

I Have An Infinite Cultivation Resource

Chapter 119: Zeng Kehan: No, I Have to Pull This Off Once

'Could it be that the kid fell too far behind and lost track of me?'

Zeng Kehan didn't even know how he felt anymore.

Part of him hoped that Lu You had secretly kept the drop of spirit liquid, so he could tell Zeng Yan that Lu You wasn't someone worthy of her trust.

But another part of him hoped Lu You hadn't taken it. After all, the fact that he had been willing to use a drop of spirit liquid to test Lu You meant that he had already begun to change his opinion of the young man.

Lost in thought, Zeng Kehan gradually slowed his pace. Every few steps he turned back, hoping to see Lu You catching up.

Yet after waiting for quite some time, the road leading from Chang'an City remained completely empty.

He sighed.

'Well... it's spirit liquid, after all. How many cultivators could see something like that without being tempted? If Lu You decided not to return it, I suppose that would only be human.'

Although he could understand such temptation, he had already made up his mind. The moment he returned, he would tell Zeng Yan everything.

If Lu You could develop greedy thoughts over a single drop of spirit liquid, then it proved that his moral bottom line was far too low. Such a person simply wasn't someone she could rely on.

As Zeng Kehan was pondering this, his eyes suddenly landed on a porcelain bottle lying ahead on the path.

'Wait... isn't that the bottle I used for the spirit liquid?'

Startled, he hurried over and picked it up.

Sure enough—it was the very same bottle he had used to test Lu You.

He uncorked it.

The rich spiritual aura immediately poured out. The single drop of spirit liquid inside was completely untouched.

'How did my spirit liquid end up here?!'

His old face instantly flushed red.

Lu You had not only returned the spirit liquid, but had somehow moved so much faster than him that he had been able to place it directly on the road ahead, where Zeng Kehan was certain to pass.

In an instant, all of Zeng Kehan's plans fell apart.

Originally, he had imagined Lu You eventually catching up and saying,

"Senior, you dropped your spirit liquid."

Then he would reply with profound dignity,

"Young man, your character is admirable. This bottle... is now yours."

Instead, not only had he failed to show off, Lu You had ended up making *him* look foolish.

Flustered, Zeng Kehan hurriedly put the bottle away. He coughed awkwardly twice before putting on an act.

"Heavens! The spirit liquid this old man lost somehow ended up here! Ah, wonderful! Otherwise I'd have been heartbroken."

"This old man..."

Hearing those words, Lu You slowly stepped out from the shadows.

"Daoist, why did you lure me all the way here?"

Since the spirit liquid was identical to the one Zeng Yan had given him, and because Zeng Kehan had shown no hostility, Lu You spoke far more politely.

Earlier, after overtaking Zeng Kehan, Lu You had carefully inspected the area ahead for any traps. Only after confirming there was no danger had he placed the bottle of spirit liquid on the path Zeng Kehan was certain to take.

He really was hiding nearby...

Zeng Kehan's breathing hitched.

Then he remembered that he was still wearing his bamboo hat, and immediately relaxed.

Thank goodness my face is covered. Otherwise, if word got out that someone who had once reached the Nascent Soul realm couldn't even detect a mere Foundation Establishment cultivator, I'd never live it down.

"Haha... hahaha..."

He let out an exaggerated laugh while frantically searching for an excuse. His eyes darted around several times before inspiration finally struck.

"Young man, what happened just now—I liked how you handled it. Very much to this old man's taste.

"However, the ladies of the Jade Pool Sect are famous for being prideful. After you embarrassed them like that, they may very well seek revenge against you.

"They might not even need to do it personally. There are bound to be countless Jade Pool Sect bootlickers eager to curry favor by teaching you a lesson on their behalf.

"I didn't want you to suffer such a loss, so I used a little trick to lure you out of Chang'an City."

The more he thought about it, the more satisfied Zeng Kehan became with the story he had just invented.

He silently gave himself a mental thumbs-up.

Straightening his posture into the image of an immortal sage, he held the bottle of spirit liquid in his palm and addressed Lu You.

"Boy, you are quick-witted. You exposed that medicine boy's scam, remained calm and unyielding even before the Jade Pool Fairy, and you even returned this spirit liquid despite how valuable it is.

"This old man has decided to grant you a fortunate opportunity.

"This bottle of spirit liquid is yours."

Beneath the bamboo hat, the corners of Zeng Kehan's mouth curled upward.

Good thing I managed to think on my feet.

Everything's back on track according to my script.

A Foundation Establishment cultivator like Lu You had just received a priceless drop of spirit liquid for free. He would surely be overwhelmed with gratitude.

Maybe he'd even keep praising him in front of Zeng Yan.

Then, after the tournament, when Zeng Yan brought Lu You back to the Zeng residence...

Hehe~~

He would be the mysterious senior whom Lu You admired so much.

By then, how impressive would that look?

Even Zeng Yan would probably be too embarrassed to keep arguing with him.

And once they were outside Chang'an City's restrictions, he could display a few profound immortal techniques, alternating kindness with intimidation.

He would make Lu You both awed and fearful, to the point where the boy wouldn't even dare lay a finger on Zeng Yan.

That way, even if the two eventually broke up, Zeng Yan wouldn't be hurt.

"What I say and do comes entirely from my own heart. I don't need anyone's reward for it. I appreciate your kindness, Daoist, but I must decline."

Lu You took a step back.

Inside his little cauldron, he already had more spirit liquid than he could use. There was no reason to accept Zeng Kehan's.

"The path of cultivation requires one's Dao Heart to remain free of regret. If I accepted your reward today, then the next time I faced a similar situation, I'd inevitably start wondering whether others would praise or criticize my actions. That would instead become a heart demon."

"Mhm, no need to thank me, no need to thank— Hm? What?! You don't want it?"

Zeng Kehan froze.

Only after seeing Lu You deliberately keeping his distance did he finally realize what had happened.

Lu You was actually refusing his spirit liquid.

And, in essence, he was telling him that he cared neither for rewards nor punishments from others.

He would simply do what he believed was right.

"Hey, kid! This is spirit liquid! It nourishes one's spiritual roots! It's a secret treasure monopolized by the major sects, and you don't want it?"

Zeng Kehan stared in disbelief.

To him, Lu You's words translated into:

"I'll do whatever I think is right. I don't need you telling me otherwise."

That meant Lu You not only didn't want the spirit liquid, he didn't particularly care about the mysterious senior who could casually hand out such treasures, either.

Something's wrong.

This isn't how the script is supposed to go!

Normally, a Foundation Establishment cultivator should have been so grateful that they wanted nothing more than to become the master's disciple and soar to greatness.

Yet Lu You wanted nothing.

He had even subtly turned around and lectured the "great senior" himself.

Lu You had said all of that simply to avoid unnecessary trouble.

With the Cauldron of Cornucopia, he was confident that even the ordinary Five Elements Qi-Nourishing Technique of the Verdant Cloud Sect could eventually lead him to immortality.

As for taking some powerful senior as his master...

Having someone constantly watching him and instructing him would only make him less safe.

Likewise, powerful cultivation techniques and destructive Dao techniques held little importance to him.

A quantitative accumulation eventually became a qualitative change.

As long as he continued steadily building his strength, he believed he could become invincible among cultivators of the same realm—even fight above his level—without relying on any extraordinary techniques.

"Daoist, now that the item has been returned to its rightful owner, I'll take my leave."

Lu You secretly breathed a sigh of relief.

Thanks to his perception, even though Zeng Kehan had changed the color of his bamboo hat, Lu You had already recognized him as the same person who had stopped and monitored him aboard the flying ship.

And after recognizing this bottle of spirit liquid, Lu You had formed a rough guess.

The disguised cultivator was probably connected to Zeng Yan's family.

That would explain why he had secretly followed him several times.

. . .

"What a remarkable kid..."

Watching Lu You leave without the slightest hesitation, Zeng Kehan took a deep breath.

A mere Foundation Establishment cultivator had faced such an invaluable treasure as spirit liquid without showing even the slightest temptation.

His Dao Heart was astonishingly firm.

If he himself had been at that same cultivation level and age, he would have accepted the spirit liquid with tears of gratitude and overwhelming joy.

There was no way he could have remained as calm as Lu You.

"...Although..."

"I feel like he ended up showing *me* up instead."

Zeng Kehan felt rather depressed.

Originally, he had wanted to awe Lu You with the bearing of an immortal master so that he would have some authority over the young man in the future.

Instead, he had been outclassed at every turn.

No matter.

Lu You offended the women of the Jade Pool Sect.

It won't be long before someone comes looking for trouble.

All I have to do is protect him a few times when he's in danger.

Then he'll naturally be grateful to me.

"Hehe~"

With his mind made up, Zeng Kehan secretly followed Lu You from a distance as they both headed toward the Verdant Cloud Sect's encampment.

Lu You paid little attention to the fact that the two of them were heading in the same direction.

On the contrary, the fact that Zeng Kehan openly followed him back instead of acting furtively only convinced Lu You further that the man harbored no ill intentions.

As they drew close to the gates of Chang'an City, Lu You suddenly felt several pairs of eyes lock onto him.

"That's him! He's the one who bullied Fairy Xiao!"

"I thought he'd gotten scared and fled outside the city. Didn't expect the bastard to actually come back!"

As the voices rang out, more than a dozen cultivators rushed out through the city gate and blocked Lu You's path outside the city.

The place Zeng Kehan had chosen to lure Lu You to had been extremely secluded, with hardly anyone passing by. Now, however, the dozen or so

cultivators surrounded Lu You with sinister grins before parting to make way for someone.

A young man dressed like a refined nobleman, holding a feather fan and wearing a scholar's robe, strolled forward.

He leisurely sized Lu You up from head to toe before sneering.

"I thought some disciple from a prestigious sect had come up with an unconventional way to catch Junior Sister Xiao's attention."

"So it turns out you're just an ignorant country bumpkin."

"What a disappointment."

The young master flicked his feather fan.

Immediately, the cultivators surrounding Lu You each took a jade stone from their robes and placed one on the ground.

Pointing his fan toward Lu You, the young master said,

"I don't consider someone like you worthy of dirtying my hands."

"That is a Recording Stone. It will record everything that happens."

"Apologize to Junior Sister Xiao in front of it. Kowtow a few times and admit your mistake."

"If you do that, I'll let you go today."

"Why aren't you thanking our young master already?"

"Country bumpkin, remember this day well! Our young master, Pang Zichuan, is a genius of the Ghost Valley Sect! Not only has he already reached the Golden Core realm, but in the field of formations he's hailed as the disciple most likely to unravel Ghost Valley Sect's ancient inheritance. In the future, he'll be one of the great figures recorded in immortal history!"

"Don't refuse a toast only to drink a forfeit! Our young master doesn't want to dirty his hands, but I don't mind. Kneel now, or believe me, I'll beat you senseless!"

"Keep it down, keep it down."

Pang Zichuan gently waved his feather fan.

"I'm merely *one of* the disciples most likely to decipher Ghost Valley Sect's inheritance."

"Don't forget to say *one of*. Otherwise people might think the Ghost Valley Sect has too few geniuses."

The surrounding cultivators immediately showered him with flattery.

"As expected of our young master! Never arrogant despite his talent, always thinking of the sect!"

"Exactly! Our young master is Ghost Valley Sect's foremost formation genius. See the formation covering Chang'an City? It was created by our Ghost Valley Sect Master!"

So...

The formation monitoring cultivators and suppressing everyone's spiritual energy had been created by the Ghost Valley Sect...

Lu You quietly committed that fact to memory.

Then he simply turned to leave in another direction, unwilling to waste time with them.

Seeing him ignore them, the dozen cultivators immediately surged forward again and completely surrounded him.

One of them even shoved Lu You hard.

"Country bumpkin, trying to run?"

"Listen carefully. Chang'an City forbids the use of spiritual energy, but it doesn't forbid fists."

"If you don't know what's good for you, we'll break your legs today so you can't even compete in the sect tournament!"

Hearing that, Lu You turned back.

"So Chang'an City doesn't prohibit fighting with bare hands?"

"Hahaha! Scared now?"

"Cultivators are always fighting each other."

"Chang'an City's restrictions on spiritual energy are only there to keep conflicts from escalating into fatalities."

"But there are plenty of ways to make someone suffer without killing them."

"If you're smart, apologize now."

"Otherwise I'll teach you exactly what unbearable pain feels like."

"Kid, hurry up and apologize. Brother Hui isn't someone you want to mess with."

"Brother Hui played with the ass of the last guy who refused to listen until it was completely ruined!"

"Hahaha! Brother Hui, there you go exposing your true nature again."

""Unbearable pain'? More like 'dying of pleasure!'"

"If this kid refuses, let's record Brother Hui together with him, then send the Recording Stone to his sect."

"Let's see how he'll explain himself after that."

"So?"

Brother Hui grinned wickedly.

"Made up your mind yet?"

As he spoke, he reached out to grab Lu You's chin.

Smack!

A figure suddenly flashed between them.

Zeng Kehan slapped Brother Hui's hand aside and stood directly in front of Lu You.

His heart was practically bursting with excitement.

When you're sleepy, someone hands you a pillow.

I was just wondering how I could impress the kid, and an opportunity delivered itself this quickly!

As a sword cultivator, what did it matter if spiritual energy couldn't be used?

As long as his sword remained in his hand, Zeng Kehan was confident he could knock every single one of these cultivators flat, one strike at a time.

"See, kid?"

"This old man told you so."

"These Jade Pool Sect bootlickers came looking for trouble almost immediately."

Standing perfectly upright, Zeng Kehan untied the longsword from his waist.

He glanced calmly at the cultivators before him.

He had no intention of killing anyone, so he kept the sword sheathed.

"Those who help others will one day be helped themselves."

"I'm in a good mood today."

"So this old man will protect you—just this once."

"Are you a sword cultivator from Mount Shu?"

Pang Zichuan stopped waving his fan and carefully examined Zeng Kehan.

The opening stance Zeng Kehan had assumed with his sword looked remarkably similar to the sword techniques of Mount Shu.

"Heh. Mount Shu?"

Thinking of Lu You standing behind him, Zeng Kehan immediately began boasting.

"A mere Mount Shu?"

"This old man is far beyond what a place like Mount Shu could contain."

"Hah."

Pang Zichuan resumed lazily fanning himself.

"Where did this senile old fool crawl out from?"

"Beat them."

"Hui Zi—if either of these two refuses to submit, they're both yours."

"Thank you, Young Master!"

Brother Hui grinned viciously.

"Hehe~ I like cultivators the most."

"Even old ones are fine."

"With spiritual energy nourishing their bodies, no matter how old they are, their skin stays smooth and tender."

"They're nothing like ordinary mortals."

"Ignorant brat."

Zeng Kehan snorted.

His sword flashed.

In an instant, the tip of the sheathed blade appeared at Brother Hui's throat.

Clang!

With a violent thrust, he smashed the man's Adam's apple.

The force was so tremendous that Hui Zi's larynx visibly caved inward.

Although Zeng Kehan had deliberately avoided killing him, that single strike had effectively ruined half his life.

Even if he recovered, his path of cultivation was finished.

"Heh, pretty strong."

Hui Zi's smile didn't change in the slightest.

Lu You narrowed his eyes.

Only then did he notice that the shattered Adam's apple wasn't flesh at all.

It consisted of countless strands of strange metallic material.

"I'm Young Master's weapon."

"You think trash like you can hurt me?"

Hui Zi reached up and grabbed his own throat.

With a violent tug, he tore away the skin.

Beneath it, his blood vessels, flesh, and bones had fused seamlessly with bizarre metal.

Strange runic characters were engraved across the metallic components.

"A living artifact!"

Zeng Kehan's heart skipped a beat.

The realization struck him immediately.

The next moment, more than a dozen cultivators charged forward simultaneously.