THE NINE CAULDRONS

BOOK 02

I Eat Tomatoes

EPUB CREATION BY LISA HAYES

The Nine Cauldrons

(九鼎记)

by

I Eat Tomatoes

(Wo Chi Xi Hong Shi)

(我吃西红柿)

Synopsis

Emperor Zi Yu used 5 strikes of his axe to split mountains and unify everyone underneath the heavens. He partitioned the land into 9 areas, thus establishing the Nine Cauldrons which eventually became known as the 9 prefectures.

When Emperor Zi Yu died, disputes unceasingly arose

One thousand years later, a once in a generation genius, Heavenly Emperor of Qin Mountains was born. Able to split a one hundred meter river, equipped with his peerless martial prowess, he finally united the land under the heavens. However, when Heavenly Emperor of Qin Mountains died, chaos once again shrouded the land. Another one thousand years passed and no one was able to consolidate the nation.

From contemporary society, great Chinese Martial Artist Teng Qingshan, unexpectedly arrived into this world.

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English Translation by Iamgt @ Qidian International

Editing by Lucas @ Qidian International

ePub conversion by Lisa Hayes @ Hasseno Blog

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Special mention to KidnigmeN for providing me the chapters so that i can create this epub!

Chapter 101: Gold Thieves

The Black Armored Soldiers chatted among themselves. They looked at Teng Qingshan differently.

The powerful ones would be revered and worshiped.

"Lieutenant Bai Qi's last move had incredible power, but I didn't expect Brother Qingshan to resolve it that easily. He even sent Lieutenant Bai Qi's weapon flying into the air." Wan Fanxiang, the skinny Centurion, praised.

"Among his generation, Qingshan is probably ranked one of the first three." Centurion Tian Dan said.

At this moment, Teng Qingshan walked over with his Reincarnation Spear.

"Brother Qingshan, your last move is must stronger than when you were fighting for the position of Centurion. It seems like you have concealed your strengths when you were fighting for the position of Centurions." Tian Dan grinned as he approached. Teng Qingshan smiled and replied, "Brother Tian Dan, I didn't cultivate the <<Vigor of the Reckless Bull>> at that time, so I was slightly weaker. I must say that the <<Vigor of the Reckless Bull>> was much better than the cultivation manuals I have cultivated in the past!"

"You cultivated the <<Vigor of the Reckless Bull>>?"

The other four Centurions were slightly shocked.

To become a First Rated Warrior, one must have a great amount of inner strength. Therefore, Tian Dan, Wan Fanxiang, and the other two Centurions thought that Teng Qingshan had his own inner strength cultivation manual.

"Of course it's because of the <<Vigor of the Reckless Bull>>. If not, how could I make such great improvements." Teng Qingshan said.

"Which stage did you reach? Why is the power so strong?" Tian Dan asked.

"The eighth stage." Teng Qingshan answered.

The four Centurions looked at each other with their eyes widened and mouths agape.

The <<Vigor of the Reckless Bull>> was powerful, but it was extremely tough to cultivate. The attainment of the eighth stage was an indication that the eight extraordinary meridians were opened and cleared up.

"No wonder!"

"Qingshan must have eaten some precious food."

The four Centurions could now understand why Teng Qingshan had grown so strong.

When Teng Qingshan saw this, he nodded to himself and said, "I can't conceal all my strengths in the Black Armored Army. I must reveal some of it so that I can be placed in more important positions. The eighth stage of the <<Vigor of the Reckless Bull>> should be good enough to win the respect of the Postliminary Experts. This was also the reason why Teng Qingshan used a strength of 50000 Jin earlier.

The eighth stage of the <<Vigor of the Reckless Bull>> unleashed an instantly explosive amount of inner strength, but this amount was just a strength of 50000 Jin.

This degree of strength should be enough for Teng Qingshan to fight any experts at the Postliminary Realm. He would only reveal his true strengths during absolutely dangerous times.

...

The story about the fight between Teng Qingshan and Lieutenant Bai Qi spread in the entire mining site. The Black Armored Soldiers and the guards at the stationary points all looked at Teng Qingshan

differently. All of them, especially the soldiers from Yi City, revered and admired Teng Qingshan!

Since Teng Qingshan was from Yi City, the soldiers from Yi City naturally felt proud!

It was night time!

The sky was pitch-black with no sight of the moon and the stars. Torches were lit everywhere around the mining site and the guards during the night patrolled.

A young man lay on his stomach and stared at the patrolling guards with gleaming eyes. He thought to himself, "Are these guards not tired? Why aren't they dozing off at the side?" The man appeared very anxious. He didn't come to the mining site to work for that measly wage.

He had been digging gold every day and naturally felt tempted as he looked at the crushed gold.

The gold that was collected every day was given to the team leader and the team leader would store the gold in the storage. He was the team leader and had secretly hidden a small amount of gold every day. The amount of gold he had hidden every time was two-to-three Qian of Gold. None of the Black Armored Soldiers noticed, and after two months, he had saved 1 Jin and 2 taels of gold.

1 Jin and 2 taels of gold would be equivalent to 1200 taels of silver. The annual salary of a commoner was 20 taels of silver, which was already considered good. One would need to work for his entire life to earn 1200 silver taels.

This man had been preparing for over two months and planned to run with the gold tonight.

He gritted his teeth and shouted, "Damn it. Today is the day I know whether I will die or live wealthily.

He then noticed that the guards were heading westward and had

turned to the other side.

"Now's the time!"

He gnashed his teeth!

Whoosh!

He ran as fast as he could and immediately dashed past the first patrol line. He then hid in a shallow hole. Actually, if the guards had observed carefully, they could see him. However, as it was night time, the guards were extremely exhausted, and so, they wouldn't notice unless there were some big movements.

The man breathed twice and no longer dared to make any sounds. He then stared at the tree in the distance.

"I was lucky to have been able to run past the line of death without being discovered." The man chuckled inwardly. To the laborious workers, the patrol line was called the line of death.

"I probably won't be that lucky later. I must rush out in one breath and find my way to a completely dark place without any torches. Only then would have the chance of escaping." The man took two deep breaths, prepared himself, and dashed out like a strong cheetah storming down the hill.

Whoosh! Whoosh!

It was a moment of life or death. The man ran at an unprecedented speed! He only felt the wind blowing past his ears. Suddenly—

"A gold thief! Catch him!" A loud voice sounded.

"They have found me!" The man felt his heart palpitating and a rush of adrenaline. During this moment of life or death, his speed actually increased slightly. The soldiers that rushed towards him were unable to encircle him as the man had already rushed to the dark area down the mountains.

"Chase after him! Useless! There are so many guards and soldiers,

but even with such great number of people, you guys can't even stop that gold thief?!" The muscular black-bearded guy roared furiously!"

"Catch him!"

"Don't let him escape! A great number of soldiers rushed down the mountain with torches in their hands.

At this moment, Teng Qingshan, who wore a black athletic suit, walked over. Normally, Teng Qingshan wouldn't sleep at night but would spend the night cultivating and nurturing his mind and body. Therefore, he was able to hear the movements immediately.

"Lord." The muscular black-bearded guy said with a bow.

"Hu Tong, what happened?" Teng Qingshan asked. During these days in the mining site, Teng Qingshan had met many people. Hu Tong was the leader of the guards and was considered a big figure in Huafeng City. However, Hu Tong was much more respectful and obedient to the Black Armored Soldiers.

Hu Tong said with a helpless expression, "A gold thief! This can't be helped. After all, the temptation of gold is real. Although many gold thieves had been caught and killed, there were still people attempting to steal!"

"How many thieves had there been?" Teng Qingshan asked.

"There are around two thousand to three thousand workers. Every year, over a hundred men tried to escape after stealing. However, only less than ten are able to escape." Hu Tong sighed and said, "However, because of how chaotic the world is, some people are just not afraid of death. Just one Jin of gold was able to make them risk their lives. If they managed to escape, they can then go back and marry a good lady and live the rest of their lives comfortably."

Death awaits the ones that failed to escape, while wealth awaits the ones that escaped successfully.

Teng Qingshan thought to himself and shook his head as he commented, "They are really betting their lives!" He then headed towards his residence.

"How is it? Did you guys catch him?" Hu Tong shouted.

"Lord, we almost did! I even cut him with my saber, but he was too quick and it was too dark outside. That fellow went another way and we couldn't find him." The guards said disappointingly. Hu Tong immediately cursed and scolded, "Useless! Only over a month had passed since the beginning of spring and we already have one escaped."

...

The days of the mining site went by just like this.

The workers mined every day, crushing the ores and cleaning out the gold. The guards and the Black Armored Soldiers supervised and patrolled, while the Teng Qingshan and the higher-ranked individuals would spend a lot of time practicing their martial arts. Still, compared to the other four Centurions, Teng Qingshan had the most responsibility as he was in charge of the purple gold mining area. He had to be very careful every day.

Gold already made people crazy, not to mention purple gold.

Teng Qingshan had been here for about one month and had already discovered two people attempting to escape with purple gold. These two people weren't able to make it out alive. After all, the purple gold mining area had the strictest security. Compared to the other mining area, it was much harder to escape the purple gold mining area.

The loss of a few Jin of gold was nothing to Gui Yuan Sect.

However, the loss of purple gold would be very painful.

"Lord, I am going to Huafeng City and I will be back tomorrow. Lord, do you need anything? I can get it from Huafeng City for you." During the early morning, the team leader 'Hu Tong'

approached when he saw Teng Qingshan practicing his spear art. In Hu Tong's eyes, Teng Qingshan had a boundless future prospect as he was young and powerful, and so, it would be best to curry favor with Teng Qingshan now.

Teng Qingshan threw a glance at him and said with a smile, "Bring some Yanghe Wine then!"

Teng Qingshan loved to drink, and Teng Qinghu loved to drink even more.

"Alright." Hu Tong laughed so hard that his beard quivered.

...

During the evening at Hu Tong's house in Huafeng City.

"Brother Dong, you are trying to kill me. If this thing fails, I will take a lot of responsibility." Hu Tong placed his wine cup wine and said as he looked at the man sitting opposite him. The man sitting opposite Hu Tong had a height of only 7 Chi, which was considered short, but he had very cunning-looking eyes.

He might appear to be a quick-witted and cunning young fellow, but Hu Tong knew that this man was very fierce and ruthless.

He was only around twenty years old, but he had killed many people in Huafeng City.

Even the city guard leader, Hu Tong, felt afraid as he thought about what this young man had done.

"Old Brother Hu, this is five thousand silver taels. If this succeeds, I will show you even more gratitude." The young man rubbed his nose and said with a grin, "I will tell what is needed to be done. You should know that...there is no risk for you. Even if my plan did not succeed, as long as I keep your identity a secret, who would know it was you? Even if I told them it was you, you could say that I held a grudge against you and is intentionally framing you. There is no risk for you."

"So Brother Hu, don't worry. Aren't you familiar with how I, Dong Yan, do things?" Dong Yan said.

Hu Tong glanced at the note of five thousand silver taels and his eyes narrowed. He then stretched his hands and took the silver note and placed it in his bosom. "Alright, Brother Dong, considering our relationship, I will help you once! When are your men leaving the mountains?"

"March 28! It's that brother that came with me last time. You know him! There won't be any problem, right?" Dong Yan said.

"March 28? Don't worry. I will get the things done even if I have to stay awake all night." Hu Tong said with a smile, "However, I can only help the area I am in charge of. As for the other areas, I will not help."

"Brother, the area you are in charge of is the most important one. Come, let's cheers." Dong Yan smiled and raised his cup. At this moment, an indescribable glint flashed in his eyes.

Chapter 102: Legacy of the Ultimate Flame

In the blink of an eye, Teng Qingshan and the others have arrived in Tielian Mountain for over a month.

As the sky darkened during evening, the torches in every area of the mining site were lit. Some areas had bonfires. A great number of guards and Black Armored Soldiers patrolled assiduously. Teng Qingshan himself was in the purple gold mining area. He stood outside a huge stone house.

This stone house was where Teng Qingshan had been staying on this Tielian Mountain.

"Chichi!" The bonfire roared.

Teng Qingshan gripped the Reincarnation Spear and stood beside the bonfire, immersing deeply in the thought of spear art.

If one is on the verge of death, he will fight to live! That is a concept of despair with a hint of hope..." Teng Qingshan pondered. During this time of over a month, he had disassembled the eighty-one techniques of the <<Ardent Flame Spear Art>> and merged the moves. He found that the eighty-one techniques contained five concepts. And now, he had created four spear techniques.

The first technique—Silver Flower of the Flaming Tree! This was a very illusory and beautiful art. It could easily distract and confuse the opponent.

The second technique—Inflamed Passion! Teng Qingshan gave this technique a very inelegant name, but it was easily understood. The name showed that when the moves of this technique were used, it would unleash an explosive power, just like adding oil to fire.

The third technique—Flashing Fire! This was a very vicious technique. The moves of this technique are extremely fast and quiet.

The fourth technique—Wildfire Flames! This technique was a technique used during group attack. The performance of this technique would use up a lot of strength, but it would display an incredibly great force

And now, the fifth technique remained. The concept of the fifth technique was similar to sadness but slightly different at the same time.

"This isn't right!" Teng Qingshan exclaimed as he shook his head.

When he was creating the Silver Flower of the Flaming Tree, it will take him three days. But as he continued creating more techniques, the time spent became longer. Honestly, although the power of these techniques was incredible, they were no match against the Pursuing Shadows, the Transmutation Unity Qi, and Toxic Dragon Drill. After all, Teng Qingshan had studied the Five Element Fist for a long time in his previous life.

And he had spent over a dozen years in this life to create these three techniques.

The three techniques might seem simple, but they had already reached the Realm of Simplicity. They displayed a much greater and astonishing power.

However, Teng Qingshan had not been able to develop the Cannon Fist of the Five Element Fist Art into a spear technique. Teng Qingshan felt that as he disassembled and merged the <<Ardent Flame Spear Art>>, his understanding of the fire element increased as well. He had a better image of the spear art he could create with the Cannon Fist.

In his previous life, the Tiger Cannon Fist was Teng Qingshan's best technique. A spear art developed from the Tiger Cannon Fist would be much more powerful than the Toxic Dragon Drill.

However, he must do it one step at a time.

He must first merge the <<Ardent Flame Spear Art>> and create

the fifth technique. If he couldn't do this, then he wouldn't be able to develop the 'Cannon Fist' into a spear art.

"The concept of sadness is different from the concept of being on the verge of death and fighting to live. This concept is..." Teng Qingshan pondered. Suddenly—

"Pa!"

Teng Qingshan turned and saw that the bonfire beside him had dimmed. Red sparks could be seen on the wood that had been burned for a long time and was occasionally bright and occasionally dim. Teng Qingshan grabbed the two pieces of dried wood and tossed it into the bonfire, causing the red sparks on the surface of the wood to ignite into flames.

"Eh?"

The instant the red sparks ignited into flames, Teng Qingshan was struck by a thought. His eyes lit up!

"Yes!"

Teng Qingshan hastily grabbed the Reincarnation Spear. He closed his eyes and grabbed the top of the spear with his right hand and grabbed the spear shaft with his left hand. He first pulled the spear shaft and pushed it forward. Teng Qingshan instilled inner strength into the Reincarnation Spear and immediately thrust the spearhead forward.

When the thrust was at its limit, the spearhead quivered.

Whew! Whew!

A visible powerful whirlpool could be seen on the spearhead.

"Yes, that's the feeling!" Teng Qingshan was elated. Immediately, he turned and thrust his spear towards a tree trunk at the side.

"Bang!"

The spearhead thrust into the tree trunk and a loud explosive noise sounded. A terrifying hole appeared on the enormous tree

trunk. The crushed wood flew everywhere and the tree began trembling, as though it was going to fall at any time. The Black Armored Soldiers were frightened and immediately took precautions.

"Everyone, watch out. Don't get hit by the tree!" Teng Qingshan laughed and sent a flying kick. Immediately, the tree crashed in front of Teng Qingshan. The Black Armored Soldiers had already moved to the side.

"Lord, what a great spear art. I can't believe you knock down such a huge tree."

"Our Lord has the best spear art."

The soldiers praised.

Teng Qingshan felt great as he thought to himself, "My flying knife technique 'Saddened Knife' is a technique that allows me to remotely control a flying knife and make it explode. A moment ago, when I guided my inner strength with my mind and used it in coordination with my physical strength, a whirlpool of inner strength was created. An explosive force was unleashed! Hm, this technique shall be named 'Legacy of the Ultimate Flame'!"

Teng Qingshan was very satisfied technique.

Of the five techniques created through the <<Ardent Flame Spear Art>>, the Legacy of the Ultimate Flame was the most powerful one.

"Unfortunately, the effect of this technique can only be achieved with inner strength. It cannot be done with just physical strength! However, with my inner strength, the power displayed was already considered very good." Teng Qingshan had a clearer vision of the spear art he could create with the Cannon Fist.

After over a month, he finally completed the creation of the five techniques.

At this moment, he was very happy. Immediately, he held the

Reincarnation Spear and began patrolling around the purple gold mining area.

"Lord!"

"Lord!"

The patrolling Black Armored Soldiers immediately salute when they saw Teng Qingshan.

"Mm." Teng Qingshan nodded with a smile. He shot a glance at the mine cave and asked, "Has the mining today ended?"

"Yes, Lord." The workers in the mine have come out." The Black Armored Soldiers answered respectfully.

Teng Qingshan smiled and walked towards the mining tunnel. Some parts of the tunnel had been hollowed out, but there were still extremely deep tunnels in the cave. Teng Qingshan walked towards one of the mining tunnels. At this moment, the laborers were walking out of the tunnel, and they bowed when they saw Teng Qingshan.

The faces, hair, and body of these laborers were covered with dust. They looked very dirty.

"Er Gou, how much purple gold did you excavate?"

"Look! As big as my nail! This is the biggest gold I have dug this month! But we have to hand it over anyway. No matter how much we dig up, it's still wouldn't belong to us."

"Look at mine. This is the purple gold dug up by eight people."

Teng Qingshan glanced at the guy who was talking and saw that there was some crushed purple gold in the man's palm.

Seeing that, Teng Qingshan asked, "How did you get the purple gold dug up by the other seven people?"

"Lord." The man looked at Teng Qingshan and quickly bowed in fright. He then explained, "My brothers asked me to hand it over to the Black Armored Soldiers. This way, it will be more convenient

as well."

"What is your name?" Teng Qingshan asked.

The man was slightly afraid as he answered, "My..my name is Wu Dagan!"

Teng Qingshan nodded. He glanced into the tunnels again and walked out of the mine cave. There were two Black Armored Soldiers sitting before the table near the mine cave, collecting the purple gold excavated by the miners, and keeping records of the amount of purple gold.

Teng Qingshan nodded and said, "According to the rules of Gui Yuan Sect, the laborers in the purple gold mining area are not allowed to interact with the miners in the other area. In addition, the rooms of these miners would be checked occasionally. Before the miners leave, they must take off all their clothes and shave their heads. They would be given a full set of new clothes, but they would have to leave naked. This was indeed to prevent people from stealing purple gold!"

The rules of the purple gold mining area were much stricter than the other four mining areas.

Stealing the purple gold was as difficult as reaching the heavens.

"Big Brother Gan, what did the Lord of that Black Armored Army say?" Some laborers asked Wu Dagan.

"Nothing much." Wu Dagan said and glanced at Teng Qingshan, who was afar. He then heaved a sigh of relief and thought to himself, "March 28 is the day after tomorrow! The crucial time is coming soon, I must be more careful not to provoke the Black Armored Soldiers! Otherwise, it would be bad if I ruined Big Brother's plan."

Wu Dagan immediately went back to his room.

...

Soon, it was March 28th.

According to the rules of the mining site, the laborers of the four gold mines could only go back to visit their families on the 28th of every month. They could only go back once a month! However, the laborers of the purple gold mine could only leave the mine once a year.

On the morning of that day, a light mist filled the air. The weather was very cool and the laborers were in a very good mood.

"I have been working day and night in this place. It's so tiring. I haven't been able to sleep well. I can finally go back now."

"Haha, you miss your wife, don't you?"

"Hehe, sleeping with your wife at home is definitely better than sleeping on the cold wooden bed."

The laborers chatted among themselves. They lined up and were waiting to go through a body search before they could leave the mining site.

"Don't be stupid, people! If you hid any gold, even if it was a tiny bit, you will be sentenced to death!" One of the officers shouted, "Check yourself before you go through the body search. Don't give others the chance to frame you. If we found any gold with you, any explanation would be useless."

The group of guards blocked the path and scrutinized the group of laborers. There were guards specially assigned to do the body search.

According to the rules, the body search of the laborers in the gold mines was done by ordinary guards.

However, the body search of the laborers for the purple gold mine was specially done by the Black Armored Soldiers.

At this moment, the black-beaded guy strode over.

"Lord!" The guards immediately saluted. The person that came

was the leader of the guards of Huafeng City. His position was just lower than the city lord. Naturally, these guards really respected him.

"Mm." Hu Tong scanned the laborers who were lining up and immediately said to the guards, "Brothers, be careful. Check every one of them carefully. Don't miss anyone of them."

"Don't worry, Lord. They won't take away any gold." The officer immediately said as he tried to win Hu Tong's favor.

"Yes." Hu Tong nodded.

He scanned the surrounding. Suddenly, he saw a middle-aged guy, dressed in simple patched clothes, walking over from a distance of several Zhang away. Immediately, Hu Tong's eyes gleamed.

Chapter 103: Pursuing in secret

Captain Hu Tong and the middle-aged man both cast a glance at each other from afar. The middle-aged man then casually chatted with the worker beside him as he lined up with the other workers.

“Phew!” Hu Tong tried to keep himself calm, and looked casually to the side — who would’ve thought that Lieutenant Bai Qi of the Black Armored Army would be walking towards him with an indifferent expression at this moment.

“I rarely see this Bai Qi, but he actually appeared today.” Hu Tong felt anger in his heart, but a smile still crept up his face as he hastily greeted, “Mister, you aren’t doing morning training today?”

“It’s the 28th today. I know many workers are going home to visit their relatives, so of course I have to check it out. Hu Tong, watch your men. Have them search more meticulously!” Lieutenant Bai Qi ordered indifferently. To this, Hu Tong only hastily bowed and smiled. “Yes, Lord. My brothers have done it many times. Don’t worry. There definitely won’t be any problems.“

“Mm!” Lieutenant Bai Qi humphed.

With this, Lieutenant Bai Qi stood to the side, scrutinizing the workers that were lining up, and going through a body search one by one. These workers occasionally glanced up at Lieutenant Bai Qi, before immediately lowering their head in fright.

These workers also knew that Lieutenant Bai Qi was a big figure.

“Check more carefully!” Hu Tong who was at the side yelled

Lieutenant Bai Qi looked around casually, glancing at the mine workers from time to time.

“Gold is rather heavy. If a large amount of gold was being smuggled in one’s clothing, then their clothing would crumple and

droop from the weight of the gold!" Bai Qi clearly knew this fact. If a block of iron were to be placed in one's pocket, it would droop and appear messy, even when worn.

Bai Qi swept a glance at the workers and didn't notice anything unusual at first sight.

"Eh?" Something piqued his interest as his eyes swept past the newly made footprints of a middle-aged man lining up in the back. The mining area had a lot of dust, with crushed pebbles, dirt, and mud scattered all over the place. Footprints were left behind with every step one took. Of course, with so many people lining up who were stepping back and forth, the footprints were very messy.

However, what kind of eyes did Bai Qi have?

He instantly noticed the two footprints left by the middle-aged man. Although they were immediately ruined by the worker behind the middle-aged man, Bai Qi still remembered them clearly.

"One footprint is deeper than the other!" Bai Qi was shocked.

Scrutinizing the middle-aged man, Bai Qi said to himself, "Yes. His clothing is neat and he seems to not be smuggling. However, his legs aren't of different lengths, and are very normal. Yet, one of his footprints is deeper than the other. There's only one possibility: a block of iron or some other heavy object is tied to one of his legs!"

Bai Qi was a lieutenant after all. Although he was slightly narrow-minded, his ability couldn't be denied.

Being able to understand the «Nine Spears of the Rising Sun»showed that Bai Qi was also very smart. He had instantly realized the problem from just the two different-looking footprints.

"Humph." With this, Lieutenant Bai Qi immediately stopped looking at the middle-aged man.

Because the middle-aged man was currently committing a crime,

he became extremely nervous when Bai Qi had stared at him from afar. The middle-aged man said to himself anxiously, “Could it be that the Lord of the Black Armored Army noticed me? That’s impossible! It’s impossible to spot anything just by looking at my appearance. Phew..... He finally looked away. I guess that big figure of the Black Armored Army was only daydreaming.”

No matter what happened, the middle-aged man had no way out.

If this feat was achieved, It would mean acquiring a lifetime of wealth.

“Lord!”

“Lord!” As a voice of respect sounded out, Bai Qi turned and saw Teng Qingshan walking along the mountain road towards him with his Reincarnation Spear in hand.

When Teng Qingshan saw Bai Qi, he cupped his hands and said, “Lord Lieutenant is also here?”

“Yeah. Qingshan, where are you going?” Bai Qi said with a smile.

“I am going to find my brother Tian Dan so that I can hang out with him,” replied Teng Qingshan.

“Then why don’t you hurry? A minor matter like a body check can be handled by these soldiers.” Lieutenant Bai Qi said as he flashed a faint smile.

Teng Qingshan cast a glance at him and left with a smile. Ever since the challenge, Lieutenant Bai Qi’s attitude towards Teng Qingshan had changed drastically. He hadn’t dared to face Teng Qingshan with an indifferent expression.

However.....

Teng Qingshan didn’t feel very happy. Bai Qi’s silent endurance caused Teng Qingshan to be even more cautious.

.....

After seeing Teng Qingshan walk past him, Bai Qi turned to look

at Hu Tong and ordered, “Hu Tong, speed up the body checking.”

“Yes, Lord!” Hearing Bai Qi’s order, Hu Tong was secretly glad.

He had originally planned to have one of the soldiers doing the body checks leave, so that he himself could do the job to let the person escape. Now, Bai Qi’s words made it even easier for him to work out his plan.

“Hey, slowpokes! If you just search two people at a time, this search will never end. As of now, search three people at a time! You two can continue searching, I’ll search the third person myself! You two should learn from me!” Hu Tong strided forward as he waved at the workers that were lining up and yelled, “You guys come over to me!”

The workers that were originally divided into two lines immediately separated into three.

“Undo your outer garments! Do it yourselves!” Hu Tong yelled.

All of the workers took off their outer garments one by one as Hu Tong rapidly patted down their outer garments, checking to see if any hard objects were hidden inside. He then searched their undergarments once, and touched one side of their pants to check if there was gold hidden within the layers of the pants. After that, he had the workers undo their pants and roll them down to their knees.

He checked if gold was hidden around their private parts. Lastly, he checked their shoes and hair.

Hu Tong searched really quickly.

“Next!” Hu Tong yelled.

Successively, Hu Tong searched three people, and these three people were clean.

“Next!” Hu Tong yelled again.

Immediately, the middle-aged man went before Hu Tong with his

outer garments undone, revealing an old, sweaty shirt inside. It was obvious that he wasn't hiding anything. Hu Tong searched carefully according to the procedure. His outer garments, pants, shoes, hair, within the body, etc. He checked everything, and nothing was found.

"Next!" Hu Tong said

The middle-aged man immediately wore his clothes and shoes, and walked down the mountain road.

"Hmph." Lieutenant Bai Qi cast a glance at the middle-aged man and secretly sneered, "It looks like even Hu Tong has been bribed. He actually bribed Hu Tong..... Smuggling gold? Impossible. Even if he was smuggling 10 Jin of gold, that would only be equal to ten thousand taels of silver, which couldn't bribe a captain of the city guards. However, what about purple gold?"

Lieutenant Bai Qi became doubtful, "How did he manage to smuggle purple gold? It's impossible for the workers of the purple gold mining area and the workers of the gold mining area to meet. Could it be that I've guessed wrong? Is it possible that that middle-aged man wasn't smuggling? "

At this moment——

"Did you see that? Just do as I did, except faster. You come search." As Hu Tong was saying this, he strode over to the side, and ordered a soldier to search in his place.

Bai Qi looked and a thought struck him, "Eh? From beginning to end, this Hu Tong had only searched four people, with the fourth person being the middle-aged man. He rested while the fifth person was still being searched. Hmph. It looks like he really was bribed!" With this, Bai Qi immediately headed down the mountain.

"Lord," Hu Tong walked towards Bai Qi with a smile.

"I'm heading down the mountain for a walk, why're you following me?" Bai Qi scolded.

Hu Tong had a feeling of suffocation, and immediately backed away.

Bai Qi then strode down the mountain, making it seem as if he was having a casual stroll. Bai Qi was an inner strength expert, so how would it be possible for him to lose to a peasant?

“If my guess is correct, then the gold that this man is smuggling must be worth a lot! There is at least a fifty percent chance that this is man smuggling purple gold!” Bai Qi felt his heart move. According to the rules of the Gui Yuan Sect, the purple gold that was mined everyday was recorded in a file. Even if he was a lieutenant, it would be impossible for him to embezzle it.

All humans had greed.

Even in the society of Teng Qingshan’s previous life, some high officials also covettd money. Thus, it wouldn’t be weird for Bai Qi to do so.

Although he was the lieutenant of the Black Armored Army, and had a high monthly salary, when compared to some wealthy merchants, there was still a big difference. All men had lust. Bai Qi also desired to buy pretty maids and some servants to make his life more comfortable. Even buying good materials to forge good weapons needed lots of silver and gold.

“Hmph. That money is mine! The sect doesn’t know anyway.” Greed had already filled Bai Qi’s heart.

Just kill that middle-age man, and take the money away.

If he guessed wrong and killed the wrong person, then the middle-age man’s bad luck was to blame.

……

At the foot of the Tielian Mountain, on the governmental road, there were five war horses with people beside them.

One of the five people standing beside the horses, the seven chi

tall lean man, was Dong Yan. There were three people surrounding him. Of these three people, two of them were tall and fat. The other one was a middle-aged man with silver-white hair.

“Big brother! You said that Old Li San is bringing down some purple gold? I don’t get it. The purple gold mining area and the gold mining area are separated, and Old Li San is a worker at the gold mining area, so how can he get purple gold?” One of the two fat men asked, “Big brother, can you tell me this secret now?”

“Er Pang, I’ll tell you guys.” Dong Yan sneered and said, “There’s a secret passage connecting the purple gold mining area and the gold mining area!”

“What?” The two fat men were shocked, while the middle aged silver-haired man remained very calm.

“Actually, one of my brothers accidentally dug too deep while he was mining in the purple gold mining area, and it actually connected with a small mining path of the gold mining area. That brother of mine hastily sealed the mining cave. The number of people that know of this secret is extremely little.” Dong Yan said with a calm smile. “During this single year, Brother Wang collected around 10 Jin of purple gold! He hid the purple gold in the secret passage, and Old Li San will collect it. When Old Li San takes that 10 Jin of purple gold out, we’ll be rich!”

To Dong Yan, these three people beside him were the ones that he trusted the most. The ones that went through life and death with him.

The reason he didn’t tell Da Pang and Er Pang previously, was because he was worried that with the careless character of these two fat fellows, they would let the secret out.

“10 Jin!” Hearing this, Da Pang and Er Pang were shock. Er Pang mumbled, “10 Jin of purple gold is one thousand Jin worth of gold! That is one million Jin of silver taels. One million Jin of silver taels..... We’re rich!”

One million silver taels was a very huge amount.

Even if one was a wealthy salt merchant, having a property worth one million silver taels was good enough.

“10 Jin of purple gold! Humph! Compared to the amount of purple gold mined by the Gui Yuan Sect, 10 Jin is nothing. However, with this money, we don’t need to hole up in this tiny Huafeng City.” Dong Yan said with a smile. Suddenly, he cast a glance in the distance and hastily said, “Yes! Look! There are workers going down the mountain! Old Li San should be coming down soon!”

Chapter 104: Slaughter

By the clear stream on Tielian Mountain, Teng Qingshan and Tian Dan were enjoying their time as they drank and ate meat.

"Tsk, tsk! The meat is so good." Tian Dan threw a piece of meat into his mouth. He munched twice and swallowed it. He then took a sip of the strong liquor. He felt so good that he smacking his lips.

Hu Tong is very good at making connections." Teng Qingshan smiled.

The Centurions do have better food, but it was impossible for them to eat a variety of delicious food. Hu Tong had specially ordered someone to bring the food from Huafeng City to here for them.

"We are halfway to the end! We still have over a month before we can return to Jiangning County City. However, when we go back, we will have to participate in the Centurion competition and the two weakest Centurions in each troop will be chosen. Then, we would prepare for June 12th, the day of the recruitment!" Tian Dan said with a smile, "Brother Qingshan, you have nothing to worry about."

The Black Armored Army was divided into four troops and each troop must select the two weakest Centurions through the competition.

"Brother Tian Dan, you are considered strong in the first troop. There are many centurions weaker than you." Before Teng Qingshan finished his words, he suddenly stopped talking and looked into the distance. He then said, "Hey, look there!"

"Eh?" Tian Dan looked at the direction Teng Qingshan pointed with confusion.

As Tian Dan looked past the flourishing trees, flowers, and grass, he could faintly see someone walking on the mountain road afar.

"Bai Qi?" Tian Dai said in surprise, "Why is he going down the mountain? Today is the day those laborers head down the mountain... Why is he, the Lieutenant, going down the mountain?" Tian Dan was very confused.

"It's just slightly out of the ordinary." Teng Qingshan frowned. He then turned to look at Tian Dan and said with a smile, "Brother Tian Dan, let's follow him. Won't we know if we follow him?"

"Okay. Let's go." Tian Dan was very interested

The two held their weapons and went after Bai Qi.

...

"Lord!"

"Lord!"

Bai Qi walked on the mountain road. There were some soldiers heading up the mountain and some heading down the mountain. When they saw Bai Qi, they immediately bowed and saluted.

Bai Qi frowned and stared at the middle-aged man, who was twenty Zhang away. "There are too many soldiers on the mountain road. They will notice if I tried to take any actions. If they saw me taking the purple gold from the middle-aged man and told others about it, it will be troublesome."

Bai Qi couldn't help but feel annoyed as he continued following the middle-aged man.

This mountain road was the most bustling place on Tielian Mountain.

Because there were a group of guards especially guarding at the bottom of the mountain and caring for the horses. The guards up on the mountain and the guards at the bottom of the mountain often changed shift and deliver food, so many soldiers could be seen on this mountain road.

...

The middle-aged man Li Laosan and the other laborers went down the mountain, appearing to be very normal.

"Hey, Li Laosan? You have done this world for over half a year. You must have quite an amount of wages, right? Go back home. Your wife must have already prepared the wine and food. She must be waiting for you on the bed."

"Me?" If my wife was that good, I wouldn't leave home!" Li Laosan humphed. Simultaneously, Li Laosan appeared very carefree. He looked back once and was secretly scared when he saw the figure behind him. "This big figure of the Black Armored Army has been staring at me for a long time. Why is he following me now?"

As he was hiding some secrets, the more he thought about it, the more suspicious he was.

"No, no. Impossible! It's impossible for him to notice." Li Laosan couldn't think about anything he did that gave the game away.

"Eh, Boss Dong is at the bottom of the mountain. It will be fine when I see Boss Dog. We will enjoy a lifetime of riches and wealth when this matter is completed!" Li Laosan forced the anxiousness down and intentionally chatted with the other laborers around before he continued walking down the mountain.

Bai Qi stared at the middle-aged man coldly. In his eyes, the rough man was a piece of cake. Now, he just needed to make sure that the other guards don't see him when he kill and take the purple gold.

"I will let you live a little while more." Bai Qi followed. He wasn't afraid of Li Laosan noticing him.

Li Laosan and Bai Qi, one after the other, went down the mountain.

Behind those two were Teng Qingshan and Tian Dan, who was following stealthily.

...

Bai Qi's pupils suddenly contracted. "I am at the bottom of the mountain!" Immediately, Bai Qi accelerated. Li Laosan separated from the other laborers and went a different direction. He turned and disappeared from Bai Qi's field of view. Within only a few seconds, he dashed to the bottom of the mountain and immediately looked towards the official road.

"Boss Dong!" When Li Laosan saw the person with warhorses in the distance, he immediately rushed over.

"A helper?"

A horrifying expression appeared on Bai Qi's face as he said, "Then die together!" There were only a few laborers nearby and no guards or soldiers. Seeing that they had war horses, Bai Qi could no longer wait.

"Whew!""Whew!"

Bai Qi performed his Qing Gong and dashed towards Li Laosan like a gust of wind.

Li Laosan looked back and shouted horrifyingly, "Boss Dong, help me! Simultaneously, he kicked with both his legs. However, the purple gold tied on his legs were too heavy. He couldn't run fast!

"Who are you!" The tall, fat, and muscular man held his thick black iron truncheon and roared furiously.

"Hmph."

Seeing this, Bai Qi sneered. Would he, someone of such high status, be afraid of some thieves?"

"Die." Bai Qi smiled condescendingly and thrust the long spear in his hands towards Li Laosan. Li Laosan was shouted in fright, "Help!!!" However, Dong Yan and the other three couldn't save him. A 'Puchi' sound was heard as the spearhead pierced through Li Laoshan's throat.

Li Laosan's eyes widened.

He was going to acquire a great wealth, but he died at the last moment!

Dong Yan's face darkened and he shouted, "Kill him!"

Dong! Dong! Dong!

Da Pang held a pair of iron truncheons, while the Er Pang held a pair of iron maces. The silver-haired middle-aged man held his trenchant sword and dashed forward. As for Dong Yan himself, he held two flying daggers and followed behind.

"Hmph." Bai Qi kicked Li Laosan's body to the side and slashed Li Laosan's right leg with his long spear, cutting apart the pants. A pouch was tied onto Li Laosan's lower leg. The pouch had already ripped open and pieces of purple gold could be seen. The brilliance of the purple gold was breathtaking.

Bai Qi's eyes lit up.

"You thief!" Da Pang, who was running ahead of the others, also saw the purple gold. He was so furious that he smashed the iron truncheons at Bai Qi.

"Release!" Bai Qi sneered and shook his long spear.

Whew!

"Clang!" As Bai Qi's long spear struck the iron truncheon, Da Pang's right hand quivered and he went three steps back. Feeling a numbness in his right hand, Bai Qi looked at the big and fat guy in shock and thought to himself, "What a powerful strength!" Through the first exchange of moves, Bai Qi was certain that the big and fat guy was a First Rated Warrior!

"Big Brother, this opponent is not easy!" Da Pang shouted.

"Let's fight him together." Dong Yan rushed over.

The silver-haired guy gripped his long spear and unleashed sword shadows toward Lieutenant Bai Qi.

Seeing this, Bai Qi's face darkened. He shook the spear shaft and the long spear in his hands instantly began revolving and eventually forming this circular shape. Only clashing sounds could be heard as the sword shadows were blocked and fended off." Where did this expert come from? Another First Rated Warrior!" Bai Qi began to feel more nervous. He hadn't expected to see so many experts here.

...

Teng Qingshan and Tian Dan hid amidst the bushes and watched the fight. Because they were quite far away, Teng Qingshan and Tian Dan did not see the purple gold.

"Qingshan, what should we do?" Tian Dan whispered.

"Brother Tian Dan, this is very interesting. Why don't we watch a little longer?" Teng Qingshan said with a smile.

Tian Dan nodded and grinned as he said, "Bai Qi killed that laborer and drew out these powerful experts. It seems like this is not a simple matter. Well, he caused this trouble himself, so let him solve it himself. It is very fun to see Bai Qi suffering."

Teng Qingshan watched the fight carefully and said, "Yes, among those four, the one standing at the side with flying daggers don't dare to join the close combat. The other three are the ones fighting. The two fat guys are strong, but they have very ordinary hammer art and truncheon art. The silver-haired expert was truly considered a powerful expert, but he was still no match against Bai Qi."

"Yea, that fatty with two maces was pierced. It seems like they can't win against Bai Qi. What a pity... I really wanted to see Bai Qi in an embarrassed state." Tian Dan said with a helpless expression.

Bai Qi's <<Nine Spears Facing the Morning Sun>> spear technique was not much weaker than Yue Song's technique.

When Bai Qi was fighting with Teng Qingshan, Teng Qingshan

performed the Pursuing Shadows spear art with a strength of 50000 Jin. Therefore, Bai Qi lost miserably.

However, Bai Qi was still pretty strong.

If he weren't strong, he wouldn't be the Lieutenant.

...

"Er Pang, retreat!" Dong Yan shouted anxiously.

"Do you think you can escape?" Bai Qi guffawed. As the long spear in his hands quivered, Er Pang only saw a beam of light that was as bright as the sun.

"Whew!"

Dong Yan was so worried that he threw out his flying dagger towards Bai Qi.

Bai Qi shook his long spear and fended off the flying dagger. Simultaneously, he thrust his long spear into Er Pang chest and pulled it out!

Pu!

Blood splattered.

A huge hole appeared on Er Pang's chest and a great amount of blood flowed out. He stared at Dong Yan and appeared to be trying to say something. Still, his head drooped and his entire body collapsed.

"Er Pang!" Dong Yan's facial expression changed drastically.

"Little brother!" Da Pang shouted madly.

"Yan, leave!" The silver-haired middle-aged man shouted. Simultaneously, a white mist emerged before his face and the speed of the longsword in his hand increased drastically.

"No, I want to avenge my little brother!" Da Pang's eyes looked bloodshot. He appeared to have gone crazy.

"Haha? Risk your life?" Bai Qi laughed and said, "None of you will

leave alive today!" Bai Qi didn't even feel this happy when he successfully completed his cultivation of the <<Nine Spears Facing the Morning Sun>>. When his <<Nine Spears Facing the Morning Sun>> spear technique had just reached culmination, Teng Qingshan defeated him, which instilled this bitterness in Bai Qi's heart. And so, being able to trample and kill these people made him feel extremely great.

Chi!

Da Pang's stomach was slashed by the long spear and blood gushed out.

"Clang!" The silver-haired middle-aged man blocked the spear and kicked Da Pang away.

"Yan, leave with Da Pang first!" The silver-haired middle-aged man said anxiously.

Dong Yan trembled as he stared at Er Pang's body. He immediately turned to stare at Bai Qi with bloodshot eyes. He then shouted with a deep voice, "Uncle, leave with Da Pang!"With this, he charged towards Bai Qi. Dong Yan, who was hiding afar in the beginning, actually approached Bai Qi at rapid speed!

Chapter 105: Poisoned

"Haha, die!" Bai Qi guffawed madly. He didn't even consider Dong Yan as an opponent.

Dong Yan had been hiding far away and had only been hurling flying daggers. How strong could he be?

"Big Brother." Da Pang, who was injured hastily shouted.

"Yan, don't be crazy." The silver-haired middle-aged man was anxious as well. They all knew that Dong Yan was the weakest of them all. He was only able to become the leader because he was smart and ruthless. In terms of physical ability and cultivation, Dong Yan was no match against Da Pang and Er Pang.

Yet, Dong Yan still continued charging forth as though he had gone mad.

"Haha!" Bai Qi gripped his spear and prepared to pierce Dong Yan to death.

At this moment—

A cold glint flashed in Dong Yan's eyes. He suddenly took out a black long tube-shaped object from his right sleeve and fiercely pressed a notch on the black long tube-shaped object.

Whew!

The several dozen shadows shot out of the black long tube-shaped object. The speed was so astonishingly fast.

Bai Qi's facial expression changed as he shouted, "Oh no!" The projectiles that shot out of the hidden weapon were too quick. He was barely able to wave his long spear and only blocked one of the shadows.

"Thief! Die!" Bai Qi felt a sense of pain in his left arm and right leg, which soon felt very numb. He came so angry that he started roaring furiously that he would take Dong Yan's life.

Yet, Dong Yan turned and fled while replying, "If you aren't afraid of dying, then come chase after me!"

If one was poisoned, it would be best not to move as the more you move, the quicker your blood would flow and the quicker the poison would spread to the other parts of the body. Bai Qi could only freeze on the spot as he didn't dare to move. Dong Yan stood ten Zhang away and obviously had no intention to run now. His eyes swept past Er Pang's body and the purple gold in the pouch tied onto Li Laosan's leg.

The pouch was filled with purple gold!

"Come! Come closer and I will kill you." Bai Qi tapped the acupuncture points on his left arm and right leg and simultaneously tore his clothes into strips of cloth. He strapped the strips of cloth tightly around the left arm and the leg and tried to stop the blood from flowing.

The silver-haired middle-aged man immediately grabbed Er Pang's corpse.

"Lord Lieutenant!" With a loud shout, Teng Qingshan and Tian Dan finally came out of their hiding place.

"Let's go!" Dong Yan gritted his teeth and jumped onto the horse.

Da Pang got on the horse, while silver-haired middle-aged man placed Er Pang's corpse on the horse and jumped up the horse as well. They immediately galloped away. The horses rode by Dong Yan and the others were good horses that could travel a distance of 1000 Li within a day. With such explosive speed, Teng Qingshan and Tian Dan could only watch Dong Yan and the others gradually disappear.

Actually, Tian Dan might not be able to catch up, but Teng Qingshan could do it.

However...

It was impossible for Teng Qingshan to reveal his true ability for

Bai Qi's sake.

...

As the horses galloped, Dong Yan and the others were suffering.

"Little Brother, Little Brother!" With tears in his eyes, Da Pang muttered painfully.

Dong Yan gnashed his teeth and said, "It's me. It's because of me. If I had taken out the Ghost Spirit Needle sooner, Er Pang wouldn't die!" When Er Pang was in danger, Dong Yan had no time to take out the Ghost Spirit Needle. And so, he could only block with his flying dagger. Still, he couldn't save Er Pang.

"Big Brother, it's not your fault. You couldn't save Er Pang earlier. I could only watch as well." Da Pang said painfully.

"Yan, don't be too sad! Er Pang is dead, but fortunately, he left behind two sons, meaning that his lineage will continue." The silver-haired middle-aged man sighed and said, "We should take care of his sons now."

"Yes." Dong Yan pondered for a while and said, "Uncle, we can't stay in Huafeng City anymore! Let's head back. We will take our money and leave Huafeng City and Jiangning County now.

"Eh?" The silver-haired middle-aged man was shocked.

"Big Brother, are we going to just abandon our men in Huafeng City? We expended great effort building that group." Da Pang stared at Dong Yan. All their subordinates were local people with families. It was impossible to ask these ordinary people to venture the world with them.

"We should make a decision when it's time to decide. Why bother thinking so much?! We were able to build our own world in Huafeng City. We will definitely be able to do even better in other places. As for that bastard from Gui Yuan Sect, I, Dong Yan, will take his life one day!" Dong Yan gritted his teeth and said.

"Wouldn't he die after being shot by the Ghost Spirit Needle?" The silver-haired middle-aged man asked.

"Hmph, if he hesitated and the poison spread to the other parts of his body, he would definitely die. However, if he could be ruthless to himself, then he will not die, but instead become disabled and useless!" Dong Yan sneered coldly and said, "However, even if he's disabled, I want to kill him with my own hands and make him pay for what he had done." Immediately, Dong Yan and the others left Huafeng City very quickly.

During the afternoon, Dong Yan and the other three took their families and left Huafeng City secretly. They would continue to venture the world.

"Lord Lieutenant?" Are you alright?" Tian Dan asked.

Teng Qingshan noticed a pouch beside the corpse. When he saw the purple gold in the pouch, he was shocked and thought to himself, "No wonder Lieutenant Bai Qi wanted to take action secretly. He was trying to take the purple gold without the sect knowing." Teng Qingshan immediately stretched his hand and placed all the scattered purple gold in the pouch.

"Teng Qingshan, what are you doing?" Bai Qi shouted.

"Someone stole the purple gold. Of course I must take the purple gold to where it is supposed to be." Teng Qingshan said calmly.

He gnashed his teeth and just felt so bitter!

Why did he chase after the middle-aged man by himself? It was for the sake of the purple gold... However, now, Teng Qingshan and Tian Dan had discovered the purple gold, meaning that he wouldn't be able to hog the purple gold. Unless...he could kill Teng Qingshan and Tian Dan.... But Bai Qi was well aware of Teng Qingshan's ability.

He would rather fight those four people ten times than fight Teng Qingshan once.

Not only had he not gotten the purple gold, he had also been poisoned.

Indeed, he tried to gain an advantage but ended up worse.

"Tsk, tsk! Lieutenant Bai Qi, Brother Tian Dan, this pouch of purple gold weigh at least ten Jin. It might even weigh more than ten Jin." Teng Qingshan lifted the pouch and said. The purple gold weighed much heavier than gold. This was why the legendary the Heavenly Emperor of the Qin Mountains had ton forge his Heavenly Sword with over a hundred Jin of purple gold.

Normally, a sword would just weigh a few Jin.

However, the Heavenly Sword weighed over a hundred Jin.

And so, it made sense for such a small pouch of purple gold to weigh ten Jin.

"Ten Jin of purple gold?" Tian Dan said, "That would be 1000 Jin of gold, which would be one million taels of silver! What a huge amount of wealth! Gui Yuan Sect had been extracting the purple gold mining site for a month, but the total amount of purple gold found was only around a dozen Jin. These people really have the means. They actually managed to steal ten Jin without being discovered."

Gui Yuan Sect wouldn't be able to notice if they hid one Jin of purple gold every month.

After all, it was impossible to extract the same amount of purple gold every month.

"Ten Jin!" Bai Qi felt his heart ached even more. The wage of the Lieutenant was high. He would receive one thousand silver taels every month. However, he still had food and beverage expenses. Therefore, he was only able to save 3000-5000 silver taels each year. Even a hundred years wouldn't be enough for him to save one million silver taels!

"Lord!"

"Lord, what happened here?" The few soldiers came and asked respectfully.

"Honorable Lieutenant, can you still walk?" Tian Dan asked worriedly.

"You two." Bai Qi pointed at the two soldiers and commanded, "Help me climb up the mountain."

Although the two soldiers felt unwilling, they could only obey the orders and support Bai Qi."

Teng Qingshan cast a glance at Bai Qi. Bai Qi looked extremely pale and seemed to be in pain.

He had only walked for twenty Zhang when he suddenly shouted, "Put me down! Now!"

The two soldiers were stunned.

"F*ck off." Bai Qi was so worried that he waved his right hand and sent the two soldiers flying to the side. He immediately sat down and tore his right pant leg apart.

Slash!

He tore his pants.

"What!" When Teng Qingshan and Bai Qi saw, their facial expression changed. Bai Qi entire right leg was swelling and had turned black.

"What is this poison?" Tian Dan shouted in shock.

"I didn't expect the poison to be this ruthless." Bai Qi thought he could rely on his inner strength to stop the poison from spreading, but he didn't know that blocking his acupuncture points and tying his leg and arm with cloth only slowed down the spreading of the poison. It couldn't stop the poison from spreading. "Tian Dan, Teng Qingshan, do you two know what poison this is? And the method of detoxification?" Bai Qi asked anxiously.

Tian Dan shook his head.

Teng Qingshan shook his head as well.

Teng Qingshan had no fear of poison.

Because Teng Qingshan cultivated the 'core,' which is the control of the body, he was able to control the flows of the Qi and blood as well as the beating of the heart. He could do this in his previous life. In this life, the control of his body became even stronger. He could control his muscle, skin membrane, bones, internal organs, etcetera. He could make himself taller or shorter within an instant.

It was to the point that he could control the major part of the body and stop the blood from flowing temporarily.

The spreading of the poison relied on the flowing blood. If the blood stopped flowing, the poison naturally couldn't spread to the other parts of the body. This was also the reason why the SS-ranked experts in his previous world were terrifying. Although the inner strength experts were powerful, they relied on inner strength, which resulted in weak controls of the muscle and bones. They couldn't control their muscles and bones, not to mention the flow of blood.

...

Even though Teng Qingshan wasn't afraid, he couldn't help anyone.

"Lord, the poison is spreading faster and faster." Tian Dan said anxiously as he saw the blackened area moving up from the thigh to the stomach. As Tian saw this, he could feel his heart palpitating.

Bai Qi shouted, "Do any of you have a saber?"

"No."

"I have a dagger." A guard responded.

"Give it to me." Bai Qi immediately took the dagger from the guard's hands and slashed a long wound on his thigh. Immediately,

the black-colored blood gushed out of the wounds.

Bai Qi immediately began cursing, "It's completely numb. What poison is this? Letting the blood out doesn't help at all." Bai Qi could distinctly sense that the poison was spreading further away. When the poison reached the vital points, it would be the end of his life. Upon this realization, Bai Qi trembled and cold drops of perspiration covered his forehead.

Chi!

His clothes were torn too. His left arm was swelling and turning black.

"What should I do? What should I do? I can't die! I can't die!" Bai Qi was so worried that his entire body was trembling. Cold drops of perspiration covered his forehead.

"Lord Lieutenant, if you continue to hesitate, it will be too late." Tian Dan said.

Suddenly, Bai Qi thought about something. He looked at the black swelling leg and left arm, and gnashed his teeth as he waved his dagger forcefully.

Puchi! Puchi!

He cut off his thigh and left arm!

Blood gushed out from the wounds.

"Ah!" Bai Qi emitted such painful cries.

Chapter 106: A thorough investigation

Bai Qi's entire thigh and left arm had been chopped off. Even though Bai Qi had sealed his meridians, blood still kept flowing from his wounds.

Bai Qi's face was pale white as his eyes gradually became dim.

"Quick, quick. Help me stop the bleeding. Quick!" Bai Qi hastily said with a weak voice.

Tian Dan, who was on the side, became worried and immediately stooped down to rip Bai Qi's already torn outer garment into strips of cloth, tying the severed limbs tight. Since one of his thighs had been chopped off directly, sealing the meridians wasn't very effective at slowing down the blood loss. If the bleeding continued, he could die due to the blood loss.

The wounds on his right thigh and left arm had stopped bleeding.

Bai Qi's lips were pallid, and his face was ashen and bloodless. His eyes had dimmed, and he seemed to have begun to doze off.

"Quick, carry the lieutenant up the mountain!" Teng Qingshan commanded the soldiers loudly, "And you two! Go to Huafeng City by horse and find the best doctor in Huafeng City! Quick!"

"Yes, My Lord!"

These soldiers were also shocked, as the Lord Lieutenant was the leader of the battalion of the Black Armored Army here. Immediately, two soldiers ran towards the place that held the war horses, while the other soldiers helped carry Bai Qi as they ran up the mountain.

Teng Qingshan and Tian Dan followed behind them.

Tian Dan still had a shocked expression as he turned to look at Teng Qingshan, saying, "Brother Qingshan, our fun has turned into something bad!"

“Indeed!” Teng Qingshan nodded in response.

If Teng Qingshan and Tian Dan had shown up in the first place, and scared those people away, everything would’ve been fine. In actuality, both Teng Qingshan and Tian Dan had wanted to see Bai Qi suffer a loss, but when they saw Bai Qi start to gain the upper hand, they’d felt displeased. However, who would’ve thought that the moment that they turned their heads away, Bai Qi would get done in.

“We’re not the ones to be blamed! We didn’t have any thoughts of harming him. Who could’ve known that the young fellow actually had such a ruthless concealed weapon! If something has to be blamed, then Bai Qi’s bad luck should be to blame!” Tian Dan said with a sneer.

Out of the people who ventured around this world, none of them could be considered cowards.

“Brother Qingshan, the things that we saw secretly... it’d be better if we didn’t tell anyone. Although it’s not a big thing, it would still cause an endless amount of trouble if it was investigated.”

Teng Qingshan nodded and said with a smile, “Don’t worry, I won’t look for trouble.”

For a lieutenant of the Black Armored Army to end up this way, the Gui Yuan Sect definitely wouldn’t let it go easily.

“If you and I don’t tell, no one will know,” Tian Dan chuckled and said, “To be honest, I, your brother, felt really great when I saw Bai Qi having this day! Haha. In the past, I saw him abuse his power, but even he himself would never have expected this day to come! Hehe. He brought this upon himself, and no one else is to be blamed.”

Teng Qingshan looked up the mountain road at Bai Qi who was being carried on a soldier’s back. Originally, Teng Qingshan had

never liked Bai Qi.

“His whole life is ruined!” Teng Qingshan said indifferently.

“With one leg gone, he won’t be able to walk, and one of his arms was severed too. It’s ruined! It’s the end for him.” Tian Dan stared at the bag of purple gold in Teng Qingshan’s hand and laughed, “But who can he blame? It was obvious that Bai Qi wanted this bag of purple gold, thus, he acted in secret so that he could take this bag of purple gold for himself. He tried to steal a chicken but ended up losing the rice used to lure it. Even if his life is ruined, he can’t blame anyone!”

Teng Qingshan cast a glance at the bag of purple gold in his hand.

“Riches excite the greed inside of men.” Teng Qingshan knew clearly about the power of money. In his previous life, many hitmen of the Underground World had killed people because they had accepted the request for the money.

Money and authority had possessed endless power since ancient times.

……

When the soldiers carried the disabled and unconscious Bai Qi up the mountain, the whole mining area became filled with agitation, and all the black armored soldiers were shocked.

From afar, the captain of the Huafeng City Guards, Hu Tong, stared at the black armored soldiers carrying Bai Qi away. His facial expression looked ghastly as he said to himself, “I knew it! Nothing good would happen when that Bai Qi followed. As expected! That Dong Yan is really ruthless, such that even Bai Qi lost to him!”

“Now we’re in trouble, big trouble!”

At the mining area, Hu Tong’s forehead was dripping with sweat while his mind was in chaos.

Bai Qi's leg and arm were severed! It was all over! The Gui Yuan Sect definitely wouldn't let it go easily! Once the investigation started..... During that time, Bai Qi had followed Dong Yan's subordinate down the mountain, and had also seen Hu Tong doing the body check. "He probably knows that I was bribed!" Hu Tong was extremely nervous.

The mining area was a place that the Gui Yuan Sect valued greatly.

Whoever dared to be bribed would be sentenced to death if discovered!

"No, Bai Qi might not have noticed that it was me who searched the middle-aged man. Maybe he won't get me into trouble." Drops of sweat dripped down Hu Tong's forehead, but he himself didn't notice it.

At this moment, he still felt unwilling, unwilling that he himself would just end this way, and a sense of hope existed within his heart.

He gnashed his teeth and spoke!

"It's alright if I lose this position, my life is more important. Whatever! I'll prepare first! I'll go back to Huafeng City first, and watch how the situation goes before I do anything!" Hu Tong had already made up his mind secretly.

In the mining area, outside Bai Qi's residence, the five centurions had gathered together.

"Lieutenant Bai Qi fell to this state, what should we do now?" Shorty Liu He was slightly nervous as he spoke, "The lieutenant of this mining garrison. If our superiors blamed us...!"

"Hmph, Sovereign and the others aren't that foolish." The lanky Wan Fanxiang narrowed his eyes and sneered, "We all know the whole course of the incident. It's just Bai Qi himself coveting riches, thus, who can he blame? Don't even mention being

disabled, he can only accept it — even if he had died!”

At this moment, Wan Fanxiang was entirely looking down upon Bai Qi.

Because of his status of “Lieutenant, ” Bai Qi was respected by everyone in the past, but now that he’d become disabled, it wouldn’t be possible for him to be lieutenant. Naturally, some people already had no regards for Bai Qi in their hearts.

“Why talk about these useless things.” Tian Dan yelled, “There’re three things we need to do now. First, get a doctor for Lieutenant Bai Qi. Second, so much purple gold was found — how was it smuggled out? Third, spread this news to the Jiangning County City, and have the commanders and the Sovereign decide!”

Du Hong and Teng Qingshan also agreed with what Tian Dan said.

“We’ve asked for a doctor!” Du Hong said clearly, “How’s this? I’ll bring some men with me back to the Jiangning County City, and tell the commanders this news personally.”

“Yeah! We will trouble you with this then.” Tian Dan nodded.

Teng Qingshan and the others immediately divided the work. Du Hong personally led over a dozen black armored soldiers, and rode towards Jiangning County City at full speed. Teng Qingshan and the other four centurions began the serious investigation on how the purple gold was smuggled out.

A thorough investigation!

……

Teng Qingshan, Tian Dan, and the other three centurions were together.

“Have your men found any useful information?” Teng Qingshan looked towards the other three as he asked, “I’ve got nothing here!”

“No!” Tian Dan shook his head.

“We couldn’t find anything.” Wan Fanxiang and Liu He also shook their heads. Wan Fanxiang cursed, “Those motherf*ckers used some clever methods! The purple gold mining area was very heavily-guarded, yet they were actually able to take ten Jin of purple gold out. How did they smuggle it out!”

Tian Dan spoke, “We only know a little information right now. The dead man is called Old Li San, and works at the second mining area to the south. He worked at the gold mining area, so how did he get purple gold?”

Hearing this question, Teng Qingshan’s brow also furrowed.

It was impossible for the workers of the purple gold mining area to get into contact with the workers of the other four mining areas. Even their living regions were separated so that it was impossible to meet each other.

“There are two possibilities.” Teng Qingshan said as he furrowed his brow, “Firstly, there’s a traitor among the one hundred black armored soldiers guarding. He secretly obtained the purple gold and thought of a way to give it to Old Li San! However, the black armored soldiers guarding the purple gold mining area aren’t allowed to leave their own region; they’re also under the strictest control. Therefore, the probability of a traitor among them isn’t high!

Of the guards at the five great mining areas, the guards at the purple gold mining area were the unluckiest ones.

Teng Qingshan was finally experiencing it. Among the five centurions, he himself was the one under the greatest pressure!

Because, during this case of Bai Qi being disabled, the most serious thing wasn’t Bai Qi being disabled — but the 10 Jin of purple gold that was taken out!

Ten Jin of purple gold was one million silver taels! And this was a

huge amount of money!

Bai Qi was nothing to the Gui Yuan Sect, since there were numerous Postliminary Experts, thus, Bai Qi's life wasn't worth one million silver taels!

"10 Jin of purple gold were stolen this time, and another 10 Jin could be stolen next time!" Teng Qingshan said solemnly, "The Gui Yuan Sect definitely won't allow this kind of thing to happen! Bai Qi being disabled is something small, but the purple gold being stolen and smuggled out is a big thing. We must find out the way that the purple gold was smuggled out. If we don't……we won't be able to live a smooth and steady life."

The other three centurions nodded.

The Tielian Mountain gold mine was the Gui Yuan Sect's precious treasure. Even Qing Hu Island and the other forces were jealous, and the Gui Yuan Sect protected this treasure with all of its effort.

Now someone actually had the audacity to steal purple gold — how could the Gui Yuan Sect tolerate this?

"Brother Qingshan, you just said that there were two possibilities as to how the Purple Gold was smuggled out. The first possibility was a traitor amongst the Black Armored Soldiers, what about the other one?" Tian Dan asked.

Teng Qingshan gazed at the mine cave in the distance, "Mining caves are deep and serene. The miners will dig downwards with all their effort in order to extract purple gold! As years have passed, many kinds of tunnels must exist within the cave. I'm guessing… is it possible that an underground area that connects the purple gold mining area and gold mining area was dug through, causing the workers of the purple gold mining area and the gold mining area to meet."

Tian Dan and Wan Fanxiang froze.

However, Liu He shook his head and said, “Brother Qingshan, don’t the guards here inspect quite often? The guards and black armored soldiers of the gold mining area will head down to inspect. If the two areas were connected, it should’ve been found.”

“It could’ve been connected, but sealed off again. “ Teng Qingshan spoke, “This isn’t impossible.”

In the depth of Teng Qingshan’s heart, he couldn’t believe that one of the soldiers under him was a traitor because of the strict discipline of the Gui Yuan Sect. Also, once they were discovered it would bring unbearable consequences.

“Investigate. We can only investigate with all of our effort.” Tian Dan said.

“It’ll be fine if we just do our best. If we can’t find anything, there’s nothing we can do.

“Lords, Lord Lieutenant is awake! ” Suddenly, the black armored soldier taking care of Bai Qi dashed towards Teng Qingshan and the others.

“Awake?” Teng Qingshan and the other three immediately stood up.

“Ask Bai Qi. He must know something.” Tian Dan said, “Otherwise, why would he pursue and kill that Old Li San.”

The four centurions immediately ran towards Bai Qi’s residence.

Chapter 107: The arrival of Ji Hong

Precisely at noon.

Teng Qingshan and the other three people entered Bai Qi's residence. The instant Teng Qingshan stepped into the room, he could smell a faint scent of blood and herbs. Although the doctor had not arrived, as there were so many guards and soldiers in the mining area, there were obviously people who knew of some simple treatments and so some simple treatments were done to Bai Qi first.

Fortunately, Bai Qi's inner strength was rich, and he woke up after being unconscious for five to six hours.

"Lord Lieutenant!" Tian Dan gestured and said, "Old Du has already led people to Jiangning County City personally to pass the news to the sect."

Bai Qi's pale white face was extremely gloomy, his eyes were even more sinister and he no longer had the suaveness that he once possessed.

"Have you found the identity of the culprit that fought with me?" Bai Qi said coldly.

"Er……no. Brother Qingshan and I didn't know those people and the others didn't see it." Tian Dan gestured and said.

"Useless!" Sitting on the bed, Bai Qi straightened his back suddenly and scolded furiously, "If you two don't know those people, you two don't know how to draw? Get drawings out and find them for me! Find that fellow, the silver-haired man and the fatties! Quickly go and find them for me! Catch them!"

It was as if flames were shooting out of Bai Qi's eyes and he himself was almost insane.

Useless?

Tian Dan's face turned cold and he cast a glance at Bai Qi, yet he endured it and remained silent.

Disdain flashed across the eyes of Wan Fanxiang and the others. In the past, Bai Qi's relationship with others was bad. Now that he had become disabled, could he still act like a lieutenant?

Bai Qi scanned the four people before him and the anger within his heart grew. Hatred harbored in his heart as he thought to himself, "These bastards! They see that I am disabled and all look down on me!" Although he felt this hatred, Bai Qi didn't dare to go overboard, because he knew clearly that……a disabled person like himself definitely wouldn't be able to be lieutenant anymore and he would be alone in the future. If he offended the four people before him, they could easily torture him in the future.

"Lord Lieutenant," Teng Qingshan opened his mouth and spoke, "Regarding the investigation of the culprit's identity, of course we will look into it! However, the most important thing now is learning how this purple gold was smuggled out! I wonder if Lord Lieutenant has any news regarding this."

Bai Qi's eyes brightened and he immediately shouted, "Go, quickly go and catch that Hu Tong for me! It was him! He was the traitor!!!"

The piercing sound boomed in the room, surprising Teng Qingshan and the others.

"Hu Tong?" Teng Qingshan and the other three centurions froze. The captain of the Huafeng City guards who was good at flattering?

"Let's go." Tian Dan was the first to turn and walk out of the room and Teng Qingshan and the others hastily followed.

Immediately, Bai Qi was the left in the room with a black armored soldier that took care of him. A fierce glow flashed in Bai Qi's eyes and he stared at the soldier beside him as he yelled, "You!

Get out!”

That soldier was shocked and ran out of the room quickly.

Bai Qi sat on the bed and pushed back the covers to look at the well-bandaged severed limbs. Without making any sounds, tears flowed down his face as he thought to himself, “My.. my leg... My hand.....” Bai Qi’s whole body was trembling and millions of thoughts surged across his mind instantly. He seemed to have seen the dark nightmare-like days in the future.

“It’s the end! It’s the end for me!”

Bai Qi actually lowered his head and began sobbing. After a long while, he suddenly raised his head and a fierce, psychotic glow flashed within his eyes.

“I must kill that bastard who shot the concealed weapon! I must! And that Hu Tong! It was him that let the worker go!” At this moment, Bai Qi even hated Hu Tong. He said to himself, “Tian Dan, Teng Qingshan and the other centurions, all of them look down upon me now!”

Bai Qi wanted revenge, but he didn’t feel that he had the power to get revenge!

“Ahhhhh!!!” Bai Qi raised his head and roared painfully and furiously.

Suddenly, Bai Qi felt dizzy and collapsed helplessly onto the bed again. He had lost too much blood and just regained consciousness. Now, his emotions were unstable and he had even roared crazily, so his body naturally couldn’t withstand it. He went into a comatose state once again.

Teng Qingshan and the other four centurions were worried that Hu Tong would ignore the command of the black armored soldiers, therefore, the four centurions personally went to Hu Tong’s residence.

“My Lords, Lord Hu Tong returned to Huafeng City in a hurry

this morning. He said that he knows a famous doctor in Huafeng City and he is going to invite that famous doctor here for Lord Lieutenant." Facing Teng Qingshan and the other three centurions, a soldier said frightfully.

Teng Qingshan and the other three centurions casted a glance at each other.

"Let's go." Tian Dan let out a sigh and turned his head.

"As expected, that Hu Tong is the traitor," Wan Fanxiang sneered coldly and said, "However, that Hu Tong is rather smart. He knew things would go badly the moment he saw Bai Qi crippled and fled."

"He left this morning ,and it's noon now. How is it possible for us to catch up with him." Liu He sighed.

Teng Qingshan shook his head and said, "Chasing after Hu Tong is impossible. It would be better to investigate on how the purple gold was lost for now."

"Yes. Check the depth of the mine cave at the purple gold mining area and see if there are any areas connected to the gold mining area. Investigate this carefully!"

……

The interrogation of the workers for the purple gold mining area began, and they were questioned one by one. If anyone could tell where the tunnel connected to the gold mining area was, there would be no punishment but rather a reward of one thousand silver taels!

However, none of the workers knew.

No answers were found from interrogations. The black armored soldiers could only begin inspecting the purple gold mining area carefully. Those ordinary guards also began to inspect the mine cave of the gold mining area. The whole mining area temporarily stopped mining. All the workers rested in their own residence.

……

All the black armored soldiers were busy, and even Teng Qingshan and the other centurions were extremely tired.

The sky soon darkened.

“Lords, the doctor is here! The doctor is here!” A soldier ran towards the centurions to notify them. Teng Qingshan recognized at a glance that this soldier was one of the two soldiers that he ordered to go fetch a doctor. Teng Qingshan immediately asked, “Where’s the doctor?”

“He went to the lieutenant’s residence.” The soldier answered.

“Let’s go and check it out.” Wan Fanxiang rose and walked towards Bai Qi’s residence with Teng Qingshan and the other centurions.

The moment they arrived outside the door, they heard cursing sounds resounding from within the house.

“Get lost! Get lost!” A white-haired elder was soon seen running out embarrassed. When the elder saw Teng Qingshan and the other three, he immediately cupped his hands and said, “My Lords.”

“How is he?” Teng Qingshan questioned.

The doctor immediately answered with respect, “The physical health of the lord is good, he is able to withstand this serious injury. He just needs recuperation and nourishment.” When it comes to the disabled ones, no matter how good the doctor was, not much could be done. They could at most help nurse the disabled patient back to health, but how was it possible for the severed limbs to grow back?

If it was the society of Teng Qingshan’s previous life, the toxicity could be completely cleared from the severed limb and reattached.

However, this was ancient times, not the technological society of

his previous world.

“Tian Dan! Liu He! You guys are outside, right! Get in here!” Bai Qi’s roars came from within the room. “Didn’t I tell you guys to catch Hu Tong? Where is he? AHH! You guys get in here now!”

“That Hu Tong had already fled and we couldn’t do anything. Lord Lieutenant, you are heavily injured and it is necessary for you to recuperate without being disturbed. It’s also not good for you to be angry.” Tian Dan said loudly. He then exchanged glances with the other people and immediately left.

The current Bai Qi was a psychopath. If they went in the room, they would definitely suffer greatly.

“You bastards!” Bai Qi was so angry that he started cursing.

Teng Qingshan and the other centurions glanced at each other without saying anything.

In the world, numerous people died in fights all the time. Some died for their family and clan, and their deaths might still be worthy of the sighs of others and their respect. But for someone like Bai Qi who suffered because of his greed for money, sympathy was not worth it.

……

It was nighttime and Tielian Mountain was very quiet.

In the spacious stone house, Teng Qingshan was sitting cross-legged on the bed. The flow of his blood was decelerating, his metabolism was slowing down and his heart rate dropped to an extremely slow speed.

Suddenly, dense footsteps sounds rang out.

“Eh?” Teng Qingshan opened his eyes.

“My Lord, My Lord.” A black armored soldier stormed in suddenly and yelled anxiously, “Lord Commander is here!”

“Lord Commander?” Teng Qingshan was surprised.

It was late at night now, and Centurion Du Hong only headed towards Jiangning County during the morning. No matter how fast he traveled, he could only arrive Jiangning County after noon. Yet, unexpectedly, the commander had already arrived during nighttime.

Whew!

Teng Qingshan immediately dashed out. He could already see the unclear figures in the distance. He ran towards the figures with rapid speed.

“Brother Qingshan, Lord Commander had already gone to Bai Qi’s residence.” Wan Fanxiang had just dressed and also ran simultaneously with Teng Qingshan. Teng Qingshan whispered, “Commander actually arrived so quickly. He traveled during the night! You can see that the sect viewed this case with great importance.”

“Yeah,” Wan Fanxiang hastily nodded as he spoke, “Qingshan, don’t shoulder all the responsibility later. The less trouble, the better.”

“I know.” Teng Qingshan nodded in response.

When Teng Qingshan and Wan Fanxiang arrived Bai Qi’s residence, the torches outside the house were brightly lit. At this moment, Tian Dan and Liu He were also running over from afar. The four centurions exchanged glances and walked into Bai Qi’s house.

“Lord Commander.” Teng Qingshan and the other three centurions bowed.

“Yes, you guys are here.” A silver-haired elder dressed in black cloak stood before the bed. Centurion Du Hong followed at the side. The silver-haired elder dressed in black cloak turned his head and glanced at the four centurions indifferently as he spoke, “During a short time of one month, something like this actually

happened! Also, who is the one responsible to guard the purple gold mining area!”

“It was I.” Teng Qingshan went one step forward and bowed.

The silver-haired elder dressed in black cloak narrowed his eyes as he exclaimed, “Teng Qingshan!”

Teng Qingshan had also heard of this lord. Among the four commanders, Ji Hong was the oldest. It was said that he was over one hundred years old and had the highest seniority. Even Sovereign Zhuge Yuanhong had to call him “Second Martial Uncle.” Since he was the number one commander, he was naturally the number one expert of the four great commanders.

You could say that Ji Hong was the number one figure of the entire Black Armored Army. He was the stabilizer of the Black Armored Army!

“I will question you later!” Ji Hong cast an indifferent glance at Teng Qingshan and scanned the other four centurions. He then yelled, “All five of you! Get out first! Without my orders, don’t come in. Keep this in mind and close the door!”

“Yes, Lord Commander.” The five centurions bowed, left the house and closed the door.

Outside the house.

“Brother Qingshan, you are in trouble this time. This Lord Commander of ours is a very fierce person,” Tian Dan whispered. The other three centurions also looked towards Teng Qingshan. They felt lucky that they had not been assigned to guard the purple gold mining area.

If it was guarded well with no problems occurring, that would be considered doing your duty without any rewards given.

However, if something went wrong, that would meant trouble.

Chapter 108: Striving for Self-Improvement

The smell of medicine spread throughout the room. Ji Hong stood there as straight as a spear.

“Sigh…” Ji Hong sighed deeply and glanced at the dejected and handicapped Bai Qi. “Bai Qi, you fool! Originally, with your talent and background, our Gui Yuan Sect would’ve groomed you well. I am also old and will not keep my position as commander for long. After a few years, my replacement would definitely be chosen from the three lieutenants under my command. Among the three, you do not lose out to the other two in terms of skill, and furthermore, you are the youngest as well.

“Of course, our Gui Yuan Sect would choose to nurture those with potential. With your strength and your capacity as a core disciple, it would not have been impossible to take on the commander position. But now….”

After hearing Ji Hong’s words of comfort and regret, a deep feeling of sorrow grew within Bai Qi.

His prospective and glorious prospect was now turning into a dark and miserable future.

“Grandmaster!” Tears overflowed from Bai Qi’s eyes, as he cried out painfully, “I can’t accept this. I really can’t accept this! Grandmaster, you have to avenge me!”

“Crying, you’re still crying!” Ji Hong reprimanded.

Bai Qi’s master was Ji Hong’s disciple. Of course, Ji Hong was more concerned for this disciple of his.

Bai Qi resisted letting the tears within him flow out, but the sorrow in his heart remained.

“What is the point of crying? Who can you blame?” Ji Hong was disappointed that Bai Qi did not live up to his expectations. “If only you hadn’t intended to keep the purple gold to yourself……”

“Grandmaster, I... I intended to snatch the gold back for the Gui Yuan Sect.” said Bai Qi.

“You still make excuses!” Ji Hong’s face turned cold. “If it was within the mining area, why would you need to go through the trouble of following that hardworking laborer? When he was on the mountain and Hu Tong was searching that person, you could have ordered someone to search and expose the hardworking laborer. Why would you follow him for so long and only take action when he reached the foot of the mountain? There are five hundred members of the Black Armored Army awaiting your orders! Even if it wasn’t just three or four First Rated Warriors, even if there were a hundred First Rated Warriors, facing the five hundred man troop of the Black Armored Army, they would have put their tails between their legs and fled!”

Bai Qi’s mouth twitched. Not another word came out of his mouth.

An astute person could tell with one glance what Bai Qi was doing. Now that Bai Qi was handicapped, he wanted to keep some of his reputation intact.

After seeing Bai Qi’s devastated state, Ji Hong did not continue further.

“You are also a warrior of the Black Armored Army. Didn’t you just lose a leg and an arm?” Ji Hong chided Bai Qi. “In the history of our Gui Yuan Sect, the late Grandmaster ‘Liu Tian Xue’ had also lost both his arms. But even with just a pair of legs, he still created the ‘Agile Snake Kick’ and spread his name across the world.”

Bai Qi clenched his teeth and swallowed back his words.

Grandmaster Liu Tian Xue had at least two legs, but he only had one.

“Hmph, get that horrible look off your face!” Ji Hong had a sharp gaze in his eyes. “Let me ask you, currently, who is third on

the«Earthly Ranking»?

Bai Qi jolted.

“Tang, Tang Han!” Bai Qi recalled his achievements.

“This Tang Han was also a renowned figure with huge potential. He has a towering figure amongst his generation and was listed in the«Hidden Dragon Ranking». When he was 21, all four of his limbs were crippled by his enemies! The tendons in Tang Han’s arms and legs were all torn apart, and he could only remained seated. He had not one ounce of strength left to defend himself! But he immersed himself in the art of concealed weapons, and studied meticulously for thirty years! When he showed himself to the world again, using only his unparalleled skills with concealed weapons, he annihilated over a hundred First Rated Warriors single-handedly!” Ji Hong remarked coldly. “Amongst the warriors in the Postliminary Realm, who has absolute confidence to defeat Tang Han? His mastery over the art of concealed weapons is profound. His«Falling Flowers of the Fairy»is a skill that even innate masters are wary against. If it weren’t for the fact that he became handicapped, restricting his mobility, it would not be impossible for him to clinch the top spot in the«Earthly Ranking»!”

There were countless Postliminary warriors across the Nine Prefectures?

There were seventy-two seats in the «Earthly Ranking». People were closely ranked and generally on par in terms of prowess. It all depended on their versatility in combat.

Bai Qi lowered his head.

True, Tang Han was in a much worse condition than he was. He could at least still exert power through his remaining arm and leg.

“I also hold Tang Han with great respect.” Ji Hong let out a deep sigh. “When he was crippled, what was the first thing that he did?”

“This……” Bai Qi flinched for a moment before he immediately

replied, “Get married!”

“Yes, when he became crippled, the first thing he did was get married. He has nine wives, eight sons, and six daughters!” Ji Hong spoke with a deep voice, “Back when Tang Han was deeply immersed in his studies of the art of concealed weapons, he concurrently taught his children! Which of his eight sons are not experts in the field of concealed weapons? At the mention of ‘The Eight Heroes of Tang’, who does not give a thumbs up? In this world, who dares offend the Tangs? The reason Tang Han spent so much effort in nurturing his children is because he considered that if his own efforts failed, he could still rely on his children in the future! In this world, if someone mentions Tang Han, who does not respect him? But you became so morose when you became crippled!”

When Bai Qi thought of Tang Han, a ball of fire also grew within him.

He thought of many possibilities.

But just within a few moments, he felt demoralised again, as he thought, “The art of concealed weapons is profound and boundless. Even Master Tang, with his aptitude, took thirty years to understand it. Will... Will... Will I be able to do it?”

Ji Hong cast a glance at Bai Qi and silently shook his head. This grand disciple of his had a smooth-sailing life and did not face any obstacles from a young age. Across the Nine Prefectures, with the daily amount of bloodshed, there were countless practitioners who were made cripples. Those who could rise from their handicap and make a name for themselves were rare, but those who could succeed all had great perseverance and determination.

“You haven’t even started and have already lost confidence. How could you ever succeed?” Ji Hong thought to himself.

“Grandmaster, do you think I.....” Bai Qi barely said anything before Ji Hong replied, “If you want to achieve great

accomplishments with your handicapped body, then you must seek self-improvement. As for the rest, you will have to slowly think for yourself. No one else can help you!" That being said, Ji Hong headed out of the room in big strides, leaving Bai Qi sitting on his bed in a daze.

***

Teng Qingshan and the four centurions gathered outside Bai Qi's room. Although it was late at night, the torches lit up the surroundings brightly.

"Creak!"

The door opened and Ji Hong walked out with a cool look.

" You guys follow me." Ji Hong shot a glance at the five and headed towards the front.

Teng Qingshan and the four centurions glanced at each other and quietly followed behind Ji Hong.

After walking for about a dozen Zhang, Ji Hong stopped in a dimly lit area.

"Teng Qingshan!" Ji Hong hollered.

"Commander." Teng Qingshan bowed slightly.

Ji Hong turned ferociously, looking in his direction. "Let me ask you. It has been one day since the purple gold was stolen. Have you found out how it was stolen?"

"Not yet." Teng Qingshan's answer was concise. He did not try to justify himself.

Looking at Teng Qingshan, Ji Hong silently nodded to himself. He hated those who tried to shift the blame when they encountered problems. He could not help but compare Teng Qingshan with his grand disciple 'Bai Qi' in his heart, as he shook his head to himself. He then coldly said, "The purple gold mine is of huge concern! Our Gui Yuan Sect, the Sovereign, and the elders

hold this case with high regard. I shall not punish you for your failure to guard the mine for now. But within ten days, you have to find out how the purple gold was stolen! The other four centurions, all of you shall assist Teng Qingshan!"

"Yes!" Teng Qingshan cupped his hands.

"Yes!" The other four centurions also bowed.

"If you find out the reason, then we will let the matter rest. If you cannot find it within the ten days..." Ji Hong's face darkened.

"Commander, please be assured. I will definitely find out the how the purple gold was stolen within ten days." Teng Qingshan firmly replied.

There were only a few methods for how the theft could have occurred. Regardless of traitors or a secret passage underground, there was one similarity. Among the hardworking laborers working in the purple gold mine, someone had to collect the purple gold. Therefore, there were definitely hardworking laborers who had lied when the soldiers of the Black Armored Army interrogated them. Normal soldiers would not be able to determine if someone was lying, but with Teng Qingshan's expertise in interrogating as an assassin in his past life, it would not be hard to tell.

With Teng Qingshan's methods, against these normal hardworking laborers, from their eyes and expressions, it would only take a few days to find out.

"Good!" Ji Hong laughed coldly. "I hope you are not just talking big!"

"Another thing." Ji Hong's eyes swept over the five. "The captain of the Huafeng city guards 'Hu Tong' worked with thieves from the outside! Has he been apprehended?"

"Commander, Hu Tong snuck away when the case blew up in the morning" Tian Dan spoke out.

“Commander, how shall we deal with Hu Tong?” Wan Fanxiang also inquired.

Ji Hong coldly replied, “The sect has always been stern with issues concerning the protection of the mines! Hu Tong worked with the thieves. Even if he is the captain of the city guards, it can’t protect him. Order the arrest of Hu Tong within Jiangning County City! Whoever can apprehend or kill Hu Tong will be awarded with a thousand taels of silver and a Human Class secret manual from our Gui Yuan Sect.

Kill Hu Tong?

Teng Qingshan sighed to himself. That Hu Tong was originally a captain of the city guards. But because of this case, he was to be executed without a chance to explain himself.

After all....

The purple gold was something the Gui Yuan Sect held in high regard. In addition, this time around, a lieutenant was crippled. Why would the Gui Yuan Sect show any mercy? They would rather kill the wrong person than let anyone escape. This was how the rules worked!

.....

When dawn arrived the next day, Teng Qingshan ordered the Black Armored Army to conscientiously comb through the purple gold mine. The other four centurions also assisted Teng Qingshan, sending their subordinates to help.

Within a short while, the whole mine was filled with chaos.

After combing the purple gold mine for three whole days, they did not find any secret passages nor discover any traitors. Teng Qingshan immediately started to interrogate the miners. Accumulating ten Jin of purple gold was not something a miner could accumulate alone. Therefore, Teng Qingshan’s first step was —-

To find out who helped gather the purple gold from other hardworking laborers to hand over the purple gold to the Black Armored Army together.

A quick search revealed fifteen people, who were all recognized ringleaders within the hardworking laborers. They would often gather all the purple gold to submit together.

From these fifteen people, it took Teng Qingshan only half a day to confirm that there were three suspects!

From there……

It would be too easy!

The Black Armored Army interrogated the suspects with verbal threats, specifically mentioning the use of torture instruments and such. The Black Armored Army only needed to put up an appearance, and immediately one suspect quickly confessed. After one hour of interrogation, the other two also quickly confessed.

After all, these three were just commoners, and they had not experienced any special training. How could they resist specialized interrogation?

It turned out, there was more than one way to smuggle the purple gold out.

They also discovered the method used to smuggle the ten Jin of purple gold. There was a very small secret passage, and it was usually covered up by minerals and such. In addition, the place was very deep and inconspicuous.

Furthermore, there were many deep passageways in the mines; therefore, the search party was not able to discover the passageway even after three days of searching.

Chapter 109: New Lieutenant

The five centurions gathered under the canopy of a short but extremely thick tree.

"Brother Qingshan, Commander gave you a time limit of ten days to conduct the investigation, while you used less than half the time he gave to find the truth. Commander probably won't be able to find any faults in you." Wan Fanxiang smiled and said. Du Hong, who was at the side, whispered, "Brother Wan, be quiet. If Commander hears this, you are screwed."

Wan Fanxiang immediately looked around and said with a smile, "What's there to be afraid of? No matter how strong the Commander, he is just an expert at the pinnacle of the Postliminary Realm. He won't be able to hear us if we are far enough. By the way, now that Bai Qi is disabled, who will be the new lieutenant of our battalion?"

"The new lieutenant?" Hearing this, the centurions all looked at each other.

Hearing this, Teng Qingshan felt his heart pounding.

"The new Lieutenant should be chosen among us!" Tian Dan said, "In terms of power, Teng Qingshan is ranked first! In terms of seniority, Du Hong is ranked first. However, the selection of Lieutenant is decided by the sect! The sect will elect the person who is loyal and can make them feel most assured."

The others nodded.

"Will they transfer a Centurion from another battalion to our battalion as the lieutenant?" Liu He asked softly.

"Bulls*it!" Wan Fanxiang cursed, "The new lieutenant must be someone in our battalion. If someone from another battalion was promoted, I would be the first to protest!"

"I would be against that too!" Tian Dan said.

Teng Qingshan said with a smile, "Don't worry, I am sure the sect won't act so recklessly. They would need to convince us as well.

"We five only joined the Black Armored Army after the examination." Du Hong said coldly, "In the sect, the core disciples are usually favored and the positions of lieutenant and commander are usually reserved for them! However, it was always a centurion in the battalion elected! I hope the sect won't treat us unfairly!"

Teng Qingshan noticed that there were some conflicts within the Black Armored Army.

The people that joined through the examination naturally formed a group and were slightly against the core disciples of the sect. As for the core disciples, they viewed themselves as superior and looked down on the outsiders. After all, there had been opposing sects planting spies in Black Armored Army.

If they chose one of us as the lieutenant, then that's fine. But if they did assign an inexperienced core disciple as the lieutenant... I will forget about it if that core disciple is truly capable, but I will secretly bully him to death if he isn't capable." Wan Fanxiang sneered and said.

"Don't say such things out loud." Liu He lowered his voice and sneered coldly.

As individuals who were able to become centurions, they naturally had their schemes and tricks.

Tian Dan glanced afar and suddenly whispered in shock, "The Commander is coming!"

Teng Qingshan looked into the distance and saw that Commander Ji Hong was striding towards them. Immediately, the five centurions became quiet.

"Commander!" The five bowed.

Ji Hong threw a glance at the five centurions and a rare smile appeared on his face. "Great! Teng Qingshan did very well this

time. He found a few loopholes in the management and security system of the purple gold mining site! Since the matter is now settled, it is time for me to leave. However, before I leave, there is a decision I should make."

Teng Qingshan and the other centurions could feel their hearts pounding.

"Bai Qi has lost his hand and leg, so he will definitely leave the Black Armored Army! Therefore, a new lieutenant must be selected for your battalion!" Ji Hong said.

Teng Qingshan and the other give felt extremely excited.

There were a total of twelve lieutenants in the entire Black Armored Army. One should know that the positions of the four commanders were extremely competitive. For example, whether it was the First Commander Ji Hong, the Second Commander Pang Shan, or the other Commanders, all four commanders were the core disciples of Gui Yuan Sect.

Of the four, Ji Hong was the Sovereign's second senior martial brother. He had extremely high seniority and had been the first commander for several dozen years.

As for Pang Shan, he was Zhuge Yuanhong's junior martial brother. He had also been a commander for several dozen years.

As for the Third Commander 'Zang Feng' and the Fourth Commander 'Guan Lu,' they were both Zhuge Yuanhong's disciples.

It was extremely difficult to get the position of commander!

However, there was still a small possibility of getting the position of lieutenant.

"The new lieutenant of your battalion was appointed by the Sovereign himself. I am here to give the order." Ji Hong said in an indifferent tone. Teng Qingshan and the other four centurions were filled with anticipation. Who did Sovereign Zhuge Yuanhong

appoint? Who did he appoint?

"From today onwards, the lieutenant of the third battalion in the first troop of the Black Armored Army will be..."

Ji Hong scanned the five before he said loudly, "Teng Qingshan!"

Teng Qingshan's eyes brightened. The others felt their hearts had sunk and they felt slightly helpless and bitter, but these feelings were soon replaced with relief and acceptance. According to the rules of the promotion in Gui Yuan Sect, if all candidates had the same level of power and strength, the youngest ones must be promoted. Take the Third commander Zang Feng and the Fourth commander Guan Lu as an example.

After all, younger people had greater potentials.

Teng Qingshan passed the examination and joined Gui Yuan Sect the same way they did. They have also developed a good relationship after several months of interaction. Moreover, Teng Qingshan's ability was undoubtedly powerful. As the other centurions thought about this, they accepted the decision made.

Teng Qingshan." Ji Hong looked towards Teng Qingshan.

"Lord." Teng Qingshan bowed.

"From today onwards, you will be the new lieutenant!" Ji Hong stared at Teng Qingshan as he said, "The Sovereign was the one that appointed you. Although I don't understand why Sovereign would appoint you, someone who has only joined the Black Armored Army for half-a-year, as the lieutenant, I will not disobey the Sovereign's command! You did a good job investigating the theft of the purple gold. I am satisfied... But do not disappoint me. I will still remove you if I discovered that you are unsuitable for this position.

"Qingshan will keep that in mind." Teng Qingshan bowed.

Ji Hong was known to be cold and fierce in the Black Armored Army. Even the third commander and the fourth commander had

been scolded by Ji Hong, not to mention Teng Qingshan.

"Mm." Ji Hong nodded and said, "I will give you the warhorses and heavy armor for the lieutenant when you are back in the sect! Alright, continue guarding here and go back when the time of three months is up. I will be taking Bai Qi back to Jiangning County City first. There is no need to escort me out with the all the men in your battalion."

Normally, it was required that all men of the battalion be present to escort the commander out.

However, this time, Teng Qingshan and the other centurions only led a few numbers of Black Armored Soldiers and escorted the commanders to the bottom of the mountain. They watched Commander Ji Hong gradually going farther and farther away with Bai Qi and the dozen elites.

After some time, Teng Qingshan and the others could no longer see Commander Ji Hong and his men, but could only see the dust flying up on the official road.

"Although Bai Qi is now disabled, he still has inner strength. Otherwise, how can he sit firmly on that galloping horse!" Wan Fanxiang smiled and said.

Bai Qi lost a leg, In order to help him cope with the speed of the galloping horse, his body was tied onto the saddle. As Bai Qi was an expert at the peak of the Postliminary Realm, he could sit still on a warhorse.

"Alright, let's head up the mountain." Teng Qingshan said.

"We never congratulated Teng Qingshan." Tian Dan said. The moment he said that—

"This subordinate pays his respect to our Lord, the Lieutenant!" Liu He suddenly bowed towards Teng Qingshan.

Tian Dan also bowed and said with a smile, "This subordinate pays his respect to our Lord, the Lieutenant." The other two

centurions also did the same.

"You guys.." Teng Qingshan burst into laughter, "There is no one but us here. Just call me Qingshan. Let's not follow those sick rules." Teng Qingshan knew the rules. During any formal occasions, his subordinates had to call him by the title of his position.

"We are brothers, but we still have to call you Lieutenant. We can't break this rule." Du Hong, at the side, laughed and said, "Brother Qingshan, you are able to reach the eighth stage of the <<Vigor of the Reckless Bull>> at such a young age. Your spear art is unique and spectacular. Your future prospect in the Black Armored Army is boundless!"

Tian Dan nodded and said, "Teng Qingshan might even become the commander in a few years!"

"That's even better! Currently, the four commanders are all core disciples. It is time to change that." Wan Fanxiang said as though he wished for chaos to occur in the sect.

"Qingshan, since you are the lieutenant, who should be the centurion of your group? How do you plan to choose? The commander said you are the one to choose." Tian Dan said, "Why don't we give the position to your cousin Teng Qinghu?"

As soon as Tian Dan said this, the other three frowned.

"We can't break the rules!" Teng Qingshan commanded, "Starting from tomorrow, the fifty sergeants will start competing and the winner will be the centurion!"

Make cousin the centurion?

Teng Qingshan had the right to do that, but one should know that the Black Armored Army recruit new members every six months and the weak centurions would be eliminated and demoted to the position of sergeant. Therefore, it's useless to help his cousin now. Cousin himself has to work hard!

"Considering cousin's strength, he should be very close to becoming a First Rated Warrior." Teng Qingshan thought to himself.

...

And so, the competition between the fifty sergeants began in the mining site on Tielian Mountain outside Huafeng City.

This was truly a competition of strength and power. Whether you win or lose, it all depended on one match. There was no second chance.

Teng Qinghu displayed an extraordinary splendor in the competition. After all, Teng Qinghu already did very well when he was going through the examination to join the sect. He had practiced Large Foundation Spear and could sense the approaching power and forces very easily. Moreover, his spear art was powerful! Since he joined the Black Armored Army, he cultivated the <<Vigor of the Reckless Bull>>. One should know that Teng Qinghu had practiced his tiger fist for many years.

The tiger fist was the Tiger Form of the twelve forms of the Xing Yi Martial Art.

Teng Qinghu had practiced the Tiger Fist for six-to-seven years and had cleared up two of his eight extraordinary meridians. Teng Qinghu had completed the third stage of the <<Vigor of the Reckless Bull>> and had started cultivating the fourth stage. Over the course of several months, Teng Qingshan had cleared up three meridians channels and had even begun clearing up the fourth meridian channel!

His cultivation of the nine stages would reach culmination when he had cleared up all eight extraordinary meridians.

Since Teng Qinghu had opened and cleared up three meridian channels, he had completed the cultivation of the fourth stage. And now, he had begun cultivating the fifth stage.

Teng Qingshan was well aware as he thought to himself, "Cousin is now cultivating the fifth stage. The total amount of instant explosive inner strength and the physical strength he possessed is about ten thousand Jin! However, the other meridians in his body contain impurities. If he continues to cultivate hastily and eagerly, the other meridians in his body will be pushed and suppressed, meaning that it will become more and more difficult to achieve a breakthrough!"

However, Teng Qingshan couldn't do anything.

If he had stopped his cousin from cultivating the <<Vigor of the Reckless Bull>>, Teng Qinghu wouldn't be able to reach the Grandmaster Realm even if he spent a time of twenty years. After all, the attainment of the Grandmaster Realm was too difficult.

Since there was nothing he could do, Teng Qingshan didn't stop cousin from cultivating the <<Vigor of the Reckless Bull>>.

...

During the competition, Teng Qinghu displayed an explosive power that was comparable to a First Rated Warrior. In addition, he had a fierce spear art that looked simple! And so, he made it to the last match. His opponent during the last match was a First Rated Warrior. As he had meticulous control of his muscles and other parts of the body and a fierce spear art, Teng Qinghu defeated the last opponent.

Eventually, Teng Qinghu became the new lieutenant!

"Under my guidance, Qinghu was able to display a great power with his simple-looking spear arts and method of sensing force. I am not surprised that he became the Centurion, but... the next recruitment is happening soon." Teng Qingshan thought to himself, "With cousin's ability, he might become one of the eight weakest centurions. If he was challenged again, he might be eliminated and become a sergeant again! Hmm... Starting tomorrow, I will teach him the <<Five Techniques of the Ardent

Flame>>!"

Teng Qingshan created the Five Techniques of the Ardent Flame by fusing techniques from the Ardent Flame Spear Art.

These five moves were even more powerful than Bai Qi's Nine Spears facing the Morning Sun.

Especially the strongest move, Legacy of the Ultimate Flame, its power was astonishing.

Once his cousin Teng Qinghu studied two or three techniques from Five Techniques of the Ardent Flame, it would be enough for him to keep the centurion position. If he managed to learn all five moves, his strength wouldn't be weaker than Bai Qi!

The <<Five Techniques of the Ardent Flame>> was the five techniques created after the fusion of the <<Ardent Flame Spear Art>>.

The five techniques were much more powerful than Bai Qi's <<Nine Spears facing the Morning Sun>>.

Of the five techniques, the strongest technique was the <<Legacy of the Ultimate Flame>> and this technique displayed an even more astonishing power.

If Teng Qinghu could learn even 20-30% of the <<Five Techniques of the Ardent Flame>>, he would be able to keep his position as the centurion. If he could complete the cultivation of the <<Five Techniques of the Ardent Flame>> and learn all five techniques, he would become stronger than Bai Qi!

Chapter 110: Master Liu San of the White Horse Gang

Early in the morning, Teng Qingshan and Teng Qinghu could be seen in a quiet place on the Tielian Mountain.

"Qingshan, what's up?" Recently, Teng Qinghu was flushed with success and felt very good about himself. He was the winner in the competition between the 50 sergeants, so he was naturally proud of himself.

Teng Qingshan wore a strict expression as he said, "Look at you! Have you forgotten that the recruitment is happening in June? By that time, the Black Armored Army will set up a competition to find the eight weakest centurions and have these eight centurions compete with the new First Rated Warriors for the position of Centurion."

Hearing this, Teng Qinghu froze. He rubbed his head and said with a grin, "Well, I will do what I can when that happens!"

"Catch." Teng Qingshan took out a book and threw it toward Qinghu.

"What is this?" Teng Qinghu caught the book and asked. He could tell that this book was made by binding several draft papers together. It wasn't printed. There were six large words on the white cover of this book—Five Techniques of the Ardent Flames!

Seeing this, Teng Qingshan was surprised and he hastily flipped through the book.

"Qingshan, this...this..." Teng Qinghu's eyes gleamed as he looked at Teng Qingshan joyously, "Qingshan, this is a spear art that coordinates with the inner strength? Where did you get this? If I can use my inner strength in coordination with the spear art, I will be able to display an even greater power. However, the cultivation of this spear art seems very complicated."

Suddenly, Teng Qingshan froze and stared at Teng Qingshan blankly. He then said, "Qingshan..is this Gui Yuan Sect's secret technique? The command of Gui Yuan Sect had stated you are not allowed to let others see the secret techniques that they gave to you! I can't learn this, Qingshan! If not, I would be breaking the sect rules!" With this, Qinghu threw the book back to Teng Qingshan.

"Rest assured. Do I look like the kind of person that doesn't know what I should and should not do?" Teng Qingshan smiled and threw the book back to Qinghu as he explained, "I am the creator of the <<Five Techniques of the Ardent Flame>>. Just learn. No harm will come to you."

"Qingshan, you created this?" Teng Qinghu asked with his eyes widened.

Teng Qingshan took out another book entitled <<Ardent Flame Spear Art>> and said, "This <<Ardent Flame Spear Art>> is the secret technique the sect had given to me. Actually, it would be better to learn this before you learn the <<Five Techniques of the Ardent Flame>>. However, I can't go against the sect rules. Moreover, with the recruitment happening so soon, there won't be enough time for you to learn both the <<Ardent Flame Spear Art>> and the <<Five Techniques of The Ardent Flame>>."

Gui Yuan Sect has extremely strict rules.

If Gui Yuan Sect had given someone a secret technique and this person distributed the secret technique to the entire world, Gui Yuan Sect would lose all the secret techniques. Therefore, only the person who received the technique could learn. If that person taught the technique to an outsider, then he or she will suffer serious consequences.

If it was a small offense that doesn't harm the sect much, then the punishment would be 12-18 months in prison. It would be a time of repentance for the offender.

If the offense would harm the sect greatly, such as the act of distributing a very important secret technique of the sect, the punishment could be the obliteration of one's martial arts or a death sentence.

However, Teng Qingshan had created the <<Five Techniques of the Ardent Flame>>, therefore, Gui Yuan Sect couldn't prohibit him from teaching others these techniques. In fact, if Gui Yuan Sect knew, they would try to include this secret technique in their collection of secret techniques. They would even reward the creator of the secret technique based on the power of the new technique.

"It is harder to learn the <<Five Techniques of the Ardent Flame>> now! But it wouldn't be a problem if I taught and guided you." Teng Qingshan was very confident as he said, "Your ability to sense the force and inner strength is quite skillful. You might even achieve 'One with the Spear' in a few years."

Teng Qingshan was able to attain 'One with the Spear' with ease when he was still young.

But that was because Teng Qingshan was already a Grandmaster in his previous life.

As for Teng Qinghu, if he wanted to achieve 'One with the Spear,' he would have to practice his Large Foundation Spear for a long time.

"Yes, Qingshan. I will do whatever you say." Teng Qingshan said with anticipation.

"Starting from today, you will spend one hour during the morning and one hour during the evening to learn this spear art." Teng Qingshan said.

"Yes, Teacher!" Teng Qinghu teased.

Teng Qingshan was the one who taught him the <<Crossing Worlds>> , the <<Five Techniques of the Ardent Flame>> , and the

Tiger Fist. Although Teng Qinghu and Teng Qingshan were cousins, their relationship was like that of a mentor and student. Age does not matter in the cultivation of martial arts. The first to make achievements would be the teacher.

"Practice seriously. Don't be the weakest centurions. If that happened, it would affect my reputation too." Teng Qingshan said.

"Don't worry, Qingshan. I won't embarrass you." Teng Qinghu said.

...

In the following days, Teng Qingshan taught meticulously and caringly. Because he was well aware of his Qinghu's ability, he was able to teach in line with Qinghu's ability. And so, Teng Qinghu improved greatly, which was not surprising at all.

Teng Qinghu had made some achievements in the cultivation of 'Inflamed Passion' and the 'Flashing Fire.'

As the 'Silver Flower of the Flaming Tree' and the 'Wildfire Flames' were too difficult, Teng Qingshan could only understand the two techniques partially. As for the most powerful technique 'Legacy of the Ultimate Flame,' Teng Qinghu understood nothing. After all, Teng Qingshan had applied his knowledge of the concept of dejection and spent the most time on the creation of this technique.

He couldn't understand the feeling of being on the verge of death and fighting to survive.

It couldn't be helped...

Teng Qinghu needed to have a better understanding of the concepts.

"Of the five techniques, the 'Inflamed Passion' is the fiercest technique, while Flashing Fire is the most cunning technique. With these two techniques, cousin will be above average among the centurions." Teng Qingshan was very certain as he said to

himself, "Now, I just need to wait for the competition among the Black Armored Army!"

...

Soon, three months passed and the Black Armored Soldiers were done guarding the mining site.

This evening.

"Brother Qingshan, Haha... My brother and I said that you have a boundless prospect. Look at you now! You became the Lieutenant within such a short time! If you don't mind, just see me as a brother!" Gui Qing, the City Lord of Huafeng City, said with a smile. Teng Qingshan really like the City Lord Gui Qing as the City Lord never showed any arrogance or pride.

Moreover, the City Lord Gui Qing was very good to him.

"Brother Gui, I was just lucky." Teng Qingshan said with a smile.

"The purple gold theft could be considered a miracle in disguise for you." Gui Qing said with a mysterious expression, "Did you find the identity of the person who crippled Bai Qi?"

"Eh, who?" Teng Qingshan asked dubiously. He never really investigated the identity of the murderer.

"He is a young and fierce bandit whose name is Dong Yan." Gui Qing sighed and said, "Among the commoners, Dong Yan isn't famous. However, he is well-known in the social circle of the wealthy merchants and gangs. He is a very vicious and merciless fellow. The people who fought against him and won still ended up being miserable.

Teng Qingshan could remember that young man very clearly.

When that young man's comrade was killed, that young man went after Bai Qi as though he had gone crazy. However, he suddenly unleashed a concealed weapon.

"I have only met him once." Teng Qingshan praised and said,

"However, he is such a sinister person! He might seem crazy, but that's just his disguise. Moreover, there are quite a few Fist Rated Warrior under his command. His concealed weapon is also very cruel. It is not good to provoke someone like him."

"Indeed. He poisoned and killed a wealthy merchant and his entire family when he was 12. He didn't even spare the guards. He is very ruthless and cunning. I heard that he fled to Xuyang County and joined a gang in Xuyang County." Gui Qing said, "I have a feeling that... In ten years, he will be an influential figure in Yangzhou! Just wait and see!"

Teng Qingshan was shocked.

Poisoning and killing an entire family when he was twelve. Dong Yan was indeed very fierce.

"Lieutenant!" A Black Armored Soldier whose responsibility was to keep a lookout ran over and said, "The next battalion of soldiers, who will be guarding the mining site, is about to arrive at the bottom of the mountain."

"Let's go and welcome them." Teng Qingshan said hastily.

Immediately, Lieutenant Teng Qingshan and the City Lord of Huafeng City descended the mountain.

Early in the morning, the City Lord of Huafeng City and the soldiers from the other battalion watched as Teng Qingshan left Tielian Mountain on horseback with his five hundred subordinates. They advanced vigorously toward Jiangning County!

When this battalion arrived at the mining site, Teng Qingshan was a Centurion and Teng Qinghu was the Sergeant. When this battalion left the mining site, Teng Qingshan was the Lieutenant and Teng Qinghu was the Centurion. Life was just full of secrets and wonders.

...

The Black Armored Soldiers galloped on the official road.

As a cloud of dust flew, the merchants, commoners, and bandits on the official road all rushed to the side, weary that they might block the Black Armored Soldiers.

Clop! Clop! Clop! The warhorses galloped.

They departed during the early morning. When the sun shone with a dazzling brightness, Teng Qingshan and his battalion of men had left the region of Huafeng City and had entered the region of Yi City.

"Stop!" Teng Qingshan commanded.

"Neigh~~~"

The trained Black Armored Soldiers immediately stopped in a very organized manner. The other Centurions quickly rushed to Teng Qingshan's side.

"Lord Lieutenant..." Tian Dan and the others looked at Teng Qingshan.

"Brother Tian, let's just split up temporarily. Qinghu and I are going home first! As for you and the other men, go rest and eat to the fullest in Yi City. I am sure the Lord of Yi City has prepared food and wine. Qinghu and I will meet you all in Yi City in the afternoon. We will then go back to Jiangning County!" Teng Qingshan explained.

Tian Dan and the others nodded.

When Teng Qingshan and Teng Qinghu were on their way to the mining site, they weren't able to go home because of Lieutenant Bai Qi. However, Teng Qingshan was now the Lieutenant, the highest-ranking leader of this battalion. Therefore, he could do what he wished to do.

"I can finally go home!" Teng Qinghu exclaimed joyously.

"Old Du, Brother Tian, and the other two Centurions, please take care of the soldiers while I am gone." Teng Qingshan instructed.

"Lord Lieutenant, please don't worry." The four Centurions laughed.

Teng Qingshan nodded slightly and stared at Teng Qinghu. "Qinghu, let's go!" With so many soldiers present, Teng Qingshan had to maintain his authority. Therefore, he called his Qinghu by his name instead of calling him cousin.

"Giddyup!""Giddyup!"

Teng Qingshan and Teng Qinghu rode the warhorses and galloped away. They soon disappeared from the view of the Black Armored Soldiers.

"Let's go." Tian Dan said.

Du Hong nodded and immediately said loudly, "Set off!"

Immediately, the Black Armored Soldiers departed toward Yi City in a grandiose manner. After galloping for one hour, they finally arrived in Yi City.

...

On the main road of Yi City, the vigorous Black Armored Soldiers advanced. The merchants, stall-keeper, passers-by all stepped to the side. None of them dared to trifle with these terrifying soldiers. On the road with many restaurants, the Yang He, the Lord of Yi City and his subordinates had come to welcome the Black Armored Army.

"City Lord!" A scar-faced man donned in embroidered gown said with a smile, "The new Lieutenant Teng Qingshan is from Yi City and he is my friend."

The scar-faced man was the Master Liu San. As the Great Master of the White Horse Gang, Master Liu San displayed an aura of elegance.

Those who knew about the stories of Master Liu San were well aware that Master Liu San was extremely ruthless.

"Haha, did you befriend him because he was strong?" The middle-aged man in a white garment laughed and said, "However, you are lucky. Teng Qingshan rose to the position of lieutenant when he had only joined the Black Armored Army for a short time. Moreover, it was the Sovereign who appointed Teng Qingshan as the Lieutenant. It seems like he is favored by the Sovereign of Gui Yuan Sect... As a young man, he really has boundless prospects. You are wise to befriend someone like him."

Master Liu San responded with a grin.

"Oh, the Black Armored Army has arrived. Let's go meet your friend Teng Qingshan." The Lord of Yi City laughed and said. Immediately Master Liu San and the CIty Lord went to welcome the Black Armored Army.

Chapter 111: Back Home

The five hundred black armored soldiers advanced vigorously and orderly on the main street of Yi City. The dense murderous aura they emitted silenced the terrified commoners and vendors in the surroundings. On the entire street, only the “Clop!” “Clop!” sound of the hooves could be heard. The Lord of Yi City personally led a troop of soldiers and when he saw the Black Armored Army from afar, he immediately moved forward to welcome them.

“Stop!” Du Hong commanded.

The entire Black Armored Army stopped simultaneously.

“Dismount!” Du Hong yelled. Along with the clashing sounds of heavy armor shards, the five hundred soldiers all dismounted.

“Haha, you all have finally arrived!” The Lord of Yi City, Yang Ke, greeted them.

“Lord Mayor!” Tian Dan and the other centurions at the forefront cupped their hands and said.

“Where’s your lieutenant?” Yang Ke asked suspiciously.

Du Hong lowered his voice and replied, “Lord Mayor, our Lord Lieutenant temporarily separated himself from us. He went back to his hometown.” Hearing this, Yang Ke suddenly realized and nodded his head while saying with a smile, “Qingshan is a citizen of Yi City. Yes, he should go home and visit his family. Alright, everyone is tired after the trip, so let’s hurry up to eat and rest. As for the war horses, just hand them over to us, and we will care for them.”

“Thank you, Lord Mayor.”

Immediately, the five hundred soldiers separated into the four restaurants.

“You heard the rumor, right?” Yang Ke glanced at Liu San who

was beside him and said, “Teng Qingshan went back to his hometown! Although you can’t meet Teng Qingshan, you should get to know the other centurions. This will bring no harm to you, only benefits.”

“Yes.” Liu San smiled and responded, but he still felt a slight disappointment in the depth of his heart. He then thought to himself, “I’ve heard that Brother Teng Qingshan became a lieutenant, but I didn’t expect that I wouldn’t get to see him! I don’t know how long I’ll have to wait to have another chance to see Teng Qingshan.”

……

At this time, Teng Qingshan and Teng Qinghu were riding on their horses. Wherever they passed, they kicked up dust and dirt.

“Qingshan, look.” Teng Qinghu was so happy as he pointed towards a distant location.

Teng Qingshan gazed afar at the slightly blurry village. That was the Teng Jia Village in which he himself had lived for over ten years.

“We’ve finally arrived!” Teng Qingshan couldn’t contain the joy in his heart. “Less than six months have passed, and I already miss my home this much!” Teng Qingshan was slightly surprised when a sense of satisfaction filled his heart. In his previous life, he had no home, but in this life, he had parents, a sister, and many clan members that cared about him.

His roots were here!

“We’re back!” Teng Qinghu began shouting excitedly while they were still far off, “Open the gate! Open the gate!”

……

Teng Jia Village was still the same as before; it was peaceful and calm. The two clansmen guarding the gate looked perplexedly in the distance at the two horsemen galloping towards them at a

shockingly fast speed.

“Cavalrymen? Mounted bandits? From where? But there’s only two.”

“They seem to be wearing heavy armor! Even their horses are dressed in heavy armor. They don’t seem like normal mounted bandits.”

The clansmen guarding the gate were very puzzled.

At this moment——”We’re back! Open the gate! Open the gate!” The two clansmen guarding the gate heard a familiar voice. They froze for a second and hastily looked out carefully. The war horses had already approached the gate. The two clansmen exclaimed, “This is… Ah! It’s Qinghu and Qingshan! Quick! Open the gate.”

“Qingshan is back!”

“Qinghu is back!”

The booming and excited voices resounded throughout the entire training field.

Immediately, many clan members from the training field of Teng Jia Village rushed towards the gate.

“Haha! Second Uncle! Uncle Lian!” Teng Qingshan dismounted from his horse and unequipped his helmet before he began greeting the clan members around him.

The large group of clan members all surrounded Teng Qingshan and Teng Qinghu.

“Oh, Qingshan is back. Tsk, tsk, is this the heavy armor of the Black Armored Army?”

“Qinghu, what kind of horse is this? Its coat is all black.”

The entire training field was extremely excited.

“Yongfan, your son, Qingshan, is back!”

“Sister Lan, Qingshan is back!”

The shouts quickly spread across the entire Teng Jia Village. Yuan Lan and Qingyu were cooking when heard the shouts. They threw their spatulas away and dashed towards the training field, forgetting about the food. They even asked as they ran, “Is my son, Teng Qingshan, really back?”

They ran all the way without stopping!

When Yuan Lan and Qingyu arrived at the training field, they saw Teng Qingshan dressed in Hematite Heavy Armor from a distance. Teng Qingshan turned his head and also saw his mother and sister.

“Mother!” Teng Qingshan couldn’t help but scream.

His mother Yuan Lan acted unperturbed, but his sister Qingyu rushed into Teng Qingshan’s arms. “Brother!” She shouted, and her eyes immediately reddened.

“Little Yu, don’t cry, don’t cry.” Teng Qingshan quickly comforted her.

“Mm, I missed you brother, so much.” Qingyu looked up at her brother. She grew up under the love and care of Teng Qingshan. She really wasn’t used to Teng Qingshan’s absence these past six months.

“Qinghu, Qinghu!”

Teng Qingshan turned around and saw Chief Teng Yunlong and his father, Teng Yongfan, walking towards him. Teng Yunlong glanced at Teng Qingshan and Teng Qinghu and smiled. “It’s good you guys are back! Qingshan, you did well. Half a year hasn’t even passed, and you are already the lieutenant of the Black Armored Army. The entire Teng Jia Village is honored!”

“Qingshan, you did well.” Teng Yongfan also patted Teng Qingshan’s shoulder.

“Grandfather, father... How.. how did you guys know?” Teng Qingshan was slightly surprised. How did Teng Jia Village find out

that he had become a lieutenant?

“Li Er hereby greets Lord Lieutenant.” A fatty with a bulging stomach and a jade ring worn on his finger bowed as he smiled.

“Uncle Li Er.” Teng Qingshan also greeted him with a smile.

Li Er was a small leader of some big merchant guild. Normally, Teng Jia Village bought ores and other materials from Li Er. Teng Yunlong, who was beside him, smiled and said, “Qingshan, Li Er just told us this news. During the business we conducted with him just now, he only accepted eighty percent of the payment. He gave us a twenty percent discount.”

“This was our master’s order. He said that Teng Jia Village gets a twenty percent discount when they buy materials from us in the future.” Li Er said with a smile.

“And your master is?” Until this point, Teng Qingshan still didn’t know this master’s identity.

Li Er answered, “My master lives in Jiangning County! With the surname, Lan, and the name, Shanhu!”

Hearing the answer, Teng Qingshan nodded.

Lan Shanhu was willing to give him face, so he would remember and help Lan Shanhu if he could in the future.

“Hehe, then I won’t trouble you any further!” Li Er bowed slightly and left with the merchant guild’s men.

“It’s rare for Qingshan and Qinghu to come back! Also, a lieutenant of the Black Armored Army is from our Teng Jia Village! This is something that glorifies our clan and ancestors! Prepare to set up banquet!” Teng Yunlong laughed as he said, “Qingshan, Qinghu, we did not prepare the banquet beforehand. You will have to wait two to four hours. By the time it is prepared, please drink with the clan members.”

Teng Qinghu looked towards Teng Qingshan.

“Grandfather, Qinghu and I can only eat lunch at home. We must depart for Jiangning County City later.” Teng Qingshan hastily said, “Thus, there’s no need to set up a banquet.”

“Ah? Leaving after lunch?”

The people in the surrounding were slightly surprised.

Teng Yunlong nodded as he smiled. “The Black Armored Army is busy with military affairs. Qingshan is the lieutenant now! Everyone, let’s not disturb Teng Qingshan. We shouldn’t distract Qingshan from his important business. Alright. Qingshan and Qinghu, you two go home first and spend some time with your parents!”

……

In Teng Qingshan’s house.

There was no one else aside from Teng Qingshan and his family.

“Qingshan, eat!” Yuan Lan said as she placed some food in Teng Qingshan’s bowl.

“Mother, enough, enough.” Teng Qingshan said. He then glanced at his mother, his father who was by his side, and his lovely sister. Warmth flowed into his heart.

“Qingshan, when is the next time you are coming back?” Teng Yongfan asked.

“I might be able to return by the end of the year and stay a few days.” Being on duty in the Black Armored Army, it was hard for Teng Qingshan to leave. Only the high ranked officers could have a short holiday. The higher the rank, the longer the holiday. If a lieutenant wanted to return home temporarily to visit family, he still needed to ask the Lord Commander for permission.

As for the commanders, it was easy for them.

Because commanders had very few things to do, they had more free time.

“By the end of the year…” Qingyu was slightly disappointed.

“Father, Mother, Qingyu is a grownup now. You must have received many proposals from different families, right? Has Little Yu found anyone she likes?” Teng Qingshan chuckled and said. Regarding his sister’s marriage, Teng Qingshan viewed it with great importance and care.

“Hmph. Brother, don’t mention this.” Qingyu humphed and said, “Those who proposed are no match for Cousin Qinghu, let alone anything compared to you.

Yuan Lan who was at his side, smiled helplessly and said, “I can’t help it. Qingshan, Qingyu’s standards are too high, and she didn’t like any one of them.”

“Mother, there’s no need to hurry. I am only fourteen years old, and it would be fine if I marry a few years later.” Qingyu hastily argued. Suddenly, her eyes brightened as she stared at Teng Qingshan and asked, “Brother, can I go with you to Jiangning City? Since I was young, I have never gone to Jiangning County City.”

“Naughty girl!” Teng Yongfan reprimanded her.

“Don’t bother your brother.” Yuan Lan also spoke.

A thought struck Teng Qingshan suddenly, and he quickly spoke, “Father! Mother! Actually, the Black Armored Army allows family members to move in! Of course, the living conditions of the ordinary black armored soldiers are rather bad, but a centurion’s living condition is already considered very good. I am now a lieutenant, and I should have a very nice house! You guys can live with me there! Little Yu can go too! And in the future, you guys can even enter the county city for a stroll.”

Teng Yongfan and Yuan Lan glanced at each other as they felt slightly tempted.

Staying with their son was a good thing indeed.

“Ahhh! I want to go! I want to go!” Qingyu jumped in excitement.

“Father, mother, what about you guys?” Teng Qingshan looked towards his parents.

Hearing the question, Yuan Lan directed her eyes to Teng Yongfan. As a woman, she listened to her man. Teng Yongfan pondered for a moment and shook his head, replying, “No. Qingshan, you should know that your grandfather is old, and I will inherit his position as chief. Actually, this is just a small matter. The important thing is that……I need to teach the younger clan members how to forge weapons! Only your grandfather and I know this skill that has been passed on from generation to generation. Your grandfather is so old, so I can’t let him teach, can I? Therefore…..”

Yuan Lan also nodded.

Teng Yongfan then continued saying, “Your mother and I can enjoy life at the county city, but I must think about the clan! How’s this? You can bring Little Yu there. It would be good for her to visit the popular places and broaden her horizons. Your mother and I have so many clan members in Teng Jia Village, so we will be fine. Just come back and visit us when you guys have time.”

His father had already made up his mind; thus, Teng Qingshan could only agree.

“Okay. Little Yu will go to the Gui Yuan Sect with me! Whenever you two want to go, you can also go live there for a few months. The city is only three hundred Li away from here anyway. Just get someone to send me a message, and I will pick you guys up personally!” Teng Qingshan said.

Chapter 112: Who is she?

Teng Qingshan stayed home for two hours and then left with his sister, Teng Qingyu. Under the eyes of many clan members, Teng Qinghu and the two siblings who rode the Azure Mane Treading In Snow Horse together, left Teng Jia Village for Yi City.

It took less than an hour to get to Yi City from Teng Jia Village.

Neigh~~~

Teng Qingshan and Teng Qinghu started to slow down as they approached the entrance of Yi City.

“Quickly! Get out of the way! Get out of the way!” The instant the city guards saw Teng Qingshan and Teng Qinghu’s horses and suits of armor, they hastily ordered those who were nearby and in the way to move to the side. The city guards then respectfully allowed Teng Qingshan and the other two into Yi City.

“Brother!” Teng Qingyu exclaimed as she widened her eyes, looking back at the city guards.“ The Black Armored Army is really powerful! Even the city guards didn’t dare to collect any fees.”

“Collect fees?” To her side, Teng Qinghu laughed and said, “Qingyu, even the Lord of Yi City has no right to collect money from Qingshan. Qingshan is a lieutenant now, and according to the army hierarchy, the Mayor is equal to Qingshan in rank!” It didn’t matter if one was in the government or in the Black Armored Army—they were all controlled by the Gui Yuan Sect anyways.

Therefore, ranks also existed in areas other than the army.

Jiangning County had a total of nine cities, with the City Lord of the nine cities having a similar status to a lieutenant of the Black Armored Army.

However, lieutenants and commanders were part of the Black Armored Army!

Thus, the City Lords and county guards would naturally feel slightly inferior to their military counterparts in their hearts.

“Lord Lieutenant!”

At the door of the restaurant, several soldiers were chatting in groups of three to five. The moment they saw the two war horses galloping forward, a soldier immediately shouted.

“Little Yu, get off the horse.” Teng Qingshan completely halted his horse, allowing his sister to carefully jump down. Since the Azure Mane Treading in Snow Horse was taller than eight Chi (8.75 ft), it was a little too tall for Teng Qingyu.

A soldier immediately took the reins of Teng Qingshan’s war horse the moment he dismounted.

“Lord Lieutenant! The Lord of Yi City has been waiting for you in the restaurant to the left,” A soldier softly notified.

Teng Qingshan turned his head and looked to the left. Coincidentally, the Lord of Yi City was walking out of the restaurant towards Teng Qingshan, with many people following closely behind. A soldier in the restaurant had most likely told the Lord of Yi City after noticing Teng Qingshan riding in the streets.

“Haha, Lieutenant Teng, the wine jug was heated three times while waiting for you.” That Yang Ke laughed out loud and said, “However, I finally get to meet the youngest lieutenant of the Black Armored Army! It’s a pity that it’s getting quite late now. Otherwise, I would have definitely drunk to the fullest with you!”

“I will drink to the fullest with you the next time I am back in Yi City,” Teng Qingshan said with a smile.

“Brother Qingshan,” A sound rang from from behind Yang Ke’s back. “Eh, this voice is…..” Teng Qingshan looked behind Yang Ke with a slightly surprised expression and saw a middle-aged, scar-faced man walking out from the crowd of people behind Yang Ke.

“Brother Liu San,” A bright smile appeared on Teng Qingshan’s

face.

“Haha, Brother Qingshan, back then when you had wanted to join the Black Armored Army ,i knew that Brother Qingshan’s future was boundless. However, I hadn’t expected you to become a lieutenant in less than six months,” said Master Liu San, immediately noticing a large amount of soldiers in black armor leaving the restaurant.

Teng Qingshan cupped his hand and said with a grin, “Mayor Yang, Master Liu San, I have little time to converse with you today, but I will definitely treat you two well the next time we meet. I shall take my leave first!”

With this, Teng Qingshan and the others mounted their war horses and left under the gaze of Yang Ke, Liu San and the others.

“Little Yu, hold tight,” Teng Qingshan said softly and ordered, “Depart!”

Immediately, under Teng Qingshan’s lead, the five hundred soldiers vigorously left Yi City. The moment the black armored soldiers exited the city, they spurred their horses and dashed towards Jiangning at lightning-fast speeds.

……

After the sky began to darken, Teng Qingshan and the others arrived at the east entrance of Jiangning County City. This was the location of the Black Armored Army barracks. After Teng Qingshan entered the city, the entourage quickly headed into the barracks. The five hundred black armored soldiers were dismissed and returned to their own residence.

The next day, during morning training.

The moment Teng Qingshan appeared in the training field, many familiar centurions, friends, and some lieutenants all came to congratulate him.

“Brother Qingshan, congratulations!”

“Qingshan, you are now the youngest lieutenant. After a dozen years, it’ll be entirely possible for you to take the position of number one commander once Commander Yi resigns.”

“You’ve become a lieutenant, brother Qingshan! Aren’t you going to buy us food?”

“Yes. We must celebrate with a good meal.”

There were many people that congratulated Teng Qingshan. Some might have been sincere, and others might have been secretly disdainful. Once a person moved to a higher position, there would be people that praised and admired that person, as well as people who felt envy and hatred. It’s true that one who isn’t envied by others is only an ordinary person. Of course, Teng Qingshan didn’t care. No matter what……

Teng Qingshan was the one standing in the limelight. Today during morning training, everyone learned that Teng Qingshan had become the lieutenant.

“Everyone, I will be hosting a banquet at Canvass Lunar Restaurant tonight. All of you should come!” Teng Qingshan announced. Immediately, responses could be heard from the surroundings. Teng Qingshan enjoyed great popularity in the Black Armored army, so at this moment, everyone was happy to go and get closer to the lieutenant with limitless potential.

“Lieutenant Teng!” A black armored soldier ran over and said with respect, “The Lord Commander has ordered to have Lord Lieutenant accept the items and house of a lieutenant. Lord Lieutenant, you just need to follow me.”

“Lead the way,” said Teng Qingshan, holding his Reincarnation Spear as he followed the soldier out of the training field.

Although Teng Qingshan had been in the Black Armored Army for almost half a year, he still didn’t know where the lieutenants lived.

“Lord Lieutenant!” This house is your residence in the future! It has already been cleaned and prepared! As for the Scarlet Blood Horse and Heavy Coldsteel Armor, they are in the courtyard. Lord Lieutenant, please prepare your Azure Mane Treading In Snow Horse and Hematite Heavy Armor. Someone will most likely come to retrieve it later.”

Teng Qingshan nodded.

“Lord Lieutenant, these are the keys to the house,” the soldier said as he handed the over the keys to Teng Qingshan.

Teng Qingshan took them and opened the door. He began carefully inspecting the house.

This house was in Jiangning County City and could be considered a pretty good home. There were three courtyards in the front, center and back, along with three rooms in the front of the house. In the back of the house, a small two-story building with a total of six rooms could be seen. In total, the entire residence had nine rooms!

Of the three courtyards, the central courtyard had a small pond with lotus flowers floating on top.

The courtyard in back had stables that housed the Scarlet Blood Horse.

“A lieutenant’s residence is much better than a centurion’s residence,” remarked Teng Qingshan, before immediately returning to his original residence in order to take care of his sister, Teng Qingyu. He also needed to ask cousin Teng Qinghu to help move his clothes and the rest of his belongings to the lieutenant’s residence.

It took them one hour to move everything to Teng Qingshan’s new home.

“Wow,” Teng Qingyu tumbled on the bed in the room and said, “Brother, this bed is so soft and comfortable.”

“A lieutenant’s residence is much more luxurious than a centurion’s residence,” Teng Qinghu uttered sighs of admiration as he looked at the surrounding space, “Qingshan, you have many rooms, so I will stay at your place.”

“And what if I don’t allow it?” Teng Qingshan laughed, teasing Teng Qinghu.

Hearing Teng Qingshan’s question, Teng Qinghu touched his own head and smiled.

At this moment——

“Brother Qingshan! Brother Qingshan!” Outside the courtyard door, voices could be heard. Not sure of what was going on, Teng Qingshan and the other two walked out together.

Creak!

They opened the door and found Zhuge Yun and Zhuge Qing standing outside.

“Big Brother Qingshan, I know you have been promoted to lieutenant and moved to a new place, so we specially came to congratulate you,” Zhuge Yun said. Suddenly, Zhuge Yun noticed his nearby sister Zhuge Qing acting slightly strangely. Zhuge Qing was staring at Teng Qingyu, who was hugging Teng Qingshan’s arm tightly, as if they had a very intimate bond.

Zhuge Qing looked towards Teng Qingshan and asked, “Big Brother Qingshan, who is she?”

“Are you asking about Little Yu?” Teng Qingshan smiled.

The moment Zhuge Qing heard Teng Qingshan intimately say the two words, “Little Yu”, her heart sank.

“Lady Qingqing,” Standing besides Teng Qingshan, Teng Qinghu hastily answered, “This is Qingshan’s sister, Qingyu!”

“This is his sister?” Zhuge Qing’s immediately brightened and hurried to Teng Qingyu’s side. She tightly held Teng Qingyu’s

hand and declared, “I have heard that Big Brother Qingshan had a sister. So her name is Qingyu. My name is Qing. Your name is similar to mine; thus, it must be fate.”

Teng Qingyu stared at Zhuge Qing and asked, “Your name is Zhuge Qing, right?”

“Yes,” Zhuge Qing nodded.

“I heard my brother speak of you yesterday,” Teng Qingyu said.

“Really?” Hearing this, Zhuge Qing secretly felt joy in her heart.

Teng Qingshan, who was at the side, was very happy to see Zhuge Qing and his sister be on intimate terms at first sight. He then looked towards Zhuge Yun and said, “Little Yun, this is my sister Teng Qingyu, who I have brought here from my hometown. However, there are not many women in Black Armored Army, which is made up of mostly men. Therefore, I was wondering..... could Little Yu join the Gui Yuan Sect and become a disciple?”

According to the rules of Gui Yuan Sect, disciples recruited outside of the city should be under ten years old.

“No problem,” Zhuge Yun replied straightforwardly. “Qingyu is your sister, and you are the lieutenant of our Black Armored Army! You are part of our Gui Yuan Sect, so this small matter is nothing.”

Hearing this, Teng Qingyu was very happy.

Teng Qingshan talked to his sister about this matter back when they had just arrived at the sect last night. Since she had nothing to do in Gui Yuan Sect, she might as well learn the secret techniques of inner strength. Additionally, Vigor of the Reckless Bull wasn’t suitable for women to learn. Sister Qingyu wanted to learn martial arts, she naturally had no objections to Teng Qingshan’s suggestion.

“Little Yu,” Lady Qing also spoke, “With such a small affair, I can go and notify them, so everything will be fine. There’s no need for Big Brother Qingshan to do it personally.”

Lady Qing was the daughter of the Sovereign, so a trivial matter like this was nothing.

“Yes,” Teng Qingyu nodded happily and added, “Thank you, Little Qing.”

Teng Qingshan stared at the two girls. They had only chatted for a short while, yet they had already begun amicably calling each other ‘Little Yu’ and ‘Litttle Qing’. Men and women were truly different.

“Little Yu, you haven’t gone sightseeing since you’ve arrived at the Gui Yuan Sect, right?” Lady Qing asked. “I will take you to explore Longgang and the ten Li long riverbank of the grand canal. It’s beautiful when you look at it on a boat, and it’s even prettier at night.”

“Sure,” Qingyu hastily nodded and said, “My brother doesn’t even have time to take me out for fun.”

Lady Qing turned her head and looked towards Teng Qingshan before declaring, “Big Brother Qingshan, I will take Little Yu out for a stroll.”

“Okay, okay.” Teng Qingshan was pleased to hear this.

Zhuge Qing grew up in Gui Yuan Sect. if she accompanied Teng Qingyu, then Teng Qingyu would definitely be able to make new friends in the Gui Yuan Sect, so there wasn’t a reason for Teng Qingshan himself to worry.

Chapter 113: Orders!

Zhuge Qing and Qing Yu left, leaving Teng Qingshan and the other two in the courtyard.

“We will be recruiting new blood on twelfth day of June. Therefore, we will be selecting the eight weakest centurions. Brother Qinghu, I am very worried for you!” Zhuge Yun jested, but Teng Qinghu remained very confident. “Young Sovereign, when the contest starts in the next few days, you just wait and see!”

“Oh?” Zhuge Yun turned towards Teng Qingshan in astonishment.

Teng Qingshan also beamed.

He was well aware of his cousin’s abilities. Even if he was unable to defeat the top notch centurion, he was still well amongst the top of the middle-ranking centurions.

……

During the next few days, the centurions and sergeants of the Black Armored Army went through rounds and rounds of competition. The intensity of the competitions amongst the top notch warriors brought liveliness and excitement to the training field. As for Teng Qinghu, as a sergeant who was promoted to a centurion, of course many would feel that he was a pushover.

This was why someone had challenged Teng Qinghu right from the start.

But Teng Qinghu unleashed one strike with the ferocious Inflamed Passion and two strikes with the sinister Flashing Fire. Using just three moves, he clinched three clear-cut wins against three centurions. It was then that the centurions understood: this Teng Qinghu was not one to be trifled with.

The summer evenings were still scorching.

Dressed in a black robe as usual, Ji Hong came to Sovereign Zhuge Yuanhong's study. Just as he arrived at the door, a voice floated over from within the study. "Second martial uncle, come in."

He pushed the door and entered the study.

Zhuge Yuanhong was reading a piece of paper he was holding.

"Sovereign, why were you urgently looking for me?" Ji Hong inquired.

Zhuge Yuanhong smiled. "The ninth son of my good friend, Zhu Tong, requested my aid."

"Zhu Tong, the God of Wealth of our Yang Prefecture?" Ji Hong was startled. In the world, Yangzhou's salt merchant and Yuzhou's merchant are the most renowned. If one were to compare which merchant in the past three thousand years was the most famous, it was without a doubt Fan Li, the prosperous God of Wealth!

Of course, Fan Li was long dead.

Currently, the most well-known merchant was, without a doubt, Yang Prefecturee's top salt merchant 'Zhu Tong'. However, not many people knew how much wealth Zhu Tong had accumulated over the years.

Zhu Tong's father can only be considered a small merchant. On the other hand, when Zhu Tong was ten years old, he established 'Feng Yang Restaurant'. Within three years, branches of the Feng Yang Restaurant could be found almost everywhere across the entire Yang Prefecture, bringing huge wealth to Zhu Tong. With this as a foundation, Zhu Tong started to slowly invest in various trades.

Zhu Tong had a philosophy regarding his work.

One step at a time. Each time, he would only invest in one trade, and only after an investment became successful would he venture into another new trade.

Sixty years passed by, and Zhu Tong gained immeasurable wealth.

But the most intensifying thing was……

Zhu Tong, revered as the God of Wealth, was also an innate expert! Even though he expended a lot of energy with his merchant work, he still managed to train as an innate expert. Even Zhuge Yuanhong was full of praise and admiration for him.

As a result, there were too many people in the world who revered Zhu Tong.

“Zhu Tong’s homeland is under the jurisdiction of Qing Hu Island. Why would his son not enlist the help of Qing Hu Island and approach us instead?” Ji Hong was puzzled by this decision.

Facing the world’s top merchant, Zhu Tong, even the Gui Yuan Sect would have to show great respect.

“Haha, this God of Wealth has unparalleled gift as a merchant. Even across history, there are not many who can compete with him. But in spite of his immeasurable wealth, he truly has his share of frustrations!” Zhuge Yuanhong laughed. “Daughters aside, he has sixteen sons! Daughters will be married out of the family, so he will just need to prepare some dowry for them. However, with such an ingenious father, all of his sixteen sons are exceptional. How should Zhu Tong divide his immeasurable wealth? Each of his sons are all competing to be the next head of the Zhu clan!”

Ji Hong chuckled, “Dividing of the family property? Haha…… This is interesting! Members of large sects compete to be the Sovereign, while his sons fight to be the Zhu clan’s next Head of the Household!”

Normally, only one son would inherit the position of “Head of the Household” in large clans. Once that son inherited the position, he would also gain most of the family’s wealth.

On the other hand, the rest of the sons would only receive a small portion of it.

Of course, in terms of the wealth belonging to Zhu Tong's family, even a little is a great deal.

But how many of his sons were easily satisfied? Even if they said that they do not covet the family property, how many of them were willing to ignore the immeasurable wealth lying in front of them?

"Sovereign, that Zhu Tong is an innate expert with a long lifespan. He doesn't have to worry about this yet," Ji Hong pointed out.

"If one doesn't plan for the future, there will be imminent doom! Furthermore, this God of Wealth is no longer interested in accumulating more wealth. He is preparing to fully devote himself to the study of martial arts. Therefore, he would have to choose a heir." Zhunge Yuanhong said, "All of his sixteen sons are intelligent. Thus, he has set a rule, giving each son a sum of money. Within ten years, the one who can earn the most would be the next head of the clan!"

Ji Hong laughed, "This solution is quite foolish. Isn't Zhu Tong concerned that there may be some sects who would meddle in the contest and support a particular son from behind closed doors?"

"Foolish? If a God of Wealth who can earn millions of silver at the age of ten is considered foolish, there would be no intelligent men in the world." Zhuge Yuanhong chuckled.

Ji Hong could not help but feel embarrassed.

Truly, who in the world would dare to call Zhu Tong foolish? Even if Zhu Tong did commit an foolish act, there would definitely be some people who would say that there must be some profound reason that others could not understand.

"For what reason did his ninth son approach Sovereign Zhuge

Yuanhong?” Ji Hong still remained quite puzzled.

“He requested for me to send some martial arts experts to protect a cargo of goods!” Zhuge Yuanhong added. “The reward is a hundred thousand taels of silver!”

To seek the aid of experts from Gui Yuan Sect, this price was not considered high.

“Sovereign, did you agree?” Ji Hong inquired.

Zhuge Yuanhong nodded, “I met Zhu Tong’s sixteen sons when I visited him some years back.”

“Each of them are tough characters. His ninth son, in particular, is quite popular with others. Although he looks young, he is actually capable of elaborate schemes. I have a feeling that the future head of the Zhu Clan will be either his eldest son, his ninth son, or his thirteenth son.”

Across the Nine Prefectures, who was not aware of Zhuge Yuanhong’s intelligence?

“It doesn’t hurt for us to help him.” Zhuge Yuanhong smiled. “Did you pay attention the contest among the centurions a few days ago?”

“Yes, I did.” Ji Hong nodded.

“Did you see the spear skills of Teng Qingshan’s cousin, Teng Qinghu?” Zhuge Yuanhong mentioned.

“Hmm?” Ji Hong was startled by this. “That Teng Qinghu has two impressive skills. One is ferocious while the other one sinister. What about it? I don’t recall a supreme spear skill within our Gui Yuan Sect.”

“Let me give you one more hint. I once presented Teng Qingshan with a manual for ‘Ardent Flame Spear Art’.” Zhuge Yuanhong told Ji Hong.

“Ardent Flame Spear Art? To Teng Qingshan? I have seen the

Ardent Flame Spear Art before. There are eighty-one steps in total, but the art's might is average." Ji Hong was a bit hesitant at first, but he eyes immediately lit up. "Sovereign, you mean...Teng Qingshan...that Spear Art....."

Zhuge Yuanhong nodded. "Each step of the Ardent Flame Spear Art is quite ordinary, but I am certain that Teng Qinghu incorporated his two skills! However, Teng Qinghu's potential is quite average, so he is only able to comprehend the two skills. I reckoned that Teng Qingshan comprehended the Ardent Flame Spear Art and combined those two skills before teaching them to Teng Qinghu. Furthermore, Qingshan is likely be able to display a prowess with the skills stronger than the might that Teng Qinghu demonstrated!"

With Zhuge Yuanhong's vicious eyesight. He could easily speculate this after seeing the skills Teng Qinghu displayed during the competition amongst the centurions.

"Creating a more powerful spear art by incorporating the Ardent Flame Spear Art? And within merely a couple of months? This....." Ji Hong shook his head in disbelief. "I still cannot believe that Teng Qingshan has already reached this level!"

"Second martial uncle." Zhuge Yuanhong spoke out.

Ji Hong bowed slightly.

"This time around, let Teng Qingshan handle the task of protecting and delivering the goods for that ninth young master 'Zhu Chong Shi'! Let him also pick two centurions as well as two ten-man teams from the Black Armored Army!" Zhuge Yuanhong smiled. "I'm dispatching Teng Qingshan to lead the troops for a hundred thousand taels of silver, so ninth young master got the better end of the deal."

"I will send some men to deliver the news to the ninth young master, requesting him to bring along his people and wait outside the north entrance of our Black Armored Army barracks one day

from now," Zhuge Yuanhong added.

"Yes." Ji Hong received his orders and quickly left the study.

Zhuge Yuanhong looked towards direction of the Black Armored Army's camp. "To create such a level of Spear Art within a few months! I had underestimated you earlier! Seems that not long from now, our Gui Yuan Sect will also be able to have a genius who is ranked in both the «Hidden Dragon Ranking» and the «Earthly Ranking».'"

……

Within the Gui Yuan Sect, no one had been able to be listed in the «Hidden Dragon Ranking». The same could be said about the «Earthly Ranking».

For a person to be listed on both rankings…

It was to say that the person must be able to be listed on the«Earthly Ranking» before the age of thirty! This condition was too harsh. In this world, there were, of course, countless talented individuals with perseverance. Zhuge Yun could only be considered a genius within Gui Yuan Sect, but there were many who with more talent than him in the whole Yang Prefecture, let alone all the Nine Prefectures.

To be concurrently listed on both the «Earthly Ranking» and «Hidden Dragon Ranking» was an achievement that would make his name resonate across the Nine Prefectures.

Morning training on the training field.

Teng Qingshan, who had just received his orders from Ji Hong, stood before the camp. He coldly ordered, "Centurion Chang Du Hong and Teng Qinghu, each of you will choose a ten-man team from your subordinates. We will set off for Chu County tomorrow morning!"

According to the commander's orders, he was to choose two centurions. Among them, Du Hong was the oldest and had the

most experience. And this time, with himself around, it would also be a good opportunity to let his cousin, Teng Qinghu, get some valuable training. That was why he had chosen these two centurions.

“Yes!”

Du Hong and Teng Qinghu bowed to receive the orders before they each proceeded to quickly pick a ten-man team.

“It didn’t occurred to me that we would be back for such a short period. Before we could see the newcomers’ recruitment, we’re already being sent off again!” Although this was what Teng Qingshan was thinking, deep down, he was full of anticipation. Chu County was located in the far north of Yang Prefecture. From Jiangning County to Chu County, they would have to cross a distance of two thousand Li. Considering that they had to escort cargo during this trip, it would be good if they could travel two hundred Li each day.

“Brother Qingshan is travelling to Chu County?”

Du Hong and Teng Qinghu came over, lowering their voice.

“Yes, we have been given a task to escort some goods. Old Du, would there be any dangers on this trip?”Teng Qingshan asked.

“The ones who asked the Black Armored Army to escort their goods are definitely involved with powerful merchants! It appears that this will definitely not be easy.” Du Hong frowned.

Teng Qingshan looked towards the north.

Danger?

Teng Qingshan was not afraid of any danger. He had been in Jiangning County the entire time since he came to this world. Finally, there was an opportunity for him to venture outside and explore the world.

“I will need to take a closer look on the battle prowess of the

world's current expert during this trip." Teng Qingshan was filled with anticipation. Killing was forbidden within the Gui Yuan Sect, but once they were outside, he would be the leader. At that point, it would not be tough to keep his true capabilities a secret when engage experts in combat.

"Everyone, get ready and have a good rest. We will be setting off early tomorrow morning. The round trip will be a total of four thousand Li (2000km)." Teng Qingshan instructed his men.

Chapter 114: Long Journey

The morning breeze was quite refreshing.

Teng Qingshan led a troop of twenty odd men and marched along the path of the camp. To his side, Zhuge Yun, Zhuge Qing, and Qingyu were there to send him off.

“Brother, the distance from here to the Chu County is two thousand Li. You have to be careful of the dangers on the road!” Qingyu stood beside Qingshan, eyes filled with reluctance.

Teng Qingshan smiled as he caressed Qingyu’s head. “Little Yu, you’re worried for your brother?”

“My brother is the strongest.” Qingyu immediately raised her chin, as she spoke with confidence.

Teng Qingshan was elated to be able to venture out. As for his sister, she’d joined the Gui Yuan Sect not long ago. It was undeniable that Qingyu was gifted. With merely seven days of training with the inner strength secret manual, she managed to already gain inner strength. While it wasn’t comparable to geniuses who could gain inner strength after training for a single day, Qingyu was only 14 years old.

“Little Yun, Lady Qingqing, I will need to trouble you two to take care of my sister while I’m away.” Teng Qingshan turned to look at the two.

“Of course. But don’t be careless while you’re outside. The Xuyang County is one the most disorderly amongst all the counties.” Zhuge Yun instructed.

During their conversations, they had arrived at the northern gate of the Black Armored Army camp.

Through the north gate, Teng Qingshan could already see the carts of goods. There seemed to be a lot. He saw eight carts already, with just a glance.

“Little Yu, you guys don’t have to follow us any further.” Teng Qingshan instructed.

“Yes.” Qingyu also turned towards Teng Qinghu. “Cousin, please listen to my brother during the trip. Don’t make any trouble for him.”

“Qingshan is the lieutenant. Of course I have to listen to him.” Teng Qinghu broke into a grin.

Zhuge Qing, who had been standing at the side quietly all this time, could not resist as she said, “Big Brother Qingshan, please be careful on the way!”

Teng Qingshan glanced at her and smiled as he nodded.

Seeing this, Teng Qinghu turned around to look towards the gate.

“Let’s go!” Teng Qingshan issued the order.

The two centurions and the two squads under him all led their warhorses and marched out of the gate. After walking out, Teng Qingshan saw clearly that there were a total of ten carts in total. Separately, there were two spacious chariots surrounded by close to a hundred people. Most of them were wearing armors that resembled the scales of a snake.

“Haha, this must be Teng Qingshan, Lieutenant Teng!” An old man with graying hair walked up as he greeted them.

Teng Qingshan nodded and threw a glance at the near hundred guards. Smiling, he said, “The Zhu Clan is truly unparalleled in wealth. With so many guards, this trip will be an easier one for the brothers under my command.”

“Although these are my master’s men, how could they possibly compare to the Black Armored Army!” The old man laughed. “I am called Wu Tan! My master is over there!”

Teng Qingshan had already seen a distinguished man heading over with his two guards from a distance.

“Lieutenant Teng!” The distinguished fellow cupped his hands and smiled. “I had long heard of Lieutenant Teng’s name during the few days that I spent in Jiangning County! The Black Armored Army’s youngest lieutenant, who also happens to have the brightest future! I had originally thought that it would be hard to meet Lieutenant Teng, but I didn’t expect to see you so soon! My heart is overjoyed!”

“This must be Ninth Master Zhu?” Teng Qingshan recognised the other party.

The ninth son of the affluent ‘God of Wealth’ Zhu Tong—Zhu Chongshi.

“Why are you calling me Ninth Master? That title makes me sound old. If Lieutenant Teng is willing, you can regard me as your brother.” Zhu Chongshi said this with a smile.

Teng Qingshan commended him in his heart. The ‘God of Wealth’ Zhu Tong had used a suitable method to nurture his sons into admirable men. The way Zhu Chongshi carried himself as he spoke was refreshing and comfortable. Although Teng Qingshan usually detested those who felt that they were superior and carried their weight around, he did not have any hostility against Zhu Chongshi.

As their conversation progressed, Teng Qingshan and Zhu Chongshi started to address each other as brothers.

Very soon, the company set off.

……

Outside of the city gate, they started to speed up as they travelled on the main road.

“Father, I want to ride a horse!”

Not long after they started out on their journey, a little boy popped his head out of the chariot and called out to Zhu Chongshi, who was riding on a horse.

“How are you going to ride when you have yet to learn how? Stay in the chariot with your mother,” Zhu Chongshi replied.

The little boy stuck out his tongue and went back inside the carriage.

“Brother Zhu, you’ve brought along your family on this trip?” In astonishment, Teng Qingshan asked the adjacent Zhu Chongshi. “We will be facing a lot of danger on this journey to the Chu County. Why not let sister-in-law and the child stay at home?”

“Brother Qingshan, you are not aware.” Zhu Chongshi laughed. “I just returned from abroad with my family. I couldn’t leave them alone abroad, could I?”

“Abroad?” Teng Qingshan was shocked.

Zhu Chongshi nodded, but did not share any further.

Teng Qingshan could tell that the other party was keeping some secret and thus tried to change the subject. Curious, Teng Qingshan asked, “Brother Zhu, I have yet to visit the sea myself. What is there outside of the East Sea?”

“The East Sea is boundless.” Zhu Chongshi sighed. “Without venturing out, you will never know horrifying the sea truly is. Within the sea, there are also numerous islands. Some of them are uninhabited while others are highly populated. There are also some that are uncivilized and are yet to be developed.”

Teng Qingshan nodded his head silently.

Having been a member of the Gui Yuan Sect for so long, Teng Qingshan had gained a general understanding of the geography of this world.

The population reached hundreds of millions across the vast land of the Nine Prefectures.

In the west of the Nine Prefectures, there was a desert with a few oases and many small countries.

While in the north, there was a vast area of greenland, and followed by the North Sea.

In the east, there was the East Sea, known to be vast and boundless.

In the south of the Nine Prefectures existed a barren and ruthless land. The endless desolate land was full of vicious snakes and ferocious beasts, and was held to be a forbidden area for humans! That was because of the endless dangers and horrifying monsters. But according to legends..... there were many warriors who entered the desolate south to train in their pursuit of martial arts. In the desolate south, there were also the remains of the deceased warriors with their secret manuals, treasures and such.

But.....

The most prosperous and flourishing sects, with the most experts in martial arts, were still those within the land of the Nine Prefectures.

The small islands abroad and the small countries in the western regions were incomparable to the martial arts experts from the land of the Nine Prefectures.

“The people staying in the islands abroad live in destitution.” Zhu Chongshi sighed. “Having drifted across various islands for so many years, I don’t ever want to set out to sea again.”

“Brother Zhu, the purpose for your venturing abroad is for your business?” Teng Qingshan inquired.

“To deal in business is one of the reasons. Another reason is that I’ve wanted to travel across the world since I was young.” Zhu Chongshi lamented. “I had visited all the countries in the western desert before I was 20. The desolate land is close to our Yang Province, just south of it! Actually there is nothing much, just various mountains and hills and a sizeable number of large trees that have grown for the Heavens knows how many years, as well as

all sorts of venomous snakes, worms, and ferocious beasts. I have even spent a month near the border of the desolate land and interacted with some warriors who ventured inside: Other than that, I never went near the desolate land again."

Zhu Chongshi glanced around the surroundings and laughed out loud, "After roaming around for so long, I still feel that our land of the Nine Prefectures is the most prosperous of them all."

.....

Teng Qingshan had to admit!

He had predicted too good of a scenario. The speed of the company was slower than he expected! Although the carts were pulled by horses, the main road was all dirt with too many of small pits, rocks, clods and such, resulting in the carts' slow progress.

One can probably catch up to the speed of the carts with just a slow jog.

At this rate, they could probably travel about a hundred and twenty Li each day

After a tiring journey, Teng Qingshan and company passed by two counties. On the eleventh day of their trip, they finally arrived at the border of Xuyang County.

.....

Whoosh whoosh!

The weather had been fine a moment ago, but all of a sudden, strong wind started to blow. Dark clouds gathered overhead, followed immediately by the clash of thunder and a heavy downpour! The rainstorm made the trip much harder for the travelling company.

"Such heavy rain. If only there's a place to shelter ourselves from the rain somewhere close by." Zhu Chongshi smiled bitterly.

Because of the rain, the earth turned to mud, slowing down their

speed even further.

“Clank!” ”Clank!” ”Clank!”……

As the raindrops fell on the heavy armor of the Black Armored Army’s soldiers, they made loud crashing sounds.

“Qingshan.” Teng Qinghu rode at the side, “Haha, told you to wear your armor. See, now you’re all wet.” Teng Qinghu and company wore full-bodied armor, exposing only their faces and hands. They were also wearing neck protectors that blocked the rain perfectly, keeping them dry.

Teng Qingshan smiled.

There were twenty-three men from the Black Armored Army, including Teng Qingshan. Everyone followed orders and wore full sets of heavy armor, all except Teng Qingshan, who only wore the inner armor as well as arm and leg guards. To Teng Qingshan…… in terms of the defense, the Heavy Coldsteel Armor was no match for his own body!

In addition, if he wore the full set of the heavy armor, it would affect his agility and such.

“Brother Zhu, there are no places nearby for us to take shelter from the rain. Let’s bear with it since the summer rainstorms tend to come and go very swiftly! However……Tell your men to be more alert. We are now entering the borders of the Xuyang County, an extremely disorderly county with many bandits. I’m afraid that the fame of our Black Armored Army will not unable to scare those crazy mounted gangsters!”

“Yes.” Zhu Chongshi also nodded gravely.

The Black Armored Army was uncontested within Jiangning County.

But when it comes to the other counties, one would have to see how many men from the Black Armored Army were currently present. If the number was too small, bandits would not hesitate to

annihilate anyone as long as no evidence was left behind.

……

Teng Qingshan and the company guessed correctly. Not long after they entered the borders of the Xuyang County, news of their arrival had already reached the ears of a band of mounted gangsters who were quite influential within Xuyang County.

“Step aside! All of you, get out of my way!”

A slender one-eyed man ran into a residence not far away, yelled at the top of his voice.

“Fourth Master!” The two men at the entrance of the residence smiled as they greeted the incoming man.

“Great Master, Great Master!” The lean one-eyed man pushed open the door as he hollered. “There’s a golden goose, a golden goose!”

“Why are you barking!” A loud voice hollered.

A topless baldie with two fierce scars on his chest walked out of the hall. At this moment, he was staring at the lean one-eyed man. “Fourth brother, you mentioned that there’s a golden goose? Just leave the typical work to the brothers under your command.”

“Great Master! This time around, this target is definitely a big one! I will need Great Master to make the final decision!” The eye of the lean one-eyed man gleamed. “A band of traders enlisted the help of the Gui Yuan Sect’s Black Armored Army to escort their goods!”

“Oh?” The eyes of the baldie shone with anticipation. “Black Armored Army? How many of them?”

Chapter 115: Bloodstone Slope

“Our men saw them very clearly. There are a total of twenty-three Black Armored Army troops!” The one-eyed man replied.

The Great Master stroked his bald head and squinted. Slowly, a smile began to spread across his cheeks. “Just twenty-three? Humph..... We will be able to drown them with just a spit from each of our brothers! However, to be able to enlist the help of the Black Armored Army, the target must have considerable influence. That’s right, tell me more details about the band of traders.”

The lean one-eyed man smirked. “Great Master, other than the protection of the Black Armored Army, they have also brought along approximately seventy to eighty guards. As for the goods..... there are a total of ten full carts, each with several crates. At the same time, there are also two carriages, which should be occupied by rich merchant and women with tender skin.

The Great Master turned silent.

The lean man knew that, while their Great Master seemed crude, he was very meticulous. Right now, he was obviously thinking of a way to deal with the band of traders.

A few moments later.....

“That seventy to eighty guards should be easy to deal with. Dispatch five hundred archers with two rounds of arrows, and we will be able to annihilate those guards!” The Great Master frowned. “The most troublesome issue is still the twenty-three men from the Black Armored Army! All of the men and horses are equipped with heavy armor that blades and swords are unable to penetrate. We will lose a lot of our brothers just to kill them.”

“No matter how strong they are, there are only twenty-three of them. We will have all sorts of means to deal with them.” The lean one-eyed man replied.

The Great Master looked at him disdainfully. “Of course I know that! There are plenty of ways to kill them, but remember, if we were to kill men from the Black Armored Army, we will need to kill all of them. There cannot be any survivors. Should we missed out on even a single one, our identities are revealed, and we will be in trouble when the Black Armored Army comes for their revenge!”

Since Gui Yuan Sect was located far away, it would be hard for them to trace the murderers if all of the soldiers from the Black Armored Army were annihilated.

But should there be any survivors, it would spell trouble. “The horses of the Black Armored Army are all exceptional horses! Did you have a good look at the color of the horses’ coats?” The Great Master asked.

Although the war horses were equipped with heavy armor, it was still impossible to cover every inch of the horses’ bodies.

For instance, their ears, legs and tail!

These would reveal their hair color.

“I did not pay much heed at the time” The one-eyed man was embarrassed. He suddenly thought of something and exclaimed, “Oh, right, I remember that two of the horses have white hooves! Right, that was easy to recall.”

“They are Cyan Bristled Treading in Snow horses!” The Great Master nodded and continued, “Those are war horses belonging to the centurions of the Black Armored Army! Seems like there should be at least two centurions this time. I wonder if there are lieutenant-ranked officers!”

“So what if there are lieutenants? They are only Postliminary Realm experts.” The one-eyed man commented.

“What do you know!” The Great Master bellowed. “A lieutenant himself is nothing, but his steed is a Crimson Horse! With the

speed of the Crimson Horse, how can we stop the lieutenant if he tries to escape? Leaving him aside, only my Wind Chaser and myself would be able to catch up when the two Cyan Bristled Treading in Snow horses dash off. Among the rest of you, no one will be able to catch up to their speed!”

The Great Master rubbed his bald head and ordered, “Summon the Second Leader and his company!”

“Great Master, will we attack?” The eye of the one-eyed man gleamed.

“Of course! To enlist the help of the Black Armored Army and increase the numbers of guards that they have, these goods are well worth at least a few hundred thousand taels of silver.” The Great Master gave a frosty look. “I will make sure that he is unable to escape alive even if he has the Crimson Horse!”

……

Dusk arrived.

The road was filled with the screams as well as the neighing of horses.

The two ten-men teams of the Black Armored Army rode on their war horses. Assuming the form of two strong gusts of wind, they slaughtered the groups of bandits and mounted gangsters in a frenzy. The piercing spears penetrated into the bandits’ frail bodies. Once the war horses of the Black Armored Army sprinted forwards, the troops need only lightly tap their spears in order to pierce through the bodies of the mounted gangsters with ease.

Teng Qingshan, Du Hong, and Teng Qinghu rode on their war horses in the middle of the path.

Whenever they encountered mounted gangsters dashing towards them, the three of them would easily kill them with a slight movement of their spears.

“These hundreds of mounted gangsters actually dare to rob us.

They are courting death!" Du Hong gave a cold smile.

"I reckon everyone won't be able to enjoy the kill." Teng Qingshan laughed. As a lieutenant, Teng Qingshan was well aware of how intimidating the men from the Black Armored Army were.

Every single cavalry member of the Black Armored Army resembled a moving fort. Regardless of whether it was a soldier or horse, they all donned heavy armor. In addition, even the horses of the regular troops were Black-Marked horses, which were worth a thousand taels of silver each. Amongst the mounted gangsters, usually only the leader would be able to ride a horse of this caliber.

The strength of the war horses was high to begin with. In addition, every man from the Black Armored Army had the strength of over a thousand Jin, and quite a number of them also practiced Vigor of the Reckless Bull.

Furthermore, when the soldiers coordinated with each other, they were able to kill the mounted gangsters with the brutality of a meat grinder.

Over a hundred mounted gangsters were killed by the two ten-man teams' numerous attacks. After seeing this, the remaining mounted gangsters ran for their lives!

"Sir Lieutenant, the other mounted gangsters have escaped!" The two ten-man team returned.

Reeking of blood, the war horses and the cavalry members' armor all stained with blood and mince meat. None of them had been injured after killing over a hundred enemies! This was the might of the Black Armored Army! The most intimidating troops within the Gui Yuan Sect!

"Okay, rinse your armors. We will continue our journey in a short while." Teng Qingshan commanded.

"Yes, My Lord!"

All the men from the Black Armored Army started to rinse their

heavy armor.

“How dare those mounted gangsters pick on us. They must not know what death is like. I only managed to kill 11 of the mounted gangster by the time I finished warming up, but they all escaped.”

“Don’t be too smug. I only managed to kill 6. It was more advantageous for you since you were dashing in the vanguard.”

None of them gave the least bit of concern over the earlier battle and instead engaged in several arguments.

The other guards in the company were all overwhelmed and astonished by the Black Armored Army’s immense strength.

“Brother Qingshan.” Zhu Chongshi smiled as he walked over. “Those mounted gangsters must have thought that you guys were regular cavalry and did not recognise you as the Black Armored Army. Haha……if they did, they wouldn’t dare attempt to seize our goods from us in such small numbers.”

“Yes.” Teng Qingshan nodded in agreement. “Xu County is over a thousand Li away from our Jiangning County. It wouldn’t be strange for these mounted gangsters to not recognise us as the Black Armored Army. By the way, Brother Zhu, the sky has already grown dark. The Fanwu City in Xu County is just right in front. Let’s hurry on our way so that we can enter the city and stay in a better inn for the night.”

“Haha. Having camped in the wilderness for the past few days, it was hard to have a proper shower. I stink of sweat in this scorching summer, so I will take advantage of this upcoming opportunity and take a good bath today.” Zhu Chongshi replied with a smile.

Cities were generally about two to three hundred Li apart, and some were separated by even greater distances.

Considering that they were crossing over a hundred Li a day, naturally they had to camp in the wilderness most of the time. Of

course, there may be a few inns along the official roads. However, most of the inns in the wilderness were not in good condition.

After a good night rest in the city, they would continue their journey once they finished eating breakfast!

……

“Master, according to the map, the Bloodstone Slope is just five Li in front of us! Also, there is a distance of close to two whole Zhang between the top and and bottom of the Bloodstone Slope! With such a long distance, even if there were a large number of mounted gangsters lying in ambush at the bottom of the slope, we won’t be able to see them! This is a spot where mounted gangsters frequently lie in ambush. We will need to be careful.” Old Wu reminded.

A guard at the side smiled. “Old Wu, don’t worry. Everyone is aware that mounted gangsters frequently lie in ambush in this area, so we’ve already made preparations. Even if there are mounted gangsters planning to attack us, it is unlikely that they will choose that spot.”

“All of reality is an illusion. Everything that we consider to be an illusion, on the other hand, is actually real.” Zhu Chongshi threw a sideward glance at the guard beside him. “Since there are frequent ambushes by mounted gangsters at this Bloodstone Slope, it goes to show that the place is suitable for planning surprise attacks! Since it is suitable, the mounted gangsters will definitely choose it!” Zhu Chongshi looked towards Teng Qingshan and called out to him, “Brother Teng, there are still five Li before we reach the Bloodstone Slope. We will need to be more careful.”

“Brother Zhu, please be assured. We are at the front. Even if there are mounted gangsters, we will fend them off!” Teng Qingshan laughed.

……

An impressive number of mounted gangsters gathered at the foot of the Bloodstone Slope. The unique thing, however, was that only some of them rode horses.

“When they arrive, just follow as I ordered, understood?” The Great Master looked at the men around him.

“Big Brother, relax, we have so many men.Also, your plan is flawless. Haha..... None of them can escape from our grasp!” The leaders around him all laughed. “We already have three thousand brothers here. Just numbers alone is sufficient for us to bury them underneath our men’s onslaught.”

.....

Teng Qingshan rode right at the front of the company. At this moment, they were just one Li away from Bloodstone Slope.

“Hmm?” Teng Qingshan propped his ears.

Teng Qingshan’s body, whether it was his physique, organs, six senses, agility and such, had already reached its limits in every possible aspect. Even if the three thousand mounted gangsters at the foot of the slope remained silent, they would still create a ruckus detectable by Teng Qingshan.

“There’s people. And in huge numbers!” Teng Qingshan focused his hearing.

“Stop!” Teng Qingshan raised his hands to halt the company.

“What’s wrong, Brother Qingshan?” Zhu Chongshi walked over. Normal people would not be able to hear anything since the three thousand men one Li away had remained completely silent.

“Brother Zhu, there are definitely mounted gangsters laying in ambush at the foot of Bloodstone Slope. I cannot confirm the number of gangsters, but they are definitely numerous. But.....For safety reasons, it’s better for us to take a detour.” Teng Qingshan replied.

“Detour?” Zhu Chongshi frowned.

If they took a detour, they would need to travel another three hundred Li or so, which would delay their journey by three additional days.

“There are too many mounted gangsters. We will not be able to protect you all while fending off the enemies.” Teng Qingshan pointed out. The reason why they were not able to send someone forward to scout was because..... Since they we one Li away, the gangsters might not find out if Zhu Chongshi’s company turned back right now. But should they send a scout, they would definitely reveal their presence to the other party.

Zhu Chongshi turned back to look at the carts before nodding, “Well then, let’s take a detour!” At Zhu Chongshi’s immediate commands, the whole company obeyed and turned around to take a detour.

But.....

The band of mounted gangsters had long since set their eyes on Teng Qingshan and the company. They had sent quite a few scouts to prevent the company from escaping.

“Swoosh!” The sound of a flying arrow pierced through the sky.

“Haha, everyone, I would recommend you to stay here!” A thunderous laughter came from far away, resounding in midair. A majestic number of men appeared from the foot of the Bloodstone slope. “I would advise you to stay here since two thousand of my men are waiting for you less than ten Li away. You have no means to escape!”

Chapter 116: Army of Thousands of Men and Horses

“Don’t listen to the mounted gangsters’ bragging. Everyone, quickly shake them off!” Zhu Chongshi exclaimed.

In an instant, the coachmen whipped their horses, in an attempt to speed them up.

The carts jolted furiously. Fortunately, the crates had already been secured to the carts with ropes. Because the horses were being whipped, all the carts and the chariots quickly picked up speed. This was the only moment they had to escape, and thus no one acted with hesitation. On the other hand, the Black Armored Army followed at the back, preventing the mounted gangsters from catching up to the company.

“There are two thousand mounted gangsters ten Li away?” Du Hong gasped. “Qingshan……”

“It is hard to tell if what the gangster said was true.” Teng Qingshan sighed to himself as he saw the speed of the carts and chariots.

Even if the carts were rushing at full speed, Teng Qingshan could not help but feel frustrated. If it was only the Black Armored Army, they would have left with the wind, but with the carts holding them back, it became more troublesome to escape.

“Haha, you don’t believe? Seems like you won’t give in until you’ve reached the end of the road. I will take my time chasing behind you, and in turn, let you see for yourself if what I said was the truth!” The voice crackled and resounded deeply. To be able to project his voice from so far away, the person was definitely an expert with strong inner strength.

Teng Qingshan turned his head around——-

Truly, the mounted gangsters were slowly following from

behind. At the pathetic speed the carts were moving at, it would not be long before the mounted gangsters caught up.

“Seems like there really is an ambush.” Teng Qingshan frowned.

“This spells trouble.” Du Hong was also worried by what was in store for them.

……

“Hmph. I will kill all of you. The greater the number of lesser men that are sacrificed, the better.” The Great Master rode on slowly with his warhorse. He was leading three thousand men from his side, but only one thousand of them were equipped with warhorses. Since their overall speed was slow, since they decided to have two men share one warhorse.

This would allow for the two thousand mounted gangsters to catch up while the remaining one thousand followed behind.

“When our men surround them from both sides, it will be impossible for them to escape!” The Great Master felt increasingly proud of himself.

……

The company escaped with all their lives, but after a short while, all the color faded from their faces.

Rumble~

Strong earth-shaking vibrations came from the front.

“There is really an ambush, and the number of gangsters is quite high!” Zhu Chongshi glanced and saw that in the far distance, there were numerous, densely packed shadows heading towards their direction at rapid speed. Even from so far away, the company could feel the vibrations caused by the moving gangsters, which went to show how high the frightening number of mounted gangsters truly was.

Zhu Chongshi looked to the front before turning around to look

at the back.

Behind them, that Great Master was leading on his men and following the company with ease.

“These mounted gangsters from Xuyang County really dare to get involved with the cargo protected by the Black Armored Army.” Zhu Chongshi felt deep regret. This batch of goods was of high importance to him, and he had considered a lot before deciding to enlist the help of the Black Armored Army. From Zhu Chongshi’s viewpoint, weak bands of mounted gangsters were helpless against the prowess of the Black Armored Army.

Even strong bands of mounted gangsters should recognise the Black Armored Army!

They should also understand that if they got involved in the goods escorted by the Black Armored Army, they would face the Army’s wrath and revenge! Zhu Chongshi had thought that the strong mounted gangsters would have reservations and would not dare to get themselves involved.

However……

Zhu Chongshi made a miscalculation!

The mounted gangsters frequently put their lives at risk, so all of them were not afraid to brave any dangers. While there may be strong bands of mounted gangsters who had reservations towards the Black Armored Army and kept out of their way; Xuyang County was one of the two most disorderly counties amongst the thirteen counties in the whole of the Yangzhou. The county also contained the most influential mounted gangsters.

It would not be surprising for there to be one maniacal group of mounted gangsters.

……

“How will the Gui Yuan Sect find out who the killer is once they are annihilated?” The Great Master laughed coldly as he looked on.

In the far distance, the carts came to a stop.

They were surrounded by the mounted gangsters from both sides.

The land beside them was all muddy farmland. Once a person stepped inside, he or she would definitely sink into the ground. Regardless if it was a warhorse or a cart, once they enter, it would be very hard for the company to move forward. With thousands of mounted gangsters surging in, there would be no escape for them.

……

“Haha……I am a reasonable guy! So long as you leave your goods and money behind, we will let you off!” The Great Master’s voice resounded in the air.

“Fellow experts, even if we give you the goods, you will not be able to use them.” Zhu Chongshi called out cheerfully. “How about this. Let us leave with our goods, and we will pay you a hundred thousand taels of silver! This way, it would not affect our amiability. Should we start to fight, it will not be worth it to have many casualties. Wouldn’t it be better to be able to get a hundred thousand taels of silver without any unnecessary death?”

From one mounted gangster’s perspective.

“Big brother, his suggestion makes sense. We can ask for more money without making any sacrifices.” One of the mounted gangsters spoke out. The Great Master cast him a glance and reprimanded, “Third brother, is your head filled with sh*t?”

The Great Master immediately called out, “Like I said, leave the goods and all the money, and we will let you live.”

At this moment——

“This must be the sect’s Great Master.” Teng Qingshan coldly spoke out from his Crimson Horse. “Stop attempting to bewitch us with your words! Leave our goods and money? I’m afraid that even if we did agree, you will still take the opportunity to catch us

unaware and attack us while we are handing over the goods."

The Great Master's face paled, since that was indeed his plan.

That was because……

Those who dare to rob the goods and money escorted by the Black Armored Army would not possibly allow any survivors. Otherwise, it would be troublesome if they were to return to seek for revenge.

"Listen up!"

Teng Qingshan spoke coldly on his Crimson Horse, "No one has any rights to rob the goods under the protection of the Black Armored Army! You have been blinded to even dare to think of robbing from us! I am the lieutenant of the third battalion of the first division in the Gui Yuan Sect! I'll say it outright. If you dare to attempt to rob the goods from us, then……your gang will be turned to dust within half a month!"

The Great Master gasped.

Teng Qingshan laughed coldly. "Don't even think of annihilating us. If I wish to escape, none of you will be able to stop me! If you know what is good for you, then clear the path and let us leave. If not…hmph, once our Black Armored Army comes, we will stamp your gang down." Each of Teng Qingshan's words contained a trace of fury.

The voice resounded in mid-air, and the thousands of mounted gangsters could hear them loud and clear.

All of the mounted gangsters started to panic.

Even the Great Master felt unease.

"Brothers, we have always been risking our lives, what are we afraid of? Death is nothing to fear!" The Great Master hollered with a sinister look on his face. "Damn it, what reputation will we have if our five thousand men let such a small number of people go

off alive? Let's just kill them all!"

"Right, we have five thousand strong men, we are not afraid!" All of them started to shout out.

"Damn it, those who dare to retreat are cowards!!!"

The shouts turned the eyes of the mounted gangsters red. The life of a mounted gangster had always been one of savagery and turmoil, and they hated to be called cowards the most. They had five thousand men. What was there to be afraid of?

"Archers, shoot!" The Great Master commanded.

……

The faces of Teng Qingshan and the company paled.

Zhu Chongshi roared, "Protect the chariots!" Immediately, most of the nearby guards each took up a huge square-shaped shield.

Using the shields, they surrounded the chariots to protect them.

"Swish!" "Swish!" "Swish!"……

Dozens of archers stood in a line from both ends, some even stepping into the farmland. The archers from both sides shot a massive volley of arrows, which dropped from the sky like rain. The Black Armored Army put down their visors and lowered their heads to shield themselves from the onslaught.

The were not harmed at all as the arrows fell on them.

On the other hand, it was tougher for Teng Qingshan. He rode to side of the chariots and used the chariots as a shield to block the arrows attacking from behind. Against the arrows coming from the front, Teng Qingshan used his spear to defend himself.

However…… Teng Qingshan would remain unscathed even if the arrows were to fall on him. The arrows probably wouldn't even be able to pierce through his skin. It was just that Teng Qingshan did not wish to expose his secret in front of thousands of witnesses.

“Kill!” Teng Qingshan commanded.

“Attack!” Both ten-man teams charged once again. Even if they were to face with thousands of enemies, the Black Armored Army wouldn’t even flinch.

“Bang!” “Bang!” “Bang!”……

With a huge bang, a huge, iron-forged weapon with the length of almost half a metre appeared at the frontlines of the mounted gangsters. Its sharp spike was aimed towards the warhorses that were charging in its direction.

“Cheval de frise!” Teng Qingshan’s face paled.

With the large numbers of chevaux de frise set up in many layers, even if the Black Armored Army was able to charge past the first layer, they would still be stopped by the layers behind, there was no way that they could charge forth since they would only end up getting surrounded and knocked off their steeds. When that happens, everyone would be goners.

“Stop!” Teng Qingshan shouted out.

“Haha……warhorses? With these chevaux de frise, there’s no way you can charge with your warhorses!” The Great Master laughed. “Brothers, kill them!” Immediately, many of the mounted gangsters jumped off their mounts and charged forward. The chevaux de frise would prevent the charging of the warhorses but had little impact on humans.

“Brother Qingshan, what should we do?” Zhu Chongshi panicked at this sight.

He could not accept this!”

What had he been roaming abroad all these years for? He could not accept the fact that the goods were going to be taken away from him.

“Everyone, stay back and protect Ninth Master Zhu.” Teng

Qingshan said coldly.

“Yes!” The men from the Black Armored Army replied, but they were all confused. What was Teng Qingshan planning to do?”

“Rumble~”

At this moment, a massive number of mounted gangsters came surging in like waves from both sides.

“Hu!” Teng Qingshan leapt from his warhorse, shooting forward as if he was a sharp arrow. Upon landing on the ground, he took large strides to charge in the direction of the mounted gangsters.

“Haha……challenging our thousands of troops single-handedly? He must think that he is an innate master. Men, kill! Kill him!” The Great Master laughed.

Facing the surging waves of mounted gangsters, Teng Qingshan charged forth alone.

“Attack!” The mounted gangsters waved their weapons fiercely as they charged towards Teng Qingshan.

Teng Qingshan glared at the Great Master coldly, finally moving the spear in his arms.

At the age of ten, even a pack of wild wolves was unable to lay a single finger on Teng Qingshan. How could these mounted gangsters kill Teng Qingshan with his current power?

Spear Art —- Transmutation Unity Law!!

“Bump!” “Bump!” “Bump!”

The mounted gangsters in front of Teng Qingshan were all sent flying. The large number of mounted gangsters were like surging waves while Teng Qingshan was like a battleship thrusting forward through the fierce waves.

Unstoppable!

“Kill him! Quickly, go forth and kill him!” The Great Master was

in a big shock. “Steel chains! Use steel chains, bind him up!”

“Boom!”

Teng Qingshan thrust forward as if he were a porcupine with spears instead of spines all over. Those who were knocked over by him were sent flying with cavities all over their bodies. No one could stop the progression of Teng Qingshan.

“Quick, stop and kill him!” The Great Master had already thought about retreating, while the few elites next to him concurrently started to wave their steel chains about.

“Die!”

Teng Qingshan bellowed and abruptly, like a sudden clap of spring thunder, his speed suddenly increased, and he jumped.

“He jumped?” A few elite mounted gangsters gleamed as they threw out the steel chains in their hands.

“Swish!” “Swish!” “Swish!”

Three flying blades killed four elite mounted gangsters, with one of the blades pierced through two men at the same time. Fear radiated in the four men’s eyes, but, they died in an instant.

Teng Qingshan stepped on the head of a mounted gangster and charged towards the Great Master like a sudden gust of strong wind.

“Die.” The Great Master swung his blade towards Teng Qingshan, who was still in the air.

“Hmph!”

Teng Qingshan shook his spear fiercely, and sent more than ten mounted gangsters within two Zhang distance flying, as if it were a wheel of fire. The Great Master himself was also sent flying! At this point, he was still unable to believe what was happening. “I, I am also a Postliminary Realm expert myself. This, this……” The point on his palms between his thumb and forefinger had been torn.

He fell heavily to the group, full of disbelief.

“Hu!” Teng Qingshan moved as if he was a mirage!

Teng Qingshan grabbed the Great Master’s throat single-handedly as he lifted him up.

“Stop!”

Teng Qingshan’s loud bellow resounded in the air as his piercing glare swept across his surroundings. The mounted gangsters were all astonished. Even the Black Armored Army, the guards, as well as Zhu Chongshi and company were all in awe at this scene.

All the mounted gangsters stopped their attacks as they stared blankly at this scene.

Teng Qingshan stared at the Great Master in his hands as he spoke out coldly, “I said before, none of your men would be able to fend me off.”

“Ah, I…” The Great Master wanted to say something, but he was being held by the throat and had trouble speaking properly.

In the history from Teng Qingshan’s past life, in a battle involving thousands of men, there were plenty of examples where the leader was captured.

And today, Teng Qingshan did the same. With his skills with the spear, these mounted gangsters were not even able to stop his movements, but in order to protect Zhu Chongshi and company……

That was why Teng Qingshan decided to first capture the leader of the enemy with lightning-fast speed.

To get rid of the followers, one would have to capture the ringleader first!

“Hmph!” Teng Qingshan tossed the Great Master aside. The Great Master fell back a few steps before regaining his balance.

The Great Master looked at Teng Qingshan in great

astonishment. He did not understand……why was there such a huge gap between the two of them? Were all the warriors in Gui Yuan Sect so powerful?

“Lieutenant, lieutenant!” The Great Master gulped and quickly said, “We have overestimated ourselves! I will have my men leave immediately instead of stopping you any further!” He was full of fear for both Teng Qingshan’s skills with his spear, as well as the methods used to kill the four elites in an instant.

“Yes, we’ll retreat, we’ll retreat now.” The second leader and company also stuttered in awe.

“Everyone, clear a path and allow the lieutenant and company to leave!” The Great Master called out.

Immediately the mounted gangsters cleared a wide path in the middle of the road.

Temg Qingshan stared coldly at the Great Master. “Oh, getting us to leave just like that? It’s the death penalty to attempt to steal goods that are being transported by the Black Armored Army. You want to treat it as if nothing had happened?”

Chapter 117: Gold Silk Vest

It was the hot summer of June. Even during the morning, the sun was slightly scorching.

Under the glare of Teng Qingshan, the Great Master's forehead started dripping sweat. This did not result from the scorching, hot summer; it was due to the fear and shock. After the quick fight just now, the Great Master understood that this lieutenant of the Black Armored Army that stood before him was an extremely terrifying expert. He then stuttered, "Lord Lieutenant, what-what do you want? Just tell me."

Teng Qingshan stretched out his hand and raised five fingers.

"Fifty..fifty thousand silver taels?" The Great Master stammered.

"Fifty thousand silver taels? You really look down on the price of your own life!" Teng Qingshan stared at him and said indifferently, "Five hundred thousand silver taels! Take out five hundred thousand silver taels now, and I will spare your life. Otherwise..." Teng Qingshan raised his Reincarnation Spear and pointed at the Great Master's face with the tip of the spear.

The Great Master felt a freezing coldness when Teng Qingshan pointed the spear at him.

"Lord Lieutenant! Five hundred thousand silver taels. I'll give it!" The Great Master hastily answered.

Five hundred thousand silver taels are a huge amount of money, but the Great Master didn't dare to hesitate at all.

Although Teng Qingshan asked for this much money, he didn't have any intention to blackmail: "Our army has only just entered Xuyang County, and we've already encountered such a powerful gang of mounted bandits! Xuyang County is a vast territory with abundant resources, and it would take at least six to seven days to leave the territory of Xuyang County. If this gang is not punished

fiercely today and word got out, then the other gangs would probably try their luck at robbing us. There would be no punishment even if they did not succeed in robbery anyway!”

Thus, this gang must be punished!

If this gang was not punished, then other gangs wouldn’t fear us! We must make them afraid!

“However, Lord Lieutenant, I can’t give that many silver taels now. I don’t bring that many silver taels when I am out. How is this? Just wait a while, I will rush back myself and bring the money here.” At this moment, the Great Master was speaking very softly, worrying that he might enrage Teng Qingshan.

“Eh?” Teng Qingshan’s face turned cold as he asked, “You want to leave?”

Hearing this, the Great Master felt frightened and hastily replied, “No, no, I will have my second brother go back and collect it!”

“Don’t talk nonsense.” Teng Qingshan said apathetically, “I don’t have the time to wait for you to collect the money. Who knows how long it will take for your men to be back? I will give you ten minutes to collect five hundred thousand silver taels! If just one hundred thousand silver taels are missing, I will break your arms. If two hundred thousand silver taels are missing, I will break your arms and legs! If it’s three hundred thousand silver taels.....then you won’t be able to see the sunset today!”

The Great Master’s face instantly became pale white, and his legs became weak because the Great Master was afraid.

“Lord Lieutenant, I cannot give you that much money now! A time frame of ten minutes is too short, too short!” The Great Master was so worried that he was almost crying.

Teng Qingshan sneered, “You can use silver, gold, silver notes, and even precious items to make up for the debt! I will give you ten minutes to collect items that are worth five hundred thousand

silver taels."

"Don't give me those warhorses and hunks of steel. I have nowhere to put them!"

"Remember, you only have ten minutes!"

Teng Qingshan's words caused the Great Master to worry until he was covered with sweat. The Great Master hurriedly took out a wad of gold notes and said, "I..I have one thousand gold notes here!" The gold notes represented one thousand gold taels, which was worth ten thousand taels of silver.

"My Blood Drinking Saber!I spent over one hundred thousand silver taels to forge it." The Great Master hastily sheathed his saber and placed it on the ground.

Teng Qingshan glanced at the Blood Devouring Saber coldly and announced, "This saber is worth one hundred thousand taels"

"Yes, yes." The Great Master hastily responded. Simultaneously, he was contemplating carefully on ways that could get him the silver that he needed. As he was thinking, cold drops of perspiration rolled down his face due to stress.

To a warrior, weapons, armor, and warhorses were extremely valuable.

For instance, Teng Qingshan's Reincarnation Spear. Just the spear shaft itself used one hundred Jin of Star Pattern Steel, which was worth one hundred thousand silver taels. The spearhead was forged with 'Purple Radiant Coldsteel.' The Purple Radiant Coldsteel used to forge the spearhead was the larger piece of the two Coldsteel that Teng Qingshan had collected, and cost almost two hundred thousand silver taels.

This meant that……

Teng Qingshan's Reincarnation spear was worth three hundred thousand silver taels!

……

The soldiers of the Black Armored Army were originally shocked, but now, smiles appeared on their faces.

“Lord Lieutenant is so powerful!”

“That big group of mounted gangsters couldn’t hurt Lord Lieutenant at all. When Lord Lieutenant swung his long spear just now, he was like a ferocious tiger storming down the mountain. All the mounted gangsters were knocked into the air.”

“Hehe, five hundred thousand silver taels! Lord Lieutenant is so fierce!”

The soldiers praised and sighed in admiration. They also felt proud to be able to follow such a powerful lieutenant.

In the carriage, Zhu Chongshi’s family members were stretching their heads out to look.

“Father,do you think Uncle Teng can defeat that many mounted gangsters alone?” Is Uncle Teng as powerful as you?” The young boy blinked his big eyes. He gazed at Teng Qingshan in the distance with admiration. Kids admired heroes easily. Plus, Teng Qingshan was capable of easily catching and killing the leader who was within the flood-like group of mounted bandits.

Such ability caused even Zhu Chongshi to feel a sense of respect.

“Your Uncle Teng is a lot more powerful than father!” Zhu Chongshi patted his oldest son’s head with a smile and said, “You should also learn martial arts assiduously in the future and become a courageous hero like your Uncle Teng.”

“Yes!” That boy nodded quickly.

‘Father, I want to learn martial arts too.” The other kid interrupted.

“Me too!” A girl with braided hair hastily said.

“Haha……” Zhu Chongshi couldn’t help but laugh. “Alright. All

of you will learn." Zhu Tong had established a rule that future generations, regardless of gender, would have to cultivate inner strength and learn martial arts. But if one had no talent and was unable to cultivate inner strength, then exceptions would be made.

"Father, what is Uncle Teng doing now?" Zhu Chongshi's daughter asked.

Zhu Chongshi looked at Teng Qingshan, who was blackmailing the Great Master. A smile appeared on his face as he answered, "He is earning money!"

"Oh!"

Hearing this, the two boys and one girl showed an expression of understanding.

……

The company was relaxed and talking cheerfully with laughter. In contrast, the mounted bandits were chaotic. The ordinary mounted bandits were extremely terrified. Within just a short time, Teng Qingshan had killed over two hundred mounted bandits. Even the four elite mounted bandits who were beside the Great Master had died without the strength to fight back.

Terrified!

The Great Master was the most terrified one!

"Quick, it's about ten minutes." Teng Qingshan said indifferently, "All the things here only have a value of three hundred thirty thousand silver taels!"

Even the silver notes and weapons of the Second Master and Third Master were taken, but it still wasn't enough.

The Great Master was so anxious that his perspiration fell like raindrops. Suddenly, he remembered something and roared to his surroundings fiercely, "Second brother, take out your King Jade Buddha! Quick!"

“Big brother, this is a family heirloom……” The Second Master became anxious.

“Go f*cking die! Family heirloom, my ass. Quick, give it to me.” The Great Master yelled loudly as his facial expressions became horrifying. At this point, the Great Master would definitely kill the Second Master himself if the Second Master said anymore unnecessary words. The Second Master took the Bright Jade Buddha off his neck bitterly.

This small jade buddha actually reflected a faint colorful light.

“Eh?” Seeing this, Teng Qingshan’s eyes brightened.

“Big Brother……” The Second Master handed the King Jade Buddha over unwillingly.

“Don’t say nonsense. With your life still intact, what can’t you get in the future?” The Great Master snatched it away forcefully and looked at Teng Qingshan as he forced a smile, “Lord Lieutenant, this Bright Jade Buddha came from the western region! It is definitely a rare, precious item! It can’t be easily bought, even with money. This item definitely has a value of over one hundred thousand silver taels.”

Teng Qingshan spoke indifferently, “King Jade Buddha is valued at one hundred thousand silver taels. Now, everything added together is worth only four hundred thirty thousand. You still need seventy thousand taels. It’s almost ten minutes. If you can’t collect it by then, I will break your arms!

The Great Master’s facial expression changed drastically.

“Who… who else has precious items? Valuable precious items? Who has them!” The Great Master roared out.

However, only a dead silence replied.

Even if someone had it, they wouldn’t be willing to take it out.

“No more? Then I will break your two arms so that you can

remember this." Teng Qingshan said, as he began waving his Reincarnation Spear. The spearhead was shaped like a diamond, so its sides were sharp and could cut a shoulder off easily.

"No, no!" The Great Master hastily shouted, "I still have some more!"

With this, the Great Master took off his outer garment and revealed a gold vest. He took off this gold vest reluctantly and placed it on the ground. He then explained, "Lord Lieutenant, this vest of mine is made completely from the silk produced by golden silkworm that inhabits the southern areas of the untamed wilderness. This silk is far more precious than purple gold! If you wear it, it will keep you warm during the winter and cool during summer. Its defense is even as good as those heavy armors! This gold silk vest can't be found on sale anywhere!"

Hearing this, Teng Qingshan's eyes brightened.

He picked up the vest and found that the vest was extremely light. The Darksteel Inner Armor that he was wearing weighed over ten Jin, but this gold silk vest weighed only around one Jin.

A good precious item!

To warriors with the physical strength of around one thousand Jin, wearing heavy armors was inconvenient indeed. Therefore, this gold silk vest was definitely an item that warriors desired, and the price of this item was absolutely a lot more expensive than that Blood Devouring Saber. Of course, for monsters like Teng Qingshan, there was no difference from wearing Darksteel Inner Armor that weighed over ten Jin and the gold silk vest that weighed one Jin.

Originally, the Great Master did not want to trade in this precious item.

It was easy to earn money, but difficult to buy precious items.

"You have collected enough money, so I will spare your life."

Teng Qingshan placed all the notes into his arms and held the other items in his hands.

“Lord Lieutenant, this gold silk vest of mine is at least valued at two hundred thousand silver taels. How about that Blood Devouring Saber of mine……” The Great Master was still speaking when Teng Qingshan cast a cold glance directed at him. The Great Master was immediately silenced due to fear.

Teng Qingshan grabbed the two long sabers, the Millennium Coldsteel Strong Bow, the gold silk vest, the notes that were worth over a hundred thousand taels, the Bright Jade Buddha, and carried them in his arms as he walked back to the company. He shouted indifferently, “Quick, get your men out of my way!”

“Quick, get out of the way! Out of the way!” The Great Master hastily shouted.

Everyone in the company looked at Teng Qingshan with a sense of respect in their eyes.

This was how this world worked; the strong ones were respected.

“Brother Qingshan.” Zhu Chongshi said, as he nodded and flashed a smile at Teng Qingshan. He then scrutinized his surroundings and immediately ordered, “Quick! Get on the horses and depart!” As the order was given, the company vigorously set out again.

Chapter 118: The Expert Listed in the《Earthly Ranking》

The bandits and robbers parted so that the caravan could go through...

No one dared to stop the caravan.

Their Great Master, a big figure in Xuyang County, had been embarrassed! The Great Master had ordered that no one else should know anything about what had happened today.

However...

Today, there were a total of five thousand horse bandits. As all the horse bandits love drinking, it was unlikely for them not to tell anyone.

...

The good deeds are difficult to spread, but the bad deeds would travel a thousand Li away!

Wushan Gang, the number one gang in Fanwu City of Xuyang County, failed to rob even with five thousand men. Not only did they fail, they lost treasures and money worth over one million silver taels to the people they tried to rob. With the speed of the wind, this news spread across the cities and among the great forces within Xuyang County.

The Wushan Gang could send out five thousand horse bandits for one robbery. Thus, it was obvious that the Wushan Gang was extremely powerful.

In fact, Wushan Gang was stronger than the White Horse Gang in Teng Qingshan's hometown Yi City. However, this time, they had lost too much!

Actually, those treasures that they had lost were mostly calculated according to the lowest price. The actual price was

around 700,000-800,000 silver taels. However, as the story spread from places to places, it became more and more ridiculous!

Xuyang County was a very chaotic county!

The Wushan Gang was able to establish its gang in such a chaotic county. It was even backed up by such a huge force! Indeed, the Wushan Gang was not weak. Instead, Teng Qingshan was too fierce! The great number of soldiers could not stop Teng Qingshan from catching the leader. To Teng Qingshan, catching the leader was as easy as taking something from his own bag!

Because of Wushan Gang's failure and the reputation of the Black Armored Army, none of the gangs and sects in Xuyang County had the audacity to rob the caravan.

...

The caravan moved slowly on the official road and 70-80 guards and cavalrymen, as well as over 20 Black Armored Soldiers, guarded the cargo. As they continued forward, none of the bandits or robbers dared to rob them.

"Lord Lieutenant, they all say that Xuyang County is a very chaotic place! Since your display of power last time, we haven't encountered any robbery. It has been two days." Du Hong said with a smile.

"Haha, if they come again, Qingshan will rob them again." Teng Qingshan laughed and said.

Since Teng Qingshan took action last time and showed his incredibly powerful strength, his status rose even higher among the caravan.

The gold notes and silver notes Teng Qingshan had obtained amounted to 130000! The King Jade Buddha, Strongbow, battle dagger, gold silk vest were much more precious but these items couldn't be exchanged for money now.

The Black Armored Soldiers were really envious, but they never

thought about taking a share of the profit.

After all... Teng Qingshan acquired the money and precious items by himself. In the Black Armored Army, if a troop worked together and slaughtered a group of bandits, the officer would usually get more money than the other soldiers even if the officer didn't do anything. In this fight, none of the Black Armored Soldiers helped, so they naturally shouldn't be getting any of the profit.

However, Teng Qingshan still distributed some money.

He gave each Centurion ten thousand silver taels.

Each of the twenty soldiers, including the sergeants, was given one thousand silver taels.

The amount of money each soldier received this time was even more than their annual salary. The Black Armored Soldier's purses were filled with money. Thus, they supported Teng Qingshan even more. The 70-80 guards of the caravan were envious as well, but Teng Qingshan didn't bother sharing any money with them.

This was the benefit of being part of the Black Armored Army!

The more superior they felt as Black Armored Soldiers, the higher their sense of belonging." Teng Qingshan understood this very clearly. He then cast a glance at the carriage. At this moment, Zhu Chongshi was already in the carriage with his three kids. The thought of children just made Teng Qingshan feel so sad.

That memory of his previous life was still so vivid.

"Wolf, when we leave the organization, we should have two kids, a boy and a girl."

"Okay."

We will let them learn to play piano and drawing... We will let them live like the ordinary people! We won't teach them how to kill. I am really sick of the life here...

"Yes, we will leave the organization soon. Little Cat, we will!"

...

"Little Cat!" Teng Qingshan still remembered his wife in his previous life. The woman who appeared to be apathetic but was always very gentle whenever she was with him. The only women he had loved. If things had gone the way he planned, he would leave the organization when he reaches the SS-rank and would then start a family with Cat.

Unfortunately, Cat died. When Cat died, he began his mad revenge against the organization Red. Because of that, he understood the 'Saddened Knife.' He then focused entirely on the cultivation of martial art and eventually reached the Grandmaster Realm. Unfortunately, it was too late.

"Little Cat..." Teng Qingshan muttered.

Teng Qingshan shook his head and tried to hide this love from his previous life in the deepest area of his heart. He tried to make himself forget everything. After all, he was now living a new life. Still, there were some things that occasionally triggered his memory of his previous life.

"In this life, I have parents, sister, and the clansmen. I am content." Teng Qingshan calmed down and thought to himself, "Let me just focus on reaching the pinnacle of the martial arts! The legendary Emperor Yu was able to split a high mountain with five moves of his axe; the legendary Heavenly Emperor of Qin Mountains could stop the hundred Zhang wide river from flowing with the use of his palm. I am now too far away from them. This path is long and tough, but it is worth a lifetime of exploration!"

Teng Qingshan was determined.

...

The wheels creaked as the carriage moved forward. In the spacious carriage, only Zhu Chongshi and his two wives could be seen. As for the kids, they stayed with the servant in another

carriage.

"Master!" A beautiful woman, dressed in green, said anxiously, "We have entered Xuyang County for four whole days and we will be out of this county in two-to-three days. We will be safe when we arrived in Chu County. But...are your brothers really not taking any action?"

"Older sister is right. I am scared as well." Said another beautiful woman wearing purple clothes.

Zhu Chongshi leaned on the carriage. He ate some fruits and laughed, "Haha, you two ladies. Don't worry. We just came back from the sea. We entered Jiangning County from the East Sea and stopped only a few days before we continued our trip to County Chu! Like how I did, none of my brothers worked together. They developed their business individually. They wouldn't be able to gather information that quickly... I am afraid that only two or three of my brothers know of my return now!"

Jiangning County City was a city by the sea.

This was also why Zhu Chongshi stayed in Jiangning County City temporarily.

"Master, what will happen if they knew?" The beautiful woman dressed in green asked nervously.

"Don't you already know?" Zhu Chongshi said, "They won't dare to kill me and my children since my children and I are both the descendants of the Zhu Family! My father absolutely hates to see family members killing each other. If they had done that, my father would know as he has a very powerful information network. Father will never make someone who can kill his brother the head of the household! In fact, that person would lose his inheritance and would be kicked out of the Zhu Family!"

The two lady felt a sense of relief.

Their father-in-law, who was respected to be the "God of

Wealth," was very intimidating.

"They wouldn't dare to kill me and my kids, but they do dare to destroy and take my goods." Zhu Chongshi frowned and said, "If the goods were taken, there would only be a 20% chance of me becoming the head of the household when the time limit of ten years is up."

The two wives were well aware of the importance of the goods.

Because of this cargo, their husband had been on the sea for several years

"With this cargo, there is a 90% chance that I would be the head of the house when the time limit is up!" Zhu Chongshi smiled confidently.

Of the thirteen counties in Yangzhou, the counties in the south were the wealthiest while the counties in the north were the poorest. However, even in the poorest county of Yangzhou, which is Chu County, was considered wealthy when compared to the other counties in the entire Land of the Nine Prefectures.

No sign of any individuals could be found on the official road to the north. The sight of an inn was extremely rare.

There were very few inns in the desolate area outside the city. If an inn was set up in such an isolated area, it could easily become the target of bandits and robbers. All the inns in the desolate area were opened by the people with power and wealth!

The San Shi Inn! This was an inn opened by the official road north of Xuyang County. No other inns could be found anywhere sixty Li south or sixty Li north of this inn.

In a small house in the backyard of the San Shi Inn:

"Old Meng!" A guy wearing earthly yellow garment stepped into the house. He hastily said, "The people of Ninth Young Master Zhu is only fifty Li away from here! But it is afternoon now. They probably won't even arrive at the Inn at night. Maybe they will

spend the night in the wilderness. By that time, wouldn't Master's plan fail?"

A middle-aged man with extremely thick brows was inside the house. He was wiping a long saber with a slight arch. The long saber was as red as the color of blood.

"Hmph, what's there to worry about!" The middle-aged man humphed and said, The San Shi Inn can be found on the map. The Ninth Young Master has been traveling on the sea for several years. Still, he is a young master from a wealthy family. Therefore, he will definitely travel several more Li to get to a more comfortable place. Even if the Ninth Young Master didn't come in the end, we can go find him and do what we need to do!"

The man in the short garment hastily smiled and said, "With Old Meng here, the plan will succeed. However, Old Meng, there is this rumor spreading in Xuyang County. Apparently, the Lieutenant in the troop accompanying Ninth Young Master Zhu is a very powerful expert!"

"Alright. You may leave." The middle-aged man said with such indifference. Since the beginning, he had been staring at the long saber in his hand. He never even looked at the man once.

"Yes, yes." The man donned in the short garment hastily retreated.

Even though the middle-aged man had shown such a bad attitude, the man in the short garment wasn't angry at all. Because Old Meng was the number one expert working under his master, the Thirteenth Young Master of Zhu Clan.

Although he appeared to be a middle-aged man, he was actually over eighty years old.

He was able to maintain such an appearance because he had an abundant amount of inner strength and was very good at maintaining his health.

"With Old Meng, we will definitely seize the cargo. If those people came to the inn, Old Meng wouldn't need to do anything." The man in the short garment walked out of the house confidently. They had bought this San Shi Inn two days ago and had been waiting for Zhu Chongshi and the others here.

Old Meng's real name was Meng Tian.

If one read the recent <<Earthly Ranking>>, they would know that Meng Tian was the expert ranked sixty-one on the <<Earthly Ranking>>

One should not look down on him because he was ranked "sixty-one."

Even the four Commanders of the Black Armored Army were not qualified to be listed in the <<Earthly Ranking>>. After all, there were too many Postliminary Realm Experts. All the experts who were listed in the <<Earthly Ranking>> had peculiar and horrifying techniques. In fact, even the experts who have just attained the Innate Realm had to be careful of the experts listed in the <<Earthly Ranking>>.

Although the experts listed in the <<Earthly Ranking>> didn't have as much inner strength as the Innate Experts, they had their unique techniques.

The fact that the Thirteenth Young Master of the Zhu Clan was able to employ an expert listed in the <<Earthly Ranking>> showed that he was indeed quite capable.

Chapter 119: Bloody Battle in the Late Hours

As the sky darkened, more mosquitoes began to appear.

“Damn it. The mosquitoes in Xuyang County seem to be more savage than those in our Jiangning County.” Teng Qinghu slapped his face, killing a mosquito. The worst thing about travelling at night during the summer was that there were way too many mosquitoes present.

“Sigh. We are already better off here. I heard that in the desolated lands in the south, the mosquitoes are really savage. There is even a type of poisonous mosquito. Even if a practitioner of martial arts is bitten once on the arm, their whole arm would turn numb! If the person gets bitten a few more times, they could even lose their life!” Du Hong lamented.

Teng Qinghu was astonished. “Such a potent poisonous mosquito exists?”

“You’d think that the desolated south is such an easy place to live in? There are almost no traces of humans there, allowing the growth of the thousand year old Lingzhi, the King of Ginseng, as well as many treasured herbs. There are also some unique mystical beasts, as well as secret manuals, weapons, and such valuables left behind by many martial art experts. With so many treasures, it is easy to see why people venture to the desolated south. It’s probably already filled people.” Du Hong said.

Teng Qinghu nodded in agreement.

Taking for example the Gold Silk Vest Teng Qingshan just obtained, the golden silkworm could only be found in the desolate south.

“The chances of finding mystical beasts and mystical herbs are higher in the deep mountains and aged forests where human traces are rare.” Teng Qingshan nodded to himself in agreement. Even

the Great Yan Mountain next to his hometown could hide a flood dragon. How could there be no powerful mystical beasts in the vast lands of the desolate south where there were few traces of human?

“Everyone hurry up! Another twenty Li and we will reach the San Shi Inn. If you want to eat grilled meat and drink lots of wine, then hang on for a little bit longer. You can rest when we’ve reached the San Shi Inn!” Old man Wu Tan called out loudly.

“Everyone buck up and hang on for a little bit longer.”

Loud responses rang through the air as the guards started to excitedly discuss what they planned to eat and drink that night.

……

After about two hours, the group finally reached San Shi Inn.

“Dear guests, please come in!” Upon seeing that there was such a large band of traders outside, three to four waiters quickly popped out and served them passionately.

The butler Wu Tan instructed, “Waiter, bring these guards to the backyard of your inn. Prepare a few more tables there and let them order any good food and wine themselves!” Wu Tan turned back to the guards and spoke, “Everyone please take note not to drink too much.”

“Old Wu, please rest assured. This is not the first time we are staying at an inn. We will not cause any delays to the important business.” One of the leaders of the guards smiled and replied.

Immediately seven to eight guards led the large number of war horses, chariots, and goods to the backyard of the inn. After all, goods and war horses were expensive items. They would need to pay more heed, especially to the war horses of the Black Armored Army.

“Brother Qingshan, let’s go and get some food first.” Zhu Chong Shi smiled and said to Teng Qingshan.

Zhu Chong Shi and his wives, children, as well as a few servants entered the inn together with Teng Qingshan and the Black Armored Army.

Once they stepped into the inn!

Teng Qingshan glanced across the room and noticed that there were five tables of customers sitting at the side of the inn. Some of them were revealing their arms, while others their chest, as they drank large mouthfuls of wine and spoke with no restraint. Weapons lay on their tables or beside their chairs. There were about twenty odd people in total.

When Teng Qingshan and company, who were wearing heavy armor, stepped into the inn —-

The temperature in the inn seemed to drop. The men, who were initially chatting without restraint, lowered their voices. They glanced over as each of them started to touch for their weapons or placed them nearby where it was within reach.

When travelling outside, it was a common occurrence that when there were slight disagreements, fights and bloodshed would follow.

……

Teng Qingshan frowned. While the inn was not small, there were only ten tables. The other party had taken up five tables, leaving only five vacant. Everyone in the Black Armored Army was wearing their heavy armor, and four men would already take up one table. Even if they squeezed a little, the tables were apparently insufficient.

“You guys.” Du Hong, in his heavy armor, looked towards some of them coldly, “ Squeeze to the side a little and give up one table!”

“What did you say!” A topless lofty man smashed his hand down hard on the table as he stood up.

“Hu!”

Twenty men of the Black Armored Army turned their heads in unison, looking towards the group of men coldly.

The lofty man shivered.

Clank! Clank! ……

The twenty odd men immediately stood up with their weapons, every single one of them wary. They could tell that the other party were all in heavy armor, and should they fight, they would be on the losing end.

“Don’t cause any trouble.” A stern man, with draping hair, sat down as he cupped his hands and said, “Dear fellow heroes, those five tables are definitely not sufficient enough for you. We will give up one table.” This man with long draping hair was obviously very dangerous.

Although the other men were unwilling, they still gave up one table.

Even if there were six tables, Teng Qingshan and company could only attempt to squeeze together.

“Shopkeeper, quickly bring out the dishes and the wine.” Butler Wu Tan called out after picking the dishes.

“Of course, be right up.” The shopkeeper held the menu as he ran towards the backyard himself.

With Teng Qingshan and company taking up the six tables, the twenty-odd men at the side lowered their volume a lot when they spoke.

Very soon ——

Dishes of food and bottles of wine kept being served. Teng Qingshan and company were obviously eating much better food than those roaming men.

“Brother Qingshan, everyone can rest well after quickly finishing the food. It is not early anymore. We still need to continue on our

journey tomorrow morning.” Zhu Chong Shi said.

Teng Qingshan nodded.

The sky was already pitch dark outside. The butler Wu Tan took out a silver needle and Lan Yun Pearl to check for poison. The men from the Black Armored Army also tested the food for poison before they dug in. One needed to be careful when roaming across the world, especially toward at inns located in the wilderness.

……

Over tens of people gathered in a big room at the rear court of the inn, with Boss Meng leading the pack.

“Light the lamps!” Boss Meng calmly spoke out.

“Yes” The waiter dressed in a shirt nodded his head as he brought out an oil lamp. As he walked to the rear court, he exchanged glances with the shopkeeper and replaced the lamp that had gone out.

The lamp continued burning silently.

The man wearing a shirt took a look at the people in the hall and thought coldly to himself, “Now that you’ve reached the inn, all of you will be dead meat even without Boss Meng doing anything.”

……

The company of people were happily enjoying their food in the hall.

“Come, Qingshan, let’s toast.” Zhu Chong Shi smiled as he raised the cups in his hands.

Teng Qingshan also emptied his cup in one gulp. It was comfortable as a feeling of spiciness filled his stomach. Suddenly, he sniffed something and frowned.

One had to know that……

Teng Qingshan could even control the flow of his blood. He has

long mastered the pinnacle of the Grandmaster, and with just a sniff, he could detect that there was a scentless and colorless substance in the air. This substance would numb one's senses.

"Hold your breath, and use a wet towel to cover your mouth and noses!" Teng Qingshan shouted out. "Someone is attempting to poison us!"

"There's poison!" A scene of ruckus filled the hall instantly.

Teng Qingshan stood up, holding on to his Reincarnation spear as he glanced across at the three waiters at the side.

"There's really poison." The first to lose consciousness was Zhu Chongshi's youngest daughter, while the rest felt slight giddiness. Thank goodness they had only inhaled a small amount as Teng Qingshan had warned them quite early. If not, all of them would have lost consciousness.

The better the physique, the harder it was to be poisoned.

For instance, one would need to use an amount of anesthetic many times the amount for a human to anesthetize an elephant.

And Teng Qingshan has a much better physique than an elephant. It would still be hard for him to faint, even if he were to inhale a lot of the substance. If he were to control the flow of his blood, there was no way for him to be poisoned.

"Lieutenant!" All of them turned towards Teng Qingshan.

"Protect Ninth Master Zhu and head to the backyard!" Teng Qingshan commanded.

"Attack!" Loud shouts came from the backyard.

Suddenly loud cries came from the direction of the backyard.

"Haha, the reputable lieutenant 'Teng Qingshan' of the Black Armored Army is definitely a top notch expert! To be able to detect the scentless and colorless 'Drifting to Dreamland with the Wind' so quickly!" – a loud laughter came in, and more than ten more

men charged in from the upper levels of the inn, each of them holding bows and arrows, raining arrows on the people below.

Teng Qingshan raised his head and looked towards the group of archers. “In a group battle, archers are the biggest threats. We have to get rid of them first!”

“Hmph!”

With one leap, Teng Qingshan reached the second floor.

“Kill him!” The archers drew the blades from their waists and slashed towards Teng Qingshan at the corridor of the second floor.

“Pu!”“Pu!”“Pu!”……

As if a sudden gust of whirlwind, Teng Qingshan killed over ten archers at the speed of lightning. At the same time, the rest of the Black Armored Army had already escorted Zhu Chongshi and his family out into the backyard.

After killing the ten-odd archers, he kicked open the doors of one of the rooms. Charging in, with a “bang” he smashed into a big window and leaped into the chaotic battle taking place in the wide courtyard.

Blood splashed across the place!

Tens of the guards were already lying down on the floor, a lot of them pierced with arrows.

Initially the guards had fallen into a disadvantageous situation. Fortunately the troops from the Black Armored Army rushed out from the front hall and started to engage the killers. The enemies had deployed a lot of manpower. There were close to hundred of them.

“Unexpectedly there are quite a few inner strength experts! This isn’t good. If this continues on, our Black Armored Army will face sacrifices of over half of our men!” Within just a short while, two of the men from the Black Armored Army had already fallen. Of

course, there were more men from the other side who were dead by now.

Once in the courtyard, Teng Qingshan scanned the savage battle happening around and immediately set his sights on a few men.

“Pu!” “Pu!” “Pu!”.....

Teng Qingshan’s skills with his spear were remarkable. Regardless of who it was, it would only take him one thrust to kill them! Teng Qingshan killed eight consecutive men in one hit. These eight men were all experts in inner strength, but they were completely defenseless against Teng Qingshan’s Spear Art, the Pursuing Shadow.

“Good skills!” A loud voice shouted out.

“Rumble!”

A figure darted out from a room with lightning speed, to the extent of picking up a gust of strong wind. This was immediately followed by a glistening red slash.

Teng Qingshan could only feel suppressed by the pressure of the slash, as if he had plummeted into an ice cave.

“This expert is ten times stronger than Yue Song and Zhuge Yuan!” Just this slash alone sent the blood of Teng Qingshan boiling. “Finally I’ve met a real expert!”

“Hu!”

The spear whizzed, as if it was a flood dragon as it swallowed to the direction of the light from the blade.

Spear Art Pursuing Shadow – strength of fifty-thousand Jin!

A strong power of fifty thousand Jin with just one strike!

“Clank!”

The expert easily dismissed Teng Qingshan’s rotational power with his whirlwind-like skills and leapt onto the rooftop of one of

the buildings as the blade and spear collided in midair. The Meng Tian was also astonished. “What horrifying Spear Arts! It was as if it has accumulated a unseen whirlpool. Even my slash was affected!”

“Come down!” Teng Qingshan bellowed, as he smashed his spear fiercely into the walls at the side.

“Rumble!”

The wall crumbled, as if it was made of paper, with debris and mud flying all over. Meng Tian took flight immediately.

Teng Qingshan’s gaze was sharp as a knife. With a thrust, the spear that had crashed into the walls swiftly turned into a thrusting stance. “Swish!” It pierced towards the Meng Tian who was in mid-air as if a flash of lightning.

Chapter 120: Bloody Man

As Meng Tian encountered this fierce spear that could pierce a hole in the heavens, he responded with a simple slash downward.

Whew!

The demonic-looking blood-red saber flashed again, making a clang sound. Meng Tian borrowed force from the spear and pounced toward the Black Armored Soldiers who were fighting in the backyard. "Haha!" He guffawed and he hacked toward the Centurion Du Hong with his blood-red saber. Du Hong's facial expression changed. He couldn't stop with his long spear.

"Whew!"

In the dark night, a beam of light shot through the sky. Teng Qingshan stared at Meng Tian and hurled a flying knife with his left hand.

The speed of flying knife was so fast that Meng Tian's expression changed slightly.

"Clang!" Meng Tian's Blood Moon Saber immediately turned and blocked the flying knife.

"Du Hong, finish the fight as soon as possible! Kill all of them!" Teng Qingshan roared and pounced toward Meng Tian like a fierce tiger. The long spear in his hands shone coldly pierced toward Meng Tian.

"Yes! Lord Lieutenant!" Du Hong answered loudly and immediately shouted, "Brothers, kill them all!"

Two of the twenty-two Black Armored Soldiers had collapsed.

However...

When Teng Qingshan entered the backyard, he killed the eight inner strength experts, who would be considered the most troublesome opponents, in one breath. Now, the remaining

experts at the San Shi Inn could do nothing to the Black Armored Soldiers, who wore heavy armors and aided each other during the fight. They tried to slash and cut the Black Armored Soldiers with their swords and sabers, but the Black Armored Soldiers would still be fine.

However, the experts at the San Shi Inn were all wearing soft armor. Thus, how could they compete against the Black Armored Soldiers?

If they wanted to kill the Black Armored Soldiers, they had to try to pierce through the gaps at join areas or attack the face. However, those areas were too small.

"Puchi!""Puchi!""Puchi!"...

The Black Armored Soldiers split into two rows as they advanced and fought. One after the other, the opposing experts at the San Shi Inn collapsed beneath their long spears. Zhu Chongshi's several dozen personal guards also fired their arrows from the side. For a moment, Teng Qingshan and his men were winning. Many of Meng Tian's men suffered injuries and many died.

Not only were these people fighting, Teng Qingshan and Meng Tian were engaging in a very intense fight.

"Boom!"

He smashed with his Reincarnation Spear, bringing up a powerful force that caused a series of air explosion.

Meng Tian stomped and leaped up a height of three-to-four Zhang to the rooftop of the San Shi Inn and Teng Qingshan smashed a big hole on the wall of the San Shi Inn with his Reincarnation Spear.

Teng Qingshan looked up and leaped up as well. At that moment, he was like an eagle pouncing on the prey.

"Is Teng Qingshan really less than 20 years old?" Meng Tian couldn't help but doubt the information gathered by the

Thirteenth Young Master of Zhu Clan. He thought to himself, "Every move seemed simple but difficult to block. The move of his spear might appear to be coming straight forward, but the direction the spear was going could change at any time. He might appear to be striking down heavily, but could instantly withdraw his spear and change the direction of his attack!"

"He's less than 20 years old, but his spear art is like the flowing river waters and emanating a majestic aura. It is very difficult to fend off his spear art." Meng Tian was slightly worried. "Which old monster was able to teach a disciple like this... I would probably be no match against him in a few years!"

Yet, Meng Tian didn't know that...

When Teng Qingshan first created the spear art, he spent most time and effort on the 'Transmutation Unity Qi' spear art. This was his strongest technique. As he pulled and twisted his long spear, he could instantly change his attack. With the Transmutation Unity Qi as the support, Teng Qingshan would never worry about his attacks stopping and giving the enemy any chance to attack.

The only technique with a weakness is the Toxic Dragon Drill!

The moment he began performing the Toxic Dragon Drill, he would lose control of his spear. However, the 'Toxic Dragon Drill' could injure even the Flood Dragon. If Teng Qingshan couldn't kill his opponent with this technique couldn't kill his opponent, then he would have no choice but to flee.

Clop! Clop! Clop!

Meng Tian dashed on the rooftop and Teng Qingshan pursued at lightning speed.

"Haha, Teng Qingshan, considering that you are less than twenty years old, I will let you go if you can block this technique of mine!" Meng Tian said out of a love for the talented youngster.

"Shameless!" Teng Qingshan shouted.

Meng Tian's facial expression changed. He was a powerful expert listed in the Earthly Ranking and an eighty-plus-years-old senior with a good reputation.

"Then prepare to fight against my 'Blood Red Dance!'" Meng Tian guffawed. He suddenly turned and attacked at lightning speed.

Teng Qingshan's eyes narrowed as he moved the long spear in his hands and pierced with the spear technique 'Pursuing Shadows.'

Whew! Whew! Whew! Whew!

Within the blink of an eye, Meng Tian's figure blurred. Teng Qingshan could only see beams of saber light heading towards him from all directions. There were sabers coming from above, bottom, right, left, back, front... Instantly, Teng Qingshan felt as though he was trapped.

The Blood Moon Dance was Meng Tian's world-renowned special technique.

He could unleash 49 slashes instantly and every slash had the terrifying power that could break huge rocks.

Clang! Clang! Clang! Clang!

A rapid clashing sounds rang and every strike produced powerful air explosions, which blasted the tiles in the surrounding into the sky.

Meng Tian stepped back and stood still on the beam of a roof.

Teng Qingshan stood on the wooden beam as well. He felt inwardly shocked as he thought to himself, "Meng Tian's speed is much faster than Little Yun. Fortunately, my 'Pursuing Shadows' spear techniques had contained the concept of 'growing and multiplying continuously.' Every move of this technique is now connected! Otherwise, I wouldn't be able to fend off his moves with a strength of only 50000 Jin.

Teng Qingshan was surprised. Yet, he had no idea that Meng

Tian was even more shocked.

"Did he block my moves? He blocked all the moves of my Blood Moon Dance?!" Meng Tian sensed the blood within his body surging up and he felt like puking blood.

The Blood Moon Dance had forty-nine moves and each move was faster than the previous move. And so, the requirements for the moving speed and body shape, as well as the slashing of the knife, were extremely harsh.

"Haha... Teng Qingshan, I admire you. Soon, you will be listed in the <<Earthly Ranking>> as well. I, Meng Tian, shall keep my promise. I will spare your life today." With this, Meng Tian smiled and dashed towards the darkness far away. However, a sharp hiss sounded!

It was a flying knife!

Meng Tian had no choice but to stop and defend against this flying knife.

"Meng Tian, I am the one who decides whether you leave or not!" Teng Qingshan flew out at the same as the flying knife. While Meng Tian was blocking the flying knife, he could see that Teng Qingshan had already pounced toward him.

Teng Qingshan attacked from above and slashed forcefully with the Reincarnation Spear!

Whew!

Although he was unable to transform the Slashing Fist into a spear art, Teng Qingshan could still use the understanding of the Slashing Fist. Now, he was like a huge mountain smashing downward.

"Rumble~~~" The spear art brought along a terrifying air explosion.

Meng Tian had just blocked the flying knife and was unable to

dodge. Thus, he could only block with his Blood Moon Saber.

"Clang!"

The tiles beneath his feet broke and Meng Tian fell through the hole on the roof.

...

The men who were in San Shi Inn had immediately run out of the Inn the moment the fight began. They stood outside and watched the fight. At this moment, they saw Teng Qingshan fighting Meng Tian on the rooftop and then Meng Tian fell.

"Big Brother, did you hear that? One is called Meng Tian and the other is called Teng Qingshan.

The man with his long hair untied nodded and said, "Meng Tian is the powerful expert listed in the <<Earthly Ranking>>. I did not expect us to witness this big fight. That person called Teng Qingshan is really powerful. He isn't at a disadvantage at all."

"I can't believe we wanted to fight with him. A fight with him would have been courting death." The guys couldn't help but feel afraid as they thought about it.

Teng Qingshan could probably kill them all.

"Big Brother, who do you think will win?" The group of men stared at the San Shi Inn. At this moment, noises erupted from the San Shi Inn. Teng Qingshan and Meng Tian were obviously engaging in a very intense fight inside the Inn.

"I think the winner will be Meng Tian! You all heard what he said on the rooftop. He hasn't performed his strongest technique because he favored the talented and gifted individuals." The man with his hair draped over his shoulder pondered and said, "Moreover, Meng Tian was able to be ranked in the <<Earthly Ranking>>. Therefore, he must have a terrifying technique. Once he performs that technique, Teng Qingshan will most likely lose!"

The moment he was done talking—

"Whew!"

A figure broke the window of the Inn and leaped outside. He appeared to be slightly embarrassed. This person was Meng Tian.

Whoosh!

A terrifying cold light shot out of the wall of the inn. Like a wall-drilling machine, Teng Qingshan crushed the wall, making a loud boom. Crushed rocks flew in all directions. Still, Teng Qingshan kept his fierce-looking eyes on Meng Tian.

"Pu!" The light of the spearhead had already arrived before Meng Tian.

"Clang!" Meng Tian dodged.

"Teng Qingshan, you are going to die!" Meng Tian roared furiously.

Teng Qingshan stared at him coldly and said, "Show me your best technique and prove to me that you can kill me. Otherwise, the same day next year will be your death anniversary!"

Meng Tian's eyes turned cold. He wanted to kill Teng Qingshan, the performance of his best technique was harmful to his body. Therefore, he wouldn't use his best technique unless it was a moment of life or death. However, Meng Tian had no choice as he had encountered Teng Qingshan's fierce spear art.

"You are courting death!" Meng Tian gritted his teeth and said.

"Chichi~~"

Strangely, Meng Tian's skin suddenly became very red. Drops of blood seeped out of the pores in his entire body. The blood instantly dyed Meng Tian's shirt red and Meng Tian himself looked as though he was covered with blood. His entire body was red and it looked very horrifying.

Teng Qingshan wasn't surprised. Instead, he was happy to be able

to finally see the true ability of the expert who was listed on the <<Earthly Ranking>>!"

The bloody man and the blood-red saber!

"Die." Meng Tian roared violently.

A blood-red shadow instantly moved a distance of over ten Zhang. He was so fast that Teng Qingshan was surprised.

"Chi!"

The Blood Moon Saber was so fast that the air shook. The saber shadows in Teng Qingshan's field of view blurred and Teng Qingshan couldn't tell which was the real saber.

Teng Qingshan's ears flinched.

With his eyes and ears, Teng Qingshan instantly determined the location of the saber. The inner strength in his body instantly surged up violently, allowing his spear to go another level faster!

When Teng Qingshan was creating the <<Five Techniques of the Ardent Flame>>, he merged the concepts of the <<Ardent Flame Spear Art>> and perfected the Five Element Fists. Because each move of his spear could stimulate the acupuncture points, the speed of his spear increased drastically! This was something Teng Qingshan normally wouldn't do, and he finally did today!

He was still using a strength of 50000 Jin. However, this time, he also used inner strength, which caused the speed of his spear to move 60-70% faster.

"Whew!"

The Reincarnation Spear moved like a streak of lightning and pierced toward the blurry red saber.

It was as though he had slashed the sky open.

Clang!

The Reincarnation Spear and the Blood Moon Saber separated

the instant they touched. Both weapons had been affected and had changed its direction. Meng Tian and Teng Qingshan were both trying to dodge. However, Teng Qingshan's Reincarnation Spear had a length of nine Chi and six Cun, while the Blood Moon Saber had a length of around four Chi.

At this moment, a longer weapon had more advantage. Before the Blood Moon Saber had even touched Teng Qingshan, the Reincarnation Spear had pierced into Meng Tian's left arm, making a plop sound.

Chapter 121: The Power of a Force of One Hundred and Eighty thousand Jin

“Argh!” Meng Tian shrieked in pain, the force of his Blood Moon Saber weakening.

Teng Qingshan took the chance to go for the kill, targeting to slash open Meng Tian’s chest. Knowing that he was in a life or death situation, Meng Tian quickly sprung up the moment his left arm was pierced, and rapidly retreated. Although he was swift in his escape, his left arm was still severed by Teng Qingshan’s Reincarnation Spear. It left a wound on his chest as well.

Hu!

A blood-red figure dashed off to the far distance.

“Teng Qingshan! I, Meng Tian, will definitely pay you back for what you have done today!” Meng Tian shouted out.

Teng Qingshan glared at him coldly.

“Don’t think you can escape your death!” Teng Qingshan chased after him at full speed as well. A red figure and a black figure, one behind the other, charged into the darkness of the wilderness.

……

“How, how could this be possible?” All of the men were dumbstruck.

“Teng Qingshan actually pushed back Meng Tian and severed one of his arms, inflicting a serious injury on him!” The leader of the pack was in shock. The men besides him all started to ask, “Big Brother, was that Meng Tian an expert in the «Earthly Ranking»? How could he be defeated by Teng Qingshan? Now that Teng Qingshan is chasing after him, will he be killed?”

The leader considered for a moment. “Meng Tian’s speed is obviously somewhat faster. But he has lost an arm and has

received serious injuries, his speed is bound to slow down. If Teng Qingshan persists in chasing after him, it is possible that he can kill Meng Tian!”

At that moment —-

A big group of men came rushing in from the back. It was Teng Qinghu, Du Hong and the men from the Black Armored Army, as well as Zhu Chongshi and company. Upon seeing the severed arm on the floor, Zhu Chongshi’s face paled. He turned to look at the men who were observing the battle and asked, “Where are Meng Tian and Teng Qingshan?”

The leader quickly replied, “Fellow heroes, we saw the fierce battle between Meng Tian and Teng Qingshan earlier. Meng Tian lost an arm and escaped. Teng Qingshan chased after him!”

“Meng Tian lost?” Du Hong, Teng Qinghu, Zhu Chong Shi and company could not hold back their surprise.

Those who practiced martial arts would be familiar with the «Earthly Ranking». After hearing the name “Meng Tian”, and seeing the display of his skills, they had all guessed his identity and were concerned for Teng Qingshan. After all, the other party was an extraordinary figure who was listed in the «Earthly Ranking».

In the wilderness, Teng Qingshan was currently chasing after Meng Tian at flying speed.

“I cut off one of his arms, so he definitely must hold an extreme hatred towards me. Before he took off, he was still gritting his teeth and declaring that he would be back for revenge.”

Teng Qingshan was well aware of the importance of doing a clean job, especially in the case of an expert this strong who also held hatred towards him. It was a must to kill him! Teng Qingshan scanned the surroundings. “Hmm, there is also no one in the vicinity now!”

Hu!

Teng Qingshan's speed suddenly increased at an amazing rate.

Qing Gong — Crossing Worlds!

"I will definitely take revenge for the arm that you took from me." Resentment grew in Meng Tian. "Chase after me? Hmph, how can his speed compare to mine!" Meng Tian was full of confidence.

He had always been the kind to rely on his speed to win. Furthermore, he had also used a forbidden move earlier, thus increasing his speed even more.

Truly……

If Teng Qingshan had not applied the skill of «Crossing Worlds», he would not have been able to catch up.

"What?" Meng Tian could not help but turn his head around towards the sounds he heard coming from behind, and his face paled. Teng Qingshan's speed was faster than his!

"That's impossible!!!" Meng Tian was filled with disbelief.

"Die, Meng Tian!" Teng Qingshan roared.

"I'm already suffering from serious injuries. If the fight is continued, I will definitely be killed by Teng Qingshan. I lost my arm earlier because my Blood Moon Saber is shorter than his spear. This time around, even if his spear pierced through me, I would seize the opportunity to kill him." Meng Tian made up his mind to kill Teng Qingshan at all costs.

Even if he were to die, he would bring Teng Qingshan along with him!

Meng Tian howled out in a state of craziness, "We will die together!" The Blood Moon Saber in his arms slashed towards Teng Qingshan.

Meng Tian was already prepared to receive the powerful blow from Teng Qingshan's spear.

But —

He was wrong.

This time around, Teng Qingshan did not employ the Spear Art, Pursuing Shadow.

Instead —–

“Haha……” Teng Qingshan laughed out loud, and whirled the spear in his hand. It appeared as if he had grabbed a large stick, and like how a parent would discipline their child, just freely smash it towards Meng Tian without any hint of spear or staff art forms!

Chi chi~

Teng Qingshan raised his arms up high!

Rumble!

The smash from Teng Qingshan’s spear created a loud blast, making it sound as if a loud clash of thunder had appeared out of nowhere. The immense pressure had also caused the land nearby to blow up.

“Boom!”

With a loud blast, nothing but a coat of bloodied fog was left.

“Haha. That was very satisfying. Such a rare opportunity to display all of my power.” Teng Qingshan looked at the blood-coated earth. That simple smash a moment ago had encompassed the strongest power from Teng Qingshan — an immense force of a hundred and eighty thousand Jin!

One man with the strength to overpower ten warriors!

Regardless of what skills one employed or what mental state one was in!

A swing of the spear would smash and blow a person up into a pile of muddy flesh.

There was no longer any corpse on the ground. That swing with a great force of a hundred and eighty thousand Jin had reached a terrifying speed and compressed the air in front of it. When the Reincarnation Spear smashed onto Meng Tian's body, it had instantly ruptured all his bones and muscles. The compressed air had also exploded, causing Meng Tian's entire body to blow up and disappear without a trace.

A force of a hundred and eighty thousand Jin!

The pinnacle force of the Grandmaster!

The expert from «Earthly Ranking», Meng Tian, had been eliminated without any remains left under the face of absolute power.

The only remnant Meng Tian left behind was – The Blood Moon Saber!

"This Blood Moon Saber is worthy of its name as a legendary weapon, suffering not a single scratch from the force of my strength of a hundred and eighty thousand Jin." Teng Qingshan was full of admiration as he picked up the Blood Moon Saber. "Meng Tian, you are the first expert from the «Earthly Ranking» that I have killed. This Blood Moon Saber will be the proof to that!"

Teng Qingshan scanned the surrounding darkness. "There are countless experts across the Nine Prefectures. Now that I've killed Meng Tian today, I'm afraid that my name will also spread across the world!"

……

Nightfall. The Black Armored Army, as well as Zhu Chongshi and company, waited outside the dilapidated San Shi Inn.

"Why is Qingshan not back yet." Teng Qinghu was slightly anxious.

Beside him, Zhu Chongshi laughed and said, "Don't worry. Since

Brother Qingshan has already inflicted serious injury upon Meng Tian, he won't be in any danger, even if he can't actually kill Meng Tian.

"While that's true, everyone knows that when an expert of the Earthly Ranking goes all out, it is still very terrifying."

At this moment, the sound of footsteps could be heard.

Teng Qingshan emerged from the darkness.

"Qingshan!" Teng Qinghu gleamed in delight and was the first one to step up.

"Brother Qingshan, how was it?" Zhu Chongshi also stepped forward. Teng Qingshan smiled as he raised the Blood Moon Saber in his hands. "From today onwards, there is no longer anyone by the name of Meng Tian."

While everyone was somewhat prepared for this, they were still surprised.

It is one thing to injure an expert from the Earthly Ranking. It is another to kill him.

"Qingshan, now that you have killed Meng Tian, you have also become an expert of the «Earthly Ranking». Your name will definitely be listed in the new list!" Zhu Chongshi exclaimed. The Du Hong who was standing beside him also exclaimed, "Lord Lieutenant, to be able to be listed in the «Earth Ranking»at your young age means that you can also be listed in the «Hidden Dragon Ranking». To be on both lists at the same time, haha..... you are the first to do so in our Gui Yuan Sect."

Everyone was excited.

Everyone knew that there was one strict principle for the ranking of the «Earthly Ranking» —- One had to kill an expert from the «Earthly Ranking» in a one-on-one fight or make him admit defeat. The winner would then replace the expert in the «Earthly Ranking». This was the fastest way! If one only injured, it would

not be sufficient to take over the position.

That meant, Teng Qingshan would directly take on the 61st position on the «Earthly Ranking».

“61st on the «Earthly Ranking»!” Everyone exclaimed.

Across the Nine Prefectures, there were many challengers who attempted to take on the experts of the «Earthly Ranking» daily. However, these experts did not take on opponents often. Even if they were to take on an opponent, they would win most of the time. Many challengers were killed in the process. Regardless, there were still many who would try to take on the challenge just to make a name for themselves.

By killing Meng Tian, Teng Qingshan would be stepping on the corpse of Meng Tian to rise to the 61st position on the «Earthly Ranking» with honor.

From today onwards, Teng Qingshan would no longer be an ordinary warrior. There would be many people vainly challenging him in hopes of victory.

“The more the merrier. It would be best if some true experts came.” Teng Qingshan was looking forward to it.

Experts tended to be lonely. They would be happier instead if they faced challengers who could fight well against them.

……

“Brother Zhu, how are our losses?” Teng Qingshan asked Zhu Chongshi. Zhu Chongshi felt a tinge of dismay. “Of the eighty guards under me, there were thirty-six who died and eighteen who were badly injured. The rest of the men mostly also suffer from light injury. That means, only the remaining twenty-six can still fight.”

Teng Qingshan sighed.

With more than half of the team killed or injured, it was indeed

disastrous.

“Old Du.” Teng Qingshan looked at Du Hong.

Du Hong’s face was grim. “Lieutenant. We lost two of our brothers and there is another one who is badly injured. He was lucky that the sword that pierced through his waist had not kill him! The rest of the men are still alright.” As the Black Armored Army were donned with heavy armor, they were usually safe; if not, the attacks tended to be fatal.

The Black Armored Army ended up with two deaths and one wounded.

“What about the enemies?” Teng Qingshan inquired.

“The other side has over eighty casualties while the remaining escaped after seeing that they were at a disadvantage.” Du Hong replied.

Zhu Chongshi patted Teng Qingshan on the shoulders. “Brother Qingshan, don’t think too much about it. Luckily you warned us early so that we were able to force out the poison with our inner strength. If it was a tad later……Or, if you were not able to push back Meng Tian, it would’ve definitely been the end of us. Not sure who the one able to send an expert of Meng Tian’s level was, but that is also a good thing, since Brother Qingshan was able to kill Meng Tian and be listed in the «Earthly Ranking».”

“Everyone, it’s late. We’d better hurry up and deal with the corpses of the brothers who had died and have an early rest. We will set off first thing tomorrow morning.” Zhu Chongshi said.

Everyone immediately headed to the backyard, preparing to deal with the corpses.

“Qingshan, you really are powerful.” Teng Qinghu said excitedly as he walked beside Teng Qingshan. “Someone from our Teng Clan has concurrently made the list of the «Earthly Ranking» and the «Hidden Dragon Ranking»; once grandfather and the rest hear

about it, they will probably wake up from their smiles even if they’re dreaming.”

Chapter 122: Strange Occurrence At The Border

One of the state of Zhou's thirteen counties, North Star County housed the Lingering Wind Building, where the red card females currently resided.

The mellow sound of a zither resounded. At times, the music would be fast and agile, then slow and gentle. It was truly extraordinary for one's zither arts to reach the level where the sound of a zither was able to freely project one's emotions. Lu Yi's facial features could only be described as pretty, but her zither arts firmly established her red card status.

Within the building, aside from Lu Yi playing the zither, there was another elegant youth wearing a white garment. This elegant youth had his eyes closed as he attentively listened to the sound of the zither.

Suddenly——

Footsteps came from the stairs.

"Lu Yi, withdraw first." The elegant youth instructed.

"Yes." Lu Yi was extremely obedient, and she proceeded to withdraw.

The elegant youth had a bad premonition. When he had first began listening to the zither, he forbade anyone from disturbing him unless something big had occurred. Right now, did something happen?

"Is it news from the business at Lan Ze River? Or is it about trying to steal Ninth Brother's goods?" The elegant youth began pondering.

"Master." An old man walked in and bowed.

"Yes." The elegant youth looked over.

“Boss Meng has died. He was killed by the Black Armored Army’s Teng Qingshan. As for the 100 assassin’s, only thirteen survived.” The old man said.

The elegant youth’s face slightly changed. He proceeded to indifferently command: “Very well, you can go.”

“Yes.” The old man withdrew.

Inside the building, the only person who remained was the elegant youth, who rubbed the jade ring on his thumb. His eyes weren’t focused, and it was clear he was busy pondering.

“Ninth Brother, oh Ninth Brother. You luck truly is incredible. You were able to encounter an expert like Teng Qingshan. With this sort of a genius coupled with Uncle Zhuge’s guidance, the Gui Yuan Sect will most likely be even stronger in the future! Old Meng… he died somewhat pitifully. However, I know the extent of his sword arts. If he dies, then he dies.” The elegant youth suddenly opened his mouth: “Lu Yi, play me a piece.”

Very quickly, Lu Yi walked up the stairs.

“Lord, what would you like to hear?” Lu Yi said.

“Ambush from Ten Sides!” The elegant youth chuckled.

(TLN: This is an actual song-https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CW1kmKOiClw)

The bottom of Lu Yi’s heart trembled, but she started to play nonetheless.

The corner of the elegant youth’s mouth curved into a smile. “Ninth Brother, oh Ninth Brother. You are sophisticated and profound. Father gave you ten years and you spent over half of it overseas. You truly have a lot of willpower! Surely, you must know that ‘A beard well lathered is half shaved’! However, you must also understand that ‘The tallest tree in the forest will ultimately be knocked down by the wind.’ Your long trip overseas caused all your elder brothers to fear you, and every one of them has secretly

conspired to resist you. I don't know if you will be able to laugh in the very end!"

(TLN: god, that was a hard paragraph; time for some Chinese idioms. The first phrase essentially means that good preparation is half the work, and the second phrase means that geniuses/people who stand out will always be coveted by others and suffer from their jealousy)

Teng Qingshan killing Meng Tian was of no consequence to the elegant youth.

This was because he was a businessman!

Even if it was an expert of the Preliminary Realm that was able to obtain a rank in the Earthly Ranking, he was only a Preliminary Realm expert. Two fists would find it difficult to overcome four hands. Once he or she faced hundreds or thousands of soldiers firing volleys of arrows, that person would be shot to death.

(TLN: "Two fists would find it difficult to overcome four hands": You get defeated when outnumbered)

As for why businessmen learned martial arts. It was purely for self-defense.

Zhu Tong once said that you mustn't throw all your eggs into one basket. Even if expert bodyguards were hired, one couldn't place their complete trust in them. One must have the strength to protect himself from danger.

"Zhiya! Zhiya!"

The wheels of the carts rolled along as Teng Qingshan's soldiers travelled down the main road. The foreheads of the Black Armored Army soldiers were currently covered in sweat.

Heavens!

This was the intense heat of June! Presently, it was afternoon, so the heat was even more frightening.

Among the soldiers of the Black Armored Army, no one had been forced to wear thick and bulky heavy armor at this point. The interior of heavy armor was like a furnace, especially because their heavy armor was black and thus absorbed heat! During the hottest moments, the soldiers couldn't help but discard their helmets and undo the heavy armor to escape from the heat.

Fortunately, the bodies of the Black Armored Army's soldiers were in prime condition. Furthermore, they had inner strength to help them resist the heat.

Why would normal people dare to wear heavy black armor under the hot summer sun? That would be the same as burning to death!

"It's so hot!" Teng Qinghu wiped his forehead, but despite of his efforts, sweat continued to flow. "Qingshan, why isn't there even one drop of sweat on you?"

"Qinghu, you want to compare yourself to the lieutenant?" The adjacent Du Hong laughed.

Teng Qingshan was genuinely unafraid of the heat. Regradless if it was winter or summer, the weather had no effect on him. Even the terrifying cold at the bottom of the Frost Jade Pool had been withstood by Teng Qingshan's body. Although Teng Qingshan was wearing Darksteel Inner Armor and the Black Armored Army's standard equipment in such a strong heat, not even a drop of sweat was visible.

Teng Qingshan's body had been tempered to such a state that even if he were to be roasted on top of a normal flame, Teng Qingshan would still be perfectly fine.

With low temperatures, Teng Qingshan could bear the cold to extreme levels.

As for high temperatures, Teng Qingshan could also bear up to a few hundred degrees.

Unless it was an extremely hot flame, Teng Qingshan would be

able to easily bear it.

“Brother Zhu, it’s so hot. Why haven’t you entered the carriage to rest?” Teng Qingshan laughed.

Zhu Chongshi laughed and shook his head: “This sort of a temperature is nothing. Even when I was on a few overseas islands where the weather was even hotter, I still managed to endure. Brother Qingshan, I have troubled you during this journey. After tonight, we will have made it past Xuyang County’s borders and entered Chu County. By the time night falls tomorrow, we will have arrived at our destination.”

Ever since the battle at the stone tavern, the caravan hadn’t encountered any other dangers.

The journey was as smooth as a calm river current.

“When the time comes, Brother Qingshan should take a good rest at my place. This time, it was all thanks to you.” Zhu Chongshi was extremely grateful.

“Haha... if you want to thank me, then wait until we arrive so that my brothers can have a thorough rest at your place for one night. The journey this half month has been draining; everyone sleeps late and is tense.” Teng Qingshan laughed. Currently, everyone’s mood was quite relaxed since the distance to their destination was already very close.

Time continued to pass. As the sun began to set in the west; the sky started to grow dark. Teng Qingshan and the others had already made it to Xuyang County’s border.

“Only a few more kilometers before we travel through Xuyang County and enter Chu County.” Zhu Chongshi joyfully exclaimed

Suddenly, Teng Qingshan’s eyebrows creased. He was staring at a nearby village because sounds of crying could be heard from within the village. The amount of people crying was numerous.

Soon, Zhu Chongshi also heard it.

“What is going on over there?” Zhu Chongshi was somewhat surprised.

“It seems there are countless people dying. Even if a family member died, there shouldn’t be this many people crying.” Teng Qingshan was also shocked and confused. However, despite his worries, they were in the midst of their journey, so they wouldn’t intervene if they didn’t have to. They continued for almost an hour until they arrived at a tavern on Xuyang County and Chu County’s borders.

Travelling Cloud Tavern! The three words on the banner were extremely distinct.

“Honored guests, please come on in!” Instantly, two waiters ran out and welcomed the group. Even the shopkeeper hastily ran out in an extremely cordial manner.

This was a result of the established rules.

Guards would eat in the rear garden and looked after the goods, while the Black Armored Army would eat on the first floor of the tavern. There was still time today, so everyone was relaxed and took their time to enjoy their food.

“Hey, waiter. Can I ask you something?” Teng Qingshan laughed and proceeded to ask.

“Honored guest, please ask away.” The waiter had already been frightened stiff by the Black Armored Army military uniforms and was naturally obedient.

“On the way here, we passed by a village a couple of kilometers away. Did something big happen there? I discovered that their cries were extremely mournful.” Teng Qingshan inquired. Immediately, the surrounding Black Armored Army soldiers looked at the waiter. They all wanted to know the answer.

When the waiter heard this, he helplessly laughed: “Honored guest. About this topic... Jin Jia Village... It truly is miserable.

Starting about a month ago, a person would disappear every day from Jin Jia Village without leaving a trace. They disappear so mysteriously that it's still unknown whether these people are dead or alive; not even traces of can be found!"

"Eh?" Teng Qingshan began to listen carefully.

"This has been going on for about half a month, and every day, they would lose one person! Perhaps it could have been the wolves from the adjacent volcano coming down and eating the villagers, but there would have been traces of leftover bones and blood. At the very least, if these people died, they would have let out a desperate cry, but no one has seen or heard anything. These people just disappeared into thin air! Of course the villagers of Jin Jia Village would be scared, but the worst thing is that about a month ago, the number of people who disappeared each day went up to two!"

When Teng Qingshan heard this, he was shocked.

People disappearing without a trace was too out of the ordinary.

"Since this is the case, no one knows the reason behind it. Living people just disappearing in thin air. Just yesterday night, Jin Jia Village suddenly lost three people!" The waiter let out a sigh. "Three people gone just like that! If this continues, how will Jin Jia Village survive?"

When Teng Qingshan's group hear this, they became somewhat afraid.

People disappearing into thin air?

When it first began, only one person would disappear per day. Afterwards, it became two people. Starting yesterday, it became three people per day.

"I've heard that Jin Jia villagers discussed moving the location of the village." The waiter shook his head. "Although Jin Jia Village has been here for a couple hundred years, protecting their

ancestral home, this sort of event is too scary, even if their ancestral home makes them want to stay here. In my opinion, I expect the Jin Jia Village to have moved elsewhere after a few days."

Teng Qingshan was very clear that it was very hard for an entire large village to move away from their homeland.

Once they moved, how would their clan members eat and drink? Where would they find fertile land? All of this was extremely difficult to accommodate.

If they had money, then things would be much easier, but if a regular village didn't have fertile land, how would they sustain their clansmen while migrating? The entire process of migration was extremely miserable.

"Truthfully, our tavern is also somewhat scared. However, we still have yet to lose even one person, so we can be considered exceptionally lucky. If there comes a day that we lose one person, then I'm afraid that we would leave this place." The waiter shook his head and left.

Teng Qingshan and the others began discussing spiritedly, but ultimately, they could only sigh in pity.

No matter whether it was an expert assassin, a wild leopard, or a man-eating wolf, there was no way they would be able to accomplish their task silently. Moreover, not even a trace of blood remained.

……

The caravan nonetheless had to continue their trip, so everyone could only let out a sigh. On the morning of the second day, Teng Qingshan and his group continued on their way, and after they arrived on Chu County's soil, everyone became much more relaxed. It stayed this way until night fell.

At the mountain stronghold entrance of the number one gang in

Chu County's Huai City.

A vast number of bandits stood beneath the command of their three chiefs and proceeded to walk out of the stronghold.

"Brother Zhu, this is your destination?" Teng Qingshan was somewhat surprised. Zhu Chongshi gave a mysterious laugh in reply.

"Big brother!" When the first chief saw Zhu Chongshi, his eyes went red. "It's been a few years since I last saw big brother. Big Brother has become back!" The two other chiefs who had been standing behind the first chief suddenly bowed: "Master!"

Upon seeing this, Teng Qingshan immediately understood.

This gang was subordinate to Zhu Chongshi. Originally, when Zhu Chongshi had been making his way around the world and travelling abroad, he let his trusted aid establish this gang of mounted gangsters.

Zhu Chongshi and the first chief hugged each other. The sight was extremely moving.

"Qingshan, this is my sworn brother, Liu Hu! Second brother, this is Lieutenant Teng Qingshan of the Gui Yuan Sect's Black Armored Army! This signifies that he is an «Earthly Ranking» expert. This time, if it wasn't for brother Qingshan, I'm afraid that your brother would have spent a few more years suffering abroad without reason." Zhu Chongshi gave Teng Qingshan a short introduction.

Liu Hu was exceptionally clear of what this business trip meant to his older brother.

Not only would Zhu Chongshi have had to suffer a few more years abroad, he would also no longer be able to claim the position of Head of the Zhu Family.

"Brother Qingshan!" This first chief, Liu Hu, cupped his hands: "Your protection of Big Brother and his goods is a merit that I will

never forget! If you ever need anything, please instruct me; I, Liu Hu, will definitely not hesitate to return the favor.”

Chapter 123: The Two Secret Manuals

Teng Qingshan and company were warmly hosted by the Red Rock Gang.

Everyone enjoyed a great feast that night. Having reached his destination safely, Zhu Chongshi was very happy as well. He had his fill of liquor before he parted ways with Teng Qingshan in a drunken state.

“Brother Qingshan! You’ll have to stay at my place for a few more days!” Zhu Chongshi reeked of alcohol and was not even able to walk straight. He wrapped an arm around Teng Qingshan’s shoulders, “I am also aware that you guys from the Black Armored Army usually do not have much business to take care of. You don’t have to hurry back, just treat it as a delay on the way and enjoy yourselves for a few days! Oh..... Right, I have arranged for a few ladies at the place where your brothers are staying. I have also specially arranged for two pretty twins at your place. Have fun tonight. Haha.....”

Having finished his words, Zhu Chongshi left smiling, wobbling as he was assisted by his men.

“Women?”

Teng Qingshan shook his head and headed for his room.

He was not aware if the rest of the Black Armored Army had enjoyed the company of the girls, but it was without a doubt that Teng Qingshan practiced the Three Xing Yi Postures that night. He had sat cross-legged in the backyard through the entire night and didn’t even lay a single finger on the two ladies.

In a central room, Zhu Chongshi sat on the main seat. He was much more awake now.

“Master!”

In the middle of the central room, two strong men bowed and

called out.

A smile broke out on Zhu Chongshi's face. "It has been tough on the two of you. Have all the goods made it safely through this journey?"

"We are thankful for not failing your orders." One of men replied with resolve. "We teamed up with the other traders to form a big group with close to a thousand guards. While there were some obstacles on the way, we did not lose any of the goods. We brought all four carts here."

When traders travelled on long journeys, they tended to gather and team up with other traders.

With such a large gathering of traders, they would form a large company. With that, they could enlist the help of many guards, making the journey much safer.

"Mmmm." Zhu Chongshi nodded. "Excellent. It's not early anymore. The two of you can head back to get some rest."

"Yes, Master." Both of them left.

Zhu Chongshi picked up the tea cup next to him and took a few sips. His gaze was reserved, without a single trace of drunkenness. "Father was right, we cannot keep all our eggs in one basket! This time around, if it weren't for Brother Qingshan, I would probably have lost my batch of goods. With my skills, it would not have been sufficient enough to fend off that Meng Tian! If these goods were snatched away……I'd be left with only the goods carried by the Fan brothers!"

After tolling for so many years, Zhu Chongshi had split the goods he had accumulated from abroad into two batches.

The Fan brothers would pretend to be normal traders, bringing along four carts to Chu County.

Zhu Chongshi himself would bring along ten carts of goods as he headed for Chu County.

Even if the ten carts of goods had been snatched from him, with the four leftover carts of goods, Zhu Chongshi still believed that he would have at least a 20% chance of winning the seat as Head of the Family.

“Brother Qingshan is still so young! I pride myself on my talents and hard work. I’ve even gone through many adventures. There should not be many who are stronger than me among the younger generations, but Brother Qingshan……” Zhu Chongshi had come across many life and death situations during his many years of roaming abroad. He had never slacked when it came to training his martial arts.

He had thought he was strong enough.

But who would have thought that Teng Qingshan would be able to kill Meng Tian?

Although Zhu Chongshi was very confident in his own strength, he did not think that he would have been able to defeat Meng Tian.

“There will always be someone stronger than yourself!” Zhu Chongshi exclaimed. “Father was right. We cannot be proud regardless of the situation. Once we let our guard down, defeat will be the only thing awaiting us.” He had just returned from abroad, but his grand emotions were quickly dashed by Teng Qingshan’s abilities.

Zhu Chongshi was also able to understand the deeper meaning behind some of the words his father had often said to him.

Nightfall!

A messenger pigeon touched down in Jiangning County’s Gui Yuan Sect.

It was common to use messenger pigeons to send word within the Nine Prefecture. Of course, only sects, certain big merchants, and large clans would be able to have the resources to specially train messenger pigeons as well as to have intelligence branches across

various locations.

With the winding roads, the distance for Teng Qingshan's soldiers and the caravan to reach Chu County from Jiangning County was close to two thousand Li.

But in fact, these winding roads were mostly detours.

Straight paths tended to be much shorter in comparison.

The messenger pigeons did not have to be concerned with obstruction by rivers or mountains. In addition, under the nurturing of nature's spiritual influence, the messenger pigeons were capable of flying at high speeds. Some of the better ones could fly across the borders of a prefecture in merely a day.

On the other hand, even the Dark Demonic Horse of the three Dragon Horses, which could travel five thousand Li per day, would need to take one day to travel across the entirety of Yangzhou due to the winding roads.

At the Gui Yuan Sect, a man in grey robes ran over in panic towards Sovereign Zhuge Yuanhong's room. The room was pitch black without a tinge of light, but the grey-robed man was aware……The Sovereign usually stayed in this study on most nights rather than visiting his personal training field.

"Bang!" "Bang!" "Bang!"

"Come in!"

The doors to the study opened with a creak. Zhuge Yuanhong was already standing as he lit the candles.

"Sovereign, we've received urgent secret message from Xuyang County." The man in grey robes handed over a secret letter that was rolled up into a small scroll.

Zhuge Yuanhong raised his eyebrows. It couldn't be a small issue for it to be treated with such urgency. Frowning, he opened the letter and immediately laughed out when he read the contents.

“Haha……this is really a surprise. Take a look, Martial Brother Qing Yang.”

“Surprise?” The man in grey robes was stunned. He received the letter in confusion.

“Two men from our Black Armored Army died…one is badly injured…Teng Qingshan killed Meng Tian?” The man in grey robes looked at Zhuge Yuanhong in shock. “Sovereign, this… how could this be possible?”

“Martial Brother Qing Yang. It was only mentioned that Qingshan inflicted Meng Tian with heavy injuries and chased after him thereafter. He later returned with a Blood Moon Saber. No one saw if he had killed Meng Tian.” Zhuge Yuanhong said with a smile. “Since no one was there to bear witness, it is hard to say.”

The man in grey robes fervently replied, “But Meng Tian is an expert of the «Earthly Ranking». How could he be defeated by the hands of Teng Qingshan and have his weapon taken from him? With his weapon taken away, chances are that he has been killed!”

Regardless if Meng Tian was really dead, it was a fact that his weapon had been taken from him.

For a powerful expert, to have a his weapon stolen was complete defeat!

“The men from Xuyang County also said that the news is spreading like wildfire. Teng Qingshan has injured Meng Tian, cut off one of his arms, and chased after him, but they did not say that he was killed!” Zhuge Yuanhong said.

“Mmm.” The man in grey robes nodded.

In fact, the news had been spread by the twenty-odd men who had seen Teng Qingshan injuring Meng Tian.

The twenty-odd men quickly left the inn after the massacre that had taken place. They were not aware about whether or not Teng Qingshan had truly killed Meng Tian, but such rumors were

quickly spread around as they travelled around in Xuyang County.

The news spread like fire and was found out by the Gui Yuan Sect's informants.

"Haha..... Qingshan. He is definitely worthy to be listed on the «Hidden Dragon Ranking»." Zhuge Yuanhong laughed. "As for whether he can be listed on the«Earthly Ranking», it is still hard to say..... The inspection from the Wan Xiang Sect on whether one can be ranked in the «Earthly Ranking» is very strict. No one has seen nor confirmed whether Qingshan had single-handedly snatched the other party's weapon."

The man in grey robes nodded.

It is truly difficult to get placed on the «Earthly Ranking». Which of the experts listed in the «Earthly Ranking»did not have stunning battle histories?

The fastest way to be listed on the «Earthly Ranking» was to kill the other party. Of course, this act must be witnessed by someone else. If not, no one would know if you were the one who carried out the act. The second method was to let the other party admit defeat. There must also be a witness to this.

Zhuge Yuanhong smiled as he said, "Regardless, our Gui Yuan Sect finally has a disciple who can be listed on the «Hidden Dragon Ranking». Now, no one will dare to say that the younger disciples of our Gui Yuan Sect are useless!"

There were many experts amongst the younger generation of the Gui Yuan Sect.

The two young commanders Zang Feng and Guan Lu, and Zhuge Yun. However, the outside world still saw the younger disciples of the Gui Yuan Sect as incompetent.

The outside world was not aware of the geniuses in Gui Yuan Sect. They only referred to the«Hidden Dragon Ranking».

"Sovereign....." The man in grey robes suddenly felt uneasy as

he said agitatedly, “Teng Qingshan is not even twenty and he was able to defeat Meng Tian! He definitely has the qualifications to be listed in the«Earthly Ranking». Do you think he will be able to reach the innate realm?”

“Innate realm?” The eyes of Zhuge Yuanhong gleamed.

The importance of an innate expert to a sect was needless to say.

“You can leave first.” Zhuge Yuanhong said.

“Yes, Sovereign.” The man in grey robes respectfully headed out.

On the other hand, Zhuge Yuanhong extinguished the candle with a wave of his arm. He calmly sat in the dark study for a very long time. “Teng Qingshan’s background is clean. It is impossible for him to be a spy from another sect, and no other sect would be willing to force a genius to be a spy! He is definitely our Gui Yuan Sect’s best disciple in the past one thousand years! If Teng Qingshan is able to continue improving at such speeds, tens or hundreds of years later, under the reign of Teng Qingshan, our Gui Yuan Sect may possibly……overtake Qing Hu Island one day to become the top sect in Yangzhou! Teng Qingshan, I will put all my efforts into nurturing you to see how far you can go. I hope that you won’t let me down!”

Sometimes, there was a need to be decisive!

Teng Qingshan’s parents were not the most trustworthy, nor were they members of the Gui Yuan Sect.

But Teng Qingshan was still one with a clean background. With such talent, why would they not nurture him and risk giving him up to other sects?

When the time came, it was important to be decisive!

In his heart, Zhuge Yuanhong had already decided to nurture Teng Qingshan as the next Sovereign! The seat of the Sovereign of the Gui Yuan Sect was not passed down from father to son, but was rather passed down to the top disciple!

In the past, Zhuge Yuanhong had treated Zang Feng, Guan Lu, and Zhuge Yun as his successors.

Although the three of them were powerful……

They were far in comparison to Teng Qingshan, who had defeated Meng Tian. Most importantly, Teng Qingshan was only 17! There had been no one in Gui Yuan Sect in the past one thousand years who was able to defeat an expert from the «Earthly Ranking» at the young age of 17. And to think that Teng Qingshan's past training was reliant on himself and not under the nurturing care of the Gui Yuan Sect.

"Gui Yuan Heart Technique and Dark Moon Spear Technique. Which one should I pass down to him?" Zhuge Yuanhong thought. "One of them is the most treasured manual of our Gui Yuan Sect. The other is merely an Earth Class technique, but emphasizes the Spear Art! Hmm……." Zhuge Yuanhong started to seriously plan on how to train Teng Qingshan.

Chapter 124: Black Monster

At the doorsteps of the Huai City's Red Rock Gang in Chu County.

It was already the afternoon, and the sky would start to grow dark in another three hours.

"Brother Qingshan, why are you in such a hurry to leave when I've asked you to stay for a few more days?" Zhu Chongshi asked. "Was it because as your brother, I was not a good host?"

"Brother Zhu, you have been an excellent host. It's just that our Black Armored Army has been recruiting new people recently and there will also be new additions to our division. There is still a lot of work that we need to do, including the managing the replacements, removing soldiers from our ranks, and training the new recruits. We really cannot stay much longer." Teng Qingshan replied.

Zhu Chongshi looked up at the sky, seeing that the sun was no longer scorching hot, "Qingshan, it seems that it will turn dark soon. You should head off tomorrow morning."

"It's not too late, and the weather is not too hot. We will be able to rush to the next city in one trip." Teng Qingshan smiled as he cupped his hands. "Brother Zhu, there's no need to keep us. We brothers will reunite when you visit our Jiangning County in the future."

"Alright." Zhu Chongshi also cupped his hands, "Then I shall not keep you any longer. Brother Qingshan, please take care!"

Under Zhu Chongshi's gaze, Teng Qingshan and his soldiers mounted their warhorses and left.

The horses kicked up sand and dust as they dashed off.

Twenty-odd black figures travelled on the main road at extreme speed. Under a situation where they did not have to be concerned

with goods and carriages, the Black Armored Army was able to proceed at a very fast pace. Previously, it took them one whole day to travel from Yun Lai Inn to the base of Red Rock Gang, but now, it only took them slightly more than an hour to reach the inn from the base of the Red Rock Gang.

“Hmm?” Teng Qingshan perked up his ears as he gazed towards the direction of Yun Lai Inn.

“Currently, there are many warriors who are on their way to Jin Jia Village!”

Teng Qingshan’s hearing was much stronger than the average person. “There are many people disappearing consecutively for no reason from the Jin Jia Village and now there are warriors heading over? Has someone discovered the reason?” Teng Qingshan felt a sense of curiosity towards the pitiful Jin Jia Village.

Since it was also getting late, it would not delay their trip by too much if they rested earlier.

“Stop!” Teng Qingshan commanded.

“Lu lu~”

Following Teng Qingshan’s commands, the horses were held back and the twenty odd calvary men came to a stop in an orderly manner.

Upon seeing such well-trained cavalry, the waiter from Yun Lai Inn, as well as some of the traders and martial art practitioners who were resting at the inn were all shock. To be able to move at such speed and order despite the fact that even their horses were equipped with heavy armor, cavalry of such calibre could definitely not be from any ordinary family.

“Dear guests, please come in.” The waiter immediately warmly invited them.

After depositing the war horses in the stables at the back and assigning three men from the Black Armored Army to stand guard,

the rest of the men entered the hall of the inn. The seventeen of them took up four tables.

“Get everyone a bowl of herbal tea first!” Du Hong instructed the waiter.

“Immediately.” The waiter replied in a loud voice.

Du Hong looked towards Qingshan and spoke in a low voice, “Lieutenant, although the sky is turning dark, the nights of summers tend to come later. We should be able to rush to the next city if we are to increase the pace a bit more.

But Teng Qingshan held absolute authority. When he said to stop, obviously no one dared not stop.

Teng Qingshan smile and called out, “Waiter.”

Immediately a waiter ran over, “Sir, what can I do for you? Ah, you stayed in this inn the night before. I was the one who served you then.”

Teng Qingshan smiled and nodded as he asked, “Has something big happened to that Jin Jia Village in these past two days?”

“Ah, you are certainly well-informed.” The waiter was surprised. “A month ago, the Jin Jia Village has had many of its members vanish for no reason. At first, one person disappeared everyday. A while later, two people disappeared daily. From two days ago, three people start to vanish into thin air! Sir, are you able to guess the reason?”

Teng Qingshan smiled and said, “Continue your story!”

The waiter, being scared of Teng Qingshan and his men, did not dare to keep them in suspense as he replied, “Sir, I reckon that you will not be able to guess it. In these two days, the horrifying event at Jin Jia Village attracted quite a number of adventuring warriors to investigate the issue. Just last night, they discovered the reason!”

Teng Qingshan's eyes lit up.

"They realized that there is actually a man-eating monster!" The waiter lowered his voice. "That monster was all black! It disappeared with a flash and even the martial arts expert who noticed it was not able to see clearly what it looked like. He only knew that the monster had swallowed a person whole in just a flash!"

Teng Qingshan was shocked.

To swallow a person whole in just a flash?

"Waiter, you better not be talking gibberish." Du Hong, who was at the side, spoke out.

"I wouldn't dare." The waiter quickly said. "Dear guests, you better believe it! The stories vivid and convincing. Furthermore, it was witnessed by a martial arts expert. It cannot be false! Just today, we were patronized by a quite a number of warriors. All of them headed to the Jin Jia Village.

There were many warriors who roamed the world with huge passion as they underwent the trainings of life and death situations.

These warriors love to take part in such strange events.

Knowing that there was a black monster, these people were of course more than happy to come and investigate.

"Alright, you can go now." Teng Qingshan instructed. At the same time, another waiter had brought up dishes of food to be served.

"Lieutenant, you trust the words of that waiter?" Du Hong and Qinghu looked towards Teng Qingshan.

"To be able to spread to this extent, it cannot be just some baseless rumors. Maybe there really is a black monster." Teng Qingshan said, as he recalled that enormous flood dragon in the

‘Great Yan Mountain’ from his hometown. In this world, even flood dragons existed. It may not be impossible for there to be a black monster that can swallow a person whole in an instant.

Du Hong laughed. “Lieutenant, what do these waiters know? There are many reckless rumors in this world. We cannot believe all of them.”

“It is true that these horrible events have been happening at the Jin Jia Village for over past month .” Teng Qingshan looked towards Du Hong. “Old Du, let me ask you, are you able to say why people has been disappearing from the Jin Jia Village? Furthermore, no one in the village has discovered anything!”

Out of nowhere, a person has vanished.

Losing one, two, three……when the numbers get bigger, of course the Jin Jia Village would be wary. They had even sent many of their members to stay on guard, but still the people continued to vanish.

“In a village, each family is connected to one another. If there are many people standing guard, even an expert would not be able to get off with bringing out people without any traces.” Teng Qingshan said. “Alright, we will rest here for tonight. You guys can just stay here. I will head to the Jin Jia Village to do a thorough investigation tonight to see what the identity of that black monster truly is.”

Once Teng Qingshan had decided, the rest could only obey his orders.

……

The sky had turned dark! Hu! With one leap, Teng Qingshan leapt out from the window and quickly reached the stables. There were a total of nine men of the Black Armored Army who were stationed on guard at the stables. The war horses of the Black Armored Army were extremely valuable. When they were outside,

there would always be people on guard.

“Lord Lieutenant.” The nine soldiers greeted Teng Qingshan.

“Alright, bear with it a little longer. There will be another batch of men taking over your duties later in the night. You will be able to rest well then.” Teng Qingshan consoled them as he carried the bag with his Reincarnation Spear and stepped into the darkness, headed towards the direction of the Jin Jia Village as he increases his speed.

Teng Qingshan did not use the move Crossing Worlds, but rather relied on the explosive energy of his muscles.

Hu! Hu!

Strong wind blew at his ears. The speed at which Teng Qingshan was running at was much faster than that of the war horses.

In just a little while, Teng Qingshan was able to see the well-lit Jin Jia Village.

“Who goes there!” The guard at the entrance of the Jin Jia Village bellowed.

“Brother, I was roaming across the land alone and heard that there was a black monster at your Jin Jia Village and decided to come and check it out.” Teng Qingshan said cheerfully. From what he could see, the Jin Jia Village today should be glad to welcome martial art practitioners here.

As expected —

The door opened and a white-haired old man came up to welcome him with many others.

“My Lord.” Grief spread across the face of the old man. “To meet such a monster, we Jin Jia Village can only rely on the help of highly skilled experts such as yourself. Last night, we found out that it was a black monster. Hopefully tonight, together with the other martial art experts, you can help our Jin Jia Village to be rid

of that monster!”

The unknown was the most horrifying thing to most people. The people from the Jin Jia Village were also more at ease to have found out last night that it was the work of a black monster.

Everyone was hoping for these martial art experts to eliminate the monster.

Afterall……none of them would want to move to a new location if they could help it.

“Old man, please rest assured.” Teng Qingshan consoled him as he stepped into the Jin Jia Village.

The Jin Jia Village was slightly smaller compared to the Teng Jia Village. The training grounds was also smaller, but at that moment, the training grounds were filled with over a hundred people.

“Hmm?” Teng Qingshan scanned across the crowd. “The group who are gathered together must be the men from the Jin Jia Village while the rest are dispersed and seemingly unsociable must be martial art practitioners.” Martial art practitioners who did not know each other tended to be more wary of the other parties. They would not be as tight knit as the clansmen of the Jin Jia Village.

“I didn’t expect for another expert to be here.” A voice rang out. A slender youth in short sleeves came running, “My name is Duan Hou. Brother, what about yours?” The Duan Hou was very friendly.

“Qin Lang.” Teng Qingshan replied.

The name ‘Teng Qingshan’ had received too much attention now. Word had spread across the Xuyang County and Chu County that Teng Qingshan had defeated Meng Tian. Teng Qingshan did not wish to involve himself in any trouble at the moment, and thus reported a alias.

“Brother Qin Lang, including yourself, there are a total of

twenty-eight martial art practitioners here today. But……" Duan Hou grinned. "Most of them are not that strong. Take those good-for-nothings for example, even if they were to attack together, they are not deserving to be my opponent." Duan Hou pointed to six fierce-looking men who had gathered together.

"To be looking for the black monster despite having no capabilities. They are really courting death. The person who saw that black monster yesterday was a Second Rate Warrior. Even a Second Rate Warrior was not able to see the monster's movements clearly. Just the speed alone is terrifying." Duan Hou sighed. "But Brother Qin Lang, from your poise alone, I could tell that you are an expert."

"Oh?" Teng Qingshan showed a bit of interest as he laughed, "One can tell if the other is an expert from their outer appearance?"

"Empty vessels make the greatest sound!" Duan Hou grinned as he said, "Those who flaunt their skills tend to be mediocre, but Brother Qin Lang, there are still experts amongst us. Take a look at that man. He is the expert 'Jin Tao' from the Tie Yi Hall and a direct disciple of the Sovereign."

Chapter 125: Teng Qingshan and the Demonic Beast

Which Tie Yi Hall?

Was it the Tie Yi Hall that was on par with the Gui Yuan Sect as the second strongest sect in Yangzhou? Was it the one that controlled all of Chu County?

Teng Qingshan glanced over at Jin Tao, who stood alone in a corner. He was leaning against a wooden pillar, as he rested with his eyes closed.

“Dear Lords. Dear Lords!” The white-haired old man shouted loudly. “That black monster could enter our village from anywhere. Please find a good location and stay on guard. When night has fallen, I am certain that all of you will be able to locate the monster and kill it!”

The old man spoke to the warriors who were present with an attitude of awe and respect.

“Chief Jin is right. Let us spread out and watch each other’s back. This will prevent the monster from escaping.” Someone shouted. Many other men shouted in agreement.

“Hu!” With a tap of his feet, Jin Tao, the expert from Tie Yi Hall who had been resting with his eyes closed earlier, headed straight for a distant rooftop like a passing shadow. He then flew off to a rooftop further away, and he eventually disappeared from sight.

In an instant, all the warriors and experts either slipped into alleys or jumped to the rooftops. Every one of them was searching for a good location.

Duan Hou quickly urged, “Brother Qin Lang. It is easiest to spot the monster from the rooftops. I will be heading off first to find a good spot.” Having said that, with a tap of his feet, he reached the rooftop with a great speed, but with steps as light as a feather.

After a few more flashes, he also disappeared.

Teng Qingshan smiled. “Duan Hou’s Qing Gong seems to be a notch higher than Jin Tao’s.”

Teng Qingshan also leapt up to the rooftops, lithe as a swallow as he regulated his internal strength and adjusted the weight of his body. He ran atop the roof at great speed, dashing straight for the northeast direction of Jin Jia Village. He then sat cross-legged on top of one of the rooftops and quietly meditated, waiting for the arrival of the black monster.

……

“Chief, will those warriors be able to defeat that monster?” The men from the village all looked towards the white-haired old man.

“Sigh.” There was a tinge of sadness in the eyes of the white-haired old man as he sighed, “Do we have any other choice? We can only seek assistance from these warriors. If it still doesn’t work, we will go through with out earlier decision . In five days, if the monster is still not dead, our clansmen will begin relocating and leave this place!”

The men, who were not afraid of death, all turned silent.

“Everyone hang on a for a bit longer and keep up the surveillance tonight.” The white-haired old man said.

“Yes, Chief!”

These ten-odd men were the elites of the village. Each of them held onto sabres and spears as they headed off to begin surveillance in ten-man teams.

Each of these warriors quietly waited in the hazy night.

Duan Hou laid down freely on the rooftop, as he crossed and shook his legs.

“Black monster. Hmph hmph. To be able to devour a person in an instant, if that guy did not lie to me, that black monster is

probably a demonic beast!

‘Easy going Hou was another self-proclaimed title that he went by.

That mischievous pair of eyes swept across the surroundings, and his ears occasionally twitched.

“It’s been four hours, why it is not here yet?” Duan Hou mumbled.

Suddenly —-

“Chi!” An extremely soft sound came. Duan Hou’s eyes gleamed and he leaped to the ground from the roof with a flip, not making a single sound.

With two soft steps and a flip, he arrived in the courtyard of one of the houses.

The doors to the central hall was opened!

With the daily appearance of the monster, who would dare to leave the doors to their central hall open?

“It can open doors? And the sound of the opening of the doors was so soft. If it wasn’t me, Duan Hou, but another First Rated Warrior, they probably would not be able to catch the sound.” Duan Hou was surprised. “Legend says that demonic beasts are able to use their head to think as human does. It seems that this is the truth.” Duan Hou has already determined that the monster was a demonic beast.

Duan Hou pulled backed to a corner of the courtyard silently. In the dark, if one did not pay much attention, it would be hard to realise that there was a person in the corner of the courtyard.

Hu!

Duan Hou only felt a gust of wind. A large black shadow appeared in the courtyard. Duan Hou only saw its tightly packed scales reflecting the night light. With another flash, the black shadow

leapt out of the courtyard.

“Thinking of escaping?!” Hou Duan leaped up and quickly pursued after the black figure, which had headed out of the courtyard. With a wave of his hands —-

Swoosh!

A flying knife cut across the air and struck the black shadow.

Clank!

Sparks flew off the tightly packed scales with a crisp sound. The large black figure slipped into an alleyway and disappeared from Duan Hou’s sight.

“Such a scary body. It seems to be close to one Zhang tall, has four limbs……and is covered with tightly packed scales. Those scales are really……” A chill ran through Duan Hou. He was a First Rated Warrior. It was quite astonishing that his flying knife was not able to pierce through the scales of the monster. Within that short moment, he was only able to capture a blurred glimpse in the darkness of the night.

As for the details, he was not able to see clearly.

Duan Hou raised his head and shouted, “Monster!”

“Black monster!”

The loud shout resounded like thunder above Jin Jia Village.

“Seize the monster!” In that moment, loud shouts filled Jin Jia Village, and the doors to every household were smashed open. Almost everyone from every household dashed out. Within a few breathe’s efforts, Jin Jia Village was filled the clansmen, each of them were in an enraged state as they held on to their weapons.

“The monster is here!”

Someone shouted immediately.

“The monster headed towards the north!”

Loud cries sounded. When the place was filled with people, it was of course easy to discover the monster.

……

Teng Qingshan looked towards the southwest. He had picked the northeast location of the Jin Jia Village, but the monster had appeared in the southwest. It was no wonder that he had not detected anything.

“Monster? It should be a demonic beast! And it should not be a monster with much powers. If this monster could match up to the flood dragon from the Frost Jade Pool, there would be no need for it to behave so secretively, nor to be fearful of humans!” Teng Qingshan turned into a bolt of lightning as he dashed towards the directions of the shouts.

Obviously there would be people shouting out loud wherever the monster ran to.

Demonic beasts had intelligence!

And of course, pride as well!

If a demonic beast was as strong as that flood dragon, it would not need to act so secretively, escaping when coming across a big crowd of humans.

It just had to kill!

“Use heavy weapons to attack that monster!” A loud cry came from far away. The one who had shouted was the warrior ‘Jin Tao’ from Tie Yi Hall.

Jin Tao was chasing at rapid speed as he held on to his saber.

“Chi —” Jin Tao looked down at his left arm. There was a huge scar. Even after he sealed the acupuncture points, blood continued flow.

“This demonic beast, can only be considered mediocre amongst other demonic beasts. If there were more people, it would be

possible to capture it, but it is a pity, mmm. Report to the sect, that demonic beast must be living in the Blazing Mountain!

……

Everyone could not catch up, but Teng Qingshan was able to see the large black figure clearly. They were far away, about forty Zhang apart, but with Teng Qingshan's vision, he could still see in the dim moonlight

Teng Qingshan shortened their distance at rapid speed by using «Crossing Worlds»

One of them was escaping, the other was chasing. Soon, they dashed into the Blazing Mountain to the north of Jin Jia Village. The reason Blazing Mountain, was named so was because there had been a volcanic eruption a very long time ago. Of course, it was something that had happened long ago. At present, the Blazing Mountain was now covered by vegetation.

After entering the mountain, the black figure unexpectedly increased its speed with great flexibility.

"Haha, you better stop attempting to escape!" Teng Qingshan laughed out loud.

From the initial distance of forty Zhang, after running for a few Li, there was now only a distance of not even three Zhang between him and the black figure.

"Growl~" The demonic beast panicked and gave a loud growl, as if attempting to threaten Teng Qingshan.

Teng Qingshan could now see the demonic beast clearly. It is about nine Chi tall (almost 3m), with four limbs, a long face and long mouth. Its head looked a bit similar to that of a crocodile from his previous life. Or it could be said that it had the head of T-Rex, with sharp and short protruding awls on its back. And its strong physique, including the stomach, were all covered in tightly packed scales.

Those strong four limbs were similar to a lion's, just that they were covered with scales. The four limbs all had sharp claws.

"No wonder it could swallow a human whole!" Teng Qingshan understood immediately at the sight of this appearance. "With such a big head and long mouth, it should be no tough feat to swallow a person whole when it opens its mouth, but……the demonic beast is only so big, how can it swallow three people in one go? It's stomach can hold so much?"

Teng Qingshan discovered that the stomach of this demonic beast is only slightly inflated.

"Swish!" Teng Qingshan leaped up strongly to be directly above the demonic beast.

"Growl!" That demonic beast raised its head and opened its mouth, attempting to take a big bite.

"You're courting death!" Teng Qingshan held his Reincarnation Spear and thrusted!

Pursuing Shadow Spear Art – strength of eighty thousand Jin!

"Clank!"

A crisp sound sounded. That demonic beast rolled on the floor after receiving a pierce of such strong power. It quickly followed with a flip.

"What strong scale armor!" Teng Qingshan focused his vision, and discovered that only only a single scale had cracked. There was another layer of scales under that cracked scale. "What a pity, it's strength seems to be mediocre, falling over with just one strike of my spear. It is no wonder that Jin Tao had called out loudly for people to employ heavy weapons." Teng Qingshan also understood the weakness of this demonic monster.

Although the dense of its armor of scales was strong, its strength was only mediocre.

“Howl”

The demonic beast raised its head and gave a loud howl. Unexpectedly, its whole body turned red and faintly emitted red light.

“Boom!” The demonic beast turned into a red afterimage and fled far into the distance.

“What speed.” Teng Qingshan gave chase.

Hu! Hu!

Within a few breath, the monster fled to the peak of the mountain.

“Let’s see where you will be escape to now.” Teng Qingshan was also surprised. The full speed of the fleeing demonic beast was actually comparable to his fastest speed.

When it reached the mountaintop, the demonic beast jumped off a cliff without any hesitation.

Teng Qingshan stood at the side of the cliff and looked down into the deep valley. With a cold laugh, he jumped down as well, but at the moment he jumped, for every ten metres he descended, he would clutch on to the protruding rocks to reduce his speed. Within a short while, Teng Qingshan reached the bottom of the valley.

“Hmm?” Teng Qingshan looked around the surroundings. The demonic beast was already nowhere to be seen.

Chapter 126: Adolescent Beast?

The moonlight was dim to begin with. In the valley, it was almost pitch black.

At the bottom of the valley, Teng Qingshan stood rooted to the spot, without moving an inch.

He was listening with his ears!

“Where did the demonic beast run off to?” Teng Qingshan tried to listen for a very long time. Other than the sound of the wind and the rustling of the leaves due to the wind, he could not sense that the demonic beast was running.

“This demonic beast should be living in the Blazing Mountain. Having stayed here for so long, it must be very familiar with this area. It will probably be difficult to find it.” Teng Qingshan calmed himself down as he moved in the valley. He focused on observing his surroundings, trying to look for some tracks. However, after searching for very long, and even having going around the valley, Teng Qingshan was unable to find any traces of the demonic beast.

“To think that I’ve let the demonic beast escape!” Teng Qingshan was filled with regret.

Without any choice, Teng Qingshan chose to head back!

……

However, at the spot where Teng Qingshan had jumped off from the valley, about twenty Zhang above the landing spot, there was a sunken spot in the cliff face. That demonic beast easily sunk its claws into the rocks with the sharp claws from its four limbs. Its large body curled up as it hid in the sunken area.

From outside, one would not be able to discover that the demonic beast was hiding here.

A faint red light shone from the cold eyes of the demonic beast. It

occasionally scanned the bottom of the valley.

It stayed hidden for over four hours. Only when it was right before dawn the following day, at the moment when it was the darkest and the valley was pitch black, did the demonic beast leap down at the speed of lightning. It landed on the bottom of the valley, and with several leaps, it left the valley.

At the training grounds of the Jin Jia Village, many torches were lit and the warriors were all gathered here.

“What is that monster? It is stronger than a wild ox. The tightly packed scales caused my hand to be numbed with pain when I attempted to cut it.”

“That is a demonic beast! That scales are definitely impervious to swords and spears. I would think that armor made from materials such as darksteel would not be comparable to the armored scales of that demonic beast!” The warriors exclaimed.

“If we were to kill the demonic beast, skin it,and make a full set of armor, haha..... it would definitely be a top notch treasure.”

“Don’t even dream about it. You think you can kill that demonic beast with your miniscule amount of strength?”

The gang of warriors seemed to be very excited. To them, it was sufficient to be able to see a demonic beast. As for whether they would be able to kill the demonic beast, most of the average warriors did not even dare to think about it.

While the warriors were excited, the clansmen from the Jin Jia Village were feeling anxious and panicky.

The face of Chief Jin was full of panic. Looking at the group of warriors who were engaged in their own discussions, he could not help but call out, “Dear Lords! Did anyone of you manage to kill that black monster?” Although he had called out to them, the warriors were all excited engaged in their own chats and did not pay him much heed.

Another man beside the chief started to panic as he shouted, “You warriors! Our Jin Jia Village is facing a great disaster! We called on each of you to help, but despite not being able to kill the monster, you are just chatting away. You guys still have……”

“Silence!” Chief Jin shouted.

“Chief.” That man was so agitated that his eyes had turned red.

Everyone in Jin Jia Village had long been driven crazy by this demonic beast. Seeing how proud the warriors were acting now, of course they did not feel comfortable.

“Hey, punk!” A man, carrying a long blade on his back and a red birthmark on his face, smirked at the agitated man. “Why, we were just chatting. Did it bother you?” At that moment, the rest of the warriors with him all seemed to carry a faint smile.

The man from the Jin Jia clenched his fist as his face turned pale.

“Damn it, have you guys forgotten my fist?” A frivolous voice spoke out. “You don’t have the ability to kill the demonic beast and you still thinking of bullying the locals? What kind of warriors are you guys? I think you should just buy a piece of tofu and knock you to death with it!” Duan Hou walked in joyfully.

The few warriors immediately turned red. They glanced at each other, not daring to say another word.

When they first came to the Jin Jia Village, they had already experienced Duan Hou’s strength for themselves.

“Brother Qin Lang!” Duan Hou suddenly called out to the distance cheerfully.

Teng Qingshan had just reached the training grounds when he saw Duan Hou running over. He walked over, “Brother Duan!”

“Seeing that Brother Qin Lang only just arrived, you must have went to chase after the demonic beast. Not sure if Brother Qin Lang had managed to catch up to it?” Duan Hou asked. At his

words, the large number of clansmen from the Jin Jia Village, who had gathered at the training grounds, all looked towards Teng Qingshan, filled with nervousness and hope.

Teng Qingshan's heart also throbbed under the stares of over a thousand men. From the many pairs of hopeful eyes, Teng Qingshan could tell how much the clansmen of the Jin Jia Village had yearned for the demonic beast to be killed.

"That demonic monster was too sneaky! I was not able to kill it." Teng Qingshan shook his head as he said this.

The eyes of the thousand odd clansmen turned grim. They are already on the verge of despair.

"But that monster was also injured by me. With the intelligence of this monster, it will probably not dare to come to the Jin Jia Village for a short while." Teng Qingshan spoke again. These words brought some cheerfulness to many of the clansmen of the JIn Jia Village who were present.

"This Lord, you said that the demonic beast will not dare to come in the short term?" Chief Jin came running.

Duan Hou, who was at the side, spoke out. "Old man, that demonic beast has intelligence similar to humans! This time it was at a disadvantage and suffered from injuries. It will not dare to come again for a while." Duan Hou had seen for himself that the monster had gotten rid of the door lock without a sound to get in a house. Such an intelligent monster would not dare to return the next day after being put at a disadvantage.

"Big brother. Big brother!" Suddenly a human figure dashed to Teng Qingshan's side, clutching onto the legs of his pants.

Teng Qingshan looked down. It was a child of about six to seven years old of age.

The little kid looked up at Teng Qingshan, eyes filled with tears. "Big brother, I beg of you. You must kill the monster and help

avenge my parents! I beg of you!”

“Er Wa, quickly let go of him.” Chief Jin spoke out. He pulled the child to the side, a bit worried that Teng Qingshan might feel unhappy and kill the child. Afterall……there were also many warriors who were not so humane.

“I beg of you, big brother.” The child cried.

Chief Jin quickly said. “My Lord, we have lost many of our clansmen over the past month or so. Er Wa’s parents have been eaten by that monster on one of the nights. Thank goodness he doesn’t stay in the same room as his parents, if not he would have been eaten on the same night as well.”

Teng Qingshan looked at the child, and his heart throbbed.

In his previous life, he was an orphan!

To have lost his parents at such a young age!

“Please rest assured!” Duan Hou pounded his chest in front of the clansmen of the Jin Jia Village. “Warriors are large in numbers. Even if there are not enough people today, in the future, there will definitely be more warriors stronger than us, who will come. There will be a day where the demonic monster will die.” Upon hearing these words, the clansmen of the Jin Jia Village only felt a little bit better.

“Brother Qin Lang, did you recognise that demonic beast?” Duan Hou asked. “I know of many demonic beasts, but I did not recognise this one.”

“I also do not recognise it.” Teng Qingshan shook his head.

Teng Qingshan had only been with Gui Yuan Sect for a short while. He had not searched for books related to demonic beasts to read.

“Brother Qin Lang, did you realise anything unique when you were chasing after the demonic monster? Maybe we can determine

what kind of demonic beast it is.” Duan Hou said.

Teng Qingshan did not hold back any information. “That demonic beast suddenly turned red all over, increased it speed, and shook me off in a just a moment.”

“Turned red all over?” Duan Hou was stunned for a moment before his eyes gleamed.

……

In the training grounds, the warrior Jin Tao from Tie Yi Hall could also hear the conversation between Teng Qingshan and Duan Hou. Upon hearing ‘flushed red all over’ Jin Tao felt a tinge of excitement. “Flushed red all over? This…….Is this the Red Scaled Beast? Yes! According to records of the Red Scaled Beast, they were black when in the adolescent stage! When they matured and eat the ‘Black Fire Spirit Fruit’, their bodies will then turn flush red and grow up to a height of three Zhang!

“Adolescent Red Scaled Beast.” Jin Tao thought to himself. “This news cannot spread out. If not, it will be hard to get the Black Fire Spirit Fruit.

At that moment —-

“Haha, its the Red Scaled Beast, the Red Scaled Beast!” Jin Tao’s face turned grim at hearing a loud laughter. The one laughing was Duan Hou.

“Duan Hou.” Jin Tao dashed over and gave him a stare.

“What are you staring at me for?” Duan Hou immediately laughed. “Haha, I know, you must want to keep the treasure for your Tie Yi Hall.”

“Stop.” Jin Tao lowered his voice.

At his side, Teng Qingshan was confused as he asked. “Brother Duan. What is the Red Scaled Beast that you were referring to?”

Jin Tao immediately glared towards Teng Qingshan, but Teng

Qingshan did not pay him any heed.

Duan Hou smiled and said, “Since someone doesn’t want me to say, all the more reason I would want to say! Brother Qin Lang, this Red Scaled Beast is an extremely powerful demonic beast. Legend says that it has a height of three Zhang, and a width of five to six Zhang, as if it was a small mountain. Furthermore, it’s body is also flush red. Even for an innate master it would be hard to penetrate its scaled armor! And it can spew flames that can melt gold and metal!”

Teng Qingshan was alarmed upon hearing this.

About three Zhangs tall? That would be a large creature of about two to three storeys tall. And with a scaled armor that would be hard to penetrate even for an innate master, spewing flames that could melt gold and metal? This was indeed a terrifying demonic beast.

Jin Tao was resentful.

But he was well aware of Duan Hou’s capabilities. As he was injured when he was chasing after the Red Scaled Beast, he was not his opponent. Furthermore, there was a secretive expert ‘Qin Lang’ who could injure a Red Scaled Beast standing beside him.

“But, that is the physique of a mature Red Scaled Beast. The records of the adolescent stage of the Red Scaled Beast only states that it’s scaled armor is black, and its body will turn flush red in times of emergency. It is too short. I didn’t think that this is a Red Scaled Beast. Now I know, this is an adolescent beast, a Red Scaled Beast that has yet to mature!” Duan Hou shared in detail.

Teng Qingshan was at a loss to laugh or to cry.

To think that a demonic beast with such perverse defense was only an adolescent beast.

“But no matter how powerful the Red Scaled Beast is, we are not able to tame it. What tempts warriors the most is the ‘Black Fire

Spirit Fruit' that accompanies the Black Scaled Beast." The eyes of Duan Hou gleamed as he continued. "Brother Qin Lang, when a Red Scaled Beast matures, only after eating the 'Black Fire Spirit Fruit' will it undergo its final transformation, shedding its black scales and grow red scales! Transforming into a terrifying demonic beast! We warriors can snatch the 'Black Fire Spirit Fruit' before it does!"

Teng Qingshan's heart skipped a beat.

That Red Scaled Beast only transformed into a terrifying demonic beast that even innate masters were wary of after it ate the 'Black Fire Spirit Fruit'.

What happened after a person ate it?

Chapter 127: Black Fire Spirit Root

Duan Hou's words attracted quite a number of warriors. Jin Tao was full of anxiety and dissatisfaction, but Duan Hou continued his stories in delight with increasing excitement.

"Everyone, are you aware of the positive effects that the Black Fire Spirit Fruit would bring if one were to eat it?" Duan Hou scanned through the crowd with a smug look.

"I know! That Black Fire Spirit Fruit, once eaten by an expert who has reached the pinnacle of the Postliminary Realm, that expert will automatically become an innate expert!" A man shouted out, and immediately the people around him started to make a ruckus. Even Teng Qingshan was astonished. There were few who could achieve the level of an innate expert. How could one reach that level just by eating one spiritual fruit?

Jin Tao snorted, "Idiot!"

The man, who had spoken out earlier, glared at him and was about to blast out in anger, "You……" His companions immediately held him back. "That's a warrior from Tie Yi Hall!"

Duan Hou spoke out in a bright voice. "Haha, it is not that easy to attain the level of innate expert! From the Postliminary Realm to the Innate Realm, it is dependent on one's own self, but as everyone is well aware, the Postliminary Realm is achieved by training vitality into Qi. To step into the Innate Realm, the Spirit and Qi must be harmonised to be able to train Qi into Spirit! The 'Spirit' is the 'Spirit' from the three states of essence, energy and spirit. It is very mysterious and hard for one to describe clearly! However, the 'Spirit' is pertinent for one to be able to reach the Innate Realm. And this 'Black Fire Spirit Fruit' is said to be able to nurture one's Spirit, allowing the 'Spirit' in one's mind to be stronger, thus making it easier for one to step into the Innate Realm!"

Teng Qingshan nodded to himself. This was referring to the transformation on one's mental spirit.

"Brother Duan, after that long story, it just means, the person who eats the Black Fire Spirit Fruit will have the hope of being able to achieve the Innate Realm?" Someone shouted.

"That is, of course, true! It increases your chances by a lot. If you are not able to achieve the Innate Realm after eating the Black Fire Spirit Fruit, then you won't ever be able to dream of reaching the Innate Realm." Duan Hou said with absolute confidence, but continue dwith a grin, "However, while the Black Fire Spirit Fruit is a treasure, the 'Black Fire Spirit Root' from which the fruit grows from is also amazing, albeit slightly incomparable to the fruit."

Someone immediately cut in, "It was said that the Black Fire Spirit Root will allow one to improve his physique and strengthen one's muscles and bones, giving the person immense strength!"

Duan Hou nodded, "Yes, an ordinary man who eats the Black Fire Spirit Root will be able to gain a strength of ten thousand Jin, immediately becoming a First Rated Warrior! However..... To a warrior who had reached the pinnacle of the Postliminary Realm, the effects of the Black Fire Spirit Root is far from being comparable to that of the Black Fire Spirit Fruit!"

One who was able to raise a weight of ten thousand Jin was considered as a First Rated Warrior, but he would be at the bottom amongst the other First Rated Warriors.

For instance, Zhuge Yun, Commander Zang Feng, Commander Ji Hong, Yue Song, the expert from the «Earthly Ranking» Meng Tian, which one of them was not able to exert an explosive tens of thousands Jin worth of strength in an instant?

Teng Qingshan, who had achieved the ninth stage of his training in the «Vigor of the Reckless Bull», was also able to exert strength of sixty thousands Jin in an instant with his inner strength.

To the powerful warriors in the Postliminary Realm, eating the ‘Black Fire Spirit Root’ to increase ten thousand Jin worth of muscle strength and to bring their capabilities up slightly higher was not of much worth to them. Only the ‘Black Fire Spirit Fruit’ that could give them hope of reaching the Innate Realm would be considered a treasure.

“Black Fire Spirit Root!” Teng Qingshan’s heart throbbed.

“This Black Fire Spirit Root must have amazing powers to be able to nurture the ‘Black Fire Spirit Fruit’. Eating the Black Fire Spirit Root will allow these powers to flow into an ordinary person’s body, allowing the person to have a strength of ten thousand Jin in a short time!” Teng Qingshan was a Grandmaster, so he was well aware of how miraculous this root was.

If a person wished to increase their strength, they needed to continue developing their potential and improve themselves.

Surviving in nature, a human body had its restrictions. For example, Teng Qingshan had reached his limits to be able to attain a strength of a hundred and eighty thousand Jin.

To improve further, one of the ways was to increase the potential of the human body!

How would they increase their potential?

“By eating the Black Fire Spirit Root, one can easily attain a strength of ten thousand Jin! The Black Fire Spirit Fruit really does contains miraculous energy in order to increase the potential of one’s body by leaps and bounds! Now that my body has reached the limits to the potential I can develop, if I eat this Black Fire Spirit Root…” Teng Qingshan was suddenly full of expectation.

According to Teng Qingshan, the Black Fire Spirit Root definitely did not just merely increase one’s strength by ten thousand Jin!

“Those who train their inner strength have no means to really develop the potential which the Black Fire Spirit Root increases!”

Teng Qingshan had thought so. “If one really develops the potential one receives from the Black Fire Spirit Root, the strength that he can increase is definitely not just ten thousand Jin. I will only be able to find out the how much strength I can receive after eating it for myself!”

At that moment, compared to the Black Fire Spirit Fruit, Teng Qingshan had a greater craving for the Black Fire Spirit Root.

He had not been able to increase his strength for a while now. The Black Fire Spirit Root was Teng Qingshan’s hope to further strengthen his body.

……

On the training field of Jin Jia Village, the warriors discussed excitedly. All of them hoped to attain the Black Fire Spirit Fruit and the Black Fire Spirit Root.

To an ordinary warrior, the Black Fire Spirit Root that could allow them to become a First Rated Warrior immediately was also a treasure.

“Hmph.” That Jin Tao coldly snorted as he went to retrieve his war horse and left Jin Jia Village that night.

“Brother Duan! I also have some matters to attend to, so I will take my leave.” Teng Qingshan cupped his hands and said.

“Brother Qin Lang.” Duan Hou grinned. “You better not leave the area near the Blazing Mountain these few days. There will be many warriors coming after the Black Fire Spirit Fruit, the Black Fire Spirit Root, and the Red Scaled Beast. There will be a crowd and excitement like never before!”

Teng Qingshan smiled and left.

Looking at Teng Qingshan’s back as he left, Duan Hou smiled even more brightly. “Jin Tao? You didn’t want me to speak? Hmph hmph, Now i will spread it even farther. I will spread it so far that all the experts from Yangzhou and Qingzhou will gather here.

Haha, it will only be lively when a large number of experts gather.” Duan Hou was one who liked to stir up trouble.

Duan Hou was very clear, with Tie Yi Hall around, there was no way that he could go against Tie Yi Hall.

Since he couldn’t get it, he might as well blow up the issue! Duan Hou had always been one who liked excitement.

Yun Lai Inn.

Once he returned to the inn, Teng Qingshan immediately called for Du Hong and Teng Qinghu.

“Lieutenant, did you see the monster?” Du Hong laughed.

Teng Qingshan asked again, “Old Du, let me ask you. A demonic beast with its whole body covered by an armor of black scales, with four limbs, many short spikes on its back, with a mouth that is long and big; furthermore, in times of emergency, it can turn its whole body red, and increase its speed by many fold. Is this the description of the Red Scaled Beast?” Du Hong had stayed in Gui Yuan Sect for very long and was very knowledgeable.

Du Hong was stunned for a moment before he excitedly replied, “Yes, it is the Red Scaled Beast, but that is in its adolescent stage. Once it grows bigger and eat the Black Fire Spirit Fruit, it will shed its skin like a snake and change into a new layer of armor of scales. Its body will also grow bigger and can spit flames. Lieutenant, are you saying that that demonic beast is an adolescent Red Scaled Beast? Ah, if it is an adolescent beast, then……” Du Hong said a whole lot regarding the Black Fire Spirit Fruit and the Black Fire Spirit Root.

Teng Qinghu also became excited.

“What did you say?” Teng Qingshan frowned. “The Black Fire Spirit Fruit will definitely mature when the Red Scaled Beast matures?” Duan Hou did not share in such details previously.

“Yes, Lieutenant.” Du Hong obviously knew more than Duan

Hou. “The Red Scaled Beast can only be born from a place where the Black Fire Spirit Fruit grows! The rate at which the Red Scaled Beast grows is extremely fast, experiencing a transformation almost daily. Everyday, its body will gradually grow bigger, and its appetite will also increase. It likes to eat meat.”

Teng Qingshan immediately understood.

That adolescent Red Scaled Beast started with eating one person a day, to two people, to the eventual three people..... its appetite really did increase very fast.

“But from what I read, there were no records that it likes to eat humans.” Du Hong said. “I would think that the Red Scaled Beast will likely fully mature in another month and grow to a height exceeding two Zhang! If it wants to transform further, it can only eat the Black Fire Spirit Fruit! What we need to do is snatch that Black Fire Spirit Fruit!”

In his heart, Teng Qingshan added, “And to snatch the Black Fire Spirit Root at the same time!”

“Not long after the Red Scaled Beast matures, the Black Fire Spirit Fruit will also mature! Once the Black Fire Spirit Fruit matures, it will turn from black to red in an instant and it will sustain for 24 hours. If no one picks it within 24 hours, it will rot. The Black Fire Spirit Fruit must be kept in a jade box to prevent it from rotting.” Du Hong shared these details.

Teng Qingshan nodded to himself after hearing this.

“Lieutenant!” Du Hong asked, “The Black Fire Spirit Fruit is of great concern to our Gui Yuan Sect. Should we report this to the sect?” Du Hong waited for Teng Qingshan’s reaction.

“We will rush to the Hua City of the Xuyang County first thing tomorrow morning and ask the men under the Gui Yuan Sect in Hua City to spread the news to the sect.” Teng Qingshan was well aware that after Duan Hou and the other warriors had spread the

news, there would be many people who would hear about it, and Tie Yi Hall would most definitely participate in this.

The headquarters of the Tie Yi Hall was in Chu County. They had plenty of experts and had an advantage in terms of location.

With the help from the experts from the Gui Yuan Sect, he would have a higher chance of obtaining the Black Fire Spirit Root!

……

Teng Qingshan and company rushed to Hua City the next morning. With the influence of the Gui Yuan Sect, they had people stationed at every city in Yangzhou. Of course, they deployed less and less men in the areas under the influence of the Qing Hu Islands to show that they did not carry any ill intentions. And of course, they had more men stationed in Xuyang County which was not under the control of any sect.

In Zhuge Yuanhong's study in Gui Yuan Sect in Jiangning County.

"Sovereign!"

"Teacher!"

Both Commander Ji Hong and Commander Guan Lu bowed.

Zhuge Yuanhong threw the secret letter in his hands towards Ji Hong. "Second Martial Uncle, you and Lu'er should read the contents of the letter."

Ji Hong rejoiced upon reading the letter.

After reading the letter, the cold look on Guan Lu's face was wiped off as she felt surprised. "Teacher? There is an adolescent Red Scaled Beast in the Blazing Mountain at the borders of the Xuyang County and Chu County?"

"The news was sent to us by Teng Qingshan and his company. There is definitely no mistake." Zhuge Yuanhong smiled. "This Black Fire Spirit Fruit is of great use to the warriors who have

reached the pinnacle of the Postliminary Realm. After eating it, the chances for them to reach the Innate Realm will have been greatly increased! Second Martial Uncle, our goal this time is to obtain the Black Fire Spirit Fruit, the Black Fire Spirit Root, and that Red Scaled Beast!"

"Red Scaled Beast?" Ji Hong was stunned. "Sovereign, it is impossible to tame the Red Scaled Beast."

Across history, no one had ever successfully tamed a Red Scaled Beast. Demonic beasts were extremely hard to tame. And of course, there were a small number of demonic beasts which could be tamed.

Zhuge Yuanhong smiled. "The Black Fire Spirit Fruit is of utmost importance to the Red Scaled Beast. It can only transform after eating the Black Fire Spirit Fruit. Therefore, it will fight for it when the time comes! If the Red Scaled Beast does not eat the Black Fire Spirit Fruit, while a maturing Red Scaled Beast, with its height of over two Zhangs, is strong, you guys should be able to kill it if you work together with Teng Qingshan. If one were to wear the scales of a maturing Red Scaled Beast, only innate experts will be able to penetrate it. It is a priceless treasure!"

There was no doubt to the prowess of the armored scales of the Red Scaled Beast.

"In the event that the Red Scaled Beast is stronger, it will transform after it takes the Black Fire Spirit Fruit. It will shed its scales and grow a new set of red armor of scales. Your mission will then be changed to retrieving the black scales that have been shed." Zhuge Yuanhong said. "Second Martial Uncle and Lu'er, select thirty elites from the Black Armored Army and another thirty warriors from the core disciples of the Gui Yuan Sect. The two of you will set off this afternoon and head towards the Hua City in Xuyang County to meet up with Teng Qingshan and his company!"

“Yes, Sovereign (Teacher).”

Ji Hong and Guan Lu bowed.

Chapter 128: Raging Storm

In a restaurant in Huai City, a city located in Chu County.

A man in plain commoner clothing was sitting at a table next to a window, drinking wine and having his food.

There was a long saber tied around his waist.

"Sir, here's your big plate of mutton!" The waiter ran over and served the dish on the table, "Please enjoy." He then turned to leave. However, just as he walked away, he bumped into this man's left arm.

The strange thing was... The sleeves to that left arm just floated up.

He had only one arm!

He had lost his left arm!

The man glanced at his left arm and then continued to enjoy his wine and meat without a care.

He had lost that arm many years ago. In the past, he had felt despair and gone crazy. However, time soothed everything. After twenty years of hard work, he once again possessed great power. Compared to the arrogant person he was twenty years ago, he was now more even-tempered and more powerful.

"Yesterday, why did Tie Yi Sect send out a group of over a hundred elites from Chu County's Chu City to Xuyang County?"

The person leading that group was Tie Yi Sect's Elder, 'Wei Canglong.'

"Ten years ago, he was an expert who had been listed on the "Earthly Ranking"." Seated not far behind the one-armed man were a few cultivators who had started discussing among themselves.

Hearing this, the one-armed man sneered coldly.

Wei Canglong?

There were countless experts in this world. If one did not strive to improve, one would then just be replaced by others.

Wei Canglong had once been listed in the "Earthly Ranking"ten years ago, but he was merely ranked seventy-first. And now, he had long been replaced by stronger experts.

Of course, being able to be listed temporarily on the"Earthly Ranking" was also a great representation of how strong the Elder of Tie Yi Sect was.

"Why did Tie Yi Sect send experts to Xuyang County? Could it be that Tie Yi Sect is thinking of gaining control over Xuyang County?"

"You're wrong. You guys should know that around Xuyang County's Blazing Mountain, there were rumors that an adolescent Red Scaled Beast was born!

"And it was eating people from a village called 'Jin Jia Village'.

"It was discovered by quite a number of cultivators and was chased all the way into the Blazing Mountain.

"It was only an adolescent beast which had a height of close to one Zhang!

"Do you know what the birth of the adolescent Red Scaled Beast implies?" That young cultivator asked proudly.

However, the one-armed man trembled.

Adolescent Red Scaled Beast?

"The appearance of the adolescent Red Scaled Beast means that there are Black Fire Spirit Fruit and Black Fire Spirit Root nearby!

"Once experts at the peak of the Postliminary Realm eats the Black Fire Spirit Fruit, it's said that they can become innate experts." When the young cultivator said this, a huge commotion broke out. "If you eat that Black Fire Spirit Root, you will

immediately become a First Rated Warrior!" The young cultivator added.

The one-armed man took a sip of his wine and his gaze turned more serious.

Adolescent Red Scaled Beast?

Black Fire Spirit Fruit?

"Waiter!

"Bill!" The one-armed man said indifferently.

"Alright, sir." The waiter ran over, "It's six strings of coins, which is twenty coins in total."

The man casually tossed some crushed silver which weighed about seven Qian on the table and asked, "Is this enough?" The waiter had handled money for so many years, therefore, he was able to tell the weight of the crushed silver. He gauged it and said, "It's enough, it's enough."

The one-armed man immediately walked out, took his horse, and rushed over to the Blazing Mountain.

"Black Fire Spirit Fruit!

"I must get it!" The one-armed man's gaze turned cold and sharp.

...

The scene which had happened in the restaurant was very normal. Huai City was very close to the Blazing Mountain and thus the news had spread to this area the next day.

The news spread out to more and more people at an increasing speed, scattering out in all directions crazily.

Many cultivators came. Some of them came to vie for the Black Fire Spirit Fruit.

Some of them came to vie for the Black Fire Spirit Root.

There were even some who came to watch the excitement.

Everyone knew that for the next one to two months, the Blazing Mountain would be very lively.

The cultivators from the entire Yangzhou, and even all the way to the Qingzhou in the north rushed toward the Blazing Mountain.

With so many experts coming together, this would be a rare gathering.

They might be able to see many powerful experts.

For example, experts listed in the "Earthly Ranking","Hidden Dragon Ranking", and the "Young Phoenix Ranking".

...

A group of merchants was slowly advancing along the official paths.

A convoy with a large number of merchants would normally hire many guards.

The abilities of the guards varied. The powerful guards were allowed to leisurely sit in the horse carriages.

They wouldn't take any action unless it was necessary.

Squeak, squeak.

The wheels on the carts went round and round. On one of the carts was a bare-!footed young man who donned plain clothes. He held onto his anti-cavalry saber with his left hand and sat cross-legged with his eyes closed.

No one dared to disturb this young man.

In the beginning, the other guards had looked down on this bare-footed young man who wore very plain clothes.

Two of the guards had wanted to scam this young man, but... the other guards only saw a splash of blood and the two of them dropped to the ground. Their throats had been slit.

It was only then did the group of guards gasp in astonishment.

The young man had drawn his saber, killed two people, and sheathed his saber.

Yet, none of them saw him move.

The speed at which the blade was drawn and the attack made was overwhelming. The guards no longer dared to offend the bare-footed young man.

"Did you hear what they said when we were resting in the inn earlier? An adolescent Red Scaled Beast appeared at the Blazing Mountain at the borders of the Xuyang County. Once the adolescent Red Scaled Beast matures and eats the Black Fire Spirit Fruit, it can grow up to three Zhang tall, five to six Zhang long..." The other guards chatted as they advanced.

The bare-footed young man who was resting with his eyes closed opened his eyes.

"Black Fire Spirit Fruit? Black Fire Spirit Root?" The bare-footed young man squinted his eyes, looking like a lone wolf with cold and detached eyes.

Immediately, a smile broke out on his face. "These guards are right. This will definitely attract thousands of warriors! I've roamed the world for eight years, braving the wind and hardship, but those so-called warriors at the pinnacle of the postliminary realm couldn't even take one blow from me! This time, there will be many experts that gather, and it will be the time for me, 'Yan Tie', who's been in training for eight years, to spread my fame across the world! Teacher will definitely be happy when he finds out that I am able to get myself listed on the "Hidden Dragon Ranking"and the "Earth Ranking"! If I can also get the Black Fire Spirit Fruit..."

The bare-footed young man didn't hesitate anymore once he thought of this.

He picked up the bag at his side and took a leap.

Hu!

With one kick, he knocked a guard off his war horse and landed on the warhorse. With a whip, he galloped away.

"My horse!" The guard quickly shouted.

Bang!

A hard item smashed onto his head. The guard lowered his head and saw that it was a tael of gold.

"So stingy." The guard cursed softly. "My war horse also took me close to a hundred taels of silver. He could've given me a little bit more." The guard ran up to the cart and boarded it temporarily.

"Brother, you should count yourself lucky that the God of Slaughter was willing to give you gold. Even if he didn't, what could you do?" The other guards laughed.

"Where is that God of Slaughter going?"

"Who knows? He's better off gone. When he's here, I'm always weary!"

Even if the guards were to leave halfway, the merchants wouldn't care. It was also not something that they could control. Moreover, the merchants would pay half the money when they reached midway, and the other half when they arrived at the destination. Since they wouldn't lose anything, they weren't afraid that the guards would run off.

Regardless if it was those who were after the Black Fire Spirit Fruit and the Black Fire Spirit Root, or those who came to join in the party — or even those who wished to make a name for themselves amidst the gathering of the experts — many experts rushed off towards the Blazing Mountain after hearing of the news!

This was a great opportunity for the cultivators who ventured the world and experienced hardship to make a name for themselves!

There were also those who had already gained fame but yearned to be able to attain the innate state.

There were also those who harbored feelings of great hatred and would like to become stronger quickly in order to be able to exact revenge!

There were those who wanted to join in for the fun!

There were those who were disciples of experts who'd hidden their names from the world, and wanted the world to know their names!

...

In short, all sorts of characters had rushed towards the Blazing Mountain.

A mansion inside Hua City in Xuyang County.

This was one of the stationary points Gui Yuan Sect had set up in Hua City and this was the place in which Teng Qingshan and his company were staying temporarily.

"These two days, it's really been bustling at the Blazing Mountain." Teng Qingshan stood by the window of the pavilion, drinking wine as he swept his gaze towards the distant streets. "So many warriors have already arrived at the Blazing Mountain! Within only two days, several hundred men had gathered! Because of the great number of people, three inns were set up near the Blazing Mountain.

There were too many people, and these strong warriors didn't care much about money.

It was a great opportunity for inns to earn big bucks. Therefore, three inns were quickly constructed in the area near Blazing Mountain.

"But that adolescent Red Scale Beast is really sneaky! It hasn't appeared for the past two days. I've entered the Blazing Mountain

three times to search for it, but I wasn't able to find any traces of the adolescent Red Scaled Beast." Teng Qingshan had also been trying to think of ways and means to search but had never been able to find the adolescent Red Scaled Beast. The Red Scaled Beast had obviously noticed the danger.

But one thing Teng Qingshan was sure of—the adolescent Red Scaled Beast would not leave its nest until it had eaten the Black Fire Spirit Fruit.

"Cousin is really diligent." Teng Qingshan threw a glance towards the courtyard below, where Teng Qinghu was practicing the spear art "Five Techniques of the Ardent Flame".

"Hmm?" From the corner of his eyes, Teng Qingshan saw a large number of men appearing on the streets, wearing black heavy armor and riding black war horses. There were also many who weren't wearing heavy armor.

Teng Qingshan could recognize the two people leading the group at a glance!

The one with long silver hair and a cold gaze was the first commander, Ji Hong, while the cool-looking lady in the black suit was the fourth commander, Guan Lu.

Dong! Dong! Dong!

Teng Qingshan quickly descended the stairs and headed for the front entrance, while the person-in-charge of the station, Yang Ta, was already waiting at the main gate.

"Commanders," Yang Ta said respectfully, "Please come inside and rest, leave these war horses to my men." With a wave of his hand, a group of servants immediately ran over and led the horses away.

Under the lead of Ji Hong and Guan Lu, A majestic group of people entered.

"Commanders." Teng Qingshan cupped his hands in front of the

two people.

"Haha, Qingshan!" The moment Ji Hong saw Teng Qingshan, he broke into a smile. He walked over and patted Teng Qingshan on the shoulder as he said, "You have really earned great merit for Gui Yuan Sect his time. I can't believe you actually defeated Meng Tian. Haha... By the way, were you really the one who killed Meng Tian?"

There were no traces of Meng Tian's corpse, and since there was no one in the vicinity, no one knew if Meng Tian was killed by Teng Qingshan.

"Of course he was killed by me." Teng Qingshan said.

"Excellent, excellent." Ji Hong's smile stretched wider. He then turned and introduced, "This is Commander Guan!

"This time, the Sovereign had commanded Commander Guan and me to lead thirty elites of the Black Armored Army and thirty core disciples here. The birth of the adolescent Red Scaled Beast attracted a large number of experts Even though there is a tremendous number of experts, Gui Yuan Sect is determined to get our hands on that treasure!"

"Qingshan, when the time comes, you better not be holding back!"

Regardless if he had defeated Meng Tian or had killed Meng Tian... Teng Qingshan at least had the abilities to be listed in the "Earthly Ranking", and an expert from the "Earthly Ranking" would be very useful when Gui Yuan Sect was vying for the Black Fire Spirit Fruit.

"Yes, Lord Commander." Teng Qingshan replied. When Teng Qingshan glanced behind Ji Hong, he was stunned. His gaze was fixed on the face of a guy who was wearing heavy armor and had a stocky and imposing build. That elite of the Black Armored Army was also looking at Teng Qingshan doubtfully.

"Brother, is your name Li Jinfu?" Teng Qingshan could still distinctly remember the genius from Li Jia Village who had a wolf fang mace which weighed a hundred and twenty-two Jin.

Unit measurement of weight. Ten Qian = one tael

Chapter 129: Guan Lu

When Teng Qingshan was young, Teng Jia Village and Li Jia Village had sent out many of their strong men to have three rounds of competition in order to fight for water.

Back then, Li Jinfu from Li Jia Village had shocked the people from Teng Jia Village. Teng Qingshan could still remember the fierce dude and the Wolf Fang Mace which weighed one hundred and twenty-two Jin. "Lieutenant Teng, you, do you know me?" Li Jinfu was a little surprised. Of course he knew who Teng Qingshan was. Teng Qingshan's reputation in the Black Armored Army was very great. Secondly, he has spent many years in the Black Armored Army. After he got married and had a son, he would go back and visit the Li Jia Village once every two-to-three years.

Of course he had heard of the genius Teng Qingshan from the neighboring village.

However, Li Jinfu just couldn't figure out how Teng Qingshan knew him. Li Jinfu had left his hometown from the age of eighteen and it had been about thirteen-to-fourteen years now. Teng Qingshan was only seventeen years old this year, which meant that he was only about four years old when Li Jinfu joined the Black Armored Army.

How could a four-year-old child still be able to remember him? And recognize him at first glance!

"Li Jinfu! Back then, when your Li Jia Village and our Teng Jia Village fought for water, you had defeated my uncle. I remember it very clearly." Teng Qingshan smiled and said. "I did not expect that we'd be able to see each other here after so many years!"

"Lieutenant Teng, you really have a good memory. It's been so many years, and you actually still remember." Li Jinfu smiled.

Over ten years had passed and Li Jinfu was no longer that man

that was filled with a beastly aura. He had become more calm and mature.

"Haha... Qingshan, so you're from the same hometown as Jinfu!" Ji Hong smiled and said. "Jinfu is the sergeant of my personal guards and his spear arts isn't bad either. In terms of abilities, he can match up to an ordinary Centurion. Alright, let's go. The two of you can have a good chat in the future. Let's go in first!

The group moved toward the hall.

It was only then did Teng Qingshan knew that Li Jinfu was the sergeant of Ji Hong's personal guards.

There were one thousand and five hundred people in each division, which was further were divided into fifteen hundred-man teams. The most elite of them was referred to as the Commander's personal guards. Since they were the personal guards, of course they were elites!

The sergeant of the personal guards was even stronger than the sergeant in other ordinary hundred-man teams.

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In the spacious hall, over eighty people were gathered and Commander Ji Hong sat in the seat of honor while Commander Guan Lu and Teng Qingshan sat on his left and right respectively.

In this hall, other than Ji Hong, Guan Lu, and Teng Qingshan, there were only eight other people seated. They were either Centurions, sergeants of the personal guards, or a few people who had higher positions amongst the core disciples. All the others stood at the side.

"Li Jinfu? Haha, I'm Teng Qinghu, from Teng Jia Village." Teng Qinghu spoke softly and friendly to Li Jinfu. Li Jinfu was clearly also very happy to see someone from his hometown and the two of them chatted softly.

"Cough!"

As a deep cough rang out, the entire hall immediately became silent. Commander Ji Hong swept across the group with a cold face before saying out in a cold voice, "This time around, the news of the adolescent Red Scaled Beast's emergence has been spreading like wildfire. And the adolescent Red Scaled Beast appeared in this Blazing Mountain which isn't far away from Qingzhou. This time around, the people attracted to the Blazing Mountain will most likely be experts who come from Yangzhou and Qingzhou!

Therefore... There would be countless powerful experts. The members of Gui Yuan Sect mustn't be acting arrogantly. However, we mustn't hold back if anyone had provoked us intentionally! Do you understand?"

"Yes!"

All the soldiers answered loudly.

"Mmmmm," Ji Hong nodded. He then looked toward Teng Qingshan and then toward Guan Lu and a smile appeared on his face. "Qingshan, Guan Lu, our Sovereign had ordered us to seize that Black Fire Spirit Fruit, Black Fire Spirit Root, and the Red Scaled Beast's scale armor. What plans do you guys have? Speak up."

The upper echelon of the elite team was in charge of discussing the strategy.

Ji Hong clearly also deemed Teng Qingshan to be a member of this elite team's upper echelon. In fact, Teng Qingshan was a lieutenant, and when compared to Ji Hong's and Guan Lu's position as commanders, he was one rank lower. However, Teng Qingshan's battle achievement had caused the entire Gui Yuan Sect to see him in a different light.

An expert listed on the "Earthly Ranking" no longer required to prove themselves with their positions.

"The Red Scaled Beast's scale armor?" Teng Qingshan looked at Ji

Hong, feeling doubtful. "Commander, it is not likely for us to kill the Red Scaled Beast after it has eaten the Black Fire Spirit Fruit, right?"

"Haha, Qingshan. The Sovereign's intention is that if the Red Scaled Beast hasn't eaten the Black Fire Spirit Fruit, then we'll kill the Red Scaled Beast and get its scale armor. If it had eaten the Black Fire Spirit Fruit, then we will think of ways to take the black scale armor it would have shed when it evolved." Ji Hong explained in greater detail.

Teng Qingshan nodded.

"Martial Granduncle!" Guan Lu finally spoke. Her voice sounded very cold and there were no changes to her expression either. "When will we be setting off?"

"There's no hurry." Ji Hong smiled and said, "Based on our information, that adolescent Red Scaled Beast is still growing and it'll take at least one month or so before it matures and reach a height of over two Zhang. That Black Fire Spirit Fruit will only mature after the adolescent Red Scaled Beast grows up. This is the natural order of things. Therefore, we'll still have at least one month."

The law of nature was very mysterious.

When the Red Scaled Beast was born, it was completely black. Then, it would slowly change as it grew at a rapid rate, reaching a terrifying mass in a mere few months.

After it ate the Black Fire Spirit Fruit, its body would turn from black to crimson red, and it would truly become a terrifying demonic beast feared by even innate experts. The Black Fire Spirit Fruit was also black before it matured, turning red only after it had ripened.

It was true that the Red Scaled Beast and the Black Fire Spirit Fruit came together.

"Martial Granduncle," Guan Lu said, "I think it's better for us to go earlier. No matter if that Red Scaled Beast can eat the Black Fire Spirit Fruit, the scale armor that we're going to fight for will be the black one. Therefore, I think that we should go earlier. It'd be best if we can kill the adolescent Red Scaled Beast before it matures! Although the scale armor will be slightly worse off than when it has matured, at the very least, we'll be able to ensure that the adolescent Red Scaled Beast won't be able to eat the Black Fire Spirit Fruit! Moreover, it's also hard to deal with a Red Scaled Beast that has grown to a height of over two Zhang!"

Ji Hong was stunned.

He then broke out laughing, "Guan Lu, you're right! Young people really have better brains. There're only benefits and no disadvantages for us to kill the adolescent Red Scaled Beast right now!"

Teng Qingshan threw a glance toward Guan Lu, feeling slightly surprised. She was also looking toward Teng Qingshan, saying coldly, "Lieutenant Teng, what do you think?"

"I agree with Commander Guan Lu." Teng Qingshan replied.

Ji Hong immediately spoke out in a loud voice. "Everyone listen up! We'll be setting off for the Blazing Mountain early tomorrow morning! Have a good rest today. For the Black Armored Army soldiers, there's no need to wear the heavy armor tomorrow. There's no way to ride on the horses on the Blazing Mountain. There's no need to bring any horse or wear heavy armor. It'll suffice to just wear an inner armor."

"Yes, Sir!" Everyone present answered, accepting the command.

"You can take your leave." At his order, the group of people in the hall immediately left while the attendants outside led them to their own respective living quarters.

Only Teng Qingshan, Ji Hong, and Guan Lu remained in the hall.

"Guan Lu!" Ji Hong wore a bright smile while patting Teng Qingshan on the shoulder. "Qingshan has really earned a great reputation for our Gui Yuan Sect! Having killed an expert from the "Earthly Ranking" ... Haha... Right now, who would still dare to say that the juniors from our Gui Yuan Sect are useless? Guan Lu, you'll have to learn well from Qingshan."

Guan Lu looked at Teng Qingshan and suddenly stood up and said, "Lieutenant, I heard that your spear art is amazing. I'd like to seek your guidance!"

Teng Qingshan quickly stood up and looked toward Ji Hong with a helpless smile.

However, Ji Hong smiled and said, "Qingshan, Gui Yuan Sect is one of the rare few experts amongst the younger generation of our Gui Yuan Sect. She cultivates the Earth Class secret manual "Profound Ice Sword Art". She is a notch stronger than even Zhuge Yun and Yue Song. You should have a spar with her. I'm also interested to see your spear art."

To be able to assume the position of commander, how could Guan Lu possibly be weak?

"Commander Guan, have you reached thirty years old?" Teng Qingshan asked abruptly.

It was a little rude to be asking a lady of her age. Guan Lu frowned a little but Ji Hong replied, "She hasn't reached thirty!"

"Commander, it's better not to spar with Commander Guan for now. Injuries are unavoidable; it won't be good if there are any injuries. Moreover, we'll be fighting for the Black Fire Spirit Fruit very soon! It's better for us to conserve our strength and energy." Teng Qingshan said. Guan Lu had yet to reach thirty years old, but her name was not listed on the "Young Phoenix Ranking".

Since she was not even able to be listed on the "Young Phoenix Ranking", Teng Qingshan had no interest to compete with her.

Now that Teng Qingshan had reached such a level, he no longer considered people who could only display a strength of fifty or sixty thousand Jin like Zhuge Yun or Yue Song as his opponents. Teng Qingshan was only interested in fighting people who were as strong as Meng Tian.

He was still unable to forget the power of the Blood Moon Saber.

The power of Meng Tian's saber art was similar to the power of his spear art. Because his Reincarnation Spear was longer, he was able to deal a severe injury onto Meng Tian. This allowed him to be slightly more superior over Meng Tian.

He had been able to kill Meng Tian with a single blow purely because he had a terrifying strength!

"Lieutenant Teng!" Commander Guan's expression darkened.

"Commander Guan, we'll be setting off early tomorrow morning. It's better for us to have an early rest." Teng Qingshan then turned to look at Ji Hong.

Realizing why Teng Qingshan had asked that question, Ji Hong stood up and said with a grin, "Guan Lu, Teng Qingshan is right. We have important things to do tomorrow. In a spar, injuries are unavoidable. Mmm, since there isn't anything else, both of you can head back to get some rest."

Guan Lu threw a cold glance toward Teng Qingshan, "When the matter concerning the Black Fire Spirit Fruit is over, I'll make sure to seek guidance from Lieutenant Teng on your spear art. I'll see what kind of means Lieutenant Teng has!" With that, Guan Lu took great strides and left.

Ji Hong threw a glance toward Guan Lu and then smiled and said to Teng Qingshan while smiling, "Qingshan, it's not a good thing to reject Guan Lu. Are you not interested in sparring because her name isn't listed in the "Young Phoenix Ranking"?" Ji Hong had gained great experience with his age and could tell Teng

Qingshan's intention with just a single glance.

Teng Qingshan looked at Ji Hong and said smiling, "Commander, Commander Guan won't target me secretly, right?"

"She won't." Ji Hong shook his head. He then asked curiously, "Qingshan, I heard that the Blood Moon Saber is with you? Can you lend it to me so I can take a look at it?"

"No problem." Teng Qingshan nodded.

Ji Hong quickly said, "Alright, bring me to your place." Ji Hong appeared to be very anxious. "Right now?" Teng Qingshan was a little surprised, but he still led Ji Hong back to his place. he handed the Blood Moon Saber which had a great reputation to the old commander, who was over one hundred years old, to take a long and careful look.

Chapter 130: Overestimating One's Own Capabilities

The next morning, at Hua City, many people gathered in front of the station where Teng Qingshan and company resided.

"Dear Lord." Yang Ta called out cheerfully. "Everyone's elite war horses will be kept here temporarily. Everyone can ride these mediocre Yellow-Maned Horses to head into the Blazing Mountain from here!" There were many cheap Yellow-Maned Horses in front of the mansion. At the sight of this? Many warriors of the Gui Yuan Sect frowned.

It was unbefitting for them to ride Yellow-Maned Horses.

Ji Hong coldly said, "We will be setting up our camp in the Blazing Mountain! Since we will be there for one or two months, if we were to bring our top grade war horses there, there would be warriors who covet them! Alright, everyone get on these horses and we'll set off!"

More than eighty men mounted the war horses at Ji Hong's command.

Not just these eighty over men. Yang Ta also ordered 10 servants to mount the horses.

"When we reach the Blazing Mountain, these ten servants will take care of your daily necessities for these one to two months." Yang Ta smiled and said as Teng Qingshan and company left Hua Cheng and quickly went on their way to the Blazing Mountain.

Although the Yellow-Maned Horse was a cheap horse, it could still gallop 300 to 400 Li distance daily. It took them about four hours for them to reach the foot of Blazing Mountain from Hua City.

When they arrived, it was already noon.

At the foot of the mountain, tents of various sizes had been set up. There were also quite a number of warriors near the tents, and they chatted happily in small groups, as if it was a large-scaled gathering. When the men from Gui Yuan Sect arrived, they immediately attracted the attention of many warriors.

"Look, those are men from Gui Yuan Sect! The one leading them is one of the four commanders, Ji Hong!"

"Tie Yi Hall is here, so is Gui Yuan Sect. I reckon that not long later, even the men from Qing Hu Island will be coming. How would the small sects from Xuyang County be able to compete with them?"

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Amongst the discussions, there were many people who could recognise famous people, but they were right. Bigger sects such as Gui Yuan Sect and Tie Yi Hall had close to ten thousand core disciples alone, in addition to having an army of warriors. Not forgetting that they had countless numbers of outer disciples...The smaller sects in Xuyang County probably would each only have a few hundreds of men. How could they compare with the bigger sects?

"Set up camp!" JI Hong commanded.

Immediately everyone dismounted and the members of the Black Armored Army, as well as the core disciples and elites from Gui Yuan Sect, all went to help the ten servants set up tents!

The many tents were quickly secured, each of them large enough to accommodate ten men.

A total of twelve big tents, with two of them catered for the ten servants to rest in. In the future, these servants would be in charge of the preparation of food and such. Teng Qingshan and his company could focus on their search for the Black Fire Spirit Fruit in peace.

"Qingshan, the number of people isn't considered much. At one glance, there are only two to three hundred people! " Teng Qinghu contemplated the surroundings as he spoke. Teng Qingshan also took a glance at their surroundings, noticing the warriors who were scattered around. "Cousin, it's daytime now, many martial artists are in the Blazing Mountain, looking out for that adolescent Red Scaled Beast!"

Teng Qingshan had also been here three times over the past two to three days.

He was aware of the alarming numbers of warriors that had gathered here.

A small number of warriors stayed in the inns, while most of them stay at the foot of the mountain, with almost all of them selecting an area near to Jin Jia Village, which was also located at the foot of the mountain.

Although the circumference of Blazing Mountain has a distance of about 60 to 70 Li, everyone firmly believed that the location of the nest of the Red Scaled Beast, as well as the Black Fire Spirit Fruit, would be located near Jin Jia Village. Afterall, the range of Blazing Mountain was so large and there were numerous villages located at the foot of the mountain. Why did the Red Scaled Beast solely target members from Jin Jia Village?

The reason would be that — Jin Jia Village was located the closest to where it stayed!

...

"Everyone gather!" Ji Hong called out from a short distance away.

Immediately the eighty odd men gathered. Ji Hong brought out a scroll and said as it unrolled it, "Take a good look, these are the Black Fire Spirit Fruit and the Black Fire Spirit Root."

Teng Qingshan observed in detail.

There was two colored pictures on the scroll. In the first picture,

the Black Fire Spirit Root was a silvery white color, but its leaves were in a weird hue of black. The shape of the black fruit was close to a round shape, resembling that of an apple.

In the second colored picture, there was no change to the Black Fire Spirit Root with it still being silvery white in color. However, both its leaves and fruit were in red.

"This Spiritual Root is not white, but translucent!" Jin Hong lowered his voice and said. "The first diagram is where is has yet to mature, while the second one is of a matured one! Take a good look at them, so that you will be able to recognize it when you see it. Another thing, the Black Fire Spirit Fruit grows in locations that are blazing hot!"

After showing it to everyone for a while, Ji Hong took back his scroll. "Everyone go get lunch first. After lunch, we will enter the mountain!"

The Blazing Mountain was scorching hot during the blazing summer.

"Since we have so many people, we will split into three groups to search this Blazing Mountain in detail!" Ji Hong said as he gave out instructions at the foot of the mountain. "The thirty elites of the Black Armored Army will remain with me! The core disciples will follow Commander Guan! Teng Qingshan, your men will continue to follow you! Anyone have any problems?"

Both Teng Qingshan and Guan Lu nodded.

"All of you must be more careful after entering the mountain." Ji Hong instructed. "There are many venomous snakes and worms, as well as wild beasts in the mountains. Don't be reckless. Commander Guan, Lieutenant Teng, you should have men under you who are familiar with the mountainous areas. Heed more of their advice. I don't wish to see any men fall from the venomous snakes and worms rather than getting injured from fighting against other warriors!"

"Yes." Teng Qingshan and Guan Lu replied.

Teng Qingshan had grown up in the mountains, but Guan Lu had no experience with staying in the mountains.

"Come back here before evening. Okay, enter the mountains!" Ji Hong waved his hand.

The three teams split up and started their search in the Blazing Mountain.

...

Teng Qingshan was not sure about the other two teams, but it was quite smooth for his own team. All the members were from the Black Armored Army, and most of them had experience with living in mountainous or forested areas. Under the lead of Teng Qingshan, Teng Qinghu, and Du Hong, they need not be afraid of any dangers lurking in the mountains.

"Damn it, it's too hot!" Teng Qinghu could not hold back his curse.

Teng Qingshan looked up at the sky. Based on the time measurement from his previous life, it should be around 2.30p.m. in the afternoon, the time of the day when it was the hottest.

"Qingshan, Commander said that the Black Fire Spirit Fruit will grow in scorching areas. I think that it is likely that everywhere in the Blazing Mountain is scorching hot." Teng Qinghu laughed as he asked, "How do we go about finding it?"

"With luck!" Teng Qingshan said. "That adolescent Red Scaled Beast is very sneaky, and it will be hard to find it. However, we may be able to come across the Black Fire Spirit Fruit since it will not move. Bear with it. We will need to bear with these conditions for at least one to two months." Teng Qingshan was aware, even if they managed to locate the Black Fire Spirit Fruit now, they would not be able to harvest it.

It could only be harvested on the day it matured.

"Hmm?" Teng Qingshan looked at the front. There were a group of warriors heading towards them. The group of warriors could tell that Teng Qingshan and company were from the Gui Yuan Sect from the standardized suits that they were wearing. The one leading the pack was a young man, but he was bald, with a pair of eyes akin to a dead fish, and had a vulture perched on his shoulders.

"Warriors from Gui Yuan Sect, may we ask which one of you is Teng Qingshan?" The bald young man cupped his hands and asked.

"Is our lieutenant's name for you to call as you wish?" Du Hong hollered.

The eyes of the bald young man gleamed. "Lord Lieutenant?" His eyes scanned and stopped on Teng Qingshan. "This must be Lieutenant Teng, Teng Qingshan."

"What matters do you have with me?" Teng Qingshan took a glance at him.

"Lieutenant Teng, my name is Jia Liang! I have heard of the reputation of Lieutenant Teng and wish to have a competition with you!" The bald young man was full of pride. He was the young master of the 'Vulture Gang' in the Xuyang County, and the top warrior of the Vulture Gang. There was no one who was on par with him within the distance of a hundred Li.

Since he mastered the art of his blade, this young master 'Jia Liang' had never suffered a defeat. He was very proud and thought that with his great talent, there were not many from the younger generation who could compare to him.

Ever since he heard that Teng Qingshan had defeated Meng Tian, he had been wanting to challenge Teng Qingshan!

If he defeated Teng Qingshan, he would be able to use Teng Qingshan as a stepping stone to spread his name across the world.

"No time." Teng Qingshan coldly replied. "Let's go!"

Teng Qingshan did not bother with such challenges. The men from the Black Armored Army also looked at young master 'Jia Liang' with disdain. There was no need to bother themselves with such young men.

"Teng Qingshan, are you afraid?" Jia Liang called out.

Hu!

The team of Black Armored Army turned back and stared at Jia Liang and company coldly. Jia Liang had been living amongst the mounted gangsters. Facing the blood-thirsty presence of the Black Armored Army, his heart stopped for a moment.

"If you wish to challenge me, you must be prepared to die!" Teng Qingshan glanced at him coldly. "Are you prepared?"

Jia Liang was previously stunned by the presence of the Black Armored Army. Now that Teng Qingshan popped this question, for a moment, he stood rooted to his spot, stunned.

Seeing this, Teng Qingshan shook his head silently. "He does not even have strong mental strength. He must be an arrogant punk who has talent and thinks the world of himself but hasn't faced many obstacles." Teng Qingshan was not interested in a man like him and he and his men turned and left.

It was then that Jia Liang reacted, "He actually left!"

"Young master, that Teng Qingshan must be scared of you." Although the mounted gangsters did not dare to say a word earlier, someone from the group shouted out then.

"Hmph, coward." Jia Liang said with regret.

"Young master, that Teng Qingshan must have powerful methods to be able defeat Meng Tian. We should not underestimate him." Another mounted gangsters also said.

"Let's go!" Jia Liang hollered.

...

In the evening, Teng Qingshan and company had already left the mountain, following the path back to the foot of the mountain as they headed back to their camp.

"Qingshan, to think that there were three men who challenged you today! Sadly, they all looked mediocre, to be stunned by the mere aura of our brothers of the Black Armored Army. They truly overestimate themselves." Teng Qinghu said ruefully. Teng Qingshan also did not know if he should laugh or cry. There were really many people who thought a lot of themselves.

But the aura of the Black Armored Army was truly terrifying.

With just a glare from the twenty men standing there, the aura was stronger than that from hundreds of ordinary mounted gangsters. This also lessened the troubles that Teng Qingshan faced.

"Lieutenant, you defeated Meng Tian! There are many people from Xuyang County and Chu County who have heard of this and wish use you as a stepping stone to gain fame! We will be here for at least one to two months. To think that there were three challengers on the first day. There will probably be more trouble the longer we stay." Du Hong said.

Teng Qingshan could not help but frown. It was true that many warriors underwent training for tens of years just to be famous one day.

Seems like there would be plenty of trouble in store over the next one month or so!

"I'll have to strike some fear in those people!" Teng Qingshan said to himself.

Chapter 131: Elites Galore

The range of the Blazing Mountain was just too wide. While Teng Qingshan and the others were following the path along the foot of the mountain back to their campsite, they came across Ji Hong and his men, who were heading back as well.

"Qingshan, it is usually very difficult to locate where natural treasures grow, so we should not panic," Ji Hong said. "Hmm, Guan Lu and her men have already returned." They could just make out the elite core disciples that were still tens of Zhang away.

"The Commander and his men are back, go prepare dinner!"

A wide variety of prepared food was brought out by the ten servants. The eighty odd men gathered and began to devour the food dished out on the brand new tables that had been made that afternoon. The elites from Gui Yuan Sect were able to enjoy good food that was comparable to food from top quality restaurants.

Thank goodness that there was good wine!

"The chef Yang Ta sent did a pretty good job with the dishes," Ji Hong praised.

Teng Qingshan held a big bowl of wine and took a sip as he smiled and said, "Commander, the warriors around us are all green with envy." Ji Hong also took a glance at the warriors a distance away and laughed.

Some of these warriors were eating plain buns and drinking cold water, while others hunted and roasted some food for themselves.

No matter what they ate, how could it ever compare to what the people from the Gui Yuan Sect ate?

To be able to enjoy dinner prepared by specialised chefs and many servants, was it even possible for the other warriors to not be envious? However, no matter how jealous they were, it was useless.

...

After having their fill of wine and food, some of the warriors of the Gui Yuan Sect went into their tent to train their inner strength while the rest sat outside and started to chat in small groups.

"Qingshan!" Ji Hong and Qingshan took a walk at the foot of the mountain. "Did any warriors challenge you this afternoon?"

"Yes there were." Teng Qingshan felt helpless as he said, "And there were three of them, but I didn't pay them any heed as their capabilities were mediocre!"

As if he had expected it, Ji Hong said, "This isn't unusual! You are only 17 years old now. In the eyes of many warriors, you can't possible be that strong. Even if you defeated Meng Tian, they would also think that you employed treacherous methods, such as using poison!"

Teng Qingshan was stunned.

"Anyway, there will definitely be quite a number of people who do not feel that you are that strong and would want to use you as a stepping stone to spread their fame." Ji Hong turned back and looked at Qingshan. "Qingshan, I am ordering you, if there are any more people who challenge you, you'll have to take up those challenges! Furthermore, you will need to be vicious, to the extent of even killing them."

"Qingshan, you do not only represent yourself now. You are also representing the younger generation of our Gui Yuan Sect! In the eyes of outsiders, you, who defeated Meng Tian, are the top warrior amongst the younger generation of the Gui Yuan Sect! Therefore, you can't back down. You will have to be vicious, to kill! After killing a few of the challengers, the rest of them will start to be fearful. From that point on, there will be less people who would dare to challenge you." Ji Hong said.

Teng Qingshan said, "No need to kill them, but I will make it

unforgettable for them!"

"Don't go easy on them." Ji Hong laughed. "Among the innate masters today, there was one elder of northwest Yongzhou's Ying Family, one of the Eight Supreme Sects, by the name of 'Ying Rufan' who is quite strong. He was listed in the «Hidden Dragon Ranking» when he was young, and there were many who went to challenge him. He always tried not to overdo it and barely injured anyone, let alone killing them! In the end? Many people took advantage of his kindness and purposely looked for opportunity to challenge him in a bid to test out their skills with their swords and blades...In the end, only when Ying Rufan could not take it and became ruthless did he get peace of mind!"

One who was kind would always got bullied. There lay some truth in these words.

"Brother, this wild rabbit doesn't taste bad, let your brother try some." A voice came from not far away.

"Hmm?" Ji Hong looked over in surprised.

Ji Hong's look of surprised intrigued Teng Qingshan and made him turn his head as well. He saw a man, who was full of stubble, sitting there as he roasted a wild rabbit as a nice smell spread out. Beside him stood three sturdy looking warriors, one of whom was already reaching out to grab the roasted wild rabbit.

"Hmm? One-armed?" Teng Qingshan could tell with one glance that the man in the cloth robe was obviously one-armed since the space where his left arm was supposed to be was empty.

"You guys had better scram further away." The man spoke out with a cold voice.

"Hmm?" The face of the three warriors turned solemn, and one of them shouted, "Don't try to be smug when we are still being nice. We brothers are giving you face by eating one of your wild rabbits. If you want to start a fight, we wouldn't mind sending you to the

King of Hell."

With a 'clang', the one-armed man pulled out the saber at his waist.

The three warriors couldn't help but take a step back.

But the one-armed man sliced off a piece of the rabbit's meat with his saber and ate it, nodding his head, before he sliced off another piece.

"Making a fool out of us" The faces of the three warriors sank, and one of them hollered, "Brothers, let's teach this crip—-"

Before he could say the word 'cripple', a flash of green light appeared!

Boom!

A vigorous whistle sounded in the air, followed by a loud scream.

The three warriors looked at the one-armed man in horror, the face of one of them paled as the man grabbed his right arm. There were traces of blood on the wrist of his right arm, the tendons of his arm were cut.

From the start to end, the three of them did not even see the other party brandishing his saber!

On the other hand, the one-armed man slowly returned his saber to its scabbard as he coldly said, "Scram!"

The three of them exchanged glances, and knowing that the other party had let them off lightly, they quickly escaped.

"How fast. Such a terrifying saber." Teng Qingshan was astonished.

This slash was definitely not slower than Meng Tian's Blood Moon Saber. Furthermore, the one-armed man had remained seated on the floor when he attacked with his saber. The posture was awkward, but the prowess displayed was still tremendous.

"I didn't think that he would be here as well." The eyes of Ji Hong gleamed. "Let's head off first. He doesn't like people bothering him." The one-armed man shot a glance at Ji Hong before lowering his head to continue feasting on the wild rabbit.

Teng Qingshan was increasing confused.

Accompanying Ji Hong on their way back, he asked, "Commander, who is he?"

"Thunder God Blade 'Wu Yue'!" Ji Hong solemnly replied.

"Thunder God Blade?" Teng Qingshan was stunned.

"The 9th ranked person on the «Earthly Ranking»!" Ji Hong added. Teng Qingshan was astonished. "9th? Meng Tian was only ranked 61st, how strong is this Wu Yue?" Teng Qingshan could of course guess the difference in strength between the 61st and 9th. Only when the rankings were close was the difference in strength relatively small.

But, to be able to be placed amongst the top ten of the «Earthly Ranking», while Meng Tian was lowly ranked amongst the last few.

This Wu Yue was definitely stronger than Meng Tian, and by a lot.

"When Wu Yue was young, he was already listed on the «Hidden Dragon Ranking»at the age of eighteen, and was also once listed among the top ten in the «Hidden Dragon Ranking». Many people had thought that he had a glorious future waiting for him!" Ji Hong exclaimed. Even people like Zhuge Yun and Yue Song were not qualified to be listed in the «Hidden Dragon Ranking»; it went to show how difficult it was to be on this list.

"But when he was twenty-six, he led the men from his sect out to battle and lost one of his arms. There was no news of him since then for nearly twenty years, but in these two years, his fame suddenly increased with him defeating three warriors from the

«Earthly Ranking». The skills of his blade were named after his speed. Once his skills are displayed, it would be as if a green flash of thunder, therefore his blade was named 'Thunder God Blade'." Ji Hong was full of praise as he continued, "This art of the Thunder God Blade was non-existent previously, so it was obviously created by him. He is now ranked 9th on the «Earthly Ranking», but he has not suffered a single loss since. There is still a possibility for his rank to increase!"

After hearing this, Teng Qingshan also started to feel a sense of respect for this one-armed man.

To be able to be ranked amongst the top ten in the «Earthly Ranking»despite being crippled, his talent and determination was one to be fearful of.

"A young warrior is challenging Tie Yi Hall's top warrior among the youngest generation, 'Feng Wuxue'. Brothers, let's go quickly." An excited shout came from a distance away.

Teng Qingshan turned to look and saw a large number of warriors running west.

"Feng Wuxue?" Back in Gui Yuan Sect, Teng Qingshan had long checked out the lists of the «Hidden Dragon Ranking», the «Young Phoenix Ranking», as well as the «Earthly Ranking». That Feng Wuxue was the young warrior ranked 68th on the «Hidden Dragon Ranking»

"Let's go. Feng Wuxue? Qingshan, Let's go and take a look." Ji Hong smiled as he said.

Teng Qingshan and Ji Hong also hurried over.

Close to a thousand men gathered in a circle, leaving a space of a distance of tens of Zhang in the center. It was likely that most of the warriors in the vicinity had gathered over.

The sound of the clashing of metal sounded out.

"Hu!""Boom!"

A deep hole appeared on the surface of the land, and two figures were criss-crossing at great speeds.

This was the scene that they saw when Teng Qingshan and Ji Hong arrived.

"That challenger is also an expert." Ji Hong's eyes gleamed when he saw this. Teng Qingshan asked, "Commander, which of them is Feng Wuxue?"

"The one in silvery white. The challenger is the young man in short sleeves." Ji Hong said.

"Clang!""Clang!""Clang!"...

Ten consecutive clashes rang as more than ten slashes of the blade cut across the night sky.

"Pu!" A splash of blood flew, as the young man dressed in silvery white was tossed onto the ground. There was a blade wound on his chest, and blood was slowly streaming from it. In an instant, a large number of warriors from Tie Yi Hall quickly gathered up to check on his wounds and stop the blood.

"Wuxue, how are you feeling?" An elder from the Tie Yi Hall asked worriedly.

"Elder, the wound is not fatal." A middle aged man spoke out.

Chaos boiled amongst the almost thousand warriors that had gathered. No one had expected that a nameless young man would be able to defeat 'Feng Wuxue', the top warrior amongst the younger generation in Tie Yi Hall. Feng Wuxue sat on the floor and shot a cold stare at the young man dressed in short sleeves as he bellowed, "What is your name!"

"Listen carefully, my name is Yan Tie!" The young man in short sleeves replied cheerfully.

It was then Teng Qingshan realised, the young man was bare-footed!

...

"Yan Tie, this guy by the name of Yan Tie is quite powerful. To think that he defeated Feng Wuxue!"

"It was such a pity for Feng Wuxue. If that slash of his sword had been a bit faster, he would have pierced Yan Tie, but the ten odd slashes from Yan Tie were really intense, each stronger than the last. Feng Wuxue was not able to hold out against it."

"Look at that Yan Tie, he is pretty young. There will probably be a change in the names on the «Hidden Dragon Ranking» again.

...

Many young warriors looked at Yan Tie in envy. After this battle, Yan Tie's name would quickly spread across the world. Whoever that was able to defeat Yan Tie at that point would be able to step over him, but looking at the terrifying display of prowess by Yan Tie and Feng Wuxue, none of them dared to step up for the challenge.

"Hey, look, the young man beside Commander Ji Hong is Teng Qingshan! He defeated Meng Tian!"

"He didn't just defeated Meng Tian, he killed him! This Teng Qingshan will probably be listed in the next «Earthly Ranking».

There were many people present, and it did not take long for them to identify Teng Qingshan.

"The person who is able defeat Teng Qingshan hands down, in front of so many people, may be able to replace him on the «Earthly Ranking»."

At that moment —

"Teng Qingshan! I am the head of Zhong Jian Sect, 'Sima Feng'. I have heard of your skills in the art of the spear and would like to exchange some blows with you." A loud bellow rang out in the sky, and the almost thousand warriors around got excited. The earlier

exchange was between warriors at the level of «Hidden Dragon Ranking». Now, it was actually between warriors of the «Earthly Ranking» level.

Teng Qingshan frowned.

"Qingshan. It's just nice that there are many people here. Be more vicious and intimidate them!" Ji Hong was a bit excited as he threw a complacent glance at the Elder of Tie Yi Hall, 'Wei Canglong'.

Chapter 132: Yin and Yang

Canglong was a Tie Yi Hall elder. Presently, he was already over 100 years old and was similar to Ji Hong.

Between the two of them, one was a commander from the Gui Yuan Sect's Black Armored Army, while the other was an elder of Tie Yi Hall. Their ages were close, and they were both old. Unexpectedly, they both had the temperament of a child. Describing them as "Child" and "Old Child" actually made sense; between the two of them, neither accepted the other, and truthfully, there weren't any differences between the two.

Wei Canglong had ranked on the «Earthly Ranking» once, while Ji Hong hadn't. Thus, Wei Canglong felt that he could pressure his old rival.

Currently, Ji Hong's expression caused Wei Canglong to feel angry: "Amongst your Gui Yuan Sect's junior generation, Teng Qingshan has appeared. Old geezer, are you satisfied now? Hmph. I heard that Teng Qingshan defeated Meng Tian. Who knows the truth?! Perhaps he used some underhanded method."

Wei Canglong lowered his gaze and looked at Feng Wuxue. In a worried voice he said: "Wuxue. There are many experts under the heavens, so you needn't mind losing once in awhile. Next time, just win instead!"

Expectedly, Feng Wuxue was the Tie Yi Hall's future Sect Leader, so the Tie Yi Hall would obviously groom Feng Wuxue to such an extent.

"Martial Ancestor! Wuxue understands. That Yan Tie's saber skills were truly terrifying. I completely accept my loss! However..." Feng Wuxue looked at the distant youth wearing a short garment and harboring a cold expression. Resolutely he said: "Three years! Within three years, I will definitely surpass you!"

A smile eclipsed Wei Canglong's face.

"Martial Ancestor, between Teng Qingshan and Sima Feng, who will win?" Ma Wuxue asked while glancing at the man who defeated him, a short distance away. A sturdy old man, with graying hair on his temples, walked 10 Zhang towards the center. This old man was wearing a cyan robe and had a black broad sword on his back.

Wei Canglong let out a sneer: "Although Sima Feng is only the leader of a small sect, he is 80 years old. Furthermore, he has immersed himself in the art of the sword for 60-70 years. Even you, Wuxue, would have issues defeating Sima Feng. As for Teng Qingshan, just watch!"

...

It was the middle of the night; a torch was lit causing the surrounding environment to be dyed red.

Over 1000 martial artists gathered to create a circle ten Zhang; everyone was excited. In the center of the spacious circle stood one person. This cyan robed old man roared: "Don't tell me that you don't have guts?" His gaze coldly glared at the nearby Teng Qingshan.

"Teng Qingshan! Are you afraid?"

"Teng Qingshan, move your ass!"

Over 100 martial artists began shouting. There were too many people, so finding the people who were jeering was impossible. These martial artists wished for the whole world to be in chaos as they continued yelling.

"Chi, chi..." Teng Qingshan paid no heed to the surrounding hubbub. Instead, he focused on attaching the two ends of the Reincarnation Spear together.

"Sima Feng, you are also an elder. I'm in the process of assembling my weapon; why must you be so impatient?" Teng

Qingshan's voice resonated in the night. Simultaneously, he strode to the center of the spacious arena. As soon as they saw Teng Qingshan walk out, over 1000 marital artists immediately gave a cheer.

Teng Qingshan versus Sima Feng!

It was a pleasure to spectate such an expert level of battle.

"Haha, Teng Qingshan, there's no need to digress any further! Let our subordinates see the true show!" Sima Feng said as he retrieved the black broad sword from his back.

"Qiang!"

The broad sword was unsheathed, and a metallic noise reverberated through the air. Holding the black broad sword with one hand, Sima Feng's face turned serious. His grandeur instantly fused together with his broadsword. Standing there, Sima Feng seemed to resemble a towering mountain that rendered one incapable of movement.

"Hu!"

Gripping his spear with one hand, Teng Qingshan looked at Sima Feng with a playful expression.

...

"This Sima Feng has managed to become 'One with the Sword', and his aura is oppressive. As the leader of a sect, it's only natural that he is such an expert." The barefoot youth, Yan Tie, muttered as he spectated the battle from amongst the crowd. "However, this Teng Qingshan seems to be very ordinary. I can't feel anything special about him. Mhm, we'll find out in a bit. If he truly relied on his own strength to defeat Meng Tian, then this battle against Sima Feng should be quite marvelous."

...

"Lord Lieutenant, beat up that old geezer!" Du Hong yelled.

"Qingshan, let him know your might." Qinghu exclaimed. Gui Yuan Sect's group had already arrived. Currently, they were all here to encourage Teng Qingshan. As for Commander Guan, she was coldly watching the battle that was about to commence.

...

There were many experts amidst this myriad of martial artists. Every one of them was intensely watching, and the thousand people instantly turned completely silent.

Sima Feng's eyes suddenly squinted as he proceeded to stride towards Teng Qingshan, wielding his broadsword.

With every step, Sima Feng's aura rapidly increased.

"Cousin, look carefully at the true meaning behind 'Inflamed Passion' and 'Flashing Fire'! Teng Qingshan suddenly yelled out in a loud voice. This sentence instantly caused an uproar in the surrounding crowd. What was Teng Qingshan trying to do? This was an important battle and Teng Qingshan still wanted to use the opportunity to teach his cousin?

"Qingshan, beat him up!" Teng Qinghu sonorously exclaimed.

In the center of the spacious field, Sima Feng didn't let Teng Qingshan's words affect his realm of conception.

When Sima Feng was three meters away from Teng Qingshan, he abruptly stomped on the ground, and the vigor he had been charging up instantly erupted. It resembled a fierce tiger instantaneously pouncing on Teng Qingshan. The black broadsword brought about an odd, acute whistling sound like a ghost wailing. The broadsword immediately descended upon Teng Qingshan's head.

"Qiang!"

The Reincarnation Spear in Teng Qingshan's hands resembled an arrow as it flew noiselessly through the air at a quick but efficient pace. Sima Feng had no way of reacting in time.

Five Techniques of Ardent Flame– Flashing Fire!

...

"Hmm? Teng Qingshan can unexpectedly enter the 'Minute Subtlety' realm?"

Thunder God Blade, Hao Yue, who was gripping a roasted rabbit leg and was originally only casually glancing at the match, was instantly shocked when he saw the spear move. He intently stared at Teng Qingshan. "Not bad, that's the Minute Subtlety realm: inner strength control to a suave state where it follows one's will and not a single bit is wasted! However... as to what stage his Minute Subtlety realm has reached, I don't yet know. I must watch carefully! Nonetheless, at such a young age, he should have only just entered the Minute Subtlety realm."

Although Hao Yue was still chewing on roasted rabbit meat, his gaze was fixated on the spacious field and the two figures standing there.

...

Even in the entire Nine Prefectures, the number of Postliminary martial artists who reached the Minute Subtlety realm was exceeding small. The reason for a martial artist's prowess lay in his body's inner strength. Those who were able to manipulate their inner strength as they wished without losing even a single strand could use inner strength to control their weapons and conduct extremely exquisite attacks.

This was Minute Subtlety!

It was a representation of one's absolute control over their inner strength!

What about Teng Qingshan? In terms of inner strength, Teng Qingshan actually had not reached the Minute Subtlety realm! His control over inner strength was in fact very crude! However, the Spear Art he was currently using didn't use inner strength.

Instead, he was using pure muscle. Teng Qingshan's control over his body's strength could be said to be at the peak of precision.

Teng Qingshan was able to control his flesh, muscles, bones, and even the flow of his Qi and blood.

Absolute control!

... Receiving the "Flashing Fire" attack, the broadsword couldn't help but be knocked aside. However, Sima Feng's figure spun around, borrowing the rotational force. The broadsword in his hands seized the opportunity to launch a diagonal strike.

Hong!

The broadsword once again brought about an odd acute whistle.

The Reincarnation Spear in Teng Qingshan's hands resembled a snake emerging from its cave as it abruptly flew out. In the instant it made contact with the broadsword, the power in Teng Qingshan's hands instantaneously erupted. The shaft of the Reincarnation Spear suddenly bent a bit, and after Teng Qingshan altered the power of his hands, it immediately emitted a completely opposite force. The accumulated power of the Reincarnation Spearhead rose to another level.

Hong!

Teng Qingshan's Reincarnation Spear's spearhead abruptly ricocheted.

"Peng!" The spearhead of the long spear smashed into the broad sword.

Sima Feng felt his hand go numb and involuntarily retreated three steps. He couldn't help but stare in shock at Teng Qingshan. He proceeded to let out an invigorating laugh and said: "Incredible Spear Arts! Among the two attacks that you just spoke of, Flashing Flames and Inflamed Passion, that was Inflamed Passion right? The instantaneous explosion of power caught me completely off guard!"

"It's only just begun!" Teng Qingshan laughed and stomped on the ground.

Hu!

His entire body charged at Sima Feng like an arrow being shot from a bow. The long spear in his hands transformed into a flash of black lightning as it stabbed towards Sima Feng's bosom.

"Qiang!" Sima Feng proceeded to swing the broadsword and simultaneously yelled: "Nine Swords of the Collapsing Mountain!"

"Haha..."

Teng Qingshan let out a loud laugh. The Reincarnation Spear in his hands was performing "Flashing Fire" and it seemed to resemble a snake ferociously thrusting out its tail, causing the broadsword to change its direction. This move caused Sima Feng's realm of conception to suffer. Subsequently, Teng Qingshan performed "Inflamed Passion".

...

On the spacious field, Sima Feng's Sword Arts began turning even more violent and ferocious. He seemed incapable of maintaining his calm from earlier and became even more rash. Even his face started to flush red.

This was because...

Teng Qingshan had unexpectedly managed to use his two techniques, "Flashing Fire" and "Inflamed Passion", to completely suppress him.

Sima Feng's body movements couldn't be considered quick. Thus, with Teng Qingshan's nimble feet, he encircled Sima Feng while wantonly performing his Spear Arts. Teng Qingshan's "Flashing Fire" resembled a venomous snake repeatedly biting someone. While his 'Inflamed Passion's' spearhead, which instantaneously exploded in power, it was similar to a malicious dragon.

Occasionally, his spear was violent and fierce. Occasionally, his spear was sinister and diabolic.

"This realm of conception..." Teng Qingshan overlapped the two moves as he alternated between them while constantly attacking Sima Feng. He unexpectedly remembered the alternation of Yin and Yang in his frame of mind when he had trained the "Three Xing Yi Postures" at the time. "These two moves, it should be like this!" The two spear moves began to slowly transform in Teng Qingshan's hands.

"Flashing Fire" became even more gentle and reserved.

"Inflamed Passion became even more violent and fierce.

The two consecutive strikes seemed to be made by heaven. Gradually, "Flashing Fire" was shortened to half its original movement before transforming into "Inflamed Passion".

Gentle and reserved, and violent and fierce would momentarily interweave.

Sima Feng reverted to an insane realm of conception. He felt as if he was being tormented to death: "What kind of damnable Spear Art is this? In one instant, it's gentle, reserved and doesn't use power. In the next, it's violent and fiercely erupts with power!" However Sima Feng still felt that his manipulation over his broadsword was enough to defend against Teng Qingshan's "Flashing Fire".

However, suddenly, Yin and Yang began alternating. It would be reserved and gentle one strike before suddenly becoming violent and fierce.

Caught unprepared, Sima Feng obviously obtained injuries.

...

These two moves were already alive in Teng Qingshan's hands, and now they had nearly fused into one move. What caused Sima Feng to suffer so much that he felt like spitting blood was that he

had never come across this sort of feeling before.

"Qiang!"

The broad sword flew out of Sima Feng's hands, and the silhouette of a spear proceeded to smash into his body. The sound of bone shattering was heard as Sima Feng flew into the air.

...

Amidst the one thousand martial artists, there was a grey-haired old man, whose eyes were like venomous snakes. He stared at Teng Qingshan: "This realm of conception... last time when Wei Wujia, that old geezer, chased me, his realm of conception was similar to that last strike! Although this young person's realm of conception during that attack is still vague and incomparable to Wei Wujia's, he is only 17 years old! Should I kill him now and rid Gui Yuan Sect of this genius, or should I steal him away and make him my own disciple?"

Chapter 133: Fusion

Teng Qingshan was only seventeen, yet, he possessed such powerful strength.

"He specializes in the cultivation of spear art, while I practice saber art! How can I teach him? In fact, I might have even weaker spear art than him. Although he is only a Postliminary Expert, his understanding of the concepts is almost as good as mine! I am not capable of teaching him. Moreover, I already have a precious disciple! I do not need another disciple... Then, should I kill him? If I were to kill him now, that Zhuge Yuanhong will definitely be enraged and he may even rush over here personally. If he were to find out that I was the killer, it'd be troublesome."

The old man was still very wary of Zhuge Yuanhong.

"Even if he can't find the killer, it will be very hard for me to seize the Black Fire Spirit Fruit when he is here! Mmm, I need to prioritize the important things first. I will kill Teng Qingshan when I have gotten my hands on the Black Fire Spirit Fruit! Hmph. I'll then wipe out any traces of his body and Zhuge Yuanhong won't be able to find out! Zhuge Yuanhong, Zhuge Yuanhong... Who told you to help Wei Wuya. You can't blame me for this!"

After deciding on his plan, the silver-haired old man continued watching with a grin.

At this moment, loud cheers rang out from the surroundings!

Everyone praised Teng Qingshan. He had put up a great fight, and his longspear seemed just like a docile dragon slithering around. Sometimes it would be terrifyingly fast, while at other times, it was very violent. Swinging his longspear, he forcibly beat the Lord of the Zhong Jian Sect, Sima Feng to the ground.

"Brother Wang, you've also been famous for several decades. Why don't you go up and challenge him?

If you win, your reputation would soar." A skinny man next to the silver-haired and gray-robed old man smiled and said.

"That's right, Brother Wang. You're also one of the few experts in our Fanwu City." Other people started chipping in.

The silver-haired old man shook his head and said smiling, "Aren't you guys aware of my abilities? You want me to compete with an expert who is on the level of the "Earthly Ranking"? Am I complaining that I have lived too long a life?" The few warriors around him laughed. They were just teasing 'Wang Yun', who was considered to be considerably strong in Xuyang County's Fanwu City.

He had reached the pinnacle of the Postliminary Realm.

The silver-haired and gray-robed old man continued to smile despite being teased by the others. However, a cold gleam flashed in his eyes, revealing his ruthlessness.

****

There were over one thousand warriors and quite a number of warriors were shouting loudly.

"Teng Qingshan is really amazing! He defeated Sima Feng so easily!"

"Teng Qingshan... As expected of an expert listed on the "Earthly Ranking"."

...

Many warriors who were not that strong were the loudest in shouting out. They had teased Teng Qingshan earlier and were now trying very hard to shower him with praises. The new copy of the "Earthly Ranking" was not out yet and there was no way to be sure if the Wan Xiang Sect would really add Teng Qingshan into the newest list of the "Earthly Ranking".

However, this was how many warriors were. They would easily

believe in rumors and loved to stir up trouble.

"Sect Master!""Sect Master!"

Many people crowded around Sima Feng, who was seated cross-legged on the ground, trying to control his injuries through his inner strength. After a short while, he opened his eyes and got up to his feet with great difficulty and with the help of the members of his sect. He looked at Teng Qingshan and although he was unwilling to accept this, he still said in a loud voice, "Lieutenant Teng, as expected of one who can defeat Meng Tian, an expert on the "Earthly Ranking". Your spear art has already reached the level of being able to use your opponent's force onto themselves. I, Sima Feng, admit that I'm no match against you! Coughs..."

As Sima Feng had spoken loudly, his internal injuries became worse, and he coughed uncontrollably to the point that he started coughing blood.

This scene shocked quite a number of warriors.

Teng Qingshan's spear attack actually managed to wound Sima Feng to such a degree.

"Thank you, Lieutenant Teng, for showing mercy." Sima Feng cupped his hands together and immediately departed with the help of the members of his sect.

Showing mercy?

It was true that Teng Qingshan had shown mercy. Sima Feng's heavy sword had been sent flying and rendered in a state where he was unable to fend off the attack, Teng Qingshan had smashed with an 'Inflamed Passion' attack. He would be able to smash Sima Feng to his death even if it was with just a strength of several ten thousand Jin. At the very end, Teng Qingshan drew back his spear attack.

He only broke the opponent's two rib bones, inflicting injuries to his internal organs.

Although he would need to take a year or more to recuperate, he at least got to keep his life.

"Defeating Teng Qingshan will allow one to be listed onto the "Earthly Ranking"."

"Yan Tie, since you can defeat Feng Wuxue, then you may be able to defeat Teng Qingshan as well." Someone shouted out. Yan Tie frowned and looked over. However, there were too many people in the surroundings. There were also some people who were especially tall and had blocked his vision. He couldn't see the person who had shouted.

"Hmph," Yan Tie snorted coldly but did not step forth.

Yan Tie stared at Teng Qingshan from the distance, "What an amazing spear arts! I'll be able to fend off these two attacks if I were to block at full power. However, from what Teng Qingshan said before he fought, he was clearly demonstrating his moves for his cousin.

This guy...Could it be that he's really concealing his abilities?" Yan Tie did not dare to take action.

Just the abilities which Teng Qingshan had revealed already caused Yan Tie to feel a great headache.

"Seems like I've underestimated the experts in the world! Mmm, there are many experts here. I'll wait first... After the things here are over, I'll return to Youzhou and look for Teacher! After having traveled around for eight years, it's about time to head back!" Yan Tie thought to himself.

...

Teng Qingshan stood there for very long and only returned back to the crowd after seeing that no one was coming up to challenge him.

The over one thousand warriors around him also left after seeing that there were no other challenges. That Thunder God Blade Wu

Yue looked at Teng Qingshan's departing back view and a gleam of cold light flashed in his eyes, "What amazing spear arts. Looking at one part allows one to understand the entire picture. This Teng Qingshan has definitely yet to bring out his strongest spear art...He really does have the ability to kill Meng Tian! In this attempt to seize the Black Fire Spirit Fruit, he will be a powerful opponent. However... I've practiced my saber arts for so many years. I don't believe that a seventeen-year-old young man like him would be able to fend it off!" Wu Yue was extremely confident.

The crowd dispersed and everyone returned to their own places.

However, they were still talking about the two sparrings earlier. They had all been taken by shock.

******

At the Gui Yuan Sect's base.

"Brother Qinghu, that two techniques that Lieutenant Teng displayed were the two techniques you displayed in the Centurion competition?" Some members of the Black Armored Army crowded around.

"Mmm," Teng Qinghu's eyes lit up. "Flashing Fire and Inflamed Passion are two of the simpler techniques that Qingshan had taught me. I did not expect him to make these two techniques so amazing! If I'm able to reach half of what Qingshan can do with these two attacks, then I'd be able to become first in the Centurion competition!"

"Just boast."

Everyone laughed.

"However, why is it that the prowess that I display is so much weaker when they are the same techniques?" Teng Qinghu mumbled. On that night, Teng Qinghu spent a very long time practicing his spear arts. What Teng Qingshan had demonstrated for him earlier stirred up great emotions in him.

...

It was a complete silence at night.

Teng Qingshan sat on the grass, leaning against a big tree.

He was at the edge of the Great Yan Mountain. If he were to look down, he would be able to see the tents set up by Gui Yuan Sect.

"The two moves, Inflamed Passion and Flashing Fire... They are completely different moves but can also be fused together. "This "Five Techniques of the Ardent Flame"..." Teng Qingshan closed his eyes and tried to simulate the fusing. He then stood up and started performing it, constantly changing his moves.

Teng Qingshan had wanted to fuse the "Five Techniques of the Ardent Flame" with the concepts of the Cannon Fist, merging them into one.

This attack would also become the fourth move of the Five Elemental Spear Arts.

Teng Qingshan had already been working on trying to change the Cannon Fist into spear arts for a few years but had been unable to succeed.

The "Five Techniques of the Ardent Flame" was an opportunity.

In the "Five Techniques of the Ardent Flame", the techniques which were the hardest to fuse together were the 'Inflamed Passion' and 'Flashing Fire' which had completely different concepts. This two moves could be fused together and Teng Qingshan's progress in fusing the five moves instantly got faster. On this night, Teng Qingshan was completely submerged in his spear arts, not sensing the passing of time at all.

He continued this until early next morning.

Teng Qingshan did not feel tired at all. He felt a little puzzled, "Where should I start to create the four technique of my Five Elemental Spear Arts?" In the process of fusing his spear art, there

was a need to get rid of useless parts and fuse the essence together. He had to bring out the concept of the fire attributed spear arts completely.

However——

Which of them was the essence?

"If I were to fuse the moves of the Wildfire Flames and Silver Flower of the Flaming Tree, then combining the fusion with the Cannon Fist, it would be an attack used against group attack. And if I were to use the Legacy of the Ultimate Flame as the primary move, then I would be able to fuse in the concept of the Tiger Cannon Fist, thereby, creating the most powerful spear art for the attack of one particular target!" Teng Qingshan was well aware of this.

There were two choices. One of it was area attack, while the other was a targeted attack.

The Tiger Cannon Fist was the strongest fist technique he had in his previous life and it could be merged with the concepts of the Legacy of the Ultimate Flame.

Teng Qingshan had a feeling——

Once he chose the targeted attack, the difficulty in creating this move will be ten times or even one hundred times more than in creating the area attack. However... This one move, in his predictions, would surpass that of the Toxic Dragon Drill and it would become the most powerful move amongst the four spear techniques!

"Area attack? My Pursuing Shadows can be used as both a targeted attack or an area attack. The prowess of the Toxic Dragon Drill is strong enough as well! There's no need for some kind of area attack with a great prowess at the moment. Forget it, it's better to have a little more patience and spend more effort. After all, I've already been working on this for so many years. A few

more years won't make a difference!"

Teng Qingshan had decided to devote all his efforts into studying and creating the fourth technique of the Five Elemental Spear Arts, a spear technique with a fire attribute!

This would be the most terrifying attack amongst the four techniques, and would also be the one which took up the most time.

Teng Qingshan went down the mountain and returned to the base.

"Qingshan, you entered the mountain so early for your morning practice?" Ji Hong just came out from his tent.

Teng Qingshan smiled and nodded.

Just then, Commander Guan Lu also walked out, throwing a glance toward Teng Qingshan. Her gaze had changed a little, but it soon returned to the previous coldness. She walked pass Teng Qingshan and her voice rang out, "Lieutenant Teng, don't forget our promise. Once the things here are settled, there would be no need to worry about any injuries. The two of us shall have a good fight."

After saying that, Guan Lu left.

Teng Qingshan was stunned.

...

In the days that followed, the Gui Yuan Sect continued to be split into three teams as they searched the entire Blazing Mountain. However, the mountain area was too wide, and as time passed by, more and more warriors arrived.

Despite there being so many warriors on a mountain, they were irrelevant just like a single drop of water in the ocean.

Very soon, the members of Yangzhou's top sect, Qing Hu Island, arrived.

Qingzhou's number one sect, Xiao Yao Palace, had also sent a team of over one hundred members. There were also other warriors, both famous and not, who arrived progressively. In a month's time, the number of warriors who had gathered around the Blazing Mountain had surpassed ten thousand. Every night, the warriors would all return to the foot of the mountain.

With there being over ten thousand warriors, of course there would be a lot of disagreements.

Sparring, settling of feuds and enmities were a common sight.

Chapter 134: Gu Shiyou

Night fell.

It had been one month and three days since the Gui Yaun sect had arrived in the Blazing Mountains. More than ten thousand warriors had already gathered, resulting in countless tentages and torches surrounding the base of the mountain. At that moment, Teng Qingshan, Guan Lu, and Ji Hong were having a discussion in their tent.

“There are more and more experts gathering here.” Ji Hong frowned and said, “Just counting experts from the «Earth Rankingly», there are already six whom I recognize! As for those from the «Hidden Dragon Ranking» and «Young Phoenix Ranking», there are over ten of them altogether. Furthermore, there are also many experts who are not listed on the «Earthly Ranking», yet are not far off in terms of their capabilities! Qingshan, Guan Lu, we are in trouble now!

It was truly quite troublesome!

Currently, the sects with the strongest presence were ‘Qing Hu Island’ and ‘Xiao Yao Palace’, respectively. These two sects were amongst the top eight sects of the Nine Prefectures.

The Gui Yuan Sect was far smaller in comparison to these two big sects.

Guan Lu frowned and said, “Martial Granduncle, while Qing Hu Island and Xiao Yao Palace have deployed many experts, they are out in the open. I’m more concerned for the experts who are hidden in the dark! Afterall……Over ten thousand warriors have already gathered here. Xiao Yan Palace and Qing Hu Island only have around a hundred men. Who knows if there are any extraordinary experts hidden amongst the crowd.”

Ji Hong nodded.

“Commander, will the Black Fire Spirit Fruit attract the attention of innate masters?” Teng Qingshan suddenly asked.

“Innate?” Ji Hong was stunned for a moment before he smiled and shook his head. “The Black Fire Spirit Fruit is useless to innate masters. Moreover……look, did Xiao Yan Palace and Qing Hu Island send any of their innate masters? There are too few innate masters in this world. Too few! They have a reputation to maintain. If an innate master were here, we would give it to him without a second word! Would he dare to take it?”

“If an innate master wanted a spirit fruit, wouldn’t it be easier to enter the Desolate Land to search for it? There are almost no traces of humans in the Desolate Land, but there are plenty of treasures! If one has the capabilities, he should get it from the Desolate Lands himself.” Ji Hong said.

Teng Qingshan began to understand.

The Desolate Land was a forbidden area to ordinary warriors, but it was nothing to innate masters. Maybe, only monsters, such as demonic beasts, would be able to be of a threat to innate masters. Of course……A person like Qingshan, with the strength of a hundred and eighty thousand Jin in his arms, could also be considered a monster himself.

“One month and three days.” Teng Qingshan frowned as he said, “The Black Fire Spirit Fruit should be maturing soon.”

“Hmm.” Ji Hong was also worried. “The Red Scaled Beast should have a height of two Zhang after such a long time. I reckon that the Black Fire Spirit Fruit will be maturing within another ten days to half a month’s time. To date, no one has managed to locate the Black Fire Spirit Fruit. Once the Red Scaled Beast eats the Black Fire Spirit Fruit and evolves, it would have the ability to annihilate us!”

It was hard, even for an innate master to penetrate through the scales of a Red Scaled Beast that had evolved.

The Red Scaled Beast at that stage would be a really terrifying demonic beast.

“Martial Granduncle, I reckon that even if someone has found the place, he would also keep it a secret for himself and not spread the news.” Guan Lu spoke out.

Teng Qingshan, Ji Hong, and Guan Lu had no other option but to wait.

When the chance appeared, they would snatch it; if not, they could only hold it in.

“Black Fire Spirit Root!” Teng Qingshan was full of thirst for the Black Fire Spirit Root. It was an opportunity for him to strengthen his physique.

While the three of them were chatting.

“Someone is challenging Gu Shiyou! Brothers, hurry up.” Voices came from the men of the Black Armored Army who were outside the tent. This caused Teng Qingshan and company to exit the tent. Upon leaving the tent. they saw a circle of people gathered to the west, and at one glance, they could tell that there were at least a few thousand men already gathered. Most of the warriors staying at the Blazing Mountains, had gathered there.

“Let’s go.” Ji Hong’s tone held a bit of expectation.

“Gu Shiyou!” Guan Lu’s eyes gleamed.

Ji Hong glanced at Teng Qingshan and smiled. “Qingshan, this Gu Shiyou should be the only expert from the younger generation across the whole Nine Prefectures who could possibly be on par with you! Now that there is someone challenging him, you should take advantage and get a good look at his abilities.”

“I have yet to see him make any moves.” Teng Qingshan could not help but feel curious.

This Gu Shiyou was the young master of Yangzhou’s first sect,

‘Qing Hu Island’. He was currently twenty-eight years old and was ranked first on the «Hidden Dragon Ranking», and forty-eighth on the «Earthly Ranking»! He was the cream of the crop amongst the youngest generation across the Nine Prefectures. Across the Nine Prefectures, there are many young men who held him in high regard and set him as their goal to defeat.

“Listed on both rankings?!” Teng Qingshan and company from the Gui Yuan Sect squeezed through the crowd quickly secured a large spot for themselves.

Most warriors would give way upon seeing people from the Gui Yuan Sect.

And of course, Teng Qingshan, Ji Hong, and Guan Lu stood right in front, where the view was the clearest.

Teng Qingshan could tell with one glance that there was a cool looking man in a green top, holding a black spear, standing in the middle of the space that was tens of Zhang wide. He was clearly the one who was ranked first on the «Hidden Dragon Ranking», the young master of the Qing Hu Islands, ‘Gu Shiyou’, and his opponent, a middle-aged man who used a staff.

Hu! Hu! Hu!

The movement of the staff was like surging waves as it struck towards Gu Shiyou

Gu Shiyou stood on the spot, the black spear in his hands immediately became tens of black shadows, each blocking the movements of the staff.

“Her~~”

That middle-aged man leapt from the ground, holding the staff with both of his hands, as he smashed down from mid-air with an aura that seemed to be able to split open the skies and earth.

“What a powerful move.” Teng Qingshan silently praised.

“Boom!”

A big hole, one Zhang deep and a couple of Zhang wide, appeared on the surface of the ground, as mud and chips of rock were sent flying. That Gu Shiyou, on the other hand, had long shunned to the side.

“Thirteen Swing of the Angry Sea!” The middle-aged man bellowed.

Each swing was faster and heavier than the previous strike!

……

“Commander, who is this middle-aged man with such powerful and intense skills with the staff?” Teng Qingshan was slightly surprised. He had thought that this match would be an easy win for Gu Shiyou but did not expect Gu Shiyou to be pushed back by the challenger.

“I do not recognize this person either.” Ji Hong was puzzled as well.

Ji Hong then exclaimed, “There are many experts who’ve trained hard in this world. For instance, Wu Yue spent twenty years on his training in one shot. Once he displayed his prowess, he was able to be ranked within the top ten in the «Earthly Ranking». This middle-aged man who is using the staff must also be an expert who has spent many years in training!”

Teng Qingshan praised silently.

There were many experts who had gone through difficult training and did not usually publicly display their skills in public. Once they did, they would choose to do so under big occasions and have a public challenge to spread their fame in one go.

“Boom!”

Another strike of the heavy staff pushed Gu Shiyou back more than ten steps. He looked surprised as he watched the middle-aged

man in front of him, who was wearing plain clothes and looked like a mountain dweller.

“Where the hell did this expert come from?” Gu Shiyou was bewildered. Being ranked first on the «Hidden Dragon Ranking» and forty-eighth on the «Earthly Ranking», obviously there would be many people who wanted to challenge him. He was open to challenges as well, but each time he accepted a challenge, he would definitely inflict heavy injuries, cripple, or even kill the other party.

Of course, there would still be many experts who were after fame and were not afraid of death.

This middle-aged man was one of them.

It is just that the other party seemed to be stronger than him. From the start, the middle-aged man had gained control of the battle as he dished out heavier and heavier hits with his staff. The intense pressure overwhelmed Gu Shiyou.

“Bang!”

Gu Shiyou made an effort to block another hit from the staff, but was thrown back into the air and upon landing, he stepped back a few paces shouting, “Stop!”

The middle-aged man with a sallow looking face held onto his staff as he looked at Gu Shiyou.

“I admit my defeat in this battle.” Gu Shiyou said calmly.

There was instant uproar from the people surrounding them.

The middle-aged man also laughed as he said, “Young Master’s spear arts are also admirable. Till now, I have yet to inflict any injuries on Young Master.”

Gu Shiyou smiled as he said, “I still do not know brother’s name.”

“I, I am Hua Chizhu!” The middle-aged man smiled and replied in

an especially loud voice. The warriors around them started to talk amongst themselves, mentioning ‘Hua Chizhu’. To be able to get Gu Shiyou to admit his defeat, the capabilities of this ‘Hua Chizhu’ was undeniable. Seems like there would be another expert listed on the «Earthly Ranking».

Gu Shi You smiled and turned to head back to his own camp.

“Young Master!” People started to gather around him.

“Let’s head back.” Gu Shiyou instructed. He lowered his head to look at both of his palms. They had turned red, and blood was permeating from them.

“What terrifying staff skills.” Gu Shiyou exclaimed to himself. He was aware that if he had not admitted defeat, his spear would probably have been sent flying in the next hit. Both his hands were already in so much pain that they were numb.

……

Another strong warrior had appeared and defeated an expert from the «Earthly Ranking». This made the warriors surrounding them very excited. The name ‘Hua Chizhu’ would spread across the world very soon. While many of the warriors were full of envy for Hua Chizhu, they were also hoping to be able to do the same for themselves one day.

To be able to spread his name across the world, it would be worth it even if it was at the expense of his life.

The next day afternoon, Teng Qingshan led his subordinates as they combed through the Blazing Mountain in detail.

“The staff skills of the Hua Chizhu was really intense! And looking at it, he probably had not exerted his full strength yet.” Teng Qingshan exclaimed to himself while he was searching. He had already thought of the notion of challenging Hua Chizhu. “While Gu Shiyou tried very hard, he probably had yet to display his best skills. With close to ten thousand warriors watching them,

he did not waver in his decision to admit his defeat! This person……has a future that is inestimable.”

Looking up into the sky, it was already late.

It was probably another two hours to noon.

“Qingshan, we’ve been searching for so long. Where exactly is that Red Scaled Beast hiding? Even though there are over ten thousand people looking for it, they still could not find it. Not even the Black Fire Spirit Fruit.” Teng Qinghu felt helpless as he said this.

Teng Qingshan also frowned as he started to think.

Suddenly, Teng Qingshan recalled that in his first encounter with the adolescent Red Scaled Beast, he had chased it up onto a tall mountain before it had jumped off the cliff.

“That’s not right!”

Teng Qingshan’s heart skipped a beat, “When I was chasing the adolescent Red Scaled Beast, it had felt that its life was in danger. It would definitely have chosen a safe route. There are so many mountain peaks in the area, why would it choose that particular one? Moreover, I had followed right after it had jumped down, why was I not able to find it when it was merely a few seconds difference? Did that valley have a unique trait?”

“Follow me!” At Teng Qingshan’s order, they all headed for the valley that Teng Qingshan had been to back then.

In the valley.

“This Black Fire Spirit Fruit is really hidden in such a secretive place. Who would have thought that the entrance is in this place?” A lean man climbed out from a shorter cliff on the opposite side of the valley, which was covered with vines. Underneath the vines was a hidden den. The lean man was feeling proud of himself.

At present, he was the only one who was aware of where the

Black Fire Spirit Fruit was hidden.

“Hmm hmm, if it keep an eye on it daily and don’t tell others, this Black Fire Spirit Fruit will be mine! Although my skills are bad, even if I am not able to snatch it from the Red Scaled Beast, at least I will still be able to eat the Black Fire Spirit Root. By then, I will also become a First Rated Warrior myself.” The lean man was feeling proud.

But his face suddenly paled as he saw at a group of men a short distance away. The leader of the pack, a man dressed in black and holding on to a spear, was staring at him.

Chapter 135: Underground

After seeing the other party's uniforms, the lean man's face paled. "They're from the Gui Yuan Sect!"

Among the warriors who had gathered at the foot of Blazing Mountain, those from major sects were dressed in similar outfits and were thus easily distinguishable. Ordinary warriors would choose to avoid them when they came across such men.

"If I go down now, I will definitely be caught by them. With my capabilities, I won't be able to escape from the clutches of the men from the Gui Yuan Sect! There's no other choice!" The lean man looked up, clenched his teeth, and quickly grabbed onto the vines before climbing upwards. He was also a warrior, so the speed at which he climbed was fast indeed.

If he had jumped down, he would have definitely been caught.

Escape into the cave beneath the vines? The other party would be able to catch up to him very quickly once they entered the cave.

If he climbed upwards and was fast enough to reach the peak of this short cliff first, he would still have some traces of hope.

...

At the foot of the mountain, Teng Qingshan raised his head and looked at the lean man, who was climbing up the cliff rapidly.

"Lieutenant, do we give chase?" Du Hong was a bit anxious.

Teng Qingshan gave a faint smile as picked up two small stones from the ground and looked up at the lean man, who was facing difficulties while attempting to climb the vineless areas. Teng Qingshan freely threw one of the stones, which raced across the air as if it were a shooting star and landed precisely on the lean man's right arm.

"Ah!" The lean man cried out in pain as he released his right hand

that was clutching onto the cliff.

Having lost his balance, he fell downwards.

It was a height of over ten Zhang. If he had jumped down, his legs would have at most suffered a fracture. However, since he had lost his balance, he was falling backwards, heads down. Even a First Rated Warrior would have fallen to his death.

"Hu!"

Like a gust of wind, Teng Qingshan reached out his hand towards the body that was crashing down as if it were a missile—

Ten Zhang was equivalent to about forty meters, comparable to a ten-story building from Teng Qingshan's previous life. To fall from such a height, the impact could probably break the arms of a First Rated Warrior if he were to receive it with his bare hands.

"Bang!"

With 90% of the impact offset by Teng Qingshan's arm, the lean man fell onto the floor with no serious injury except for a tight feeling in his chest.

Teng Qingshan could have actually received that impact with just one arm. However, even if he himself were unharmed, the lean man would have probably suffered from the impact and died. Therefore, he could only use this gentler approach and catch him with his hands instead.

"I know the secret to the Black Fire Spirit Fruit. The reason he saved me is likely because he's not aware of the situation in the cave and wants me to lead the way. Once they find the Black Fire Spirit Fruit, they will definitely kill me! They will definitely not let me leave this place alive in order to keep the Black Fire Spirit Fruit to themselves!" The lean man had gained much experience from roaming the world over the past years and was not a fool.

He understood that whoever found the Black Fire Spirit Fruit would want to keep it for themselves!

Having fallen on the floor, the lean man waved his hand and shot a cold flash of light towards Teng Qingshan's chest, which was in close proximity. He then instantly propped himself up with both hands, and with a "woosh", he dashed far away.

"Clank!" Teng Qingshan deflected the dagger with a mere flick of his finger, .

Looking at the lean man, who was quickly running away, Teng Qingshan threw the other stone in his hand.

"Ah!" The lean man's right leg collapsed from under him, causing him to fall down on his rear.

"If you try to escape again, I WILL kill you!" A cold voice rang out by his ear, causing the lean man, who still wanted to escape, to feel a sense of devastation. As of this moment, he understood that he no longer had any hope of escaping when he couldn't even run away from the sneak attack earlier. He was not one who would court death.

After rubbing his right leg, the lean man stood up and turned towards Teng Qingshan, squeezing out a smile. "Dear heroes from Gui Yuan Sect, you all..."

"Is the Black Fire Spirit Fruit inside that cave?" Teng Qingshan got straight to the point.

The lean man was stunned by the other party's sharp guess.

"Yes!" The lean man nodded his head.

By then, Du Hong, Teng Qinghu, and the rest of the company had also rushed over. They were elated upon hearing this. "Qingshan, your guess was right. The Black Fire Spirit Fruit is actually in this valley. To think that we were previously blindly running all over the place ." Teng Qinghu said. Teng Qingshan also smiled. He had merely made a guess based on the location where the adolescent Red Scaled Beast had escaped to.

Teng Qingshan immediate instructed, "Qinghu, Old Du, you two

follow me into the cave. The rest of the men will stay in the vicinity and continue pretending to search for the Black Fire Spirit Fruit. Wait for us to come out."

"Yes, Lieutenant." The group of men lowered their voices.

The lean man looked at Teng Qingshan in horror. "Yes, this is Gui Yuan Sect's Lieutenant Teng Qingshan. He even competed with Sima Feng the other day. No wonder he could catch me so easily when I fell from a height of sixteen to seventeen Zhang! Even though I launched a sneak attack from such close proximity, he still managed to easily deflect it."

After knowing the other party's identity, the lean man did not dare to resist any further.

Teng Qingshan scanned the surroundings.

Since it had originally been a concealed location, there were no other people in the vicinity of the valley at that moment. Even if anyone did come to search the vicinity, there wouldn't be many people to find. If nothing turned up from their search, they would generally not carry on.

"Let's enter the cave," Teng Qingshan said.

Teng Qingshan grabbed onto the lean man's shirt with his left hand, and with a leap, he jumped a height of about seven to eight Zhang. He then grabbed onto a protruding rock with his right hand and propelled himself upwards. With a tap of his feet, he flew straight to the cave, lifted the vines and entered it.

Teng Qinghu and Du Hong used both their hands and legs as they climbed up with great speed as well.

Both of them were also First Rated Warriors, so they were able to quickly climb up. Thus, they entered the cave within the span of a few breaths.

...

Teng Qingshan returned the vines to their position and covered the entrance to the cave.

The tunnels in the cave were dark, but they had a height of over one Zhang, therefore Teng Qingshan's group did not have to stoop low upon entering the cave.

"You, take the lead," Teng Qingshan instructed calmly.

Du Hong hollered at the lean man, "Chap, if you try anything funny one more time, even if the lieutenant doesn't do anything, I will pierce you with a single spear strike!" At this moment, Du Hong and Qinghu drew their spears from their back. Teng Qingshan also drew his spear from his back and held it in his hands.

In the cave, nothing was uncertain. It was better to be careful.

"Sirs, please be assured. In front of Lieutenant Teng, even if my courage were ten times greater, I would not dare to escape again." That lean man said respectfully. "Lieutenant Teng, sirs, I will lead the way." The lean man headed forth for the deeper region of the cave after vowing this.

Although he was saying one thing, the lean man was actually very feeling very anxious. "Among the bigger sects, who would be lenient towards others? I am still useful now, but when they find the Black Fire Spirit Fruit, they will most likely kill me. I will need to find a good opportunity to make my move."

Although he was fearful of Teng Qingshan, he was even more afraid of being killed.

As he started to think about an escape route, he cheerfully spoke out, "Lieutenant Teng, this tunnel is not very long. There is a large crevice in front!"

"Crevice?"

Teng Qingshan felt that he had walked for about over a hundred metres before he saw a large crevice. The large crevice had a width

of about one Zhang and was pitch black in the middle, with an unpredictable depth. There was only a slight sense of blazing heat coming out from the crevice and straight at their faces.

Du Hong hollered, "Chap, how did you get down?"

The lean man quickly replied, "Sirs, this crevice has a depth of a hundred Zhang. One would die if they were to fall down. I spent half a night of effort to run to another cliff, collect some sturdier vines, and connect them into a long rope. The rope is just over there!"

As he said this, he pointed to a spot not too far away from which thick vines were hanging.

"I will go down first." Teng Qingshan spoke out as he looked at the lean man. "You will be next. Qinghu, Old Du, you two will follow behind." Teng Qingshan was afraid that the lean man would resort to tricks while they were distracted.

"Go!" Teng Qingshan placed his Reincarnation Spear on his back again as he leaped down, and with a tap of his feet on the cliff, he grabbed onto the vines and descended with great speed.

"Faster!" Du Hong bellowed at the man.

The lean man quickly followed Teng Qingshan down the crevice.

During the descend, Teng Qingshan realised that the deeper they went, the darker it was. "Even with my vision, I can barely see past a distance of five to six meters! If ordinary First Rated Warriors were here, they would only be able see their own hands." Teng Qingshan could also feel a sulfuric heat slamming into his face.

The heat was growing increasingly thicker!

As they continued to descend further and further, the temperature in the crevice kept increasing, alongside the sulfuric heat.

"Pu!"

Teng Qingshan finally landed. "Hmm, about a hundred Zhang! Based on the height of the cave on the cliff, my current location should be lower than the base of the valley by eight, nine, or ten Zhang!" Shortly after, the lean man, together with Du Hong and Teng Qinghu, had also arrived at the bottom.

"Lead the way." Teng Qingshan spoke out.

Familiar with area, the lean man walked in front of the group, while saying at the same time, "Lieutenant Teng, here in the depths of the crevice, it is especially hot." Faint red light started to become visible from the front. Even if it was just a faint light, Teng Qingshan was able to see tens of metres in an instant with his remarkable eyesight. Looking into the distance, however, he could only see the blurred sight of light red fog.

"Red?" Du Hong was slightly surprised.

"Lieutenant Teng, that is actually vapor!" The lean man explained.

"Water vapor should be white fog, who are you kidding? Are you trying to take us for fools?" Teng Qinghu bellowed. The lean man quickly spoke out in fear, "Sirs, I would not dare to lie to you. Without a doubt, this is fog from water vapor! It's because the place is too hot that water vapor has appeared."

Teng Qingshan also realised that the temperature was growing increasingly hotter.

Although it was quite hot in the valley, it was not unbearable. Now, however, it was getting a bit out of hand.

Following the lean man, Teng Qingshan and company stepped into the 'red fog' together. After moving closer, Teng Qingshan was certain that this was truly ordinary water vapor. Eventually, Teng Qingshan heard "bloop bloop", the sound of water was boiling. Teng Qingshan put his right arm on the lean man's shoulders and followed him the entire way.

"This Teng Qingshan is remarkably careful." The lean man felt the hand on his shoulders. "This happens to be the best place to escape, but..."

His original plan was to make his escape from here.

But now he had no way out.

He had no choice but to continue walking onward!

After walking tens of Zhang, the fog began to thin, and the "bloop bloop" sound became increasingly clearer. Finally, Teng Qingshan and company emerged from the foggy area.

"This is—" Teng Qinghu and Du Hong were dumbfounded.

The lean man quickly said, "This should be the flaming lava mentioned in the stories!"

Appearing before Teng Qingshan's sight was a trail of scorching red flaming lava that flowed steadily while bubbling from the heat. Du Hong and company had to circulate their internal strength in order to resist that terrible heat.

"Lava!" Teng Qingshan was well aware of what this was. "The layer of lava should be located deep underground. I didn't expect to find lava within a depth of two to three hundred meters. Seems like...the stories about a volcanic eruption happening here were true."

Chapter 136: Red Scaled Beast

According to Teng Qingshan's knowledge from his prior life, lava normally manifested around 10,000 meters underground. There were even some particularly special cases where lava would appear at a shallower level. However, this was the Nine Prefectures, so it was hard to say if general knowledge from his prior life's world would be applicable here. Thus, this idea only fleeted through Teng Qingshan's mind before disappearing.

"Lead the way!" Teng Qingshan yelled.

"Yes, yes." The lean man walked continuously along the burning magma path. Only, he made sure to keep at least a few Zhang away from the magma, because if he were any nearer, the suffused heat would be even more terrifying.

"Qingshan, the heat in this area is gonna kill me." Teng Qinghu's forehead was glistening with sweat.

Teng Qingshan maintained his calm as he walked; furthermore, he was only two Zhang from the lava and could distinctly feel the waves of heat that the lava pumped out as they approached his body: "This heat is approximately 100 degrees! A normal martial artist would not be able to protect themselves from this sort of heat."

100 degree heat was nothing to Teng Qingshan's terrifying body.

Perhaps only the heat within the lava could be of some threat to Teng Qingshan's body, which possessed a tenaciousness that far surpassed steel alloys. It wouldn't even be threatened by a First Rated Warrior's saber or sword. This sort of a terrifying body could withstand heat to a frightening level.

"My three lords, the surrounding underground lava is too hot; it makes one terribly thirsty." The lean man continued. "Yes, we still have two kilometers to go before we reach the area where the

Black Fire Spirit Fruit is at; however, it is even hotter there."

"Two kilometers?" Teng Qingshan instructed, "We should pick up the pace."

"Yes." The lean man immediately hastened his speed and began to run.

As they ran, Teng Qingshan continued to observe his surroundings. The solid rock, that encompassed the flowing magma, was a light black color. As for the adjacent mountain rampart, the exterior had an indistinct lighter white color. Teng Qingshan walked over and brushed it with his hand, causing it to disintegrate into tiny pieces and tumble down. Of course, aside from the exterior, the interior was rather sturdy.

Moreover——

Next to the lava was not only one path, but rather numerous tunnels; however, the further down the path they went, the darker they became. There was no way of knowing how deep they actually were.

"Where does this tunnel lead to?" Teng Qingshan asked.

"I don't know. I didn't dare to brashly wander around in these frightening areas. When I came down here at the time, I only followed the lava as I walked. All I know is that returning will be very easy and losing your way is quite hard." The lean man said. "The further we advance, the hotter it gets. The Black Fire Spirit Fruit's location is the place in the tunnels with the most extreme heat!"

They continued to follow the winding lava flow.

Gradually, Teng Qingshan discovered something. "Hmm? The color of the lava flow has changed? When I first came down, the lava was a red color. I didn't pay attention while we were walking, yet the lava has already become orange." Teng Qingshan clearly felt the heat rising.

“The Black Fire Spirit Fruit resides in the open area ahead of us.” The lean man proceeded to say.

“Black Fire Spirit Fruit!” Du Hong and Teng Qinghu’s eyes lit up, and they sped up their pace.

The further they walked, the hotter it became.

After rounding another bend, Teng Qingshan and the others had already reached a spacious area. The original river of lava had already transformed into a circular “lava lake” that was nearly a dozen Zhang wide. The lava on the edges of the lake were orange, and closer to the center, the lava would slowly change to a yellow, golden color. Particularly the centermost point, which was a dazzling white color.

A black boulder was surprisingly protruding from the center of the lake. On top of it was a transparent spirit root with black leaves, as well as a black fruit.

The spirit roots seemed to burrow deep within the interior of the rock, while the exterior only contained a short section of the spirit roots. The most important parts, however, were the leaves and the fruit.

At first glance, this black fruit seemed very ordinary and unappealing.

“Gugu~~~”

Surrounding the stone sitting in the center of the lake were waves of lava, that were similar to spring water. The surfacing lava flow was a dazzling white color! It was the same as lifting one’s head and looking directly at the sun: brilliant!

“The white lava contains the highest temperature! The further away the lava is from the center, the lower the temperature. The color will also slowly change according to the temperature.” Teng Qingshan stared at the brilliant white magma. “Underneath these black lava rocks is definitely a lava passage that leads to an abyss

where the lava emerges from! This white colored magma has an astonishing temperature!”

Teng Qingshan even thought about dipping his body into the red colored lava.

Of course, it was only an idea.

When he saw the dazzling white lava, the idea didn’t even surface in Teng Qingshan’s mind. “Even with my body, once I enter the magma, there’s no way I would be able to withstand it.” He had no need to test it out. With a simple look, Teng Qingshan understood the dangers of this white, dazzling, sun-like lava.

“Even though it’s submerged in the white lava, the black boulder in the center of the lake has not only kept its original form, its color hasn’t even faded! It’s definitely not a normal rock.” Teng Qingshan knew that this black rock was most likely a profound treasure.

Nevertheless…

With such a large volume, no one knew exactly how much of the rock in the center of the lake was still hidden underneath the lava flow.

There was no way of moving it!

“The spirit root is growing on this rock and thus must be even more extraordinary.”

……

Just as Teng Qingshan and the two others continued to stare at the lava lake and give their opinions, the lean man clenched his teeth and frantically sprinted for a neighboring dark tunnel.

“Lieutenant! That chap is running away!” Du Hong yelled and proceeded to give chase.

Teng Qingshan also reacted when the lean man raced for the tunnel and gave chase. Only, when Teng Qingshan and and Du

Hong ran to the tunnel, they saw the lean man take a sudden turn and sprint into another tunnel.

“You stay here. I will chase him.” Teng Qingshan commanded.

“Yes.” Du Hong affirmed the order.

Everyone knew that this lean man knew where the Black Fire Spirit Fruit was located, so there was no way they could let him escape; otherwise, the Gui Yuan Sect would not be able to easily obtain the Black Fire Spirit Fruit’s Black Fire Spirit Root.

……

In the dark tunnel, there were countless forks in the path. The lean man was engrossed in his thoughts as he ran. “If I follow the lava and continue running, they will definitely catch me. Earlier, I didn’t have a chance to escape in White Fog Area. Right now, I can only escape through one of the tunnels. Since the interior is pitch black, I might actually hope of escaping!”

He closed his eyes and began to run wildly.

Teng Qingshan would run sometimes and stop at other times. In his mind, he continued to remember: “Left. Left. Right. Left…” Truthfully, when it came to speed, Teng Qingshan was faster than the other party; however, the interior of the tunnel was shrouded in darkness, and the opposing party would often make sudden turns. Teng Qingshan had no way of clearly seeing the other and could only rely on his ears.

Thus, his speed was significantly reduced.

“Hmm…” Teng Qingshan stood at a junction in the path. Using his ears to listen carefully, he could distinctly hear running sounds coming from ahead, but right in front of him was a wall.

“Which way did he run?” After experiencing his previous life’s training as an assassin, the simple task of memorizing his route wasn’t an issue.

Suddenly——

Like a phantom image, Teng Qingshan's right foot ferociously stamped against the mountain wall in front of him. "Peng!" The mountain wall proceeded to explode. A Zhang-thick mountain wall had been completely obliterated with a single kick from Teng Qingshan. From above, a myriad of crushed rock fell down onto his head, but Teng Qingshan used "Transmutation Unity Law" to easily knock away the rocks with his spear.

A meter-thick wall was normally capable of preventing one from passing, but Teng Qingshan had merely used a single kick to obliterate it.

After walking through, Teng Qingshan listened carefully again.

……

"Run! Run! This forsaken area is pitch black, so it'd be a wonder if the Gui Yuan Sect's people are able to find me." A trace of a smile appeared on the lean man's face. "In a little while, I will be able to slow down and carefully look for an exit." Just as his heart began to relax, suddenly…

"Hu!"

A fishy smell pervaded the air. Before the lean man had the chance to react, he felt a sharp pain overcome his entire body. Subsequently, he lost consciousness.

A red pupil surveyed the surrounding area as a colossal black monster slowly walked out from its nest. It was at least two Zhang tall and four to five Zhang in length, causing one to be extremely shocked. It was a Red Scaled Beast! However, the current Red Scaled Beast was much stronger than it had been a month ago.

A Postliminary Realm cultivator would be of no threat to the current Red Scaled Beast.

With every step it took, not even the slightest sound was made.

The Red Scaled Beast's quite footsteps were much like a kitten's gait: noiseless.

After walking a while, the Red Scaled Beast walked around a bend and discovered a distant figure. This familiar figure wielded the same long spear that had previously heavily wounded it. The Red Scaled Beast's red pupils contracted, and it proceeded to immediately retreat.

Teng Qingshan abruptly turned his head and looked over!

"Hmm?"

Teng Qingshan instantly flew around at a quick speed like lightning. After a while, he had arrived at that corner and looked to both sides.

"No one?" Teng Qingshan's eyebrows creased. "My detection should be correct!"

In his previous life, those secret service agents had been completely unable to approach Teng Qingshan. In his current life, even when he was just ten years old and the mounted bandit attempted to ambush him, none of them had escaped Teng Qingshan's detection.

Although that Red Scaled Beast had only looked once before immediately retreating, Teng Qingshan had still detected its presence in that instant.

"Hmm?" Teng Qingshan gripped his Reincarnation spear and looked at the fork in the path. "There aren't any traces of movement..."

After a while, Teng Qingshan had no choice but to return.

He didn't realize that the lean man had already become the Red Scaled Beast's lunch.

.....

A moment later, the Red Scaled Beast entered the dark labyrinth

once again. Its natural habitat was a dark hot environment. On this path, where not even a ray of light existed, Teng Qingshan could only see ten meters away from him at most, while the Red Scaled Beast could see as if it were daytime. This was a unique ability that its eyes possessed.

Its nose was very efficacious, and by relying on smell, the Red Scaled Beast was able to follow the path Teng Qingshan used to leave the tunnel.

A moment later, the Red Scaled Beast stopped at a certain area.

Here, Teng Qingshan had just used his foot to kick apart a thick mountain wall. The one Zhang thick lava rock was something that even a Postliminary martial artist would find hard to break apart. Yet, Teng Qingshan had only used one kick! The strength of one's leg was normally stronger than the might possessed by one's arms.

Teng Qingshan's two arms had a combined strength of 280,000 Jin, so it could only be imagined how much more terrifying his legs were.

Nevertheless, one's hands contained the ability to utilize weapons, and thus they were able to condense the strength into a "spear tip". On this spear tip, there was a terrifying amount of gathered force, making its prowess naturally enormous. Using one's legs to utilize a weapon was incomparable to using hands. However, when comparing strength, the legs were naturally much stronger than hands.

At the time when Teng Qingshan opposed the Frost Jade Pool's flood dragon, he had to use a kick in order to escape.

The strength of one leg was at least 200,000-300,000 Jin.

This amount of leg strength was naturally enough to kick open lava rock!

The Red Scaled Beast was very familiar with its own nest and knew that before today, this wall had not been in pieces.

The Red Scaled Beast lifted its massive head and stared in the direction that Teng Qingshan had retreated; its two pupils contracted. Its intelligence was not the least bit inferior to normal humans, and from this terrifying hole, it was able to deduce that... its human enemy harbored a terrifying strength that was enough to threaten its very existence!

Chapter 137: Monopolize

The glaring white lake of lava bubbled.

Teng Qingshan emerged from the dark tunnel. Seeing him emerge, Du Hong quickly asked, “Lieutenant, did you manage to catch the guy?”

“There were too many forks in these maze-like tunnels. Furthermore, it‘s pitch black inside……” Teng Qingshan shook his head and instructed, “Alright, let’s forget about the chap for now. We’ve found the Black Fire Spirit Fruit, but it obviously needs more time before it matures. Let’s head back first.”

“Mmm, we need to report this to the commander.” Du Hong also nodded.

“When we obtain this Black Fire Spirit Fruit, who do you think the sect will give it to?” Teng Qingshan asked.

Du Hong spoke out, “It was lieutenant who thought that something was amiss in this valley and rushed over! Not only did we find it because of the lieutenant, lieutenant’s martial prowess is also at the top amongst the younger generation in the Gui Yuan Sect. Regardless of whether potential or achievements is being considered, it would most likely be awarded to the lieutenant.”

“Yes, you are right.” Teng Qinghu nodded.

“The Black Fire Spirit Fruit has yet to enter our hands, so there’s no point in thinking about this right now.” Teng Qingshan smiled as he headed back the way they came from. “Let’s go back.”

“I feel thirsty after staying in this place for just a short while.” Teng Qinghu wiped his forehead, which was covered in sweat.

Even if it was a quite a distance from the entrance, it was generally about sixty degrees in the underground area. Under such temperatures, of course they would sweat profusely. Thankfully, they were all strong warriors. Ordinary people would probably

faint from the intense heat.

……

As they followed the dark path in the deep crevice, Teng Qingshan and company grabbed onto the vines and quickly climbed upwards. They ascended a height of a hundred Zhang in one breath and, with a single leap, jumped onto the flat platform of the cave's path.

The three of them leapt out of the crevice and headed for the entrance of the cave.

"Wait for a bit, don't be in a rush to head out. Look through the gaps to check if there are other people outside. We'll head out once we confirm that there's no one else in the vicinity." Teng Qingshan said. Both Du Hong and Teng Qinghu nodded. They both understood……the path in this cave was an absolute secret that they had to protect.

The three of them walked up to the entrance before Teng Qingshan peeked outside through the gaps between the vines.

Other than the men from the Black Armored Army in the valley, there were two other ordinary warriors.

"Hold up." Teng Qingshan said.

Teng Qinghu and Du Hong quietly waited. Teng Qingshan realised that……the two ordinary warriors seemed to be fearful of the Black Armored Army, and they quickly left the valley.

"Go, go down." Teng Qingshan took the lead, pushed back the vines and leapt downward.

Only powerful First Rated Warriors would dare to jump down from a height of over ten Zhang. This would not expose Teng Qingshan's capabilities, but would instead increase the level of admiration from the soldiers of the Black Armored Army.

"Hu!"

He landed directly on the ground from a height of over ten Zhang.

With his exceptional control over his body, Teng Qingshan easily negated the impact.

Teng Qinghu followed suit and leapt down while holding onto the vines. After he slid down a couple of Zhang, he clutched the vines tightly to stop himself before he leaped and landed easily on the ground after stepping against the cliff wall.

“Hu!” Du Hong imitated Teng Qinghsan and leapt straight down from the entrance of the cave.

“Old Du.” Teng Qingshan was astonished.

But before he landed, Du Hong shrunk his body and made a tumble to deflect the impact.

“Lieutenant is truly great. At such a height, I was also not able to negate all the impact and thus had to resort to a tumble.” Du Hong laughed out loud. Teng Qinghu jested as he came over, “Old Du, even I relied on the vines. You are not showing me face by directly jumping down. What do you think should be done now?”

“I’ll give you a jug of my wine tonight.” Du Hong laughed and said.

“One jug?” Teng Qinghu shook his head. “No, you won’t be drinking tonight. All your wine will be mine!”

Ji Hong was strict in regulating the amount of alcohol they could drink. Since they had to search for their targets in the afternoon, they couldn’t drink much during this time. While they could drink more at night, it was limited to only three jugs per centurion.

“All three jugs to you?”

“What? If you find it too little, you can give me your wine tomorrow as well.”

……

Teng Qingshan ignored the two and gave out instructions to the rest of the Black Armored Army. “The first small team will stay in this valley for now. It would be best if you can remain hidden amongst the underbrush. Keep an eye on the entrance to the cave! If you find the lean man whom I brought in earlier, capture him.”

“Yes!” The first team of troops received their orders.

“Lord Lieutenant, what if that person tries to escape?” The first team spoke out.

Teng Qingshan said calmly, “Then break his legs! If he tries to fight to the death, then there’s no need to go easy on him!”

“Yes.” The men heaved a sigh of relief. With Teng Qingshan’s words, they would have less things to worry about.

At noon, Guan Lu led her team back to the campsite, followed by Ji Hong. When both teams arrived, Teng Qingshan, who had rushed back earlier, invited Guan Lu and Ji Hong into a tent to hold a secret discussion.

“What did you say?!” Ji Hong was astonished.

Guan Lu also looked at Teng Qingshan in surprise. Since the start of the search, there had been no news relating to the discovery of the Black Fire Spirit Fruit’s location.

Teng Qingshan nodded. “Yes, I just managed to discover where the Black Fire Spirit Fruit is growing this morning. The location is incredibly hot.” It was, of course, scorching because of the flowing lava.

“Quickly share the details.” Ji Hong was elated by this news.

Teng Qingshan immediately started to share the details. Beside him, Ji Hong and Guan Lu were excited and also slightly shocked to hear that the Black Fire Spirit Fruit was in such proximity to a lake of lava.

“But the fellow who led the way escaped into the tunnels, and I

haven't been able to find him since. It was pitch black inside, a complete maze." Teng Qingshan said. "I ordered a team of men to remain concealed within the valley and wait for us. Once the man leaves the cave, he will definitely not be able to escape."

Ji Hong nodded after listening to this.

"Haha, Qingshan, you did a good job this time!" The happy Ji Hong gave Qingshan a pat on his shoulders. "Once we get rid of the man who escaped, only our Gui Yuan Sect will be aware of this news! The Black Fire Spirit Fruit and Black Fire Spirit Root will then be within our grasp!"

Guan Lu also looked towards Teng Qingshan.

She could not understand why Teng Qingshan was always able to render meritorious services.

"For now, we need to keep this a secret!" Ji Hong said. "We can't let the others find out……Let's do it this way. We'll go about as usual for our midday meal. When we go out to search in the afternoon, Qingshan and Guan Lu, the two of you will follow me as I enter the cave quietly to take a good look."

Ji Hong and Guan Lu had not seen the Black Fire Spirit Fruit and would not be able to have peace of mind if they did not see it with their own eyes.

……

That afternoon, Teng Qingshan, Ji Hong, and Guan Lu brought their men into the Blazing Mountain. Very soon, the three quietly entered the valley.

"Commander, lieutenant." The small team of men immediately came out from the underbrush.

"Has the chap exited the tunnels yet?" Teng Qingshan asked.

"No." The leader of the team shook his head.

Teng Qingshan was unaware……that the lean man would never

be able to come out again.

“Hmm, I reckon that he must have gotten lost in the maze and has not been able to find his way out.” Teng Qingshan then instructed, “Mmm, you guys can take a break first. Second team, bring out the food and let them eat.” The members from the second team brought out warm food from their bags and passed it to the men from the first team.

On the other hand, Teng Qingshan, Ji Hong, and Guan Lu headed for the short cliff.

Teng Qingshan scanned the surroundings, and upon seeing that there was no one around, he pointed at the cave, “It’s there!”

“It truly is well hidden on the cliff and covered by vines!” Ji Hong smiled. “The Blazing Mountain is so big and contains countless small mountain peaks. No one would climb the cliffs as they were searching. Even if they pay heed to the cliffs, it would still be hard to find this hidden cave. Alright, Qingshan, take the lead.”

Teng Qingshan carried the Reincarnation Spear on his back and ascended about ten Zhang with a single leap. With a tap of his feet, he reached the entrance of the cave and quickly entered it.

“Qingshan’s Qing Gong is not bad.” Ji Hong praised.

With an uncaring ‘humph’, Guan Lu also leapt up a height of about eight to nine Zhang, tapped on a protruding rock on the cliff wall, and flew into the entrance. Ji Hong took a look at his surroundings and quickly entered as well!

……

The deep crevice, the heavy fog, and the scorching lava astonished Ji Hong and Guan Lu. The high temperature of the flowing lava, especially, made Ji Hong and Guan Lu wary, so they kept their distance from it. It was not that they didn’t have the courage to go near, but rather that they didn’t wish to waste their inner strength!

To get close, they would need to exert a lot of their inner strength in order to resist the ferocious heat.

They were not able to move like Teng Qingshan. who could walk closely besides the flowing river of lava without taking precautions. Of course, Teng Qingshan followed Ji Hong and Guan Lu's example, keeping a safe distance between him and the flowing lava.

"Haha……It really is the Black Fire Spirit Fruit!" From the side of the lake of lava, the three of them could make out the the Black Fire Spirit Fruit, which was in the middle of the lake.

"Qingshan, you did a fantastic job." Ji Hong smiled happily.

"From today onwards, we will come here once in the morning and once in the afternoon. Once it matures, we will harvest it immediately. Do not let that Red Scaled Beast get it first!" Ji Hong solemnly said, "Since the Black Fire Spirit Fruit is growing here, the Red Scaled Beast definitely will come by often. Furthermore, the Red Scaled Beast will reach maturity soon, with a height of two Zhang……A lone warrior of the Postliminary Realm would not be much of a threat to it. Only an innate master or a group of warriors of the Postliminary Realm will be able to handle it."

……

As planned, Teng Qingshan and company seemed to go on about their usual routine, except when Ji Hong, Guan Lu, and Qingshan would secretly sneak into the cave twice a day. Once in the morning, and once in the afternoon. Afterall, Teng Qingshan and the company were not sure when the Black Fire Spirit Fruit would mature.

Three days passed in this manner.

Wu Dai was a warrior who liked to roam the world. On such a grand occasion where countless warriors were gathering at the Blazing Mountain, he would of course join the party. But to him, it

was exciting to see the various challenges or revenges that were occurring every night; his task of looking for the Black Fire Spirit Fruit during the day was quite boring in comparison.

“With my abilities, even if I get my hands on the Black Fire Spirit Fruit, I won’t be able to keep it for myself.” Wu Dai searched for a while before he looked for a mountain peak and cozily laid below a big tree in order to enjoy an afternoon nap in the cool mountain breeze.

“Voices?”

Wu Dai opened his years, and with a flip, he climbed up the side of the cliff and looked down the valley. There were actually three people here.

“Aren’t they…Gui Yuan Sect’s Commander Ji Hong…that person is Teng Qingshan……and the female……” Wu Dai’s eyes lit up as he retracted his head and quietly looked down from the grass. He saw Teng Qingshan, Ji Hong, and the lady quickly enter a cave in another cliff one after another.

These three people made sure to scan the surroundings in order to check whether there were any other people around each time they entered.

“Hmm? They are being so careful, and that cave is so well hidden! Don’t tell me that place is……” Wu Dai’s eyes lit up, and the smile on his face grew brighter and brighter. “After roaming for so many years, it appears that I, Wu Dai, am finally changing my luck for the better!”

Chapter 138: Encounter

At the foot of Blazing Mountain, there were many tents set up all around.

At noon, most of the warriors would be having their lunch. There were also some people resting in the shade after their meal.

"Mmm, Gu Shiyou, the Young Sovereign from Qing Hu Island, is out!" Wu Dai was elated. He had been keeping his eyes on where the Qing Hu Island had set up their tents and he immediately went over. Right now, Gu Shiyou was holding a long spear and leaning against a shorter tree to rest with his eyes closed.

The moment Wu Dai wanted to get near, the two experts next to Gu Shiyou immediately looked toward him coldly.

However, Wu Dai was not afraid at all. He continued walking.

No other people would dare to get within ten Zhang near the place where the Young Sovereign Gu Shiyou was resting. They were all afraid that the Qing Hu Island's experts would be unhappy.

"Scram off." One of the experts bellowed.

"Young Sovereign," Wu Dai called out.

Gu Shiyou opened his eyes, threw a glance toward Wu Dai, and broke into a faint smile, "I don't think I know you!"

Wu Dai lowered his voice and said, "Young Sovereign, I have a great secret to tell you!"

"What secret?" Gu Shiyou seemed interested and walked over.

Wu Dai grinned and said in a soft voice to Gu Shiyou, "The secret to where the Black Fire Spirit Fruit is located!" Gu Shiyou's eyes narrowed and he locked his gaze which was cold as a blade onto Wu Dai. However, Wu Dai shrugged and smiled, "Young Sovereign, I'm just an unimportant character. Right now, I don't

even have a secret manual for weapon based arts. Even my secret manual for the acquiring of inner strength isn't something good."

Gu Shiyou gave it some thought before saying, "What kind of weapon based arts do you want?"

"It'll be best if it's for a scimitar!" Wu Dai quickly said, "Like this one that I have."

Wu Dai showed Gu Shiyou the scimitar he had at his waist.

"Scimitar..." Gu Shiyou smiled, "If what you say is the truth, mmm, one of my guards happen to have a Human Class secret manual for the "Hurricane Blade". This secret manual has a matching cultivation technique for the inner strength."

Wu Dai was overjoyed.

A Human Class secret manual?

He had been traveling in the world and the secret manual which he trained in was a low-grade inner strength secret manual. As for his blade arts, he had casually picked some stances up after peeking at other people's practice. Someone of his abilities... Would be considered at the lowest tier amongst warriors. Even Third Rated Warriors who had a trick or two up their sleeves could be of a threat to him.

"Bring me there first. If the Black Fire Spirit Fruit is really there, I'll give you the secret manual." Gu Shiyou said.

"Actually, I'm not 100% confident if the Black Fire Spirit Fruit is there."Wu Dai said. He wanted to make things clear beforehand.

Gu Shiyou's face immediately darkened as he shouted, "You're trying to make a fool out of me!"

"No, no!" Wu Dai immediately said. "I accidentally came across Gui Yuan Sect's Commander Ji Hong, Lieutenant Teng Qingshan, as well as a lady secretly entering a concealed place. And they appeared to be very careful when they entered, making it seem

very mysterious. Instead of looking for the Black Fire Spirit Fruit, they went into such a hidden location. There's a high probability that the place is where the Black Fire Spirit Fruit is located."

It was only then did Gu Shiyou's expression seem a little better.

"Gui Yuan Sect..." Gu Shiyou then immediately looked toward Wu Dai, "Where's that hidden location?"

"Young Sovereign, that secret manual..." Wu Dai quickly said.

"Of course I'll give it to you." Gu Shiyou snorted. "It's just one manual. I don't care about it. I will give it to you when we reach the place."

Wu Dai grinned and said, "Young Sovereign, you're a person of a high position while I'm just a nobody. Is there a need for you to worry that I'd lie to you after you've given me the secret manual?"

Gu Shiyou spoke in a deeper voice, "Alright! Come with me into my tent first... You will lead us there when we enter the mountain areas in the afternoon!"

"Yes, yes." Wu Dai quickly agreed.

In his heart, Wu Dai was overjoyed, "Haha, I, Wu Dai, have finally gotten my hands on a good inner strength cultivation technique and a good scimitar secret manual! I'll be able to change my fate completely now. Previously, Old Third Wang had humiliated me. D*mn it. After I've mastered the scimitar technique, I'll definitely seek my revenge from him!" He then followed after Gu Shiyou, entering the Qing Hu Island's tent.

...

In the afternoon, a total of four people stood at the bottom of the valley. Other than Wu Dai, there were also Gu Shiyou, a slightly plump middle-aged man, as well as an elderly man with a pair of triangular eyes and a balding head. The soldiers from Gui Yuan Sect's Black Armored Army had only lied amongst the grass on the very first day, waiting for that skinny man to appear. At a later

time, in order not to arouse suspicion, the members of the Black Armored Army did not dare to constantly hang around here.

If people noticed that the Black Armored Soldiers were always staying around the valley, they would be suspicious.

Therefore, they continued to pretend as if they were searching outside the valley.

"Look, it's over there!" Wu Dai pointed upward.

"A hidden cave? There?" The white-haired old man with triangular eyes and a balding head looked upward. Then, he leaped out just like an eagle and arrived on the cliffs. He grabbed onto the vines and did a quick check. He soon discovered the big cave that was hidden behind the vines and nodded to the people on the ground.

"Haha, there's really a hidden cave. Such a secretive place! He might really be telling the truth."

The plump middle-aged man grabbed onto Wu Dai, kicked onto the cliffs a few times, and flew into the cave. Gu Shiyou quickly followed after.

******

Wu Dai had never been in this place before and the four of them could only progress carefully. They first followed the crack to the underground, and then arrived at the shores of the molten lava river after passing through the mist. They did not dare to barge into the dark and unfathomable passageway at the side and only headed forward.

They continued to progress until they arrived at the magma lake!

"Blub blub~~" The piercing white magma continued to flow outward like spring water with that huge black rock in the middle of the lake as the center. The boiling steam caused all four of them who were on the shores of the magma lake to sweat profusely.

That plump middle-aged man looked at the Black Fire Spirit Fruit on the black stone in great surprise and said, "Haha, it's the Black Fire Spirit Fruit! It really is the Black Fire Spirit Fruit!"

That balding old man also smiled coldly, "Hmph, that Gui Yuan Sect is really freaking lucky to be able to discover this first!

However, this Black Fire Spirit Fruit belongs to our Qing Hu Island." Just then, a voice rang out, "Sir, there's something I have to say." A trembling voice spoke out.

The three of them turned their heads. The one who had spoken was Wu Dai, who had revealed the news to them.

"There's no need to leave this person alive." The balding old man was all ready to take action.

Dead people definitely would keep your secrets safe...

"Lords of Qing Hu Island! Earlier on, I was afraid that this might happen. Therefore, I kept a trick up my sleeves." Wu Dai smiled awkwardly. "If I'm unable to return alive tonight, then... The secret of where the Black Fire Spirit Fruit is hidden will definitely be discovered and spread out!"

The countenances of Gu Shiyou and the other two men changed.

"Please have mercy on me! I had gauged the hearts of gentlemen with my own mean measure!" Wu Dai quickly said. "If I get to return, then this news will definitely not leak out!"

"Hmph," The balding old man snorted coldly.

In this day and age, none of them were fools! The balding old man, Gu Shiyou, and the plump middle-aged man would all be able to kill Wu Dai with great ease. However, they did not dare to do it now. No one knew... What kind of trick Wu Dai playing? If the news were to really spread out...

Then all their trouble would be for naught.

"We're people from Qing Hu Island. Of course we won't go back

on our words." The balding old man snorted coldly. "However, before the Black Fire Spirit Fruit matures, you must stay in our Qing Hu Island's tent."

"Sure, sure." Wu Dai quickly nodded.

"Martial Uncle! Martial Granduncle!" Gu Shiyou looked at that Black Fire Spirit Fruit with a scorching gaze, "Gui Yuan Sect are also aware that the Black Fire Spirit Fruit is here. When that time comes... What will we do if the people from Gui Yuan Sect were to fight with us for the Black Fire Spirit Fruit?

"I dare them to try!" The white-haired balding old man snorted coldly, a cold gleam flashing in his triangular eyes, "A small Gui Yuan Sect dares to fight with our Qing Hu Island? If they really don't know what's good for them, then we'll deal with them ruthlessly. In the fight for the Black Fire Spirit Fruit, even if they were to die, it's only because they are inferior to others. If they were to lose three of their men, would the Gui Yuan Sect dare to challenge out Qing Hu Island?"

Gu Shiyou and that plump middle-aged man nodded in approval. This time around, although it was announced to the public that Gu Shiyou was the one to lead the group, the best expert amongst them was Gu Shiyou's Martial Granduncle, Du Jiu.

...

At that moment, Teng Qingshan, Ji Hong and Guan Lu followed the great cracks, grabbing onto the vines that were linked together and sliding down rapidly.

The place was pitch-black.

Hu!

The three of them landed consecutively, entering the white fog with great familiarity while smelling that sulfur smell in the air.

"Qingshan, I think that the Black Fire Spirit Fruit will soon be matured in a few days' time." Ji Hong spoke as he walked on, his

face full of smiles. He was clearly in a good mood.

"Mmm, if we can make it through the next few days carefully, we'd have hope to get our hands on the Black Fire Spirit Fruit." Teng Qingshan and the others continued to advance on.

...

Blob~blob~~

The magma continued to flow while scorching air currents gushed out in all directions.

Gu Shiyou wiped off the sweat off his head and said, "Martial Granduncle, Martial Uncle, let's head back first."

"We'll come here twice a day from now on." The white-haired balding old man also turned as he said this. The three of them, together with Wu Dai, headed back the way they came from. However, they had only taken a few steps when they saw Teng Qingshan, Ji Hong, and Guan Lu appearing before them on the corner in front. The trio from the Qing Hu Island was stunned.

Teng Qingshan and his two companions were stunned as well!

Wu Dai looked at the people from both sides, completely shocked!

"I did not expect them to enter at a time like this!" Gu Shiyou had not expected that the people from the Gui Yuan Sect would also come in at this time.

Although the three men from the Qing Hu Island were astonished, they were at least mentally prepared.

However, Teng Qingshan and the other two had no mental preparation at all. To them, the Black Fire Spirit Fruit had seemed to be already within grasp. However, the most critical moment, the people from the Qing Hu Island had gotten involved.

"The people from the Qing Hu Island got in here as well!" Ji Hong's countenance changed drastically.

"It'll be troublesome now." Teng Qingshan frowned.

"Haha..." That white-haired balding old man laughed, "Ji Hong, you guys are pretty lucky! To think that you are able to discover this place as well. However, our Qing Hu Island has found this place for over half a month. First come, first served. This Black Fire Spirit Fruit should belong to Qing Hu Island!"

Gu Shiyou and the plump middle-aged man each stood on one side of the balding old man.

"Old Du Jiu!" Ji Hong bellowed furiously, "You said that you got into this place half a month ago? Let me ask you. How did you come down from the crack that has a depth of one hundred Zhang?"

The balding old man was stunned. The had come down through those vines!

"Old Du Jiu, you don't even blink when you lie! Those vines had been woven by our men!" Ji Hong's voice was very loud as he glared at that balding old man. Wu Dai watched as both parties quarreled and he thought to himself, "Even the vines had been woven by them. How could you people from Qing Hu Island possibly enter earlier than the people from the Gui Yuan Sect? Even your lies are immediately exposed!"

The balding old man's countenance immediately turned grim.

"Our people were the ones who weaved those vines. So naturally, our Gui Yuan Sect is the first to come in here." Ji Hong said coldly, "Earlier on, you were the one who said first come, first served!"

Chapter 139: Kill Them!

The bald old man was stunned speechless.

“Ji Hong!” Gu Shiyou smiled and said, “It only took a lie from my Martial Granduncle for you to reveal that the vines were woven by your men! Mmm……Seems like the only people who know the location of the Black Fire Spirit Fruit is just your Gui Yuan Sect and our Qing Hu Island! That makes matters easier. Your Gui Yuan Sect had best not compete with us. We from Qing Hu Island will definitely give you our thanks at a later time.”

Ji Hong’s face sunk. “Young Master, I don’t like the sound of your words! Does our Gui Yuan Sect look like we are short on money?”

The bald old man bellowed with a cold look on his face, “Ji Hong, let me tell you this right now: don’t try to be smug when we are still giving you face! I, Du Jiu, am making things clear here. Both the Black Fire Spirit Fruit and the Black Fire Spirit Root will belong to our Qing Hu Island. Your Gui Yuan Sect can stop dreaming of getting even a single piece! If you continue to cling to your fantasies……”

The triangular eyes of the bald old man gleamed coldly as he pulled two short blades from his waist with a “clank” sound.

“Ji Hong, a word of advice: you’d better turn back.” The bald old man held a short blade in each of his hands.

……

Ji Hong’s face paled, while Teng Qingshan and Guan Lu exchanged a glance.

“‘Blade of Life and Death’ Du Jiu! Ranked seventeenth on the «Earthly Ranking», master of Qing Hu Island’s Sovereign!” Teng Qingshan was well aware of the other party’s identity. In terms of abilities, Teng Qingshan did not care for this Blade Life and Death

‘Du Jiu’. Ranked in the top twenty, Teng Qingshan could definitely kill him with a thrust of his Reincarnation Spear.

It was just that……

The other party was the master of the Sovereign of Qing Hu Island! The current head of Qing Hu Island was an innate master, a formidable character who dominated Yangzhou.

Who would dare to kill his master?

“Old Du Jiu!” Ji Hong was enraged.

“Ji Hong, I’m giving you a way out to respect the relationship we formed back when we were youths long ago. Don’t think that I wouldn’t dare to do anything against you! That ‘Teng Qingshan’ should be the strongest amongst the three of you. Hmph, to be able to kill Meng Tian, his martial prowess isn’t half bad. However, it would be a far cry to compare him to me!” The bald old man said coldly. “I’m going to count to three. If you don’t leave now, don’t blame me for being ruthless!”

Blade of Life and Death Du Jiu was definitely an unreasonable and cold character.

Across the world, who wasn’t aware of this?

“Lord Commander.” Teng Qingshan and Guan Lu both looked towards Ji Hong.

Ji Hong clenched his teeth.

Teng Qingshan was feeling anxious. “If this Ji Hong really gives the Black Fire Spirit Fruit to the other party, it would be hard to snatch the Black Fire Spirit Root! I have confidence that I can kill Du Jiu, but……Ji Hong is unaware that I am this strong!” Indeed, Ji Hong was not sure of Teng Qingshan’s actual abilities.

“One!” Du Jiu shouted coldly.

Looking at the current situation, Ji Hong was forced to clench his teeth as he shouted, “Let’s go!”

“Go?” Teng Qingshan was anxious.

“Ji Hong, Commander Ji! I give my thanks to your Gui Yuan Sect, but……I do not wish to hear people spread the location of the Black Fire Spirit Fruit when we emerge. If the information is leaked, I would only suspect you three.” Gu Shiyou spoke out. “That would certainly spoil our relationship.”

Ji Hong did have the notion of leaking the information after they left.

Anyway, the other party would not be able have a handle against them.

But after Gu Shiyou said this, Ji Hong turned his head sharply and stared at Gu Shiyou, Du Jiu, and the other nameless man from Qing Hu Island. “Old Du Jiu……One cannot be excessive! You may be fierce today, but…… Hmph, if you have the gall to be so overboard, you will suffer from retribution!”

“Retribution?” Du Jiu’s pair of triangular eyes scanned Teng Qingshan and company viciously. “From the three of you?”

“Martial Granduncle!” Guan Lu lowered her voice.

“Lord Commander!” Teng Qingshan also shouted impatiently with an anxious look on his face. He was only a young man at the age of seventeen, the age when one was prone to become angered. Even the calmest youngster would not be able to contain his anger at that point.

Teng Qingshan didn’t want to turn away just like that. He was bent on getting the Black Fire Spirit Root, “It would be best to act now. If Ji Hong is not agreeable, I will have to act in the dark to get the Black Fire Spirit Root.”

Ji Hong’s face turned sullen, “Qingshan, Guan Lu, let’s go!”

Teng Qingshan and Guan Lu could only bear with it as they followed behind Ji Hong.

……

Gu Shiyou and company laughed, and Wu Dai, who was standing beside them, accompanied the group of three.

“Senior Du is really good. To think that the people from the Gui Yuan Sect left just like that.” Wu Dai flattered.

A hint of arrogance showed on the bald old man’s face.

Ever since his disciple had reached the innate state and eventually became the head of Qing Hu Island, his own status had also heightened. Furthermore, since he was also an expert listed on the «Earthly Ranking», his status in Qing Hu Island was very high. Who would dare to offend someone who was used to being bossy and domineering?

“Haha, Great Master, the Black Fire Spirit Fruit is right in front of us!” A slight laughter came from a distance away.

The three men from Qing Hu Island were all stunned.

They turned to look in the other direction. The lava lake flowed in both directions. Teng Qingshan and company had entered from the lava river on the left to get to the lava lake. This time around, however, the voices came from the right side.

“Someone else is coming this way?” The bald old man was stunned.

“Wu Dai.” Gu Shiyou looked at Wu Dai.

“I, I don’t know.” Wu Dai shook his head repeatedly. This was the first time that he had entered underground. How would he know what was on the other end?

The bald old man lowered his voice. “Let’s ignore the other matters and head over first.”

At that moment, the three men from Qing Hu Island quietly made their way to the right side. The path was obviously wider than in the left side. Because the paths were too wide, although the

tunnels were folded upon themselves, they could already see the other party from a distance of tens of Zhang.

Both parties were only about a distance of fifty Zhang away from each other!

“They’re from Qing Hu Island! Run!” One of the men from the other group yelled out, and immediately, everyone from the group ran for their lives without hesitation!

“Kill them!!!” The bald old man shouted out and dashed over. Gu Shiyou and his Martial Uncle also headed over quickly. The other party escaped at mediocre speed, while the men from Qing Hu Island were all warriors in the Postliminary Realm and could catch up in very little time.

……

Ji Hong, Teng Qingshan, and Guan Lu all felt infuriated as they travelled on the path, heading back to their camp, when they heard two shouts.

“They are from Qing Hu Island!”

“Kill them!”

Teng Qingshan, Ji Hong, and Guan Lu exchanged glances!

“There is another group of people.” Guan Lu said in a daze.

“Let’s go back!” Ji Hong said in a low voice. The three of them turned and headed quickly in the direction of the men from Qing Hu Island.

They moved at rapid speed.

“There’s fighting ahead of us!” Although the tunnels were convoluted, Teng Qingshan could hear the sounds of fighting from not too far away. In terms of speed, the three from the Gui Yuan Sect were not that much slower than the three men from Qing Hu Island, but as the three from Qing Hu Island fought with the other party, their speed obviously slowed down. Very soon——

Teng Qingshan and company could see clearly the scene of the fighting from a distance.

“Great Master, quickly escape!” One of the strong men shouted loudly. Even after receiving a cut, he grabbed on tightly to the leg of the Martial Uncle.

“Hu!”

With a single step, this Martial Uncle coldly smashed the strong man’s skull, which steadily oozed out a mixture of red and white fluid . That Martial Uncle then continued the chase while killing at great speed.

“Third Brother!” That Great Master had run a distance of tens of Zhang. With tears streaming out of his eyes, he turned his head to have a look at his recently-killed brother.

“Great Master, hurry up and run away.” The other men were also risking their lives to intercept the Martial Uncle. That Great Master evidently had a proficient mastery over Qing Gong as he immediately dashed off at great speed.

Gu Shiyou anxiously wanted to give chase, but the Great Master’s men tried to intercept him at all cost, unafraid of death. These mounted bandits were also men who risked their lives, each of them with vicious methods. Some of them used powdered limestone or threw concealed weapons, or even held onto the men from Qing Hu Island, disregarding their own lives. Even for an expert on the «Earthly Ranking», facing the interception of these elite mounted bandits who disregarded their own lives, would affect their speed significantly

“Pu!”

“Pu!”

Blood splashed all over, and the three men from Qing Hu Island finally broke through the ten men’s interception. That Great Master had already escaped from their sight, so they could only

chase blindly after him.

“Three-way fork!” The three men from Qing Hu Island stood in the middle of a three-way fork, with two paths forward and one path back. Looking at the two paths ahead of them, they had no idea which way to go.

“Haha, Old Du Jiu, the mounted bandits’ leader possesses a Qing Gong comparable to your own. With the help of his men, who intercepted you and disregarded their own lives, he has long since escaped.” By then, Ji Hong and the company had also arrived. Feeling carefree, Ji Hong said, “Things are always so unpredictable! Your Qing Hu Island is fated to find no joy in life!”

Looking at the three from the Gui Yuan Sect, the three men from Qing Hu Island only turned around to leave with a “Hmph’”.

“To think that there was another path!” Teng Qingshan exclaimed.

Guan Lu said coldly, “Of course there would be another path! The cave that we came from had only a height of slightly over one Zhang. That Red Scaled Beast should be two Zhang tall by now. When it was younger, it could enter from the route we came in from, but now that it has grown bigger, it can no longer enter from there. Therefore, there must be another, wider path!”

Teng Qingshan also woke up.

Of course!

The Red Scaled Beast would definitely come here to eat the Black Fire Spirit Fruit. Therefore, there must be a path from which it could enter.

“To think that I did not notice this earlier!” Teng Qingshan thought to himself.

“But this is also good.” Teng Qingshan felt happy deep down. “It will be easier for me to act within the mess then. With my methods, there should be no problems to get the Black Fire Spirit

Root in the midst of chaos."

……

A strong man with three small braids popped his head from the surface of the deep lake. His eyes were blood red, "Third Brother, Ah Hu……You guys, ahh!" His blood brothers had lost their lives because of a big brother like him. The strong man's eyes were blood red as he spoke with a hateful voice as he clenched his teeth, "Qing Hu Island! I will not die in peace until I have my revenge! Mmm……Black Fire Spirit Fruit, don't even think of monopolizing the Black Fire Spirit Fruit!"

……

That evening, Teng Qingshan and company were having dinner at the foot of the mountain.

At that moment, a voice was heard——"Did you hear? Someone found an underwater path in the deep lake on the west side of the Blazing Mountain below the peaks near Flying Monkey Rock. After dashing through the underground tunnel, there is a wide underground passageway. You will come across flowing lava after walking for a distance of two to three Li. After you continue to walk for another two Li, you will find the Black Fire Spirit Fruit."

"Flying Monkey Rock? We passed by there the other time during our search. I even went into that deep lake to take a bath. Are you sure it's that particular deep lake? There is an underwater tunnel at the bottom of the lake?

"The news is spreading in such realistic detail. Many people have already started to check if it is true or not."

"Let's also head over there immediately to see for ourselves."

……

Teng Qingshan, Ji Hong, and Guan Lu exchanged a glance.

"To think that the entrance to the other pathway is at the bottom

of a lake.” Ji Hong lamented.

“This news news must have been leaked by that ‘Great Master’. To think that so many people would know about it in such a short span of four to six hours. The news has spread so fast.” Teng Qingshan sorrowfully added. Guan Lu also nodded as she said, “Seems like……It will be hard for one person to monopolize the Black Fire Spirit Fruit and the Black Fire Spirit Root.”

With the news spread all over, one thing was for sure.

The battle for the Black Fire Spirit Fruit would be a messy one!

Many experts, whether hidden or well known, would all wait for the Black Fire Spirit Fruit to mature before taking action!

Chapter 140: Maturation of the Spirit Fruit, A State of Panic!

“Commander, I think we should set off immediately! Bring our men to the lava lake.” Teng Qingshan lowered his voice, “There are already quite a number of people who are rushing over to the bottom of the lake. If we don’t set off soon……By tomorrow, the entire area around the lava lake will probably be occupied by them.”

Ji Hong was stunned.

Indeed, they had to take up spots before it’s too late!!

The lava lake was only a curved channel, hundreds of Zhang long. Only one side of the lava river flow had a wide passageway. In addition, it was unbearably hot near the lava lake. A First Rate Warrior would need remain at least two to three Zhang away from the lava lake. If they got too close, just resisting the heat alone would sap a large portion of their inner strength. As a result——there could only be around two to three hundred people in the empty space surrounding the lava lake.

The rest of the people could only stay in the passageways or further away from the lava lake and lava stream.

In summary, the later one arrived, the harder it would be to secure a good spot.

“If we are pushed out to a distance of hundreds of Zhang from the center at the very start, we won’t have any chance to get the Black Fire Spirit Fruit.” Ji Hong stood up. “Qingshan, Guan Lu, mobilize your men. We will head underground immediately! Claim a good spot in the front. Right……Make sure to bring extra food and water!”

Aware of the situation underground, within one hour, Teng Qingshan and company spent a considerable sum of money to

purchase a large amount of food such as buns and cakes. At the same time, they also lugged big water cartons. When the food and water were all prepared, Teng Qingshan and the company immediately headed for the valley.

When Teng Qingshan and the company arrived.

“Haha, Ji Hong, your men came pretty fast.” Du Jiu was standing in the valley. The experts from Qing Hu Island under him were all carrying food or water cartons as they climbed into the cave.

“Not as fast as you guys.” Ji Hong instructed, “Qingshan, lead the way. You’re up first.”

“Yes!”

Teng Qingshan was carrying a metal water carton by himself. The one he was carrying was the heaviest, weighing a thousand Jin. With this weight, it would be tough for an ordinary expert to carry it while climbing into the cave.

“Why are you guys in such a hurry?” The Qing Hu Island’s Young Master ‘Gu Shiyou’, who was standing below, waved the spear in his hands and attempted to block Teng Qingshan.

In Gu Shiyou’s eyes, as Teng Qingshan was carrying a water carton, his flexibility would be restricted.

Contrary to his opinion, Teng Qingshan pushed Gu Shiyou aside with his Reincarnation Spear and stepped onto the shoulders of one of Qing Hu Island’s experts, propelling himself upward. He clutched the rocks for a brief moment before entering the cave.

“Good Qing Gong!” Gu Shiyou praised.

“Quickly ascend.” Under Ji Hong’s commands, the other experts climbed upwards in an orderly fashion. Carrying a weight of hundreds of Jins, the soldiers were forced to climb since it was too tough to fly up.

Qing Hu Island eventually managed to have all their men enter

first, while Gui Yuan Sect was a tad slower.

……

Hot! It was scathingly hot!

Regardless if it were the experts from Qing Hu Island or from Gui Yuan Sect, all of them were carrying a weight equivalent to hundreds of Jin as they walked in an environment with a temperature of over sixty degrees. Besides them, there was the steady flow of scorching lava and the occasional steaming heat. Even when they kept their distance, the steam that blew in their direction was still difficult to bear.

Their sweat kept flowing!

“To keep staying in such a hot place? Heavens!”

“It’s too hot! I’ve never stayed in such a hot place in my entire life.”

Those experts all felt that the next few days were going to be arduous.

Very soon, the men from Gui Yuan Sect and Qing Hu Island rushed to the side of the lava lake.

At that moment, there were only the two groups at the banks of the lava lake. The rest of the groups had yet to arrive.

“The cave that we entered from is near the foot of the mountain. That passageway within the deep lake is at the far west of the Blazing Mountain. We came quickly.” Ji Hong smiled. “Alright, we will just occupy a space four Zhang wide. The rest will sit towards the back. If there isn’t enough space, then rest in the passageways.”

Although there was a space of hundreds of Zhang next to the lava lake…

Everyone was aware that there were over ten thousand warriors and many experts. If the Gui Yuan Sect were to take up half the

space, the other experts would probably tear them apart!

“Qingshan, it’s so hot here. Are we going to have to eat and sleep here?” Teng Qinghu appeared glum.

“There’s no other option even if it’s hot. Just bear with it.” Teng Qingshan smiled. “Once the Black Fire Spirit Fruit matures, it will be the end of our suffering.”

In the four Zhang wide space, they formed rows of ten people. There was a distance of six to seven Cun between each row so that they could lie down and rest.

Once the first three rows were formed, the rest of the people were ordered to enter the tunnels.

……

As time passed, more and more warriors arrived.

“Damn it, it’s too hot!” Many warriors had started to complain after their first entrance.

“It’s so hot and dry! Looks like we’ll need to bring along large quantities of water. If not, one wouldn’t be able to tolerate the heat after a single night.” Many experienced warriors quickly headed back to get water after they came across the lake and surveyed the situation.

……

“So many people! Where’s the Black Fire Spirit Fruit? I don’t see it.” Some warriors came late and were stunned to see the many warriors who were seated or lying down near the edge of the lake.

Many warriors were surging to this underground location.

Just those who were in the path besides the lava lake were already stretched out two to three hundred Zhang away from the center of the lake. This was why most of the warriors were staying in the tunnels.

“Qingshan, you were thorough in your consideration.” Teng

Qinghu looked at the far distance, towards the crowd. “With so many people, we wouldn’t have been able to come in if we arrived late!”

“It’s easy to leave, but hard to enter!’” Teng Qingshan couldn’t help but heave a sigh.

If the people inside wished to exit, those warriors outside would be happy to cooperate.

But if the people outside wanted to squeeze their way through!

The people inside would work together! Or even draw their blades!

“The people from Xiao Yao Palace are so tragic.” Teng Qinghu looked towards a group of men over ten Zhang away from them. “They must have lost at least lost forty to fifty of their men.”

“Mmm.” Teng Qingshan looked towards the distance, gazing at the group of men in white robes.

Those men were experts from Xiao Yao Palace, one of the Eight Supreme Sects in the Nine Prefectures. This time around, the men from Xiao Yao Palace arrived slightly later, when warriors had already lined up the close to a hundred Zhang in front of them. If they were a hundred Zhang away, how could they get a hold of the Black Fire Spirit Fruit?

Therefore, they tried to push their way through!

There were many warriors in front as well, but they were not willing to give up their spot. With this conflict and with the massive number of warriors in front, who would be afraid?

Warriors were all brutal. Once they started to fight, they would be very vicious!

Fresh blood splattered. Thankfully, because of the fanatical carnage led by the ‘Black and White’ Elders from Xiao Yao Palace, a large number of crazy warriors were kept under control.

Eventually, the people from Xiao Yao Palace managed to squeeze to a position ten Zhang away from the lava lake. No one would give in to them, even if they wished to proceed further. Almost everyone at the front were experts!

Should Xiao Yao Palace still wish to be demanding and force their way forward, most of their men would likely perish.

……

“One gets thirsty here too easily at the rate that we’re sweating.” The warriors often drank water to replenish themselves. In this underground area, they didn’t need much food, but they needed large amounts of water! The water they brought was being consumed at a very fast pace.

Three whole days!

To be staying in the tunnels for three days under a temperature of sixty degrees, even powerful warriors were feeling faint from the heat. Quite a number of warriors, who were weak, had already left the place to go to the surface. To them, they had only gone underground to watch a good show.

To go through such torment for a show was not worth the torment.

In three days, more than half of the warriors had already left the area.

But the warriors who were closest to the lava lake all persisted.

“The warriors who left trained their physiques poorly!” Teng Qingshan shook his head silently. Those warriors all had strong inner strength, but when exposed to high temperatures, their bodies weren’t able to withstand it. “When they come across trouble, they can only wait for death to arrive after they’ve exhausted all their inner strength.” The only drinks Teng Qingshan took were the occasional sips of water.

Frankly, Teng Qingshan wouldn’t care even if he didn’t have

even a single drop to drink.

He just didn't want to appear strange in front of others.

This temperature had no impact on Teng Qingshan, whose physique was outstanding.

"Hu~~~"

Suddenly, a gust of steam surged from the lava lake.

"So hot!" Many warriors, who were seated close to the center, all quickly shrunk back when they came into contact with the steam.

"The gust of steam was at least a hundred degrees hot. What happened?" Teng Qingshan was also astonished as he quickly looked in the direction of the lava lake. In the center of the lake, that 'Black Fire Spirit Fruit', that was growing on top of that gigantic black rock, was emitting red light as it consecutively shifted colors between red and black. Each time the color changed, a gust of steam would surge out.

"Hu!"

"Hu!"

No matter how hot the surging steam was, the warriors did not falter.

"The Black Fire Spirit Fruit has matured!" Someone suddenly shouted out.

An uproar broke out in the initially silent underground, and even the warriors behind them started to push forward.

"Hu hu~~~"

In an instant, the entire Black Fire Spirit Fruit turned a crimson red! Even its surface was covered by a burning flame!

"It has matured!"

All the warriors close by stood up, and in an instant, a number of figures flew towards the black boulder in the middle of the lava

lake.

“Grab the Spirit Fruit!”

“Kill them!”

A riot broke out!

The warriors in the back also did not falter. Each of them were trying to think of ways to dash to the front. Those who were not able to push forth would shout out ‘Kill them’ or ‘Grab it’, to incite more chaos. The whole situation turned fanatic all of a sudden. The numerous figures who had flown towards the black boulder even brought the atmosphere to its peak!

“Kill them!”

“Swish!” “Boom!” “Pu!”……

In the blink of an eye, a large number of concealed weapons, such as flying daggers and lancets, flew towards the first batch of men who had dashed for the black boulder. Even experts without concealed weapons started to pick up stones from the ground and fiercely threw them in their direction. The stones thrown by First Rated Warriors carried a force to be reckoned with.

“Seven people!” Teng Qingshan stayed in his spot calmly.

“Bang!” “Bang!” “Pu!”

Amidst the noise and the cries, six out of the seven men suffered from serious injuries and fell into the lava lake. The seventh person only managed to hang on for a second before a piece of stone smashed his neck, and took the plunge shortly after.

Seven people fell into the lava!

The lava in the middle of the lake had a golden color. Upon falling into the lake, flames started appearing on their whole body as the warriors were engulfed by flames! At the same time, they cried out in a piercing voice!

“Ahhh!!!”

The piercing screams sounded like the wailings of ghosts.

“Chi chi~~~” In almost an instant, the flesh of the seven people turned into ash, leaving only a pile of white bones floating in the lake, but very soon, the bones had also dissolved.

Not a trace of them were left!

Upon seeing this, the fanatical warriors, who were tempted to make their move, gasped, causing the atmosphere to freeze in less than second.

Chapter 141: A Common Target

“Chi chi!!” Occasionally, a drop of water would land on the steadily flowing lava, offsetting an explosion of steam.

Amongst the many warriors present, how many of them had ever seen lava before?

None!

It was even Teng Qingshan’s first time seeing lava throughout both of his lives. The impact of the lava stunned the troop of fearless warriors. Seeing the seven powerful warriors being burnt to ashes until “there was nothing left” chilled the eager emotions of the experts.

“What an astonishingly high temperature!” Teng Qingshan could not help but gasp. “The lava in the outer reaches of the pool of lava had a golden hue, with only the center of the pool being scorchingly white. It was obvious that the temperature of the white lava had reached its peak state. However, it was likely that the temperature was even higher underneath the surface, even for the golden lava!”

Being several times hotter than water’s boiling point, the lava was so hot that it was able to dissolve bones in the blink of an eye.

“Everyone charge! Grab the Black Fire Spirit Fruit!”

“Grab the Spirit Fruit! Kill!”

Those warriors who were far away and had not yet seen what had just happened were all shouting as they attempted to charge forward.

Teng Qingshan frowned, throwing a glance in the direction of the shouting warriors. “These scattered warriors are trying to cause chaos. They would probably be happier to see more experts from the major sects dying!” In that moment, the Young Sovereign of Qing Hu Island ‘Gu Shiyou’ loudly cried, “Everyone, we will

fight for this Black Fire Spirit Fruit within ourselves. However, we cannot let the other warriors make trouble! Everyone work together, and if any outsider dares to charge or squeeze their way through, kill them!”

“I agree!” Tie Yi Hall’s ‘Wei Cang Long’ was the first to consent.

“Agreed,” said Ji Hong, also nodding his head.

Those in the deeper regions all agreed to give the command for some of their men to focus on handling the people on the outside, preventing them from charging in.

……

The passageway was only a few Zhang wide, and only a small minority of warriors could engage with their weapons.

While the smaller sects and individual warriors had an advantage in number, when they were pushed out to a few hundred Zhang away, most of them could only shout from the sidelines, unable to take part in battle. Those who could fight were small in number, and were of no threat to the elites of the various larger sects!

One man can hold against ten thousand enemies!

Each of the large sects only needed to send out some of their elites to block the passageways, taking turns to fend them off!

From there, those who had wanted to take advantage of the situation to create chaos no longer dared to take any action.

If anyone moved, he would be killed!

“Kill!” A warrior shouted from the back.

“Damn you, what the hell are you shouting about? If you want to charge, you can go ahead.” The warriors in front were enraged. “You guys are only watching the show from the back, and you expect me to risk my life?”

Nobody here was stupid enough to sacrifice their precious life for someone else.

“How could these warriors ever hope to win when there is no one in command?” Teng Qingshan could tell that the space which they could battle in was not that big. “Even if the thousands of warriors fought to the death with the experts from the various big sects, the thousand man strong force from the big sects would be able to annihilate them! Moreover, most of these people are only here to join in the crowd, who would even be willing to throw away their lives?”

Within an extremely short amount of time, the messy situation was under control.

Teng Qingshan looked towards the surroundings of the lava lake. “The amount of men from the various groups would add up to around a thousand men, while those immediately ready for battle only amount to two or three hundred.”

“Lord Commander,” Teng Qingshan looked towards Ji Hong.

“Don’t rush. Whoever sticks out now is just courting death!” Ji Hong laughed, “There is no absolute power that is undefeatable. Bear with it for now!”

Teng Qingshan and Guan Lu stood behind Ji Hong.

Just when the experts from the various sects were planning on how to snatch the fruit, all of a sudden, a figure shot towards the middle of the lava lake at a rapid speed. As if it was on reflex, almost half of the experts surrounding the lava lake instantly threw out their concealed weapons!

Weapons such as flying daggers were thrown, some even picked up stones from the ground.

Hu! Hu! Hu!

The massive number of concealed weapons flew towards the figure like a gale of wind.

“Rumble~~~”

A green, hazy light crept up the blade, engulfing the figure. “Clank! Clank! Clank!”……A series of clashing sounds rang out. The attempt to deflect so many concealed weapons also resulted in the speed of the figure slowing down. The lava lake was over ten Zhang wide.

The distance from the bank to the boulder is a distance of over ten Zhang!

“That’s close to thirty meters! If a First Rated Warrior were to have no obstructions, he would be able to reach it if he tried with all his might!” Teng Qingshan looked towards the figure. “He would be able to fly up there if not for the hindrance of the many concealed weapons.”

“That’s Thunder God Blade ‘Wu Yue’!” A voice called out.

It was the Thunder God Blade ‘Wu Yue’!

The super strong warrior ranked ninth on the «Earthly Ranking»!

The long disheveled hair, stern-looking eyes, empty sleeves that swayed in the wind, and that long saber that shone with a cold gleam. It all explained his identity — Thunder God Blade Wu Yue!

A man with strong skills had strong guts! To think that the Thunder God Blade ‘Wu Yue’ would dare to snatch the Black Fire Spirit Fruit under the eyes of so many experts!

“Too bad, an expert of the generation will be losing his life here.” Looking at this, many people lamented.

Even an expert from the «Earth lyRanking» would be left without a trace once he dropped into the lava.

“That’s not right!” Teng Qingshan frowned as he looked at Thunder God Blade ‘Wu Yue’, who was still in mid-air.

“Swoosh!” There was no panic in Wu Yue’s eyes as he took out a book from his chest at lightning speed, spinning it as he threw it out. The book was left spinning when Wu Yue’s nimble figure

stepped on the book as he descended.

“Hu!”

The book plunged down into the lava and with a “boom!”, flames engulfed the surface of the flowing lava as the book turned into ashes.

Propelled by that one step, Wu Yue flew for a few more Zhang before landing directly on the black boulder in the middle of the lake.

Seemingly slow, but was in fact at great speed!

“Not good!” Ji Hong, Wei Canglong, Gu Shiyou, Du Jiu, the Black and White Elders..... all the faces of the experts paled. With the ability of one who was ranked ninth on the «Earthly Ranking», once Wu Yue was able to regain his balance and have a surface to stand on, the other people who were tens of Zhang away would not be a threat to him.

Even if it was hard to be of any threat to him, they could not stare blankly while he succeeded.

“Hu!” “Hu!” “Hu!”.....

A large number of concealed weapons flew towards Thunder God Blade ‘Wu Yue’ once again. Teng Qingshan, who was at the bank of the lava lake, also held onto a flying dagger as he stared coldly at that figure, “Wu Yue! Although I have favorable impressions of you, but..... In such a critical situation, I can’t hold back any further.”

Just when Teng Qingshan had found the right opportunity and was planning to take action —

“Ah!” A loud, deep voice cried out in pain.

Just when Thunder God Blade ‘Wu Yue’ stepped on that black boulder, “Hu!”, flames appeared on his right leg and caught on fire! The Thunder God Blade ‘Wu Yue’ did not even had the chance

to take two more steps forward to get the Black Fire Spirit Fruit! At the moment Thunder God Blade ‘Wu Yue’’s leg landed on the rock…

With one step!

He dashed towards the direction of the bank of the lava lake while he deflected the many concealed weapons with the saber in his hand.

Everyone was flabbergasted!

“Scram!” Wu Yue bellowed, and with a swing of his saber, the warriors in the direction he was flying to all retreated. With a tumble, Wu Yue landed on one of his knees as he clutched his right leg. The shoe on that leg was incinerated, and the skin of his right leg was also burnt to a red color. It was covered in blood, and one could faintly see the bones of his toes.

Everyone was in shock!

Teng Qingshan was also astonished as he looked towards the black boulder in the middle of the lava lake. “That Wu Yue had only landed, stepped on the rock, and returned. His foot had not been on the black boulder for even a second! In that short moment, to be able to burn the leg of a First Rate Warrior to this state!”

Everyone was stunned!

It was so terribly scorching on top of the black boulder. What were they to do?

Teng Qingshan’s gaze landed on the surroundings of that black boulder, and on the bubbling steaming white lava. “Right! That black boulder seems to be blocking the underground entrance of the lava flow! Its surroundings continuously emit white lava. That white lava has an incredible high temperature, and when that black boulder has been in contact with the white lava over the years, how could it not be extremely hot?

The heat conductivity of metal was very extreme.

That black boulder should be something similar to the extremely rare ore ‘Millennium Coldsteel’. It must definitely be good at conducting heat! If not, it would not be so scorching.

“The white lava is extremely scorching. While the black boulder looks normal from its appearance, the surface temperature of the rock should be at least a few hundred degrees!”

……

“Quick, pass me the Coldsteel Battle Boots!”

Gu Shiyou’s voice came from a distance away. At that point, many experts were already starting to change their boots.

“That rock is so hot that normal leather boots would be incinerated once it comes into contact with it. We’ll have to rely on the battle boots of out Black Armored Army.” Ji Hong smiled as he said this. The experts of the Black Armored Army all had a common set of heavy armor. Not just for their body, but for their legs, neck, and head as well.

Helmets, neck guards, battle boots, even the battle boots had the ability to deflect blades.

Teng Qingshan, Ji Hong, and Guan Lu were all wearing battle boots! Ji Hong and Guan Lu’s battle boots even contained some element of Darksteel, while Teng Qingshan’s battle boots had also contained some element of Millennium Coldsteel. The battle boots made with such precious materials would not dissolve under high temperatures, let alone burn.

“That Thunder God Blade ‘Wu Yue’ is a loner wearing normal leather boots. To step with that, he was really quite unlucky.” Ji Hong laughed.

Teng Qingshan scanned the surroundings. Many experts were all changing their boots. Battle boots made from good quality metal were very heavy and would give the legs more pressure. Therefore, other than armies, most experts of inner strength would wear

comfortable leather boots.

“Qingshan, Guan Lu!” Ji Hong lowered his voice and said, “Everyone is very eager to act now. With our abilities, we cannot be the one to stand out, but..... everyone won’t be able to bear with it much longer. Once they take action, Guan Lu, you stay here. Qingshan will charge in together with me! Grab that Black Fire Spirit Fruit and Black Fire Spirit Root!”

Guan Lu frowned, “I.....”

Looking at Ji Hong’s sullened face, Guan Lu did not continue further, but she threw a glance at Teng Qingshan.

Ji Hong observed the surroundings. The rest of the experts were also waiting to take action. Ji Hong lowered his voice, “Qingshan, we may need to stake it all later! If we manage to get the Black Fire Spirit Fruit, the Sovereign may decide to give it to you, but if we only manage to get the Black Fire Spirit Root.....Sovereign would not care much about it. Therefore, we need to set our sights on that Black Fire Spirit Fruit!”

“Yes.” Teng Qingshan held the Reincarnation Spear in his hand and answered in a low voice.

Chapter 142: Melted Bones and Flesh

All the top notch experts at the bank of the lava lake were ready for action. Everyone was hoping for someone else to be the first to charge in and attract attention before they themselves would charge in. Everyone was thinking the same thing; therefore they were all tensed up and ready, but no one flew out.

“Hmm?” Teng Qingshan jerked his head.

“Hu!”

From the direction of the men from Qing Hu Island, a grey figure shot out towards the center of the lava lake.

“Die!” No one held back as a large number of concealed weapons cut across the sky.

“Haha……” A laughter spread out as the the light of a blade flashed out in front of the grey figure. Only the sound of metal clashing was heard from the large number of concealed weapons that were deflected and fell into the lake, quickly melting as they became a part of the lava flow.

“Du Jiu!” Teng Qingshan’s sharp eyes could tell whom that figure belonged to in an instant. That man in grey robes was in fact the number one expert among the men from Qing Hu Island, ‘Du Jiu’. “Hmm, his back?” Du Jiu’s skill with his blade was obviously not comparable to that of Thunder God Blade ‘Wu Yue’. He was not able to deflect the concealed weapons that were coming from every direction.

There were some holes on his back and his clothes, but a dark gold color could be seen beneath the holes.

“Could it be that his inner armor is made from Godly Dark Gold Metal?” Teng Qingshan was astonished. This Godly Dark Gold Metal was in no way inferior to the ‘Ten Millennia Coldsteel’. Although the Godly Dark Gold Metal did not have the sharpness of

the Ten Millennia Coldsteel, it was better in terms of flexibility, making it more suitable to be used to manufacture defensive armor.

But due to its extravagant cost, most people could not bear to spend so much. Furthermore, getting one's hands on enough Godly Dark Gold Metal to make a set of armor was no easy task.

Du Jiu tossed out a book, stepped on it, and propelled himself to the center of the lava lake!

"Old Du Jiu!" Ji Hong's face paled.

"Go!" Ji Hong shouted in a low voice.

"Hu!" "Hu!"

Teng Qingshan and Ji Hong leapt up at almost the same time, creating a gust of wind as they flew for the center of the black boulder.

"Hu!" "Hu!" "Hu……"

Teng Qingshan and Ji Hong were not the only ones who took advantage of this opportunity. Over ten warriors leaped up at the same time, including the 'Black and White' Elders. Their response was simultaneously, throwing out the concealed weapons in their hands as they flew up. Their target was the same: the man who was at the forefront——Du Jiu!

Du Jiu was in the forefront. Only after intercepting him would the rest then have some hope.

"Swoosh!" Similarly, a stone flew out from Teng Qingshan's hand.

"Haha, none of you……" Du Jiu was very proud as the two short sabers in his two hands deflected one concealed weapon after another. In Du Jiu's eyes, he was charging in the forefront, so the one to obtain the Black Fire Spirit Fruit would definitely be him. When the time came, he would throw the Black Fire Spirit Fruit

towards the men from Qing Hu Island.

In fact, he actually did manage to get his hands on the Black Fire Spirit Fruit.

Just when Du Jiu was feeling elated, “Clank!”, a small stone knocked away the short saber from the hands of the bald old man ‘Du Jiu’. Du Jiu’s smile instantly froze.

That stone contained terrifying energy, causing Du Jiu’s palm to burst and blood to flow down steadily. His whole body was shifted from the stone’s strong impact, resulting in him plunging with his back facing downwards.

His stomach was facing the sky!

This orientation would be fatal!

Du Jiu’s orientation not only changed the course of his flight, but also ensured that he would land in the boiling lava flow.

Moreover!

Since his stomach was facing upwards, he wouldn’t be able to throw items and use the momentum to save his own life.

“No!” Du Jiu’s triangular eyes were filled with horror as he twisted his waist, exerting his strong inner strength to turn himself over so that his stomach faced downwards. He finally had a chance to escape, but after this turn, he could already see the boiling lava flow right before his eyes!

Du Jiu plunged into the lava lake faced down.

There wasn’t even a chance for him to react!

From the moment he was knocked off course to his flip onto the surface of the lava lake, less than the span of one breath had transpired.

“Ahh!” Du Jiu wasn’t even able to finish his shout before the shriek ended!

“Chi chi~~”

The experts above the lava lake could see the scene clearly. The expert from the «Earthly Ranking», ‘Du Jiu’; the master of the Sovereign of Qing Hu Island, ‘Du Jiu’, fell face down on the surface of the lava lake, his head sinking into the lava. In an instance, he became a ball of fire that burnt very quickly, and within the blink of an eye, his bones and flesh melted into nothingness.

All that was left was the pair of battle boots, as well as that dark golden inner armor which slowly sank into the lava.

In just an instant, all that was left of an expert were his battle boots and armor!

“Martial Granduncle!” Gu Shiyou, who was at the river bank, gave out a mournful cry.

“Who...who had caused the death of my Martial Granduncle!” The men from Qing Hu Island were enraged and anxious, but..... There were too many people who had thrown their concealed weapons at the same time. Not just the experts who had rushed in, even the large number of experts at the side had thrown their concealed weapons. Amongst all the closely packed concealed weapons, it was hard to differentiate who had thrown the stone that struck Du Jiu’s saber. It was impossible to tell!

Not many people could even see the stone’s trail clearly with their eyes!

The stone was too fast!

An expert of his generation, ‘Du Jiu’, died just like that after being so domineering for over a hundred years!

The experts near the lava lake only lamented for a short while before turning their attention to the black boulder in the middle of the lake. It was because at that moment, a group of experts landed on top of that black boulder at almost the same time. There were many experts, but there was only one Black Fire Spirit Fruit!

Who would it belong to?

Therefore, kill!

“Hu!” A long saber slashed towards Teng Qingshan, who tilted his body and hid behind another warrior while he kicked towards the warrior in front of him. The warrior in front of him quickly dodged and attempted to pierce his sword towards a middle-aged man with greying temples.

The width of the black boulder was slightly more than one Zhang.

That meant that there were over ten people standing on top of the rock, which was about three meters long and wide. What would the scene be like?

Teng Qingshan’s spear had a length of nine Chi and six Cun. With a wave of his spear, he could cover the whole surface of the black boulder. Therefore, this battle was extremely desperate and required everyone to be very meticulous.

“Second brother, let’s go!” Using an iron plank bridge, an old man dodged a slash and followed with a strong step as he flew towards the side of the lava lake, spinning. Within the span of a few breaths, the old man had already suffered from a slash. He was considered lucky. Those who had less luck were doomed.

……

“Hu!”

A large saber slashed towards Teng Qingshan furiously.

“You must be courting death!” Teng Qingshan was agitated. This bald strong man with a large saber had tried to attack him consecutively. With a shake of his spear, it smashed against the big saber as if it were a long dragon.

Bang!

Inner strength was overflowing!

It was a direct clash of their strength!

“What?” The moment when Teng Qingshan’s Reincarnation Spear smashed down, the face of the bald strong man suddenly paled!

On the rock that was slightly over one Zhang wide, there were many people engaged in their own battles. Not many would try to have a direct brawl of strength. This was because a clash from any of these experts would be a clash of over ten thousand Jin. The impact from these clashes would tend to make them back down. Those who were strong would only take a few steps back.

Those who were not as strong would take more steps backwards.

In such a small space, one step backwards could mean stepping into the lava.

Taken by surprise, the bald strong man was knocked off his feet and sent backwards, flying through the air. Actually, with Teng Qingshan’s abilities, he would not need to take any step backwards, but he still needed to maintain his pretense. Teng Qingshan knocked the sword from another expert as the spear in his hand pierced towards the bald strong man——

The Reincarnation Spear had a length of nine Chi and six Cun!

The face of the bald strong man paled, and he quickly did a flip in midair, but just as he turned over, he saw a shadow flying in his direction from the corners of his eyes.

“No!” The bald strong man could not hold back his shout as he used his large saber to block the attack.

“Bang!”

The moment the Reincarnation Spear was thrust, with a single shake of the spearhead, the thrust turned into a smash!

It fiercely smashed into the chest of the bald strong man, causing the bald strong man to fly like a meteorite, smashing into the lava

with a ‘boom’. “Boom!” A ball of flames rose up, signalling the death of another strong expert.

“Go!”

Another three injured experts flew away from the black boulder, including Tie Yi Hall’s ‘Wei Canglong’! From the beginning of the battle until now, it had only been a short while, but already close to ten experts had either died or escaped.

Within just a short span of time, there were only six experts left.

The two from the Gui Yuan Sect——Teng Qingshan and Ji Hong.

Two from Xiao Yao Palace——The Black and White Elders.

An old man who wore grey robes, had silver hair, and carried a saber. Teng Qingshan had not heard of this person before.

The sixth person was an old lady with a scar on her face. She was holding a curved blade, and her movements were swift and unexpected.

……

“Old White!” Exchanging glances, the Black Elder and White Elder were able to understand each other’s thoughts. They were aware that among the six people on the black boulder, their biggest threat was the men from the Gui Yuan Sect. This was because the Gui Yuan Sect, like themselves, also had two experts.

As for the other two, they were unaffiliated with any group.

“Chi!”

A black sword was thrust towards Teng Qingshan. Withdrawing his spear, he deflected the black sword, but the white sword followed, thrusting at him from behind.

Obviously the two Black and White Elders were trying to work together to deal with Teng Qingshan.

The longer the spear, the stronger its power, but in such a

restricted area, there were very close to each other. For most practitioners, the strength of their spears would decline in a small place packed with multiple people.

“Hu!”

At that moment, a flash of cold light headed for Teng Qingshan. It was the old lady with a scar on her face. Seeing her, Teng Qingshan’s turned pale. “These three are thinking of dealing with me first!” Teng Qingshan had once killed Meng Tian and made a name for himself. Of course everyone would want to deal with the expert from the «Earthly Ranking» first and foremost.

“Qingshan, be careful.” With a wave of his long saber, Ji Hong slashed towards the old lady.

Teng Qingshan’s eyes turned cold as the Reincarnation Spear in his hands became as swift as a swimming dragon. The spearhead and the spear shaft could both be used for defence. The shadows of the black and white swords were like frost, while Teng Qingshan’s spear was flexible and swift. Even if both of them attacked at the same time, he could quickly block their every attack.

“Look, that Teng Qingshan is so strong. To think that he could fight off the two ‘Black and White’ Elders from Xiao Yao Palace with only his spear!”

“The two Black and White Elders are both experts listed in the «Earthly Ranking». To think that they are not able to kill Teng Qingshan in a short period even though they are working together. The defence of Teng Qingshan’s spear skills is truly formidable.”

All of the people were astonished.

“The five of them, including the Black and White Elders as well as Teng Qingshan, had made a name for themselves, but who is that silver haired old man? To think that he could also be on par with them.”

Chapter 143: The Eruption of the Red Scaled Beast

"That elderly man has some reputation in our Xuyang County." Someone interrupted, "He's called Wang Yun! He an expert with some influence in our Xuyang County's Fanwu City. However... in our Fanwu City, he can only be considered to be ranked in the top few. Despite that, he was still able to fight it out with the experts listed on the "Earthly Ranking". I did not expect Old Wang to keep such strong ability hidden.

"He can only be considered the top few in the Fanwu City? However, he's not that far off from Commander Ji Hong, as well as Elder Qi Yan from Qingzhou's Shan Shui Sect. He should be considered close to be listed in the "Earthly Ranking" now."

Hearing that, the other warriors were also full of praises and admiration for him. It was easy to gauge how strong a warrior was when he could not even rank first in a small city. By right, these people could only be considered First Rated Warriors.

"He has really concealed his skills and ability well!"

Quite a number of people secretly remembered the name 'Wang Yun'. From that day onward, Wang Yun's name would rapidly spread out across.

****

The Black and White Elders joined forces to deal with Teng Qingshan while Ji Hong, that silver-haired Wang Yun, and that vicious lady, Qi Yan, went killing at each other.

...

No one present had paid any notice to the magma lake.

Blob~~blob~~

There were bubbles rising up and heat scattering out. This was a

very common sight. In the depths of the scorching magma lake, a massive creature was hiding at the very bottom. The magma flowed very slowly and had a terrifyingly high temperature, but the magma was unable to hurt this massive creature in the least.

It had a massive body of over two Zhang tall and four to five Zhangs in length. It also had a terrifying tail that was over two Zhang long.

It was the Red Scaled Beast!

The Red Scaled Beast was a fire attribute demonic beast in the first place and the power that seethed in its body was the power of fire! Once it transformed after swallowing the 'Red Fire Spirit Fruit', it would be able to spew out flames with a prowess that would be even more terrifying than that of the magma flow and that could easily melt down metal. Even innate experts would be wary of it.

As for the magma currents... The Red Scaled Beast love a scorching environment.

It had been born in a scorching environment.

To the Red Scaled Beast, being at the bottom of the magma was merely a bath. It could even open its eyes at the bottom of the magma currents!

The invisible film on the surface of its pupils allowed it to be able to easily withstand such high temperatures. It was completely different from the eyes of humans. Not only would it be able to adapt to high temperature and could also see things in the dark just as well as in the day.

It was lying in ambush!

As a demonic beast, it had a terrifyingly powerful hearing. Its ears clearly heard the sounds of weapons clashing above it and it could even distinguish where everyone was at just by listening.

...

No one knew that the Red Scaled Beast was hidden at the bottom of the magma lake. Teng Qingshan and the other five were still fighting it out.

"This Teng Qingshan's spear arts is really amazing. Even when I join forces with Old Bai, we aren't able to handle him. The Black and White Elders exchanged a glance, unable to conceal the astonishment they were feeling now. After all, the two of them were ranked sixty-ninth and seventieth in the "Earthly Ranking".

They were considered to be at the very bottom of the rank.

However, the two of them were still experts listed on the "Earthly Ranking" and they were also situated in a narrow space.

"My identity mustn't be exposed!" Silver-haired Wang Yun dodged Qi Yan's attack. "I've only managed to completely figure out Wang Yun's lifestyle habits, actions, and smile after close to one year. It was only then could I completely replace him and live with his identity. Living a carefree life! Once my identity is exposed, Wei Wuya will definitely come after me to kill me! I can only play around a bit more with these kids."

Wang Yun swung about his long saber, displaying great prowess.

Just as the six great experts were killing each other——

"Boom!" The calmly flowing magma river sudden erupted!

Magma splattered and even the experts who were far away on the shores of the magma lake all gasped and tried to dodge. however, there was still a small amount of magma that splattered over. When the scorching magma landed on them, the extremely high temperature caused their clothes to be lit up in flames immediately and it would also burn their skin and flesh. The unlucky warriors who were hit by the splattered magma cried out agonizingly.

"Ahh!" "Chi——"

There was also the smell of cooked meat. However, the warriors were fine as they only suffered an injury on a small portion of their

body.

The six people who were on the black boulder thought, 'This is bad!'

"What is that?!" All six of them were taken by surprise. Faced with the splattering magma, all six experts rapidly dodged. However, they immediately saw a massive head appearing on the surface of the magma. Just the head alone was eight Chi (two meters) long. Such a massive head was already bigger than an adult man's head.

"Red Scaled Beast!" Teng Qingshan's countenance changed.

"Red Scaled Beast!"

A series of gasps rang out. No one had expected that the Red Scaled Beast would actually be hiding at the bottom of the magma lake.

This massive Red Scaled Beast revealed it head, and its crimson red eyes that were like a pair of lanterns stared at the six of them. Then, it opened its huge mouth——

Hu!

A large spurt of magma shot out toward the six people on the black boulder like a sharp arrow.

"The Red Scaled Beast is able to consume the magma? And it can even spurt it out?" Teng Qingshan was extremely astonished. The Red Scaled Beast had long gotten used to high temperatures and even its fragile eyeballs had the resistance to high temperatures, let alone its mouth and throat. The magma that had been spurted out formed a fan shape and encompassed toward the entire black boulder.

All six experts leaped up at the same time.

"Boom!"

The Red Scaled Beast's massive body came charging out from the

magma. Its massive body that was like a small mountain was over two Zhang tall, four to five Zhang long. It caused the cultivators in the distance to gasp in alarm.

The Red Scaled Beast opened its terrifyingly big mouth and headed for the expert from Qingzhou, who was the only female amongst the six--Qi Yan. Qi Yan's scarred face become distorted from horror. She let out a furious bellow and struck out the curved blade that she was holding toward the Red Scaled Beast.

The Red Scaled Beast dodged slightly.

Clank!

The curved blade struck onto the scaled armor on the Red Scaled Beast's head, leaving a white mark on the densely packed scales. At the same time, the Red Scaled Beast took the opportunity to bite down on Qi Yan.

"Kacha!"

Its sharp interlocking teeth that were like saws bit down on Qi Yan. Her body broke into two parts and one of it dropped into the magma lake, turning into ashes. The other chunk was swallowed by the Red Scaled Beast. This scene caused all the warriors to shudder in fear!

In just a split second, Qi Yan died!

Hu!

And Teng Qingshan and the four other people who had jumped earlier had also landed. As they were landing and unable to control their movements...

"Hu!" The Red Scaled Beast's massive body pounced toward the five of them!

The surface of the entire black boulder was only slightly over one Zhang in length and width. However, the Red Scaled Beast was a massive creature with a height of over two Zhang and a length of

four to five Zhang. When it came pouncing toward them, Teng Qingshan and the other four people only felt as if a small mountain was crashing toward them. The Red Scaled Beast's front legs and sharp claws grabbed out toward them!

It did not dare to grab out at Teng Qingshan!

In its eyes, out of the five humans, Teng Qingshan was the one who posed the greatest threat.

"Hu!" "Hu!"

Its sharp claws pierced out like four sharp blades, respectively heading for Commander Ji Hong and the White Elder.

"Clank!" "Clank!"

"Ahhh—"

As the massive Red Scaled Beast pounced out, all the five experts were thrown off and sent flying. Commander Ji Hong and the White Elder who had been struck by its sharp claws had it the worst. Ji Hong's long saber had been sent flying off and his right arm and been crushed into pieces, with blood splattering around. The White Elder's left leg had also broke.

"Scram off!" "Scram!"

The other three unleashed fierce attack and as that Black Elder was sent flying out, he thrust a fierce sword attack onto the scale armor. However, there was not even a single crack.

Teng Qingshan and that silver-haired Wang Yun also unleashed fierce attacks!

"Boom!" Teng Qingshan's Reincarnation Spear brought about an unbearable piercing screech in the air and smashed out toward the Red Scaled Beast. At the moment when the spear was about to come into contact with the Red Scaled Beast, its prowess suddenly rose tremendously!

Boom!

The battle saber the silver-haired old man Wang Yun was holding tore across the air and hack down fiercely on the Red Scaled Beast's body.

"Roar~~~"

The Red Scaled Beast roared out in pain and its massive body rolled about.

The attacks from Teng Qingshan and the silver-haired old man Wang Yun had injured it.

"This kid isn't bad." The silver-haired old man threw a glance toward Teng Qingshan. The rest of the people were very far away. Moreover, Teng Qingshan's attack from earlier had demonstrated the greatest prowess at the very last moment. In this short moment, the people who were far away would not be able to notice or assess the prowess of this spear attack. However, this silver-haired old man could.

"Amongst the postliminary experts in the world, Teng Qingshan would at least be ranked amongst the top twenty." the silver-haired old man thought to himself.

The Red Scaled Beast was sent tumbling away by the two men's attacks.

Teng Qingshan and the silver-haired old were also sent flying toward the shores from the impact of the Red Scaled Beast's pounce as well as the backlash from their own attacks.

Amongst the five people who were sent flying away, Teng Qingshan, the silver-haired old man, and the Black Elder were prepared and were able to get to the shores of the magma lack by tapping on the impact. However, the White Elder and Ji Hong were different. Both of them were seriously injured and were sent flying back toward the direction of the shores. However, they did not last long and were about to fall.

"Old White!" The Black Elder cried out and could only watch as

the White Elder, who had lost one of his legs, struggled helplessly and eventually dropped into the magma, bursting out in flames.

"Commander!" On the shores of the magma lake, Guan Lu and the others gasped.

"Commander!" Teng Qingshan's countenance changed as well.

The White Elder had been in a very bad state, but the same could be said for Ji Hong!

"Am I going to die just like that?" Ji Hong was about to plunge downward and there was nothing he could do. He even felt a scorching heat behind his back.

"Commander!" A loud bellow rang out next to Ji Hong's ears.

Ji Hong turned in that direction.

He saw a spear shadow lashing out toward him, and as if hitting a sandbag, the spear shadow struck Ji Hong on the stomach——

Hu!

Ji Hong was sent upward until he landed on the shores of the magma lake.

When Ji Hong landed on the ground, he had no time to feel elated and merely looked at the Teng Qingshan who was in the air of the magma lake, "Qingshan!"

"Qingshan!" Guan Lu was shocked as well.

Quite a number of people were staring at Teng Qingshan from the shores of the magma lake.

There were those who were astonished, those who were filled with admiration, and also those who were elated...

Teng Qingshan had lashed out toward Ji Hong and was sent back toward the direction of the black boulder from the backlash force.

The power of this backlash was clearly insufficient and Teng Qingshan was still three Zhang away from the black boulder. He

was about to plunge downward, where there was on scorching magma!

"Qingshan!" Teng Qinghu shouted out anxiously.

"Lieutenant!"

The members of the Black Armored Army shouted out anxiously.

Teng Qingshan turned abruptly, facing the direction of the black boulder. Then, smiling as he swung his Reincarnation Spear about, he smashed out toward the magma below him!

Boom!

The Reincarnation Spear's flat diamond-shaped spearhead struck against the magma and a powerful backlashing force acted on Teng Qingshan. He was like an eagle, once again pouncing toward the black boulder in the middle of the magma lake.

The Red Scaled Beast's massive head emerged from the magma lake and was just next to the black boulder. It's cold red eyes were starting at Teng Qingshan, who was flying toward its direction.

Chapter 144: Evil Creature!!!

“Bubble~~”

The lava’s scorching steam could not contain the excitement of the surrounding warriors. They all wished to witness the battle between Teng Qingshan and that demonic beast!

“Hu!”

A figure flew from the banks of the lava lake towards the black boulder in the center of the lake. Teng Qingshan noticed with his acute senses, “Hmm? It’s that silver-haired old man! To think that he’s coming back!” Among the five experts who had been sent flying by the Red Scaled Beast, one had died, while another was crippled. Even the Black Elder was fearful of the Red Scaled Beast.

Only the silver-haired old man by the name of ‘Wang Yun’ flew back towards the boulder!

“He’s merely a warrior in the Postliminary Realm, there’s nothing to be concerned about!” Once he landed, Teng Qingshan quickly made an attempt to dash for the Black Fire Spirit Fruit.

The Red Scaled Beast was resting its massive head on the black boulder while locking his crimson eyes on Teng Qingshan. Suddenly, a hint of jest reflected in his eyes. From the white teeth of the Red Scales Beast, a long flashing red shadow emitted, cutting off the Black Fire Spirit Fruit at the speed of lightning!

In just that short moment!

The Black Fire Spirit Fruit vanished!

Leaving only the translucent Spirit Root, which was strongly rooted within the cracks of the black boulder.

“You evil creature!!!” Flying over in the air, the silver-haired old man ‘Wang Yun’ gave an angry shout.

“You’re courting death!”

Teng Qingshan's face paled as he gave off a low shout. The Reincarnation Spear in his hands immediately turned into a flash of lightning, piercing towards the head of the Red Scaled Beast in the lava lake.

"Growl~~" The Red Scaled Beast gave off a conceited growl as it quickly submerged itself into the lava.

"Pu!"

The Reincarnation Spear was thrust into the lava and recovered in an instant.

"This Red Scaled Beast is doing this on purpose!" Teng Qingshan was annoyed. "When it sent the five of us flying, it had more than enough time to eat the Black Fire Spirit Fruit, but it didn't! It deliberately waited for me to head over, giving me a falsified hopeful that I could retrieve the Black Fire Spirit Fruit before it suddenly ate the Black Fire Spirit Fruit!"

The tongue of the Red Scales Beast was like that of a venomous snake, flying with swift speed.

With a dash and a curl, the Black Fire Spirit Fruit was gone, pulled into the Red Scaled Beast's mouth.

Teng Qingshan had no time to react.

"All of this was obviously within the Red Scaled Beast's control. Hmph! Seems like it hasn't forgotten the injury that I have inflicted on it previously." Teng Qingshan understood that the intelligence of this Red Scales Beast was in no way inferior to that of a human. "But to me, the Black Fire Spirit Root is far more important than the Black Fire Spirit Fruit!"

These thoughts flashed past his head in a moment.

Teng Qingshan immediately looked towards the 'Black Fire Spirit Root' embedded in the black boulder. The translucent Black Fire Spirit Root had a special glow to it that faintly emitted a mysterious energy. It was this energy that was able to nurture a

treasure like the ‘Black Fire Spirit Fruit’.

“The Black Fire Spirit Root contains a mysterious energy. A normal person can gain the strength of ten thousand Jin in an instant after consuming it. I wonder what sort of state I can reach after I eat it and absorb all of its given potential.” At that moment when Teng Qingshan wanted to pull out the Black Fire Spirit Root —

“Hu!” The light from a blade slashed towards Teng Qingshan.

It was the silver-haired old man, ‘Wang Yun’, who had just landed on the boulder.

“Hmph!” Teng Qingshan snorted coldly as he held the Reincarnation Spear in one hand, giving a back-handed thrust. Teng Qingshan thrust the end of the spear shaft towards the silver-haired old man ‘Wang Yun’ while using his left hand to remove the Black Fire Spirit Root!

“Bang!”

The long saber and Teng Qingshan’s Reincarnation Spear clashed fiercely.

Bang!

The fierce clash created a deafening sound of exploding air! Created by the burst of inner strength, a strong gust of wind spread out, creating ripples on the surface of the scorching lava lake.

Teng Qingshan was thrown off by the attack and had to take three steps backward.

“An expert! An absolute expert much stronger than Meng Tian.” Teng Qingshan was astonished, but he immediately became excited and smiled. At the same time, he took a turn at lightning speed, and waved his Reincarnation Spear in a curving arc with inner strength that could be seen by the naked eye as he smashed towards the head of the silver-haired old man.

“Clank!”

Teng Qingshan could clearly felt the strange impact that was transmitted through his spear. “What a powerful expert! I’m not sure where he appeared from. To be able to keep his strength hidden, there’s no such man listed in the «Earthly Ranking». He must be a reclusive expert who has gone through tough training over tens of years.” The spear in Teng Qingshan’s hand remained swift and agile.

“Swoosh!”

With a pull of his spear, a silver light flashed as the spearhead pierced forward. It pushed forth as if it were a thunderstrike, accompanied by a sharp whistle

“Clank!”

When the silver-haired old man blocked the spear attack, he could feel that it contained a strange rotational energy, as if it would send the saber in his hand flying. The silver-haired old man’s heart sank. “Hmph, I can’t afford to be wasting time here with this chap! I’ll have to end the battle quickly!” His blade became lit with a dazzling series of light.

“Hu!” “Hu!” “Hu!”

Nine rays of light shot out from the old man’s blade, but they were met simultaneously by Teng Qingshan’s lightning-fast spear shadows!

Each shadow clashed with one of the flying blade lights.

“Hmph.”

The moment they began exchanging moves, the silver-haired old man lowered himself and slipped like a fish towards the side of the Black Fire Spirit Root. What was strangest of all was that with a simple wave of the old man’s left hand, all that Teng Qingshan managed to see was just a shadow——

The Black Fire Spirit Root was gone!

“Haha, Teng Qingshan, as expected, you are the top expert of the younger generation. I had trained for tens of years, but could only best you by a little.” With a loud laugh, the silver-haired man had already reached the center of the lava lake.

“Leave the Black Fire Spirit Root behind!”

With a holler and a step on the black boulder, Teng Qingshan headed for the banks of the lava lake. However, he was left astonished by the old man’s might. “In that short instant earlier, each slash from this old man contained an impact of at least ten thousand Jin. Not only that, he was able to display those extremely peculiar skills even under such a situation. Even I was not able to react in time!”

Strange!

Yes, it was truly strange!

Teng Qingshan had even thought that in terms of nimble movements, even if he were to utilize all of his abilities, he would not be a match for the other party. “This old man should be able to rank amongst the first few on the «Earthly Ranking». He was an opponent not to be missed!” There was no way that Teng Qingshan would let this opponent off, not just because he wanted to have a battle with him.

More importantly, Teng Qingshan was hell bent on obtaining the Black Fire Spirit Root!

……

Coincidentally, the silver-haired old man was headed towards the men from Qinghu Island.

“Stop him!” The Young Sovereign of Qing Hu Island, ‘Gu Shiyou’, bellowed, causing many experts behind him to line up and brandish their spears. Tens of spear shadows enveloped the the silver-haired old man as if it were a fishing net, but the silver-

haired old man landed on the bank of the lava lake and immediately made a nimble dodge.

“Hu!”

Like a fish, he slipped through the crowds of the experts from the Qing Hu Island.

“Ahh!” “Ahh!” “Ahh!”……

A series of blood-curdling screams filled the air as fresh blood splattered. The silver-haired old man had easily charged through the crowd from Qing Hu Island.

“Kill him and snatch the Black Fire Spirit Root! He is only one person and won’t be a match for our combined might.” Someone shouted, but it was obvious that most of the warriors who were enjoying the show were not greedy for the Black Fire Spirit Root. Although the Black Fire Spirit Root would easily allow one to become a First Rated Warrior and improve their physique…

Even if ordinary warriors managed to get a hold of it, they would not be able to keep it for themselves.

Once he passed through the obstacles from the Qing Hu Island, the silver-haired old man left nimbly with swift speed like a fish that had escaped into the sea.

“Don’t think about escaping!”

With a loud holler, Teng Qingshan instantly increased his speed by thirty to forty percent as he rapidly gave chase.

……

The two experts, one escaping and one giving chase, disappeared from the vision of so many experts in the blink of an eye. Now, there was no longer any Black Fire Spirit Root or Black Fire Spirit Fruit in the center of the lava lake. Of course, while the Red Scaled Beast could be hidden somewhere within the lava, no one dared to provoke it.

“To think that so many experts died. It was truly exciting this time around.”

“Mmm, even the White Elder from Xiao Yao Palace died. That Virtuous Water Zong Qi Yan was also devoured by the Red Scaled Beast! Old Li from our very own Xuyang County also fell into the lava lake and died; Qing Hu Island’s ‘Blade of Life and Death’ Du Jiu also died…… The number of fine experts who died is more than we can count with two hands.”

Each of them had nothing but praise in their hearts.

As the saying went, man would die for wealth, and birds would die for food!

But the finest experts had already removed themselves from their lust for ‘wealth’. The only things that could made them crazy were natural treasures such as Spirit Fruits or Spirit Flora; as well as the precious and rare materials that could be used to create godly weapons.

“That Wang Yun was really strong; to think that he would be able to grab the Black Fire Spirit Root! That Teng Qingshan seems to be slightly weaker than him.”

“Teng Qingshan is not weak, it was just that the movements of that Wang Yun were strange and flexible. In a real battle to the death, it would be hard to tell who would be the winner between the two. Didn’t you see that the Black and White Elders combined were not able to suppress Teng Qingshan? With these skills, tsk tsk…… rumors have it that Teng Qingshan is only seventeen years old.”

“To be so strong at the age of seventeen, how scary!”

……

No one expected that in this fight for the Black Fire Spirit Fruit, the Red Scaled Beast had been the one to get it in the end.

Frankly, the Red Scaled Beast was fortunate that the Black Fire

Spirit Fruit happened to grow in the middle of a lava lake, which enabled the beast to sneak up and snatch it away. If it hadn't been the case, with so many warriors fencing it in, probably tens of First Rate Warriors working together would be enough to suppress the Red Scaled Beast. Afterall, it had yet to evolve.

In the battle for the Black Fire Spirit Fruit, there were no winners among the warriors.

Large droplets of sweat appeared on Ji Hong's forehead as he endured the pain of losing his arm and called out, "Alright, the Black Fire Spirit Fruit has been eaten by the Red Scaled Beast. Let's head back for now. As for the armored scales that the Red Scaled Beast will shed……will depend on our luck and look for them slowly in the future."

"Commander, Qingshan……" Teng Qinghu spoke out anxiously.

Ji Hong took a look at him and squeezed out a smile, "Qingshan's has high defensive skills with his spear. Although that Wang Yun kept his skills hidden, it would not be easy for him to defeat Qingshan. Furthermore, none of us are a match for that Wang Yun."

By then, all the other groups had dispersed, and occasionally a few of them came up to greet Ji Hong.

"Martial Granduncle!" Guan Lu suddenly spoke out.

"Hmm?" Ji Hong looked at her.

"I will lead thirty elites from the Black Armored Army to assist Teng Qingshan." Guan Lu declared.

Ji Hong contemplated for a moment. Guan Lu's abilities were not bad, and the Black Armored Army was good at attacking as a team. The combined efforts of thirty elites could definitely be of a threat to that Wang Yun. He nodded and said, "Mmm, that's good as well, but Guan Lu, you'll need to be careful. Do not split up the team of thirty elites."

Guan Lu nodded.

“If you want to go, go quickly.” Ji Hong told her.

“Follow me!” At Guan Lu’s order, thirty elites followed her into the passageway in the deep lake.

Ji Hong looked at his amputated arm and took a look at that boiling and scorching lava lake. If not for Teng Qingshan, he would have lost his life today. Ji Hong lamented to himself, “I am already so old and have already lost my right arm and my vitality. My abilities will definitely drop! Sigh, I should relinquish my commander position! Hmm……Who should be appointed as the new commander? Teng Qingshan? I owe him for saving my life, but he is still inexperienced and has not been stationed in our Black Armored Army for that long! I’m afraid that that group of elders from our Gui Yuan Sect will not trust Teng Qingshan.”

Chapter 145: Innate Master!

“Hu!”

“Hu!”

Teng Qingshan chased behind at great speeds, his gaze locked onto the figure in the distance. “Old man, your abilities really are alarming; however, I am determined to get the Black Fire Spirit Root. You can take your time to escape, but once we reach a place where there are no witnesses, I will settle this once and for all!” Teng Qingshan was well aware of his own abilities.

If he were to hold back, it would be hard to kill this silver-haired old man!

It would be best to not reveal his explosive trump card in front of other people!

The speeds of the two men were not far off from each other, with one leading in front, while the other was in hot pursuit.

“Hmph, chap, if I truly wanted to escape, how would you ever be able to catch up to me?” The silver-haired old man, ‘Wang Yun’, threw a glance at the man chasing behind him. “If I was not so concerned with the crazy Wei Wuya, and if I were able to give up the identity ‘Wang Yun’, I would have long since killed you. Carry on chasing. Once we reach outside, I will kill you!”

To maintain the identity ‘Wang Yun’, the silver-haired old man could not display abilities that were too overwhelming.

He had only displayed strange, nimble movements when he was chasing after the Black Fire Spirit Fruit earlier. In terms of speed, it was not too exaggerated. It was still within the boundaries of the warriors’ acceptance.

……

Regardless if it was Teng Qingshan or Wang Yun, they both had

the same thought!

They had to hide their abilities!

They had to wait until they reached a place with no other people! Only then could they expose their hidden strength and get rid of the other party, which both of them had absolute confidence in!

“Bang!”

They followed the underground tunnel and continued forward. After running uphill for some time, Teng Qingshan saw with his own eyes that the silver-haired old man had slipped into the water. Without any hesitation, Teng Qingshan slipped into the water as well. After swimming underwater for some time, there was no more way in front, and the only way was to head up!

Teng Qingshan scuttled upwards, and it didn’t take long for him to exit the deep lake.

“This deep lake is shallower compared to the Frost Jade Pool back in my hometown.” As if he were a fish, Teng Qingshan slipped out of the surface of the water and landed on the ground.

From a distance, amidst the forest and the weeds, a blurred figure was scampering away.

“Hmph, you think you can escape?” Teng Qingshan immediately gave chase.

In the Blazing Mountain, the two experts each was escaping and chasing respectively. The silver-haired old man threaded through the forest and continued to run for a while, but Teng Qingshan followed right behind. “Now we are at least ten over Li away from the deep lake. Furthermore, an ordinary warrior would not reach this godforsaken place if he were to follow the normal path downhill!”

“I can get rid of him now!”

Teng Qingshan raised his speed once again!

……

A group of people consecutively floated up to the surface of the deep lake, each of them heading towards land. They were Guan Lu and the thirty elites from the Black Armored Army she was leading.

“Hmm?” Guan Lu scanned the surroundings but was not able to see anyone. She was not sure which direction she should be headed to.

“Commander, what shall we do now?” The elites of the Black Armored Army were all waiting for Guan Lu’s instructions. Guan Lu frowned and looked at the two paths in front of them. She then noticed a mountain peak a distance away and coldly said, “We will head to the peak of that mountain in front. After we reach the peak, we will observe carefully to see if we can find Lieutenant Teng and the silver-haired old man.

“As you command!”

They would be able to see far from a high vantage point. In addition, she had given this order because she forbidden from splitting up the elites of the Black Armored Army. The group of people immediately headed for the distant mountain peak.

“Hua hua~~” Water flowed steadily in the lush bamboo forest.

A piece of desolate land laid beside the bamboo forest, and behind it was a very steep rock face.The silver-haired old man floated in like a gust of wind and stopped after he landed on the desolate land. Within the span of a single breath, a black light flashed passed and was replaced by a young man in a black suit.

“Teng Qingshan!” The silvered haired old man looked at Teng Qingshan with a spurious smile. “I had long heard of your famous name. It seems like amidst the warriors in the Postliminary Realm, your Qing Gong is definitely in the top ten.”

Teng Qingshan smiled. “You, you old gramps, have also hidden

your skills extremely well. I reckon your abilities would probably be able to put you in the top ten of the «Earthly Ranking».” At the very beginning he had not chased at a very fast speed, but towards the end, Teng Qingshan used the first level of «Crossing Worlds», allowing him to immediately reach an amazing speed.

“You dare to chase despite being aware of this?” The silver-haired old man sneered. “Seems like you are quite confident.”

Teng Qingshan’s face turned sullen. “Old man, I do not have time to waste. Hand over the Black Fire Spirit Root, and I will spare your life.”

“Black Fire Spirit Root, hmph.” The silver-haired old man smiled coldly. “This time around, I did not expect that Red Scaled Beast would actually hide itslef in the lava. Otherwise, what would I want this Black Fire Spirit Root for? But……Even without the Black Fire Spirit Fruit, with the Black Fire Spirit Root, my trip would not be wasted.”

Teng Qingshan frowned.

“Hu!”

Holding onto the spear with one hand, Teng Qingshan said coldly, “Seems like you are not planning on handing it over. You are truly courting death!”

“Courting death?”

The silver-haired old man laugh as if he had heard the world’s biggest joke. He face then turned sullen, and, as if he were an eagle, he stared at Teng Qingshan with a sharp gaze, “A seventeen years old with the ability to be ranked in the top twenty of the «Earthly Ranking». It’s really a shame. With your talent, you would be able to step into the Innate Realm in the future. But today, you will be dying by my hands.”

Teng Qingshan shook the spear in his hand.

“Swoosh!”

Like an arrow shot from a bow, the spear pierced towards the silver-haired old man with a swift and forceful impact.

“Die!” The silver-haired old man bellowed, and the saber in his hand now came with a simple but hard smash!

“Chi!”

The shrilling sound of sliding a knife across glass cut through the air.

“Hmm?” Teng Qingshan’s face paled, and as he quickly shook the Reincarnation Spear in his hands, the spearhead became like a nimble venomous snake, biting towards the saber.

“Bang!”

The chaotic inner strength spread towards the surroundings, crushing the gravel ground into dust that flew all over the place! Such a terrifying power from a single clash of inner strength!

“Hu!”

Teng Qingshan took three steps backwards, and his right hand turned numb.

“How…how could this old man be so strong?” Teng Qingshan was astonished. “Amongst the warriors in the Postliminary Realm, the top warrior from the «Earthly Ranking» would probably not be able to push me back three steps, specially when I used my Spear Arts under a situation I was prepared for!” Teng Qingshan observed the silver-haired old man closely.

Was this old man truly a warrior in the Postliminary Realm?

Could it be that there were warriors who were as strong as him in the Postliminary Realm? He had depended on his Grandmaster training to reach the strong limits of his physique. What about this old man?

“Haha, your abilities are not bad at all. Too bad you’ll have to die today.” The silver-haired old man laughed out loud as he once

again slashed towards Teng Qingshan.

“Hu!”

A grey colored light from a blade swiftly cut across the sky and arrived in front of Teng Qingshan.

“This is —” Teng Qingshan gawked. A grey of blade light flew over, but the silver-haired old man was still three Zhang away and holding on to his saber. “Blade of light shooting from the body? How could he have made a long range attack?” Teng Qingshan immediately waved the Reincarnation Spear in his hands and smashed against the grey blade of light.

“Bang!”

Cracked, the grey blade of light lost some of its force, but it still continue to pierce towards him.

Teng Qingshan quickly dodged, but he was nonetheless slashed on the chest by the cracked blade of light.

“Rustle!”

Teng Qingshan’s clothes were sliced open, and the cracked blade light slashed on the Coldsteel inner armor he was wearing.

“Bang!”

Teng Qingshan stared at the silver-haired old man and said in a cold voice, “You are not a warrior in the Postliminary Realm!”

“Haha……” The silver-haired old man laughed out loud. “Yes, I’m not a warrior in the Postliminary Realm. I have already stepped into the Innate Realm. Boy……no matter how talented you are, you are doomed to die by my hands today. It is far too easy for an innate master to kill a warrior in the Postliminary Real. A few strokes of my Qi blade would be sufficient to kill you!”

Saying this, the silver-haired old man consecutively waved his saber.

“Hu!” “Hu!” “Hu!”

A series of three rays of blade light flew off from the saber and headed towards Teng Qingshan.

“Hmph.” Teng Qingshan immediately used «Crossing Worlds» as he dodged like a gust of green smoke. Out of the three blade lights, two of them flew into the far distance and sliced off a large bamboo thicket. As the bamboo fell and threw up dust, a crashing sound was heard.

The third ray of blade light brushed past Teng Qingshan’s body and embedded itself into the cliff.

“Bang!”

Crushed stones were sent flying, and a huge crater about five to six chi long appeared, with cracks appearing on the side. Calming himself, Teng Qingshan turned his head to take a look. “It was as I expected. This Qi blade should be the accumulated Qi from Innate True Origin Vitrum. The power of the Qi used for a long range attack would naturally be weaker than the Qi that was contained within the blade for close range attacks!”

If a warrior with inner strength sent his inner strength outwards, the impact would be mediocre.

But if it was contained within the palm, each strike could cause rocks to split.

The same went for innate masters!

The power of weapon attacks would definitely be strong if Qi blade was stored within the weapon. But if the Qi blade was sent out, the power would surely be weakened. However……with the power to easily blast a large crate in the rock wall, if it had landed on the body of a warrior in the Postliminary Realm, it would be able to kill him easily.

That was because the bodies of most warriors in the Postliminary Realm were mediocre and thus would be easily killed by the pressure from the blade!

“You dodged pretty fast!” The silver-haired old man smiled coldly as he spoke these words.

“But I don’t have much time to waste with you. Teng Qingshan, you should be honored to die by my hands.” The silver-haired old man charged towards Teng Qingshan and concurrently waved the savers in his hand.

“Hu!” “Hu!” “Hu! ……”

A consecutive series of over ten blade of lights came from all directions. In a moment, these rays of light formed a semicircle around Teng Qingshan. Teng Qingshan wanted to dodge, but he was encircled within after he had barely moved a single Zhang.

“Boom!” “Boom!” “Boom!”

A series of explosions sounded.

“Haha, what a pity. A young talent with a glorious future has died just like that.” The corners of the silver-haired old man’s mouth curled up. His smile was eerie to behold.

“You are smiling too soon!” A cold voice rang out.

The silver-haired old man gawked. “How could it be……? He…he is not dead?” At that moment, the black suit on Teng Qingshan was in shreds. But even though his arms and faces were not protected, they had not suffered from a single injury. Facing the attacks from the blade of lights, to think that there was not even a single injury!

“No, it is not possible!” The eyes of the silver-haired old man spelled of disbelief. “A warrior in the Postliminary Realm would not be able to block against so many Qi blades. He is wearing inner armor, but his face is not protected. How could there be no injuries on his face? Could it be…could it be……”

The reason that innate masters could easily defeat warriors in the Postliminary Realm…

The most important reason was that the ‘Innate True Origin’ of an innate master was extremely strong. Easily detachable, it contained strong attacking powers that could easily kill a warrior in the Postliminary Realm. Even the strongest warrior in the Postliminary Realm would not be able to block it.

“Only an innate master would be able to deflect the attacks from my Qi blade that easily.”

“Could it be that you…you are also an innate master?!” The silver-haired old man shook his head furiously. “It’s not possible. How could a seventeen year-old be an innate master!”

He could not believe this, but the truth was forcing him to accept it.

“Teng Qingshan, you have also stepped into the Innate Realm?” The silver-haired old man stared at Teng Qingshan.

“Innate?” Teng Qingshan smiled. “Wouldn’t you know after experiencing it for yourself?” After saying this, as if wrapped by metal wires, green veins that seemed as thick as venomous snakes popped up around Teng Qingshan’s arms and legs.

His arms and legs grew much thicker. He had transformed from a delicate-looking character to a terrifying demon!

“This……” The silver-haired old man stared with his eyes wide open.

“You are the first human to see my full strength!” Teng Qingshan smiled.

Chapter 146: The Strongest!

After seeing the might of the Qi blade, Teng Qingshan was clear that it alone was not enough to harm his body.

In his previous life, he relied on inner strength to resist bullets with his body.

In this life, his body was way stronger than his previous life's. When it came to pure defensive ability, Teng Qingshan's body was able to compare to some unique metal alloys! When it came to defensive capabilities, Teng Qingshan was extremely similar to the pre-evolution Red Scaled Beast. As for strength, Teng Qingshan was much stronger than a adolecent Red Scaled Beast!

He could be considered a human-form monster!

"Hmph, apparently you are an innate master." The silver-haired old man licked his lips; his eyes were serenely cold as he said, "You are the second seventeen year old innate master the Nine Prefectures has seen in 1000 years!"

Just as he finished speaking.

The cold and detached Teng Qingshan gave a sneer and stamped his foot. A "Hong" sound rang out, and the earth shook. Teng Qingshan's body transformed into a black flash of light as it flew forwards. Simultaneously, the Reincarnation Spear in his hands made an ear-piercing shrill whistle as it streaked across a few tens of Zhang in a flash and stabbed at the silver-haired old man.

The human was like rumbling thunder while the spear was like flashing lightning!

When the spear flew out, the shrill whistling sound caused people's ears to hurt. Teng Qingshan narrowed his eyes and locked onto his opponent.

Spear Art Pursuing Shadow — 180,000 Jin of strength!

The silver-haired old man's expression slightly changed. He tapped his foot on the ground and retreated. Simultaneously, the battle saber in his hand gracefully slashed forwards, creating a cold ray of light.

"Peng!"

An intense explosion of inner strength occurred, and the ground gave way to a large hole, causing the surrounding sand and stones to be violently sucked in. Teng Qingshan's spear was blocked, but it immediately pulled back before lashing out again. Once again, it formed the extremely fierce Pursuing Shadow!

The Spear Art was like its name: As quick as a shadow! As ferocious as thunder!

"Peng!" "Peng!" "Peng!"

Three consecutive thrusts!

The spear was extremely relentless and exceptionally powerful. The surrounding stones and sand flew away; even successive holes were made in the adjacent mountain wall. While the pieces of sand and rock flew away, in the midst of the howling gale, Teng Qingshan unceasingly advanced, and the silver-haired man continuously retreated.

It was extremely clear that the silver-haired old man was completely disadvantaged.

"What ferocious and fierce Spear Arts! This Teng Qingshan unexpectedly is able to completely control Innate True Origin to a point of perfection. He surprisingly has already consolidated his Hollow Dan." The silver-haired old man was shocked, "Moreover, even though my speed is quick, with every thrust, I am unable to leave the radius of his Spear Arts!"

Pursuing Shadow Spear Art was continuous and multiplied without end. Once one was locked onto by the Spear Art, it was hard to escape.

“Hu!”

The tip of the spear continued to search for the silver-haired old man’s head. The silver-haired old man desperately attempted to save his own life by continuously blocking with his saber. He did not dare not defend because his saber was shorter than Teng Qingshan’s spear, so he would be dead before killing Teng Qingshan.

“Peng!”

A clear sound resonated and the battle saber exploded. The fragments of saber flew everywhere and the battle saber disintegrated in a matter of seconds. The silver-haired old man ground his teeth, his face darkened, and his eyes turned red. His legs blurred, and with incredible speed, he managed to escape Teng Qingshan’s chase-to-kill Spear Art.

The howling gale stopped, and the sand and rocks fell onto the ground.

It became calm.

Teng Qingshan felt that it seemed like every cell in his body had been excited. Last time, when he killed Meng Tian, he had only used 180,000 Jin of strength, but he hadn’t even used Vigor of the Reckless Bull. Furthermore, he had won in one strike. That couldn’t even be considered a warmup. As for this fight...

Teng Qingshan felt the long silent blood in his body stir.

“Teng Qingshan! Don’t think that you’ve won just because you’ve shatter my saber.” The nearby silver-haired old man’s face turned ugly, “That saber, truthfully, is Wang Yun’s weapon! Regarding Saber Arts, I can’t be considered proficient. Right now, I’ll show you Ghost Fox Sima Qing’s true strength!”

As he said this, the silver-haired old man’s put two translucent gloves onto his hands.

“Ghost Fox Sima Qing?” Teng Qingshan’s eyebrows creased. He

himself had never heard of this name before.

Honestly, regarding innate masters, Teng Qingshan's knowledge was very limited.

'Ghost Fox' Sima Qing actually had a substantial reputation amongst the circle of Sovereigns of various large sects. Although 'Ghost Fox' Sima Qing was only at the Hollow Dan Innate Realm, he was able to easily alter his facial appearance, voice and other features; this enabled him to turn into other people.

Sima Qing was crafty, treacherous and proficient in changing his facial features and voice. He was also an expert at Qing Gong. Despite having many enemies, it was very hard to kill him.

"Haha... it turns out that the battle saber was not your weapon. No wonder it was so weak! You weren't even able to receive a few of my spear moves!" Teng Qingshan grew even more excited, "Come Sima Qing. Where is your weapon?"

"This is my weapon."

Sima Qing let out a devilish laugh, and his body successively blurred nine times like a ghost before a mirage appeared. In a brief moment, he had travelled over ten Zhang and in an elegant arc, approached Teng Qingshan. Facing Sima Qing's approach, Teng Qingshan's spear ruthlessly stabbed forwards!

"Xiu!"

It was like a flash of silver lightning!

"Hua!" Sima Qing's right hand was like a ghost claw. Its exterior brought about a grey flash of light. It unexpectedly slapped Teng Qingshan's spear shaft.

"You're courting death." Teng Qingshan used Inflamed Passion.

The tip of the Reincarnation Spear immediately intensely ricocheted and fiercely smashed towards Sima Qing's right hand.

"What profound Spear Arts. Even his use of Innate True Origin

has entered the ‘Minute Subtlety’ Realm. However, even though his future is limitless, he will die in my hands!” Sima Qing gave a word of praise as his right hand mysteriously turned from a slap to a grab. His fingers moved articulately, like he was playing a zither, and caressed the spear shaft.

Teng Qingshan only felt a burst of weird inner strength on his Reincarnation Spear, causing his attack power to decrease.

“Not good!” Teng Qingshan’s face slightly changed.

When Sima Qing stopped the spear, his entire body instantly approached Teng Qingshan. An innate master such as Sima Qing who was able to possess the nickname ‘Ghost Fox’ would naturally have incredible speed and agility when his entire strength was used. There was not enough time for Teng Qingshan to recover his spear before the opponent arrived right in front of him and brought the silver flash of light towards his head.

At this crucial moment!

Teng Qingshan’s left hand moved. The iron fist contained a shocking strength and resembled an arrow leaving the bowstring as it suddenly smashed forwards!

Retreating Smashing Fist!

“Peng!” A terrifying fist smashed into Sima Qing’s palm. Sima Qing’s face changed, “What a powerful close combat boxing art!” A normal expert who used weapons, and specifically a long spear user, would normally be very miserable when it came to close combat fighting. However, Sima Qing didn’t know... Teng Qingshan had been a Xing Yi Martial Arts Grandmaster!

What he was most proficient in was boxing arts!

When his right hand was obstructed, Sima Qing’s face darkened. His empty right hand slapped towards Teng Qingshan’s stomach.

“Go die!” Teng Qingshan suddenly roared, but he didn’t defend against the palm; instead, he kicked forwards. Legs were much

brawnier than arms, and the instantaneous release of energy by the legs was shocking.

“Hong!”

His leg was like lightning as it kicked out, bringing about an extremely terrifying energy.

Sima Qing felt the situation was awry and hastily slapped both his hands towards Teng Qingshan’s leg.

“Peng!”

Sima Qing felt both his hands go numb.

“Hu!”

Sima Qing was blown away by the force of impact: “My hands! My hands!!!!” In mid air, he hastily controlled his Innate True Origin so that it flowed into his already numb hands. When he fell on the ground, both his hands had already regained feeling. His heart was full of fear as he thought, “Teng Qingshan... how is the strength of one of his legs this much stronger than my hands?”

Normally, when using Innate True Origin to attack, no matter whether it was used on one’s legs or fists, the strength of Innate True Origin emitted should be the same.

However, this was Teng Qingshan’s muscle and bone strength.

The legs were naturally superior to arms in terms of strength, and the leg bones were much thicker than arm bones! The muscles were also much sturdier; thus, instantaneous burst power would be greater. Of course, when it came to controlling weapons, the arms and hands held the advantage, compared to legs.

“This Teng Qingshan’s martial arts are also terrifying. It seems that in order to kill him, I have to rely on my flexibility while simultaneously performing the 18 Ghost Hands!” Sima Qing instantly calmed down. He discovered that in terms of pure running speed, he was not faster than Teng Qingshan;

nevertheless, when it came to nimbly moving about, he clearly held the advantage.

He would rely on flexibility to kill Teng Qingshan!

“Hu!” Teng Qingshan stamped his foot on the ground and a fissure appeared in the earth. Like a meteorite, he instantaneously travelled over ten Zhang.

“Xiu!” The spear was like a roaming dragon as it directly pierced at his opponent!

Sima Qing smiled again before his body flashed once again. He simultaneously used his five right hand fingers to grab Teng Qingshan’s Reincarnation Spear, performing the same move again; however, this time, the second Sima Qing released his strength on Teng Qingshan’s spear, Teng Qingshan’s next thrust arrived!

“Hu!” “Hu!” “Hu!”

A continuous stream of spear silhouettes, one after the other, wildly stabbed at Sima Qing. The spears were like flashes of lightning and brought about terrifying explosion sounds in the air; the surrounding sand and rocks were engulfed in a howling gale. Encompassing Teng Qingshan and Sima Qing was a layer of darkness. Teng Qingshan violently thrust spear after spear.

“This, why can I not get closer?!” Sima Qing felt his 10 fingers begin to faintly ache.

“Last time, I was negligent and altered Pursuing Shadow into Inflamed Passion, ending the continuous realm of concept. It gave you an advantage. Right now, my Spear Art is growing without end and the speed of my spear is over ten times faster than your movement.” Teng Qingshan wielded his spear extremely fiercely.

Sima Qing was impetious, but couldn’t get close.

“Run!” Sima Qing silently said.

“Haha…” Faced with the opponent’s thought of fleeing, Teng

Qingshan let out a big laugh, “Die!”

Another Pursuing Shadow Spear Art!

Only this time, the Spear Art’s might had unexpectedly increased!

180,000 Jin of strength and the 60,000 Jin of inner strength burst of the ninth layer of Vigor of the Reckless Bull.

An instant increase of 60,000 Jin of strength!

“Peng!” Sima Qing hastily jumped onto the nearby mountain rampart, and he easily thrust his fingers into the rampart; simultaneously, he quickly climbed up the wall.

“Thinking of fleeing?!”

Teng Qingshan also leaped. The weapon, comparable to a god’s, in his hands pierced the mountain rock. He abruptly used the momentum to jump another ten Zhang. By doing this, Teng Qingshan’s speed of climbing the mountain was clearly faster than Sima Qing’s since one leap would bring him further. In only three jumps, he had arrived at the middle of the mountain and had caught up to Sima Qing.

“Die!”

The Reincarnation Spear suddenly thrust out!

“Not good!” In a shock, Sima Qing leaped up.

“Honglonglong~~~”

240,000 Jin of body strength including the full expulsion of inner strength! This spear was even more formidable than an artillery shell. The entire mountain rampart resonated with a loud rumble; pieces of shatter rock flew everywhere and a dust layer proliferated. An enormous hole at least 10 meters wide and long, and three to four meters deep appeared.

The might of one spear unexpectedly reached such a terrifying stage!

A great number of large rocks flew everywhere. Each piece contained a frightful force of impact and a few pieces of large rock smashed into Sima Qing's body. He had nowhere from which to borrow strength and consequently fell from that great height.

"Hmph!" Teng Qingshan stood at the middle of the mountain. He was like a spider as his two legs moved and he descended the mountain after Sima Qing dropped like an artillery shell. Teng Qingshan's descending speed was much faster than Sima Qing's.

"No!" In mid air, Sima Qing had nowhere to dodge.

Teng Qingshan swooped towards Sima Qing and his body strength from his waist upwards erupted. In an instant, he had transferred the spear to his right hand and the Reincarnation Spear momentarily transformed into a silver flash of lightning! The thrusting Reincarnation brought about an explosive sound that was comparable to thunder!

Silver lightning!

Ripping the vast sky!

"No!" Sima Qing's pupil dilated and he could only throw his two hands in front of his body in a last ditch effort.

"Pu!"

Fresh blood splashed everywhere!

Five Elemental Spears-Toxic Dragon Drill!

Chapter 147: Making a Fortune!

The tip of the Reincarnation Spear was like a drill bit as it spun freely and with ease, and pierced through the palm that was currently emitting a faint grey light. Without slowing down, it pierced through the heart of Sima Qing with a sickening squelch. The grey light hovering over the surface of Sima Qing's body slowly died away.

"Hu!"

With a gaze as sharp as a blade, Teng Qingshan gripped the shaft of the Reincarnation Spear and ruthlessly pulled it out in an instant!

"Puchi!"

Blood frantically spurted out of the hole in Sima Qing's chest as he stared at Teng Qingshan in shock, his eyes wide open. Horror, resentment, and an unwillingness to die fiercely shone in his eyes……It was quite a complicated look.

"I, an innate master, am being slain by a seventeen year-old youth?" Sima Qing felt his vitality quickly leaking out of him; however, his consciousness was still present, allowing him to think clearly. The eyes that were slowly dimming were fixated on the cold murderous figure standing before them. "In my whole life of roaming the lands, even Wei Wuya was not able to kill me, Sima Qing. I had only initially decided to join in on this battle for the Black Fire Spirit Fruit for fun…Who would've ever thought that I would fall to the hands of a seventeen year-old youth! Yes, this time around, I've fallen to my own arrogance. When faced with any other innate master, I would've always made sneak attacks; if I failed, I would've escaped. I was too arrogant this time when faced with a seventeen year-old young man. Just from this one slip-up, I, 'Ghostly Fox' Sima Qing, will die!"

Sima Qing's eyes turned completely dark as his consciousness

started to blur.

After Teng Qingshan pulled out his spear, he fiercely stepped on the corpse of Sima Qing to reduce the speed of his plunge. Contrary to his intentions however, Sima Qing's body began to plummet at an even faster speed!

Boom!

His corpse fell harshly onto the sandy ground, fresh blood splattering all over.

"Boom!" A low rumble could be heard when Teng Qingshan landed on the ground.

"To freely plunge down from a height of about one hundred metres, I should be able to take the impact with just my body." Teng Qingshan nodded to himself. "If I were to use inner strength to reduce the weight of my body, the descending speed would be greatly reduced. If I further combined that with my resistant skills, I should be able to freely plunge from a height of three hundred meters without requiring the resistance of external objects!"

His abilities had continued to rise, but it had been some time since Teng Qingshan checked his limits on the height he could fall from.

For security, when he jumped from tall mountains, Teng Qingshan would usually jump from or step on rocks to reduce the speed of his fall.

From the free fall of a hundred meters earlier, Teng Qingshan had realised that his body could definitely take more, compared to a few years ago, and that it was much stronger.

……

On the sandy ground beside the precipice, the sand and rocks were dyed in blood, and Sima Qing's corpse was already in pieces. Teng Qingshan headed towards it.

“‘Ghostly Fox’ Sima Qing!” Teng Qingshan carefully observed Sima Qing’s body and saw his pair of gloves. “Those gloves would’ve allowed one to contend with weapons with their bare hands…too bad that they are now torn!” Teng Qingshan reached out his hands to tear off Sima Qing’s clothes.

Hua la!

Beneath his clothes lied a layer of black inner armor! Similarly, there was a large hole at the chest area of the black inner armor.

Regardless of if it was the gloves or the inner armor, facing Teng Qingshan’s best skill — the ‘Toxic Dragon Drill’ — they had both been pierced through and torn. After all, back when Teng Qingshan was using the Damascus Steel Spear and was weaker compared to who he was now, he could already pierce through the outer layer of the scales of a flood dragon. Teng Qingshan was very confident…

That if he were to use the strongest ‘Toxic Dragon Drill’ at his full physical power, as well as with his inner strength, that even the flood dragon would suffer damage.

“These torn inner armor and gloves have gone to waste. I have no need for them.” Teng Qingshan reached his hands into the inner pockets of Sima Qing’s clothes and took out all of the items inside.

Some crushed silver! One wet silver note!

The translucent Black Fire Spirit Root, which was emitting a strange glow! The roots of the Spirit Root were a faint milky white.

And a small package that was tightly and firmly bound by sheepskin.

“One would be completely wet when entering the deep lake to go underground. But this Sima Qing was really rich and imposing. He didn’t even put that note of a hundred taels of silver inside the sheepskin package. As expected of an innate master, he didn’t care for such a small amount of money. What’s in this package?”

Without a second word, Teng Qingshan kept the Black Fire Spirit Root in his bosom. It was the most important thing.

Thereafter, Teng Qingshan opened the sheepskin package.

“Tsk tsk!” Teng Qingshan’s eyes popped out. “This old man was really rich!”

A thick stack of golden glittery notes!

These were gold notes!

The words on the notes were all in gold. The most shocking thing was that there were only two notes worth a hundred taels of gold — most of them were of the denomination of a thousand taels of gold. At the very end, there were a few notes of the denomination of ten thousand taels of gold! There was a huge stack of about seventy to eighty gold notes in total!

“Sixty-eight notes worth a thousand gold! Two gold notes worth one hundred taels of gold, and eight gold notes that are worth ten thousand taels of gold! In total, there are 148,200 taels of gold in gold notes! It’s close to a hundred and fifty thousand taels of gold.” Teng Qingshan gasped!

This was close to 15 million taels of silver!

No matter where one was, it would be a huge sum of wealth!

“Just this stack!” Teng Qingshan grabbed on to the stack of gold notes as if he was grabbing onto a stack of one hundred RMB (currency used in China). It was just that the value was thousands of times more. “Why would this old chap keep such a big amount of wealth on him?” Teng Qingshan thought for a while before it became clear to him!

A smile broke out Teng Qingshan’s face. “This Sima Qing took on the identity of ‘Wang Yun’! He would need to be prepared to flee anytime, so of course he wouldn’t be keeping his money in Wang Yun’s quarters!”

Ghostly Fox ‘Sima Qing’ — once he was discovered, he would have to run for his life!

Of course the money would have to be kept near him!

As an innate master, Ghostly Fox ‘Sima Qing’ was well known for being sly. It would, of course, be very easy for an innate master to get ahold of money. After so many years, ‘Sima Qing’, who was over a hundred years old, would of course have accumulated an astonishing sum of wealth. And with his character, he wouldn’t place his trust in others easily.

If he kept it close by and safe with him, the money could only be stolen if he were killed. And if he was to die, the money would no longer mean a thing to him.

So long as he was still alive, with his abilities as an innate master, who would be able to steal from him? Therefore, the best place to keep his money was on himself.

“With so many gold notes, he must’ve spent his life accumulating it. I’ll be keeping it then!” Suddenly possessing such a large amount of wealth, Teng Qingshan was shocked. But it was also a pleasing thing. After all, as a powerful expert, it would be easy to get ahold of money. The Ghostly Fox ‘Sima Qing’ must’ve only earned from a few bigger transactions before he’d stopped.

With the abilities of an innate master, he could rob people during the daylight!

It would be an easy feat for him to just rob any large salt merchant and get himself millions of taels of silver.

It was just that to an inmate master, money didn’t matter much.

“The thing about money is that, if there’s too much, it’d just be merely numbers. But……without it, it would also be troublesome.” Teng Qingshan was well aware that this sum of money could let both his family and the villagers lead a better life. “Hmm, let’s take a look and see if there’s anything else. Why didn’t he even have a

secret manual! This ‘Sima Qing’ was able to change his looks to be like Wang Yun. He must’ve had some strange methods in the area of disguise. Moreover, he was more nimble than me in dodging in such a small area. He should’ve had a top tier secret manual on close combat.”

Teng Qingshan had originally thought that there’d be a secret manual within such a thick package.

But it was too bad — while the package was thick, it had been mostly filled with gold notes. There was no secret manual at all!

Initially Teng Qingshan was still hoping to get himself a secret manual on close combat. Afterall, «Crossing Worlds» was a secret manual that was about travelling far distances in a straight path with Qing Gong, and wasn’t for dodging within a small area!

“Weird items are definitely weird.” Teng Qingshan realised that other than the gold notes in the package, the rest were all assorted items which were necessities for those who roamed the world, such as a silver needle, a Lan Yun Pearl, and a small porcelain bottle. Other than that, there were two……

“Masks?” Teng Qingshan picked up the two beige colored faces astonishingly. “Could these be human skin masks?”

Teng Qingshan scrutinized the two human skin masks. One of them looked like an ordinary young man, while the other was a middle-aged man with a scar on his face. The masks looked like they were made with fine workmanship. Teng Qingshan touched them with his hands. They felt very cool to the touch and were light, as if there was nothing there.

“Hmm? Then on Sima Qing’s face……” Teng Qingshan took a good look at the chin, temples, and other parts of Sima Qing face, before he found it. Exerting some strength, he tore off another human skin mask.

Under the human skin mask was Sima Qing’s actual face.

Sima Qing had very thin lips and long, narrow eyes, it was the look of an unkind man.

“This Sima Qing was really good with his disguises. The workmanship of these human skin masks is comparable to those top notch masters of disguise of the future.” Teng Qingshan could tell with just one touch that these human skin masks were made with special materials. “With these human skin masks, it would be easier for me to do things in the future!”

Teng Qingshan could control the veins, muscles, and bones of his body to make himself taller or shorter, and bulkier or skinnier, but he wasn’t able to change his looks.

In Teng Qingshan’s past life as an assassin, he’d also learnt the art of disguise.

But that would require certain materials and such, while these human skin masks were much more convenient!

“Although I didn’t get the secret manual that I wanted the most, these items aren’t too bad. I’ll let you rest in peace in the ground.” With one hand, Teng Qingshan smashed the Reincarnation Spear in his hands furiously, and thrust it into the sandy ground in front of him. At the top of the spear was a rotating inner strength that could be seen with the naked eye.

Boom!

“Boom!” A loud sound sounded, as if explosives had been hidden underground. A large hole one Zhang wide and close to a Zhang deep appeared in the sandy ground in front of him.

Five Techniques of the Ardent Flame — Legacy of the Ultimate Flame!

Teng Qingshan only used a small amount of inner strength to easily blast this big of a hole into the ground before he kicked the corpse into the hole. He also piled earth into the hole and buried the corpse completely.

Other than Teng Qingshan, no one else was aware.

“Hu!” Teng Qingshan quickly dashed to a stream besides the bamboo forest nearby.

After the battle, Teng Qingshan’s body was covered in dust. He cleaned himself a little and took out the mask with the face of ‘Wang Yun’ to wash. “This mask is that of an old man. If I were to wear it, I’d need to dye my hair. It’s quite troublesome. The other two are more suitable for me!”

Teng Qingshan put on the human skin mask that had the face of a scarred middle-aged man.

Teng Qingshan only felt an icy cold feeling when the human skin mask came into contact with his skin before the mask adhered itself comfortably. Teng Qingshan didn’t feel any discomfort at all. “This Sima Qing had mediocre attacking skills, but he was really good at creating human skin masks.”

Looking into the surface of the stream, the face of a harsh middle-aged man was reflected back.

“If I change my physique a little, even my parents wouldn’t be able to recognise me.” Teng Qingshan immediately wrapped the masks and gold notes inside the sheepskin, before hiding them between his Coldsteel inner armor and his undergarments. It wasn’t that he didn’t want to put them in the pockets of his outer clothes, but that it was just that it had been completely torn to shatters.

“Now, it’s time to eat this thing!”

Teng Qingshan grabbed onto the Black Fire Spirit Root!

Chapter 148: The Spirit Root's Unique Effect

Suddenly, the Black Fire Spirit Root seemed as if it was a crying person.

Most of the Spirit Root was clear, only the roots were a milky white color.

"So this is the small item that can bear a Black Fire Spirit Fruit." Teng Qingshan sighed in his heart. Truthfully, Teng Qingshan didn't know that... this Black Fire Spirit Root wasn't only solely capable of bearing a Black Fire Spirit Fruit. In actuality, even the birth of the Red Scaled Beast had to do with this Black Fire Spirit Root!

Through its roots, the Black Fire Spirit Root absorbed the surrounding fire element from the air. It would ceaselessly absorb this, until it ultimately underwent a particular transformation where it obtained a special transparent ability!

This transparent ability was extremely mysterious.

This was because it enabled the birth of the adolescent Red Scaled Beast. The Red Scaled Beast thus had a very intimate relationship with the Black Fire Spirit Fruit.

Even its maturation phase was nearly identical!

Within the Nine Prefectures, numerous people believed that despite the uniqueness of the Black Fire Spirit Root, it was still far inferior to the Black Fire Spirit Fruit. This was a fatal misconception! The Black Fire Spirit Fruit harbored a "Godly" energy that improved one's mental strength, bolstering their Spirit. It also made it much easier to step into the Innate realm.

The Black Fire Spirit Root was different!

The Black Fire Spirit Root contained a life attributed energy. This sort of energy was able to give birth to a living Red Scaled Beast, and could also bear a Black Fire Spirit Fruit.

It was extremely unique!

Throughout history, when someone had managed to eat a Black Fire Spirit Root, they would only discover that their body's physique had changed, and that they suddenly had the strength of ten thousand Jin. Truthfully, they didn't discover the other things.... However it wasn't their fault, because the full potential of their physical body had yet to be fully unlocked. How could they discover the Heaven and Earth Spirit Treasure, the Black Fire Spirit Fruit's, energy.

"I don't know what the effect will be."

Teng Qingshan took a bath in the water first before biting into the Black Fire Spirit Root.

"Ka cha!"

"Hmm? It's so firm!" The outer skin of the Black Fire Spirit Root was very firm, but the interior succulence was extremely soft; upon entering one's mouth, it would melt. A burning energy suddenly rushed into Teng Qingshan's throat. Yet, Teng Qingshan didn't care and took two more bites. Subsequently, he ate the rest of the root and swallowed it into his stomach.

"This sort of energy is strong, but my body should still be able to bear it." Throughout history, no one had ever died from eating a Black Fire Spirit Root.

With such a strong body, there was even less of a chance for something to happen to Teng Qingshan.

Teng Qingshan immediately sat down, and his breathing speed instantly slowed. His spirit was completely retracted. Teng Qingshan meticulously observed the changes that occurred in every muscle, bone, and organ of his body as that cauterizing fiery energy seeped down his esophagus. Subsequently, the energy began to rapidly integrate with his five viscera and six bowels; even his skin absorbed some of this fiery energy.

"Hong!"

This energy even proliferated upwards and quickly filled Teng Qingshan's skull. The skin on his face, his ears, eyes etc. — they all merged with this energy.

"What a mysterious energy." Teng Qingshan was aware of the changes happening in his body, and felt what he originally thought to be his body's absolute pinnacle condition that was unable to upgrade any further, once again grow again as if it was a large tree being watered by a magical life water; his muscle fibers also grew more robust.

Especially his bones, as they too unexpectedly felt an intense burning!

This feeling persisted for approximately the time it takes to have a cup of tea, before slowly disappearing.

This Black Fire Spirit Root had transformed into a special energy that had integrated with every part of Teng Qingshan's body.

"Hu!" Teng Qingshan stood up and retrieved the Reincarnation Spear stuck into the ground next to him.

"Ha!"

The full strength of Teng Qingshan's body instantly erupted as his arm muscles thickened and molded together. They contained an endless tremendous strength. Teng Qingshan abruptly swung the Reincarnation Spear in his hands!

"Hong!"

A deafening sound erupted as the terrifying force from the Reincarnation Spear caused the air and space to momentarily compress. When the long spear stopped, the extremely compressed space abruptly exploded like an incorporeal artillery shell bombing an expansive bamboo forest. A plethora of cyan bamboos were split open.

"Hmm? My strength has nearly increased by 20,000 Jin!" Teng Qingshan was very precise in regards to control over his own strength and could clearly feel the variation that had occurred to himself.

"According to legends, when one ate a Black Fire Spirit Root, wouldn't his or her strength only increase by ten thousand Jin?" Teng Qingshan pondered in his heart, and recalled the feeling when he'd first eaten the Black Fire Spirit Root. "That's right, it's a lot like my previous life's Iron Palm: only through the course of cultivation can I effectively absorb medicine. If normal people who didn't train martial arts were to use medicine, then it would be a waste!"

"Therefore, one reason is that in order for the immense amount of Black Fire Spirit Root energy to be fully absorbed into the body, one must train. Since I've cultivated my body to an extremely high level, and am unable to further increase its level, rapidly absorbing external energy allowed me to far surpass normal people!"

A normal person's body didn't have a large need for the Black Fire Spirit Root's energy, and would thus absorb less energy.

Teng Qingshan's body, however, was in great need, and had thus absorbed more.

"Nevertheless, according to my senses, a large amount of energy has been hidden within my body." Teng Qingshan was very confident in his own perception. A few Heaven and Earth Spirit Treasure energies utilized to the max were not something that his body could absorb completely. There was definitely a myriad of energy still hidden in his body.

He'd only absorbed a small portion.

"If the energy is hidden within my body, I should be able to improve my body again and absorb it by using the Godly Tiger Form Technique. "Teng Qingshan nodded his head. "When I return, I should start cultivating the Godly Tiger Form Technique,

as it absorbs energy from within the body.

He could probably use it to unlock the full potential of the Black Fire Spirit Root.

'Time to return!" Teng Qingshan gripped his Reincarnation Spear and morphed into a phantom image as he rapidly shot through the mountain forest. With just a few leaps, he'd already disappeared to a distant place.

Teng Qingshan headed towards the camp stationed at the foot of the Blazing Mountain.

A cold breeze blew; Teng Qingshan was in a good mood.

"Hmm?" From afar, Teng Qingshan made out a squadron in the distance that was composed of numerous Gui Yuan Sect members. "Commander Guan, why are you here?" Teng Qingshan flew over in a flash.

Guan Lu was leading the men to search for Teng Qingshan.

For a long while, they hadn't find a trace of anyone.

However, just at this time, a familiar voice rang out, and a silhouette appeared in front of her. Guan Lu's heart couldn't help but be overcome with a wave of happiness. Looking at Teng Qingshan, her face stiffened and she yelled, "Teng Qingshan, when you were chasing Wang Yuan, where on earth did you run to? We did an entire loop trying to search for you, but we couldn't even find a trace of you!"

"Commander Guan." Teng Qingshan laughed. "I was chasing Wang Yuan. Wherever he ran, I also ran. Not even I know where we ran to."

"Did you kill him?" Guan Lu inquired.

"I didn't. That old geezer was too cunning." Teng Qingshan shook his head. The Black Fire Spirit Root had already been consumed by him, so there was no way that he could admit to killing Wang

Yuan.

Guan Lu shook her head and sighed "What a pity. The Black Fire Spirit Root has already been taken by him. Whatever; how big of a deal is one Black Fire Spirit Root? You... your clothes are all tattered. Were you injured?" Teng Qingshan's clothes were currently more broken than a beggar's since he'd received all those Qi blade attacks.

His body was fine, but his clothes had suffered greatly.

"It's nothing." Teng Qingshan shook his head.

"Showoff." Guan Lu harrumphed before issuing a command, "Lieutenant Teng has already returned. Let's head back to camp!"

Immediately, this group of people grandiosely began to walk back.

...

After returning to the foot of the mountain, when Ji Hong saw that Teng Qingshan had returned safely, he was extremely pleased. As for not obtaining the Black Fire Spirit Root, he didn't seem to care too much about this. This time, Teng Qingshan had saved his life in the lava lake, so Ji Hong's attitude towards Teng Qingshan was significantly better. When evening fell, the group of Gui Yuan Sect members had a great feast.

In the pitch black night, Teng Qingshan, Ji Hong, and Guan Lu sat around a bonfire.

"The affair this time still has one thing left; to find the Black Scaled Armor shed by the Red Scaled Beast!" Ji Hong said. "Qingshan, Guan Lu, in my opinion... this last matter can be dealt with by a group of 20 or so people who stay behind. If they find it, then that would be nice, but if they don't, then whatever. The three of us should take the majority of them back to Jiangning first."

Guan Lu's eyebrows creased. "The Red Scaled Beast's shed scales

are particularly large and are enough to manufacture a plethora of battle armor! Moreover, each piece of battle armor are quite heavy, and harbor better defensive capabilities than heavy armor. We should be placing more importance on this Black Scaled Armor."

Ever since Ji Hong had broken his arm, he'd lost the will to fight.

Currently, he wanted to return to Jiangning and properly recuperate before casually teaching younger generation disciples in retirement. He was extremely exhausted!

"The Red Scaled Beast's scaled armor should boast slightly higher defensive capabilities than my Coldsteel internal armour." Teng Qingshan said. "Compared to Senior Commander's Darksteel battle armour, it's still slightly lacking. However... that Red Scaled Armour is clearly thinner and is most likely much lighter. Moreover, its flexibility is much better!"

Normally, heavy armor was extremely troublesome at the joints.

However, this Red Scaled Beast's Red Scaled Armour had an exterior of red armor and an interior of leather. When one wore it, they wouldn't have to worry about small chinks in the joints.

"Are the two of you implying that you wish to earnestly steal the Red Scaled Beast's scaled armor?" Ji Hong looked at the two of them.

Guan Lu nodded her head.

Teng Qingshan also nodded his head.

There were a few items that gold would find hard to buy. For example, Darksteel, which was an even higher grade metal than Ten Thousand Coldsteel, Silent Gold Godsteel, etc. The Red Scaled Armour also fell into this category.

"Ai... I've gotten old." Upon seeing their answer, Ji Hong let out a laugh. "I still have to rely on you youngsters."

Ji Hong proceeded to say: "Nevertheless, the Red Scaled Beast has

eaten the Black Fire Spirit Fruit and will have grown again. It will be larger while also gradually transforming... we should still have about a month left for this trip. A successfully transformed Red Scaled Beast is extremely terrifying. Even Innate Masters are afraid of it! Attempting to steal the Red Scaled Armour from it is very dangerous."

Guan Lu subsequently said, "The Red Scaled Beast cannot stay in its nest forever. We should wait for it to leave its nest before stealing the armor!"

"If we are careful, it shouldn't be a problem." Teng Qingshan said. "It's physique is incredibly large, so when the time comes, we should find a small space to drill through. That way, it won't be able to chase us."

"You guys..."

Having been a commander for many years, Ji Hong understood that those among the younger generation who had potential needed to undergo successive experiences where they steeled themselves. If they were constantly under protection, it would be very hard for them to grow.

"Okay. I'll lead all of the Black Armored Army soldiers back first! I'll leave 30 Gui Yuan Sect core disciple experts for the two of you! These 30 people are much more skilled in martial arts than Black Armored Army members, and should be enough to help you... remember, don't be reckless. You must be prudent and careful!"

"Yes!"

Teng Qingshan and Guan Lu accepted the order.

Chapter 149: Change in the Body

The next morning, Ji Hong lead nearly 50 members of the Black Armored Army away. Teng Qingshan, Guan Lu, and another 30 Gui Yuan Sect experts remained behind.

Those who were coveting the Red Scaled Beast's armour weren't only limited to the Gui Yuan Sect. There were still many people who'd stopped by at the foot of the Blazing Mountain.

……

In the blink of an eye, it had been 26 days since Ji Hong left.

When night fell, Teng Qingshan descended the mountain unfettered and by himself, as he gripped his Reincarnation Spear.

"Lieutenant Teng!" When the Gui Yuan Sect experts in the camp saw that Teng Qingshan had returned, they enthusiastically greeted him. Ever since they'd seen him battle in the center of the lava lake, they'd been extremely understanding about Teng Qingshan's strength; it was definitely strength that belonged to the «Earthly Ranking», and moreover was probably near the high end of the «Earthly Ranking».

"Lieutenant Teng, did you find the Red Scaled Beast?"

"Haha, considering that all of you were unable to find it, it would also be extremely hard for me to find it." Teng Qingshan laughed in reply.

"Hmph." A cold harumph was heard.

Teng Qingshan turned his head as Commander Guan Lu walked out of her own large tent with a cold face, "We were all waiting for you!"

"Haha, let's eat, let's eat." Teng Qingshan let out a laugh; he didn't feel like bickering with Guan Lu.

"I've irritated the woman! Aiya!" Teng Qingshan sat next to the

table and glanced at the adjacent Guan Lu. He sighed in his heart, “Didn’t I only win once? I even retained a lot of my strength; furthermore, I didn’t even make your loss seem that bad, yet you’re acting so cold to me.” Teng Qingshan was very helpless.

26 days ago, Ji Hong had just left.

According to Guan Lu, Teng Qingshan and her were to each take one half of the troops to search the mountain. Teng Qingshan, on the other hand, wanted to enter the mountain alone and let Guan Lu lead all of the experts. This caused Guan Lu to be unhappy, and for some inexplicable reason, a fight was proposed.

Even though she knew that Teng Qingshan was strong, Guan Lu still stubbornly wanted to fight.

Ultimately, Teng Qingshan made it look as if Guan Lu had only barely lost in order to save her some face.

Thus, Teng Qingshan was able to move by himself; however, Guan Lu began to complain about Teng Qingshan’s even more.

“Teng Qingshan!” Guan Lu and Teng Qingshan sat a table as they ate their dinners. She seriously said, “It’s already been 26 days, and I’m pretty sure that the Red Scaled Beast has finished transforming. Right now, if we were to enter the Blazing Mountain the danger level would significantly increase. In my opinion, you probably shouldn’t go by yourself. It’s safer if you’re with us.”

Teng Qingshan laughed, “Lieutenant Guan, if the Red Scaled Beast has indeed finished its transformation, it’d be suicide for the people here to fight with it.”

Guan Lu was silent.

Even Innate Realm martial artists were somewhat afraid of a transformed Red Scaled Beast. Whoever sought to risk their life and fight it was equivalent to them committing suicide.

“Looking for Scaled Armor doesn’t just require strength, we should rely on this instead,” Teng Qingshan pointed to his brain,

“Don’t worry Lieutenant Guan, I know what to do.”

“Hmph.” Guan Lu’s face frosted over.

She’d approached Teng Qingshan with good intentions in order to let them operate together, but Teng Qingshan hadn’t accepted her good intentions.

Teng Qingshan looked at the cold-faced Guan Lu and softly chuckled, “Lieutenant Guan Lu, I’m going to tell you a secret.”

“Hmm?” Guan Lu’s eyebrows creased as she looked at him.

“Truthfully, you’re quite pretty. If you didn’t harbor a cold expression all day, and smiled instead, I’m positive that many people in the sect would chase after you.” Teng Qingshan teased. When Guan Lu heard this, her eyes instantly widened like round balls, and she was frozen with shock for a second.

She was famous in Gui Yuan Sect for being cold and callous. Moreover, she was young and she occupied a commander position. When all this was combines, what sort of a normal young man would chase after her? In front of her, most of them would be scared witless.

Guan Lu glared at Teng Qingshan and ground her teeth. Finally,

“Hmph.”

In a fit of anger, she threw down her chopsticks and subsequently ran into her tent.

Teng Qingshan looked at the back of Guan Lu’s figure, and laughed as he shook his head. He then satisfyingly took a drink out of his wine cup.

“Women!” Teng Qingshan let out a sigh. In his previous life’s assassin organization, Teng Qingshan had seen seductive female assassins and ice cold female assassins; what sort had Teng Qingshan not seen before? He’d even seen women more ice-cold than Commander Guan. For example, his wife, “Cat”, was a

woman as ice-cold as a machine!

Only when she was with Teng Qingshan did she expose her appearance as a normal female.

Truthfully, towards the ice-cold Guan Lu, Teng Qingshan had a trace of good intention at the bottom of his heart.

Perhaps...

This was because in his previous life, his wife had been the same sort of ice-cold person.

“If I was this strong in my previous life, many tragedies wouldn’t have occurred.” Teng Qingshan drank from his wine cup again. Although he was slightly sentimental, his mood was actually quite calm, “The world in my previous life had very thin Spiritual Qi and didn’t have treasures like the Black Fire Spirit Root.”

As he recalled the past 26 days, Teng Qingshan only felt somewhat indifferent.

Truthfully, the real reason that he’d wanted to travel alone was because he’d entered the mountain to train his «Godly Tiger Form Technique», not to find the Red Scaled Beast.

Surely enough, as he’d expected, «Godly Tiger Form Technique» had caused his body’s potential to once again exponentially increase, allowing him to absorb more energy.

However, the amount of the Black Fire Spirit Root’s mysterious energy that was absorbed by Teng Qingshan’s body was related to the length of his training. The longer Teng Qingshan cultivated «Godly Tiger Form Technique», the more energy that he’d absorb. Moreover, this progress seemed to be set at a fixed pace.

Within the 26 days, Teng Qingshan’s level had increased every day!

“During these 26 days, my strength has increased by 10 thousand Jin. Furthermore, at this rate, there seems to be no limit.” Teng

Qingshan let out sigh of admiration. The enormous energy that had been harbored by the Black Fire Spirit Root had originally let his strength increase by twenty thousand Jin. Up to now, all together, it had increased his strength by 30 thousand Jin!

His body's strength had increased from 180 thousand jin to 210 thousand jin!

It hadn't even been a month.

"Fortunately, this Black Fire Spirit Root ended up in my hands! If it was another martial artist, since they all train inner strength, not their own body's strength, eating the Black Fire Spirit Root would've been a waste on them." Teng Qingshan sighed as he remembered the other martial artists who'd eaten the Black Fire Spirit Root throughout history.

What a waste!

His own strength had already increased by thirty-thousand Jin, and it was still constantly increasing.

"Even if that innate master 'Sima Qing' were to fully display his Innate True Origin power, it would only be around two-hundred thousand Jin." Teng Qingshan still clearly remembered the fight from a few days ago, "My inner strength rapidly increased my strength by 60 thousand Jin, and I was able to heavily wound him. Of course... Sima Qing's weak body was probably the cause of this!"

Teng Qingshan was very clear-headed!

Even though Teng Qingshan had killed Sima Qing, he didn't arrogantly believe that he was invincible.

"Based on Sima Qing's strength, he should've been at the first of the three levels in the Innate Master Realm, the "Emptiness Dan" stage! Moreover, this Sima Qing was proficient at agilely fighting others at close range, as well as escaping. When it came to a genuine head-on close-combat fight, his strength was still quite

lacking.” Teng Qingshan guessed that amongst the Innate Master Realm martial artists, Sima Qing would be an inferior person.

He would be the equivalent of a Postliminary expert.

For example, Godly Thunder Blade ‘Hao Yue’, was able to easily slaughter a group of First Rated martial artists.

Even if one was also at the Emptiness Dan stage of the Innate Master Realm, there were also most likely higher and lower rankings.

“Nevertheless, I was able to display overwhelming dominance and kill Sima Qiang. At the very least, I have a sliver of certainty when facing Innate Master ‘Emptiness Dan’ experts.” Teng Qingshan wasn’t unduly humble.

“Ye, tomorrow I should enter the mountain and begin searching for the Red Scaled Beast!” Teng Qingshan stopped overthinking the matter.

On the morning of the second day, time had already flown by. It was the ninth month; it was already late autumn, and the weather had turned frigid.

“In the blink of an eye, it’s been three months since I left.” Teng Qingshan unceasingly sighed as he travelled the Blazing Mountain alone. At the beginning of the sixth month, he’d escorted goods to Chu County and had spent 20 days doing so. He’d then resided in the Blazing Mountain for two months. When he left Jiangning, the weather had reflected the scorching heat of June, but now, the weather had turned cold.

Teng Qingshan was like an efficacious monkey as he rapidly transversed the great mountain.

He didn’t feel like taking a detour.

He directly climbed a tall mountain before jumping off of a cliff. The inner strength in his body continued to operate, and his weight sharply declined as he fell into a canyon.

“Peng!”

After falling to the ground, the earth shook, and a hole in the ground appeared. The surrounding ground cracked apart. Teng Qingshan let out a slight laugh as he walked out.

“A 100 Zhang precipice; when I combine both my inner strength and my body’s strength, I really can significantly lessen the force of impact.” Teng Qingshan subsequently left the hole and entered the subterranean lava lake area.

The first place Teng Qingshan searched was the subterranean area!

……

Myriads of martial artists had said that after the Red Scaled Beast had encountered that battle, it would leave the subterranean area in order to undergo its metamorphosis on the surface at a secret location. Thus, numerous people searched the surface!

Although they said this, a plethora of martial artists all knew in their hearts that—

The Red Scaled Beast was most likely still in the subterranean area!

This was because the subterranean area contained a labyrinth of tunnels. Tunnels upon tunnels in the pitch black dark; there were even high ceiling tunnels that could completely accommodate for the Red Scaled Beast’s movement. There were also portions of tunnels that were slightly shorter. However… no one could see through the pitch black and clearly identify the tunnels; therefore, they were afraid.

Moreover, they weren’t willing to go.

“Gugu~~” Behind him, the lava lake was bubbling.

Teng Qingshan directly entered the tunnels and walked very slowly. He held his Reincarnation Spear at the ready, prepared to

attack at any time.

“In the dark, my eyes can unexpectedly see this far.” Teng Qingshan silently exclaimed in astonishment. In the pitch-black tunnels, Teng QIngshan was able to see a few tens of Zhang. It must be known that only a month ago, when Teng Qingshan was in the tunnels, he was only able to see a few Zhang.

Ever since he’d cultivated «Godly Tiger Form Technique», Teng Qingshan’s vision capabilities in the dark had clearly risen.

Moreover, his hearing ability had also increased.

“In addition, if I were to completely exhibit my full strength, the skin on my entire body would turn a vague dark red color! It’s tenacity has clearly also increased.” Teng QIngshan was very satisfied with his transformation over the past 26 days. His skin was currently a dark red color and was even more tenacious... this caused Teng Qingshan to think of a beast!

“A Red Scaled Beast! I remember that the first time I chased down the adolescent Red Scaled Beast, its entire body suddenly became extremely red, and its speed increased by leaps and bounds.”

“My sudden increase in my body’s strength has rendered my skin slightly dark red. Only, dark red is unremarkable.”

Teng Qingshan wasn’t an idiot.

He felt that this most likely had something to do with the Black Fire Spirit Root.

The first time he’d voluntarily absorbed the Black Fire Spirit Root’s energy, Teng Qingshan’s eyesight, hearing, skin, and other areas hadn’t changed. However, after actively cultivating and absorbing the energy, progressive transformations had occurred.

“At the very least, in the darkness, I hold the advantage! Moreover, my body’s defenses are even stronger! Of course... it’s not as extreme as the Red Scaled Beast’s!” Teng Qingshan thought

of the Red Scaled Beast and couldn't help but sigh in admiration. When the Red Scaled Beast was just an adolescent, its body's strength had only been average. However, its scaled armour was terrifying.

Although Teng Qingshan's strength had increased, the increase wasn't obvious.

"Hmm?"

Teng Qingshan was walking very nonchalantly, when suddenly, he abruptly turned his head and looked into the distant place. Approximately ten Zhang away was a rather large red colored head that was facing him.

"Red Scaled Beast! Red scaled armor? It... It completed its metamorphosis?" Teng Qingshan was greatly alarmed in his heart, "Hmm? I'm looking straight at it, yet it hasn't displayed any reaction. Could it be that the Red Scaled Beast can't see me?"

Teng Qingshan was unclear of the Red Scaled Beast's vision capabilities.

At the same time, the Red Scaled Beast figured that Teng Qingshan was unable to see it, since it was nearly ten Zhang away. In its eyes, in the pitch-black environment, humans were blind.

Chapter 150: An Intensive Battle Between the Strong

The Red Scaled Beast recognised the human immediately. It was the person that it wanted to kill the most!

For the past twenty-plus days, it wasn't like no warriors had came to search the underground passageways. Those who braved the journey, especially those who entered the tunnels, once they came across the Red Scaled Beast, they all became its meal! Not only had it just evolved, which transformed its armored scales crimson red, its abilities had also been raised substantially.

It was absolutely confident that it could kill this human in front of it!

Die!

The Red Scaled Beast silently crept out of its nest on its four feet. Its pair of red eyes, larger than copper bells, contained blatant murderous intent!

"Hmm? It can see me?" Teng Qingshan saw the Red Scaled Beast headed in his direction and was especially shocked to see the murderous intent in its eyes. He then laughed coldly, "But……I'm afraid that this Red Scaled Beast does not know that I can see it as well." Teng Qingshan glanced at the Red Scaled Beast and turned his gaze away.

He pretended to not see the Red Scaled Beast while secretly conserving his energy!

The Red Scales Beast silently crept closer. When it was ten Zhang away from Teng Qingshan, its pupils began to dilate——

"It's getting close, it's getting close!" Teng Qingshan fully relaxed his entire body.

"Hu!"

Teng Qingshan only felt the Red Scaled Beast turning into an enormous red beam of light as it pounced over——

“Hur!”

With a loud bellow, Teng Qingshan’s eyes snapped wide open. The initially completely relaxed body, like a bow, shot out an astonishing power in an instance. The rocky ground below Teng Qingshan shattered into powder with a low rumble, and an astonishing power circulated from his feet to his waist. His pants were stretched out, and with a twist of his body——

The energy coursed into his two hands; the muscles on his arms coiled around and stretched out his sleeves, revealing a pair of robust hands with a tinge of dark red color.

“Swoosh!”

A flash of silver lightning pierced towards that massive red light!

The strength of 210,000 Jin from his body! The ninth stage of the Vigor of the Reckless Bull! Exploding at full blast!

The Pursuing Shadow Spear Art! An explosive power of 270,000 Jin!

“Clank!”

The piercing sound of metal clashing!

“Boom!”

Teng Qingshan’s Reincarnation Spear clashed with the beast’s red sharp claws, and the compressed air that had exploded resembled invisible Qi blades flying towards the surroundings. With a series of rumbling sounds, crushed stones were sent flying about. Deep grooves formed on the rock walls in the tunnel as dust was sent flying.

“Growl~~!” The Red Scaled Beast was shaken and sent flying back more than one Zhang. Its massive body tumbled off the ground and quickly regained its stance. The eyes of the Red Scaled Beast

turned a crimson red as it let out a fiery growl, as if it had fallen to madness. Once again, it pounced towards Teng Qingshan!

It had already evolved!

The majesty of a demonic beast was not something humans should mess with!

The strong impact also made Teng Qingshan take three steps backwards. “What a demonic beast. Its claws are long and resemble four sharp godly weapons! To think that it clashed head-on against my Reincarnation Spear.” In the short exchange earlier, Teng Qingshan realized that the demonic beast’s weapon was its sharp claws! Not only that, the Red Scaled Beast was able to deflect the Reincarnation Spear with its sharp claws in such a short window. It goes to show that its reflexes were also extremely fast!

Strong power, fast reflexes, strong defence!

This was the Red Scaled Beast!

Facing the Red Scaled Beast’s frenzied pounce——

“Evil creature!” Teng Qingshan hollered, charging up at the speed of lightning and pointing his Reincarnation straight at the Red Scaled Beast!

“Boom!” “Boom!” “Boom!”……

The continuous strikes of the Reincarnation Spear were as fast as lightning, and each strike was very strong, containing a shocking amount of power! Furthermore, each spear strike was also augmented by an astonishing rotational energy. When the endless spear strikes were combined together, even the powerful Red Scaled Beast could feel its massive body falling into a large invisible tornado!

“Bang!”

Teng Qingshan’s body knocked against the rock walls on the side, causing the rock to crack and dust to fall.

However, Teng Qingshan behaved as if nothing had happened as he charged towards the Red Scaled Beast once again!

“Bang!” The Red Scaled Beast’s massive body had also knocked repeatedly against the rock walls in the tunnels. There was no other way around it since the width of the tunnel was only so wide. With such a massive body, the Red Scaled Beast had no way of making big movements while battling against Teng Qingshan in the dark tunnels. The two of them were restricted within this small space!

“To think that the strength of this demonic beast has increased by so much after one transformation!” Teng Qingshan was also astonished.

Unless necessary, Teng Qingshan did not want to use the ‘Toxic Dragon Drill’.

That was because once he used it, especially when the opponent was a massive creature like the ‘Red Scaled Beast’, even if it penetrated, it would be hard to finish it off! Then……with the Red Scaled Beast’s fast reflexes, he would simply throw a claw towards Teng Qingshan directly! By then, Teng Qingshan would be faced with great danger.

The ‘Pursuing Shadow’ Spear Art had a weaker impact than the Toxic Dragon Drill.

But it was superior since that its attack was endless and had no flaws!

“Growl~~~” The infuriated Red Scaled Beast roared. It had been deeply enraged! To think that it was not able to deal with one human even after it had transformed! The fanatic Red Scaled Beast was like a moving steel fort as it attacked Teng Qingshan repeatedly. The eight claws on its two front limbs were the godly soldiers!

It wanted to tear Teng Qingshan into shreds!

A human and a demonic beast!

They frenziedly exchanged moves again and again. Currently, the Red Scaled Beast had already a height of close to 2.7 to 2.8 Zhang, with a length of about five to six Zhang. Its massive body contained an incredible amount of power. On the other hand, while Teng Qingshan's height of seven Chi and six Cun (1.9 metres) seemed weak, his body also contained power that would not pale in comparison to that of the Red Scaled Beast!

A human and a demonic beast, both were equipped with ultimate strength!

"Bang!" "Bang!" "Bang!" "Bang!"

Wherever they passed by in their battles, the thin walls of the mountain collapsed; the thick rocks were split as smashed stones were sent flying, and the immense pressure of Qi blades were also sent flying about.

Ever since the human and the demonic beast had first engaged in their battle, Teng Qingshan's 'Pursuing Shadow' Spear Art had continuously created an invisible tornado that suppressed the demonic beast. Each time they clashed, Teng Qingshan was able to advance, and the demonic beast was forced to back off. At that moment, the Red Scaled Beast had already been forced back to the entrance of its nest!

"Now!" Teng Qingshan's eyes gleamed.

As this was the nest of the Red Scaled Beast, the space was much larger! Teng Qingshan could now dodge his opponent's sharp claws and display his ultimate skill.

"Hu!" He controlled the skill 'Crossing Worlds' with his body and maximized limits of his body's energy. Teng Qingshan slipped next to the Red Scaled Beast, channeling the energy into his right arm, and the Reincarnation Spear in his hand immediately became an awl that pierced towards the back of the brain of the Red Scaled

Beast at an amazing speed. As it got closer and closer——

Boom!

The Reincarnation Spear unleashed a strong rotational energy that was channeled out from within. The Reincarnation Spear was so strong that even Teng Qingshan was not able to be have full control over the Spear Art!

“Swoosh!”

The spear was like silver lightning!

“Growl~~” The Red Scaled Beast had been aware of the danger when Teng Qingshan flipped to its side. It roared furiously as it tried to dodge with its massive body. Furthermore, its tail, which had been unable to reach Teng Qingshan when they were in the tunnels, also turned into a shadow and whipped towards Teng Qingshan!

“Chi —”

The Reincarnation Spear’s spearhead was made with Purple Radiant Coldsteel, and its sharpness was unparalleled.

It pierced through the outermost layer of the armored scales with much difficulty and then into the thick muscles underneath the scales. Fresh blood immediately flowed out from the cracks on the surface of the red armored scales!

“Not good.”

The moment Teng Qingshan had thrust his spear, the tail of the Red Scaled Beast appeared before Teng Qingshan.

He was not able to retrieve his spear to block in time!

Teng Qingshan was only able to pull back his Reincarnation Spear with his left hand while his right arm, like a swimming dragon, barely managed to block off the attacks with the Dragon Form of the Twelve Forms of Xing Yi. The strong and powerful right arm then instantly turned into a slippery cobra, as the fist

and arm clashed furiously against the Red Scaled Beast's dragon tail.

"Bang!"

Teng Qingshan was smashed into the rock walls facing the side of the nest as if he were an missile. With a loud sound, a large cavity was carved into the walls.

"My body has long since achieved the state of 'the merging of toughness and flexibility', but I was still injured. In terms of the defence, I am still far away from the Red Scaled Beast's armored scales." Teng Qingshan glanced at his right arm. A large wound had appeared on the right arm, ripping it open. However, with Teng Qingshan's abilities to control his energy and blood, he was able to seal his wound without dripping a single drop of blood.

The Red Scaled Beast's dragon tail whipped strongly; if Teng Qingshan had met it head-on, he would probably have suffered from heavy injuries.

After all the Red Scaled Beast's defence was too strong; every part of its body was a weapon!

"Growl~~" A large amount of blood flowed out from the wound on the back of the Red Scaled Beast. It opened its big mouth as it roared furiously!

To think that a human was able to inflict serious injuries on itself!

He must die!

Suddenly, a beam of pure-white flames shot out from its gaping maw! Before the flame reached him, Teng Qingshan quickly tapped on the rock walls and leaped to the other side in shock.

"Chi chi~~" That piece of rock had be reduced to smithereens.

Teng Qingshan's face paled in shock. "The flames spewed by the Red Scaled Beast is able to melt gold and dissolve metal! The stories

are true. But this Red Scaled Beast seems to be very tired!" Teng Qingshan had also realized that after the Red Scaled Beast had spewed out flames, it was starting to pant heavily, as if it were exhausted.

"Growl~~" Looking at Teng Qingshan, it was once again enraged.

"I am not fighting with you anymore!" With a quick glance, Teng Qingshan saw the massive black-colored armored scales on the side of the nest and slipped over. He grabbed them with his right arm, gave a tug, and circled them around his shoulders. Then, resembling a gust of wind, he slipped out of the hole had been created by the Red Scaled Beast's own flames.

After slipping out of its nest, with a quick glance, Teng Qingshan found a small narrow passageway on the left. "Yes, this is it!"

"Growl~~" The enraged Red Scaled Beast knocked apart the rocks and followed.

"Hmph." Teng Qingshan slipped into the narrow passageway and dashed more than ten Zhang away. The Red Scaled Beast roared furiously at the entrance, knocking and clawing for a couple of Zhang deep before stopping its futile attempt. There was no way that its massive body could enter the passageway that was one Zhang high!

As it destroyed a depth of a couple of Zhang, Teng Qingshan had already ran tens of Zhang away.

"Growl~~~" The Red Scaled Beast continued to roar furiously for a while before it eventually left. With its intelligence, it could understand that although it had just transformed, it was still a distance away from reaching its peak. If it had sufficient fire-attribute energy in its body, it would not be exhausted from just a spew of flames.

……

Carrying the big, rolled up lump of armored scales, Teng

Qingshan quickly climbed through the deep crevice and soon reach the entrance of the cave.

Looking at his battered self, Teng Qingshan took at a look at the black armored scales that were rolled up into a lump. “When rolled up, this lump of armored scales already reaches the height of a person! If it was spread out completely, it would probably cover an entire courtyard.” Thinking back on the recent battle, Teng Qingshan was also clear, “That Red Scaled Beast must have just transformed! Its height was only about 2.7 or 2.8 Zhang even though the records show that that it would be over three Zhang tall. And those flames...it was clearly exhausted after just one spew.”

The prowess of the white flame was terrifying!

“In terms of prowess, this white flame should be similar to the black mist spewed by the flood dragon within the Frost Jade Pool. But that flood dragon was able to spew it continuously. It was still spewing the black mist after I jumped off the cliff. It was obvious that it paid no heed to the black mist!” Teng Qingshan deduced.

That flood dragon should have been living for very long time and harbored shocking energy within its body.

On the other hand, the Red Scaled Beast had just transformed and was still young, therefore the energy it stored was too little.

“In my battle with the Red Scaled Beast, my strength was in no way weaker, it was just that its armored scales were too strong. The Toxic Dragon Drill probably failed inflict any fatal injuries.” Teng Qingshan was well aware that if he were to risk his life, he would have a fifty to sixty percent chance to kill the Red Scaled Beast which was still very young, but the Red Scaled Beast could kill him as well.

It was not worth risking his life for!

“With these armored scales, our mission is also complete, so now

we can head back to Jiangning. These scales are quite heavy. The whole lump must be over 10,000 Jin." Teng Qingshan looked at the curled up lump of black armored scales next to him, picked it up and slipped out of the cave, leaping downwards.

Chapter 151: Jiangning

As if he was a gust of wind, Teng Qingshan slipped out of the mountain, and quickly entered the big tent.

It was the morning, and quite a number of warriors had gone into the mountain. Furthermore, Teng Qingshan had run very quickly, slipping straight into the tent from the mountain, thus not many people had noticed him. Only the servants at the base of the Gui Yuan Sect noticed a figure entering Lieutenant Teng's large tent right in front of their eyes.

"Who goes there." One of the servants immediately called out.

"It's me." Teng Qingshan's voice responded.

"Ahh, My Lord, you're back so early." The servant didn't dare to disrupt further.

"Get me a big tub of water, I want to take a bath!" Teng Qingshan's voice reached out.

"Yes!"

In the large tent, Teng Qingshan took off his battered outer clothes and started to carefully observe the black armored scales of the Red Scaled Beast. Once the armored scales were laid out, Teng Qingshan noticed some things. "Hmm, these spikes!" Teng Qingshan realised that the armored scales, once laid out, should be about the size of Red Scaled Beast's body.

It was only missing the armored scales on its head and neck area, which should've been torn.

Teng Qingshan could imagine the moment of the Red Scaled Beast's transformation, when it ruptured its old layer of armored scales and climbed out of them.

"These scales are so closely packed together, with one on top of another, but it should be pretty easy to tear them off from the

inside.” Teng Qingshan took a look at the internal layer. The internal layer was actually a layer of thick skin. While the thick skin was tough, a flying dagger infused with inner strength should sufficient to cut it off, and the scales on top would naturally fall apart once this was done. “However, these spikes are quite useless, so it’s better for one to remove them.”

Teng Qingshan split the armored scales into three big pieces, cutting it from the inside with a flying dagger.

He then removed all the spikes that were on the back of the armored scales.

“These spikes are really heavy.” Teng Qingshan held on to one of the black spikes, which had originally been on the back of the Red Scaled Beast. Teng Qingshan had thought that it was small, but when he held it closer to take a look, “To think that it’s actually half a metre long, and its base is as thick as a fist. This spike alone has a weight of a hundred Jin!” Teng Qingshan started to pluck out the sharp spikes one by one.

There were a total of eighty-one spikes!

“Most of the armored scales’ weight belongs to these spikes.” Teng Qingshan didn’t know whether to laugh or cry. The weight of these eighty-one short spikes added up to over eight thousand Jin.

The thin layers of armored scales only added up to a weight of over two thousand Jin!

“The material of these spikes are unusual, they should be treasures as well.” Teng Qingshan thought to himself.

……

At noon, Guan Lu led a big group of men back to the base.

“My Lords, you’re back.” The servants welcomed them back warmly.

“Mmm, is Lieutenant Teng back?” Guan Lu enquired cooly.

“Lieutenant returned shortly after he headed out this morning.” The servant quickly replied. Guan Lu frowned as she looked towards the tent that Teng Qingshan was in. “How dare he skirt his duty!”

“Commander Guan!” Teng Qingshan suddenly came out from the tent. “Please come over here for a while.”

“Hmm?” Guan Lu was baffled but still headed into Teng Qingshan’s tent. She took a brief look around the tent before staring at Teng Qingshan. “What’s the matter? Is it to explain why you came back so early in the morning?” Teng Qingshan had put on new outer clothes at this point, and the wounds on his arms were hidden.

Teng Qingshan pointed to the table not far away. “Look over there!”

Guan Lu paid more attention and looked where he was pointing. She hadn’t paid much heed earlier, but after taking a closer look, she saw three carefully stacked piles of greyish white items on the table in the corner. And under the table, there were a pile of spikes on the floor.

“What are these? They’re quite heavy, and should have a weight of at least seven to eight hundred Jin.” Guan Lu was baffled as she walked over and flipped through the items.

Hua!

The black armored scales were flipped over and landed on the floor, revealing the side with the black scales.

“This is……” Guan Lu stared with her eyes wide open.

“This is the black armored scales of the Red Scaled Beast! One side is the scales, while the other side is a thick layer of greyish white skin! I’ve split this into three big pieces, each slightly over two Zhang in length and one Zhang in width!” Teng Qingshan said. He’d done a brief calculation in his mind. The three pieces in

total were about fifty square meters.

Guan Lu turned to look at Teng Qingshan in shock. “You, you……”

“The pile under the table are the spikes of the Red Scaled Beast. They’re really something, each of them weighing over a hundred Jin. There are a total of eighty-one of them!” Teng Qingshan replied.

Guan Lu took a deep breath before she asked, “Where did you get the armored scales of the Red Scaled Beast from?”

“Of course I stole it from the nest of the Red Scaled Beast.” Teng Qingshan replied helplessly. “You may not be aware, but the Red Scaled Beast has transformed and had turned crimson red all over — it was insanely strong. If it wasn’t that I was quick in my escape, and that I slipped into a short passageway, I would’ve been killed by that Red Scaled Beast.”

Guan Lu stared at him and hollered, “You’re really risking your life. Are you hurt?” She carefully looked at Teng Qingshan’s body.

“I was just scratched by the tail of the Red Scaled Beast. It’s just a superficial wound.” Teng Qingshan replied.

“Quick, let me take a look.” Guan Lu quickly said.

“It’s nothing. Do I look like I’m hurt?” Teng Qingshan tried to change the topic. “Now that we’ve gotten our hands on the armored scales of the Red Scaled Beast, I think that we better hurry and pack up, then head back to Jiangning!”

Teng Qingshan and his company took advantage of the fact that there weren’t many people around in the morning, as the forty odd number of people rushed towards Hua City. The spikes and armored scales weren’t considered too heavy. Furthermore, they had a lot of men, as well as chariots. It was easy for them to bring them along to Hua City. After staying in Hua City for a night, Teng Qingshan and his company boarded their top quality war horses,

and headed out the next morning!

Out of those three stacks of armored scales, one stack was on Teng Qingshan's 'Crimson Horse', while the other two stacks were bounded to Guan Lu's Dark Demonic Horse.

Being one of the top three Dragon Horses, it was an easy feat for the Black Demonic Horse to run alongside the normal Black-Marked Horses while carrying a weight of two thousand Jin. The other eighty-one sharp spikes were distributed amongst the thirty elites of the core disciples. They weren't very heavy with some of them carrying two, while others three.

……

The group went on their way at a rapid speed. While there were people at the foot of the Blazing Mountain who suspected that the Gui Yuan Sect had obtained the scales, they weren't very sure, and not many warriors were willing to provoke the group of experts with Teng Qingshan in the lead.

Two and a half days later, on the afternoon of the third day, Teng Qingshan and his company finally arrived in Jiangning County safely.

……

"Brother!"

"Qingshan!"

"Big Brother Qingshan!"

Teng Qingshan had just arrived at the northern gate of the Gui Yuan Sect when he saw his sister and a big group of people gathering, including Qingyu, Zhuge Yun, Lady Qing, and Teng Qinghu. Only a few of these people were there to welcome Teng Qingshan back. The rest were the friends and family members of the thirty elites of the core disciples.

"Little Yu, it's been over three months. Have you missed your

brother?” Teng Qingshan smiled as he patted Qingyu on the head.

“I missed you a lot. I thought that brother would be back in one month.” Qingyu replied unhappily.

At that moment, a voice rang out beside them. “Lieutenant Teng, the Sovereign ordered that you were to see him immediately once you arrived. I will lead the way. This way please.”

Teng Qingshan looked in the voices direction — it was a disciple dressed in green.

“Alright, cousin, help me bring this stuff to my lodge. I’ll meet the Sovereign first, and catch up with you guys later.” Teng Qingshan smiled at the few of them, and followed after the disciple in green.

Under a short and strong willow tree, the branches swayed with the wind.

Beside the willow tree, Zhuge Yuanhong was seated on a chair, enjoying a bound book. Zhuge Yuanhong’s hair was let down as usual, and he was wearing a loose-fitting, long sleeved white robe.

“Zhuge Yuanhong!”

Teng Qingshan could see Zhuge Yuanhong from afar, but for some reason, the Zhuge Yuanhong right then had given Teng Qingshan a blurry feeling — as if Zhuge Yuanhong was one with the low tree and the gentle breeze. It was like a scene from a painting.

“Sovereign.” The disciple in green clothes called out respectfully.

“How strange.” Teng Qingshan didn’t want to question further, and he followed behind.

“Qingshan, you’re here.” Zhuge Yuanhong lifted his head as he smiled. “Alright, you can take your leave first. Qingshan, come here.”

That disciple in green bowed and took his leave. Teng Qingshan

walked to the side of the empty space.

“I’ve already heard of the things that you’ve done in the past three months. You’ve done well!” Zhuge Yuanhong nodded in satisfaction. The news of him having gotten the armored scales had already been quickly passed on to the Jiangning County by messenger pigeons when they were in Hua City. Of course Zhuge Hongyuan was well aware. “You’ve killed Meng Tian, saved Commander Ji Hong, and obtained the armored scales of the Red Scaled Beast. Go ahead, what do you want as a reward?”

Teng Qingshan was stunned. To mention reward right from the start?

“Sovereign,” Teng Qingshan said respectfully, “I would like to have one set of the armors that are made from the armored scales of the Red Scaled Beast be given to my cousin! I also hope that the sect will be able to give proper guidance to my sister.”

“These are small issues. The Red Scaled Beast’s body was very big. The armored scales will be able to make twenty sets of full bodied armors. Since you’ve brought back the armored scales alone, I’ll give you two sets. As for who you want to give the armors to, I’ll let you decide for yourself. As for your sister..... Haha, the Gui Yuan Sect will definitely carefully nurture those with talent.” Zhuge Yuanhong looked at Teng Qingshan. “I wished to ask about you — what about yourself? What desires do you have?”

Teng Qingshan frowned.

“If I were to offer you the position of Commander, would you accept it?” Zhuge Yuanhong said with a smile.

Teng Qingshan was astonished

Commander?

After Ji Hong had lost his arm, Teng Qingshan had already understood that Ji Hong would definitely need to give up his

position. But the positions of the four Commanders had always been taken up by the core disciples due to their importance. While Teng Qingshan was strong, the person who was to be appointed on the position must be one who was most loyal.

“Me? Would the sect agree?” Teng Qingshan couldn’t believe it.

“Wouldn’t it work if you become my disciple?” Zhuge Yuanhong smiled as he said.

“Disciple?”

Teng Qingshan took a close look at Zhuge Yuanhong. To this day, he’d had only one master, Teng Bolei from his past life! Deep down, Teng Qingshan was very proud of his status as a Grandmaster of Xi Yi Martial arts in his past life. For him to recognise someone as his master……it wasn’t easy.

“I wonder what abilities the Sovereign has to teach me with!” Teng Qingshan looked at Zhuge Yuanhong.

Zhuge Yuanhong put down his book, stood up, walked to the willow tree, and broke off a branch as he stood on the empty land looking at Teng Qingshan. “Qingshan, you will use your spear, while I use this willow branch. We will each send off a power of ten thousand Jin and compare. How about it?” After saying this, he emitted Innate True Origin into the willow branch in his hands and stretched it.

Teng Qingshan frowned.

To exert the same amount of power?

The other party was holding onto a willow branch? He would be using his Reincarnation Spear? But Zhuge Yuanhong was an extreme expert who was listed on the «Heavenly Ranking», he was the Sovereign of the Gui Yuan Sect — a feudal lord who’d spread his name across the world. Teng Qingshan didn’t dare to underestimate him.

“I appreciate the Sovereign’s advice!” Teng Qingshan held the

Reincarnation Spear as he cupped his hands and said.

To be able to exchange blows with such a strong expert, why not?

“Make your move.” Zhuge Yuanhong smiled as he stood on the spot.

“Swoosh!”

Teng Qingshan’s spear suddenly moved, turning into a sharp arrow, and a loud whistling sound as it pierced towards Zhuge Yuanhong. Teng Qingshan did indeed use a strength of ten thousand Jin, and at the same time he used inner strength to stimulate important acupuncture points, increasing the speed of the spear even further.

“You’ve lost!”

A calm voice sounded.

Teng Qingshan looked at the willow branch in front of his chest in astonishment. The sharp end of the willow branch was pointing at his chest.

“This……” Teng Qingshan’s reflexes were fast. He could clearly remember the scene from earlier. He’d only just attacked with his spear, when Zhuge Yuanhong had easily dodged to the side. Zhuge Yuanhong only took a step forward to reduce their distance before he’d followed forward with a thrust of his weapon. While it was just a simple thrust, Teng Qingshan still didn’t have enough time to dodge!

Actually, if Teng Qingshan had used strength of two hundred and ten thousand, the instant thrust in speed, coupled with the «Crossing Worlds», would’ve allowed him to dodge easily.

But, the two of them were comparing the usage of the same amount of strength— ten thousand Jin!

“Master, how did you dodge my spear so easily? You only used Innate True Origin power to produce a strength of ten thousand

Jin?” Teng Qingshan looked at Zhuge Yuanhong.

“You doubt me, but already call me ‘Master’?” Zhuge Yuanhong replied with a question.

“With just that thrust! That thrust earlier didn’t have any sound, and the speed was extremely fast. With just the speed alone, I doubt that Master had utilised even more Innate True Origin power. However, to be without any sound or traces, with just this alone, Sovereign is qualified to be my master!” Teng Qingshan really admitted defeat.

Maybe, if he’d exerted his full powers, he’d be able to kill an innate ‘Emptiness Dan’ expert.

But the thrust of his spear would definitely be paired with the sound of exploding Qi.

And at the speed at which the willow branch was thrust by Zhuge Yuanhong, by right, it should create exploding Qi and a strong gust of wind. However……The truth was that it was silent without a trace!

Exploding Qi wasn’t good!

Because the sound of exploding Qi showed that there was air resistance, which in turn resulted in exploding Qi! With such a strong resistance, the speed of the spear would of course be restricted.

If there was no air resistance, the speed would of course be much faster.

With no sound or trace……this showed that the air hadn’t formed any resistance!

“Haha……” Zhuge Yuanhong laughed. “This thrust that didn’t have any sound or trace indeed looked simple. However……It was something I just comprehended recently.” Zhuge Yuanhong was also very happy to be praised in the area that he was most proud of. At the very least, Teng Qingshan had eyes for things that were

extraordinary. This seemingly unremarkable ‘no sound or trace’, was his strongest skill.

“To learn this skill, you’ll have to reach the Innate Realm first. After reaching the Innate Realm, then you can slowly proceed, one step at a time.” Zhuge Yuanhong said.

Teng Qingshan had also felt it……The differences between the stronger and weaker innate masters was tremendous!

While his level was considered very high, based on what Zhuge Yuanhong had implied……There were certain levels that could only be slowly comprehended after reaching the innate state. Without reaching the innate state, there was no way of comprehending them.

“Master will choose a good date to select you as my disciple!” A smile broke out Zhuge Yuanhong’s face. “Qingshan, you’re the most outstanding one of my six disciples! Initially, I had wanted to use that Black Fire Spirit Fruit to help you attain the innate state. But it seems like you’ll need to depend on yourself now!”

“Yes, master.” Teng Qingshan said respectfully.

Zhuge Yuanhong’s level was sufficient to be his master!

“Mmm, the day that I accept you as my disciple will also be the day that you’re appointed as the First Commander!” Zhuge Yuanhong said.

Chapter 152: Unity of Spirit and Qi

Zhuge Yuanhong observed Teng Qingshan, and the more he saw of his natural disposition, the more he liked him. “His temperament is tenacious, and he’s neither arrogant nor impatient. He is exceptionally talented and has great willpower! If I were to meticulously instruct him, he would easily enter the Innate Master Realm in 10 years. Once he enters the Innate Master Realm, he can use his spirit to comprehend heaven and earth. Thus, his realm will progressively increase....If Qingshan were to undergo harsh training for 10 years and based on his attitude, he may surpass me. In the future, he may even cause my Gui Yuan Sect to become Yangzhou’s number one sect by replacing Qing Hu Island.”

In the eyes of exceptionally strong experts, a few secret books and treasures were no longer of much value.

Those were only external objects.

When one reached Zhuge Yuanhong’s level, one would place importance on cultivating internal areas. Moreover, trying to find a true disciple to one’s liking was extremely difficult at that level.

Treasures were easy to obtain, but disciples were difficult!

“Qingshan, if you solely concentrate on cultivating in the future, you will definitely enter the Innate Master Realm sooner or later.” Zhuge Yuanhong said.

“Yes, master.” Teng Qingshan replied in agreement.

Although he had agreed outwardly, Teng Qingshan had his doubts in his heart. He had most likely already entered the peak of the Postliminary Realm, but regarding realms... having experienced two lives, despite being unable to compare to Zhuge Yuanhong, at the very least, he was not inferior to that Ghost Fox, Sima Qing. However, why had he not yet seen any signs of

breaking into the Innate Master Realm?

“Master, what do I have to do to advance from the Postliminary Realm to the Innate Master Realm?” Teng Qingshan inquired.

“Haha…”

Seeing that Teng Qingshan was anxious, Zhuge Yuanhong couldn’t help but laugh. “Okay, I will discuss a bit about this matter with you, today! In this world, the number of experts at the Innate Master Realm is extremely small. Among 10 million people, it would be rare for even one to appear! As for experts at the peak of the Postliminary Realm, they are innumerable. Therefore, you should understand exactly how hard it is to advance from the Postliminary Realm to the Innate Master Realm.”

Teng Qingshan nodded.

Teng Qingshan knew about population numbers. For example, his hometown Yi City had a perimeter of 300 kilometers and a population of 3 million. All of Jiangning County contained approximately 30 million people. Within all of Yangzhou, there were most likely 400 million people!

“The absolute first condition to advance from the Postliminary Realm to the Innate Master Realm is to be at the peak of the Postliminary Realm!” Zhuge Yuanhong chuckled and said, “The second condition is for the spirit of one’s essence, Qi and Spirit to be strong enough! The third condition is to find a method for the Spirit and Qi to fuse together! If one satisfies these three conditions and if one has enough talent, perseverance, and luck, then one will be able to become an innate master!”

Teng Qingshan silently took this to his heart.

A method for Unity of Spirit and Qi?

Teng Qingshan had no idea what any of this was.

“You should already know about reaching the peak of the Postliminary Realm. As for the second requirement, I will carefully

explain to you the essence, Qi and Spirit." Zhuge Yuanhong said. "The essence refers to the essence of one's body or in other words, blood essence. Life on this world is dictated by breathing in Spiritual Qi from Heaven and Earth and eating the five essential crops, which is transformed into the body's essence! The very basis of a person's body is this essence!" (TL: the five essential crops= millet, soybean, sesame, barley, rice)

"The Qi is obtained from absorbing the Heaven and Earth's Spiritual Qi before voluntarily refining it through cultivation. It will then transform into inner strength! The ability to utilize Qi and to blend it with essence will make a martial artist's body strong. As for inner strength, you should already have a pretty good understanding. However, among the three, you must pay the most attention to understanding 'Spirit'!" Zhuge Yuanhong's expression turned serious.

Teng Qingshan listened earnestly.

This concerned the ability to step into the Innate Master Realm.

"This 'Spirit' is what normal people call 'mental ability'. It is also what we martial artists call the 'realm of conception'. There are some people who feel muddle-headed and sleepy all day. This is because their Spirit is insufficient! Their state of mind is weak! There are also others who have ample mental ability and feel invigorated when doing anything. This is also called 'sufficient spirit'. Of course, the so-called 'sufficient spirit' only pertains to commoners."

"When martial artists cultivate inner strength, the inner strength is able to foster 'Spirit'. Thus, martial artists will always reach sufficient Spirit. In order to become an innate master, the requirements for 'Spirit' are 10 to 100 times higher than a villager's ample mental ability!" Zhuge Yuanhong said. "This requirement is harsh, and the majority of martial artists are all stuck at this stage and cannot become an innate master."

Teng Qingshan's eyebrows creased, "Master, how do I know if my Spirit is strong enough to become an innate master?"

"Good question!" Zhuge Yuanhong laughed. "There is an easy method to see if one's 'Spirit' is strong enough to become an innate master."

"What method?" Teng Qingshan proceeded to ask.

Zhuge Yuanhong let out a chuckle and stretched out his hand. A deep cyan ebb of light flew out from his palm.

Teng Qingshan felt a heart-palpitating force from the deep cyan ebb of light and couldn't help but stare at it: "Innate True Origin! This is Innate True Origin! Master's Innate True Origin is much stronger than Sima Qing's! It hasn't even touched me yet, and I'm already feeling fear."

The deep cyan ebb of light looked exactly like a deep cyan colored ribbon. It coiled around Zhuge Yuanhong's body twice before finally assimilating into Zhuge Yuanhong's body. Afterwards, Zhuge Yuanhong looked at Teng Qingshan: "Qingshan, you saw it right?"

"I saw it." Teng Qingshan nodded.

"When your 'Spirit' is able to control inner strength, then that will signify you have one foot in the Innate Master Realm." Zhuge Yuanhong laughed. "Unity of Spirit and Qi is essentially whether one's Spirit is strong enough to fuse with Qi and to control the flow of inner strength. Of course, this is very difficult! One must have a method for the Unity of Spirit and Qi."

Teng Qingshan nodded.

"How can I reach the Unity of Spirit and Qi?" Teng Qingshan promptly inquired.

"Your Spirit must be strong enough to break through the seal of your Niwan Palace!" Zhuge Yuanhong said. "The Niwan Palace is within a person's mind! 'Spirit' is also concealed in the Niwan

Palace. The Niwan Palace is sealed, so a normal martial artist's Spirit is not enough to break out."

Teng Qingshan also understood this in his heart.

The Millennium Chronicles of his previous life had also mentioned the Niwan Palace.

Breaking through the barrier of the Niwan Palace would enable the Spirit to fuse with Qi, which would allow him to transform and become an innate master.

"Of course, there are secret methods to strengthen one's 'Spirit' in order to break through the Niwan Palace! Such are the methods to reach the Unity of Spirit and Qi." Zhuge Yuanhong laughed. "These methods are secrets that the various great sects do not disclose."

"If the earliest elders of the sects didn't have secret methods, then how did they break through?" Teng Qingshan couldn't help but ask.

Zhuge Yuanhong said: "If they didn't have a secret method, then they had to create their own! The secret methods of the various great sects were created by a few elders."

Teng Qingshan let out a sigh in his heart.

Strengthening one's Spirit to control inner strength to revolve outside the body was too hard.

"Qingshan, a few secret methods are classified into three large classes: 'Heaven Class', 'Earth Class', and 'Human Class'. You already know about the Human Class secret methods, since Postliminary experts cultivate with these methods." Zhuge Yuanhong said. "As for Earth Class secret methods, they contain methods to break through into the Innate Realm. There are numerous innate experts who cultivate with these methods. As for Heaven Class secret methods, they are obviously even more mysterious."

Zhuge Yuanhong looked at Teng Qingshan, “Qingshan, Earth Class secret methods and Heaven Class secret methods are very important. Thus, I must receive approval from the elders before I can give them to you! You must wait until I officially take you on as a disciple before I give the secret methods to you.”

Teng Qingshan nodded.

A great sect would naturally have its own rules. The Earth and Heaven Class secret methods were not something that could just be handed to whomever.

“Qingshan, let me tell you! Our Gui Yuan Sect has two great Heaven Class secret methods! Between the two, the Gui Yuan Heart Technique has the most formidable power and is the ultimate secret method of my Gui Yuan Sect!” Zhuge Yuanhong said seriously.

Even if the class was the same, the prowess would be different.

Even Teng Qingshan understood this. There were some times when a few unique skills had great power. His own Toxic Dragon Drill was exceptionally powerful. “Could it be that master wants to pass on the Gui Yuan Heart Technique to me?” Teng Qingshan said silently. “The Gui Yuan Sect and the Gui Yuan Heart Technique. Just from hearing the name, I can tell how important it is.”

Zhuge Yuanhong continued to speak: “The Gui Yuan Heart Technique is the most cultivated technique amongst our Gui Yuan Sect’s history of experts. In the past 100 years, over 90 percent of those who became an innate master cultivated in the Gui Yuan Heart Technique! Therefore, when it comes to questions that arise while cultivating, our sect has many books that describe the experiences of the elders throughout history that you can refer to. This way, it will be difficult to take a wrong path while cultivating.”

“However… the Gui Yuan Heart Technique cultivates the Sword Arts!” Zhuge Yuanhong said.

Teng Qingshan was stunned when heard this.

Sword Arts?

He himself cultivated Spear Arts. What use would giving this to him be?

Zhuge Yuanhong looked at Teng Qingshan: “Of the two Heaven Class secret manuals in my Gui Yuan Sect, one is for Sword Arts and the other is for Saber Arts. Therefore, Qingshan, if you wish to learn the Gui Yuan Heart Technique, it would be best if you forsook your Spear Arts and learned the Sword Arts! Truthfully, this is a reasonable justification because with your current Spear Art realm, it would be very easy for you to learn Sword Arts.”

“Qingshan, what do you think?” Zhuge Yuanhong looked at Teng Qingshan.

Forsake his Spear Arts? Learn the Sword Arts?

The second this idea appeared in his mind, it was quickly discarded by Teng Qingshan. In his previous life, he had bitterly trained his Xing Yi Martial Arts. In this life, he continued to meticulously study it while transferring it to his Spear Arts. When he used his spear, he utilized it like his arm. Moreover, he had only converted three attacks of the Five Elemental Boxing and still had two attacks left.

However, looking at it now, the Five Elemental Spear Arts clearly possessed incredible martial prowess.

“Master, there’s no need to!” Teng Qingshan didn’t think about it any longer and proceeded to shake his head. “I will still learn the Spear Arts. Are there any Earth Class Spear Art manuals in the sect?”

“Yes, but there is only one, the Dark Moon Spear Technique!” Zhuge Yuanhong said. “Qingshan, amongst the various weapons like the saber, sword, club, stick etc., the spear is the hardest to succeed with! Within the Nine Prefectures, those who managed to

become an innate master while using Spear Arts number a lot fewer than those who use the saber or sword! The difficulty to improve one's Spear Arts is extremely high, and there are very few people to use as references."

Zhuge Yuanhong looked at Teng Qingshan: "Qingshan, you should consider awhile first! I plan to officially accept you as my disciple on the 21st of the ninth month at the main hall of the Gui Yuan Sect! You can give me your answer again on that day!"

"Yes, Master!"

Teng Qingshan replied in agreement.

"One more thing, Qingshan. The Unity of Spirit and Qi and the utilization of Spirit to control inner strength do not have to reach my level. You only have to have a slight grasp over them. If you can still control your inner strength after it leaves your body, then the Unity of Spirit and Qi can be considered complete. Of course, you shouldn't worry too much. It's very difficult to reach that level. Wait until you receive a secret manual, so you can train according to its method. There will eventually be a day when you succeed." Zhuge Yuanhong proceeded to laugh. "Okay, you should head back first."

However, Teng Qingshan stood completely still in his original spot.

Having slight control over one's inner strength after it left his or her body?

Then...

What about his own Saddened Throwing Knives?

When his throwing knives flew a long distance, he had to control them with his inner strength. Was this the same thing?

"Why are you standing there like a statue?" Zhuge Yuanhong let out a low yell.

Chapter 153: Flying Knife

“Yes, Master.” Teng Qingshan did not continue further. He bowed and left.

Zhuge Yuanhong saw Teng Qingshan leave before he smiled and picked up his book. He reclined on the chair and started reading again.

……

Walking on the road, Teng Qingshan became a little excited. “Based on what master had shared, being in control of one’s inner strength after it leaves one’s body and being able to control one’s inner strength would mean that the ‘Spirit’ has already broken through the barrier of the Niwan Palace. One would already be one step closer to reaching the Innate Master Realm! Isn’t my Saddened Throwing Knives like this? Could it be I had long achieved the first step of achieving the Innate Master Realm?”

He had initially thought that this would be very difficult to achieve, but now he realised that he was almost there unwittingly.

Teng Qingshan was able to reach the ‘Grandmaster’ level in his previous life. Although the ‘Grandmaster’ from his previous life could only be comparable to the experts in the Postliminary Realm of the Nine Prefectures.

But in terms of battle strength, a Grandmaster of Internal Martial Arts could probably kill a bunch of First Rated Warriors. Although a Grandmaster of the Internal Martial Arts only had a strength of ten thousand Jin, that was his body’s strength, and he could sustain it for a very long time. Furthermore, a Grandmaster of Internal Martial Arts could completely allow the extremely delicate control of the muscles of the body.

There was too big of a difference between the realms.

If it weren’t for the lack of Spiritual Qi of Heaven and Earth, the

achievements of the Grandmasters in his previous life would have probably been much higher.

Teng Qingshan had already achieved a high level in his 'Spirit' of the essence, energy and spirit. Furthermore, Internal Martial Arts was good for maintaining one's health and for the nurturing of the 'Spirit'. Teng Qingshan's 'Spirit' was naturally strong.

"But, why is it that my inner strength is merely at the Postliminary Realm and has not stepped into the Innate Realm?" Teng Qingshan did not understand. "Forget it, there is no need to hurry. I will be officially accepted as a disciple on 21st September. By then, I would be able to have access to the detailed description in the secret manual on how to achieve the Innate Realm." Teng Qingshan was well aware.

The consummate skill of his Saddened Knife meant that he was already one step closer to achieving the Innate Realm!

"After my Spirit and Qi harmonize and turn into Innate True Origin, by then, with the combination of my Innate True Origin and the strength of my body……" Teng Qingshan was full of expectation. "Furthermore, my inner strength is no longer able to strengthen my body. I wonder……if the Innate True Origin will be able to strengthen my body once again!"

After eating the Black Fire Spirit Root, Teng Qingshan's body could continue to elevate further.

But there was always an end to how much it could elevate.

The Innate True Origin was obviously of a higher level as compared to 'inner strength'. It might have a miraculous effect.

After Teng Qingshan returned to his quarters, washed up and changed his clothes, he was pulled by Teng Qinghu, Zhuge Yun, Little Yu and Zhuge Qing to go have a good meal. The few of them went to the Canvass Lunar Restaurant and chatted over their food, spending almost three hours there. Only when the sky had turned

completely dark did they head back to the Gui Yuan Sect in the company of their laughter.

“Brother Qingshan, after the 21st, we will be Martial Brothers.” Zhuge Yun grinned as he said, “Mmm, let me address you in advance, Fourth Martial Brother!”

“Martial Brother.” Teng Qingshan smiled as he replied.

“Fourth Martial Brother.” Lady Qing also called out in amusement.

“In Gui Yuan Sect, the recognition of their seniority amongst Martial Brothers were based on their age. That was because most of them had entered Gui Yuan Sect before they turned ten years old, and there were not many who joined when they were older. In addition, even if they were to have exceptions and take in disciples who were older, it was more for those who had shown great talent or capability.

“It is no longer early, Little Yun, the two of you better head back and rest.” Teng Qingshan smiled as he said.

Lady Qing nodded. “Mmm mmm, Litte Yu, come to my place tomorrow morning. We will have our sword practice together.”

“Okay.” Qingyu also nodded happily.’

The two groups went on their separate ways. Teng Qingshan, Teng Qinghu and Qingyu went back to their quarters. The sky was already dark and a crescent moon moon hung high up in the sky.

“Brother, previously I was the only one left here. It was so quiet with both you and cousin Qinghu away.” Qingyu smiled and said, “Now that the matters are settled, brother won’t be leaving again, right?”

“Not in the short term.” Teng Qingshan replied as he headed back to his quarters. “Qingyu, cousin, both of you follow me.”

Qingyu and Teng Qinghu were a bit baffled, but they still

followed behind. Teng Qingshan's room was on the second floor at the back of the mansion. After entering Teng Qingshan's room, they saw a big cloth bag. The big cloth bag held all the stuff that Teng Qingshan had brought back all the way from the Blazing Mountain.

It opened with ease!

"Little Yu, take a look." Teng Qingshan brought out a soft golden vest from inside.

"What is this?" Qingyu stared with her eyes wide open.

Teng Qinghu who was beside them quickly introduced, "Qingyu, this was what Qingshan had snatched from the captive leader of the mounted bandits the other time when we were faced with thousands of mounted bandits. It is called the Gold Silk Vest! After wearing it, most experts in the Postliminary Realm would not be able to pierce through this Gold Silk Vest! Furthermore, it is extremely light, unlike the heavy armor worn by our Black Armored Army.

"Wow!" Qinghu received it happily. "Wow, how soft! It's very cool and comfortable to the touch! And it isn't very heavy."

With a weight close to one Jin, it was not considered heavy.

Compared to the inner armor of some heavy armor, this was much lighter. Furthermore, some inner armor such as the Coldsteel Inner Armor and the Darksteel Inner Armor were very hard and could not be compared to the comfort of this Gold Silk Vest.

"Brother, you're not wearing this?" Qingyu said. "I know that when warriors wear heavy inner armor, it affects their abilities."

"Brother has no need for this." Teng Qingshan smiled as he shook his head.

With his amazing strength of two hundred and ten thousand Jin, why would it matter for him to put on heavy armor weighing tens

of Jin? For Teng Qingshan to wear inner armor weighing tens of Jin would be comparable to those who can lift weights of two thousand Jin wearing practice gowns which weighed a few Liang.

“Cousin.” Teng Qingshan also took out that Millennium Coldsteel Bow. “You also practiced the bow when you were in the village. This Millennium Coldsteel Bow can withstand a strength of tens of thousands of Jin and is more than enough for your use. When you are sick of practicing the spear, you can also practice your bow! It wouldn’t be bad for one to gain an additional skill.”

“Hehe, I won’t stand on ceremony with you then.”

Teng Qinghu received this Millennium Coldsteel Bow with one grab. Such weapons were extremely pricey. Just the amount of ‘Millennium Coldsteel’ in the bow alone was scary enough.

“Cousin, there are sixty thousand taels of silver here, take it!” Teng Qingshan handed him a stack of silver notes. “Now that you are already a centurion, you’ll need money for getting a wife, treating people to wine and food as well as for the purchase of weapons. Take it!” Teng Qingshan earned over ten thousand taels of silver from the bandits previously.

Of course, Teng Qingshan did not care about such little money.

“Sixty thousand taels.” Teng Qinghu looked at Teng Qingshan. “Qingshan, what about yourself?”

“I have my own money!” Teng Qingshan looked towards his sister. “Little Yu, this is fifty thousand taels of silver! Keep it with you, you can use it whenever you like!” Teng Qingshan was well aware that be many disciples would secretly compare themselves within those in Gui Yuan Sect. If one was poor and did not have money, people would look down on them as well.

Humans were very realistic creatures.

“Mmm mmm.” Qingyu was very excited. These days when she had been out with Lady Qing for boat rides and shopping and such,

Lady Qing had been the one paying. She felt embarrassed by this.

“Brother, you don’t need any?” Qingyu looked towards Teng Qingshan.

“Brother has loads and loads of it.” Teng Qingshan pinched Qingyu’s small face as he smiled.

In fact, Teng Qingshan did not think of taking out the huge wealth which he had received from the ‘Ghostly Fox’ Sima Qing. Regardless if it was a centurion or a disciple of the Gui Yuan Sect, it would not be strange for them to have a couple of tens of thousands taels of silver. With so many notes of silver, Teng Qingshan only kept them as reserves. In the future he could also use them for the village.

As for himself?

Teng Qingshan had little desire for gold and silver.

“Alright, both of you should go back and rest. There is still going to be morning practice tomorrow.” Teng Qingshan said.

“Yes, brother.” Qingyu happily replied.

After the two of them had left, Teng Qingshan turned and took out a large number of flying daggers and leapt out into the backyard from the window.

In the backyard.

In the night breeze, Teng Qingshan first took out over ten blades of flying dagger and put them to the side. At the same time, he picked up some stones, and with a deep breath, he immediately went into the Saddened Knife state as he tossed out a small stone!

“Swoosh!”

The speed of the stone was not very fast, and it exploded with a ‘bang’ in midair.

“Mmm! I can control the explosion of the inner strength from a distance. Under the state of the Saddened Knife, my ‘Spirit’ can

definitely control inner strength. Then……would it be possible to be like master, and control the rotation of my inner strength?” Teng Qingshan tossed out another small stone and concurrently tried to control the turning of the stone!

But when Teng Qingshan’s ‘spirit’ had just received inner strength and was about to turn —-

Bang!

The stone smashed into bits!

“No, once I attempt to control my Spirit, the inner strength disrupts the balance, resulting in an explosion.” Teng Qingshan shook his head. Inner strength was like a porcupine with spikes all over. Once you touched it, the reaction would be very big.

The rock was small in size and contained little inner strength.

It should be easy to control. If someone couldn’t even control the turning of a small rock, he could forget about controlling the flying dagger.

Swoosh! Bang!

Swoosh! Bang!

……

Experimenting with one try after another, the noise even caught on the attention of his sister Qingyu and his cousin, but they were sent off by Teng Qingshan. Teng Qingshan continued to dwell in his studies to allow the ‘Spirit’ to have better control of the inner strength so as to allow the stone to turn!

Eventually, Teng Qingshan realised that the ‘Spirit’ should not control the inner strength only at the latest stage where the turn was supposed to be.

The ‘Spirit’ should come into contact with the inner strength just when inner strength was transferred into the stone. In the process of the flight, the Spirit would attempt to fuse with the ‘inner

strength'. Of course, the flight of the stone would be over in the blink of an eye. It was extremely difficult to fuse one's 'Spirit' and 'inner strength' within such a short timespan.

……

He continued his experiments again and again, each time determining the reason for the failure as he made improvements.

"Swoosh!" Another rock shot out.

When it reached the fake mountain in the distance, it suddenly turned, smashing into a protruding rock on the fake mountain as it curved. With a 'bang', it exploded.

"It's complete!"

A smile broke out on Teng Qingshan's face.

"While the explosion of the flying dagger of the Saddened Knife is able to have the element of surprise, the impact of the shattered flying dagger would also weaken. But the turning of this flying dagger did not reduce its impact at all." Teng Qingshan was elated. "Now, I have better control over the fusion of Spirit and inner strength! Of course, it is still too difficult to be like Master, who can let the True Innate Origin circle his body for two rounds before it returns into his body."

Teng Qingshan was already happy to see improvements.

With just the consummate skill of the flying dagger alone, Teng Qingshan already has the confidence to kill the weaker innate masters such as 'Sima Qing'.

"Hmm hmm, if most innate masters wish to channel inner strength in the flying dagger…… with the materials the flying daggers are made from, if too much inner strength are channeled in, it will probably explode!" Teng Qingshan was well aware of this point. The amount of inner strength that weapons could take in was limited. That was also the reason why godly weapons were so precious.

But it was different for Teng Qingshan when he tossed his flying daggers.

His strength was not channeled into the inside of the flying dagger. It was just that some inner strength was channeled inside, while the strength of the body was used on the flying dagger's exterior.

It was just like tossing rocks; even if one was to throw a rock with a strength of a hundred thousand Jin, the rock would only explode after it comes contact with another object. However, if one were to channel an explosive strength of a hundred thousand Jin of 'inner strength' into a rock, the rock would probably explode from the inside and turned into dust even before it flew out.

"This is the biggest advantage of the body's strength!" Teng Qingshan said to himself.

Chapter 154: At The Main Hall

There was still some time until 21st of September arrived.

During this time, Teng Qingshan had been practicing the Three Postures in the mornings to appreciate the realm of conception. He wanted to create the fourth spear art of the Five Element Spear Art. In the afternoon, Teng Qingshan practiced the «Godly Tiger Form Technique». After he had eaten the Black Fire Spirit Fruit, with his training, Teng Qingshan's strength, vision and hearing have been gradually improving.

At night, he studied the consummate skills of the flying knives.

Of course, he spent his lunch and dinner time with his brothers from the Black Armored Army, and they chatted while enjoying their wine. Teng Qingshan was not the only one who was diligent. Most of the men in the Black Armored Army were diligent as well. To be able to pass the selections and remain in the Black Armored Army, there were not many who shunned hard work and indulged in leisure.

……

In the blink of an eye, 21st of September had arrived.

In the morning, when the morning sun appeared on the horizon and most of the men from the Black Armored Army had yet to wake up, Teng Qingshan's quarters was already filled with noise and excitement.

"Cousin, cousin!" Qingyu had been in the courtyard very early in the morning as she jumped around excitedly and shouted, "Get up quickly! We need to go to the main hall now!"

"It is only dawn now." Teng Qinghu pushed the door to his room open and came out holding a steel spear in his hands. He threw a helpless glance at Qingyu. "Qingyu, take a look at the time now! There is still an hour before breakfast." Although he had said that,

Teng Qinghu still went to the front courtyard and started to practice with his spear.

Qingyu humphed uncaringly. “You’re so lazy! Look at my brother, he was already practicing his boxing when I woke up!”

“If I wanted to compare with Qingshan, I should forget about sleeping.” Teng Qinghu stopped his spear and laughed. “Look at your brother, he only sits cross-legged in the backyard as he meditates at night. How can I compare to him? You’re asking me to not sleep and meditate? To take meditation as sleep? I do not have that capability!”

Hu! Hu!

There were occasional whistling sounds coming from the backyard.

Teng Qingshan was in the middle of practicing the Three Postures. In his hands, the ordinary Three Postures seemed to have a unique charm to it. If one was to take a closer look, they would realize that Teng Qingshan’s legs were as if they had a hidden bow in them. Both his arms were another bow. His whole body was also a bow!

His whole body contained a strong force!

Slow, then fast!

Retract!

Teng Qingshan’s chest was like a large bellow, as he let out long exhale with a tranquil smile. Everytime he practiced the Three Postures, Teng Qingshan could faintly feel a Realm of Concept with an endless flow and with the balance of Yin and Yang. It was just that the Realm of Concept was too deep and it was hard for him to grasp.

“Cousin, Little Yu, both of you are up early today. Let’s go and have breakfast.” Teng Qingshan headed for the front courtyard.

“Brother, you’ll have to change your clothes. Today is the big day when the Sovereign officially takes you in as his disciple! There will be many people invited to the main hall then, including the Elders, the Protectors.” Qingyu said.

Teng Qingshan looked at his clothes.

There was dust on his clothes. As he had quietly meditated in the courtyard overnight, dust had covered his clothes.

“There’s no hurry. I will clean up after breakfast and have change my clothes.” Teng Qingshan replied.

The three of them left the quarters together.

……

The morning sun rose as sunlight shone across the main hall of the Gui Yuan Sect.

A large number of core disciples of the Gui Yuan Sect stood on the tens of flight of stairs outside the main hall, each of them was coordinated as they all wore white robes, standing upright. Quite a distance away, there were even more core disciples who were gathered in small groups as they looked at the main hall and discussed low voices.

“What big event is happening in our sect today? My Martial Uncle as well as the disciples of the 27th generation are all waiting outside the main hall!”

“Who knows? The disciples of the 27th generation have the right to stand outside the main hall but we of the 28th generation can only look from afar. Look! Martial Granduncle! Wow, there are the Elders and the Protectors as well!”

Many core disciples saw the group of men from afar.

This group of people were the real superiors in Gui Yuan Sect! At that moment, Teng Qingshan was amongst this group of people.

“All the centurions, two people stand on each step! Take your

positions on the steps in order and stand outside the main hall." Ji Hong who was dressed in a full suit of black armor hollered. The centurions who were following behind the group all respectfully followed the order. In this gathering at the main hall, even the centurions of the Black Armored Army did not have the qualifications to enter the main hall and they could only stay outside.

Each step outside the main hall was occupied by two centurions as well as two core disciples of the 27th generation. Teng Qinghu was one of them.

In the main hall!

There were chairs that were laid out in a row on each side of the hall, forming a straight line all the way to the entrance of the hall. There were eighteen chairs on each side of the hall, with a total of thirty-six chairs altogether!

The four commanders and eleven lieutenants all sat on the right side. There were twelve lieutenants in the Black Armored Army, but it was just that one of them was outside. Other than these fifteen people, there was also the 'County Governor' of the Jiangning County as well as the 'General' of the city guards. They were seated in front of the four commanders.

With these seventeen people, naturally only the first seat of this row was vacant.

As for the eighteen seats on the left, there were seventeen people seated as well, leaving the first spot vacant!

"From this seating arrangement, one can already tell who is in power in the Gui Yuan Sect." Teng Qingshan sat on one of the seats further back on the row on the right and he glanced at the group of men opposite him. "The ones on the left should be the Elders and Protectors of the Gui Yuan Sect who manage the core disciples and outer disciples. Our side are those from the Black Armored Army... Oh, those two."

Teng Qingshan could not recognize the ‘County Governor’ of Jiangning County and the ‘General’ of the City Guards.

At this moment, the Sovereign had not arrived yet, and laughter had filled the main hall as everyone was at ease.

“Old Yan, who are the two at the front of our row? To think that they are able to be seated in front of the four commanders.” Teng Qingshan lowered his voice and asked.

Yan Ge, who was beside him, was also one of the lieutenants under the First Commander.

“Qingshan, those two are the ‘County Governor’ of Jiangning County and the ‘General’ of the City Guards. The two of them controls the eighty thousand men in the ‘City Guards’.” Yan Ge replied softly. “Although the City Guards were kicked out of our Black Armored Army, they are large in numbers. They are also the army that protects the base of our Gui Yuan Sect.

“It’s them!”

Teng Qingshan’s heart skipped a beat.

The Black Armored Army was always kept at a number of six thousand men and there were many who wished to enter. While there were many who were capable, they were still kicked out! Therefore, the Gui Yuan Sect took those men into the City Guards! The City Guards of the Jiangning County totalled a strength of eighty thousand men! It was the biggest army in the whole Jiangning County.

Of course, if they were to have an outright battle on the plains, the six thousand men of the Black Armored Army would be able to eliminate the eighty thousand men of the City Guards!

However, if the eighty thousand City Guards were to defend the great city walls of the Jiangning County, it would be hard for them to push through even with the all of the six thousand men of the Black Armored Army.

“This is the Gui Yuan Sect!” Teng Qingshan sighed. An elite team of six thousand men in the Black Armored Army, eighty thousand well-trained City Guards, close to ten thousand core disciples and countless numbers of outer disciples. This was the Gui Yuan Sect, the supporting force that dominated the whole Jiangning County!

At that moment —

Three figures entered the main hall, with Zhuge Yuanhong in the lead. He was wearing a long white robe that was like the moon and his long hair was let down. Behind him was a white-haired old man in plain cloth robes and a middle-aged man whose gaze was like electricity and had a fierce presence.

“Martial Uncle, Martial Granduncle, please be seated.” Zhuge Yuanhong had a faint smile.

The two of them bowed slightly and headed for the respective two front seats on each row.

“The two of them!” Teng Qingshan immediately guessed who they were. “Could it be that these two men are the legendary ‘Law Enforcing Elders’?” In his days spent in the Black Armored Army, Teng Qingshan had also heard of the ‘Law Enforcing Elders’. Their statuses were extremely high, and were only slightly below that of the Sovereign.

In comparison, the other commanders, County Governors, Protectors, and lieutenants were all much lower in status…….

In the main hall, only after Zhuge Yuanhong had taken his seat, did the rest follow.

“Qingshan!” Zhuge Yuanhong gave a faint smile as he spoke.

Teng Qingshan immediately stood up, bowing, “Sovereign!” In public, as he had not officially been appointed as the sovereign’s disciple, Teng Qingshan still had to address him as ‘Sovereign’.

“Teng Qingshan had lived in the mountains since young, with the nature as his master as he created his spear arts! At his young

age, he even killed the ‘Blood Moon Saber’ Meng Tian. At the Blazing Mountain, he was far from being disadvantaged even when he was up against the Black and White Elders of the Xiao Yao Palace together! Haha, Teng Qingshan is an unpolished jade with huge potential. Today, I, Zhuge Yuanhong will officially take Qingshan as my disciple, with all of you as witnesses!” Zhuge Yuanhong laughed as he said this.

Teng Qingshan immediately stepped up and picked the tea cup off the tray of the maid at the side.

He held on to the tea cup while kneeling down on one of his knees!

“Teacher, please have the tea!” Teng Qingshan said respectfully.

Zhuge Yuanhong smiled as he received the cup, took two sips and placed it aside. He smiled, nodding as he said, “From today onwards, Qingshan, you are now the disciple of the 27th generation of our Gui Yuan Sect! In the future, you will need to work even harder and quickly enter the Innate Realm.” The process of taking in a disciple was actually very simple. After drinking the tea, it would be complete.

“Yes, Teacher,” Teng Qingshan said respectfully.

“You may get up.” Zhuge Yuanhong replied with a faint smile.

From this day onwards, Teng Qingshan had become the direct disciple of the Sovereign! This was not an ordinary identity. There were some who were eventually appointed as the Sovereign and they were usually the most outstanding disciple. And when the Sovereign chooses his disciple, he always chose from the best! Based on tradition, in the absence of any unforeseen circumstances, the next Sovereign would be chosen from the direct disciples of the Sovereign!

People like Zang Feng and Guan Lu were appointed as commanders at their young age.

Other that their abilities, it was also because of their identity as the ‘direct disciples of the Sovereign’.

“Congratulations to the Sovereign!” The group of men in the main hall cupped their hands and shouted.

“Haha… today, taking in Qingshan as my disciple is a small issue! There is a more important issue.” Zhuge Yuanhong said as he looked at Ji Hong and there was silence in the main hall. Everyone was aware… The important moment was here!

The process of taking in a disciple was very simple. There was rarely such a big showcase for this in the past.

To be gathering so many people this time around, everyone was aware that they would probably be picking a new commander! The position of commander was one that holds great authority. Furthermore… Ji Hong’s position was that of First Commander! By the hierarchy, the other three commanders would have to be under his command!

“Everyone.” Ji Hong stood up and said in a clear voice. “I have been the First Commander for over fifty years! Now, I feel that I am not able to accomplish much as well as I wish to. Thus, I have decided to step down from this position.” He then looked at the Sovereign, Zhuge Yuanhong. “I plead for the Sovereign to pick the new commander.”

Everyone held their breath and looked at the Sovereign, ‘Zhuge Yuanhong’!

Chapter 155: The Four Heaven Grade Secret Manuals

All the eleven lieutenants present held on to their expectations. Since they were short of a commander, they would of course have to be chosen from amongst the lieutenants!

And Pang Shan, Zang Feng and Guan Lu could not settle down either!

Selecting the First Commander?

Pang Shan was the Second Commander, Zang Feng was the Third Commander and Guan Lu was the Fourth Commander. All three of them wanted to progress further as well!

“At present, I have also reached a small achievement in my《Shooting Star Blade》! Probably even Martial Uncle wouldn’t be my opponent... The First Commander position should be mine!” A burning feeling grew in Zang Feng. The《Shooting Star Blade》was one of the two Heaven level secret manuals. Zang Feng had always been developing his blade skills and he had barely roamed the world. Therefore, the level of his fame was not that high.

But, before Teng Qingshan had came along, Zhuge Yuanhong had thought most highly of Zang Feng!

The diligent Zang Feng really had outstanding abilities. The people from the younger generation such as Zhuge Yun would be easily defeated by him!

“Second Martial Uncle has led the Black Armored Army out to battles for our Gui Yuan Sect for so many years. He has worked very hard and has lots of achievements! From today onwards, Second Martial Uncle will be appointed as an Elder of our Gui Yuan Sect!” Zhuge Yuanhong said in a clear voice. A smile broke out on Ji Hong’s face as well. Now that he was old, he also gained success and recognition to be appointed as an Elder after stepping down

from his position.

Quite a number of people congratulated Ji Hong.

Zhuge Yuanhong paused for a while, before he continued, “However, the position of the commander in our Black Armored Army cannot be left vacant.”

Immediately, silence filled the main hall once again.

Zhuge Yuanhong’s voice echoed within the spacious main hall, “The position of the new First Commander of the Black Armored Army will be assumed by Lieutenant Teng Qingshan from the First Division!”

The main hall was filled with a state of uproar!

Teng Qingshan is going to be appointed as the First Commander? Quite a number of people turned to look at Teng Qingshan.

“Teng Qingshan, come up to receive your armor!” Zhuge Yuanhong called out in a clear voice.

Teng Qingshan immediately stood up and walked towards Zhuge Yuanhong.

“How could it be him?” Zang Feng’s face paled. “I was a commander to begin with! Even if Teng Qingshan was to be appointed as a commander, he should only be appointed as the Fourth Commander. The First Commander should be picked from the three of us! With my abilities, the position of the First Commander should be mine!” Zang Feng squinted his cold eyes.

Suddenly ---

Zang Feng suddenly stood up and walked to the middle. Quite a number of people looked at him.

“Hmm?” Zhuge Yuanhong looked at his beloved disciple.

“There’s going to be a good show!”

“Zang Feng probably is not willing to accept this.” Those Elders

and Protectors all exchanged glances and smiled. They were interested in how this would turn out. This was an internal issue of the Black Armored Army. Regardless of who was chosen, the person would not be from among the Protectors and the Elders.

Teng Qingshan also looked at Zang Feng.

“Master!” Zang Feng called out with respect. “Martial Brother Qingshan has exceptional abilities and he has established great merit. He definitely has the right to be a commander! It’s just that he is still very young and he has little experience. When Martial Granduncle was appointed as the First Commander previously, the three of us were convinced. But Qingshan… I think, it is still better for him to be appointed as the Fourth Commander for now!”

Guan Lu and Pang Shan remained silent.

Zang Feng was feeling restless as he waited for Zhuge Yuanhong to speak up.

“Step down!” Zhuge Yuanhong hollered.

Zang Feng stifled, as he raised his head to look at Zhuge Yuanhong.

Zhuge Yuanhong’s face turned sullen. “With regards to who is appoint as the First Commander, it was decided with consultation with the Law Enforcing Elders. Since when has it been for you to decide? Alright, Feng Er, you step down first.”

Zang Feng’s was stunned.

The ones with the highest status in the Gui Yuan Sect are undoubtedly the Sovereign as well as the Law Enforcing Elders. Most of the major issues are decided after they discussed them. As a mere disciple, it was true that he had no rights to raise doubts against this decision. Zang Feng was not satisfied… All these years, he had been the representative figure of the younger generation in the Gui Yuan Sect.

No one else could compare against him.

Zang Feng did not step down, but gritted his teeth as he spoke, “Master! The ranking of the four Commanders is based on one’s abilities. Back then, Martial Granduncle defeated the three of us. And today, if Martial Brother Qingshan wishes to take on the role of the First Commander, he would need to convince us as well. I will be the first to challenge him... to see how the abilities of Martial Brother Qingshan!”

The Sovereign Zhuge Yuanhong sighed to himself when he heard this.

This disciple Zang Feng does have great perseverance and talent. The only thing was that... he was too concerned about fame! In the Black Armored Army, he had regarded the different rankings highly. Most of the lieutenants in the Black Armored Army were apprehensive of him.

“To be bickering about such a small issue of who should be the First Commander... He doesn’t have much foresight. Commander? Elder? These are nothing. Only the one who can reach the innate realm and become an innate master has the real ability.” Zhuge Yuanhong was obviously not happy with his disciple, Zang Feng. “This time around, it’s also good to use Qingshan to teach him a lesson. Hopefully, he will wake up!”

Towards this disciple with talent and perseverance, Zhuge Yuanhong still held hopes for him.

“Qingshan, are you willing to take up the challenge?” Zhuge Yuanhong looked at Teng Qingshan. So did the rest of the Elders, Protectors and lieutenants in the main hall.

“Disciple is willing.” Teng Qingshan bowed and answered.

Zang Feng threw a chilling glance at Teng Qingshan.

Zhuge Yuanhong nodded his head slightly and said in a clear voice, “However, today is the day that Qingshan takes up the appointment of the First Commander! It is not suitable for a

challenge... Feng Er, you step down first! Today, Qingshan will receive the armor. On the 28th of September, should the other three commanders be unwilling to accept this arrangement, he or she can feel free to challenge Qingshan! The eventual winner will become the First Commander!"

"Yes, master." Only then did Zang Feng step down as he threw a glance at Teng Qingshan. "Hmph, killed Meng Tian? On par with the Black and White Elders? He is probably not weak. But.....at only the age of seventeen, I don't believe he is able to take my《Shooting Star Blade》!"

Zang Feng was very confident in himself.

.....

On the main hall, Teng Qingshan respectfully received the set of Darksteel Armor as well as the tablet of the First Commander!

"The 'Darksteel Heavy Armor' of the commanders are really the heaviest." When he held the armor, Teng Qingshan was able to tell the weight clearly. The whole set of the centurions' 'Hematite Heavy Armor', including the battle boots, helmets and such, weighted about two hundred Jin. And the weight of the whole set of the lieutenants' 'Coldsteel Heavy Armor' would be over three hundred Jin. Afterall, just the Coldsteel Inner Armor alone would weigh tens of Jin.

While the whole set of the commanders' Darksteel Heavy Armor add up to over five hundred Jin!

Even a First Rated Warrior would feel uncomfortable wearing a weight of five hundred Jin. The warriors who were close to the level of the《Earth Ranking》would be able to take this weight usually. But in a battle, it would affect their flexibility a lot. Most of the time, they would take it off and go to battle in only their inner armor. This goes to show how good the armored scales of the Red Scaled Beast was!

The whole set weighs only about a hundred Jin.

Its defensive ability was stronger than that of the Coldsteel Heavy Armor, and it was better able to protect the joints!

The new First Commander was appointed in the main hall. Outside the main hall, the disciples of the 27th generation as well as the centurions of the Black Armored Army could hear the voice in the main hall clearly. All of them started chattering in low voices.

“To think that the First Commander is Teng Qingshan.”

“I had long guessed it. He was someone who is on par with the Black and White elders of the Xiao Yao Palace. The Black and White elders... are both listed on the《Earth Ranking》. Any one of them could kill us with just one move, but the two of them together could not defeat Teng Qingshan. Tsk tsk, if only I could match up to Martial Brother Qingshan one day.”

“You are still addressing him as Martial Brother? He is now a commander!”

“Like us, he is also a disciple of the 27th generation. What’s wrong with calling him Martial Brother!?”

“Forget about this. Didn’t you hear it earlier? Commander Zang Feng will be challenging Commander Qingshan on the 28th of September.”

“Zang Feng... he had never lost to anyone from the younger generation before.”

“That Teng Qingshan was someone who could kill an expert listed in the《Earth Ranking》.”

……

The group of experts of the core disciples as well as the centurions chatted in low voices. Teng Qinghu was the happiest. Not long later, a big group exited the main hall, with the Sovereign

and the Law Enforcing Elders in front, followed by the four commanders, Elders, lieutenants & Protectors.

In an instance, the centurions and core disciples outside the main hall fell into silence.

“Cousin, help me take this set of Darksteel Heavy Armor back.” Teng Qingshan passed the items to Teng Qinghu.

“Alright.” Teng Qinghu nodded.

“I still have something to tend to and will be back later.” After saying that, Teng Qingshan followed the Sovereign ‘Zhuge Yuanhong’ and left.

Following behind Zhuge Yuanhong, Teng Qingshan continued moving forward.

“Qingshan, have you decided? To learn the sword skills or the spear art?” Zhuge Yuanhong spoke out.

“Master, disciple wishes to learn the spear art!” Teng Qingshan replied respectfully.

Having heard this, Zhuge Yuanhong could not help but shake his head. “I already guessed it! Qingshan, the sword art and spear art do have their similarities! The sword, emphasizes on ‘piercing’. So does the spear! With your level in the spear art, you can change it to suit the sword art.” Teng Qingshan was also aware that there were similarities between the spear art and sword art.

A sword was the simplified version of the long spear!

“The spear is long. Should there be a distance between two person, the spear would have an advantage! But because of its length, it is difficult to manage. It isn’t as flexible as the sword! And it would be easier for a sword of four chi long to display various sword arts. Especially after reaching the innate realm... Ever since the birth of the ‘Poetic Sword God’ Li Taibai, the sword arts were pushed further to the pinnacle. Amongst the innate masters, most of them wield the sword!” Zhuge Yuanhong said.

Teng Qingshan had also heard of the ‘Poetic Sword God’ Li Taibai.

Even the books on the《Earth Ranking》 and the 《Hidden Dragon Ranking》 would mention characters such as the ‘Poetic Sword God’ Li Taibai, Yu Huang and the Celestial Emperor Qin Ling.

From the various books, the ones who were revered with the highest status were undoubtedly Yu Huang and Celestial Emperor Qin Ling. The two of them had ruled the world before and their martial arts were the best across the world. And amongst the countless experts who had not ruled the world, there some who were comparable with Yu Huang and the Celestial Emperor Qin Ling.

One of them was the one who had set up the ‘Mani Temple’, and created the buddhism training methods. The man known as the Grandmaster of Buddhism, ‘Shi Jia’!

Mani Temple dominated two of the nine prefectures and it had countless experts whose skills were unfathomable. The reason that it became the biggest sect across the Nine Prefectures was highly related to ‘Shi Jia’ Grandmaster.

And the other person, was the peerless Poetic Sword God ‘Li Taibai’. This person was undefeated across the land with just a long sword over three thousand years ago. However, he did not create a sect. His ultimate skill 《Green Lotus Sword Melody》had also brought a few calamities in history.

Over the countless years, the four who stood at the pinnacle left behind four secret manuals, namely, 《The Heavenly Book of the Nine Cauldrons》《 Green Lotus Sword Melody》《Golden Buddha》《 The Enlightenment of the God of Heaven》

“Poetic Sword God ‘Li Taibai’?” Teng Qingshan shook his head and said, “Master, I would still like to learn the spear art!”

The predecessors had not achieved much in the spear arts. Could

he not... create a set by himself?

"You are really... I will not say anything else. Follow me to the Martial Pavilion!" Zhuge Yuanhong shook his head and smiled.

Chapter 156: Martial Pavilion

It was morning, as the rising sun shone its gentle autumn rays of light onto the green, two-story building, completely blanketing it with a dreamy orange color. The moss and the marks on the stone walls all showed the old age of the stone building!

Near the roof of the building, two confident words were flamboyantly displayed — Martial Pavilion!

“Qingshan, this place, the Martial Pavilion, is where all of Gui Yuan Sect’s secret manuals are kept!” Zhuge Yuanhong showed a faint smile. “The Martial Pavilion has been here ever since the founding of our Gui Yuan Sect. As of today, it already has a history of over a thousand years!”

“Sovereign!”

There were two disciples standing on guard at the entrance of the Martial Pavilion. They quickly bowed and greeted when they saw Zhuge Yuanhong.

Teng Qingshan followed Zhuge Yuanhong into the Martial Pavilion. Looking around, he saw the first floor filled with many bookshelves, each storing many secret manuals. “There are probably hundreds of secret manuals contained on this floor alone!” Teng Qingshan exclaimed to himself. “Alas, this is just as expected from a sect with a history of over a thousand years.”

“Those stored on the first and second floors are Human Class and mediocre secret manuals. Earth Class secret manuals are stored underground. Follow me.” Zhuge Yuanhong said as he made his way inside, passing by many bookshelves.

“There are more underground?”

Teng Qingshan quickly followed. There was a desk in the corner of the first floor near the windows. There were wine flasks, wine cups, and books laid out on the desktop. A white-haired old man

was deep into a book whose pages had turned yellow.

“Martial Granduncle!” Zhuge Yuanhong called out.

Teng Qingshan was shocked. “The Martial Granduncle of my master? Commander Ji Hong was the Second Martial Uncle of my master! Then, this person must be the master of Ji Hong. Ji Hong is already over a hundred years old, so this old man must also be over a hundred years old.” But there were so many people in the sect. It usually was not easy to accurately to guess someone’s age based on their seniority.

In Gui Yuan Sect, even an old man of seventy or eighty years old could still be addressed as a young man of twenty to thirty years old as Martial Uncle!

“Ahh! Oh, Sovereign.” It was only then that the white-haired old man jolted awake.

“Martial Granduncle, Yuanhong did not bring the key for the door to the secret underground passage. I’ll have to trouble Martial Granduncle this time.” Zhuge Yuanhong said.

Teng Qingshan also noticed that the stairways to the secret passageway was behind the white-haired old man.

“Sovereign, please wait one moment.” The old man immediately went down the stairs, and took out the key to open the black steel door. With a ‘kuang’ sound, the door opened.

“Hmmm…” Teng Qingshan threw a glance towards that book. At the top of the page that was opened and these words were written. ‘The second day, Zhang Ye held on to an exquisite metal bow and entered the mountain again. This time, he did not make the same mistake and successfully hunted down a wild boar’. Seeing these few lines, Teng Qingshan was a bit stunned. He could tell from there —

These were some random books recording unofficial history and such.

The old man threw a glance at Teng Qingshan and grinned. “Young man, you also like to read such random books? This is the unofficial history of our Yangzhou’s ‘Zhang Ye’, a towering figure of his generation, but it is an interesting read. If you like, I can lend you a book or two ?”

“No, it’s alright”.” Teng Qingshan said.

“Qingshan, Martial Granduncle is the one who guards the Martial Pavilion. You can call him Martial Elder.” Zhuge Yuanhong smiled.

“Qingshan pay his respects to Martial Elder.” Teng Qingshan bowed.

The eyes of the Martial Elder gleamed and squinted. “Oh? You are that Teng Qingshan?! I heard that Ji Hong, that chap, had stepped down from the position of First Commander and you had taken over! Mmm, good, good……That Ji Hong also is already over a hundred years old but still hogged the commander position. He should have stepped down long ago. He would not have lost an arm if he had stepped down.”

“Martial Elder, I will bring Qingshan in first.” Zhuge Yuanhong said.

“Älright, alright, I know you find me long-winded.” Martial Elder buried his head and began reading the transcript of unofficial history again.

Teng Qingshan did not know whether to laugh or cry.

Old kid, old kid!

This old man of over a hundred years old had an interesting temper.

They followed the stairways and entered the underground passageway. It was very dim in the underground passage. After they walked into the underground passageway for a distance of tens of zhang, the stone door was pushed open and they entered a

spacious room. There were two altar lamps lit up, so it was not considered dark in the room. After Zhuge Yuanhong entered, he lit another two candles!

“Qingshan, these two bookshelves hold Earth Class secret manuals!” Zhuge Yuanhong said.

Teng Qingshan also saw that there were two bookshelves on the two sides of the room, which almost covered the whole walls. There was many secret manuals on the bookshelves, but there were also rocks, metal pieces, bamboo pieces, and such.

“Amongst the secret manuals here, most of them are only records of some skills or the methods to channel and control the Innate True Origin.”

“The «Dark Moon Spear Technique» over there is the most treasured secret manual of the spear art of your Gui Yuan Sect. It includes the processes from achieving the Innate Realm all the way to reaching the ‘Golden Dan’ of the innate state, as well as the insights of the predecessors.” Zhuge Yuanhong pointed to a bookshelf in a distance.

Teng Qingshan immediately looked over.

There were thick layers of of sheepskin laid out into three stacks.

“This is……” Teng Qingshan was a bit astonished.

“Those sheepskin are the original records of the «Dark Moon Spear Technique»! There are only detailed records of the methods of training, but not on the insights from the predecessors. Because paper was only invented a few hundred years ago, the original records of the secret manuals from further back were mostly recorded on stone tablets, metal plates, sheepskin, bamboo sheets, and such. That book over there are the copies. Take one!” Zhuge Yuanhong said.

There were three copies of the records of the «Dark Moon Spear Technique».

Teng Qingshan also noticed that all three books were exactly the same. He took one of them.

“It’s really thick!” Teng Qingshan casually flipped it open.

The «Dark Moon Spear Technique» was created by a strong warrior by the name of ‘Wu Kefan’. There are four main sections to it, including the postliminary realm, innate Emptiness Dan, the innate True Dan, as well as the innate Golden Dan.

“You can bring this secret manual back and study it slowly. Qingshan! Remember, this «Dark Moon Spear Technique» can be considered top grade amongst the Earth Class secret manuals. Do not divulge the information contained in it to others!” Zhuge Yuanhong sternly instructed.

“Yes, Master.” Teng Qingshan was also well aware.

The usual Earth Class secret manual only recorded the training needed to achieve the state of the ‘Innate Emptiness Dan’. Some did not even have records on the realms, but only focused on the spear techniques.

On the other hand, this «Dark Moon Spear Technique» had everything from the Postliminary Realm to the ‘Innate Golden Dan’.

Such secret manuals were hard to come by.

“With your talent, if you were to give up the spear and take up the sword, within three years, your sword skills would definitely catch up to your spear’s! By then, with the «Gui Yuan Heart Technique», the difficulty of your training would definitely be lower after you reach the Innate Realm!” Zhuge Yuanhong looked towards Teng Qingshan and said, “You chose «Dark Moon Spear Technique». Even if you were to regret it in the future, I will not give you the «Gui Yuan Heart Technique» again. You’ll have to decide carefully now.”

Teng Qingshan smiled.

“Master, I want to learn the art of the spear.” Teng Qingshan also understood what his master was thinking.

Three years? To get his sword skills to reach the level of his spear’s at present.

In three years time, he would probably have attained a new level in his spear art.

“You chose this path for yourself!” Zhuge Yuanhong looked stern. “You will need to depend on yourself in the future! In addition, in a few days time, on the 28th of September, your Martial Brother will have a battle with you! At that time……I hope that you will not hold back. If you are to win, do so cleanly!”

“Yes, master.” Teng Qingshan was a bit shocked.

Master was asking him not to hold back?

“But you shouldn’t be careless either. Your Martial Brother had devoted all his heart to his training and has seldom ventured out. While his reputation is not great, his skills are quite good.” After saying this, Zhuge Yuanhong extinguished the two candles. “Go now!”

Teng Qingshan followed behind Zhuge Yuanhong and left the Martial Pavilion.

Bang!

The door to the underground passage closed shut. Teng Qingshan and Zhuge Yuanhong quickly left the Martial Pavilion. Thereafter……Teng Qingshan headed for the Black Armored Army while Zhuge Yuanhong returned to his quarters.

In the evening, a cooling breeze was blowing and the yellowed leaves fell down gently.

Teng Qingshan sat cross-legged in the backyard, and his gaze fell on the «Dark Moon Spear Technique». The «Dark Moon Spear Technique» was laid out on the floor, flipped open. The page it was

opened to had the records on how to achieve the Innate Realm!

“Based on the «Dark Moon Spear Technique», the most difficult step was for the ‘Spirit’ to break through the Niwan Palace! My ‘Spirit’ has already broken through the Niwan Palace and I am in the pinnacle of the Postliminary Realm. I need to be able to attain the “Unity of Spirit and Qi’, in order for the Spirit and inner strength to merge as one and become the Innate True Origin.” Teng Qingshan read the contents on this page a few times.

Based on what the secret manual had recorded.

For the ‘spirit’ to break through the Niwan Palace, one must “focus the mental state on the Dantian, harmonize the Spirit and Qi”. These simple words.

Based on the insights of the other three predecessors who had practiced the «Dark Moon Spear Technique».

“Focus the mental state on the Dantian, harmonize the Spirit and Qi”

When one focused their mental state on the Dantian, it would also be the moment where the Spirit and inner strength merged.

To create the first gush of ‘Innate True Origin’, amongst the three predecessors, the fastest one took only 2 hours. The slowest one took 3 days! In short, once one’s ‘Spirit’ broke through the Niwan Palace and achieved the pinnacle of the Postliminary Realm, it would not be hard to reach the Innate Realm. As for the amount of time taken, it should be related to the strength of one’s ‘Spirit’!

“Hmm? My ‘Spirit’ was already able to break through the Niwan Palace in my previous life. Having trained for so long, I would think that the state that I have reached should not be any lower than a strong warrior who achieved the state of the innate Emptiness Dan. With my ‘Spirit’, I should be able to create the ‘Innate True Origin’ within two hours, but why……”

This afternoon, Teng Qingshan practiced for a whole four hours!

But he could still not create any ‘Innate True Origin’.

“What is going on?!”

Teng Qingshan shook his head and stood up, keeping the secret manual in his chest. “Get some food first. Amongst the three predecessors, it took the slowest one three whole days to achieve it. Mmmm, I will continue the training tonight.”

……

Teng Qingshan was not one to give up easily, but……A consecutive six days!

These six days, Teng Qingshan did not give a hoot about his upcoming battle with Zang Feng. His time and efforts had all been spent on how to reach the innate realm!

Teng Qingshan spent most of his time on this. However, even after six consecutive days of vigorous training, the inner strength in Teng Qingshan’s Dantian still did not create his first gush of ‘Innate True Origin’! This first gust of First True Origin was the most important. Once the first gush was created, it would be fast for the conversion in the future!

Within the six days, there was no changes his inner strength, but the intermittent training in his «Godly Tiger Form Technique» had gradually and consistently increased the strength of his body.

“The fastest one of the three predecessors who had practiced the «Dark Moon Spear Technique»only took two hours. The slowest one also only took three days. I have spent six days but there has been no change to my inner strength.” Teng Qingshan was confused. “What is the reason? I had achieved both the pinnacle of the Postliminary Realm, and my Spirit has already broken through the Niwan Palace! As compared to the other warriors, my unique trait is that my body is too strong! Could it be that the reason why I did not achieve the Innate Realm is related to my body being too

strong?”

Teng Qingshan was contemplating the reason!

Chapter 157: Character

“One’s physical strength shouldn’t affect the process of one’s inner strength transforming into Innate True Origin at all.” Teng Qingshan pondered a long while before shaking his head. He wasn’t the type to relentlessly chase an unsolvable mystery. “Ok, today is the 27th day of the September. That means tomorrow will be the day that I fight Zang Feng! In these next two days, I’ll continue to try and cultivate. If that still doesn’t work… then I will find Teacher after the fight!”

If he ran out methods to break through, then he could only ask Zhuge Yuanhong for help!

Teng Qingshan raised his head and looked at the sky—

As sunlight seeped through the cracks of the branches motley tree, he guessed that it was almost 2 hours from lunch.

“I haven’t been paying attention to Little Yu’s cultivation these days! Alright, it’s decided then, I shall go to the core disciple area.” Teng Qingshan stood up. As he stood up, his muscles suddenly vibrated with such intensity that a gust of wind was generated from within his body, causing the dust on his clothes to fly off. Subsequently, he walked out of his residence and transversed Longgang before heading towards the core disciple cultivation area.

“I remember Little Yu saying that her master’s name was ‘Wang Qinglan’.”

As Teng Qingshan walked along a small path composed of limestones, he saw three disciples cultivating sword arts in the distance. Walking towards them, he saw sword rays flashing brilliantly off of their swords as they practiced. The movements of the three disciples were extremely quick, and it was quite obvious that they were formidable experts. They immediately stopped their training after spotting Teng Qingshan walking over..

“It’s Teng Qingshan!”

In the main hall, Zhuge Yuanhong had accepted Teng Qingshan as his disciple, and had even given him the position of First Commander. Thus, the core disciples of Gui Yuan Sect naturally recognized Teng Qingshan.

“Lord Commander!” The three people immediately bowed.

“Do you know where Master Wang Qinglan teaches her disciples?” Teng Qingshan inquired.

“Ah, Master Wang Qinglan is over in the southeast end of Ya Garden. Master’s disciples are all in the garden as well,” directed one of the core disciples, as they pointed in a certain direction. Teng Qingshan nodded his head in thanks, and walked in the Ya Garden’s direction.

Ya Garden!

Running water calmly flowed under the bridge, portraying an elegant scene. The east side of the small river was an empty grass field, upon which a group of female disciples were learning sword arts. To the side of the bridge sat a beautiful woman wearing a light red robe, who was guiding these female disciples as they trained.

On the west side of the small river was another group of female disciples who were taking a rest.

“It seems that Teng Qingyu’s sword arts aren’t that good after all! Hmph, with her strength, she should only be a 28th generation disciple! However, she was unexpectedly recruited under our master’s tutelage with my generation.” A young woman wearing green clothing let out a harumph. To her side was a skinny, round faced female youth who said, “There’s nothing we can do. Who told her to have a good relationship with the Sovereign’s daughter and to have a formidable older brother?”

The green robed girl giggled, “Isn’t that the same as having a

patron? Amongst us martial sisters, Teng Qingyu's strength is the weakest!"

"Okay, Second Martial Sister, stop talking about this." To her side was an oval faced young woman who said, "Qingyu has only trained in the sword arts for a few months. We, on the other hand, have trained since we were young and possess a lot more experience. It isn't Qingyu's fault that she's weaker than us!"

"Hmmm, Seventh Martial Sister, I heard that the day before yesterday, you went for a walk with Teng Qingyu and bullied her. Why are you suddenly supporting her?" The green robed girl mystifyingly said.

The oval shape faced young girl's expression couldn't help but change as she sneered, "That's right, junior Sister Qingyu is very simple, so I enjoy being with her. What's the matter? The night before yesterday wasn't only comprised of us few martial sisters. Even Young Sovereign accompanied us! It's a pity that a certain someone can only daydream about the Young Sovereign accompanying her!"

"You..." The green robed girl was absolutely livid.

The oval faced girl turned her head and walked off to the side where she sat down, not paying the slightest attention to the green robed youth.

"Everyone is only crowding around Teng Qingyu because she has some silver taels to spend," The green robed lady let out a soft harumph, "A few months ago, Teng Qingyu was still very poor. It was only after Teng Qingshan returned that she got some money! All she has is a formidable brother! Even Master is prejudiced!"

To her side, someone said, "Second martial sister, that Teng Qingshan is the Sovereign's personal disciple and also is the First Commander! It's no wonder that those martial sisters treat Teng Qingyu so well. I reckon that each one of them wants to marry Teng Qingshan in order climb onto a branch and become a

phoenix!”

Within the group of female disciples, there were a few who had a good relationship with Teng Qingyu; however, there were also a few female disciples who still disliked Teng Qingyu.

Her strength was quite lacking! However, she had a backing! Zhuge Yun and Zhuge Qing’s relationship with Teng Qingyu was also quite good…

These reasons were enough cause for others to dislike Teng Qingyu.

One must know that within a female disciple’s heart existed the dream to marry a formidable male disciple. For instance: Zhuge Yun, Teng Qingshan, Zang Feng, and the others had high statuses and incredible strength, and had therefore already been a hot topic for the female disciples. Moreover, there were a few average female disciples with mediocre looks who knew they had no chance; therefore, they were instead even more jealous.

“Become a phoenix? Hmph, we’ll see. Don’t think too highly of Teng Qingshan’s current splendor! Yesterday, he issued a fight with martial brother Zang Feng! I don’t believe that Teng Qingshan is good enough to be martial brother Zang Feng’s opponent.” The green robed girl let out a harrumph.

“Martial brother Zang Feng has been a Commander for quite some time, while Teng Qingshan is only 17 years old! Although he may be quite strong, I just don’t think that he’s a match for martial brother Zang Feng.” The round faced girl echoed the other lady’s thoughts.

“That’s right! When Teng Qingshan loses, he will no longer be able to retain the position of First Commander, and will be suppressed by Zang Feng! Then we’ll see if Teng QIngyu is still complacent as she’s constantly blathering about her brother.” The green robed girl giggled, “I’ve heard that she’s from the countryside. It’s no wonder that she’s an uncultured swine!”

“Second martial sister, what are you so proud of? Do you believe that you can compare with junior sister Qingyu? Do you believe that you can chase after the Young Sovereign?” The oval faced girl promptly said.

The green robed lady’s face flushed red, “I, I... that Teng Qingyu is a back country bumpkin and even more unsuited for the Young Sovereign! Her brother is too! Look... tomorrow, Teng Qingshan will definitely be defeated by martial brother Zang Feng so badly that he won’t even be able to retaliate!”

Just at this time—-

“Lord Commander!” Two female disciples saw the visitor and their eyes lit up. They proceeded to deferentially yell out.

The group of girls that was previously gossiping gasped in surprise as they turned their bodies to look.

The green robed girl looked over and saw Teng Qingshan walking over. His gaze was as sharp as a knife as it slowly swept over her body. She only felt the depths of her heart quake in fear, and it felt as if she had sunken into an icehouse, her forehead riddled with sweat. Teng Qingshan’s gaze only passed over, simultaneously smiling as he looked at the oval faced girl.

He then walked over to the small bridge.

“When Commander Teng walked over just now, I didn’t even dare to breathe,” A few female disciples excitedly exclaimed.

“Just now, Commander Teng smiled at me,” The oval faced girl was extremely giddy.

As for the green robed girl, her face was a bit pale as she frightenedly stared at Teng Qingshan’s from behind.

One expression was enough to cause her heart to shudder in fear!

……

Teng Qingshan let out a silent sigh, “This sort of character truly

is complex. Although Qingyu treats people very well and is a very simple person, she has been unexpectedly labeled a country bumpkin! However, it's still fine... at least amongst the female disciples, there are many who have a decent relation with Qingyu." Teng Qingshan had actually already foreseen that people would be jealous of Qingyu.

"Qingyu!" Teng Qingshan laughed as he called out.

"Brother!" Qingyu was in the midst of training the sword when she turned her head and immediately ran over excitedly.

"Brother, why have you come?" Qingyu was very pleasantly surprised. This was the first time Teng Qingshan had come to find her in these past few days when she was training the sword.

"I've come to see you," Teng Qingshan laughed and rubbed Qingyu's head.

At this time, a beautiful woman wearing a light red long robe walked over while smiling, "Lord Commander!"

"Master, calling me Qingshan is fine," Teng Qingshan laughed. According to his position, a Black Armored Army Commander was on the same level as a Gui Yuan Sect Elder. Although this Wang Qinglan was part of the 26th generation, the Gui Yuan Sect harbored a large amount of 26th generation disciples. Thus, even if one was older, it didn't necessarily mean that his or her ranking was just as high.

After all, in the Gui Yuan Sect, there were others who were three to four generations older than Sovereign Zhuge Yuanhong!

"How has my sister been doing under Master's tutelage?" Teng Qingshan asked.

"Qingshan." The beautiful woman let out a faint laugh, "Qingyu, this child, has fairly good talent and great comprehension towards sword arts! Only, the time she's spent training has been fairly short, and her inner strenth is quite lacking... she still requires

assiduous training.”

Teng Qingshan nodded his head, “Then I will have to trouble Master.”

“Of course!” The beautiful woman affirmed the statement.

People like Wang Qinglan had been in Gui Yuan Sect for a very long time, and clearly knew that it would be very difficult to guage the future accomplishments of someone like Teng Qingshan, who was the First Commander and the Sovereign’s personal disciple at such a young age. There was a high chance that he could be Gui Yuan Sect’s new Sovereign in the future.

If they were to form a good relationship now, then there would only be benefits.

Teng Qingshan looked at the happy Qingyu, and understood in his heart why those female disciples were envious of her and why they held her in contempt but didn’t look down on Lady Qing! This was because Lady Qing was the Sovereign’s daughter, while Qingyu was only his sister! His own strength had yet to be formally recognized! If he were to be officially known as the strongest person in his generation, then at the very least, he had to become an innate master.

Even if those girls were full of envy, they would probably not dare to speak it aloud!

“I must completely win my fight with Zang Feng!” Teng Qingshan silently said.

……

The weather was gloomy on the 28th day of the ninth month!

In the morning, the Black Armored Army military training field was covered by a vast expanse of people. No matter whether it was soldiers from the Black Armored Army or Gui Yuan Sect core disciples, all of them were gathered here. The Elders, the Law Enforcing Elders, and even the Sovereign was gathered here to

watch this great fight! The importance of this fight was obvious!

There was a huge crowd of people!

In the center of the training ground was an elevated stage ten Zhang wide. Currently, it was empty. The dense crowds of people surrounding the stage all watched the elevated stage.

“Commander Teng will definitely win; after all, he is an Earthly Ranking expert!”

“He’s only 17 years old! Commander Zang Feng has been hiding his cultivation, so I’m afraid that Commander Teng cannot beat Commander Zang Feng!”

……

All together, the Black Armored Army soldiers and the Gui Yuan Sect disciples added up to around ten thousand people; thus, it was bustling with activity and clamoring with noise. Everyone was discussing with each other!

Of the two fighters, one was once officially recognized by Gui Yuan Sect as the strongest person of his generation, Zang Feng. The other was someone who, although not a member of the Gui Yuan Sect for even a year, had gained fame at an alarming rate. He was only 17, but he was an Earthly Ranking expert. He was Teng Qingshan.

The two of them were both commanders of the Black Armored Army.

Who would win?

This fight would ultimately decide who was the strongest person among Gui Yuan Sect’s youth.

Perhaps, the next generation Sovereign of the Gui Yuan Sect would be the winner of today’s fight.

“Hu!” A tall and large black silhouette leaped onto the disciples heads and arrived on the elevated stage. This person had a tough a

stocky build, and was at least 2.25 meters tall! His face had a metallic shine to it, almost like a metallic alloy. This person was the Sovereign's disciple and the Black Armored Army's Second Commander, Pang Shan!

When Pang Shan arrived on the elevated stage, immediately, the ten thousand people hastily quieted down.

Pang Shan's gaze swept over the multitudes of people as he roared, "This fight is Commander Zang Feng challenging Commander Teng Qingshan! The winner will be Black Armored Army's First Commander! Now... can Commander Teng Qingshan and Commander Zang Feng please get onto the stage!" The voice was like thunder and it reverberated around the entire military training field.

Chapter 158: The Direction of the Spear

Hu! Hu!

Gusts of strong wind blew across the drill ground and the sky was increasingly turning darker. However, the atmosphere on the drill ground was even more suffocating than that of the gloomy weather.

“Brother, be careful!” Teng Qingshan, Teng Qinghu, Zhuge Yun, and company had gathered together. A faint smile appeared on the face of Teng Qingshan as he nodded. Thereafter, with the Qing Gong «Crossing Worlds», he gracefully flew above the crowd as if a gust of green smoke. With two taps on the heads of two disciples of the Gui Yuan Sect, he landed in the arena.

“Martial Uncle!” Teng Qingshan smiled and greeted Pang Shan!

“Good Qing Gong!” Pang Shan praised as his eyes lit up.

The arena had a height of four Chi, a width of ten Zhang, and was made from a layer of bluish gray rock. At that moment, there was only Teng Qingshan and Pang Shan on the vast arena. Teng Qingshan took a glance down and was full of emotion when he saw Zang Feng in the distance, wearing a suit of black!

Zang Feng held on to a saber and lifted his head as he looked at Teng Qingshan coldly.

“Hu!” The figure suddenly lifted himself off the ground and, as if a beam of light, within a few flashes, he passed through twenty-odd Zhang and entered the arena.

“Commander Zang Feng!”

“Martial Brother Zang Feng!”

……

Following the scattered cheers was an overwhelming cheer of support. There were those from the Black Armored Army, as well

as those from the core disciples of the Gui Yuan Sect. All these years, there were many who were convinced by Zang Feng's abilities and were supportive of him.

"Commander Teng!"

"Teng Qingshan!"

.....

Many from the Black Armored Army started to holler, and the men from the battalion under Teng Qingshan were especially loud. Teng Qinghu shouted with till his face was grim. Teng Qingshan was from the First Division, so naturally the men from the First Division would be supportive of him. Similarly, those from the Third Division would be supportive of Zang Feng.

The men from the Second and Fourth Division also followed and shouted.

In just that instant!

The whole drill ground was bustling and the shouts circled the area as if a hurricane with the arena being the eye of the storm. Teng Qingshan was wearing a opal suit and grasped his silvery-grey Reincarnation Spear in his hand while Zang Feng was wearing a suit of black and was similarly holding onto his godly weapon.

Standing in the middle of the arena, Pang Shan spoke out.

"This is an arena competition. If one steps out of the ring or admits defeat, it would be their loss. In a contest, blades and spears do not have eyes, but if one were to kill the other party on purpose, the penalty would be death!" Pang Shan's loud voice spread across the whole drill ground and the shouts in the drill ground immediately turned into silence.

Pang Shan turned his head and looked far into the distance where the Sovereign 'Zhuge Yuanhong' was seated on the high platform with a company. Zhuge Yuanhong nodded at him.

“Teng Qingshan, Zang Feng, you may begin!” Pang Shan said, as he turned and leapt down from the arena.

There were only two people left in the arena —

Teng Qingshan! Zang Feng!

“Martial Brother Zang Feng, kindly please enlightenment me!” Teng Qingshan cupped his hands.

“Please!” Zang Feng also cupped his hands coldly.

……

There was not a single strand of noise on the drill ground, and on the heightened platform at the side of the drill ground, there were three seated on chairs. It was the Sovereign ‘Zhuge Yuanhong’ and the two Law Enforcing Elders.

“Sovereign, look at Zang Feng. This kid is displaying his full ability. Even if there are over ten thousand warriors staring at him, there is no hesitation in his eyes at all. Standing atop the arena, he is like a sharp blade. Just looking at his temperament alone, it is hard to find someone from the younger generation with such firm will as his. Compared to the last time I saw him battling with Ji Hong, he has improved a lot.” The white-haired Law Enforcing Elder spoke out.

The Sovereign smiled and nodded his head.

The cool, middle-aged man beside him said, “Martial Uncle! That Teng Qingshan’s gaze is reserved and motionless like a mountain! Standing there with the spear in his hand, he is not affected at all. At such an age, this is rare, truly rare!”

“Martial Uncle and Martial Granduncle. Which of the two do you think will win this battle?” Zhuge Yuanhong smiled as he looked towards the arena.

“It’s hard to say!” The Martial Granduncle shook his head.

The cool-looking middle-aged man also shook his head and said,

“Sovereign, what do you think?”

“I did not see for myself when Qingshan killed Meng Tian..... Maybe today, he will be able to display his actual skills.” Zhuge Yuanhong smiled faintly. “Mmmm.....Feng Er has finally made his move!”

.....

Indeed, on the arena, Zang Feng had been prepared right from the start. Teng Qingshan was also holding onto his spear as he faced it with a light smile!

“If one is to win, one must have a clean and obvious win!” Teng Qingshan fixed his gaze on Zang Feng.

Zang Feng’s gaze was as if a vicious eagle, staring at Teng Qingshan. Suddenly, he exerted force upon his legs and the limestone ground cracked as Zang Feng shot towards Teng Qingshan as if a beam of light. The distance of about eight Zhang was closed within the blink of an eye and only a ‘chi chi’ sound could be heard.

The shadow of the blade was as if a cold crescent!

The sweep of blade light reflected in Teng Qingshan’s pupils.

Teng Qingshan’s pupils contracted! An astonishing strength abruptly shot out from his arms as his Reincarnation Spear started to move!

Hu!

The spear was as if an arrow which had just been released, cutting across the sky with a sharp whistling sound!

“Clank!”

At the moment the weapons clashed, the head of Teng Qingshan’s spear created a strong rotational force! It enveloped the saber and forced it to tilt to the side. Zang Feng’s face immediately changed! Zang Feng, who had initially maintained a fierce and

strong appearance, could only feel that the saber had fallen to an invisible hurricane.

Swoosh!

The spear pierced towards his heart!

“No!” Zang Feng stared with his eyes wide open.

“Clank!” At the final moment, the sheath in his left hand swiped in a curved path and knocked against the tip of Teng Qingshan’s spear. Borrowing strength from the collision, with a tap of his feet, he retreated a few Zhang away. Once he landed, Zang Feng realised that his forehead was covered in cold sweat and his back was also completely wet from his sweat.

“What a horrifying Spear Art!” Zang Feng was very astonished.

But he was not aware that, in order to have a clean triumph, Teng Qingshan used a strength of sixty thousand jin! That was because the «Vigor of the Reckless Bull» could only create an explosive strength of this standard. Such strength, coupled with Teng Qingshan’s Five Element Spear Art, was something that even the expert Meng Tian from the« Earthly Ranking» was unable to match up to.

Teng Qingshan broke into a grin.

Hu!

With a poke, the tip of the spear once again turned into a beam of light as it thrust towards Zang Feng.

“Swoosh!” “Swoosh!” “Swoosh!”……

The shadow of the spear was as if many sharp arrows!

Tens of thousands of arrows shot out at once!

The shadows of the spear, dash after dash, seemed like a whole group of venomous vipers fighting to bite Zang Feng. Zang Feng was holding his saber in one hand and his sheath in another. With nimble movements, he continuously shunned and dodged, and

concurrently used the saber and sheath in both hands to block the moves. There was one thing — he was continuously moving backwards!

“How could it be, how could it be, how could it be like this?”

While moving backwards, Zang Feng was panicking.

“I must attack!”

Zang Feng wanted to attack, but each spear of Teng Qingshan contained a rotational force. Each thrust was as if it had hiding a hurricane. Furthermore, Teng Qingshan had been practicing the ‘Three Postures’ for very long, and was able to comprehend the ceaseless state even better. His ‘Pursuing Shadow’ completely encompassed the opponent!

One thrust after another, one hurricane after another!

He fended off one spear after another with much difficulty, but the spear skill with endless streams of attacks made Zang Feng feel that he had entered a massive hurricane. He was totally trapped, without any means to escape! Zang Feng only felt that he was not able to display his blade skills at all. Each time he fended off an attack, he felt so terrible that he was on the verge of puking blood!

It wasn’t just Zang Feng!

Even the innate expert ‘Sima Qing’, as well as the evolved demonic beast ‘Red Scaled Beast’, had once entangled with Teng Qingshan’s ‘Pursuing Shadow’ Spear Art. It had been hard for even them to escape.

It was as if a small boat was entrapped within a surge after surge of stormy ocean waves.

Fending off surge after surge of ocean waves with much difficulty, but……there would be a time when the boat would capsize!

“Pu!”

The sheath was sent flying!

Zang Feng was only left with the saber in his hands. His face was covered in sweat, his face was flushed, and his eyes were staring hard at the endless shadows of the spear.

“Clank!” “Clank!” “Clank!”……

Hu!

The saber was sent flying!

“Ahh!” Zang Feng shouted out in a deep voice of agony.

Silence!

There was nothing but silence!

One could only see that Zang Feng had fallen and was seated on the ground, his face was very pale. On the other hand, the spearhead of Teng Qingshan’s Reincarnation Spear was adhered to Zang Feng’s throat.

“I, I……” Zang Feng’s vision slowly started to focus as he stared in horror at the silver spear in front of his eyes, feeling the strange warm feeling from the tip of the spear. He could see it clearly earlier that the spear was thrust at his throat. “I’m not dead? This Teng Qingshan……to think that he had stopped at the crucial moment?”

……

The thousands of men of the Black Armored Army, as well as the close to ten thousand of core disciples in the drill ground, were all dumbfounded.

This fight had been very short!

Other than Zang Feng’s fierce hack of his saber right from the start, he was only able to fend off the violent waves of Teng Qingshan’s spear shadows. Under the envelopment of horrifying spear attacks that resembled a violent thunderstorm, Zang Feng was like a frail sheep. After he had barely fended off the attacks for

a few breaths time, in the blink of an eye, his sheath was sent flying. Not long later, his saber was also sent flying!

He had suffered from a bitter defeat!

On the platform at the side of the drill ground, Zhuge Yuanhong and the two Law Enforcing Elders gasped in surprise.

“What excellent Spear Arts!” The white haired old man praised.

The eyes of Zhuge Yuanhong also lit up as he praised, “When Teng Qingshan was fighting for the position of the centurion, he had used this spear skill as well. However……At that time, it did not reach the perfection of such endless streams of attack. Each thrust of the spear was connected to each other. Once one is unable to break through the first attack, facing the endless stream of shadows of Qingshan’s spear, he would not be able to retaliate!”

“The more he retaliates, the worse the defeat!” That cool middle-aged old man gasped. “Facing this Spear Art, one option is to use an overwhelming amount of Innate True Origin to smash him! Or to use an even faster attack to break his first move directly! Or to use extreme speed to escape from the envelopment of that Spear Art.”

The three of them were all innate experts.

What keen eyes! To be able to see the impressiveness of Teng Qingshan’s Spear Arts. Even amongst innate warriors, this Spear Art was also very terrifying.

“Actually, the abilities of that kid Zang Feng can’t be considered bad. His «Shooting Star Blade» must have reached the second level, the realm of ‘Moon Blade’” That cold middle-aged man praised. Amongst the innate experts in Gui Yuan Sect, he was the only who trained in the Saber Arts.

“Sovereign, that Teng Qingshan is really only seventeen? And this Spear Art, was created by him?” The cool middle-aged man looked towards Zhuge Yuanhong in disbelief.

Zhuge Yuanhong smiled as he nodded. He then looked towards Teng Qingshan in the arena. “That Spear Art earlier has a state of endless stream of attacks, and to think that he could stop the spear easily at the very last moment. For the spear to touch Zang Feng’s throat yet not hurting him at all. With this level of control, he can definitely achieve the realm of ‘Minute Subtlety’ with ease!”

The other two Law Enforcing Elder also nodded their head.

Under the violent attacks, which were like raging thunderstorms, to be able to stop the spear at the skin of one’s throat without hurting the person an inch in just a moment, the level of control needed was really astonishing.

“With his caliber, once he reaches the Innate Realm, then, haha……” Zhuge Yuanhong smiled brightly.

Chapter 159: The Limits of the Dantian

The gazes of over ten thousand people were fixated on the arena.

"Hu!" Teng Qingshan pulled back his Reincarnation Spear.

Zang Feng was stunned as he fell down, seated on the floor. After a long time, he took a deep look at Teng Qingshan before saying, "Martial Brother Qingshan, I've lost, and I admit my defeat!" With that, he got up, picked up the sheath and saber, and left the arena in desolation. The men from the Black Armored Army, as well as the core disciples, immediately opened a path for Zang Feng to leave.

Zang Feng had lost. He wasn't able to retaliate at all!

"Zang Feng's abilities were not bad at all! His strength would likely be comparable with the strength of the two Black and White Elders from the Xiao Yao Palace. But against the Blood Moon Saber Meng Tian, he would be a notch lower." Teng Qingshan silently gauged. His Five Elemental Spear Art was constantly improving because of his research and insights. Especially the time at the Blazing Mountain, he had defeated the Sovereign of the Zhong Jian Sect with merely his 'Inflamed Passion' and 'Flashing Fire'.

At that moment, his understanding of fusing Yin and Yang, strong and weak, went up another level.

The Pursuing Shadow Spear Art had become even more continuous and perfect.

"He is already considered very talented." Teng Qingshan looked at Zang Feng's desolate figure from behind. "Only the strong can grow from facing obstacles! Whether this Zang Feng will be a dragon or a worm will depend on how strong his mental state is." Teng Qingshan had experienced trials of life and death that an assassin went through starting from the age of seven! Some of them would include killing, survival skills, as well interrogation

skills by using torture.

The deaths of friends, his lover, as well as himself.

Teng Qingshan had gone through far too much!

Both his past and present lives had allowed Teng Qingshan to experience everything that built up his mentality to what it was. How could Zang Feng compare at all?

Zang Feng had joined the Gui Yuan Sect since he was young, and he was assessed as a genius with immeasurable potential. He had led a smooth life, becoming the direct disciple of the Sovereign and eventually the commander of the Black Armored Army! Indeed, Zang Feng had not gone through many obstacles.

"Commander Teng Qingshan has won this contest!" Standing atop the arena, Pang Shan said out in a clear voice. "Commander Teng shall remain as the First Commander of our Black Armored Army!"

The gazes of over ten thousand men were all fixed on the arena. They were fixed on Teng Qingshan who was clad in a suit of green.

"Teng Qingshan!"

"Commander Teng!"

...

The men from the Black Armored Army all shouted crazily. All of them were very agitated, bellowing, hollering! In the Black Armored Army, the strong were revered! Teng Qingshan had defeated Zang Feng with indisputable strength. In their hearts, the men from the Black Armored Army would of course see Teng Qingshan as the strongest of the Black Armored Army! Many core disciples of the Gui Yuan Sect were extremely excited as well.

Teng Qingshan came from a normal background, but he already had such abilities at the age of seventeen. Many core disciples considered Teng Qingshan as their goal!

Indisputable!

From that day onwards, Teng Qingshan would be the strongest amongst the younger generation!

Heavy rainfall finally arrived at night after the sky had been gloomy for the whole day!

Hua hua!

The rainfall was very heavy, and the wind was chilling!

On the veranda of the second floor in his quarters, Teng Qingshan was lying on the chair while looking at the chilling rainstorm. "The Gui Yuan Sect truly reveres the strong. Merely defeating Zang Feng...Such a small thing could raise such a big storm." Recalling the scene after the fight that morning, Teng Qingshan didn't know whether to laugh or cry.

There were those who congratulated him.

There were those who would like to speak to him.

There were those who wished for Teng Qingshan to take in their relatives as disciples. Teng Qingshan was the 27th generation disciple and had such strong capabilities, so he had the right to take in disciples.

...

In short, this battle had solidified Teng Qingshan's status.

"Status and respect. All these depend on one's abilities." Teng Qingshan lamented. This was how it was across the Nine Prefectures! To gain respect, one must rely on his own hands! What one hears may not be the truth. Only what could be seen was reliable. While there had been plenty of rumors spreading that Teng Qingshan was very powerful, many disciples and soldiers may not have really believed it.

Only after they saw the battle earlier were they finally convinced!

"What's the point of dominating the warriors in the Postliminary

Realm! Across the Nine Prefectures, the strongest ones are the innate experts! In the Gui Yuan Sect, once one becomes an innate expert, he will be appointed as a 'Law Enforcing Elder' and gain a high status right away!" Teng Qingshan was only thinking about how to achieve the Innate Realm. Teng Qingshan would not be content with the mere compliments and flattery from that morning.

Teng Qingshan got up and sat cross-legged on the veranda, trying once again to cultivate his first Innate True Origin.

...

The endless rain continued until the next morning. By that time, the heavy rain slowed into a light drizzle, but it nonetheless continued to fall.

Teng Qingshan opened his eyes.

After sitting cross-legged on the veranda overnight, his clothes were slightly damp.

"I have been training with 'Dark Moon Spear Technique', the method to achieve the Innate Realm, for a whole nine days, but there hasn't been any progress at all." Teng Qingshan frowned. "I can only ask Teacher now!" Thereafter, Teng Qingshan washed up and brought an umbrella to head out for breakfast before he went to look for Zhuge Yuanhong.

Morning.

The doors to Zhuge Yuanhong's study were wide open. Zhuge Yuanhong was barefoot and his long hair was let down, as he wore a loose fitting long robe and waved a brush in front of his desk. A scent of sandalwood was emitting from the incense burning on the desk.

"Teacher!" Teng Qingshan stood at the door as he called out respectfully.

"Oh, Qingshan." Zhuge Yuanhong did not raise his head, but he

continued to wave his brush, sometimes slowly and sometimes quickly. "Come in."

Teng Qingshan walked into the study, and he calmed down after smelling the scent of the sandalwood. He quietly stood at the side while not making a sound. He could see that his teacher was painting a scene of mountains and water. With a few simple strokes, the rocky gorge appeared on the paper. Only after some time did Zhuge Yuanhong put down his brush.

"I will probably only be able to finish this painting at noon." Zhuge Yuanhong smiled as he looked at Teng Qingshan. "Qingshan, do you like to draw?"

"I don't." Teng Qingshan shook his head.

"Actually, drawing is a good way to train your mind." Zhuge Yuanhong lamented. "For example, when you are infuriated, you can draw the scene of a burning building, channeling the anger into the painting. So when other people see the painting, they will be able to feel the flames that can burn down everything, as the craziness and fury are all contained within."

"It requires extreme control of your mental states to be able to control the paintbrush and complete the painting under different mental states while not making any mistakes!" Zhuge Yuanhong said.

Teng Qingshan nodded.

To be able to express the states in the drawing, first, one's artistic skill must reach an extremely high level. The artistic skill was just the foundation.

"The training after achieving the Innate Realm would be the training of the mind and the comprehension of the realm." Zhuge Yuanhong smiled and said. "Qingshan, you'll have to pick up a skill to train your mind! The Dark Moon Spear Technique contains a method to practice calligraphy. It is to practice writing the 'moon'

character. There are a total of eighteen different ways to write the 'moon' character. When the ancestors created words, they did not create them without contemplation. When one is engrossed in writing, it allows you to really appreciate the feelings behind each word."

Teng Qingshan nodded his head, but he still remained silent!

Writing? Drawing?

Writing was the most that Teng Qingshan could do, in additional to drawing of a few simple portraits. These were the basic skills required of an assassin. As for the mental state? Teng Qingshan was far from that. Furthermore, he also had no interest in them.

His interest only lay in boxing! In Spear Arts!

With the 'Three Postures', each time Teng Qingshan practiced it, it would take him one whole day, but he would not feel tired at all. But as for writing calligraphy? That was torture.

"Haha..." Zhuge Yuanhong shook his head and smiled. "Go ahead, what's on your mind?"

"Teacher!" Teng Qingshan said solemnly. "Actually, I have long reached the stage where my 'Spirit' breaks through the obstacles of the Niwan Palace."

"What?!" No matter how calm Zhuge Yuanhong was, he was so shocked that his eyes were wide open!

"Qingshan, you, are able to reach the state where your 'Spirit' breaks through the obstacles of the Niwan Palace?" Zhuge Yuanhong could not believe it. To attain the Innate Realm, this was the biggest obstacle. Once one's 'Spirit' was able to break through, it would be one step away from attaining the Innate Realm. It would mean that the person would definitely be able to achieve the Innate Realm.

A seventeen year-old innate expert?

What notion was this?!

"Teacher, take a look at this." Teng Qingshan took out a flying dagger and tossed it out towards the outside of the study.

Swoosh!

The flying knife cut across the sky, but suddenly, it curved and pierced into the bark of the willow tree.

"This..." Zhuge Yuanhong's eyes lit up as he agitatedly patted Teng Qingshan on the shoulder. "Haha, Qingshan, oh Qingshan! Teacher has thought very well of you, but you, surprise me time and time again! Haha...turning a flying dagger? Your Spirit has not just left the body, but it has also reached such a high level of control. Your 'Spirit' really is very strong. I can guarantee that you do not even require two hours to attain the Innate Realm!"

'Gui Yuan Zhuge', in the Nine Prefectures, was a synonym for calm and wisdom.

But facing a disciple who could achieve the Innate Realm at the age of seventeen, no one would be able to keep his cool.

"Teacher7." Teng Qingshan said helplessly, "To be frank, from the day I received the'Dark Moon Spear Technique', I had already started to 'focus the mental state on the Dantian, fusing the Spirit and Qi in an attempt to cultivate the first Innate True Origin. But after nine days have passed, I am still not able to succeed."

"What, impossible." Zhuge Yuanhong was in disbelief.

"This is the truth." Teng Qingshan was also feeling very helpless.

Zhuge Yuanhong was a bit surprised, but he quickly calmed down and said in a deep voice, "There are two conditions for one to attain the Innate Realm. One of them is to be at the pinnacle of the Postliminary Realm, and the other is for the Spirit to breakthrough the obstacles of the 'Niwan Palace'. You have achieved both, so how could you not succeed? I saw the turning of your flying dagger earlier very clearly. The control of the 'Spirit' was much better

than when I first stepped into the Innate Realm. Could it be that you have not reached the pinnacle of the Postliminary Realm? That's not possible. You were already at the peak of the Postliminary Realm when I first saw you."

"Qingshan, sit down cross-legged. Try one more time and follow what I say." Zhuge Yuanhong said.

"Yes, Teacher."

Teng Qingshan sat down in a cross-legged position.

Zhuge Yuanhong said, "Focus all of your Spirit into your Dantian, preferably gathering it to the center of your Dantian, in the middle of the hurricane there."

Teng Qingshan suddenly opened his eyes as he looked at Zhuge Yuanhong in confusion. "Teacher, center of the hurricane? There is a center of a hurricane in the Dantian?"

Zhuge Yuanhong was also a bit dumbfounded.

"Of course there is!" Zhuge Yuanhong was exclaimed. "After the Spiritual Qi of Heaven and Earth are absorbed, it's converted into inner strength and stored in the Dantian. As one absorbs more and more inner strength, the Dantian will gradually grow bigger as it expands. Take Little Yun for instance, he is good in his training of mental cultivation method, and thus he is able to absorb the Spiritual Qi of Heaven and Earth very quickly. It took him only ten years for his Dantian to expand to its limit and stop growing. At that time, the inner strength in the Dantian will naturally form a hurricane! This is something that all who cultivate inner strength are aware of."

Teng Qingshan was dumbfounded.

"Teacher, my...my Dantian is still gradually expanding!" Teng Qingshan spoke out.

Zhuge Yuanhong was in shock. "That's not possible. When you first fought for the position of the centurion, you already had the

capabilities of a First Rated Warrior. And your mental cultivation method of inner strength was obviously very bad. You must have eaten some spiritual fruit to get such a thick and profound inner strength. Spiritual fruits which can increase one's inner strength can also modify the Dantian, allowing the Dantian to grow to its limit."

Teng Qingshan did not know whether to laugh or to cry.

He finally found out the reason!

Spiritual Fruit of Heaven and Earth? Bullsh*t. The absorption of his inner strength was all thanks to the training of Xing Yi Martial Arts. The actual amount of inner strength absorbed was actually not much.

Even in the battle for the position of the centurion, he had relied on the strength of his body and not inner strength. He was conservative in the use of his inner strength.

The reason his training was fast was reliant on the 'Vigor of the Reckless Bull'. Now that he had reached the ninth stage, the speed of one day of training now was comparable to a hundred days of training back in the Teng Jia Village. Also, the 'Vigor of the Reckless Bull' merely stated a method of cultivation, and it did not include common knowledge such as achieving the pinnacle state of the Postliminary Realm or on how the Dantian would reach its limits.

This was common knowledge!

Every warrior who cultivated would be informed by their master. However, Teng Qingshan did not have a master who would teach him about inner strength in the past. While he had one now, in Zhuge Yuanhong's eyes, why would he still need to share such common knowledge to his ingenious disciple Teng Qingshan who was listed in the 'Earth Ranking'?

"No wonder! Even with Zhuge Yun's great mental cultivation

method, it also took him ten years for his Dantian to reach its limits. The growth spurt of my Dantian only started after I started training in the 'Vigor of the Reckless Bull'. I have yet to train for a year, so of course it wouldn't have reached its limits yet." Teng Qingshan was feeling very bitter.

Who would have thought that the obstacle was the simplest reason, that is, reaching the pinnacle of the Postliminary Realm!

"Qingshan, your Dantian is still growing and has yet to reach its limits?" Zhuge Yuanhong stared at Teng Qingshan.

Teng Qingshan nodded his head.

"Then, based on the normal mental cultivation method, how would you have such thick and profound inner strength within ten years time?" Zhuge Yuanhong asked.

"It is not that my inner strength is thick and profound. It is just that my meridian channels are wide and are able to exert a large amount of inner strength in an instance." Teng Qingshan said.

Zhuge Yuanhong was astonished.

Amongst the spiritual fruits, the ones that can modify one's meridian channels would be more rare and precious than those that can increase one's inner strength! The wider one's meridian channels were, the stronger the explosive power it could create in an instance.

"No wonder your 'Vigor of the Reckless Bull' can display such prowess." Zhuge Yuanhong was uncertain as he asked, "What spiritual fruit did you eat in the past?"

"I didn't have any special feeling! In the mountains, I will often eat wild fruits. My meridian channels have also changed gradually." Teng Qingshan said. There is no way that he would reveal the secrets of Xing Yi Martial Arts. Even if he were to tell them...the people of the Nine Prefectures would not be able to understand it. It belonged to the achievements of another system.

Zhuge Yuanhong shook his head. "Nature is full of mysteries with many spiritual fruits and spiritual grasses that people are unaware of. You must have been lucky and ate something! Alright, now the problem is clear. Your problem is that your Dantian has yet to grow to its limits, and you have not reached the pinnacle of the Postliminary Realm!"

In the mind of a warrior.

To achieve a strength of ten thousand Jin, to have the Dantian reach its limit, and to reach the pinnacle of the Postliminary Realm...all these thoughts were all linked into one.

To become a First Rated Warrior, the Dantian would have almost reached its limits. After all, the spiritual fruits of Heaven and Earth that could expand the meridian channels were rare and few in number.

Who would have thought that an enigma such as Teng Qingshan would appear.

"Teacher, if I continue to train the 'Vigor of the Reckless Bull', how long would it take for my Dantian to reach its limits?" Teng Qingshan asked.

"For the past ten odd years, your Dantian has probably grown at a very slow pace! Based on the speed of the ninth stage of the 'Vigor of the Reckless Bull', I reckon...you would take at least another three to four years before your Dantian reaches its limits and you step into the Innate Realm." Zhuge Yuanhong said. Teng Qingshan started to feel unsettled.

Three to four years?

"But it is not worth it to let you waste these three to four years time." Zhuge Yuanhong shook his head and said. "There's no other way out...We'll have to find a spiritual fruit to instantly increase your inner strength and let your Dantian grow to its limit."

Chapter 160: The Map of the Desolate Land

Spiritual fruits that increased one's inner strength?

Teng Qingshan's knowledge of things such as spiritual fruits and demonic beasts was very small.

Zhuge Yuanhong laughed. "Initially, I had thought that you, Qingshan, had eaten a spiritual fruit that increased your inner strength. Seems like it was actually a spiritual fruit that modified your meridian channels. Now, we'll have to find a way to get a hold of a spiritual fruit that increases your inner strength!" While it was a bit troublesome, Zhuge Yuanhong was rather happy.

That was because...

Once the spiritual fruit was obtained, Teng Qingshan would be able to step into the Innate Realm.

"Master, what are the spiritual fruits that increase inner strength?" Teng Qingshan inquired.

Astonished, Zhuge Yuanhong said, "There are many miscellaneous books in the Martial Pavilion. You didn't read them?"

Seeing Teng Qingshan's expression, he understood. He smiled and added in detail, "There are currently six known spiritual fruits of the Heaven and Earth that increase one's inner strength and expand the Dantian to the limits. These include the Violet Ice Heart, Bamboo Spirit Fruit and Scarlet Fruit. These six spiritual fruits increase inner strength but are considered mediocre amongst the spiritual fruits of the Heaven and Earth. The fruits that can affect one's meridian channels, like the fruit you had eaten, are the most precious spiritual fruits.

Teng Qingshan was astonished.

Dear heavens! To think that there were six types of spiritual fruits that increase one's inner strength. The Nine Prefectures

were definitely much more amazing than the world from his previous life.

"Of course, the effects of these six fruits are slightly different! For example, after eating the Violet Ice Heart, your Dantian will reach its limits. But at the same time, your inner strength would also be affected and contain icy cold Qi." Zhuge Yuanhong explained. "As for the Scarlet Fruit, after eating it, it will make you inner strength contain scorching flaming Qi!"

After mentioning this, Zhuge Yuanhong smiled. "Of course, right now, you are only a warrior in the Postliminary Realm. There is no differentiation such as hot and cold in your inner strength, so you can choose to eat whichever you prefer. But once eaten, when you reach the Innate Realm in the future, the method by which you train your Innate True Origin must be the same as the nature of the spiritual fruit you consumed."

Teng Qingshan frowned.

The inner strength of almost all warriors was the same, colorless, and no differentiation such as that of hot or cold.

However, after attaining the Innate Realm, the Innate True Origin would have color! Take that 'Ghostly Fox' Sima Qing for example, his Innate True Origin was grey in color. When individual training methods diverged, it allowed their Innate True Origin to contain different traits. For instance, if one were to train the 'Dark Moon Spear Technique' to perfection, it should contain the icy cold trait.

"Qingshan, you will be training the 'Dark Moon Spear Technique'. Therefore, in the future, your Innate True Origin will have the icy cold trait. It would be better for you to find the 'Violet Ice Heart', since eating it will strengthen the ice cold trait of your Innate True Origin, giving you bigger prowess! But it's also hard to locate this Violet Ice Heart. I reckon not many sects have them in stock."

"To find the Violet Ice Heart, you will need to traverse across the Nine Prefecture as you travel north. After reaching the North Plains, travel through the plains, and head towards the North Sea...You will only be able to have the hope of finding the Violet Ice Heart in the midst of the North Sea! Once harvested, the Violet Ice Heart must be consumed within one month, else it will turn into water. This is also why not many sects have it in stock."

Perishables such as fruits would rot when stored for a prolonged period of time.

Furthermore, it was highly challenging to harvest such spiritual fruits. Therefore, usually only when there was a need would sects spend a large amount of effort to harvest them.

"From our Yangzhou to the North Sea, the journey is very long..." Zhuge Yuanhong continued.

Hearing this, Teng Qingshan, shook his head. "Master, I don't need the 'Violet Ice Heart'. I would like to take that Scarlet Fruit!"

"Scarlet Fruit?" Zhuge Yuanhong looked at Teng Qingshan in astonishment. "Qingshan, that Scarlet Fruit contains the scorching heat trait. Aren't you training the 'Dark Moon Spear Technique'? The Innate True Origin cultivated from the 'Dark Moon Spear Technique' has the ice cold trait. If you were to eat the Scarlet Fruit, the conflict between the heat and the cold would do you no good."

"Master!" Teng Qingshan quickly explained himself. "I am only using the 'Dark Moon Spear Technique' as a reference on the method for the Dantian to achieve the 'True Dan' and the 'Golden Dan' from the 'Emptiness Dan'. As for the channeling within the meridian channels, I will not learn it."

A person had eight extraordinary meridians and twelve regular meridians.

That was because even an innate master might not be able to

clear all of them. Furthermore, rather than spending a large amount of time to clear all the meridian channels, it would be better to focus and specialise one's training on a few meridian channels. By focusing the training the few meridian channels, it could allow those meridian channels to widen unobstructed. For instance, to focus on training meridian channel with the 'cold' characteristic.

Then in the future, the Innate True Origin would also contain the cold characteristic.

But Teng Qingshan was different!

All his meridian channels had long since been cleared, and he had already seen the components of the 'Dark Moon Spear Technique'. To him, it was a waste of the other meridian channels. He might as well learn the technique of the 'Vigor of the Reckless Bull'. The ninth level of the 'Vigor of the Reckless Bull' depended on absorbing with all eight meridian channels. To concurrently absorb Qi through all eight meridian channels, it would not be any slower than using the 'Dark Moon Spear Technique' to absorb the Spiritual Qi of Heaven and Earth.

...

This was the so called mental cultivation method.

The first step was actually to absorb the Spiritual Qi of Heaven and Earth and convert it to inner strength. Thereafter, the inner strength would be fused with the 'Spirit' to turn into Innate True Origin. In the Dantian, he would start from Emptiness Dan to slowly train to the 'True Dan', and finally the 'Golden Dan'!

To Teng Qingshan, only the last part of the 'Dark Moon Spear Technique', which held information about the evolution process of the Emptiness Dan, the True Dan and the Golden Dan, was worth learning.

Of course, the insights from those predecessors were even more

important!

"Not learning?" Zhuge Yuanhong was also an expert warrior, so he understood Teng Qingshan's intentions. "If you don't want to learn, so be it! It is not a big problem. It's just that... why do you want to choose the Scarlet Fruit? Is the heat characteristic better than that of the cold characteristic?"

"Master, I studied the 'Ardent Flame Spear Art' and created the 'Five Techniques of the Ardent Flame'. Now, I am currently studying on how to merge the 'Five Techniques of the Ardent Flame' into one Spear Art! I feel that this move, when used together with the Innate True Origin with scorching heat characteristic, its prowess would be larger." Teng Qingshan said.

Zhuge Yuanhong was astonished. "Combining the 'Five Techniques of the Ardent Flame' into one move?"

"Good, good!" Zhuge Yuanhong exclaimed. "Although I haven't seen your 'Five Techniques of the Ardent Flame', I heard from Ji Hong that you relied on two moves to defeat the Sovereign of the Zhong Jian Sect, Sima Feng." With Zhuge Yuanhong's abilities, he could clearly imagine the prowess of the Five Techniques of the Ardent Flame.

To want to break up such powerful strokes and merge them into one!

Even Zhuge Yuanhong felt that it would be hard for himself to achieve this if he did not have a few years' time.

"Excellent!" Zhuge Yuanhong said. "Then, Qingshan, you can set off to look for the Scarlet Fruit!"

"First, I'd like to ask Master one question. Where can I find this Scarlet Fruit?" Teng Qingshan asked.

Zhuge Yuanhong quickly replied, "The Scarlet Fruit has an even shorter shelf life than that of the Violet Ice Heart. Even if it's stored in a jade box immediately after its harvest, it will start to rot

in fifteen days! I would reckon that there are no sects with the fruit in its stock. Therefore, you'd have to look for it for yourself. Based on my understanding, the Scarlet Fruit can be found in the Desolate Lands in the south!"

"Desolate South?" Teng Qingshan had generated a tinge of interest.

Boorish South, Desolate South, Boorish Desolate... These few terms referred to the same place. It was a location that would change the faces of many warriors when they talked about it.

"Mmm, the Scarlet Fruit grows about eight hundred Li deep in the region of the Boorish Desolate! There are plenty of Scarlet Fruits there. Of course, it's also hard to harvest it." Zhuge Yuanhong mentioned. "Go to the Martial Pavilion, look for Martial Elder, and get a copy of the map of the Boorish Desolate. Right, and get another two books on spiritual fruits and demonic beasts." Zhuge Yuanhong instructed.

"Yes, master."

Teng Qingshan immediately left the study.

...

The rain outside continued to fall endlessly, accompanied by the chilly wind. Carrying an umbrella, Teng Qingshan hurried to the Martial Pavilion.

After the time it takes to drink a cup of tea, Teng Qingshan placed the umbrella outside the study and entered.

"Pass me the map of the Boorish Desolate." Zhuge Yuanhong instructed.

"Yes, Master."

Teng Qingshan took out a stack of thick leather paper. After receiving it, Zhuge Yuanhong laid it out on the floor of the study. When completely laid out, the map of the Boorish Desolate was

four Chi long and two Chi wide. It contained specific details of many areas, but this map only introduced certain regions of the Boorish Desolate.

"Qingshan, this map of the Boorish Desolate shows close to over two thousand Li of land." Zhuge Yuanhong took out his brush and drew a circle around a spot. "This area is called the "'Steel Arms Monkey Mountain', the one place in the Boorish Desolate where the 'Scarlet Fruit' can be found."

After marking this, Zhuge Yuanhong stacked up the map properly and passed it to Teng Qingshan.

"Qingshan! The Steel Arms Monkey Mountain is known for the demonic beast known as the 'Steel Arms Monkey'. The Steel Arms Monkey is not considered strong, far in comparison from the 'Red Scaled Beast'. However, even if it's not strong, it's still a demonic beast and has the abilities close to that of an expert listed in the Earthly Ranking. Most importantly, in this Monkey Mountain, there is a large troop of Steel Arms Monkey!" Zhuge Yuanhong said.

Teng Qingshan was astonished.

A troop of monkeys?

"Even if an innate master were to look for the Scarlet Fruit, they would not dare to take it by force! Qingshan, that book on demonic beasts also has some records on the 'Steel Arms Monkey'. Take a good look at it before you set off for the Boorish Desolate! Keep in mind...To obtain the Scarlet Fruit, you must use your wit! Do not intend to take it by force." Zhuge Yuanhong said with a smile. "For this issue, it doesn't matter how many of people accompany you. Therefore, this time you will need to depend on yourself."

"Yes, Master."

Teng Qingshan was undaunted.

It was obvious that to Zhuge Yuanhong, even an expert of the

Earthly Ranking would be able to get the Scarlet Fruit if he were to use his brain and be careful.

"When do you plan to set off?" Zhuge Yuanhong asked.

"Tomorrow." Teng Qingshan replied.

...

Teng Qingshan was one who would do what he put his mind to, and was not one who procrastinated. On the same day, Teng Qingshan spoke of his task with the others, including his sister, Teng Qingyu, and his cousin, Teng Qinghu, as well as went to purchase a Cyan Bristled Horse in the afternoon! While he was travelling, Teng Qingshan did not wish to attract too much attention by riding on one of the three Dragon Horses, the 'Dark Demonic Horse'.

Once people saw the Dark Demonic Horse, his identity would be revealed.

The rain only stopped at night.

"Unbelievable! This is really unbelievable." Teng Qingshan put down the book that held records of demonic beasts. "To think that there are so many types of demonic beasts across the Nine Prefectures. There are strong ones and weak ones. To think that... The Flood Dragon in that Frost Jade Pool was actually such a terrifying creature!" Only after reading the book did Teng Qingshan start to feel terrified.

The Flood Dragon in the Frost Jade Pool was much more terrifying that the Red Scaled Beast.

The book mentioned a Purple Radiant Boa that mostly stayed in the area of the 'Purple Radiant Coldsteel'. When it was young, the Purple Radiant Boa was about three Zhang long and its abilities were mediocre. When it fully matured, it would grow up to eight Zhang long and could spew white fog that could freeze the mountain rocks. Even an innate master would have to avoid them.

Over the years, the Purple Radiant Boa would continue to grow slowly. When it reached a length of ten Zhang, it would grow silver horns and turn into a Flood Dragon. It would be a top grade demonic beast once it turns into a Purple Radiant Flood Dragon! At that time, it would spew black fog. Even a innate master, once he came into contact with the black fog, would turn into dust instantaneously! Even an innate Golden Dan expert, when faced with this top grade demonic beast, would lose his life if he wasn't careful!

"It was truly luck." Teng Qingshan felt the terror as he recalled. "The Flood Dragon in the Frost Jade Pool was about twelve Zhang long! If I had touched the black fog, I would have perished."

That time, Teng Qingshan had been in the water.

The Flood Dragon of the Frost Jade Pool spewed black fog and froze the water in the Frost Jade Pool, causing Teng Qingshan to be frozen within the iceberg.The low temperature that Teng Qingshan had endured was the freezing point of ice and not the lowest temperature of the black fog. Thank the heavens that was the case...

"From this book, it seems that the Purple Radiant Boa would be able to match up to the Red Scaled Beast. When the boa turns into the Flood Dragon, its abilities would increase by another notch." Teng Qingshan exclaimed. "If the Flood Dragon were to leave the Frost Jade Pool one day and wreak havoc across the world, many would perish."

He immediately stored the books.

"Mmm, I'll take a rest for a while and set off early tomorrow morning!" Teng Qingshan sat crossed-legged and meditated. His heartbeat slowed down to an extreme, and his life signs plunged to an absolute limit.

Chapter 161: Swordsman

Early morning of the next day, the humidity was very high.

In Jiangning County, outside the northern gate of the Gui Yuan Sect, a young man was leading a ‘Cyan Bristled Horse.’ He wore a green suit and his hair was let down, looking uninhibited. He carried a bag on his back and a long saber at his waist.

“Alright, no need to send me off any further! Brother will be back within half a month.” Teng Qingshan smiled as he hopped on the horse.

“Brother, be careful on your way.”

Teng Qingyu and Teng Qinghu sent off Teng Qingshan. This time around, Teng Qingshan would not be out for too long, which was why he did not inform many.

Clatter! Clatter! Clatter!

The Cyan Bristled Horse galloped on the royal road, splashing about muddied water.

“Now that I’ve made some changes, there probably wouldn’t be many who would be able to recognize me.” Teng Qingshan looked at the saber by his waist. Teng Qingshan did not want to get involved in any trouble on this trip. The name ‘Teng Qingshan’ had too much fame across the Nine Prefectures, especially in Yangzhou!

Therefore, he dismantled his Reincarnation Spear into two sections and kept it in his bag while carrying along a Blood Devouring Saber.

This Blood Devouring Saber was what he received from threatening the leader of the bandits previously.

“Many people may have heard of my name, but few had seen me before! Even at the Blazing Mountain, only some of the people had

met me before. And now, with my hair let down and changing to a saber, my atmosphere would be different. Probably only very few would be able to recognize me!" Teng Qingshan smiled.

His identity was now Qin Lang!

Swordsman 'Qin Lang'.

An uninhibited swordsman who roamed the world suavely.

Teng Qingshan took in a deep breath, taking in the pleasant scent of the earth in a good mood. "With my abilities with the saber, even if I can't be ranked in the «Earthly Ranking», I would still be at the level of the experts of the «Hidden Dragon Ranking»." Teng Qingshan's saber skills was one that kills!

Back then when he was in the hitman group, he had learned to handle a variety of weapons, including daggers, flying daggers, and knives.

The techniques of a hitman were meant to be fast, accurate, and ruthless!

Teng Qingshan did not have any mysterious techniques, but just the three words, fast, accurate and ruthless.

With Teng Qingshan's ability to make discerning judgments, his fast reactions, as well as his excellent control of his strength, the prowess of the saber that he flung out would be very terrifying as well. Even if he were to make a simple furious hack with the strength of over two hundred thousand Jin, he would be able to easily smash a building with much ease.

……

"Scarlet Fruit, oh Scarlet Fruit. I wonder how the scorching energy would compare against that of the Black Fire Spirit Root?" Seated on the horse, Teng Qingshan wondered.

To find the Scarlet Fruit!

As for why he had chosen the Scarlet Fruit over the 'Violet Ice

Heart', Teng Qingshan did not share the real reason with his teacher Zhuge Yuanhong.

The reason why he had chosen the Scarlet Fruit had nothing to do with the Five Techniques of the Ardent Flame!

It was actually because of the 'Black Fire Spirit Root'. Ever since he had taken the Black Fire Spirit Root, whenever he practiced the «Godly Tiger Form Technique», Teng Qingshan would feel his whole body heating up. His skin had also turned a dark red color, and his muscles and skin had also felt tougher. It was very obvious that — the Black Fire Spirit Root had contained the fire characteristic.

"Since I had taken the Black Fire Spirit Root, naturally, I can only choose the Scarlet Fruit." Teng Qingshan exclaimed. "As for the North Sea……I can only find another opportunity to go in the future."

Teng Qingshan was curious about places such as the Desolate Land and the North Sea.

Disguised as an uninhibited swordsman who roamed the world, Teng Qingshan was in an excellent mood.

At times, when he came across bandits that did not know any better, he would kill them straightaway to practice his skills with the saber!

At times, he would just spend the night in the wilderness, hunting wild beasts for food.

At times, when he met other warriors in restaurants, he would also be glad to have a drink with them and make new friends.

……

In short, Teng Qingshan had a casual and relaxed time. With his current capabilities, if others were to offend him when he ventures by himself, they would be courting death.

……

In Yangzhou, Wu An County.

The dust flew about as three warhorses galloped to a three-way fork.

Neigh~~~

The warhorses called out and came to a halt.

“Brother Qin Lang! Let’s take our separate ways here! My second brother and myself will need to rush to Yanzhou. In the future, if Brother Qin Lang is to come to Yanzhou, do come to Meng Hu Stronghold and the three of us shall have a good drink then.” A burly man wearing a short top that revealed his chest laughed out heartily.

“Haha……Brother Meng Hu, you two brothers would need to prepare more wine!” Teng Qingshan replied as he laughed.

“That’s for sure. Then, we brothers shall take our leave. Brother Qin Lang, may we meet again!” The two brothers with close resemblance cupped their hands and said.

“May we meet again!” Teng Qingshan also smiled as he cupped his hands.

“Jia!”“Jia!”

The two burly men rode their horses and headed took the path which led to the west.

“It is really interesting to roam the world and meet new friends.” Riding on the Cyan Bristled Horse, Teng Qingshan continued to head towards the south. He had left the Jiangning County for five days and traveled a distance of close to a thousand Li. Teng Qingshan was actually not in a hurry. He took his time to enjoy the local customs and charms.

The two men earlier were the two leaders of a force, ‘Meng Hu Stronghold’ in the boundaries of ‘Yanzhou’ of the Nine

Prefectures.

In the restaurant, Teng Qingshan had saw someone bullying others and helped to teach the guy a lesson.

The abilities which he had displayed caught the attention of the two men, and they soon became friends. Teng Qingshan and the two Meng Hu brothers also traveled together for two days. Both Teng Qingshan and the two brothers were powerful warriors who were forthright. The trio had an unrestrained and enjoyable journey together.

……

Teng Qingshan was riding his horse casually and traveling on the royal road.

Suddenly——

Clatter! Clatter! Clatter!

The sound of urgent and rapid galloping of horses sounded as two gust of strong wind passed by Teng Qingshan and went ahead. Teng Qingshan took a glance and saw that the two figures on the horses were both women! One of them should be a middle-aged lady while the other, a young girl. The latter's figure was obviously smaller and more fragile looking.

"Riding so fast?" Teng Qingshan was slightly astonished. "They're only riding Yellow Maned Horse. If they were to ride so fast, the Yellow Maned Horse would die of exhaustion."

Slap! Slap!

The occasion slashing of the horse whips sounded as they whipped the horses. The two Yellow Maned Horses ran at full speed. The young girl even turned back for a look before quickly turning back to face the front.

"Mmm?"

Teng Qingshan's heart skipped a beat.

“That young girl……” Teng Qingshan stared at the back of the girl. When she had turned her head earlier, Teng Qingshan was shocked to discover that the sideview of her face was very similar to that of his wife from his previous life, ‘Cat’. “Cat?” His initial wonderful mood disappeared instantaneously.

Teng Qingshan fiercely clamped on the horse’s stomach.

“Jia!”

The Cyan Bristled Horse immediately sped up. Under the control of Teng Qingshan, the Cyan Bristled Horse remained quite a distance behind the young girl. “I wonder how the front view of the girl looks like?” It’s common for the face of one’s side view to show resemblance even though they may look nothing alike upfront.

Deep in the heart of Teng Qingshan, Cat’s figure was deeply engraved.

Having seen the side view of that face, Teng Qingshan uncontrollably followed behind from a distance.

From his previous life to his current, he had wanted to force himself to forget it, but how could he easily throw away the love which had surpassed life and death? Teng Qingshan silently looked at the back of the girl as a strange light lit up in his eyes.

……

The ones riding on the horses was a pair of mother and daughter. Their faces were filthy and their hair were messy, while tears kept streaming down the girl’s face.

“Junjun, don’t cry!” The mother kept saying.

“Mother, Father is dead, our home is gone. What are we to do now? Who were those evil-doers?” The girl bit her lips. Her face was covered with traces of tears. She could not forget the splattering blood, and the corpse that fell down one by one. The home in which she had lived for over ten years, now gone!

The mother's eyes were also red as she said, "Junjun, we escaped fast. Those evil-doers should not have discovered us. When we reach the Wu An County, the silver notes that Mother has should be enough for us to make a living. Let's live our lives and forget about those evil-doers. With just the two of us, being women, we would not be able to take our revenge. Mother would just like for you to live a good life in the future."

Tears streamed down the girl's face as she nodded.

"There is a distance of another thirty Li before we reach the Wu An County." The mother consoled.

Puchi!

An arrow pierced through the chest of the middle-aged lady, and the arrowhead was covered with blood. The middle-aged lady's eyes were filled with shock. The girl's eyes stared widely as she saw the bloodied arrow on her mother's chest. Her face instantly turned pale white! She then fiercely tugged back the reins.

"Mother —"

A forlorn voice came from the girl, till she almost lost her voice from the shouting.

"Haha, two females trying to roam the world....." A loud laughter filled the air as over ten bandits leapt out from the bushes.

The middle-aged lady fell off the horse helplessly and rolled on the floor. She stared at her daughter and spurted blood. "Quick, quickly escape!" After saying these words with much difficulty, the middle-aged lady turned silent.

"Mother, mother." The girl's face was pale white.

"The little girl here is quite pretty. But to think that you were so scared that you stopped the horse after seeing us brothers. Haha, it's too late even if you were to try to escape now." Over ten bandits closed in, with five of them holding onto bows and arrows.

At such close proximity, they were not afraid that the girl would be able to escape.

The girl looked at the ten odd bandits.

The nightmarish scene of splattering fresh blood and falling corpses flew across her mind as she lowered her head to look at her mother.

“Little girl, come have a good time with us brothers. Maybe we’d leave you alive.” The violent bandits smiled as they closed in. In their eyes, a weak little girl was of no threat to them.

Hatred grew in the heart of the girl as she looked at the ten odd bandits.

But she had no means to retaliate.

“These evil-doers……” The girl pulled out a dagger used for self-protection.

“Oh , you want to retaliate?” The bandits laughed.

Hu!

“Father, Mother, your daughter is coming to accompany you.” The girl fiercely thrusted the dagger towards her stomach. She would rather die than to let herself be violated by these bandits.

Clank!

The dagger in the girl’s hands slipped out. Simultaneously, a figured dashed into the crowd of bandits. With the sounds ‘puchi’, blood splattered and pitiful cries sounded.

“Lord, please spare my life!”

“Please spare my life.”

The frightened bandits wanted to escape, but within the time it takes for two breaths, all of the bandits had fallen, each of them with a wound on their throat.

Clank!

Teng Qingshan returned the Blood Devouring Saber to its sheath and turned to look at the girl whose face was pale white. He was full of regret. “Just a little bit more! If I were to react slightly faster, if I were to be more wary of the surroundings, her mother wouldn’t have died!” Teng Qingshan was initially tens of Zhang behind the mother and daughter. However, because they were riding horses, the clattering of the galloping horses covered some slight motions from the surroundings.

In addition, Teng Qingshan was a bit swayed. Therefore, he was not able to spot the bandits who were in cover tens of Zhang away.

With the clattering of the galloping horses, even Teng Qingshan would need to be fully focused to be able to sense the hidden bandits tens of Zhang away.

When the other party shot out the arrow and it immediately pierced through the mother’s chest, with Teng Qingshan’s reaction time, and considering that he was too far away from them, there was no way that he would have been able to save her.

“What resemblance……” Teng Qingshan looked at this girl.

The girl had an uncanny resemblance with the younger Cat!

“Boohoo ~~~” After throwing a glance at Teng Qingshan, the girl ran to her mother’s corpse and started to cry bitterly as she leaned over the corpse.

Chapter 162: Help Settle Down

The wind blew as over ten corpses laid on the royal road and the stench of blood encompassed the area. When people occasionally passed by, they would get frightened as they saw the scene and quickly passed by, hoping not to enrage the swordsman in the green suit.

Teng Qingshan silently stood there, looking at the young girl.

“Wuuuuu……” After crying for very long time, the girl gradually stopped.

Within a day, she lost her entire family. This was too big of a blow to her. Only after crying beside her mother’s corpse for a very long time, did she slowly regain her senses. The girl suddenly stood up and looked towards Teng Qingshan. A weird look fluttered across her eyes as she took two steps forward.

“Bang!”

The girl kneeled down on her knees and kowtowed as she cried and said, “Benefactor, I beg of you, please help me to take revenge and kill those evil-doers! I’m willing to be your slave for life to repay your kindness!”

She was merely a weak little girl, how could she have exact her revenge by herself? She saw the abilities of Teng Qingshan when he killed the bandits earlier and thought that he would definitely be able to annihilate the foes who had killed her family. She was alone and had no one to rely on, let alone to exact revenge with. She could only beg Teng Qingshan! And the only chip that she has……

Was herself!

“Get up. Let’s cremate your mother first.” Teng Qingshan said.

“Mmm.” The girl nodded.

Looking at the girl's tear streaked face, which was exactly the same as the wife from his previous life, 'Cat' Teng Qingshan could not help but wish to treat her a little better. This girl had the same pitiful plight as Cat, which only made Teng Qingshan pity her more.

On an abandoned land not far away from the official path, fire burned and the charred smell of corpses spread out.

The girl kneeled in front of the fire, solemnly kowtowed thrice, and lifted her head to look at the fire. Tears brimmed up in her eyes as she said, "Mother, please be assured. Your daughter will definitely take revenge for Father, Granddad, and the others. I will definitely do so!" After saying this, she kowtowed another three times before she stood up, tears filling up her eyes.

"Benefactor." The girl looked at Teng Qingshan.

To the girl, Teng Qingshan was a super strong warrior. It was already kind enough of him to save her life. She was one who knew where she was supposed to stand. She knew..... that she only had to listen to Teng Qingshan's instructions and not shoot off her mouth.

"Follow me to Wu An County first." Teng Qingshan said.

"Mmm." The girl nodded.

Thereafter, Teng Qingshan rode on the Cyan Bristled Horse while she rode on the Yellow Maned Horse. The two of them set off for Wu An County.

On the official road.

"What is your name?" Teng Qingshan asked.

"Li Jun!" The girl replied.

Teng Qingshan repeated the name to himself and nodded. When he had first seen the young girl 'Li Jun', Teng Qingshan had thought for a moment that Cat had been reborn. But seeing her

face the bandits and studying her reactions, it was obvious to him that..... she had no way of defending herself. On the other hand, his wife 'Cat' from his previous life had also been an expert of the Xing Yi Martial Arts.

She was ranked alongside Teng Qingshan, one of the A-grade assassins of the Red Organization!

The two of them were partners. The assassin combination of 'Wolf' and 'Cat' possessed widespread fame!

If it was Cat, even if she had not been able to reach his level, she would have had no issues reaching the level of a First Rated Warrior.

Teng Qingshan thought of his cool and decisive yet gentle wife 'Cat', looked towards the girl beside him who looked exactly the same as Cat in her younger days, and sighed. No matter what..... Cat was merely a memory from his past life. In this life, Cat was no more!

For him to help this girl, it was merely for the sake of the wife whom he had loved deeply in his past life.

"Benefactor, you may call me Little Jun!" The girl looked at Teng Qingshan. "How shall I address benefactor?"

"My name is Teng Qingshan." Teng Qingshan did not hide his identity in front of the girl as he calmly asked, "Little Jun, how old are you this year?"

"Thirteen years old." The girl replied. "Teng.....Brother Teng!" The girl threw a disturbed glance at Teng Qingshan, but after seeing that Teng Qingshan was not angry, she continued, "Brother Teng, why are we going to Wu An County.....My home is not in Wu An County. I...I would like to take revenge."

Teng Qingshan gazed at her. "Revenge? Who is your enemy?"

"I, I don't know." Li Jun bit her lips and shook her head.

Teng Qingshan frowned. “How can you exact revenge when you do not know who your enemy is?”

Li Jun’s face immediately paled.

“Right, how can I take revenge when I don’t know who my enemies are?” Tears streamed down Li Jun’s face silently as she mumbled, “It was dark, and I wasn’t able to see clearly before my mother had dragged me and escaped. I only saw many corpses..... I, I, I have no idea who they were at all. I don’t even know how they look like!”

Seeing Li Jun’s state, Teng Qingshan hollered, “Stop crying!”

Li Jun was stunned.

“Tell me about the state of your family.” Teng Qingshan commanded. “Based on your attire, you must have lived in a wealthy family. You should have been staying in the city..... Not many would dare to kill in the city. Based on your family’s situation as well as your father’s friends and other information, there may be hope of finding out more.”

Pleasantly surprised, Li Jun elaborated, “My, my home was in the Wan City, which is over a hundred li away. My father was Li Yuan, a merchant. My granddad was named.....”

Li Jun described the situation of her family in great detail.

“Mmmm.” Teng Qingshan nodded and looked at her. “Are you thinking of exacting revenge by yourself or with my aid?”

“I would like to take revenge by myself, but I do not have the means to do it.” Li Jun replied bitterly.

“I can get people to teach you how to cultivate inner strength.” Teng Qingshan said.

Li Jun shooked her head and explained, “When I was young, my father sent me to Qing Hu Island, hoping that I can become a warrior. But.....I was not able to cultivate inner strength at all.

The warriors from Qing Hu Island all said that my meridian channels were cluttered with too much impurities and that I would not be able to channel any inner strength at all."

Teng Qingshan lamented to himself after hearing this.

To be born with meridian channels, such a state was disadvantageous to training……it might help if she were to train the Xing Yi Martial Art.

However, the difficulty of Xing Yi Martial Art was too excessive and required one to have high potential. To depend on the training of the Xing Yi Martial Art to exact one's revenge, there was a possibility that she may never get to do it.

Yangzhou, Wu An County, Liuhu Street.

Liuhu street's scenery was very beautiful, with one side of the street facing a lake and countless willow trees alongside the path. The branches of the willow trees swayed gracefully with the wind, which gently rippled the lake's surface. It was truly a marvelous sight.

Liuhu Street was a place where only the rich and powerful families from Wu An County could stay in. Each of the mansions took up quite a significant area of land and was very costly.

"Call your Master Wang here. Tell him that someone from Jiangning County is here." Teng Qingshan stood at the entrance of one of the mansions and called out.

The two guards at the entrance of the mansion were stunned.

"Lord, kindly please hold on while I pass on the message." One of the guards quickly ran into the mansion. Li Jun stood behind Teng Qingshan as she looked at the scene with much reservations…… This mansion was even bigger than the mansion she had stayed in previously. Having lost all her kin, Li Jun could only depend on this fellow in front of her to protect her.

Very soon, a fat man wear a golden suit quickly ran out.

On seeing Teng Qingshan, the eyes of the fat man gleamed as he quickly bowed. “Commander!”

“Commander?” Li Jun was astonished as she sneaked a look at Teng Qingshan.

“Little Jun, follow me inside.” Teng Qingshan said.

……

On the second level of a building in the mansion, Teng Qingshan sat besides the round table. The fat man respectfully stood at the side, while Li Jun stood behind Teng Qingshan.

“I had long heard that Commander would be passing by. I had also long heard of Commander, but had no opportunity to meet you. In fact, I could only see a painting of you. I did not expect to be able to meet the Commander in person today!” The fat man was smiling so happily that it looked as if flowers had bloomed on his face.

“Old Wang, I have a favor to ask of you.” Teng Qingshan smiled.

The fat man immediately said, “Commander, please feel free to give your orders.”

“This girl is called Li Jun, and her father goes by the name of Li Yuan. They lived in Wan City, not far from here. Li Yuan was a merchant and his family was considered wealthy. However, just last night, everyone in her family was killed. I want you to help to investigate who had killed her family.” Teng Qingshan said.

The fat man looked at Li Jun in astonishment.

Li Jun looked at the fat man apprehensively.

“Commander, please be assured. Wan City is a small place with only those few men who are rich and and have power. Their relations……would be easy to track. Furthermore, it is a big issue to kill in the city, which should make them easier to find. We also have men from our Gui Yuan Sect in Wan City. Within a few days

time, we would definitely be able to find out all the facts." The fat man pounded his chest and assured.

Gui Yuan Sect had a branch in every city and county in Yangzhou.

Of course, in Xuyang County and Tiannan County, two counties that were more disorderly, they had more people stationed. On the other hand, in the area under Qing Hu Island's jurisdiction, they would station less people to display weakness to the Qing Hu Island out of respect.

"Excellent." Teng Qingshan nodded.

Happiness filled Li Jun's face.

"Old Wang, you can head back and rest first. While you are at it, get someone to send some food here." Teng Qingshan instructed.

"Yes, Lord Commander." The fat man immediately went back.

Li Jun looked at Teng Qingshan in gratitude. "Brother Teng, thank you! I……I am but a girl. I will never be able to repay your debt through my whole life!"

"Alright." Teng Qingshan smiled and shook his head. "Don't talk about repaying debts. While this may be a big issue to you, to me…… it's just a matter of issuing an instruction. It's nothing much. Therefore, you don't have to think too much about it. I'm sure your parents would also wish for you to lead a good life and not resort to being a maid or a servant."

Li Jun was stunned.

Her mother had wished for her to lead a stable life and not seek for revenge.

"Therefore, you will have to follow your parents' wishes and live a good life. In the future, find a good man who you can get married to and spend a wonderful life together." Teng Qingshan smiled gently and spoke this to Li Jun.

“Teng……” Li Jun was a bit stunned.

She had initially decided to spend her life serving Teng Qingshan and would be willing to do whatever he had asked. But she did not expect that……Teng Qingshan did not ask for any repayment for saving her and helping her seek revenge. With her parents dead and no one to rely on, Li Jun had felt warmth in her heart. Her eyes were slightly wet as she replied in a soft voice, “Brother Teng, thank you.”

“Rest well after taking your meal. You will stay here for now. You can stay however long you wish.” Teng Qingshan added.

“Mmm.” Li Jun nodded her head. “What about you, Brother Teng?”

“I will stay in Wu An County to rest today and continue on my journey tomorrow.”

“Brother Teng, if you are leaving, I want to leave with you too……” Li Jun started to panic.

Teng Qingshan consoled her, “Little Jun, I am heading for the Boorish Desolate! The land of the Boorish Desolate is very dangerous, and I will not be able to take care of you! Moreover, you have your own life to lead.”

Chapter 163: The Boorish South

The night sky was pitch black!

The night breeze was chilling as it blew across the entirety of Wu An County. Teng Qingshan sat in the second story of the pavilion in the dark without lighting any candles. There were two pots of wine on the table. He occasionally drank a cup of wine as he sat there, letting the chilling wind blow against his clothes.

In the pitch black pavilion, Teng Qingshan sat silently.

“Cat, I didn’t expect to meet a girl who looks so much like you in this life! I wonder if she’d be your exact resemblance when she grows up!” Teng Qingshan said in a soft voice. “Sigh.....Initially, I had thought that after going through my past life and my current, I should have forgotten you by now! But only when I saw Little Jun did I realise.....your each and every smile and scowl, as well as the words you had spoken to me, I still recalled them very clearly. All these are as if they were carved into my soul. Even if I am born into a new life, there’s still no way for me to forget.”

A slight smile appeared on Teng Qingshan’s face.

“Cat, seems it’s going to be difficult for your man to find another woman to love in this life! This is all your fault.” Teng Qingshan drank another cup.

.....

That night, Teng Qingshan did not sleep, nor did he meditate. He sat there on the well-ventilated pitch black pavilion by himself throughout the entire night.

Early morning.

Li Jun, wearing a suit of green, ran about in the mansion, looking for Teng Qingshan.

“Little Lady Jun, you are up so early.” The fat man smiled and

said.

“Uncle Wang, where is Brother Teng?” Li Jun asked in a panic.

“Commander set off for the Boorish Desolate early in the morning.” The fat man smiled and replied.

“Left?” Li Jun was stunned.

The fat man quickly said, “Commander asked Lady Little Jun to stay here comfortably. As for the issue with the revenge, Commander will settle it for you. Another thing —” The fat man took out a gold note from his chest as he said, “This is a note worth a hundred taels of gold. Commander passed it to me before he left. Little Lady Jun, if you wish to buy a house, or when you get married in the future, you can use this money.”

Looking at the gold note, Li Jun could not stop the tears that had filled her eyes to the brim.

A hundred taels of gold, that was the equivalent of ten thousand taels of silver. One would be able to lead a life with no worries for food and accommodation.

“Buy a house, get married……” Tears flowed down Li Jun’s cheeks.

……

By helping Little Jun this one time, Teng Qingshan was reminded of the memories of his previous life. His mood had turned moody, and he was no longer in the mood to do any sightseeing. He sped up on his journey, and that very evening, he reached the one city in Yangzhou that was closest to the Boorish Desolate — Nanman City!

Nanman City was a city about the same size as Yi City.

However, since Nanman City was the city closest in proximity to the Boorish Desolate, it was very prosperous. The dauntless warriors who wished to venture the Boorish Desolate, as well as

the herbalists who would collect herbs from the borders of the Boorish Desolate, would all gather in Nanman City. After all, while the Boorish Desolate was very dangerous, there were many herbs that were a rare find in other places.

In Nanman City.

“Shopkeeper, prepare a top grade room.” Qingshan stepped into the hall on the first level of an inn and instructed. “And prepare a table of food and wine.” After saying that, Teng Qingshan selected a window seat and sat down.

“Dear guest, what would you like to eat?” The waiter immediately brought a menu.

After ordering some food and wine, Teng Qingshan started to eat and drink.

“Little Jun, that kid, has lost her kin. She would probably need a little more time to get over it.” Teng Qingshan thought to himself as he ate his food. Towards that Little Jun……Teng Qingshan did not hold any emotions of love. After all, Li Jun was merely a thirteen year-old young girl. She was even younger than his sister, Little Yu.

Not to mention that Teng Qingshan’s mental age was probably enough to be Li Jun’s father.

This was merely out of brotherly concern.

“Mmm, in Wu An County, there’s Old Wang to take care of her, so she won’t be in any danger. She will need to depend on herself in the future.” Teng Qingshan was aware that he was merely a passerby in Li Jun’s life.

“Hu!”

A middle-aged man wearing a conical bamboo hat and a grey suit entered the inn. Taking a glance at Teng Qingshan, a hint of surprise flashed across his eyes. Thereafter, the middle-aged man took the stairs up.

……

In the private room on the third floor, there was a sumptuous spread of food and wine on the round table. Three middle-aged men and two old men sat around the table. All five of them were dressed in grey. Out of them, one of the old man was the Elder of ‘Tie Yi Hall’ of Yangzhou’s Chu County, ‘Wei Canglong’. The five of them were chatting cheerfully as they ate.

“Bang!” “Bang!” “Bang!”

The five in the private room immediately quieted down after hearing the door knocks.

“Come in.” Wei Canglong said.

The five men at the dining table heaved a sigh of relief upon seeing the middle-aged man in grey suit entering after the door was opened. This man closed the door to the private room took off his bamboo hat, and quickly said, “The matter is settled! But…… when I came up earlier, I saw Gui Yuan Sect’s Teng Qingshan on the first floor!”

“Teng Qingshan!” The five men were all stunned.

Wei Canglong turned to look at the elegant-looking middle-aged man besides him who had white hair on both sides of his temples.

“Even within our Tie Yi Hall, there are not many who know of this secret! It is unlikely that the Gui Yuan Sect would know about it.” The elegant-looking middle-aged man shook his head. “It’s just that we from Tie Yi Hall had only found out this secret ini Xuyang County. Could it be that the Gui Yuan Sect also picked up some traces of it?”

The six men in the private room were silent.

This matter was of great concern to them.

“Martial Brother.” Cang Weilong frowned and said, “Teng Qingshan is the Commander of the Gui Yuan Sect’s Black Armored

Army. Why would he come to the Nanman City for? I can't think of any other thing. Therefore, my worry is that he followed us in secret. It could also be that he is not alone, but that there are other men whom we have not discovered."

These words started to worry the men.

"If we are targeted by them, we're in trouble."

"Martial Granduncle, what shall we do?"

……

All of them looked towards the elegant-looking middle-aged man.

"Don't scare yourselves!" The elegant-looking middle-aged man said. "If there were other people from the Gui Yuan Sect, we would have found out long ago. And with Teng Qingshan alone……hmph, if he were to be overconfident, he'd be courting death. Let's ignore this and have a good rest after our dinner. We will set off to enter the Boorish Desolate first thing tomorrow morning!"

"Yes."

All five men answered respectfully.

Early in the morning, all six men from Tie Yi Hall wore their grey suits, left Nanman City wearing bamboo hats, and entered the Boorish Desolate. After all, there were many forests, hills and valleys, so all they could depend on were their two legs since they weren't able to enter on horses. Teng Qingshan entered a tad later than the six men from Tie Yi Hall.

The morning sun rose.

Leaving from Nanman City's southern gate, Teng Qingshan headed southwards.

"The Boorish Desolate…… I wonder how big the Boorish Desolate truly is." He saw endless darkness before him, to the extent that in the blurry distance very far away, there were still steep hills and valleys that had reached the clouds. This was the Boorish Desolate!

The most dangerous place across the entire Nine Prefectures.

From the the Nine Prefecture's south-eastern 'Yangzhou', to the southern 'Yanzhou', to the south-western 'Rongzhou', the southwards direction of these three prefectures was where the Boorish Desolate lied!

As for its depth, there were no records in any book.

"The Gui Yuan Sect's map only recorded a depth of over two thousand Li. Further in……there were no records." Teng Qingshan looked at the map in his hands and tried to affirm his direction before storing the map and taking very big strides forward.

……

There were few traces of human in the Boorish Desolate. The piles of fallen leaves crackled when they were stepped on. The many ancient trees have survived for heaven knows how many years. After merely walking for a couple of hours, the biggest tree that Teng Qingshan had seen was a whole three Zhang wide.

"I wonder, when this Boorish Desolate is compared with the Amazon, which of them is bigger!" Teng Qingshan had trained in the Amazon in his previous life. "However, the Amazon is mostly covered by water, whereas it is forests and mountains here. Furthermore, there are many wild beasts, venomous snakes and worms, and even demonic beasts. It's definitely way more dangerous here!"

The broken branches and fallen leaves were emitting a rotting stench that filled the forest. With the massive trees that covered up the sky, the air was very stuffy.

Teng Qingshan took light steps. In this ancient Boorish Desolate, he acted as if he were at home.

On a black tree at the side, there was a similarly black venomous snake wrapped around it. It stared at the human who was moving very rapidly——Teng Qingshan!

“Swoosh!” The venomous snake, which had been waiting for very long, shot out like a black lightning and bared its fangs towards Teng Qingshan.

“Hu!”

Teng Qingshan’s footsteps did not change at all. The Blood Sucking Saber in the hands slashed in a ray of red light, and the snake fell from mid-air. Its severed body was still twitching with a ‘chichi’ sound on the floor due to its strong vitality. On the other hand, Teng Qingshan didn’t even turn to look at it as he continued to take big steps forward. Within a few blinks of an eye, he had covered quite a distance.

Venomous snake?

Teng Qingshan was not afraid of venom at all. Furthermore, with the strong six senses he had, these venomous snakes and ferocious beasts would not be able to escape from his sight.

……

Teng Qingshan moved forth very quickly while the six men from Tie Yi Hall proceeded slowly. While they were all experts, even with one of them being an innate master, ……they still did not dare to underestimate the snakes and worms in the Boorish Desolate. Especially the warriors in the Postliminary Realm, if they were bitten……

Even if they survived, they would suffer from fatal injuries.

“Silver Horned Mountain is two thousand li deep inside. The Boorish Desolate is filled with mountains, forests and lakes, and there are snakes, worms and ferocious beasts……We would probably take half a month to arrive.” Wei Canglong and the company each held onto their weapons. In the Boorish Desolate, even if they were listed in the Earth Ranking, once they were to be bitten by bugs, they could possibly lose their lives!

Danger lurked around everywhere!

“Someone’s coming!” The elegant-looking middle-aged man’s face turned solemn as he warned in a low voice.

The other five men immediately kept quiet.

From afar, they saw a human figure flashing past at very quick speeds while throwing them a glance.

“It’s Teng Qingshan!” Wei Canglong’s face paled.

The faces of the group changed.

“This Teng Qingshan was following behind us……” Another expert from Tie Yi Hall looked towards the elegant-looking middle-aged man. “Martial Granduncle, that Teng Qingshan was really following us! When we first left Nanman City, the land was flat, and he did not dare to chase closely since we’d be able to see him clearly. But after we entered the Boorish Desolate, he began to catch up. If Martial Granduncle had not noticed, we probably would not have spotted him.”

“It could just be a coincidence……” Another man spoke up.

The elegant-looking middle-age man lowered his voice and said, “We met him the other time, we have now met him again. It may be a coincidence, but it could also be that he was following us.”

“It doesn’t matter if the act of him following us is the truth or a coincidence! Our Tie Yi Hall’s secret cannot be exposed! Once it’s exposed and news is spread out…… Our Tie Yi Hall will not only not be able to prosper, but we may even face annihilation.” The elegant-looking middle-aged man said coldly, “Liu Jian, you follow after him. Kill Teng Qingshan!”

Chapter 164: To Kill by Poison

"Yes, Martial Granduncle!" A lean man in grey said respectfully.

Beside him, Wei Canglong reminded, "Martial Brother, that Teng Qingshan's abilities is likely to be even stronger than mine! While Protector Liu Jian's abilities are not bad, when compared to Teng Qingshan……" At the underground lava lake at the Blazing Mountain, Wei Canglong had witnessed Teng Qingshan's abilities.

"This is not a fair one-on-one battle!" The elegant-looking middle-aged man said coldly.

A red dash of light flashed past Liu Jian's eyes as he laughed in a low voice. "Elder Wei, I know myself very well. Moreover, for our trip to the Boorish Desolate this time around, all of us brought along the poison, 'A Dream of Nanke'." After getting poisoned by 'A Dream of Nanke', innate masters may have an ability to resist, but warriors in the Postliminary Realm……hmph hmph, they would be the fish on the chopping board!"

Wei Canglong nodded his head as he listened to this.

Actually, warriors tended to not care about poison since they would usually request for fairness in battle in order to prove themselves. It was just that……this time around, the elites of the Tie Yi Hall had set off for a great secret. This secret would even affect Tie Yi Hall's prosperity or diminishment.

That was also the reason why they wanted to kill Teng Qingshan before they clarified whether or not he was actually following after them! They would rather kill a thousand wrongly, than to let off anyone!

It would then be understandable that, for their reason, they would be unscrupulous to reach their goals.

"Liu Jian, quickly go after him!" The elegant-looking middle-aged man instructed. "After getting rid of Teng Qingshan, follow

the path and catch up to us!”

“Yes, Martial Granduncle.”

A bloodthirsty smile appeared on Liu Jian’s face as he dashed into the far distance with a ‘swoosh’. He went through the mountains and the forests nimbly, avoiding the obstacles such as thistles and thorns as he chased in the direction where Teng Qingshan had disappeared to. He quickly disappeared from the sight of the other five men from Tie Yi Hall.

“Let us continue on our way.” The elegant-looking middle-aged man instructed.

Immediately, the five men from Tie Yi Hall carefully, but with haste, headed down the route that they had mapped down earlier.

The place was filled with dense humidity. With Teng Qingshan’s sense of smell, he could even smell a tinge of the stench of rotting beast corpses amidst the stench of the decomposing leaves. The noon sunlight slipped through the tightly-packed leaves with much trouble, and some rays of light landed on the surrounding thistles, thorns, and weeds.

Teng Qingshan made his way through the Boorish Desolate in great speed.

With haste, with flexibility!

“Hmm?” Teng Qingshan abruptly turned his head to the far distance, and saw that amongst the thistles, there was a pair of glowing green eyes staring at him. The eyes emitted an aura of wilderness and bloodthirst! But after it exchanged glances with Teng Qingshan, the wild beast hidden in the thistles seemed to sense that this human was not easy to deal with.

Swoosh! The wild beast quickly vanished.

Teng Qingshan did not stop in his tracks but continued to move forward with his brows frowning. “Hmm? What was that wild beast earlier? It escaped really fast and had hidden itself really well

too.”

There were many creatures in the Boorish Desolate that could not be found from the Earth of his previous life.

The book that Teng Qingshan received from the Gui Yuan Sect’s Martial Pavilion had only introduced demonic beasts but not on the various wild beasts..... However, Teng Qingshan did not dare to underestimate those wild beasts. While some of these wild beasts did not have any spiritual intelligence, they may have special hidden abilities. These may pose a threat not lower than that of demonic beasts!

“Out of the six men I saw earlier, one of them was Wei Canglong! There was also a fellow I’d met on the Blazing Mountain. These six men should be from Tie Yi Hall.” Teng Qingshan recalled the six men he came across earlier. “Why have the Tie Yi Hall’s elites come to the Boorish Desolate. Could it be that they are also here to pick some kind of spiritual fruit?”

Teng Qingshan did not care for the six men from Tie Yi Hall.

To Teng Qingshan, he had came to the Boorish Desolate to look for the Scarlet Fruit.....once he obtained it, he would return! As for why the men from Tie Yi Hall had come, what concern was it of his?”

Therefore, Teng Qingshan only threw a glance and didn’t bother to greet them as he headed quickly for Steel Arms Monkey Mountain by himself.

.....

“Hu!” “Hu!”

In a grey suit, Tie Yi Hall’s Protector ‘Liu Jian’ held onto a dagger and moved quickly in the Boorish Desolate.

“Damn him, this Teng Qingshan is running faster than a monkey! Doesn’t he knows that it is dangerous in this Boorish Desolate? I have already been chasing him for the time it takes to

drink a cup of tea, at least a distance of ten Li. Even so, I have yet to catch a glance of his shadow!" Liu Jian followed Teng Qingshan's path, which was filled with stomped rotting branches, thistles, and thorns that were pushed away as he followed with much difficulty.

It was really difficult!

For a warrior in the Postliminary Realm, it was considered fast to be able to travel a distance of a hundred-odd Li in a day in the Boorish Desolate. After all, it was too dangerous in the Boorish Desolate. If one was not careful and fell for a trap, he could be inflicted with heavy injuries, or even lead to death eventually.

But in order to chase up to Teng Qingshan, Liu Jian could only clenched his teeth and speed up.

There was no path in the Boorish Desolate, but plenty of thistles and thorns, weeds, as well as rotting branches and leaves everywhere. Therefore, once someone walked through, they would need to push away the thistles and the weeds, and even to slash through them to proceed forth. This would make a visible path for those behind. Of course……after some time, it would be harder to differentiate.

Liu Jian was right behind Teng Qingshan, a distance of about one Li.

This was under the situation where Liu Jian had risked his life to be able to barely catch up.

"With this speed, he would travel at least four to five hundred li in a day!" Liu Jian cursed in his heart but kept his eyes and ears in close observance of the surroundings. "Thank goodness it is still the exterior region of the Boorish Desolate! Mmm, need to quickly catch up!" Liu Jian did not want to waste too much time. He circulated his inner strength to increase his speed.

With the increase in his speed, the distance between Liu Jian and

Teng Qingshan narrowed.

Teng Qingshan did not know that there was someone following him. To him, it was an easy feat to travel about four or five hundred li per day in the Boorish Desolate.

“Mmm, there’s movement?” Teng Qingshan abruptly stopped. his ears twitched.

“Rustle~~~”

A slight sound came from behind, and Teng Qingshan frowned as he turned back. “There’s a wild beast behind me? That doesn’t seem like it……it’s moving closer towards me!” Teng Qingshan remained motionless as he looked behind him. Finally, through the seams between the thistles, he saw a blurred figure a distance away.

The shadow of the figure flashed through the seams. But within that short moment, Teng Qingshan had seen it clearly.

“It’s a person! It’s one of the six men from Tie Yi Hall!”

Teng Qingshan affirmed in that short moment.

“Why did he follow me by himself?” Teng Qingshan was puzzled. At that moment Teng Qingshan did not think that the other party was out to kill him. After all, to Teng Qingshan……The Tie Yi Hall had no reason to kill him. It was just that the other party’s abnormal actions drew his wariness.

The man closed in with great speed.

Teng Qingshan stared at the other party just like that! Their distance closed up steadily until finally, the other party could see Teng Qingshan clearly. Their gazes met……

To Liu Jian, who had followed behind with much difficulty, his heart skipped a beat after seeing Teng Qingshan staring at him. “This Teng Qingshan is really careful. He noticed me from a far distance away! Now what do I do?” Within that short moment, Liu

Jian came up with a plan. He broke into a smile and headed over to Teng Qingshan in big strides. “Brother Teng! You put me through a lot chasing after you.”

“Who are you?” Teng Qingshan frowned and asked.

In the silence of the mountains of the Boorish Desolate, there were only Teng Qingshan and Liu Jian around.

“Haha, I am Tie Yi Hall’s Protector ‘Liu Jian’.” Liu Jian walked over as he place the dagger in his hands into the sheath. At the same moment the dagger returned into the sheath, his right hand casually pressed onto the left side of his abdomen. There was a large pocket in Liu Jian’s inner pocket. In it was a small gourd.

He tightened his abdomen and lightly pressed with his right hand.

Chi!

The gourd immediately cracked.

It was just that with the sound of the dagger entering the sheath, the slight cracking sound was not clear.

“Protector Liu?” Teng Qingshan smiled. “I wonder, what matter does Protector Liu have with me to be chasing after me so urgently?”

“It’s like this. Our Elder Wei saw you earlier……” Liu Jian’s talking speed slowed down. When he was a short distance away from Teng Qingshan, he stopped in his tracks and just looked at Teng Qingshan.

Teng Qingshan’s face paled. “You……You used poison!” Teng Qingshan could distinctly realize that there was an unknown substance entering his blood as his body gradually turned numb. Although the feeling was very mild, Teng Qingshan could control the flow of his Qi and blood instantly, and he forced this unknown substance out of his body.

On the surface, Teng Qingshan fell onto the floor weakly with a boom.

“Haha, that’s right, I used poison. But it’s too bad that you realized it too late.” Liu Jian smiled and said. “Is your body feeling numb and weak? You can’t even draw your inner strength? Stop struggling! After being poisoned by our Tie Yi Hall’s ‘A Dream of Nanke’, even the ability of an innate master would be affected.”

“Protector Liu, I should have no qualms with your Tie Yi Hall.” Teng Qingshan said in a voice of full of hatred as he fell down, seated on the ground.

“Right, we have no qualms.” Liu Jian grinned. “But you just had to come to the Boorish Desolate.”

“You’re killing me just because I came to the Boorish Desolate?” Teng Qingshan stared at Liu Jian. At that moment, Teng Qingshan would very much like to know……What was the reason that Tie Yi Hall wanted to kill him. Therefore, he had feigned that he was poisoned, hoping that the other party could divulge the reason.

“Clang”

Liu Jian drew the dagger at his waist, as a flash of cold light flashed in his eyes. “Teng Qingshan, stop your questions! You have only your bad luck to blame. It’s too bad……A seventeen year-old expert listed in the Earthly Ranking will be dying in the Boorish Desolate without anyone knowing. After you die, your corpse will be eaten up by wild beasts. However, you are also considered lucky to be dying in my hands.”

Liu Jian gradually closed in to Teng Qingshan as he said this.

Suddenly——

With a fierce wave of his dagger, swoosh! The dagger slashed towards Teng Qingshan’s neck! He wanted to behead him in one slash!

Teng Qingshan, who was originally weakly seated on the floor,

moved his right hand.

“Pa!”

A shadow smashed on Liu Jian’s right wrist, and the sound of smashed bones was heard. “Arghh!!!” Liu Jian screamed out in pain as the dagger was sent flying, landing in the weeds after flipping a few rounds in mid air. Liu Jian clenched his teeth while he attempted to clutch towards Teng Qingshan with his left hand.

“Boom!”

Teng Qingshan’s fist smashed on Liu Jian’s abdomen.

With a low sound, Liu Jian was sent flying. When he landed, he curled up in pain with an extremely pale face. “My Dan Tian, my inner strength……” He was horrified to find out that his Dan Tian had burst and his inner strength had all seeped away. With his Dan Tian destroyed, he would no longer be able to cultivate inner strength!

Not able to cultivate inner strength? To a warrior, that was a worse fate than losing both of his legs!

“You, why are you not poisoned?” Liu Jian dropped onto the ground as he looked at Teng Qingshan in horror. “There’s no way that you’d have the antidote, nor I didn’t see you using any general antidote.”

Crisp sounds filled the air as Teng Qingshan stepped on the decomposing leaves on the ground, taking one step after another towards Liu Jian in a cool demeanor.

Chapter 165: Secret

Although Teng Qingshan had destroyed Liu Jian's Dantian with a single punch, he was still quite confused as he thought to himself, "There is no enmity between me and this Tie Yi Hall, yet they still tried to attack me for entering the Boorish Desolate. There were many experts who frequently visit the Boorish Desolate. Due to the lack of manpower, the Tie Yi Hall couldn't kill everyone that entered the Boorish Desolate, even if they tried. There must be a hidden secret around here somewhere.

As Teng Qingshan was thinking this through, he stared at Liu Jian like a lone wolf staring at its prey.

"No, no!" Liu Jian desperately crawled away. He didn't want to die!

"Bang!"

Forcefully supporting himself up with his left hand, Liu Jian turned back and dashed away. Although his Dantian was destroyed, he was still a powerful martial artist with a body that was considerably high in quality. Therefore, he was quite fast on his feet. However..... compared with Teng Qingshan, he was considerably inferior.

Whoosh!

Liu Jian only felt a gust of wind sweep past before he felt a tightening sensation around his neck.

"Ah~~" Both of Liu Jian's legs weren't able to touch the ground.

Teng Qingshan grabbed Liu Jian's collar and lifted Liu Jian up. Liu Jian hastily exclaimed, "Teng.. Teng Qingshan... no. Commander Teng! Commander Teng, I had only obeyed the command. You have already eliminated all of my inner strength, so right now I am just a useless person. Just consider it like letting out a fart and let me go!"

Liu Jian valued his own life greatly!

If his inner strength is gone, then so be it. With his identity as a Protector of Tie Yi Hall, even if he had no more inner strength, his future still wouldn't be very troublesome. He still had a few beautiful wives at home, and he hadn't enjoyed this world of sensual pleasures, so how would he willingly die?

"Let me ask you!" Teng Qingshan asked coldly, "Why did you wanted to kill me?"

Liu Jian was secretly shocked. That secret was extremely important. Liu Jian had lived in Tie Yi Hall for over a dozen of years and he was still rather loyal. Liu Jian shook his head and smiled bitterly as he answered, "Our journey to the Boorish Desolate this time is of great importance. We all listened to Sovereign's Martial Granduncle. As for why I wanted to kill you, it was an order given by Sovereign's Martial Granduncle and I have no idea as to why……."

"You don't know?"

Teng Qingshan stretched his hand and grabbed Liu Jian's disabled right hand finger. He gradually began applying strength.

"Ahhh, it's breaking.. it's breaking." Liu Jian yelled in fright.

"Kacha!"

Alongside Liu Jian's painful screams, Teng Qingshan crushed that finger as if he was crushing a peanut shell. Teng Qingshan stared Liu Jian and warned, "I hope you won't lie again! Because of this lie, I broke one of your right hand fingers. However, the next time you lie, I will disable your left wrist!"

Liu Jian's face turned pale white.

"I didn't……"

"You dare say you didn't lie?" Teng Qingshan stared at Liu Jian as he asked.

Liu Jian opened his mouth and didn't dare to make any sounds.

"Why did the Sovereign's Martial Granduncle of yours order to have me killed?" Teng Qingshan continued to ask.

Liu Jian gnashed his teeth and thought to himself, "As long as I don't tell him that secret, it should be alright. He probably wouldn't doubt it." Liu Jian then stared at Teng Qingshan with frightened eyes as he answered, "Commander Teng. In actuality we had come to the Boorish Desolate to gather the Grass of Immortality!"

"Grass of Immortality ?" Teng Qingshan was shocked.

A person's life span was limited. If it was a Postliminary expert, no matter how good his health was, he would still die even without catching any sort of sickness at the age of one hundred fifty. One hundred fifty years old 2qs the end of a Postliminary expert's life! Usually, if the experts who reached the peak of the Postliminary Realm did not die in other people's hand, they would mostly live to over a hundred years old.

As for innate experts, the end of their lives was two hundred years.

No matter how powerful and how healthy the innate expert was, he wouldn't be able to fight against the time of his demise! Of course, two hundred years was already a very long time.

The Grass of Immortality could prolong one's life span.

It did not mean that by eating this Grass of Immortality, one would really become immortal! Instead.... it was told that by eating the Grass of Immortality, it would let a person live for two hundred more years! If someone heavily injured to the point of dying ate this Grass of Immortality, they would recover within a short amount of time. To an innate expert with two hundred years of life span, it would mean adding another two hundred years to their life span.....and most likely, no innate expert could fight

against such temptations.

Among the spirit treasures of the world, the Grass of Immortality was also considered top-rank.

“The Boorish Desolate has no end, so therefore, it is possible to have the Grass of Immortality. Tie Yi Hall could actually obtain this information.” Teng Qingshan stared at Liu Jian as he spoke.

“This Grass of Immortality is extremely significant. If this information was leaked, it might attract some super powerful ones that are living in seclusion. By that time, Tie Yi Hall wouldn’t be able to deal with the powerful experts of the whole world.” Liu Jian continued to say, “Therefore, this journey was led by Sovereign’s Martial Granduncle personally, and we advanced carefully along the way. However……we saw you, Commander Teng, in the lodge at Nanman and met you at the Boorish Desolate once again. We suspected that you were following us!”

Teng Qingshan nodded to himself.

So they had met me twice.

“This Grass of Immortality is of great importance, therefore, just in case what we suspected was true, Sovereign’s Martial Granduncle ordered me to kill you.

“Who is your Sovereign’s Martial Granduncle?” Teng Qingshan yelled.

Liu Jian answered, “Sovereign’s Martial Granduncle’s name is ‘Deng Geng’!”

“Deng Geng? An innate expert?” Teng Qingshan asked.

“Yes. An I=innate expert. He is the Law Enforcing Elder of our Tie Yi Hall.” Liu Jian replied. Hearing this, Teng Qingshan furrowed and continued questioning, “What state of the Innate Realm?”

Liu Jian shook his head and replied, “I don’t know about that.”

Seeing that Teng Qingshan's eyes were gradually turning cold, Liu Jian exclaimed in fright, "Commander Teng! I really don't know! Sovereign's Martial Granduncle has a very high status in our Tie Yi Hall. Most people know that he is an innate expert, but whether or not he is of the Hollow Dan, True Dan, or Golden Dan, how would I, a small Protector, know that? That is a very big secret."

"Hmph." Teng Qingshan nodded.

"How long has it been since that Deng Geng reached the Innate Realm?" Teng Qingshan asked again. Based on the time a person has reached the Innate Realm, one could guess the level of the person's ability.

"Around twenty years." Liu Jian answered.

Twenty years!

It was not so long but also not a short amount of time. Some people could make no improvements after entering the Innate Realm for twenty years, but some people could cultivate from the very bottom, the Hollow Dan, to the peak, the state of Golden Dan, within twenty years.

"Let me ask you one last question! If you answer it nicely, I will not kill you." Teng Qingshan threw Liu Jian off to the side and Liu Jian crashed onto the pile of dried twigs and dead leaves. With a smile on his face, Qingshan continued, "However, if you lie! I will break all four of your limbs and slowly crush your fingers one by one. I will then cut many light wounds onto your body with my knife, and fresh blood will flow out. The scent of blood..... will attract many beasts in the surroundings and those beasts will eat you alive. I think you will like that very much."

Hearing this, Liu Jian face became pale.

"Tell me! Where in the Boorish Desolate are you guys going to?" Teng Qingshan suddenly yelled!

The shout caused Liu Jian to feel a sense of suffocation

The destination was a big secret, and if he said it, it would be very bad.

“A man of character.” Teng Qingshan smiled and stretched his hand, grabbing Liu Jian’s left arm at lightning speed. Liu Jian immediately shouted in fright, “No, no! I.. i will tell! I will tell!”

“Crack!”

Teng Qingshan twisted Liu Jian’s arm forcefully and a wood cracking sound rang. The arm was broken completely, showing the white bones.

“Remember! Don’t hesitate! I don’t have much time to waste with you!” Teng Qingshan stood up.

“It’s Half Moon Lake! The Half Moon Lake of the Boorish Desolate!” Liu Jian hastily answered.

Teng Qingshan’s face fell and he yelled, “Liu Jian! The real reason I came to the Boorish Desolate had nothing to do with Tie Yi Hall. You came to kill me yourself t..... According to reason, I should kill you, but I gave you many chances! However, you have disappointed me. You actually chose to still lie! Therefore, this will be your burial place.”

“No, I didn’t lie.” Liu Jian hastily shouted.

“Hmph! Half Moon Lake is in the region at the center of the Boorish Desolate. The nearest route from your capital to the Half Moon Lake at the Boorish Desolate should be advancing all the way straight into Yanzhou and entering the Boorish Desolate from Yanzhou!” Teng Qingshan said as he looked towards Liu Jian. Liu Jian’s facial expression changed as he explained hastily, “Tie Yi Hall has manpower in all of Yangzhou, so we went.....”

Teng Qingshan then interrupted, “Even if you guys departed from the Nanman City to the Half Moon Lake of the Boorish Desolate, you guys should have advanced southwest instead of towards the south! Perhaps your Sovereign’s Martial Granduncle

loves taking detours?”

Liu Jian gnashed his teeth, feeling the resentment harbored within his heart.

Of course the destination wasn’t ‘Half Moon Lake’. Tie Yi Hall had raised him for many years, and so even if he was afraid of death, he was still very loyal. Because of his loyalty, he had immediately said a name during that time of urgency, but he did not expect that Teng Qingshan would instantly see through his lie.

“Fine. I will tell you, but you can’t kill me.” Liu Jian gnashed his teeth and said.

“You must pay a price for lying.” With this, Teng Qingshan stretched his right arm outward again.

“No.. don’t!” Liu Jian yelled quickly.

Pa!

Teng Qingshan crushed Liu Jian’s right wrist and shoulder and said with a faint smile, “This is just a small punishment..... Say it. If you don’t, you won’t have another chance.”

Liu Jian was in such great pain that drops of perspiration covered his forehead. He hastily nodded as he replied, “I will tell you, but you must let me go.”

“Hmph, still saying unnecessary words.” As Teng Qingshan spoken, he stretched his right hand again. Liu Jian was terrified of Teng Qingshan’s right hand and hastily answered, “It’s Silver Horn Mountain! The Silver Horn Mountain in the Boorish Desolate! Sovereign’s Martial Granduncle and the others went there. I definitely didn’t lie this time. If I had lied, I would be struck by lightning.”

Silver Horn Mountain?

Teng Qingshan knew that place. That was a very dangerous mountain located two thousand Li in the Boorish Desolate.

“Don’t leave so quickly.” Teng Qingshan stretched his hand and took out everything in Liu Jian’s bag as he thought to himself, “Maybe he brought a map and their destination is marked on the map.”

A map was found instantaneously. Teng Qingshan opened it and saw that it was a map of the Boorish Desolate. Unfortunately, there were no markings on the map of the Boorish Desolate.

“You are quite cautious. Teng Qingshan said as he shook his head.

“I can leave now, right?” Liu Jian asked with trepidation. Seeing that Teng Qingshan nodded, he then turned back and walked away. Hatred filled his heart as he said secretly, “Teng Qingshan! I will never forget this grudge. You——”

“Ah!”

Liu Jian howled in pain.

Pu! Pu! Pu!

Blood splashed in all directions as Liu Jian collapsed on the ground with his four limbs drooping helplessly. Seeing this, Teng Qingshan then sheathed his Blood Sucking Saber.

“You.. you said.. you said you won’t kill me and you will let me go!” Liu Jian glared at Teng Qingshan.

“I didn’t kill you. Aren’t you still alive?” Teng Qingshan turned and left. Liu Jian watched his own blood flow continuously while “ShaSha” sound began resounding from the surroundings. From afar, a pair of green shiny eyes stared at Liu Jian. The scent of the blood had already attracted the beast in the Boorish Desolate!

Chapter 166: Steel Arms Monkey Mountain

Teng Qingshan did not fully believe what he had heard from Liu Jian.

However, there were a few points which he could be sure of. Firstly, the Tie Yi Hall definitely had some very important business at the Boorish Desolate or else they would not be out to kill him. It could be because of the Grass of Immortality, but it could also be something else. Secondly, based on the direction that the Tie Yi Hall was travelling towards, coupled with Liu Jian's tone, expression, and such, there was a 90% likelihood that their destination was 'Silver Horn Mountain'.

However……

For now, his own goal was the 'Steel Arms Monkey Mountain'.

"I'm uncertain of the abilities of Tie Yi Hall's 'Deng Geng'. Moreover, Deng Geng has four underlings, and with their speed, they can only travel about one or two hundred Li a day. To reach the Silver Horn Mountain, it will take them at least half a month. If there are any delays on the road, it could take even longer. I'll head to the Steel Arms Monkey Mountain first, take the 'Scarlet Fruit', and cultivate the Innate True Origin. After my abilities increase by leaps and bounds, then I'll head to Silver Horn Mountain!"

Towards those who wished to kill him, Teng Qingshan would show no mercy!

If the treasure can be stolen, then he would take it. If not, he would destroy their good fortunes!

……

With this decision, Teng Qingshan hastened his speed and travelled a distance of six hundred Li on the first day. At night, he rested on the tree fork of a thick and sturdy tree. On that night, a

python and two lizard-like wild beasts climbed up the tree in a bid to sneak an attack on Teng Qingshan.

Teng Qingshan rested but did not sleep; he sat cross-legged and meditated. At that moment, his six senses were at their sharpest.

The python as well as the lizard-like wild beasts were all killed.

……

The next morning, Teng Qingshan rapidly set off again. Throughout his journey, he slashed through all the thistles and thorns and killed many wild beasts. At noon that day, Teng Qingshan reached his destination: Steel Arms Monkey Mountain!

The Steel Arms Monkey Mountain towered into the clouds. At the mountain's peak, there were even clouds circling around.

"This Steel Arms Monkey Mountain is really tall!"

Although his clothes were torn and tattered, he felt very refreshed as he lifted his head and looked towards the tall mountain. "Seems like it's at least three to four thousand meters tall! If one falls from the peak and there is no way to reduce the resistance, even I will be smashed into a meat patty." At that moment, Teng Qingshan was in an excellent mood.

He finally reached his destination.

"Master said that the Scarlet Fruit is only within the Steel Arms Monkey Mountain, but what I do not know…… is where in the Steel Arms Monkey Mountain?" Teng Qingshan had thought that the Steel Arms Monkey Mountain was merely a small mountain, but he did not expect that this big mountain was so tall.

"It will take a very long time to search through the entire Steel Arms Monkey Mountain."

"How should I begin?"

In just a short moment, a smile broke out on Teng Qingshan's face. "Hmm…… according to the books, the Steel Arms Monkeys

will be defending in the vicinity of the Scarlet Fruit. It will not be easy to get hold of the Scarlet Fruit……Haha, right, on the Steel Arms Monkey Mountain, who would know the location of the Scarlet Fruit better than the Steel Arms Monkeys? Seems like if I were to quickly ascend, there'd definitely be no Scarlet Fruit in the areas without any Steel Arms Monkeys."

He first went to a small stream nearby to quickly wash his face.

Thereafter, Teng Qingshan carried his backpack and quickly ascended the mountain!

The Steel Arms Monkey Mountain was a tall, steep mountain which took up a lot of space. But Teng Qingshan ascended like it was a piece of flat land as he rushed through. Only when he occasionally met up with troubles did he climb with his hands.

On the Steel Arms Monkey Mountain, Teng Qingshan sat on the tree fork, and he took out some flatbread and the water gourd. "After I'm done eating, I'll take a look around. This mountain is too big, and it is even difficult to find the Steel Arms Monkeys." Teng Qingshan took a sip of water and took two big bites of the flatbread.

The mountain breeze blew.

There was a rustling sound.

"Hmm?" Teng Qingshan perked his ears and looked towards a spot, which was about ten Zhang away. He saw an azure python moving steadily, making very soft sounds as its cool golden gaze swept around the surroundings. This python had a length of about four Zhang long, and its thickness was almost the thickness of the upper thigh of a human.

"Pythons have great strength! This Azure Python can also be considered a demonic beast. But it can only be considered a mediocre demonic beast." Teng Qingshan could tell in one glance it was the demonic beast 'Azure Python'.

But the Azure Python which was four Zhang long was of no threat to Teng Qingshan.

This was unless it had grown to a length of ten Zhang and evolved into the ‘Jade Green Flood Dragon,’ which was merely three Zhang long. The Jade Green Flood Dragon, although small and thin, posed a threat no lower than the ‘Purple Radiant Flood Dragon’ in the Frost Jade Pool. The Flood Dragon may not necessarily be stronger the bigger it was. The body of the Jade Green Flood Dragon was small, but it had the toughness that was comparable to godly weapons. Its body could act as a killing weapon!

Moreover, it was extremely poisonous!

Even an innate master at the Golden Dan level would be wary of the ‘Jade Green Flood Dragon’.

“The venom of the Jade Green Flood Dragon spreads very quickly. Even though I am able to control the flow of my Qi and blood, I would also have to be careful.” Teng Qingshan smiled and looked at that Azure Python. The ‘Jade Green Flood Dragon’ was very powerful, but the Azure Python was merely a level higher than an «Earthly Ranking» expert.

Hu! Hu!

With the sound of a strong wind blowing, three crimson red figures flew over, grabbing on to tree branches, swaying their bodies body, and dashing a distance of over ten Zhang.

Teng Qingshan’s eyes lit up. The three crimson red figures were three monkeys covered all over with red fur! However, they had a pair of blue eyes, and their most unique trait was their long arms. The monkeys had arms that were longer than their legs. Moreover, the muscularity of their arms were no lesser than that of their legs.

The sharp claws on both arms had an icy cold gleam to them.

“Steel Arms Monkeys!” Teng Qingshan was very sure. “I’ve

finally met the Steel Arms Monkeys!”

Based on the recordings in books, the most unique trait of the Steel Arms Monkeys were their two arms as well as their sharp claws. The two arms held immense strength and could easily tear up ferocious wild beasts. Moreover, they were like godly weapons and were impenetrable by swords and spears. The sharpest was still their front claws, which could easily smash boulders.

“Steel Arms Monkey, Steel Arms Monkey! The most powerful thing is their pair of steel arms! Their arms have an immense strength of a hundred thousand Jin! Their strength is sufficient to kill an «Earthly Ranking» expert. According to the books, when faced with a group of these monkeys, even an innate master wouldn’t dare use force.” Teng Qingshan exclaimed to himself.

The Steel Arms Monkey had some similarities to himself.

Arms with immense strength.

Although he was stronger than the Steel Arms Monkeys, indeed...if he was surrounded and attacked by more than ten Steel Arms Monkeys...Teng Qingshan was fearful just thinking about it. “Both their arms have the strength of a hundred thousand Jin, and they are impenetrable by swords and spears. Such strength, coupled with the sharp front claws...even with my body, I don’t know if I can handle it.”

The full blown attack of most warriors in the Postliminary Realm would not be able to harm Teng Qingshan.

But with the Steel Arms Monkey, Teng Qingshan did not have much confidence.

“Chatter! Chatter!”

Three Steel Arms Monkeys cried out before they skillfully split up and surrounded the azure Python.

“Oh, the Steel Arms Monkeys are killing the Azure Python?” Teng Qingshan observed with much interest.

“Chi chi~~” The Azure Python’s massive body suddenly pulled back and coiled itself into a pile with its head at the top and its cold gold eyes observing the three Steel Arms Monkeys surrounding it. Obviously….it had felt threatened by the three Steel Arms Monkeys. Living in this Steel Arms Monkey Mountain, it was not the first time it had engaged in a battle with the Steel Arms Monkeys.

“Chatter, chatter!”

“Chatter chatter chatter chatter!”

The three Steel Arms Monkeys surrounded the Azure Python as they made weird crying sounds. Suddenly, one of the Steel Arms Monkey turned and leapt a short distance away, hugging a big three that was as thick as as the waist of an adult man. With its sharp claws, it fiercely slashed the big tree, and it easily slashed across the big tree like a knife.

Hu!

The Steel Arms Monkey hugged the big tree just like that, and with a loud ‘chatter’, it dashed towards the Azure Python.

“What strong arms, what sharp claws.” Teng Qingshan was astonished. “Massive strength of a hundred thousand Jin? It has to be more; it is unlikely to be lower.” Teng Qingshan’s interest in this battle between the demonic beasts grew.

Swoosh! The Azure Python scuttled.

Boom!

The big tree smashed on the ground with a loud boom, but the Azure Python had already dodged before it did. The Steel Arms Monkey cried out loudly once again, waved the tree, and smashed towards the azure Python’s head. Facing the tree trunk which was waving, the Azure Python could only dodge once again.

“Chatter!” A loud cry!

Hu! Hu!

The other two Steel Arms Monkeys which had been watching on the side, dashed out the same time the azure Python was avoiding the smashing tree. One of them grabbed towards the Azure Python's tail while the other grabbed towards its head. The weakness of a python was usually slightly behind the back of its head, and only after it was pierced there could it be killed.

While even if one was to pierce through other locations, it would be hard to kill the python.

"Roar~~" The python let out a terrifying cry and whipped its tail fiercely towards the Steel Arms Monkey. At the same time, it turned its head to spew out a mouthful of green liquid.

Boom!

The Azure Python's tail and the Steel Arms Monkey's pair of sharp claws clashed. With a tumble, the Steel Arms Monkey managed to dodge safely while a large wound appear on the Azure Python's tail as blood came gushing out.

"Chatter!" The other Steel Arms Monkey immediately dodged and avoided the green liquid.

"Chi chi~~"

The green liquid landed on the mountain rocks, and immediately it dissolved into a gigantic crater.

"Boom!" The third Steel Arms Monkey waved the big tree and took the opportunity when the Azure Python was fending off the other two Steel Arms Monkey to smash onto the body of the Azure Python.

""Roar~~~" The Azure Python let out a cry of pain. Its body twitched and flipped over the big tree.

The other two Steel Arms Monkeys pounced up again, but the Azure Python only had time to whip one off with its tail.

“Puchi!”

A pair of sharp claws dug into the Azure Python’s body, and with a tug, the Azure Python was severed into two. The Azure Python cried out in pain and was twisting and tumbling. At that moment, all three Steel Arms Monkey pounced at the same time and manage to kill the Azure Python easily.

“Yiaaa!”

“Yiaaa yiaaa!”

“Yiaaar~~~~”

The three Steel Arms Monkeys called out joyfully. One of them dug out a green python gut and swallowed it in one gulp. Thereafter, they carried the corpse of the Azure Python and left happily.

Teng Qingshan who was hidden in the big tree tens of Zhang away felt troubled. “They are really demonic beasts! They are as intelligent as a human. Obviously, they know how to delegate work between themselves. One Steel Arms Monkey used a big tree to attack from afar while the other two engaged in close range attacks. The moment the Azure Python reacted too slowly, it would get killed. Moreover……the Steel Arms Monkeys are too flexible!”

Teng Qingshan was not afraid of the arms and sharp claws of the Steel Arms Monkey.

But he was wary of their flexibility.

They were even able to instantaneously avoid the Azure Python’s desperate spew of venom. This ability to dodge exceeded the level of an «Earthly Ranking» expert.

“Once surrounded by a group of Steel Arms Monkeys with their flexibility, even if I wanted to escape, it’d be difficult.” Teng Qingshan exclaimed to himself. “It’s no wonder that master had said that to obtain the ‘Scarlet Fruit’, you needed to use wit instead

of force. Mmmm……I may find the location of the ‘Scarlet Fruit’ if I follow after those Steel Arms Monkeys.” Teng Qingshan kept his water gourd in his backpack, carried it, and leapt down without a sound.

Silently, Teng Qingshan followed after the Steel Arms Monkeys.

Chapter 167: The lair of the monkeys

Teng Qingshan followed the three Steel Arms Monkeys from afar, nimbly chasing after them. When some thorns and grass blocked the way, Teng Qingshan would fly ten Zhang away, dodging it easily. Anyway, Teng Qingshan did not make any sound in this Steel Arms Monkey Mountain.

“Ahhh!”

“AhAhAh~~”

The three Steel Arms Monkeys carried the dead Azure Python, dashing all the way while yelling excitedly. With their sensitive six senses, they still did not notice that a human was following them.

After following for for a distance of seven to eight Li, Teng Qingshan heard something.

“AhAh!”

“AhAhAh~~~~”

……

Noisy Chattering sounds emitted by the Steel Arms Monkeys resounded from in front.

“Based on the sounds of the Steel Arms Monkeys, there must be a large amount of monkeys.” Teng Qingshan stared at the three monkeys carrying the dead azure python disappeared from his sight. “Now I can’t follow recklessly. If I was accidentally trapped in the multitude of monkeys, that would be bad.”

Lowering his body, Teng Qingshan followed the chattering noises, slowly moving closer.

“Walla~~” Although the sound of the flowing water was very soft, Teng Qingshan still heard it clearly.

On this mountainside, Teng Qingshan advanced silently for a distance of around one Li before he stopped and hid among the

bushes and weeds. In front of him was a ten Zhang long lake shaped like a circle. Hot air emanated from the lake and many Steel Arms Monkeys were in the lake while a small number of monkeys were on the land.

“There are really a lot of Steel Arms Monkeys. There are over thirty monkeys in the hot spring lake and over a dozen on the land.” Seeing the monkeys, Teng Qingshan laughed and commented, “These Steel Arms Monkeys love hot springs too.”

Just based on appearance, the lake emanating hot air was like a hot spring indeed.

However, whether it was really a hot spring or not, unless you experienced the temperature personally, you wouldn’t know.

“Ah! Ahh!”

The Steel Arms Monkeys were playing in the lake and the monkeys on the land were also shouting. Unfortunately, Teng Qingshan did not understand the language of the Steel Arms Monkey.

“Eh!” Teng Qingshan’s eyes brightened as he stared at the center of the hot spring lake.

In the hot spring lake, some smooth rocks were protruding above the surface. In the center of the hot spring lake, over a dozen long and slender stems emerged from the water surface.There were green leaves on each of the stems. In the midst of the leaves of three of the plants, there were actually glowing red fruits.

Among the remaining ten stems, only three stems had fruits. However, the fruits of these three stems were green and were a lot smaller. The rest of the stems had no fruits but only leaves.

“Scarlet Fruits!” When Teng Qingshan, who had already seen the pictures of the many kinds of spirit fruits, saw the fruits, he couldn’t help but feel immense joy as he said to himself, “I came at the right time. There are actually three ripe Scarlet Fruits. The

other three Scarlet Fruits still need a few months to mature completely.”

Eating an unripe Scarlet Fruits would only bring harm.

“However, there are almost fifty Steel Arms Monkeys here!” Teng Qingshan furrowed and questioned, “What should I do?”

Forcing my way in definitely won’t work. The three Steel Arms Monkeys carrying the dead Azure Python are not here, so it was obvious that the Steel Arms Monkeys before his sight were not all of the monkeys of the Steel Arms Monkey Mountain.

The King of the monkeys and other powerful monkeys are probably not here.

“If I dashed directly forward to take the Scarlet Fruits forcefully, the monkeys would probably surround me before I could even touch the Scarlet Fruit.” Pondering for a while, Teng Qingshan then said, “Yes, any creature would definitely sleep. Although the Steel Arms Monkeys are wise, they are like kids. They are not as dutiful as soldiers.”

One word——wait!

Just wait until the sky darkens and wait until the Steel Arms Monkeys sleep. He would steal the Scarlet Fruit when it was night time.

With his own night vision, moving in the dark would be more effective.

……

Because he was preparing to steal the Scarlet Fruits, Teng Qingshan emptied his bottle gourd, which had bee half filled with water. The bottle gourd was not full, and if Teng Qingshan didn’t move violently, it might not make any sound. However, during crucial moment, when his movements were violent and swift, the water in the bottle gourd would move and make sounds.

His Blood Sucking Saber was wrapped with clothes and placed in his bag so that it won't make a sound.

Holding his Reincarnation Spear, Teng Qingshan crouched silently in the weeds

"When it's night time, I will go from the side!" Teng Qingshan scrutinized the environment and even the surrounding rocks and trees as he pondered the safest plan. "After plucking the fruits, I will go back through the same way quietly if they did not notice. If they noticed, then I will leap up to the tree..... These monkeys that have not reached the innate realm won't be able to catch me."

Teng Qingshan began waiting silently.

Without making a sound, Teng Qingshan waited for many hours. It was already evening and the sky was dusky.

"Ah!"! A piercing squeal rang.

Teng Qingshan, who was at the hot spring lake in the distance at this moment, narrowed his eyes.

Whew! Whew! Whew!

When piercing shriek sounded, the almost fifty Steel Arms Monkeys dashed out of the hot spring lake at lightning speed. All of the Steel Arms Monkeys were on the land now and not one of them dared to make a sound. They were all staring at a Steel Arms Monkey walking towards the lake like a man from a distance. It was a Steel Arms Monkey with a taller and bigger physique!

Normal Steel Arms Monkeys were slightly smaller than humans.

However, the Steel Arms Monkey walking towards the lake was nine Chi tall. It had red fur with some silver fur on its chest. This Steel Arms Monkey of great stature scanned the group of monkeys and leaped up forcefully, making a "Whew" sound. The leap was several Zhang high and over ten Zhang long and the monkey landed on a rock in the center of the lake.

The tall and big Steel Arms Monkey then made two more small leaps, arriving beside the stem of a Scarlet Fruit. It stretched its hand and plucked a glowing red Scarlet Fruit!

“Damn!”

Seeing this, Teng Qingshan’s facial expression changed drastically as he exclaimed, “It’s here to gather the fruits!”

Originally, Teng Qingshan planned to wait until nighttime to make his move, but who would have thought……that the tall and big Steel Arms Monkey would gather the fruits this evening. At this moment, the fifty Steel Arms Monkeys surrounded the lake, all appearing very obedient. They all stared at the tall and big Steel Arms Monkey plucking the fruits…….Teng Qingshan didn’t have a single chance now.

Whew! Whew!

After a few jumps, the three ripe Scarlet Fruits were gathered.

“Not even leaving one! Now it’s trouble.” Teng Qingshan gnashed his teeth and said, ”That tall and big Steel Arms Monkey should be a lot stronger than normal Steel Arms Monkeys!” The arms of normal Steel Arms Monkeys have a strength of more than hundred thousand Jin. This ability of this tall and big Steel Arms Monkey……should be greater than an innate expert.

“Let’s find a chance again.” Teng Qingshan did not have the audacity to take the fruits forcefully.

Who knows how many more Steel Arms Monkeys there are?

“Ah!” The tall and big Steel Arms Monkey let out a shriek and almost thirty Steel Arms Monkeys immediately followed it, leaving the remaining dozen monkeys at the lake.

Teng Qingshan held his Reincarnation Spear with one hand and walked in the forest quietly, following the group of Steel Arms Monkeys quickly. As he followed, he kept a distance of more than two Li…… With one glance,Teng Qingshan saw over one hundred

Steel Arms Monkeys waiting in the distance. Among the over one hundred Steel Arms Monkeys, there was one tall and big Steel Arms Monkey with silver fur on its chest.

“Ah! AhAh!”

When the tall and big Steel Arms Monkey that gathered the scarlet fruits arrived with the other Steel Arms Monkeys, shouts of joy immediately sounded.

“There are quite a lot of monkeys. There are over one hundred monkeys at the entrance of the lair. I wonder how many monkeys are inside the lair.” Teng Qingshan cast a glance at a conspicuously protruding cliff at the side and said to himself, “Let’s check it on the cliff.” Teng Qingshan climbed easily and arrived on top of the cliff.

There was a terrace on the cliff and it was covered with vines and weeds.

Teng Qingshan went slightly forward on the terrace of this cliff and prostrated himself. He moved to the edge of the cliff and looked down towards the lair of the monkeys.

“Heavens!” The sight caused Teng Qingshan to gasp with surprise.

Below the cliff, a huge number of red fur Steel Arms Monkeys scattered around. Some were eating wild fruits, and some were playing around. Occasionally, one or two tall and big Steel Arms Monkeys were seen. Teng Qingshan then exclaimed, “Now I see why no one dared to force their way in. There are over one thousand Steel Arms Monkeys in this lair! They are even all the big and tall Steel Arms Monkeys, I can already see more than eight bosses.”

The arms of each Steel Arms Monkeys had a strength of hundred thousand Jin.

With over one thousand Steel Arms Monkeys, who would dare to

force their way in?

“That Steel Arms Monkey is carrying the Scarlet Fruit.” Teng Qingshan saw it immediately. The tall and big Steel Arms Monkey carrying the three Scarlet Fruit was heading into a cave on the mountain wall at the side. The cave of this mountain wall had two normal Steel Arms Monkeys guarding it, and the tall and big Steel Arms Monkey went into the cave. None of the Steel Arms Monkeys stopped it.

“Oh..... The items of the Steel Arms Monkeys must be hidden in that cave.” Teng Qingshan stared at the cave and scrutinized the surrounding as he spoke, “Yes, if I climbed to the terrace above the cave at night, I might be able to flip down from the top into the cave with a faster speed.”

.....

The tall and big Steel Arms Monkey held three Scarlet Fruits and continued advancing in the cave. After a few turns, it arrived a spacious area inside the mountain. There was a huge rectangular hole on the ground and within this rectangular hole, there was a huge amount of light red liquid. A dense smell of alcohol permeated. The tall and big Steel Arms Monkey sniffed and involuntarily licked its lips.

However, it didn’t dared to make any sounds.

Because, beside the rectangular hole, there was a Steel Arms Monkey with the same stature as a normal Steel Arms Monkey. However.....the fur of this monkey was completely silver! And its eyes were golden colored! The tall and big monkey appeared very obedient in front of this golden-eyed and silver furred Steel Arms Monkey.

The golden-eyed Steel Arms Monkey casted a glance at the tall and big Steel Arms Monkey.

“Ah!” The tall and big Steel Arms Monkey immediately placed

the three Scarlet Fruit on the ground and went two steps backwards.

The golden-eyed Steel Arms Monkey took a stone mortar from the side. Some water and many kinds of green and white fruits were placed in the stone mortar. The gold-colored eyed Steel Arms Monkey took out a Scarlet Fruit and placed it in the stone mortar. With the use of a stone pestle, it mashed these fruits that was mixed with water, and the result was actually a light red color.

“ChiChi!” The golden-eyed Steel Arms Monkey took another Scarlet Fruit and placed it in, smashing it again.

“ChiChi.” Smelling it again, the golden-eyed Steel Arms Monkey then nodded satisfiedly.

Holding the stone mortar, it poured the liquid completely into the rectangular hole. The gold-colored Steel Arms Monkey smiled in satisfaction and threw the last Scarlet Fruit beside the stone mortar. It was obvious that it didn’t need other ingredients anymore.

“Ah Ah Ah Ah!” The golden-eyed Steel Arms Monkey yelled towards the tall and big Steel Arms Monkey.

When the tall and big Steel Arms Monkey heard, it raised its hands happily and shouted excitedly before it ran out.

This golden-eyed Steel Arms Monkey took a wine jar made of stone from the side and dipped the wine jar into the hole, filling it completely. The monkey took a sip first and shouted proudly. It then carried this wine jar and headed outside.

Chapter 168: Moving during Chaos

Teng Qingshan prostrated himself on the terrace of the cliff, making his breathing so weak that it could not be heard.

“It’s out.” Teng Qingshan could see the tall and big Steel Arms Monkey walk out of the cave. He then said to himself, “Yes. As expected, the Scarlet Fruit that was in his hand is now in the cave.”

When the tall and big Steel Arms Monkey walked out of the cave, it immediately made “Ah Ah Ah” sounds. The noise was excited and loud, resonating above the lair of the monkeys. When the monkeys that were originally playing around heard the squeals of the tall and big monkey, they immediately waved and shouted excitedly.

“AhAhAh…….”

After the shouting sounds rang, the monkeys immediately ran to each corner, taking out some stone cups.

“Cups?” Teng Qingshan stared at this scene in shock.

Some of the Steel Arms Monkeys seemed to have lost their cups. Those monkeys casually grabbed some stones and begun using their sharp claws like knives, cutting and carving the stones rapidly. Soon, the stones became stone cups.

Many of the other Steel Arms Monkeys that heard the shouts emerged from many other places, causing an increase in the number of the Steel Arms Monkeys below the cliff.

“There are over one thousand normal Steel Arms Monkeys, and the Steel Arms Monkeys with a greater stature are thirteen in number!” Teng Qingshan sighed in awe. He then questioned, “But why are they all taking out cups? ”

At this moment——

A Steel Arms Monkey with a normal physique, silver-colored fur

and gold-colored eyes came out of the cave. It grabbed a large wine jar with one hand. Light red liquid filled the wine jar, and a strong alcohol scent permeated the air. Teng Qingshan, who was only around ten Zhang away from the cave, also smelled the scent.

“This smell……” Teng Qingshan only felt that this scent caused his body to quiver as a refreshing sensation spread throughout his body.

“Even the scent is so alluring.” Teng Qingshan said as he casted a glance at the Steel Arms Monkey with gold-colored eyes, “All of the monkeys treat the silver-furred monkey with respect.” Teng Qingshan could tell that this Steel Arms Monkey with gold-colored eyes was the king of all the monkeys! Among the demonic beasts, the one that could be king must be the most powerful one.

However, Teng Qingshan was unclear of this monkey king’s ability.

“In the books about the demonic beasts, they only talked about the normal Steel Arms Monkeys. The books didn’t even mention the tall and big Steel Arms Monkey or the monkey king.” Teng Qingshan sighed secretly. The book failed to explain everything.

Below the cliff——

As the Steel Arms Monkey with gold-colored eyes shouted, thousands of Steel Arms Monkeys immediately cheered in joy.

The Steel Arms Monkey with gold-colored eyes poured the wine jar filled with the light red liquid into the wine jugs held by the thirteen tall and big Steel Arms Monkeys. The thirteen tall and big Steel Arms Monkeys then gave some Scarlet Fruit Wine to each Steel Arms Monkey.

The speed of those thirteen tall and big Steel Arms Monkeys was fast, and in the blink of an eye, each of the thousand-plus of Steel Arms Monkey got a cup of wine.

……

“It smells so good!” Teng Qingshan gasped in admiration.

By the time the rich and thick wine was completely split among the more then a thousand Steel Arms Monkeys, the sky had already darkened. The Steel Arms Monkeys were all happily treasuring the drink, smacking their lips as they took light sips every once in awhile. One cup of Scarlet Fruit Wine would take at least a dozen sips to be finished.

“Hm?” Teng Qingshan’s gaze swept over the distance.

He saw a black figure appear on top of a nearby tree. A pair of grey eyes stared at him amidst the darkness, giving off a mysterious feeling.

“It’s a black panther.” Teng Qingshan’s eyesight was extremely good, and a single glance was enough to determine that the black figure in the distance was a panther with a body of glossy, pitch-black fur. “It’s the demonic beast ‘Black Wind Leopard’. It should be even faster than I am.” Teng Qingshan had very clearly seen the speed at which the black leopard leaped onto the tree.

“Whoosh!”

Another figure was hidden in the grass, not too far away. The glowing green eyes were also stuck fast on the monkeys’ lair.

……

“So many demonic beasts.” Teng Qingshan’s heart trembled. “Demonic beasts’“Black Wind Leopard’, ‘Green Patterned Wolf’, ‘Purple Electric Centipede’, and two more I don’t recognize.” From Teng Qingshan’s angle and his senses, he’d already discovered five demonic beasts. Exactly how many of them were hidden in the surroundings?

Teng Qingshan didn’t dare say.

In short, there were many of them! Of course, the concealed Teng Qingshan’s might wasn’t the slightest bit less imposing than those demonic beasts.

“Ya!”

The Golden Eyed Monkey King gleefully took a large swig of Scarlet Fruit Wine. It glanced at the surrounding demonic beasts in hiding with great scorn.

The other Steel Arms Monkeys also shouted excitedly. There were obviously some among the over one thousand Steel Arms Monkeys that noticed the demonic beasts in the surroundings, but……it was obvious that these monkeys looked down on those demonic beasts. Each and every one of them sipped their Scarlet Fruit Wine and shouted proudly after each sip.

In the Steel Arms Monkey Mountain, the Steel Arms Monkeys were kings!

The other demonic beasts couldn’t defeat the Steel Arms Monkeys! They were all unable to go against the monkeys!

……

Chaos!

It was obvious that the demonic beasts staying in concealment were attracted here by the Scarlet Fruit Wine. The force of the Scarlet Fruit Wine’s attraction was too strong, but those demonic beasts only hid in the surroundings, and not one of them dared to pounce into the multitude of monkeys. If it was only one Steel Arms Monkey, the demonic beasts in solitude wouldn’t be afraid at all, but the Steel Arms Monkeys were numbered in the thousands.

Therefore, they hesitated!

“Something is wrong with the atmosphere.” Teng Qingshan gasped secretly as he looked towards the demonic beasts in the distance. He then said to himself, “I seldom encounter demonic beasts in the Desolate Land, but on this Steel Arms Monkey Mountain, there’s not only Scarlet Fruit, but also a multitude of Steel Arms Monkeys and other demonic beasts.”

Teng Qingshan understood.

The reason why the demonic beasts showed up had something to do with the Spiritual Qi of Heavens and Earth! So many spiritual fruits and demonic beasts appeared in this Steel Arms Monkey Mountain, thus, it was obvious that this mountain was not an ordinary mountain.

While Teng Qingshan was hiding quietly——

“Xiu!”

A piercing sound rang and high up in the sky. A silver figure slashed across the air, dashing into the multitude of monkeys like lightning.

“It’s an eagle. However, I never read about this godly eagle in the book.” Teng Qingshan also realized that the book describing the demonic beasts was not complete. The godly eagle swooped down. The width of its opened wings was over one Zhang. The instant the godly eagle darted into the multitude of monkeys, it pounced on one of the thirteen tall and big Steel Arms Monkeys.

“Pu!”

The eagle flapped its wings.

“Bang!” The tall and big Steel Arms Monkey was thrown into the air and crashed fiercely onto a mountain wall at the side. With a booming sound, a large hole appeared on the mountain wall, and broken rocks flew towards all directions.

“Whew!” The godly eagle put its beak into the water jar, and with a sip, it drank the remaining Scarlet Fruit Wine in the water jar.

“Ah Ah Ah~~~”

The Steel Arms Monkeys immediately became agitated, and each one of them showed an menace appearance.

“Ah!” The Golden Eyed Monkey King shrieked and dashed towards the godly eagle like a silver streak of lightning.

The silver-colored godly eagle refused to fight the Golden Eyed

Monkey. With a quiver of its wings, the eagle flew towards the sky.

“Pu!”

The Golden Eyed Monkey King stomped on the ground, causing the earth to tremble fiercely. Suddenly, the Golden Eyed Monkey King seemed to have transformed into a beam of silver light, instantly jumped a distance of over twenty Zhang, and its steeled arms actually grabbed the claw of the silver godly eagle. The silver godly eagle immediately flipped forcefully and attacked the Gold Eyed Monkey King with its sharp beaks and claws.

“Whew!” “Whew!” “Whew!”

While the monkey king and godly eagle was fighting, the demonic beasts that were hiding immediately dashed into the multitude of monkeys to drink the Scarlet Fruit Wine, rushing like they were in a competition.

“Ah Ah!!!”

The Steel Arms Monkeys shouted and simultaneously drank the Scarlet Fruit Wine in their own cups, refusing to let the outsiders drink it. And then, over ten Steel Arms Monkeys formed a group and pounced onto the demonic beasts together. After demonic beasts dashed in and drank a few cups of Scarlet Fruit Wine, they also realized that the situation was bad and had no choice but to flee.

In actuality, when the monkeys were in confusion, Teng Qingshan already dashed onto the cliff directly above the cave.

“Even though it’s chaos, there are still Steel Arms Monkeys guarding here.” Teng Qingshan said as he glanced at the Steel Arms Monkeys below. Those monkeys were watching the fights in the distance and paid no attention to their surroundings.

“Whew!”

Teng Qingshan fell silently from the cliff, and the instant his head was near the cave entrance, his right hand clawed into the

internal walls of the cave. Through the strength of his right hand, his body stuck closely to the internal cave walls as if it was boneless. Teng Qingshan darted directly into the cave, before falling and entering the cave in just the blink of an eye.

“Whew!”

Teng Qingshan had already disappeared deep into the cave.

As for those monkeys standing before the entrance of the cave, they were still staring at the fighting demonic beasts while cheering excitedly and roaring occasionally. They did not notice Teng Qingshan at all.

……

Teng Qingshan held his Reincarnation Spear with his right hand and a flying knife with his left hand as he advanced in the cave carefully. The cave was pitch black, but Teng Qingshan could see everything before him. After a few turns, Teng Qingshan also arrived the the spacious area inside the mountain.

A thick wine fragrance came from within. Thick and rich aroma of wine arose from the middle of the area.

“This is——” Teng Qingshan stared at the light red liquid in the rectangular stone hole and said, “There’s this many? The demonic beasts outside fought to death for a little bit of this, yet there’s so much here. However, I need to find the Scarlet Fruit first.”

Beside this rectangular stone hole, there were a few bottles, stone mortars, wine jars, etcetera.

“Scarlet Fruit!” “Scarlet Fruit!”

Teng Qingshan immediately saw the Scarlet Fruit within the stone basin. “There’s only one more? What about the other two?” Teng Qingshan picked up the Scarlet Fruit and was shocked to discover that…the aroma it emitted was very similar to the scent the scarlet liquid gave off.

“There’s still some scarlet fluid remaining in the basin. Could it be that..the scarlet wine was produced by combining Scarlet Fruits and some other materials?” Teng Qingshan began to realize.

“If the demonic beasts are fighting to drink it, the wine should be drinkable. However...” Teng Qingshan opened his bag and placed the Scarlet Fruit within. “Once the Scarlet Fruit is eaten, one’s inner strength will explode, and the Dantian will rapidly expand as well. I would assume that as the Dantian is changing, there is no way to use one’s inner strength as one pleases. The situation is dire right now, so I’ll wait until I escape before I eat the fruit.”

There were monkey packs outside after all!

Staying in this cave for a moment longer meant a moment more of danger.

It didn’t matter what kind of spirit fruit it was, Teng Qingshan didn’t dare to eat it at the moment.

“It’s really a waste to not drink this Scarlet Fruit Wine. However, if I drink it now, it’ll incite certain reactions in my body that won’t be of any help to my escape.” Teng Qingshan’s gaze swept across the bottle and jugs, but they were all made of stone and very roughly constructed. There wasn’t even a single sealing cork. Suddenly, Teng Qingshan noticed the gourd inside his own bag!

This was a gourd meant for storing water! For the purpose of adventuring around outside, a gourd meant for storing water naturally wouldn’t be small.

“I can store it within this gourd; it’s quite a few Jin.” Teng Qingshan was delighted and immediately opened the gourd’s stopper before placing it into the stone pit. With a few gurgling sounds, the Scarlet Fruit Wine ceaselessly flowed into the gourd.

Chapter 169: Kill a Way Out!!!

The Scarlet Fruit Wine in the basin bubbled, and soon, the whole gourd was filled.

Teng Qingshan immediately wiped down the exterior of the gourd before plugging in the cork and placing it in his baggage.

“These Steel Arms Monkeys are really poor. Other than the Scarlet Fruit Wine, they have nothing else. While demonic beasts have intelligence, their expectations for fun is still very low. Mmmm……Now that I’ve gotten the Scarlet Fruit, it’s time to go!” Teng Qingshan threw a glance to the surroundings before he tightened the baggage on himself, held onto the Reincarnation Spear with one hand, and quietly left the mountainside.

In the nest of the monkey group, the slaughters were very fast.

The demonic beasts that were out to snatch the Scarlet Fruit Wine, after stealing a sip, tried to make their escape. On the other hand, the Steel Arms Monkeys gathered in big groups, attempting to kill these demonic beasts. Those that dared to steal the fruit wine were quite capable themselves. Most of the demonic beasts escaped with injuries, and only two unlucky ones were surrounded and eventually torn up by the Steel Arms Monkey!

Of course, two of the Steel Arms Monkeys also died.

The world of the demonic beasts was that cruel.

“Yiaaa!”

“Yiaaa yiaaa!!!”

After a winning battle, the Steel Arms Monkeys all cheered excitedly. And in the forest a distance away, the Golden Eyed Monkey King and the godly eagle were also having an intense battle, and both of them very covered in wounds. With a piercing cry the godly eagle once again took flight, and this time around, the Golden Eyed Monkey King did not give chase.

“Yiaaa yiaaa!” The Monkey King stared at the soaring figure and cried out loudly.

At that moment——

At the deep cave at the peak of the mountain, a figure plastered himself to the walls, the Reincarnation Spear at his waist. His whole figure was hidden in the darkness. Using both arms and legs, he quietly plastered himself to the top of the rock walls and slowly headed for the entrance of the cave, his cold eyes constantly focusing on the two big Steel Arms Monkeys at the entrance!

“I’m really unlucky!” Teng Qingshan said to himself. “Seems like the fighting between the demonic beasts outside is almost over. To think that there are two big Steel Arms Monkeys guarding this place themselves! The fighting ended too soon.”

Teng Qingshan had originally thought that the fighting was still ongoing and he could take advantage of the chaos to make his escape.

Who would have thought……

Thee demonic beasts that had made their way in failed his expectations. Those demonic beasts were all afraid of death. Once they had a drink of the Scarlet Fruit wine, they quickly made their escape. It was not long before the lair of the monkey group quieted down.

“I hope they don’t discover me.” Teng Qingshan gradually made his way to the entrance of the cave.

Actually, with the clutch of his fingers, he could adhere to the top of the cave walls with one hand. However…….for the sake of safety, in order not to make a single sound, Teng Qingshan exerted strength with his whole body, as if his was stuck to the top of the top of the rocky walls. At that moment, he was only two Zhang away from the entrance of the cave!

Suddenly, one of the two big Steel Arms Monkeys at the entrance

of the cave turned. With its claws pointing to the distance, it went ‘Yiaaa yiaaa yiaaa’, as if it was crying out something.

But with its turn, it discovered from the corner of its eyes the Teng Qingshan who was adhered to the top of the rock walls.

“Yiaaa!”

The Steel Arms Monkey stared hard. To think that a human had intruded to their monkey troops’ extremely important zone!

“Not good!” Teng Qingshan’s eyes turned sharp as knives. Teng Qingshan, who was originally adhered to the top of the rock walls like a spider, exerted strength with his four limbs, and dashed like a frog, as quick as lightning!

“Yiaaa!” The big Steel Arms Monkey also swiped its claws in fury.

“Boom!”

Teng Qingshan’s clothes on his right arm bulged up, and a strong fist smash against the claws of that big Steel Arms Monkey. “Boom!” A loud sound like an explosion issued forth, and the strong pressure caused the inner strength to spread out in all directions. A spinning explosive energy of over 200,00 Jin caused the unprepared big Steel Arms Monkey to be smashed three steps back. Each step it took left a deep claw mark in the ground.

Meanwhile, Teng Qingshan borrowed the energy from the backlash to do a flip in midair!

“Hu!”

With extreme nimbleness, he flipped a few Zhang upwards, clutched onto the rock walls, and leaped up onto a flat ground on top of the cliff.

“Yiaaa yiaaa yiaaa!!!” The two big Steel Arms Monkey cried out furiously.

“Yiaaa yiaaa yiaaa, yiaaa yiaaa yiaaa~~~”

The entire group of monkeys started to cry out. In a short

instance, at least hundreds of Steel Arms Monkeys noticed that a human had leaped up to a flat surface on the cliff from their important ‘cave’, the cave where they had stored their most precious ‘Scarlet Fruit Wine’, something that was usually hard for them to even get a sip.

“Yiaaa yiaaa yiaaa!!!”

The cries filled the air as hundreds and thousands of enraged Steel Arms Monkeys dashed over from all over the place, packing the area with their large builds.

“Hu!” “Hu!” “Hu!”

A leap from a Steeled Armed Monkey reached a height of seven to eight Zhang, and soon each of them easily leaped up onto the flat surface of the cliff. They all seemed crazy as they went after Teng Qingshan with killing intent.

The face of Teng Qingshan, who was running at the speed of lightning, paled when he saw this. “This is troublesome! No other way, I can only follow the nearest path and kill my way out in one go! If I don’t escape, there’s only death!” Teng Qingshan quickly drew out the Reincarnation Spear on his back as he leaped on the cliff walls at the speed of lightning.

Teng Qingshan used ‘Crossing Worlds’ and summoned all the energy from his body.

His speed was extremely fast!

The distance between him and the normal Steel Arms Monkeys chasing behind gradually increased. But it was too bad that..... there were too many Steel Arms Monkeys. There were simply many of them that had intercepted him from other directions! With interceptions from all directions, no matter what, Teng Qingshan had to fend against these obstacles.

Teng Qingshan squinted his eyes and gave an ice-cold gaze!

“Yiaaa yiaaa!”

Eight Steel Arms Monkeys lined up and dashed towards Teng Qingshan simultaneously. Each of them cried out loudly, waving their proudest Steel Arms.

“Die!”

The Reincarnation Spear in Teng Qingshan’s hand immediately turned into a shadow, swiping four rays of sharp sliver light like the poisonous sting of a scorpion.

“Pu!” “Pu!” “Pu!” “Pu!”

The spear figure was like a needle!

Blood splattered!

The eight Steel Arms Monkeys did not even slow down Teng Qingshan, and he passed by them just like that. Blood spewed out from the necks of four of the Steel Arms Monkeys as they fell down, lifeless. The other four living Steel Arms Monkeys cried out furiously!

Teng Qingshan’s speed did not decrease at all as he continued to dash forth!

Kill!

Kill all those who obstruct him!

At that moment, time was so tight that at every blink of an eye, Teng Qingshan could have died if he were one blink slower.

“Yiaaa yiaaa yiaaa yiaaa~~~” Seeing that four Steel Arms Monkeys had died, all the other Steel Arms Monkeys cried out, but more of them came crowding from all over.

Initially, when the Golden Eyed Monkey King returned to the monkeys’ lair after its battle with the godly eagle, it had merely watched from the sides as its subordinates went after to kill the man. But Teng Qingshan’s powerful and sharp spear had enraged it. It raised its head and cried out loudly, “Yiaaa!!!” Immediately, it tapped its legs.

Rumble! The rocky ground cracked.

Swoosh!

The Golden Eyed Monkey King turned into a ray of silver light and leaped out a distance of over tens of Zhang. When it landed again, it tapped fiercely on the ground and progressed another tens of Zhang!

“Not good.” Teng Qingshan paled upon seeing this. “This Monkey King’s speed is at least two times my own. If I were to take the route I planned, I wouldn’t be able to make it.” As Teng Qingshan was running, he concurrently scanned the surroundings and fixed his gaze somewhere far off in the southern direction. “There’s no other way out, I can only do this!”

Teng Qingshan fiercely turned and dashed southward.

“Yiaaa yiaaa~~” Another eleven Steel Arms Monkeys gathered over with killing intention. There was even a big Steel Arms Monkey in front of them!

“My Reincarnation can kill normal Steel Arms Monkeys with one pierce, but I wouldn’t be able to kill this big Steel Arms Monkey with one thrust.” Teng Qingshan had a short encounter with a big Steel Arms Monkey earlier and could tell that this big Steel Arms Monkey can definitely match up to the abilities of that ‘Ghostly Fox’ Sima Qing. The moment Teng Qingshan was dashing in front ——

A bright light flashed past from his left arm!

“Swoosh!”

The cold gleaming light slashed across the air and shot towards the big Steel Arms Monkey’s neck.

“Yiaaa~” The big Steel Arms Monkey immediately clawed towards the cool light that was sent flying. But when it was about six Chi distance away, the cool light suddenly curved, passed by its sharp claws, and thrusted towards its face.

“Puchi!”

The flying knife pierced through the big Steel Arms Monkey’s skull! Splatters of red and white flew all over!

“Yiaaa yiaaa!” When the running Golden Eyed Monkey King saw this, it was further infuriated. There were many normal Steel Arms Monkeys, so it was fine even if they had died. But the big Steel Arms Monkeys were his left and right arms! The infuriated Monkey King moved at an astonishing speed, each step causing rocks to crumble.

The Steel Arms Monkeys were very clever!

Previously, they had seen Teng Qingshan kill four Steel Arms Monkeys at once. Because of this, the eleven Steel Arms Monkeys split up to form three rows. There were four in the first row, three in the second, and four in the third. They pounced towards Teng Qingshan interchangeably. Even if Teng Qingshan killed three or four of them, he would not be able to charge pass the obstacle.

“They are intelligent. This has grown even more troublesome.”

Teng Qingshan did not slow down at all, charging like a tank that was increasingly its speed crazily as he dashed forth.

“Boom!”

With a tap on the ground, Teng Qingshan leaped up.

“Hu!” “Hu!” “Hu!”

The eleven Steel Arms Monkeys leaped up at almost the same time, pouncing towards Teng Qingshan!

“Their formation is broken!” With a cold glance, the Reincarnation Spear in Teng Qingshan’s hands consecutively thrusted three times as if it were a venomous snake, killing three Steel Arms Monkeys. Thereafter, it turned into a curve—— Transmutation Unity Law Spear Art!

The only defensive spear art in the Five Element Spear Art!

“Boom!”

Three Steel Arms Monkeys plunged down from midair, while the other eight Steel Arms Monkeys were knocked off their tracks.

“These monkeys are really strong.” Teng Qingshan’s sleeves were torn, and a claw mark appeared on his arm, but it was merely torn skin. ‘Transmutation Unity Law’ Spear Art was not one with absolute defence. If the surrounding enemies were all very strong, once the speed of the Reincarnation Spear was affected, the defensive powers of the spear would no longer be perfect.

Like a flash of lightning——

Breaking through the obstacles of a big Steel Arms Monkey and eleven normal Steel Arms Monkeys, Teng Qingshan dashed directly to southwards.

“Yiaaa!” The infuriated Monkey King caught up, its eyes gleaming with a gold light, making it seem extremely brutal.

“Hu!”

With a leap, it pounced over.

Teng Qingshan, who had dashed at extreme speed, suddenly turned and waved his arm——a ray of cold light cut across the sky!

A golden light flashed across the air!

“Boom!” The Monkey King’s right claw crumbled the flying knife. However, that flying blade had contained an immense energy of over 200,000 Jin. Since Monkey King had received the impact when it had leaped and was in midair, it uncontrollably fell backwards.

“To think that the speed of the Monkey King’s sharp claws could match up with the turning of my flying knife.” Teng Qingshan exclaimed to himself. “This Monkey King is much stronger than me, and is probably comparable to the innate Golden Dan experts.” Facing such a terrifying demonic beast, Teng Qingshan was even

more affirmative of his decision.

Once it caught up, he would definitely die!

“Yiaaa!” The Monkey King, which had landed due to the backlash, immediately dashed forth.

However——

During the short moment the Monkey King was delayed, Teng Qingshan had dashed to the southern end of the Steel Arms Monkey Mountain——at the the hanging cliff! And at the bottom of the cliff was white fog. It was an unfathomable depth!

With no hesitation!

“Hu!”

Holding onto the Reincarnation Spear, Teng Qingshan leaped downwards.

“Yiaaa!” The Monkey King stood at the cliff, unusually enraged as it grabbed two boulders and hurled them towards the Teng Qingshan who had leaped down.

“Rumble!” “Rumble!”

Falling in midair, Teng Qingshan could not dodge the boulders!

Chapter 170: Breaking through the Innate Realm

The instant Teng Qingshan jumped down, he averted himself, causing his body to position facing up!

The two boulders were thrown towards him in succession.

“This Golden Eyed Monkey King only has brute strength. The way it threw the concealed weapons was completely unskillful! With such powerful strength, it’s a shame only some of it was used on the rock.” If Teng Qingshan was on flat land, he could dodge the rocks easily, but since he could not borrow any energy in midair, he could only force himself to fight.

Teng Qingshan’s eyes became sharp and he thrusted the Reincarnation Spear in his hand rapidly——

“Bang!” “Bang!”

The two rocks split apart, but the force carried by them caused Teng Qingshan to fall at an even faster pace.

“Not good!” Teng Qingshan forcefully turned and stared at northern mountain wall. Unfortunately, the mountain wall was four to five Zhang away from him, and Teng Qingshan couldn’t touch it.

Whew!

The fierce wind roared as Teng Qingshan fell at an extremely rapid speed.

Teng Qingshan also began to worry, “The mountain wall of this Steel Arms Monkey Mountain must have protruding areas……if I continue to fall with nothing to offset the force, after falling seven hundred to eight hundred meters, I would hit one of the protruding areas. Even if I survived, I would be disabled!” The cliff that Teng Qingshan jumped off was 3,000 meters above the

ground. However……even though the cliff had an altitude of 3,000 meters, touching the mountain wall was not impossible.

This was because the Steel Arms Monkey Mountain wasn't all too precipitous. Instead, just this one part of the mountain was very precipitous.

However, how far did this very precipitous area extend?

Teng Qingshan must think of a way to offset the force!

If he couldn't offset the force, and it was a three hundred meter fall, Teng Qingshan might be alright. If it was a five hundred meters vertical free fall, Teng Qingshan might be seriously injured. If it was a seven or eight hundred meters fall, he would be disabled even if he was able to survive. However, if the fall was even higher than that, he would most definitely die.

"A person falling from an altitude of thousands of meters would be like solid iron falling. Once it crashed onto the ground, the body would become meat paste." Although Teng Qingshan was anxious, he still remained calm.

Whew! Whew!

As Teng Qingshan was free falling at an extremely rapid speed, the cold wind blew and roared.

"In just a few seconds, I have already fallen three hundred meters." Teng Qingshan was slightly nervous. Suddenly, his eyes brighten as he saw a vine hung on the mountain wall before him, swaying along with the wind.

Teng Qingshan stretched the Reincarnation Spear in his hand outward forcefully!

Chi! With a roll!

His Reincarnation Spear caught the vine and with a "Pu! " sound, the vine was instantly dragged straight down. Due to the three hundred meters fall and the impact of the two rocks, the vine only

withstand the drag for just a blink of an eye and then broke. The broken vine entangled around the spear and descended with Teng Qingshan.

In that short time of less than a second, Teng Qingshan wasn't even able to get close to the mountain wall.

"That second just now offsetted eighty percent of the force of the impact." Teng Qingshan relaxed slightly and thought to himself, "If the structure of this Steel Arms Monkey Mountain is normal, it would impossible to be this steep for six hundred to seven hundred meters."Teng Qingshan then looked down and saw a huge protruding rock on the mountain wall.

Teng Qingshan was about to crash on it!

Bang!

Teng Qingshan stomped on that mountain rock forcefully, and the rock exploded as crushed rocks flew in all directions. Teng Qingshan tumbled and finally resolved the force of the impact. However, as he tumbled, he rolled onto the edge of the cliff. With a puchi sound, Teng Qingshan immediately stabbed his right hand into the rock, thereby stopping himself.

"Phew, phew!" Teng Qingshan let out a sigh of relief.

"If it wasn't for the vine, I would have been dead or disabled." Teng Qingshan sighed secretly. During this whole event for survival, Teng Qingshan's decision making was absolutely correct. With the ability of that Golden Eyed Monkey King, if Teng Qingshan had not jumped down the cliff, he would have been killed instantly once the Golden Eyed Monkey King caught up to him!

"I can't stay here! I have really enraged the Golden Eyed Monkey King this time and the Monkey King might even command its subordinates to pursue and kill me!" Teng Qingshan was unclear about the temper of the Monkey King.

However, it's better safe than sorry.

"I can't stay in this steel arms monkey mountain here for long." Teng Qingshan looked towards the surroundings.

The fastest speed down the mountain was obviously jumping down.

Teng Qingshan scrutinized the areas below the mountain and forcefully made a leap. Every ten Zhang of free falling, Teng Qingshan would grab the mountain wall and stop for a second. And thus, stopping every ten Zhang was the way he used to descend the mountain. Even when the mountain wall caved in, Teng Qingshan was able to flip himself and approach the depressed mountain wall.

Teng Qingshan rapidly slid down with great caution.

When Teng Qingshan was only less than one hundred Zhang away from ground, he directly jumped down.

"Whew!" Those trees went straight towards his face.

"Crack!" Teng Qingshan broke a branch of a big tree with one step and descended the ground easily.

"Hah. I finally escaped from the Steel Arms Monkey Mountain." Teng Qingshan felt a sense of joy as he talked to himself, "Yes, To prevent those monkeys from catching up, let's run a distance of one hundred Li." Teng Qingshan began running in the Desolate Land rapidly. This time, his speed was a lot faster than when he had just entered the Desolate Land.

With two flashes, he disappeared into the heart of the forest.

……

Clouds and mist enshrouded below the cliff. When the Golden Eyed Monkey King saw that the human below thrusted through the two rocks it had thrown, it began roaring furiously!

The sound of its roars broke the heavens.

Unfortunately, even the Golden Eyed Monkey King didn't have the audacity to jump down this immeasurably deep abyss. If it wasn't because there was no choice, no one would choose to jump off a cliff.

"Yia Yia!"

"Yia Yia Yia!" Discordant noises rang in the lair of the monkeys. Every one of the steel arms monkeys was obviously very angry.

The other twelve big and tall steel arms monkeys rushed before the Golden Eyed Monkey King and awaited the command of the Monkey King.

"Yia!" The Monkey King opened its mouth and speedily dashed towards the cave alone. To all the monkeys, the most important thing was the Scarlet Fruit Wine. Although a tall and big steel arms monkey died, as time passed, a new tall and big monkey would evolve from among the multitude of monkeys.

After entering the cave for a while, the Golden Eyed Monkey King ran out.

All the steel arms monkeys stared at their own king. They were most afraid of losing all the scarlet fruit wine.

"Yia Yia~~" The monkey king smiled and squealed.

Immediately, all the monkeys cheered. They all knew..... They knew that the scarlet fruit wine was still there. Since Teng Qingshan had only took a gourd full of wine from that whole quarry of scarlet fruit wine, just from judging through the eye, there would almost be no difference. As the scarlet fruit wine was still there..... the monkeys did not pursue Teng Qingshan.

Pursuing would only result in more loss than gain.

These Steel Arms Monkeys, especially the Monkey King, were very smart.

It was a dark night and the crescent moon hung high up in the

sky. The blurry moon light covered the endless desolate land.

Teng Qingshan was sitting on the branch of a thick and strong huge tree. He thought to himself, “I ran over one hundred Li in one breath! The Steel Arms Monkeys don’t know the direction I escaped to, therefore the possibility of the monkeys catching me is nil!” Teng Qingshan was finally able to relax. He then opened his bag and took out the scarlet fruit.

“Just for this Scarlet Fruit, I almost lost my life!” Teng Qingshan couldn’t help but sigh emotionally.

The Scarlet Fruit was red like a red apple.

Teng Qingshan did not regret this adventure. If he had done everything cowardly, it would be difficult to do great things. For example, the survival feat today caused Teng Qingshan to understand more about the Spear ARt, Pursuing Shadow. He slightly understood the way to increase power whiles still maintaining coherence.

The moment of life and death was the easiest time to reach your limit and break through your own limit!

“Let’s eat it, and when my Dantian reaches the limit, Unity of Spirit and Qi will be achieved and I will break through the Innate Realm.” With this, Teng Qingshan took a bite. “Kacha” The fruit was very fresh and crispy.

After three continuous bites, Teng Qingshan ate the whole Scarlet Fruit.

When the Scarlet Fruit entered his body, it immediately transformed into a burning hot flow that flowed through every meridian and converged at the location of the Dantian at the stomach. Teng Qingshan could distinctly feel his stomach boil and that sensation was extremely comfortable. After those hot flow dissolved in the Dantian, the walls of the Dantian seemed to have melted.

The Dantian began to expand!

Chi Chi~~~

The space of the Dantian enlarged continually. In the past, it would only enlarge slightly after a long time of cultivation. Even practicing powerful inner strength cultivation methods would require ten years for the Dantian to reach its limit. However, he just ate the Scarlet Fruit..... And the growing speed of the Dantian was shocking!

After around half an hour later, the Dantian finally stopped expanding, and the hot flow, which was now weak, soon dissipated.

“Just based on the capacitance, the Dantian now is four times its previous size.” Teng Qingshan began feeling the interior of his Dantian and found that a Dantian that had reached its limit had an oval shape similar to eggs. This shape actually caused the inner strength to spin naturally, spinning freely and horizontally.....

The forces of inner strength entangled in each other like whirlpools.

The center of the Dantian was the center of the whirlpool.

“To reach the Innate Realm, the Dantian must reach its limit. I guess it has something to do with this whirlpool.” Teng Qingshan gasped in awe. In the past, his inner strength was only stored in his Dantian and made no special movements. His Dantian was just a depository. However, when his Dantian reached its limit, the inner strength within actually moved.

“I should taste the Scarlet Fruit Wine.”

Teng Qingshan took out the gourd and removed the cork, taking a sip.

“Eh?” Teng Qingshan only felt a scorching energy spread throughout his whole body to the location of Dantian when this scarlet fruit wine entered his body. The burning sensation of the

whole body was fascinating. The scorching energy combined with every part of his body.

At this moment——

Joy displayed on Teng Qingshan's face as he stared at the gourd in amazement and said, "Some energy of this Scarlet Fruit Wine could actually amalgamate with the Dantian, assisting its growth. However, as my Dantian has reached its limit, the wine has no effect! But..... This Scarlet Fruit Wine is actually able to improve my physical strength."

Yes! It improved my physical strength just like the Black Fire Spirit Root!

Teng Qingshan could distinctly feel his power increase after just one sip. It was so distinct which meant that.....it must have added thousand Jin of strength.

"No wonder those demonic beast wanted to drink it so badly. It could increase your physical strength. In this Scarlet Fruit Wine, aside from the Scarlet Fruit, the ingredients must include other spiritual fruits, otherwise the effect wouldn't be this magical." Teng Qingshan felt extremely surprised. "However, no matter what spiritual medicine or precious items, the effect is strongest in the beginning. The more you drink, the weaker the effect will be. Otherwise, there wouldn't be just thirteen tall and big steel arms monkeys in the multitude of monkeys.

Teng Qingshan clearly knew that the effect of this fruit wine must have limits.

However, it would still be a bonus surprise.

Taking a deep breath, Teng Qingshan packed his gourd and began concentrating on observing the location of the Dantian.

With his mind on the Dantian, the Unity of Spirit and Qi!

.....

The night had come, and it was a complete silence. Only the faint sound of the wind could be heard.

Teng Qingshan sat there quietly as he observed his Dantian carefully. In his Dantian, whirlpools were rotating by themselves. Within fifteen minutes, the inner strength at the center of the whirlpools in his Dantian gradually began morphing as a great amount of colorless inner strength assembled. Then, in the center of the Dantian, a streak of fiery red True Origin appeared!

Training Vitality into Qi and Training Qi into Spirit!

One could only step in the Innate Realm when his Spirit and Qi were in unison. The innate True Origin appeared, causing Teng Qingshan's ability to improved in leaps and bounds!

"It's done!" Teng Qingshan opened his eyes and exclaimed, "I finally reached the Innate Realm."

It only took fifteen minutes to succeed. Through this, you could see how godly Teng Qingshan's strength was.

Teng Qingshan gazed at the south as if he had looked through the emptiness. He then said to himself, "Tie Yi Hall sent someone to assassinate me last time, thus, there must be a big secret. Now I have reached the Innate Realm. These days were enough to transform my inner strength into the Innate True Origin! I will be on my way tomorrow and head to the Silver Horn Mountain quickly. Tie Yi Hall, you wanted to kill me, so you can't blame me for ruining your plan."

Teng Qingshan then closed his eyes again, refining his Innate True Origin with all his heart.

Chapter 171: Silver Horn Mountain

After entering the Innate Realm, during his journey to the Silver Horn Mountain, Teng Qingshan spent most of the night time refining his Innate True Origin.

However, Teng Qingshan's speed was extremely rapid this time.

In the Desolate Land, he almost constantly maintained a speed of eight hundred Li per day, and within two days, he arrived at Silver Horn Mountain. During this one thousand Li trip, Teng Qingshan only encounter one demonic beast, while the number of ordinary wild animals and poisonous insects was so great that it seemed like an exaggeration. Almost every second, Teng Qingshan would have to kill one wild animal or insect. And so, he arrived on a bloody path.

"Silver Horn Mountain!"

Teng Qingshan stared at the steep, tall mountain before him. This tall mountain was extremely precipitous, almost shaped like the horn of a bull. Because the rocks on this mountain were slightly white, it was called Silver Horn Mountain!

Looking from afar, this Silver Horn Mountain was like a bull's horn piercing towards the heavens.

"Phew. I have finally arrived. The wild animals and poisonous insects during this journey were really troublesome." Teng Qingshan lowered his head and stared at himself. His clothes were broken and covered in dried bloodstains. "No wonder the Postliminary Realm experts didn't dare to enter the Desolate Land! The wild animals, venomous snakes, and other creatures at the border of the Desolate Land are bearable as there are not a lot, but once you go deeper into the desolate land, you realize that this land is their home! Those wild animals and insects are seen everywhere. If a Postliminary Realm expert dared to enter the desolate land, he would most likely die. "

Now Teng Qingshan completely understood why the Desolate Land was called the forbidden region.

Postliminary Realm experts could still venture the border of the Desolate Land.

But entering the heart of the Desolate Land? That would be committing suicide!

“Wush~~~” Near Teng Qingshan, a stream flowed from top of the mountain.

Beside the stream, there were over a dozen purple snakes as thick as a human arm swimming around. In the forest behind him, a few figures would occasionally dash past. In the sky, some ferocious birds would descend and grab some big snakes with their sharp claws before throwing them down from high up, killing the snake.

This was the Desolate Land.

The home of the wild animals and poisonous insects! The place where the demonic beasts were kings! The forbidden region of human beings!

Teng Qingshan walked to the stream and drank some water.

“Chi——” About one Zhang away from Teng Qingshan, a dark, purple snake with a triangular head suddenly pounced, biting towards Teng Qingshan.

“Pa!” Teng Qingshan waved his right hand.

The dark purple snake was knocked back at an even faster speed than when it first bounced. Blood splattered as it fell on the ground, motionless.

“Ssss~~”

The other venomous snakes glanced at Teng Qingshan and immediately swarmed away. The smell of the bloodstains on Teng Qingshan’s clothes caused these venomous snakes to fear him. The wild animals and venomous snakes were very simple creatures.

They killed and ate the weak and either avoided or submitted to the powerful ones! Of course, Teng Qingshan was a human being.

The possibility of these very savage wild animals submitting to humans was very low. It required skills, great patience, and time.

“It only took me two days to get to Silver Horn Mountain from Steel Arms Monkey Mountain. The Tie Yi Hall’s powerful fighters should not be that quick.” Teng Qingshan thought as he gazed at the crimson clouds of sunset in the west. “It is late now. I must find shelter while I await the men of Tie Yi Hall.”

With this, Teng Qingshan ignored the wild animals and easily leaped two to three times. Each leap was over ten Zhang high, and after the last leap, he was on Silver Horn Mountain.

……

Halfway up the mountain, on the precipitous mountain walls, there was a cave three to four Zhang deep. Teng Qingshan decided to temporarily stay here.

Teng Qingshan sat at the entrance, which was hidden by falling vines.

Through the vines, Teng Qingshan could see the forest below with one glance. If someone came up the mountain from the northern side, Teng Qingshan could see it. Teng Qingshan had stayed in this Silver Horn Mountain for two days, and during these two days, Teng Qingshan spent most of the time refining his Innate True Origin, but it was still not completely refined.

Ordinary Innate experts needed ten to fifteen days to succeed.

Converting the inner strength into the Innate True Origin was troublesome indeed. These days, Teng Qingshan had converted eighty percent of his inner strength into the Innate True Origin.

He leaned on the walls at the entrance and grabbed a roasted meat in his hand.

“Chi.” Teng Qingshan grabbed wild wolf thigh and gobbled it up. He then held the stone jug he made himself and took a sip of water. “For the sake of the Scarlet Fruit Wine, the only thing I could use to store water, my gourd, was used to store the fruit wine. Thus, I could only use this thing to drink water..... I really don’t know when the men of the Tie Yi Hall will arrive. If they advanced in a speed of one to two hundred Li per day, I estimate they would really arrive half a month from now”

The roasted wild wolf meat Teng Qingshan had been specially hunted and roasted in land under the mountain.

After all, it would be best to not leave any trace of living in Silver Horn Mountain.

“Chichi~~~” Sounds of something rubbing the rocks rang, and Teng Qingshan turned to look at the side.

A large azure snake was seen moving along the vine, slowing swimming down from the entrance. Seeing this scene, Teng Qingshan smiled and sighed emotionally as he spoke, “The heart of this Desolate Land is the home of venomous snakes and wild animals.”

At this time——

“Eh!” Teng Qingshan’s eyes brightened as he saw five figures in the distance below. Because of the difference in altitude, they seemed as tiny as ants. “They are finally here! They came two to three times faster than what I expected.”

They were precisely the five people from the Tie Yi Hall. The innate expert, Deng Geng, looked healthy without much wounds. It was just his clothes that were ripped and stained with blood. However, the other four looked miserable. Each one of them was covered with dust, and almost every one of them was injured. A tall and lean middle-aged man even had a broken arm.

“Haha. Silver Horn Mountain. We finally arrived Silver Horn

Mountain!”

“Phew. We’ve arrived at Silver Horn Mountain. After we find the treasure map, we don’t have to be in such a hurry when we go back, right?”

“I am never entering the Desolate Land again.”

……

The other four couldn’t help talking, and each one of them looked very excited. Deng Geng, who was at the side, also smiled. “Everyone has suffered these days! However, it couldn’t be helped……. Liu Jian went to kill Teng Qingshan, but he never returned. Although the possibility of him betraying us is very low, we can’t bear to lose! We had to take precautions in case Teng Qingshan obtained information from Liu Jian and summoned the Gui Yuan Sect’s elites here…..”

At the side, Wei Cang laughed and said, “Martial Brother, everyone understands! Martial Brother did it for the sake of our Tie Yi Hall. We got to Silver Horn Mountain within two days, so even if Teng Qingshan notified the Gui Yuan Sect, sending message needs time, and getting here from Jiangning County City needs even more time. The Gui Yuan Sect’s powerful figures wouldn’t be able to make it in time.”

Deng Geng nodded.

Originally, Tie Yi Hall planned to advance cautiously and slowly. If Liu Jian did return, they wouldn’t have sped up, but Liu Jian failed to do so.

They began to worry and naturally headed to Silver Horn Mountain with an even faster speed.

The deeper they entered the desolate land, the greater the number of wild animals and poisonous insects. Even the innate expert, Deng Geng, couldn’t take care of the other four perfectly well, causing one of them to break his arm. This happened under

the care of Deng Geng. If Deng Geng hadn't been there, the four people wouldn't be able to arrive at Silver Horn Mountain alive.

The Desolate Land was very terrifying indeed.

"It's still early. Let's head up Silver Horn Mountain first and do a search. See if we can find the body of Senior Wei Dan!" Deng Geng ordered.

"Yes."

The other four people answered.

The five immediately started climbing the mountain. With Deng Geng, the innate expert, opening the pathway and the other four assisting each other, the only thing that gave them a headache was the wild animals, snakes and insects that appeared frequently on the mountain. Although Silver Horn Mountain was considered a precipitous mountain, it couldn't be compared to Steel Arms Monkey Mountain.

It actually would be very fascinating if the mountain had a extremely high altitude according to the shape of a silver horn.

"This Silver Horn Mountain is not too big. Everyone, pay attention to places suitable for quiet training." Deng Geng went up the mountain as he gave his order.

The other four scattered and followed Deng Geng. Their eyes moved constantly, paying attention to every area. Once they saw caves or stone houses, they would go in and search carefully. If nothing could be found, they would continue advancing.

……

Teng Qingshan, more than ten Zhang away from Deng Geng and his companions, was following them carefully. His every step was silent, and even his breathing slowed down.

The current Teng Qingshan looked completely different from the past.

He became a middle-aged man with a knife-scarred face, and his body was a lot more muscular. His saber and Reincarnation Spear was packed in his bag. With the use of the human skin mask, and changing his height and weight, the Teng Qingshan had completely changed his identity.

“What are they looking for?” Teng Qingshan furrowed his brows, “They are mainly searching places like caves and stone house and it doesn’t seem like they are looking for the Grass of Immortality. Liu Jian said that Tie Yi Hall came to the Desolate Land to look for the Grass of Immortality, but now that doesn’t seem the case. Teng Qingshan began to doubt Liu Jian’s words.

At this moment, voices came from above.

“Martial Brother! The information we obtained was that Senior Wei Dan lived in seclusion at the Silver Horn Mountain, but…….he might have left the Silver Horn Mountain before he died.” Wei Canglong said. The volume of his voice was normal, but unfortunately for him, Teng Qingshan’s ears were so sensitive that he could clearly hear conversations that happened over ten Zhang away.

That Deng Geng shook his head and said, “Senior Wei Dan is a 600 year-old expert. The information we obtained is that after he reached the ‘Golden Dan of the Innate Realm’, he stayed at Silver Horn Mountain and trained in seclusion. Whether he left before he died…….nobody knows. We can only search this Silver Horn Mountain carefully.”

Another person spoke, “Martial Uncle! That Senior Wei Dan was the extremely powerful fellow ranked top ten of the Heavenly Ranking during his time. If he was training here alone, I think his residence wouldn’t be some inconspicuous places in the corner of the mountain, but rather a comfortable place with good scenery.”

“Yes.” Hearing this, Deng Geng nodded.

“This way, hurry up. Don’t check those small places at the

corner. Just advance all the way up. Carefully search the places that Senior Wei Dan might've lived." Deng Geng commanded.

"Yes."

The five people people from the Tie Yi Hall immediately headed up the mountain with an even faster pace. They didn't expect that someone would follow behind them.....Ever since they realized that Liu Jian would not catch up, they immediately rushed towards Silver Horn Mountain. To them, even if the Gui Yuan Sect knew of the secret, their innate expert wouldn't get there in time.

"Eh. Wei Dan?" Teng Qingshan felt slightly dubious, "A powerful fellow ranked top ten of the Heavenly Ranking around six hundred ago must have died a few hundred years ago. Why are they trying to find Wei Dan's body? Perhaps there is some relic? Ordinary secret techniques or godly weapon don't usually draw the attention of innate experts."

Teng Qingshan knew nothing of Wei Dan.

However, when he heard "Golden Dan of the Innate Realm and "Top ten of the Heavenly Ranking", he knew that Wei Dan had been an awe-inspiring figure.

"He's a famous figure from six hundred years ago, yet this Tie Yi Hall still came to find his body....." Teng Qingshan really didn't know what treasure attracted Tie Yi Hall. "Must be a big secret."

Chapter 172: Black Small Cauldron

Putting on the human skin mask and changing his height and weight, he changed into a brand new Teng Qingshan who followed behind them.

Even if he were to be discovered by the people from Tie Yi Hall, they would not know that he was Teng Qingshan…If someone was to tell them directly that the person was Teng Qingshan, the people from Tie Yi Hall may not believe it!

“Not even a trace!” Wei Canglong and the other men from Tie Yi Hall continued their endless search. After spending over two hours, with the speed of these experts, they were about to reach the summit.

“Martial Brother, the summit is right in front. If it is still not at the summit, what shall we do?” Wei Canglong asked in a panic.

Deng Geng raised his head and looked towards the summit. Clenching his teeth, he replied, “Ever since our founding father created the Tie Yi Hall and eventually passed away, an order was passed down for all future generations of the sect to search for this treasure map! In the past thousand-plus years, the many generations of our Tie Yi Hall’s disciples have never given up. Everyone, put in more effort. This is the biggest chance for our Tie Yi Hall to get the treasure map!”

“Mmm.”

Everyone started to feel heated up after hearing these words.

For over a thousand years, Tie Yi Hall really had never given up on looking for this treasure map. In fact, it wasn’t just Tie Yi Hall. There were also experts from other sects across the world looking for it.

“Once we get that treasure map, within tens of years, our Tie Yi Hall will definitely be able to suppress the Gui Yuan Sect and Qing

Hu Island, thereby becoming the number sect in Yangzhou and being known as one of the Eight Supreme Sects!”

“Yes, we’ll definitely be able to find it!”

These few men all opened their eyes wide, solemnly searching for it.

……

“Looking for a treasure map? Surpass the Gui Yuan Sect and Qing Hu Island?” Teng Qingshan was astonished when he heard this. “For a sect to dominate a prefecture, they would need a big number of experts or tens of innate masters! With this, only then would they be able to dominate a prefecture! However, from what they said…”

“They just need to rely on merely a treasure map! What secret does this treasure map hide?” Teng Qingshan did not understand.

One treasure map alone would allow Tie Yi Hall dominate the whole Yangzhou within tens of years?

What secret did that treasure map contain?

“In addition, this Tie Yi Hall…ever since their founding father established the Tie Yi Hall, they have never given up on their search.” Teng Qingshan deducted that this treasure map had existed for over a thousand year. Moreover, it also hid an alarming secret. If not, would it lead a sect to search for it without giving up for more than a thousand years?

What secret?

What treasure map?

“This time, I caught a big fish.” A smile broke out on Teng Qingshan’s face, and he quietly followed behind them.

Tie Yi Hall’s five men searched on their way, but eventually still reached the summit. The summit of the mountain was the only place they had yet to search.

“If we still can’t find it at the summit of the mountain, it’ll be troublesome.” Wei Canglong and the other four arrived at the summit.

“Find it. Search every nook and cranny of the summit! We must find it!” Deng Geng hollered with a solemn face. Obviously he was not able to remain calm anymore. Actually, what he had shared with his subordinates was only a small part of this secret. As for the complete secret, it was only known to Tie Yi Hall’s innate experts.

All the more because he knew of this secret, Deng Geng wanted that treasure map even more!

……

Since there were few human traces over the past years, the summit was covered with weeds and thistles.

“Stone house!”

“Martial Brother, take a look at that stone house over there.” Wei Canglong and the others were overjoyed. Towards the northern side of the summit, there were three stone houses. However, plants and vines had grown all over the stone houses, the walls were filled with moss, and the stones had started to crack. It was obvious that they had been desolate for many years.

At the front of these three stone houses, there was a vast lake with more than ten Zhang wide.

“Martial Uncle, there’s a big crater on this summit. Look, there are many deep trenches.” The men from Tie Yi Hall noted some unique traces on the summit.

The big crater seemed as if a giant had smashed down with a sledgehammer. The deep trences were very long and very messy.

Deng Geng took a closer look, and a smile broke out on his face. “Its obvious the marks were left behind when two innate masters fought. Moreover…these two person were both very strong. One of

them used a sledgehammer or fist as his weapon while the other should have used a sword! If my guess is correct, this big crater should have been left behind by the fist of Senior Wei Dan, while those trenches should have been left behind by a sword user."

The other men also nodded in agreement.

"These big craters and ravines were merely the destruction caused by the Innate True Origin emitted by the two seniors!" Deng Geng said confidently. "To be able to let these two experts use their Innate True Origin uncontrollably, these two people... must have had a battle to the death!" Deng Geng was also an innate expert. He was very clear on Wei Dan's abilities!

A Golden Dan innate expert would use his Innate True Origin with reservations in each of his skill and technique...

Unless he came across a formidable opponent. He would then be unable to control his power in a fight to the death.

"Everyone search quickly. Search the inside of all the houses carefully and the surrounding areas as well. Don't be in a hurry to look for the treasure map, but rather find the bone remains first!" Deng Geng said and dashed into a stone house. The others also dashed towards the various parts of the summit.

.....

Teng Qingshan hid tens of Zhang away at the bottom of the hill and could only rely on his sense of hearing. With that, he was able to distinguish what those people were up to.

After quite some time, Teng Qingshan perked his ears as he could feel that the footsteps were gathering together.

"Martial Brother, there's nothing here to find."

"Martial Uncle, we did not find anything either."

"We have combed the surrounding area. Martial Brother, what do we do now?"

Obviously, Deng Geng stayed silent and after a long period of silence, he suddenly said, “Look, over there!”

“The bottom of the lake?”

“Right, there’s only the bottom of the lake where we have yet to search on this summit. Everyone, go in and search carefully. Human bones are the easiest to find. After finding the bones, it will be easy to locate the treasure map.” Deng Geng instructed. “Don’t be taking your own sweet time. Go, enter the water.” The voice was still resounding when Teng Qingshan heard a ‘splash’ sound.

“Splash! Splash! …”

There were five consecutive splashes in the water.

Teng Qingshan smiled. “Seems like all of them went to the bottom of the lake.” Like a ferret, he ascended with much nimbleness. In the blink of an eye, he reached the boundary of the summit. Teng Qingshan hid at the side where it was covered in vines and thistles, looking towards the lake far away. There, he quietly waited.

“Pfft!” After a short while, someone emerged from the water, took two breaths, and submerged again.

“His ability to hold his breath is too lacking.” Teng Qingshan shook his head to himself. “Experts in the Postliminary Realm are merely strong in inner strength. Their organs are mediocre. In addition, the pores on their skin are unable to take in air, and thus they wouldn’t be able to hang on for very long. On the other hand, innate experts can use their Innate True Origin to create a protective layer containing air and can last for much longer.”

Amongst the five men from Tie Yi Hall, the four experts from the Postliminary Realm lingered on at the bottom of the lake for a while before needing to come up to get air. Innate expert ‘Deng Geng’, however, constantly remained underwater.

“Boom.” Wei Canglong emerged from the water holding on to a

set of bones and shouted in surprise. “I found it, I found it!” His voice resounded in the air at the summit.

“Pu!” “Pu!” “Pu!” “Pu!”

The other four men almost simultaneously emerged from the water. Deng Geng quickly said, “Everyone, get on land.”

Teng Qingshan lowered his head and observed carefully.

Once the five men from Tie Yi Hall were on the land, they gathered around that set of of bones. Even from far away, Teng Qingshan could also tell with one glance that the skeleton was wearing a pair of purple-colored gloves.

“Five fingers are thick and strong. Even after so many years have passed, other than two broken bones at the chest, there was no other damages to the skeleton...definitely an innate expert. Moreover, he is still wearing the gloves in his hands. Those should be the renowned ‘Heavenly Hawk Claws’ from centuries ago!” Deng Geng said.

The other people also nodded in agreement. “Senior Wei Dan had used his hands to kill. The weapon ‘Heavenly Hawk Claws’ was his unique skill.”

“Seems like someone killed Senior Wei Dan. Looking at his chest area, he should have received a fatal blow at his chest and died.” Wei Canglong added.

“It’s probably related the the battle marks in the surroundings.” Deng Geng shook his head. “I thought that Senior Wei Dan had died of old age. Who would have thought that he was killed by someone else! However...the other party did not take his ‘Heavenly Hawk Claws’. He was probably an extreme expert who did not care for this ‘Heavenly Hawk Claws’. You guys keep the ‘Heavenly Hawk Claws’ carefully. We’ll bring this back when we return to Tie Yi Hall. This is a profound weapon.” Deng Geng instructed.

“Yes.” The others accepted the order.

“Martial Brother, what about the treasure map?” The others did not find any treasure map on this skeleton.

“Hundreds of years have passed. Having seeped in the water, Senior Wei Dan’s clothes had long decomposed, but it is impossible for the treasure map to decompose. It would have either been taken away by that expert swordsman or washed away to other parts at the bottom of the lake by the currents.” Deng Geng immediately stood up. “The two of you, stay here. The other two, follow me into the water and continue the search for the treasure map.”

“Yes.”

The two who stayed on the surface were Wei Canglong and a single-armed middle-aged man. The other three men progressively entered the water once again.

“Martial Uncle, look at the small item Senior Wei Dan was wearing at his chest.” The single-armed middle-aged man took out the hidden pendant from the skeleton’s chest area. Wei Canglong threw a glance at it and smiled. “To think that Senior Wei Dan liked to wear such pendants. It must be some family heirloom or something with special significance. Stop looking at that pendant, take a look at these ‘Heavenly Hawk Claws’. It truly is a wonderful godly weapon.”

Saying this, Wei Canglong took out the pair of purple ‘Heavenly Hawk Claws’ gloves, put it on his hands, and clawed towards the ground.

“Chi!” “Chi!”

The rocks on the surface of the summit were easily clawed as if they were mud.

“It indeed is a worthy weapon for a Golden Dan innate expert. It really is incredible. I don’t even know what material this is made from.” Wei Canglong exclaimed. The single-armed middle-aged

man also put that pendant aside and focus on the godly weapon ‘Heavenly Hawk Claws’.

……

Squatting in the far distance, Teng Qingshan was originally observing calmly, but when his gaze landed on that pendant, his eyes almost popped out.

With Teng Qingshan’s vision, he could clearly see that the pendant was a small black cauldron the size of a finger!

“This small cauldron….” Teng Qingshan felt his heart pounding. It was as if his brain had been fried by electricity. “It looks exactly the same as the small cauldron Cat left for me!” After Cat died, Teng Qingshan had treated the small cauldron as a treasure, wearing it daily. However, ever since he died and came to the world of the Nine Prefectures…

The small cauldron, existed only as a small memory. He did not think that he would be able to see something that looked exactly the same!

“Do it!” Teng Qingshan squinted his eyes, tapped his foot once, and immediately dashed out quietly, his two hands each grasping onto a flying knife that gleamed with cold light!

Chapter 173: Black Steel Treasure Map

At the peak of the Silver Horn Mountain, Wei Canglong and the single-armed middle-aged man were beside the lake, happily discussing about the godly weapon ‘Heavenly Hawk Claws’. Suddenly, Wei Canglong seemed to have noticed something and turned back.

“Die!”

Just as it looked like Wei Canglong was about to turn his head, Teng Qingshan tossed out the two flying knives in his hands. “Swoosh! Swoosh!” Two flashes of cold light cut across the air. It was merely a distance of over ten Zhang, and with the speed at which Teng Qingshan had tossed out the flying knives, how could the two warriors in the Postliminary Realm dodge when they were caught unaware?

“Pu!” “Pu!”

The blades of the flying knives shot into the back of their heads and out from their mouths!

Wei Canglong and the single-armed middle-aged man stared with wide-open eyes before they dropped down weakly, falling onto the skeleton next to them.

“Hu!”

Just when the two of them fell down, Teng Qingshan also landed lightly, not bothering to take a look at the two dead men. He picked up a stone with his left hand and grabbed the small black cauldron that had been left on the ground with his right. His gaze was completely focused on the small cauldron, and he touched the surface of the small black cauldron with his trembling right hand.

“This is it, this is it! It’s exactly the same!”

In his previous life, he had treasured the item left behind by his wife the most, and to think that in this life, he would get his hands

on it again.

“This material, this touch…they’re all exactly the same.” Tears vaguely rolled in Teng Qingshan’s eyes. Thereafter, Teng Qingshan solemnly put on the small black cauldron pendant around his neck, feeling the cauldron against his chest as he took in a deep breath. He then lowered his head and look at the skeleton that had been submerged at the bottom of the lake for hundreds of years as he said to himself, “Senior Wei Dan, you also came across this little cauldron. While we are separated for centuries, it is still a connection of sort.”

At that moment——

“Hua!” A figure appeared from the water. It was one of Tie Yi Hall’s Postliminary Realm expert who had gone to the bottom of the lake to look for the treasure map.

Teng Qingshan’s gaze turned cold, and the stone in his hand shot out.

“Pu!”

The stone pierced through the spot between that person’s brows, and his body was about to sink down feebly.

On land, Teng Qingshan dashed out and grabbed onto the corpse, tossing it to the side after he landed on the opposite side of the lake.

“If the lake is deep and the currents at the bottom are strong, they won’t know that I was the one who killed the men at the bottom of the lake.” Teng Qingshan calmly lingered at the lake’s bank. “There were three men who had entered the lake, one innate expert and two warriors in the Postliminary Realm. After dealing with all the warriors in the Postliminary Realm, I’d be able to focus on dealing with the innate expert.”

Teng Qingshan waited calmly.

……

“Where on earth is the treasure map This lake is so deep and covered with a layer of mud. How do we find it?” Frowning, the white-haired old man held onto his breath and searched carefully. This time around, amongst the experts from Tie Yi Hall, there were only two whose hair were white. One of them was him, Elder Tian, the other one was Wei Canglong.

In terms of age, he was close with Deng Geng, but Deng Geng had become an innate expert many years ago, and thus he did not appear old.

“Hu!” He released some breath from his mouth, “I’ll head up for some air.”

Elder Tian dashed for the surface.

“Boom!”

When his head emerged from the water, his face was covered with water such that he could not see his surroundings clearly, and he only cared to take in a few breaths greedily. But just when he took in one breath...

“Pu!” Elder Tian only felt an intense pain between his brows and throughout his head, and then he lost consciousness.

.....

Teng Qingshan was like a little bird flying across the surface of the lake. He grab onto Elder Tian’s corpse and landed at the opposite bank of the lake, tossing it gently on the ground. His movements were extremely small. With these two trips, Teng Qingshan returned back to the side with Senior Wei Dan’s remains.

“Now, there is only Deng Geng left!” Teng Qingshan grabbed onto a flying knife in his right hand.

The best opportunity to deal with Deng Geng would be to shoot a flying knife at him when he first emerged from the water! Teng Qingshan was an assassin in his previous life, and he had been

trained to kill his targets with the least cost regardless of the means used and without being silly and insistent on pursuing fairness. Afterall, Teng Qingshan was not clear about his opponent's actual abilities.

Teng Qingshan's gaze chanced upon Wei Canglong's hands.

On Wei Canglong's hands, there was a pair of purple gloves.

"Hmm?" Teng Qingshan could still remember the conversation between the two men earlier. "This must be the godly weapon, the 'Heavenly Hawk Claws' that they were referring to! That Wei Dan...according to them, was a innate Golden Dan and an extreme expert who was once listed in the top ten of the Heavenly Ranking. The weapon used by such an expert would definitely be something."

Teng Qingshan took off the pair of 'Heavenly Hawk Claws', while holding on to a flying knife with his right hand. He prepared to launch an attack on Deng Geng, who would emerge anytime.

"This is quite heavy." Teng Qingshan assessed it with his left hand, and astonishment flashed passed his eyes. "This pair of 'Heavenly Hawk Claws' seemed light at first glance, but in actual fact, it has a weight of tens of Jin."

Teng Qingshan noticed that the value of this weapon would probably be no lower than his Reincarnation Spear.

Teng Qingshan first put on one of the 'Heavenly Hawk Claws' on his left hand. While it was very heavy, it was also very soft, as if a layer of skin had adhered to his hands. At the joints and fingers, there was a dark purple metal which was seemingly sharp. Wearing the glove, Teng Qingshan casually waved his hand.

"Chi!"

It was as if a sharp sword had cut across the sky.

"It's no wonder that Wei Canglong could easily crush boulders with this pair of gloves." Teng Qingshan had an idea. "With this

pair of gloves…I can easily depend on this pair of gloves to fend off sharp godly weapons. My Xing Yi Martial Arts can finally be put to good use!”

Although Teng Qingshan’s hands were tougher than iron…

No matter how tough they were, they would not be comparable to ‘Ten Millennia Coldsteel’. Teng Qingshan dared to fend off the sharp blades of ordinary warriors.

But against a blade at the level of his Reincarnation Spear, if he was to receive it with his bare hands, they would probably be chopped off!

“Mmm, from today onwards, the identity of the scarred face man will wear the Heavenly Hawk Claws to battle!” Teng Qingshan was prepared for his alias to become a well-known presence. Then, in the future…there would be many unexpected rewards from using the reputation of his ‘alias’, .

He put on the glove on his right hand at the speed of lightning.

“With this pair of ‘Heavenly Hawk Claws’, there’s no issue with close combat against innate experts.” At the same time when he was putting on the glove, Teng Qingshan held onto a flying knife in each hand as he started at the bottom of the lake.

Once Deng Geng emerged, the two flying knives would shoot out!

……

Time passed, and at the blink of an eye, close to an hour passed. However, Deng Geng still had yet to emerge.

“This Deng Geng can really hold his breath in in the water.” Although he had waited for an hour, Teng Qingshan was not panicking at all. He half squatted, holding firmly to the flying knives with his hands, not moving an inch. A smile hung on his face, “Rushing to this Silver Horn Mountain, the best and unexpected gain would be getting hold of this little cauldron.”

Having gotten the little cauldron, other than feeling happy, Teng Qingshan also had some doubts.

“The size, design, and feel are exactly the same as the little cauldron from my previous life!”

“But, this little cauldron had been submerged at the bottom of the lake for six hundred years! What kind of metal, after being submerged for six hundred years…to think that there is no impact on it.”

“In my past life, I did not manage to know what material the small cauldron was made from, but now, I still do not know!”

“The most important thing is…my previous life was on earth, and my current one is on the world of the Nine Prefectures. Regardless of its the geographical setting or historical developments, they are all totally different. They are definitely not the same world. But…why would there be the exact same small cauldron in two different worlds? It would not be easy to create a cauldron this small!”

Teng Qingshan had some status across the Nine Prefectures. Hence, he had learned quite a bit regarding some of the precious materials.

A material he had never heard of, having no change even after submerged in water for six hundred years…who would be able to create a small cauldron like that? Could it be that such a small cauldron had appeared coincidentally in both his previous life and now?

Teng Qingshan could not help but have doubts when thinking through this questions.

“A coincidence for this small cauldron to appear in two worlds? Or is it that the small cauldron that I was wearing in my previous life came to this world the way I did, just that it arrived six hundred years back?” Thinking about this, Teng Qingshan could

not help but shake his head, overruling this possibility. It was all too atrocious.

While he was thinking in his head, Teng Qingshan's gaze had not left the surface of the lake for even a second.

……

Deep at the bottom of the lake, the light that shone from the surface was very dim.

However, there was big ball of white light at the bottom of the lake. Beyond the layer of light was Deng Geng! He had channeled out Innate True Origin to form a layer of light surrounding his body. There was quite a lot of air beyond the layer of light. Furthermore, with Deng Geng's ability to hold his breathe, this little amount of air would allow him to stay at the bottom of the lake for very, very long time.

"Could it be that the treasure map had been taken away by the expert who killed Senior Wei Dan?" Deng Geng frowned and lowered his head. The layer of light stopped at his elbows, and his arms were still submerged in water. He continued to dig about and fiddle with the mud endlessly. "No matter what, we must decide after combing through the bottom of the lake."

Deng Geng was very patient.

He fumbled through, inch by inch, through the rocks and the rotting corpses of birds, venomous snakes, and other dead creatures.

This search at the bottom of the lake took him two hours! And Deng Geng only managed to cover a small area at the vast land at the bottom of the lake.

"Hmmm?" Deng Geng fumbled in the mud and suddenly his hand came into contact with a hard object. Deng Geng was not excited, and he casually tugged on the hard object. It was too common to come into across hard objects. There were too many

things around, including the remains of birds as well as rocks. However, after tugging it out, his eyes opened wide.

This hard object was square.

Deng Geng quickly wiped the surface with his hands, cleaning the layer of filth on its surface. Under the light of the Innate True Origin, Deng Geng could clearly see——it was a black piece of metal. And on one side of the black metal, there seemed to be numerous closely packed marks that were carved by a knife.

The familiar material and familiar markings made Deng Geng's heart tremble in excitement.

"Haha, this is it, this is it." Deng Geng could not stop his trembling hands. "The Black Iron Treasure Map! Haha, our Tie Yi Hall has finally gotten the bottom half of the Black Iron Treasure Map! Founding father! Our Tie Yi Hall finally has the hope to gain prosperity! Haha, our founding father obtained the first half of the Black Iron Treasure Map more than a thousand years ago, leaving only the bottom of the map. Now, with both parts of the map, it's finally complete! Our Tie Yi Hall will be able to access the legendary treasures of Emperor Yu!"

Deng Geng was so agitated that he was trembling.

Before Tie Yi Hall's founding father had died, he had instructed all the future generations of Tie Yi Hall's Sovereigns to never give up on the search for the bottom half of the Black Iron Treasure Map! Tie Yi Hall had the first half of the treasure map, so long as it did not leak out...then, other people would not be able to access the treasures even if they had the bottom half of it. Therefore, so long as Tie Yi Hall puts in effort, they would be able to succeed one day.

"It's been over a thousand years! Haha..." Deng Geng was agitated like never before. Suddenly, his gaze focused, "Hmmm, there are fine prints on this Black Iron Treasure Map?"

Under the numerous closely-packed markings of the Black Iron

Treasure Map, there was actually a line of words——“For those who hold the treasure map, he who enters by force is bound to die. One must remember, to get the treasure, one must bring along one of the nine cauldrons!”

Chapter 174: The Nine Cauldrons

At the dusky bottom of the lake, Deng Geng stared at the line of words carved on this black metal treasure map.

“One of the nine cauldrons?” Deng Geng felt troubled. “Getting the treasure map was actually not enough. It still needed one of the nine cauldrons! So troublesome……” Of course Deng Geng knew of the nine cauldrons. After the invincible Emperor Yu united the land under the heavens, he partitioned the land into nine areas.

Simultaneously, Emperor Yu gathered many precious metals from the nine areas and forged nine huge cauldrons.

The nine cauldrons represented the Nine Prefectures.

Since then…… the people of the Nine Prefectures, from ordinary civilians to the big figures of the eight sects, needed to worship Emperor Yu and the nine cauldrons during the annual ritual. This cauldron became an item needed during the sacrifice.

The legends of Emperor Yu and the nine cauldrons were known by everyone of the Nine Prefectures. Who didn’t worship during the yearly sacrifice?

“Emperor Yu, you left a treasure map and even played such trick…. The nine cauldrons… Since your death, the world became chaotic and the nine cauldrons disappeared. I think only the senior, Poetic Sword God Li Taibai obtained one of the nine cauldrons.” Deng Geng was Tie Yi Hall’s Elder of Discipline, so therefore, he knew a lot about the senior experts.

From ancient times until now, there were only four awe-inspiring figures that were on a par with one another——Emperor Yu, Celestial Emperor Qin Ling, Martial Ancestor Shakya, Poetic Sword God Li Taibai.

“Senior Li Taibai once obtain a cauldron and even used that cauldron to drink wine.” Deng Geng remembered those records.

Li Taibai should be the most unrestrained one of the four greatest figures in history. Although he had invincible and peerless martial strength, he chose not to conquer the land under the heavens and did not accept any disciples or establish any sects. With an azure lotus sword in hand, he traveled the world freely, leaving many legends. Drinking wine with one of the nine cauldrons was one of his legends.

Li Taibai even sighed emotionally at the time, “The nine cauldrons that were worshiped by the people of the Nine Prefectures actually became this amazing. An item that was so huge is now the size of a bowl. Even my azure lotus sword can’t hurt it. Amazing!”

In the land of the Nine Prefectures, some important figures from various sects also knew these stories.

The nine cauldrons could shrink and wouldn’t be damaged even a single bit!

That Poetic Sword God Li Taibai was a figure on a par with Emperor Yu, but even he himself couldn’t hurt the nine cauldrons. Thus, one could see how amazing the nine cauldrons were.

After Emperor Yu’s era, numerous people of the Nine Prefectures worshiped Emperor Yu from generations to generations until now..... In the hearts of many people, the nine cauldrons were not just containers, but the objects that represented the land of the Nine Prefectures and contained the hope of the people!

.....

At the bottom of the lake, Deng Geng was feeling very worried.

“The Tie Yi Hall’s previous Lords and Elders of Discipline have been searching for the treasure map for more than thousand of years, and now it’s found. However, at this very moment, the treasure map even reminded me that a cauldron is needed. The cauldron can’t be any ordinary cauldron but one of the nine

cauldrons. Isn't he messing with us!" Deng Geng was so worried that he wanted to curse Emperor Yu. "The nine cauldrons are magical indeed, but how will Tie Yi Hall search for it? Even if the cauldron was placed before me, I'm afraid that I wouldn't even recognize it."

Suddenly——

An image flashed across Deng Geng's mind. It was the black tiny cauldron worn around the neck of Wei Dan's corpse.

"Right!" Deng Geng's facial expression changed, and his eyes brightened.

"Yes, yes!" Deng Geng was extremely excited. "The nine cauldrons are magical, and their sizes can be changed. The cauldron that Poetic Sword God Li Taibai obtained could become as small as a bowl. It obviously could become as small as a finger! No wonder Wei Dan wore that tiny cauldron!"

"Plus, this tiny cauldron had been in the water for few hundred years, yet it did not erode and there was no moss on it. I originally thought it was an item made from some precious ingredients, but now I see. Haha. As one of the nine cauldrons, how is it possible to erode in water?"

The more Deng Geng pondered, the more he thought he was right.

Wei Dan had been an Golden Dan innate expert. How could it be that he happened to be wearing such a peculiar tiny cauldron? Plus, Wei Dan coincidentally obtained the lower half of treasure map..... The two were a combination. Thus, one could deduce that Wei Dan searched for the tiny cauldron because of the treasure map and found it somehow. Since it was important, of course he would wear it and keep it close to himself.

"Haha..... the heavens are helping my Tie Yi Hall!" Deng Geng's heart immediately became cheerful. "I wanted this tiny cauldron,

and the heavens sent it to me immediately. Now that we have the treasure map and the tiny cauldron, Tie Yi Hall will be able to activate the treasure of Emperor Yu! Within ten years, Tie Yi Hall will definitely obliterate the Gui Yuan Sect and Qing Hu Island and control the entire Yangzhou! Tie Yi Hall will be ranked the eighth great sect!”

With this, Deng Geng placed the treasure map in his arms and began swimming upwards.

As he looked up at the surface of the water, his expression changed, stopping suddenly.

“This is not right!” Deng Geng looked around and thought, “I have spent about two hours at the bottom of the lake, so why didn’t I see Elder Tian and the others? The lake is only this big, and if three people searched the bottom of the lake together, they would definitely meet. However, Deng Geng remembered that he did not see Elder Tian and the others at the bottom of the lake for a long time.”

Deng Geng raised his head and stared at the lake’s sparkling surface.

His face turned cold as he said, “It looks like there’s a change in the situation.” Deng Geng immediately unsheathed his silver sword. This sword of his was named Silver Scaled Sword, and it was a rare godly weapon.

Teng Qingshan waited over two hours at the shore. The sky had darkened. and a crescent moon hung high up.

“Whew Whew~~~” The wind on the mountaintop blew fiercely.

“Ga, Ga——” High up in the sky, some unknown type of bird flew past, emitting a cacophonous sounds. Squatting at the lake shore,Teng Qingshan wore the Heavenly Hawk Claw Gloves and grabbed a flying knife in each of his hands. Although he waited for two hours, he still wasn’t nervous. Even if he had to wait a few

more hours, it would be a piece a cake.

The wind on the mountain blew fiercely as the ferocious animals roared.

“Rumble~~~” Explosions suddenly occurred on the surface of the lake. The ten Zhang wide lake surface completely exploded, shooting waters several Zhang high up in the sky.

With waters splashing, it was impossible to see anyone hiding.

“Oh no! Deng Geng noticed an ambush.” Teng Qingshan furrowed his brows. He had waited for two hours, only to find out that time he spent waiting had been a waste!

Suddenly, at the edge of the splashing waters, a figure dashed to the shore like a flash. As soon as the figure stepped on the ground, it charged towards Teng Qingshan.

“Hmph!” Teng Qingshan threw out the flying knife in his right hand!

“Xiu!”

“Xiu!”

The two flying knives in his left and right hands were thrown in succession and slashed across the air like two streaks of lightning. When the knives were about one Zhang away from the figure, the first flying knife suddenly made a turn.

“Clang!”

Shadows of a silver sword appeared and went past Teng Qingshan’s flying knives like a waterfall. Two clanging sounds were heard and the flying knives became dust. The figure that was flying forward suddenly stopped and retreated two steps backwards.

Deng Geng stared at the knife-scarred man before his eyes and thought, “The strength of this knife-scarred man’s flying knives is actually so strong that my hands felt slightly numb from the

force.”

Deng Geng’s eyes swept past the chest of Wei Dan’s dead body, and his pupils constricted, “The tiny cauldron is gone!”

“You killed the disciples of my Tie Yi Hall! Die!” Deng Geng roared and rushed towards Teng Qingshan.

“You think you can kill me?” Teng Qingshan emitted a rough-sounding voice and stomped his feet, dashing towards Deng Geng like a ferocious tiger heading down a mountain.

The two were originally only several Zhang apart, and after they charged towards each other, they immediately began fighting.

“Chi!”

The Silver Scaled Sword flashed and was thrusted before Teng Qingshan’s eyes, while Teng Qingshan nimbly moved and waved his right hand, averting himself. A ‘clang’ sound was heard as Teng Qingshan’s right hand clashed with the Silver Scaled Sword. Truly the weapon of a Golden Dan innate expert, the Heavenly Hawk Claws remained intact.

The instant they clashed, Teng Qingshan took a step forward and used Smashing Fist!

“Pu!”

Teng Qingshan’s fists became like the arrows of a stretched bow. The air before his fists was compressed, and a visible arc-shaped pressure appeared. The air emitted trembling sounds, and the density of the air experienced changes, blurring Teng Qingshan’s fist. Seeing this, Deng Geng tensed up and went a step back while his Silver Scaled Sword drew an arc.

“Boom!” A series of explosions occurred, and the high air pressure blasted forwards.

Immediately, sand and stones flew in every direction.

Teng Qingshan utilized both of his fists, blocking with one and

attacking with the other. Sometimes, both his fists would attack in succession while his feet moved back and forth. His fighting style had few variations, but he grasped the opportunity to attack at the right time, and his control of the space had reached an unbelievable level. The nonstopping Smashing Fist encircled Deng Geng.

The Smashing Fist were like arrows with an unending cycle!

As for Deng Geng, his sword technique was terrifying as well. Every strike of his formed an arc. Some of the arcs were bigger and some were smaller, just like how his Innate True Origin was also strong at times and weak at times. Deng Geng completely blocked Teng Qingshan's Smashing Fist.

"The defensive force of this Deng Geng's sword technique is probably on a par with my 'Transmutation Unity Law' Spear Art. Each arc is like a shield, and resulting shields are endless." Teng Qingshan could feel Deng Geng's strong ability and thought to himself, "My physical strength was aided with the Innate True Origin, yet I actually couldn't gain the upper hand!"

If Teng Qingshan was shocked, wouldn't Deng Geng feel shock as well?

"This knife-scarred man... Where did this expert come from? With just the use of his fists, he actually could suppress me to the point that I could only defend, unable to attack." Deng Geng was also nervous. "I have never heard of this person among the innate experts that have reached the state of True Dan."

"Rumble!"

A thundering sound boomed on the flat land!

"Oh no!" When Deng Geng saw the fist break through the air instantly and seemingly occupy the entire space, he couldn't help but feel shocked. This punch that broke through the air contained a special force that caused rotating air to appear around the fist.

Deng Geng could only retreat rapidly while slashing his Silver Scaled Sword.

“Bang!”

Deng Geng backed several steps away. Each step caused the rocks to tremble, and many huge holes appeared as numerous rocks flew in every direction.

“Stop!” Deng Geng yelled.

Teng Qingshan looked at Deng Geng and thought to himself, “Although the Tiger Fist performed with the use of the Heavenly Hawk Claws is slightly slower, the explosive force is equal to the Toxic Dragon Drill. Yet, this Deng Geng could actually block it.

At this moment, Deng Geng felt a painful sensation in his bones and arm and thought to himself, “If I want to kill this knife-scarred man, I guess I would have to pay a big price.”

“This brother! Great moves! I did not expect that among the ones who have reached the True Dan state, there was an individual who is so adept in fist martial arts.” Deng Geng said.

“Your sword technique is not bad either.” Teng Qingshan said loudly.

On the mountaintop, the two experts were both slightly wary of each other.

A smile showed on Deng Geng’s face as he said, “The juniors of my Tie Yi Hall offended you, so you killed them. I will let this go. However..... brother, please return the item that was passed on to my Tie Yi Hall. Please return the black tiny cauldron to Tie Yi Hall!”

Chapter 175: Realm of Self-Actualization

“That small black cauldron is the Tie Yi Hall’s heirloom?” Teng Qingshan was astonished.

Deng Geng had initially planned to kill Teng Qingshan in one breath and retrieve the small black cauldron. However, after a short exchange of blows, he realized that his opponent was not so easy to deal with, and he naturally decided to change his plan. He smiled and nodded, “You’re right. This is our Tie Yi Hall’s heirloom. It was stolen by Wei Dan a while back, and we only managed to find it today. If you could please return the small black cauldron to our Tie Yi Hall, we’ll write off what had happened earlier in thanks!”

“Write off, write off your head!”

Teng Qingshan hollered crudely, and the scar across his face made him seem even more sinister. “Deng Geng! You shameless rascal. Do you know who I am?”

Deng Geng’s face turned sullen. This crude, scarred man had just called him ‘shameless’, causing him to grow furious.

“Senior Wei Dan was the ancestor of our sect!” Teng Qingshan kept his head high and proclaimed, “There are not many innate realm masters who are skilled in the art of the fist. Haha, you had a taste of my fist earlier…and should be able to guess my identity. That’s right, I have inherited the skills of Senior Wei Dan. Back then, Ancestor Wei Dan had secluded himself in the Silver Horn Mountain and disappeared without a trace. The subsequent generations of Sovereigns in our ‘Heavenly Hawk Sect’ would then occasionally come to this Silver Horn Mountain to pay our respects to our ancestor.”

Deng Geng was stunned.

Wei Dan’s Fist Art? It had been over six hundred years since it

had first appeared. Furthermore, paper was only recently invented two to three hundred years ago. In the past, records were all kept on bamboo, sheepskin, and the like. The records on Wei Dan were already very rare with only a few simple descriptions recounting Wei Dan's Fist Art as tyrannical and harsh. Furthermore, Wei Dan had no disciples!

However, Deng Geng could not recognize Teng Qingshan's Fist Art either.

Did that mean that Wei Dan had no disciples just because the records had said so? It wouldn't be that strange for people to not know that he had secretly taken in a disciple.

"This time I came to the Silver Horn Mountain to pay respects to our ancestor. Who would have thought that I would come across you guys from Tie Yi Hall fishing out the remains of my ancestor! This is being extremely disrespectful to my ancestor's remains, so how could I let them go?" Teng Qingshan said in a loud voice. "This 'Heavenly Hawk Claws' is a divine weapon of our Heavenly Hawk Sect. It would only be able to release its maximum potential in my hands! Moreover, this small black cauldron was the keepsake of our ancestor, and naturally it should be inherited by our 'Heavenly Hawk Sect'. What rights do you Tie Yi Hall people have to take it?"

Teng Qingshan said everything in one breath, leaving Deng Geng speechless.

Deng Geng had told a lie in a bid to win the argument by reason.

Who would have thought that Teng Qingshan's bullsh**ting skills were a notch higher than his own?

"You...Heavenly Hawk Sect? Wei Dan's sect? Why have I not heard of them before?" Deng Geng said.

"There are many things that you do not know!" Teng Qingshan snorted coldly. "Our Heavenly Hawk Sect had received the order

from our ancestor to stay secluded and to hide our existence from the world. There are not many who know of us. This time, if it was not for you guys showing disrespect to our ancestor's remains, I might not have taken action. Alright, I still have to bury our ancestor. You should quickly take your leave, otherwise…"

Deng Geng was infuriated.

What was this?

Deng Geng was also one with a sharp tongue. Why would he suddenly become the unreasonable one in merely just a few words?

However…the line of words in that Black Iron Treasure Map had written, 'For those who hold the treasure map, those who enter by force, are bound to die. One must remember that to get the treasure, one must bring along one of the nine cauldrons!' He had recalled the words clearly. It was probably harder to find one of the nine cauldrons than the treasure map itself!

A thousand years since Emperor Yu had passed away, it was known that only the Poetic Sword God 'Li Taibai' had once gotten one.

If they did not get that small cauldron this time, when would they be able to get it?

"I don't care who you are!" Deng Geng's face turned sullen as he hollered, "I'm advising you, give me the small black cauldron. Otherwise…this Silver Horn Mountain will be the place of your death! Your Heavenly Hawk Sect will also face the threat of annihilation!"

"What? Trying to use force?" Teng Qingshan lifted his eyebrows and smiled.

In fact, Teng Qingshan had deduced many things. "This Deng Geng had not paid this 'small cauldron' any heed when they first discovered the remains. However, after finding the treasure map at the bottom of the lake after searching for two hours, he didn't

even want to take revenge for the four warriors in the Postliminary Realm! To think that he only wanted to get his hands on this small cauldron! Seeing how he was about to turn crazy, it was obvious how important this small cauldron was to him!”

In the beginning, he did not care about the small cauldron.

After looking for the map for two hours, he was suddenly so concerned about the small cauldron.

Teng Qingshan could easily figure out one thing – Deng Geng should have discovered the treasure map, noticing that this ‘small cauldron’ was closely related to the treasure map!

“Only this would explain his complete change in attitude toward the cauldron in merely two hours.” Although Teng Qingshan had come up with all of these reasons, he still had some doubts. He had gotten ahold of this small black cauldron in his previous life and once again in his current life. What kind of relationship did this small cauldron have with the ‘treasure map’ that Tie Yi Hall was looking for?

At that moment –

“You’re courting death!” The furious Deng Geng immediately turned into an afterimage, thrusting a silvery-white blade light towards Teng Qingshan.

“Bring it on!”

Teng Qingshan let out a loud laugh as he dashed up to receive the blade light with his fist.

“Clank!” Teng Qingshan blocked with his left hand and aimed for close combat with Deng Geng. However, after fending off with his left hand, Teng Qingshan’s face paled. “This is not right!” Deng Geng’s sword was light and airy and contained very weak inner strength. This made Teng Qingshan’s prepared hand look like a fist smashing into thin air.

Deng Geng flexibly took one step back. This retreat was only a

small step back with his body turned to the side.

“Pu!” The Silver Scaled Sword slashed diagonally, with a sharp Qi encompassing the edges of its blade.

Teng Qingshan immediately plunged down, landing a strong force on the surface with his left palm. The rocky land below immediately exploded with bits of rock everywhere, creating a gust of strong backlash of inner strength. Teng Qingshan shot towards Deng Geng horizontally as if he was a cannonball. At the same time, he twisted his abs, channeled all his inner strength into his right leg, and his right leg stomped towards him.

“Clank!” Deng Geng seemed to have expected for Teng Qingshan to make this move as he quickly dodged and slashed his Silver Scaled Sword towards Teng Qingshan’s neck.

“Something’s not right!” Teng Qingshan was astonished. The exchange this time was completely different from the previous one.

While his opponent did not seem to have improved, his attacks were all strangely within the other side’s grasp. No matter which skill Teng Qingshan used, Deng Geng seemed to be able to see through them. Teng Qingshan was deep in thought, as his gaze swept past Deng Geng’s eyes. There was no light in Deng Geng’s eyes, and it was slightly dark.

“He has reached the Realm of Self-Actualization!” Teng Qingshan was surprised.

“Hu!” The sharp blade light pierced towards Teng Qingshan’s chest in an instant.

Teng Qingshan’s right palm fiercely pushed against the sword as he nimbly dodged the attack. However, Deng Geng’s trajectory of attack curved and once again came towards Teng Qingshan.

Teng Qingshan retreated, taking many steps back!

“This Deng Geng is really putting his life on the line,” thought

Teng Qingshan as he started to panic a little.

He had read the «Dark Moon Spear Technique», and he knew that there were some steps that one was required to train in after reaching the innate realm. For example, only when someone reached the ‘Human Class’ Realm could his Spirit break through the ‘Niwan Palace’ and have a chance to reach the Emptiness Dan Realm of the innate state. Which meant.... all those who reached the Emptiness Dan Realm of the innate state also attained the ‘Human Class’ Realm.

And to be able to reach the realm of ‘True Dan’, one must comprehend the ‘Realm of Self-Actualization’ or the ‘Realm of Enlightenment’.

The Realms of ‘Self-Actualization’ and ‘Enlightenment’. As long as one comprehended one of them, one would be able to attain the level of ‘innate True Dan’ very quickly. However, there was still a difference between the Realms of ‘Self-Actualization’ and ‘Enlightenment’.

The Realm of ‘Self-Actualization’ was less difficult, but if one trained in this, in the future, one would have an extremely low probability of attaining the level of ‘innate Golden Dan’. In the Realm of ‘Self-Actualization’, one’s mind would fully be occupied with thinking of battle, killing the opponent at all costs, and even losing an arm or suffering from serious injuries to that extent.

To put it simply, under the Realm of ‘Self-Actualization’, one has lost all sanity.

The Realm of ‘Enlightenment’ was more difficult, but the probability of attaining the level of ‘innate Golden Dan’ would be much higher in the future. Under the Realm of ‘Enlightenment’, one would still be highly focused in battles, and he would still have his sanity.

.....

Once a person fully entered the Realm of ‘Self-Actualization’, one would become a crazy battle lunatic!

“This Deng Geng is really going all out, and he won’t be satisfied until he’s killed me.”

Pu!

The shadow of the sword slashed passed Teng Qingshan’s stomach, slitting his clothes and even leaving a slash mark on the ‘Darksteel Inner Armor’.

Tens of thousands of blade lights encompassed Teng Qingshan, and he seemed to be in a sorry state within the blade lights.

“This cannot go on.” Teng Qingshan started to panic. The strength of his own body, coupled with the explosive powers of the ‘innate Emptiness Dan’, was not very far from the level of an ‘innate True Dan’ expert. However…in terms of the Realms, he was a notch weaker. He knew nothing of the Realm of ‘Self-Actualization’ nor of the Realm of ‘Enlightenment’.

The following was based on the description in the ‘Dark Moon Spear Technique’.

Regardless if it was the ‘Self-Actualization’ or ‘Enlightenment’ Realms, both would allow one to have an extremely strong battle consciousness, allowing one to fully perform all the skills and techniques that one knew, such as sword skills and Spear Arts. Moreover, it would allow for excellent control in channeling the Innate True Origin. It would also allow one to accurately grasp the space in which the battle was in and even to the extent of being able to foresee the opponent’s next attack.

It can be said that –

‘Self-Actualization’ and ‘Enlightenment’ were able to bring one’s abilities to its fullest potential! It was only when comparing with ‘Self-Actualization’, one would have the additional sanity when under ‘Enlightenment’.

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“I would rather meet one who is trained in ‘Enlightenment’ than to encounter one who is trained in ‘Self-Actualization’. He is now a robot, a lunatic.” Teng Qingshan made a quick flip, and with both fists, he smashed them fiercely into the ground as if they were a pair of hammers. A loud boom sounded as if thunder had roared beside one’s ears!

The land exploded, but as Teng Qingshan had the intention to control it, most of the rocks shot towards Deng Geng.

“Retreat!” Teng Qingshan immediately dashed down the mountain.

“Don’t think about escaping!” Deng Geng, with his lifeless eyes, roared like a wild beast and dashed through a large amount of obstructing rocks. He turned into a beam of light and chased after Teng Qingshan rapidly.

Hu!

Hu!

Between the two men, one after the other, Deng Geng was an ‘innate True Dan’ expert and was skilled in Qing Gong. But the strange thing was…the distance between the two grew increasingly larger.

“A lunatic! Although he had merely entered the ‘Realm of Self-Actualization’, it would not increase his speed of running in a straight line.” Teng Qingshan was like a flash of lightning. He was now an innate master! Therefore…he could finally display the Qing Gong of the second level of «Crossing Worlds», which he had learned in his previous life.

There were a total of three levels to «Crossing Worlds», three sets of diagrams on movements, and six sets of diagrams on the meridian and energy channels.

As for the second level, one could only utilize it after attaining

the innate realm.

The speed of the first level was already astonishing enough. Now as soon as the second level was on display, it was compatible with Teng Qingshan's monstrous physique.

Deng Geng could only stare while Teng Qingshan disappeared from his vision. Only after chasing crazily for a while longer did Deng Geng stop and gradually regain clarity in his eyes.

"I let him escape!" Deng Geng was infuriated, and his eyes turned red. "The Cauldron of the Nine Prefectures! I almost had it!!!" Tie Yi Hall had toiled for over a thousand years, and how hard had it been for them? Moreover, this small cauldron was once right in front of his eyes, but he had not paid it any heed. Only when he had seen the Black Iron Treasure Map did he realize that the small cauldron was special. When he wanted to take it...it was already taken away by someone else!

Everything was too late!

He had merely gotten the Black Iron Treasure Map, but there was no way for him to get Emperor Yu's treasures. The treasure map had clearly stated that 'he who enters by force, is bound to die'.

"Arghhhh..." Deng Geng gave a loud roar, and the Silver Scaled Sword in his hand slashed crazily around the surroundings.

Boom! Boom! Boom!

Rocks were split open, and a large bunch of big trees in the surroundings fell. Deng Geng face looked sinister as he bellowed, "Heavenly Hawk Sect's Sovereign, I must shred you into pieces!" The bellow echoed amongst the forest of the Boorish Desolate, causing many ferocious beasts and venomous snakes to scatter around in fright.

Chapter 176: No Longer There?

In the pitch black eerie mountain forests of the Boorish Desolate.

"Hu!"

An afterimage dashed through and faced occasional attacks from venomous vipers and ferocious beasts. Despite of their ferocity, however, all of the beasts were slain.

After hearing the infuriated bellow "Heavenly Hawk Sect's Sovereign, I must shred you into pieces!" from far away, Teng Qingshan snorted. "Heavenly Hawk Sect's Sovereign? Go look for a Heavenly Hawk Sect across the land of the Nine Prefectures first if you're able to." The 'Heavenly Hawk Sect' had been fabricated by Teng Qingshan.

As for whether there was really one, he did not know. At least, he had not heard of it before.

If there really was one and Tie Yi Hall had gone to look for them, then it could only be said that they had a bad streak of luck.

"It is no wonder that this 'Realm of Self-Actualization' is the best battle state that can allow one to tap on the full potential of the space and one's abilities. In the battle earlier, the opponent had held on to the upper hand the entire time! Thankfully I escaped while running in a straight line, and it wasn't related to the state." Recalling the battle earlier, Teng Qingshan, was exclaimed in admiration.

The different levels of the realms.

For the innate Hollow Dan, it was usually the Realm of Minute Subtlety.

For the innate True Dan, it was the 'Realm of Self-Actualization' or the 'Realm of Enlightenment'.

For the innate Golden Dan, it would be the Realm of Simplicity!

If the 'Realm of Self-Actualization' and the 'Realm of Enlightenment' were said to be the strongest battle consciousness...

Then the 'Realm of Simplicity' comparatively would have an additional trait – to be able to remove all forms of resistance such as air resistance!

Take for example, the crumbling of mountain rocks caused when innate masters raised their limbs, and the air resistance when their thrust their swords. The faster the speed, the higher the air resistance! Even when in the 'Realm of Self-Actualization' and 'Realm of Enlightenment', there was no way to remove air resistance.

But innate Golden Dan experts could!

With the same sword, the same Innate True Origin, one's speed could increase two to three times once there was no air resistance. What happened when the speed was increased by two to three times? Death by a single blow!

Each skill and technique of the innate Golden Dan experts did not result in the explosive sound of Qi, nor did they create roaring strong waves and such, seemingly very ordinary. Therefore, it was known as the 'Realm of Simplicity'! Back when Zhuge Yuanhong had took in Teng Qingshan as his disciple, the technique he had applied was a technique of this 'Realm of Simplicity'!

Teng Qingshan had only known about this after reading the 'Dark Moon Spear Art'.

"According to the 'Dark Moon Spear Art', one's Spirit will only evolve with the leveling of the realm. The evolved 'Spirit', when incorporated with the Innate True Origin, will allow the Innate True Origin to evolve! I now need to comprehend the 'Realm of Enlightenment'." Teng Qingshan did not want to cultivate the 'Realm of Self-Actualization'. Once self-actualization was attained, he would cease to care about inflicting serious injuries when

battling.

Moreover, when one cultivated Self-Actualization, it would be hard to attain innate Golden Dan in the future. Actually, a lot of strong warriors did not wish to cultivate the 'Realm of Self-Actualization' either, but it was just that the 'State of Enlightenment' was too hard. Therefore, they could only give in and went for the second best option, to cultivate the 'Realm of Self-Actualization' which had a lower difficulty.

...

Teng Qingshan did not rest that night but hurried on his way, killing countless ferocious beasts and venomous snakes. He only rested on the second night, and he reached the borders of the Boorish Desolate on the afternoon of the third day.

Teng Qingshan threw away his tattered clothes and washed himself in the river at the side before changing into a set of new clothes.

"Crack~~" Teng Qingshan's muscles and bones let out a very soft sound as his thick arms shrunk a little. His height increased a little, and he removed the human-skin mask on his face. In an instant, the tough and sturdy scarred man turned into a delicate young man.

He placed the 'Heavenly Hawk Claws' in his bag and carried the Blood Sucking Saber, took up his bag and set off once again.

In a short moment, Teng Qingshan left the Boorish Desolate.

"The outside is still more comfortable!" Walking out of the Boorish Desolate, the warm afternoon sunlight landed on him, and the slight breeze was even more comfortable. "The air is much fresher too, unlike how it was in the Boorish Desolate. There's always a stench of rotting wild beasts around." Teng Qingshan was in a good mood.

This time around, he had been in the Boorish Desolate for close

to ten days and he had a battle with that Deng Geng!

In that battle, the odds were definitely not in Teng Qingshan's favor, but that was because he had not used his spear!

After all, in this life, Teng Qingshan had spent all his efforts on improving his spear arts. One inch longer, one inch stronger. If he were to utilize his Reincarnation Spear, although he would not be comparable to his opponent in terms of the realms they reached, Teng Qingshan's Spear Art more formidable. If the two of them were to fight to their death, with the sharpness of Teng Qingshan's Spear Art, his winning rate would be no lesser than 50%!

It was just that...there were too few experts in Spear Arts, and many people had known that Teng Qingshan had many Arts. Once he used the Spear Arts, he must fight to the death. If Deng Geng was not killed, his own identity might be exposed.

But if he were to use fist techniques, even if he did not kill Deng Geng, his identity would not be exposed!

"Nonetheless, my goal was to disrupt their plan! So long as the effect is there, then it's fine." Whether Deng Geng was killed or not, Teng Qingshan did not care much. "This trip to the Boorish Desolate was quite fruitful."

He ate the Scarlet Fruit, attained the Innate Realm, and even got items such as the Heavenly Hawk Claws.

"The most important thing is this!" Teng Qingshan touched the small black cauldron on his chest before putting it inside his clothes. Teng Qingshan did not bother to care about the connection between the small black cauldron and the treasure map. In his heart...the memorial significance of the small cauldron was more important.

Wu An County.

"Da, da, da."

Teng Qingshan led his Cyan Bristled Horse and walked amongst

the streets of Wu An County. Back then, Teng Qingshan had helped 'Li Jun' to settle down here, and he had also promised to help her seek revenge.

"I wonder how that young lady's doing right now." As Teng Qingshan walked, he noticed in astonishment, "Hmm, why is it so lively in Liuhu Street?" The mansions lining up next to Liuhu Street were something that only wealthy merchants and those influential characters would be able to afford.

Usually, it would be very peaceful in Liuhu Street.

There were many beautiful and large boats on the lake next to the Liuhu Street. Teng Qingshan recognized them the moment he laid his eyes on them. They were boats that carried prostitutes! Usually, at night, the lake would be filled with a large number of such boats, attracting some of the wealthy merchants on the banks to enjoy themselves.

"It's daytime right now. Why would there be so many boats housing prostitutes?" Teng Qingshan was a bit surprised.

There were many of these boats, closely anchored next to each other. Amongst them, the biggest boat was even at the bank. And at the grassland on the bank, a large group of people had gathered. At one glance, there were over a thousand people, and the mass of people reached tens of Zhang away from the banks.

Teng Qingshan led his horse and headed to where Fatty Wang was as he looked at the excitement. He heard a crisp shout, "The next one coming out is the top of the Four Fragrance of our Heavenly Fragrance Court, Lady 'Chunxiang'." Instantly, all the closely packed thousand-plus people began to cheer.

"Lady Chunxiang, tonight, you are mine."

"Haha, I'm here to show you some support."

The laughter was non-stop.

...

Only when Teng Qingshan got nearer did he discover...

There were rugs laid out on the banks of the grassland, with fifty tables set up. Many lavishly dressed wealthy merchants and influential characters were seated at the tables while their guards and servants were standing at the side. The wealthy merchants casually drank wine and ate fruits, enjoying the performance on the boats.

And surrounding the fifty tables, there were even more people gathered around to enjoy the excitement. Those poor things... everyone was squeezing around.

"Old Wang." Teng Qingshan took a quick scan of the surroundings and soon spotted Fatty Wang, who was eating grapes.

Fatty Wang was wearing a golden gown, with two guards beside him. Since he was also considered someone with status, he hogged a table by himself.

Upon hearing this voice, Fatty Wang turned his head harshly and immediately ran to where Teng Qingshan was, saying respectfully, "Commander, you are back. Congratulations."

"Old Wang, you really know how to enjoy yourself." Teng Qingshan smiled and chided.

"Hehe, I usually don't have much to do, so I look around for small entertainment." Fatty Wang smiled and hollered at the two guards who had followed him, "What are you standing there for? Quickly take the horse from Commander."

Teng Qingshan passed over the reins. "Old Wang, I got you to help look after Lady Little Jun. Is that young lady alright?"

"Lady Little Jun?" Fatty Wang shook his head and said, "Commander, two days after you left, this Lady Little Jun suddenly got herself a master! She told me that she would be leaving with her master...Before she left, she handed me a letter to pass to you.

Right, that Lady Little Jun also asked you not to take revenge for her. This revenge, she will seek for it with her master."

Teng Qingshan frowned in suspicion, "Master?"

"Mmm." Fatty Wang nodded. "It was a lady who appeared to be about thirty to forty years old. But..This lady had a horrifying gaze. With just one look from, my back was already covered in sweat. She should be an extremely formidable character. Even so, that lady seemed to like Lady Little Jun a lot."

Teng Qingshan was well aware that there were too many impurities in Little Jun's meridian channels and that she would not be able to channel internal strength. How would she have a master?

"Old Wang is also a warrior in the Postliminary Realm. To be able to instil so much terror in him, the lady is likely to be a powerful expert. The fact that she was willing to take in Little Jun as her disciple shows that she probably has the means to solve the problems of Little Jun's meridian channels." Teng Qingshan also heaved a sigh of relief. "Old Wang, bring that letter here. I'll be here taking a rest and have my lunch."

Fatty Wang immediately replied, "Commander, come sit at my table." After that, he immediately instructed for people to bring food.

...

On the banks, a light breeze blew.

Enjoying delicacies while watching the performances of the beautiful ladies on the deck of the boats was truly not bad.

"Top Courtesan Contest?" A short moment after Teng Qingshan sat down, he overheard the conversations from others around and understood what was happening. This was Wu An County's 'Top Courtesan Contest', which happened once every four years. Those who had participated were all popular courtesans. Teng Qingshan

had originally thought that the ladies from brothels were all degenerate.

But the ten ladies who were vying to be the top courtesan all had different disposition. Regardless if it was their beauty, disposition and such, they were all no worse off than Zhuge Qing.

They each also had their areas of excellence in the four arts of music, chess, calligraphy and painting.

"They were just unlucky and fell into prostitution." Looking at these ladies, Teng Qingshan could not help but shake his head. In this chaotic world, the prettier the girls from families that weren't well off, the worse the plight they would be in.

"Mmm?" Teng Qingshan could not help but turn his head.

Two men in green suit walked over, and one of the hollered, "There's a table in the corner at the back, you go over there! Our Qing Hu Island will be taking this table. And you guys, that table over there, our Qing Hu Island will be taking it as well." The two fellows spoke in a tyrannical tone.

"Qing Hu Island? No wonder they are tyrannical." Teng Qingshan realized.

In Yangzhou, Qing Hu Island was the emperor!

"Mmm, didn't you hear what I said?" The face of the man in green suit sank as he stared towards Teng Qingshan.

"Oh, Commander Teng, haha, such a coincidence!" A laughter rang. Teng Qingshan turned his head and saw a youth in a silvery white long gown with a young girl dressed in purple walking beside him. Behind them were five young males and females.

"Gu Shiyou!" Teng Qingshan recognised him in a glance. He was Qing Hu Island's Young Master, 'Gu Shiyou'.

"Young Sovereign." Teng Qingshan smiled and greeted.

"Tie Pan, step down." Gu Shiyou instructed the man in a green

suit. "This is Gui Yuan Sect's First Commander, Teng Qingshan! In the newly published Earthly Ranking released in the second half of the year, Commander Teng was ranked number forty-six. Commander Teng, I hope you don't mind that my Martial Sister and myself join your table?"

"Please." Teng Qingshan replied with a nod, feeling puzzled at the same time.

Number forty-six of the Earthly Ranking?

Chapter 177: The Guard Tie Ta

Gu Shiyou and the young lady dressed in purple sat at the same table as Teng Qingshan.

“Commander Teng, this is my Martial Sister, Wen Xiao,” Gu Shiyou said. The brows of the young lady in purple were slightly thick, which established an air of valiance. The young lady in purple took a good look at Teng Qingshan as she smiled and said, “Wen Xiao greets Commander Teng. It’s too bad that I did not go to the Blazing Mountain with Martial Brother. If I had, I would have been able to see the prowess of Commander Teng’s ‘Blazing Spear.’”

Teng Qingshan was stunned.

“Blazing Spear?” Teng Qingshan smiled and said, “Lady Wen, what’s this about the ‘Blazing Spear?’”

Wen Xiao was surprised. “Is Commander Teng not aware? In the latest version of the Earthly Ranking, it was said that Commander Teng’s spear art was frantic as a blazing fire, ferocious and strong. Furthermore, Commander Teng gained his reputation on Blazing Mountain. Therefore, across the lands of the Nine Prefectures, quite a number of people refer to you as the ‘Blazing Spear.’ It was also written as such in the Earthly Ranking.”

Teng Qingshan did not know whether to laugh or cry.

‘Blazing Spear’ Teng Qingshan?

All of the powerful experts across the world had a nickname, such as the ‘Blood Moon Saber’ Meng Tian, the ‘Thunder God Blade’ Wu Yue, the ‘Blade of Life and Death’ Du Jiu and many others. Most of these nicknames would reveal some information of these people. The name ‘Blazing Spear’ stated that Teng Qingshan wielded a spear and that his spear art was ferocious and frantic.

“Why, Commander Teng, you didn’t know?” Gu Shiyou asked in

astonishment.

“I have been out for a while and have yet to return to Gui Yuan Sect, so I am truly unaware,” Teng Qingshan said.

“Oh, that’s why.” Gu Shiyou nodded.

At that moment, a plump, silver-haired old man smiled with squinted eyes and jogged over from a distance away. When he arrived, he bowed slightly and said smiling, “Young Master, you should have told me that you were coming so that I could make the preparations in advance…What does Young Master wish to eat, please feel free to let me know.”

Gu Shiyou threw a glance at this silvered haired old man. “Oh, Boss Yu Wen. Right, how many of these ten beauties on the boat belong to Boss Yu Wen?”

The silver-haired old man smiled and said, “There are seven! The one that has just come out goes by the name of ‘Meng Dujuan,’ and is the best lady I have under me. Her skill with the zither is one of the best across the whole Wu An County. Furthermore, she is still a virgin. If the Young Master is interested…”

“You step down first.” Gu Shiyou’s face turned sullen.

The silver-haired old man glanced at the young lady in purple and immediately took his leave.

“Martial Brother, that Lady Meng Dujuan is really a beauty,” The young lady in purple said.

“Martial Sister, stop joking with your Martial Brother.” Gu Shiyou smiled.

Suddenly —

The over one thousand people suddenly broke into an overwhelming cheer, each of their gazes were fixed on a frail young girl in white who had appeared on the deck. This young lady was carrying a plantain-leaf styled seven-stringed ancient zither.

After taking a slight bow, she sat down and placed the seven-stringed zither on the table in front of her.

Thereafter, she sliced a piece of incense and lighted the incense burner.

The young lady in white closed her eyes to gather her concentration for a moment before she started to strum the zither.

“Dang!” A crisp sound resounded, reaching to one’s soul. At that moment, the surroundings turned quiet.

“Hmm?” Teng Qingshan turned his head to look in astonishment.

When the music sounded, Teng Qingshan’s heart trembled and his scalp felt numb. He put down his wine cup and focused on appreciating the music from the zither. The music had a cheerful rhythm to it, as if there were a hundred spiritual birds chirping, reaching deep into one’s heart, and changing one’s mood for the better.

After an unknown period of time.

Following the echo of the music from the zither in the air above the lake, the piece of music came to an end.

“What excellent skills with the zither.” Teng Qingshan looked at that frail young lady in white. He could not imagine that a master who could play such soul cleansing and cheerful music, which could even affect his state of mind, was actually a prostitute.

“Everyone has seen Lady Meng Dujuan’s skills with the zither for yourselves. Now, everyone can buy flowers and gift them to Lady Meng Dujuan. A stalk of white flower costs two hundred taels of silver, a stalk of yellow flower costs a thousand taels of silver, and a stalk of red flowers costs ten thousand taels of silver!” A charming middle-aged lady in red smiled and said, “The one who receives flowers with the highest total value out of the ten beauties here will be crowned as the top courtesan! Moreover, the person

who gifted her with the flowers of the highest value would have the opportunity to spend a wonderful night with the top courtesan. Even those who are ranked 2nd and 3rd amongst those who gifted flowers to the top courtesan will be able to have a chance to have a solo meeting with her."

As she said this, two little girls holding onto flower baskets headed up the bank.

"Master Li, eight hundred taels of silver!"

"Master Wang, a thousand taels of silver!"

"Lord Lan, a thousand and five hundred taels of silver!"

……

The rich men all threw in a large amount of money for the lady of their fancy.

"Top courtesan?" 'Wen Xiao', the young lady in purple exclaimed. "So the top courtesan would be the one who gets the most silver. Sigh…this lady's mastery of the zither is the highest one I've come across since I was young. It's too bad that she would still have to accompany stinky men to bed."

At that moment —

"My master would to redeem Lady Meng Dujuan's freedom!" A deep voice sounded.

At that moment, the over one thousand people present turned silent, staring at the person who had spoken. It was a tall and sturdy man with tanned skin. Standing there, he seemed very much like a statue.

"Redeem? Is your master able to afford redeeming her freedom?" Someone smirked and said.

"Lady Meng Dujuan is likely to be the top courtesan this time around. It would be a sky-high price." All the commoners and other rich men were waiting to watch a good show.

Without a few thousand taels of silver, it would be nothing but a dream to be able to wish to spend a night with such a top quality woman who was known to be a ‘top courtesan.’ Such women would be the money tree for the brothel they worked in! They would also act as the pillar, raising the status of the brothels even higher with their presence.

“Let your boss state a price.” The tanned man hollered.

The silver-haired old man walked to the deck of the boat and said in a clear voice, “It is not impossible to redeem her! But it is hard to find someone of Lady Meng Dujuan’s quality even from ten thousand people. We had paid a big price to nurture her as well. If your master would really like to redeem her freedom, we’ll set a fixed price of ten thousand taels of gold!”

“Ten thousand taels of gold?”

All the thousand odd people present were all shocked.

Ten thousand taels of gold was the equivalent of a million taels of silver! This was a monstrous amount. Usually, those who had a hundred thousand taels of silver were considered to be rich; to be able to have a million taels, they would be considered to be big merchants. To think that the top courtesan from a brothel would reach a price that would cost a big merchant all of his possessions!

Scary!

Although such top courtesans would cost a few thousand taels of silver a night, they do not accept customers frequently. They must remain mysterious. Moreover, a top courtesan would only be able to bring in money easily when they were young. When they get older, they would not be able to do the same. A top courtesan would only be able to earn ten thousand taels of silver in her whole life, and that was only if they had strong support.

“Ten thousand taels of gold,” The lady in purple exclaimed in shock, “That would be a thousand jin of gold, an amount which

would totally be sufficient to cast a pure gold human statue."

A sky-high price!

The tanned man turned around and had a short discussion in a soft voice before he stood up and said in a loud voice, "Ten thousand taels of gold! My master will pay it!"

"Hu!"

The thousand-odd men around were all astonished. Those who were squeezing into the outer area and had no rights to take a seat, would not be able to accumulate so much money even if they all pooled in together. There were not many present who were able to afford the price.

"Ahh." When the silver-haired old man heard this, he was stunned for a moment before he got himself together and said, "This...this Master, Meng Dujuan's contract is not here. Therefore, please wait here for awhile while I immediately head back to bring it." He had not thought that someone would be redeeming when they were contesting for the top courtesan.

"You can just tear up the contract when you go back." A gentle voice spoke out. "Tie Ta, hand them the gold notes and bring Lady Meng Dujuan here."

"Yes, master." With a leap, the man called Tie Ta crossed a few Zhangs distance and landed directly on the boat.

"Lady Du Mengjuan, this way please." Tie Ta concurrently passed the gold notes to the silver haired old man.

The silver haired old man glanced at the stack of gold notes. There were ten of them in total, each with a value of a thousand taels of god. That scorching amount made his head feel heated up.

"Tear the contract up when I go back?" The silver haired old man was in disbelief. If he did not tear up the contract, he could retrieve Meng Dujuan through the officials.

“No one would dare to hanker after my master’s gold notes.” Tie Ta threw another glance at the silver haired old man. The silver-haired old man trembled. To be able to pay ten thousand taels of gold to purchase a woman, he would probably not dare to offend such a character.

Meng Dujuan held onto her plantain-leaf styled ancient zither and followed the tanned man down the boat.

“Master.” Meng Dujuan walked over, bowed and said.

That master finally stood up. It was a slightly plumped fair-skinned man, dressed in a long purple gown. From his looks, one could tell that he should have been very good-looking when he was young. The slightly plump man nodded and said, “From today onwards, you’ll follow me!”

“Yes, master.” No matter how calm Meng Dujuan was, a strand of joy flashed passed her eyes.

After all, even a top courtesan would need to ride under thousands of people. How could she not be happy to be bought at that moment?

“Why is it that I do not recognise this person?” Gu Shiyou glanced at that middle-aged man in purple in astonishment. “To be able to be so generous, he must definitely be a big merchant. I recognise almost all of the big merchants in Yangzhou. Commander Teng, do you recognise this rich and overbearing big merchant?”

“I don’t.” Teng Qingshan said.

At that moment, the middle-aged man in purple turned to look at the table where Teng Qingshan and company were at. “Today I, Pei San, am quite lucky. To be able to meet the first on the «Hidden Dragon Ranking»Teng Qingshan, as well as the second on the «Hidden Dragon Ranking» Gu Shiyou.”

“First on the «Hidden Dragon Ranking»?” Teng Qingshan

immediately reacted.

To be able to rank number forty-six on the «Earthly Ranking», he would, of course, be listed on the «Hidden Dragon Ranking». However, he did not expect to be ranked above Gu Shiyou, to be first.

Gu Shiyou's face sunk.

"Pei San, I don't seem to have heard of you in Yangzhou." Gu Shiyou squinted his eyes and said.

The middle-aged man in purple smiled and said, "You're just too ill-informed."

Gu Shiyou started to feel fury.

In Yangzhou, who would dare to show disrespect to him, the Young Sovereign of Qing Hu Island?

The man in purple looked at Teng Qingshan. "Seventeen years old, number one on the «Hidden Dragon Ranking», and number forty-six on the «Earthly Ranking»! Not bad, not bad! The younger generation of Gui Yuan Sect is definitely stronger than Qing Hu Island's." With these words, Gu Shiyou was even more infuriated. Thereafter, the man in purple instructed, "Tie Ta!"

The tanned man was very clear what his master wanted him to do.

He immediately took a step forward and said in a clear voice, "Teng Qingshan, I have heard that you have an excellent spear art. I wish to seek your guidance!"

Chapter 178: In Gui Yuan Sect

Immediately, the thousand plus people began to clamor.

Challenge Teng Qingshan, the highest ranked person of the «Hidden Dragon Ranking»?

Teng Qingshan narrowed his eyes and glanced at the tanned man coldly as he replied, “If you want to challenge me, you should at least introduce yourself first!”

“My name is Tie Ta!” The tanned man said with a deep voice.

“Commander Teng, this idiot wants to challenge you! You better not lose in such an easy fight.” Gu Shiyou smiled and said. From these words, it was obvious that he despised Tie Ta. Well, it couldn’t be helped. The words of Pei San, the master of that tanned man, had caused Gu Shiyou to feel very uncomfortable and angry.

If it was an ordinary hedonistic son of a wealthy family, Gu Shiyou would have ordered men to have him killed.

However, Gu Shiyou was no ordinary man. He did not want to offend this mysterious Pei San now.

“Lose in such an easy fight?” The man dressed in purple, Pei San, laughed and said, “I heard that you, Gu Shiyou, suffered defeat at the hands of Hua Chizhu on the Blazing Mountain.

Gu Shiyou glared at Pei San as killing intent emerged from the depths of his heart.

“This guard of mine is the teacher of Hua Chizhu!” The man dressed in purple said.

“Teacher of Hua Chizhu!”

An uproar sounded!

Teng Qingshan was also shocked. He had met Hua Chizhu, that person had defeated Gu Shiyou with a long stick at the foot of

Blazing Mountain. He did not expect that the tanned man that stood before him was the teacher of Hua Chizhu.

“Is he Hua Chizhu’s teacher just because you say so?” Gu Shiyou humphed.

“Whether you believe it or not is your business. However, the disciple could defeat you, so Tie Ta would decimate you.” Pei San said with a faint smile. Coldness flashed through Gu Shiyou’s eyes and the murderous intent in his heart grew greater as he thought to himself, “This Pei San! I must kill him with my own hands!”

That Tie Ta pulled out a pair of black iron maces from his back and said, “Teng Qingshan, please!”

“Chi Chi!”

Teng Qingshan took out his two pieces of the Reincarnation Spear from his bag and connected the pieces together. He then held it in his hands and ordered the guard beside him, “Watch my bag.” “Yes, Lord.” The guard replied respectfully.

“Please!” Teng Qingshan stood there, straight like a javelin.

There were three tables between the two.

“Hmph!” The tanned man held the iron maces in each of his hands and leapt up forcefully, jumping past the three tables like a huge black bear pouncing towards Teng Qingshan. The two iron maces in his hands instantly transformed into two black dragons crashing towards Teng Qingshan, whipping up a ferocious gust of wind. The people in the surrounding immediately went far away.

“Too arrogant!”

Teng Qingshan yelled and forcefully thrust the Reincarnation Spear in his hand.

“Clang!” The spearhead and the iron mace clashed.

“Such a strong force! Must be eighty to ninety thousand Jin!” Feeling surprised, Teng Qingshan humphed furiously!

With this, Teng Qingshan struck with the use of ‘Inflamed Passion’ and the powerful rebound provided by the head of the Reincarnation Spear knocked the tanned man, who was high up in the air and unable to borrow any force, towards the lake.

The tanned man stepped off the water’s surface and leaped up to the top of the flower boat.

“Haha……Teng Qingshan. I have underestimated you.” The tanned man laughed and said. Usually, in combat between two people, even if one pounced towards the other, they would usually remain near the ground. This is because……once you jump too high, you won’t be able to change direction and it would be easy for the enemy to attack.

Unless you are very confident, otherwise, not many people would choose to attack from such a high point.

“Your ability is not bad too.” Teng Qingshan stepped on the ground once and shot towards the top of the flower boat like a flying arrow.

His long spear was like a swimming silver dragon, piercing straightly towards Tie Ta’s throat.

“Bang!”

The two clashed again and the roof of the boat below Tie Ta broke apart due to the vibration and Tie Ta flew to the back. As for Teng Qingshan, he stared at Tie Ta like an owl staring at its prey and jumped lightly, pouncing towards the tanned man. His Reincarnation Spear transformed into numerous spear shadows and seemed like arrows shooting directly towards Tie Ta’s vital organs.

Pursuing Shadow!

Boom! Boom! Boom!

Teng Qingshan and the tanned man actually stepped off the water surface and fought from one side of the lake to the other

side, causing the waters of the lake to explode. Rumble~~~ The exploding sounds on the water surface was unending.

Teng Qingshan's spear figure became like millions of blooming lotus flowers while Tie Ta's two iron maces were like two iron shields that defended perfectly.

"Ha!" Tie Ta suddenly roared fiercely as a faint golden light flashed in his eyes and forcefully hacked the iron mace in his right hand towards Teng Qingshan.

Rumble! Explosions of air sounded throughout the heavens!

"This guy hid his weak points pretty well." Teng Qingshan's facial expression changed and immediately performed the Transmutation Unity Law spear technique, wishing to resolve the attack.

Bang!

The iron mace and Reincarnation Spear clashed and a loud explosion resounded through the sky.

"Phew!" Teng Qingshan was knocked away by the concussion of the blast. On the surface of the lake Teng Qingshan stepped on the water and leaped up onto the deck of a flower boat.

"Perhaps this guy is an innate expert?" Teng Qingshan narrowed his eyes.

The force of the explosion just now had the strength of around five hundred thousand jin. It was impossible for a Postliminary expert to create such a powerful blast.

"Teng Qingshan, the first ranked on the «Hidden Dragon Ranking». Your reputation is well deserved. I admire you." The tanned man clasped his hands and jumped up immediately. He then stepped onto the lake surface once and flew towards the man dressed in purple.

"Master." The tanned man bowed.

“Let’s go.” Pei San, the middle-aged man dressed in purple, immediately led the tanned man and Meng Dujuan, the lady holding the zither and left.

……

“Phew!” Teng Qingshan leaped back to the shore and looked dubiously at the man dressed in purple and the other two leave. He thought to himself, “When that tanned man performed such a powerful move, a golden light flashed in his eyes. I definitely did not see wrong! This guy is an innate expert! An innate expert actually became a guard……. Who is that man dressed in purple?”

“Commander Teng, I still have some errands to run. Let’s meet again in the future. I will be leaving now.” Gu Shiyou stood up and said.

“Commander Teng.” The lady dressed in purple clasped her hands gently.

With this, the martial brother and sister left with the five young men and women. Yet, Teng Qingshan did not notice that among the five men and women behind Gu Shiyou, a handsome teenager, dressed in black, was constantly staring at Teng Qingshan. This young man was the teenager that Teng Qingshan saved during his garrison at the gold mines——Yan Danchen.

Yan Danchen looked deeply at Teng Qingshan one last time and rapidly left with the Young Island Lord.

He has never forgot that Teng Qingshan saved his life!

“Commander Teng, I……”

“Commander Teng……”

The wealthy merchants around came to greet Teng Qingshan one by one. Teng Qingshan cupped his hands in response and took his bag and walked towards the house where the fat Wang was waiting. Those people were too annoying and Teng Qingshan himself was too lazy to greet each one of them. As soon as he

walked out of the crowds, Teng Qingshan saw fat Wang running towards him from afar.

“Lord Commander.” Fat Wang took out a letter and said, “Here’s a letter from Little Jun!”

Teng Qingshan took the letter.

“Lord Commander, There’s probably still two hours until they choose the prettiest courtesan. “

“I am not watching. I will be going back to Gui Yuan Sect later.” Teng Qingshan opened the letter and the words on the paper were very beautiful——

“Big Brother Teng:

I originally decided to do as you said and live life out as an ordinary person. However, soon after you left, I met my teacher when I was sightseeing in Wu An County City. She accepted me as her disciple and gave me a cup of liquid. It tasted very good. My meridians are almost all opened and I can cultivate my inner strength now. To be honest, I did not want to be an ordinary person. I want to be like Big Brother Teng and kill those bandits and robbers!”

“As for the grudges, I will seek revenge with my teacher. I won’t trouble Big Brother Teng. When I finish my apprenticeship, I will look for you! I definitely will……

From Little Jun!”

After Teng Qingshan read the letter, he smiled and said, “Little Jun is quite lucky. The cup of liquid her teacher gave her should be ‘Jade Marrow Extract’.”

The Jade Marrow Extract was much more precious than the Scarlet Fruit. It could improve the muscles and bones. Ordinary people could open all meridians at once. As for Little Jun, there were many impurities in her meridians, so not all, but most of the meridians were opened.

In a quiet study at Wu An County City.

“Have you found the man dressed in purple, Pei San, and the other two?” Gu Shiyou said deeply.

The sturdy man with a big beard beside him immediately answered, “The city guards have sent five thousand people to search, but the three people have not been found. However, Young Island Lord, don’t worry. Those three definitely won’t escape.”

“Hmph.” Coldness flashed in Gu Shiyou ‘s eyes as he said, “That Pei San was very arrogant today and looked down on Qing Hu Island. If I don’t catch him, I can’t let this go. Alright, arrange people and search carefully for me! I just don’t believe that those three living people can escape my grasp!”

“Yes.” The big bearded sturdy man quivered and left the study quickly.

Pei San had enraged Gu Shiyou, but he couldn’t see through Pei San, therefore, he did not show his anger. If he did and the person was a powerful expert, it would be the end for he himself. Therefore, he endured until he could send his subordinates! After all, Qing Hu Island was one of the eight greatest sects in the land of the nine areas!

No one dared to challenge Qing Hu Island at Yangzhou!

“Phew.”

Gu Shiyou took a deep breath and a smile appeared on his face, “Second of «Hidden Dragon Ranking»? Hmph. Soon, this seventeen years old talented teenager, the first of the «Hidden Dragon Ranking» will be gone and I will be the new first!”

……

At Yangzhou, Jiangning County City, in Zhuge Yuanhong’s study at Gui Yuan Sect.

“Order the north entrance guards to have Commander Teng

Qingshan here once he returns!” Zhuge Yuanhong ordered.

“Yes, Sovereign.” The disciple, dressed in azure clothes, immediately left the study and headed towards the north entrance.

Zhuge Yuanhong looked at the secret letter in his hand. It was a letter from Wu An County City——“Commander Teng returned from the Desolate Land safely!” The concise eight words caused Zhuge Yuanhong to feel agitated.

“I wonder if Qingshan obtained the Scarlet Fruit, if he did……” Zhuge Yuanhong was slightly agitated as he continued saying. “A seventeen years old innate expert?”It was impossible for human beings to live forever, therefore the speed of their cultivation determined their future success. Some reached the innate realm after the age of one hundred, some reached the innate realm at the age of fifty. As for Teng Qingshan, he reached the innate realm at the age of seventeen.

It was impossible for human beings to live forever, therefore the speed of their cultivation determined their future success. Some reached the Innate Realm after the age of one hundred, some reached the Innate Realm at the age of fifty. As for Teng Qingshan, he reached the Innate Realm at the age of seventeen.

The difference was too large.

If he reached the Innate Realm at the age of seventeen, he would have enough time to reach the pinnacle.

“I just don’t know if he obtained the Scarlet Fruit.” Zhuge Yuanhong was slightly worried as searching for the Scarlet Fruit was really just something that depended on luck.

……

The sun shone brightly at noon. At the north entrance of Gui Yuan Sect.

“Neigh~~~”

The horse hooves lifted high up in the air and Teng Qingshan jumped down from the Cyan Mane Horse.

“Lord Commander!” The guard at the north entrance shouted with respect and someone immediately came to help stable the horse. One of the bodyguards hastily said, “Commander Teng, Sovereign has issued orders for you to go meet him once you return!”

“Go now?” Teng Qingshan was surprised at first, but immediately understood as he thought, “Teacher probably wants to know if I successfully obtained the Scarlet Fruit and if I reached the Innate Realm.”

Handing the Cyam Mane Horse’s reins to the guard, Teng Qingshan immediately rushed to Zhuge Yuanhong’s residence with his bag on his back.

Chapter 179: Father-In-Law?

“Commander!”

“Commander!”

As Teng Qingshan walked by, all of the men from the Black Armored Army saluted him respectfully. Teng Qingshan first entered the Black Armored Army by passing the sect’s monthly examination. Within only a year’s time, he had risen up to become the First Commander of the Black Armored Army, at the age of seventeen nonetheless! There were countless men in the Black Armored Army who revered Teng Qingshan.

Teng Qingshan gave a slight nod and headed towards the area where the core disciples trained.

“Look, it’s Commander Teng!”

Three young female disciples approached opposite from Teng Qingshan. When Teng Qingshan passed by them, the eyes of the three young ladies lit up as they called out together, “Commander Teng!” They eyes were locked onto Teng Qingshan, hoping that he would talk to them. Their hopes were unfulfilled, however, as Teng Qingshan only nodded and passed by them.

They turned to look at Teng Qingshan’s ass as he walked further away.

“Commander Teng has the demeanor of a great expert,” A young lady in ponytail exclaimed.

“In terms of seniority, Commander is considered our Martial Uncle. We should be addressing him as Martial Uncle Teng!”

“Martial Uncle Teng? It’s not good to call him Martial Uncle, as that makes him sound old. He is only seventeen this year, a year older than me. Commander Teng is really awesome, isn’t he? To be ranked first on the «Hidden Dragon Ranking»? Come to think of it, Second Martial Sister, didn’t you say that you wished to go

shopping with Commander Teng? Why didn't you speak up? Did you freeze up or something??"

"Keep your volume down. I only said that for fun," The wide eyed young lady blushed.

These young ladies had practiced martial arts since they were young, making their bodies in very good shape. They were at the peak of their youth, and whenever they played around and frolicked about, they would always catch the attention of many young male disciples. In the Gui Yuan Sect, many male disciples would look for fellow female disciples to marry. However, regardless of whether they were male or female disciples, they were separated by different standards.

Take Teng Qingshan for example. Because he was ranked at the top of the «Hidden Dragon Ranking», and because he was the appointed First Commander of the Black Armored Army, there was certainly quite a number of people in Gui Yuan Sect who held crushes for Teng Qingshan.

……

Climbing the flight of steps, Teng Qingshan came into the study of his teacher, 'Zhuge Yuanhong.'

"Teacher!" Teng Qingshan stood at the door and called out respectfully.

"Oh, Qingshan, come in quickly." Zhuge Yuanhong put down the book he was reading as he smiled and said before he took a good look at Teng Qingshan. "Qingshan, from your expression, you seem to be in a good mood. How were your returns from the Boorish Desolate this time?" No matter how strong one may be, he would not be able to determine if another person had attained the Innate Realm.

After all, the Innate True Origin was hidden in the Dantian, and no one had the ability to see through it.

The most they could do was to make a rough judgement based on a person's spiritual state.

"My returns were not bad. In the Boorish Desolate, disciple had gotten the Scarlet Fruit." Teng Qingshan said.

Hu!

Zhuge Yuanhong's eyes lit up. "Qingshan, have you attained the Innate Realm now?"

"Yes, Teacher," Teng Qingshan said. At the same moment, his whole body and his hair started to exude a crimson colored glow. Suddenly, Teng Qingshan was like a God of Fire as he stood there, the scorching Innate True Origin caused a wave of heat to pass through the study.

"Good!" Seeing this, Zhuge Yuanhong was overjoyed and a wide grin broke out on his face. "Haha, Qingshan, you did a good job. A seventeen-year-old innate expert, haa...you are the second person in a thousand years across the whole of the Nine Prefectures to accomplish this! The first in five hundred years!"

The population was dense across the world of the Nine Prefectures.

There was a population of two to three thousand just in Jiangning Country alone, and close to three billion in Yangzhou. There was a population of twenty to thirty billion population across the Nine Prefectures. To be born, age, get sick, and eventually die, most people do not live past a hundred years old. One could well imagine across the history of a thousand years, how many people there were. Amongst this uncountable population, in a span of a thousand years, there were only two such geniuses, including Teng Qingshan.

And within a span of five hundred years, Teng Qingshan was the only one!

"Teacher, then who was the first one in the past thousand

years?” Teng Qingshan was a bit curious.

“It was a monk from the Buddhist ‘Mani Temple’ by the name of ‘Xiang Fanchen’. This Xiang Fanchen was definitely brimming with talent, a character who was unmatched in his generation. The year he turned sixteen, he attained the Arhat realm which, in Buddhism, is the equivalent to our ‘Innate Realm’.” Zhuge Yuanhong said.

“Xiang Fanchen?” Teng Qingshan took note of this name.

This Xiang Fanchen had attained the Arhat realm at the age of sixteen. His talent was definitely greather than his own. Teng Qingshan was very clear...he had trained the Xing Yi Martial Arts for over twenty years in his previous life, but Xiang Fanchen had relied on himself.

Zhuge Yuanhong smiled and said. “But Xiang Fanchen was different from you. He had a stubborn personality.”

“In history, this Xiang Fanchen was known as the ‘Demonic Monk’. Firstly, it was because his talent surpassed that of a demon’s, and secondly, it was describing his personality! The year Xiang Fanchen turned fifty-six, he turned his back on the Mani Temple, ventured the world, and created a period of violence and terror! It could be said that back then, across the Nine Prefectures, only the ultimate experts of the Eight Supreme Sects would be able to hold their own against this Xiang Fanchen, but it would still be with much difficulty. There was no one who could kill him, and when he was over a hundred years old, Xian Fanchen was unrivaled! Thereafter, it may be because he felt lonely, and thus eventually secluded himself and barely showed his face in the world.”

Teng Qingshan gasped.

According to the study of psychology, most geniuses acted without concern for others.

“Since this Xiang Fanchen was unrivalled, did he not reach the realm comparable to that of Emperor Yu, Heavenly Emperor of Qin Mountains, Grandmaster Shi Jia, and the Poetic Sword God ‘Li Taibai’?” Teng Qingshan asked.

“He didn’t.” Zhuge Yuanhong shook his head.

“Since he was unrivalled, how would others know that he had not reached a realm as high as that Emperor Yu?” Teng Qingshan questioned.

Zhuge Yuanhong smiled and looked at Teng Qingshan. “Xiang Fanchen’s strength was different from that of Emperor Yu. Emperor Yu was unrivalled and could dominate the Nine Prefectures alone! You still don’t understand this now, but when you reach my level, you will understand...the difference between Xiang Fanchen and the four men.”

Teng Qingshan nodded.

“But this Xiang Fanchen was someone from over six hundred years back. He had long died and returned to the earth,” Zhuge Yuanhong said ruefully.

No matter how powerful a genius, he would not be able to fight against time.

……

The fragrance from the incense burner in the study had turned lighter, and Zhuge Yuanhong sliced another piece of incense and placed it in the incense burner.

“Qingshan,” Zhuge Yuanhong smiled and said, “You are gifted with extraordinary talents, and may also be unrivalled in the future. But Teacher needs to remind you not to aim for something beyond your grasp. Talent is one thing, but an individual’s efforts, luck, and other factors are another. You have the «Dark Moon Spear Technique» but are merely using it as a reference for the creation of your own spear art. On the other hand, Xiang Fanchen

was trained in one of the four Heaven Class manuals «Golden Buddha». Therefore, it is going to be very very tough for you to catch up to Xiang Fanchen."

Zhuge Yuanhong attempted to deal a blow to Teng Qingshan to prevent him turning too complacent.

"Teacher, I understand." Teng Qingshan nodded.

The other party had one of the four Heaven Class manuals, the «Golden Buddha» while he only had the Earth Class manual «Dark Moon Spear Technique». The gap was very big.

"Mmm, since you have already attained the Innate Realm, based on our Gui Yuan Sect's rules, you will be raised to the level of 'Law Enforcing Elder'. Our Gui Yuan Sect now has two Law Enforcing Elders, and you will be the third," Zhuge Yuanhong smiled and said, "I plan to choose a good date to make this announcement."

Teng Qingshan naturally abided by his teacher's orders.

"Haha, Qingshan, Teacher has a private issue to discuss with you," Zhuge Yuanhong suddenly said.

Teng Qingshan looked at Zhuge Yuanhong, puzzled.

"It's like this, Yun Er spoke to me, saying that he is on quite a good relationship with your sister 'Qingyu'. Moreover, the two of them seems to like each other...Therefore, I'd like to discuss with you, if you are not against it, we can let them spend some time together for a while, and then let them get married next year. What do you think?" Zhuge Yuanhong said.

"Little Yun and my sister?" Teng Qingshan could not help but smile.

Teng Qingshan was well aware of the relationship between Zhuge Yun and his sister. When his sister had just come to Gui Yuan Sect, she did not know many people and spend most of her time with the siblings, Zhuge Yun and Zhuge Qing. With two young men and a lady spending most of their time together for half

a year, it would not be weird for love to sprout.

As for Zhuge Yun's character, Teng Qingshan was very pleased. If his sister really did get married to Zhuge Yun, he would be assured.

"Teacher, it is not that I object, but this matter would need to get my parents' consent," Teng Qingshan said.

"Oh, your parents...Your parents seem to not have come to our Gui Yuan Sect all this time. Find a time to bring your parents over, or even better, to get them to stay here. It would be easier for you siblings to take care of them," Zhuge Yuanhong said.

"Mmm, I'm preparing to get my parents over to stay for a few days during the annual worship this year," Teng Qingshan smiled helplessly and said, "My parents cherish the members of the clan and do not wish to stay here permanently."

"Oh."

Zhuge Yuanhong picked up a teacup at the side and took a sip before he smiled and said, "Qingshan, putting the matter of your sister and Yun Er aside, let's talk about you. You will be turning eighteen after the annual worship and should get married! You are now concurrently listed on the «Earthly Ranking» and «Hidden Dragon Ranking», and are also the top of the «Hidden Dragon Ranking». You are also the First Commander of our Black Armored Army and will soon be a Law Enforcing Elder! Many Elders, Protectors, as well as my Martial Brothers and such had brought up the issue of your marriage to me. There are some ladies who are not bad from their family or from their kin and friends. You can meet them if you have time."

Teng Qingshan was astonished.

Teacher was acting as a matchmaker?

"Teacher, this..." Teng Qingshan could only shake his head.

Gui Yuan Sect was like a country by itself. After all, it controls a population of two to three million and had quite a few strong

powers within the sect. It would not be strange to have a lady from the sect marry to him to pull him in.

“You do not take a fancy to those ladies?” Zhuge Yuanhong smiled and said, “Your expectations are quite high! How about it, let Teacher introduce a nice lady to you.”

Teng Qingshan was stunned.

“All men and women should get married when they reach the age to do so. This is the natural order of things.” Zhuge Yuanhong smiled and said. “My daughter Qing Qing will also turn sixteen soon. The number of people who came to propose marriage almost crushed our door sills. But I think you are quite a good match with Qing Qing. Qing Qing is good in the four arts of zither, chess, calligraphy and painting, and is also good in culinary skills. She is two years younger than you and would be a good match. It’s not humiliating for you if I marry my daughter to you? If you’re not against it, as a father, I’ll make the decision for Qing Qing…When your parents come, just let them know before we can decide on a date for the marriage,” Zhuge Yuanhong smiled and said.

This Zhuge Yuanhong was not satisfied to be just a teacher, he wanted to become a father-in-law.

Chapter 180: Pei San

“Teacher, I do not wish to think of marriage at the moment.” Teng Qingshan said.

Zhuge Yuanhong took a good look at Teng Qingshan before he laughed. “Haha, I now understand why you attained the Innate Realm at the age of seventeen! You are the same as Xiang Fanchen, devoting all your efforts on training. But Qingshan, I have to remind you that marriage is an important stage of one’s life and you cannot ignore it.”

“Mmm, I understand.” Teng Qingshan was stumped by this.

Lady Qing was definitely a good lady, with a pure charisma like that of a goddess who fell from heaven. It was rare to find such a lady in this chaotic world. Usually, one who had seen blood would hardly be able to retain that purity. And Zhuge Qing, as the Sovereign’s daughter, had lived a life of ease. In addition, Zhuge Yuanhong had taught her well, therefore she had such charisma.

However, towards Lady Qing, Teng Qingshan had only shown her the concern as if she was his younger sister. He did not feel love for her.

However, Qingshan understood what his teacher ‘Zhuge Yuanhong’ said as well.

Marriage was definitely an important event!

This was the ancient times where, out of the three most unfilial actions, not having an offspring was the worst! Back when he was in the Teng Jia Village, his father ‘Teng Yongfan’ had once tried to force him to get married early. He only agreed to allow Teng Qingshan to delay a few years on the account that he would need to work hard after entering the Gui Yuan Sect.

“Even if it’s for the sake of the family, there is a need to have descendents. My father only has one son.” Teng Qingshan sighed

in his heart. “No matter what, I’ll still need to find a wife and have kids in a few years time.” As for whether he could find a woman like Cat who could touch his heart, Teng Qingshan had no confidence at all.

But if he were to remain single all his life, even if he was willing to, his parents would be the first to object.

Considering how filial Teng Qingshan was, he did not want to be the one to put an end to his family line.

……

“Master, I passed by Wu An County on my way back. There, I met an expert who had tanned skin and a sturdy body, by the name of ‘Tie Ta’. He challenged me… But I noticed that he should be an innate expert.” Teng Qingshan spoke out his suspicions.

Zhuge Yuanhong was astonished, “An innate expert challenged you? Could it be that he knew that you reached the Innate Realm?”

“It seemed that he did not know beforehand.” Teng Qingshan said. “But after exchanging blows with me, he should have found out.”

To be able to fend off that attack from the metal truncheon, Tie Ta could obviously have guessed Teng Qingshan’s abilities.

“The weirdest thing was that when he had exerted his actual abilities, a flash of golden light flashed in his eyes.” Teng Qingshan could not understand.

“Gold light flashed in his eyes?” On hearing this, Zhuge Yuanhong frowned and said, “Mmm, based on what you’ve said, this guy by the name of ‘Tie Ta’ should be from Mani Temple!”

“Mani Temple?” Teng Qingshan was a bit astonished.

“Mmm, amongst the Eight Supreme Sects, only the Mani Temple follows Buddhism. The other seven major sects cultivate essence into Qi, and Qi into Spirit. And for gold light to flash in his eyes, he

would have to be from Mani Temple. Afterall, the Buddhism of Mani Temple pursues the ‘sarira’, while we cultivate in the pursuance of the ‘innate Golden Dan’. If one’s gaze was as if it had materialized and flashed with a light of gold, in Buddhism, one would be able to achieve this at the Arhat realm. But for us, we would need to achieve the ‘innate Golden Dan’ realm.”

Teng Qingshan did not really understand.

It was because he was not familiar with the cultivation of the Buddhism. It seemed that the cultivation technique of Mani Temple was completely different from the rest of the sects.

“In short, there’s a 90% chance that Tie Ta is from Mani Temple.” Zhuge Yuanhong said.

“Master, this Tie Ta was the guard of a middle-aged man by the name of Pei San.” Teng Qingshan followed to say. “The other day, at Wu An county, this Pei San had used ten thousand taels of gold to buy a top courtesan. Moreover, this Pei San had looked down on the Young Sovereign of Qing Hu Island ‘Gu Shiyou’.”

“An expert of the Arhat realm as a guard?” Zhuge Yuanhong was a bit astonished. “This Pei San is an important character of Mani Temple? But Mani Temple is very much against wastage of money. They would not agree to the spending of ten thousand taels of gold to purchase a courtesan.”

Zhuge Yuanhong was also surprised.

Mani Temple was the best of the Eight Supreme Sects! “I don’t really understand. There are people under the Mani Temple who earn money; however, they would never dare to spend ten thousand taels of gold to buy a top courtesan... or to even offend the Young Master of Qing Hu Island!” Zhuge Yuanhong was very certain that those at the top of the Mani Temple could afford to look down on Qinghu Island and spend a large amount of wealth.

However, one must be a monk to be able to be among the top

practitioners of the Mani Temple, and monks were prohibited for falling for women's charm, let alone to spend money on one.

As for the common disciples, while they did not have to stay away from women, their actions made it impossible for them to climb to the top ranks of the Mani Temple. Those common disciples would likely not dare to offend the Young Sovereign of the Qing Hu Island.

"There are two possibilities in this matter. The first possibility is that the Mani Temple is greatly indebted to Pei San, resulting in them sending an expert of the Arhat realm as an escort. The second one is that either this Pei San or his elder is an extremely strong expert. So powerful that they are able to steal the Buddhist manual from Mani Temple for the escort to train and eventually achieve the Innate Realm!" Zhuge Yuanhong said.

Teng Qingshan gasped when he heard this.

Regardless of which of the two possibilities it was, this Pei San was not someone that was easily messed with.

"Qingshan, if there's nothing else, you can head back to rest first," Zhuge Yuanhong smiled and said.

"Yes, Teacher," Teng Qingshan replied, and left the study.

……

Yangzhou, Wu An County.

In a small pavilion of a luxurious mansion, Gu Shiyou sat down with a sullen face a strong, bushy-bearded man respectfully standing before him.

Ever since that day when Pei San left with his guard 'Tie Ta' and Meng Dujuan, Gu Shiyou immediately sent out thousands of men in search of this Pei San. After a while, Shiyou even resorted to sending out over ten thousand of men. With the status that Gu Shiyou held, dispatching over ten thousand of men merely required him to say the word, and it would be done.

In the land under Qing Hu Island's control, it was ridiculous to think that ten thousand men were only able to locate Pei San and company the next afternoon.

The news had only reached Gu Shiyou at noon.

"General Li!" Gu Shiyou looked at the big bearded strong man and said, "You ordered thousands of city guards to surround that Pei San and his company; however, hundreds of men were killed, and the leader who had led the thousands of men was even captured!" Gu Shiyou's face had sunk. "This is the the greatest humiliation! Our Qing Hu Island's face has been completely lost thanks to you guys!!! There were only three of them, one of whom was a weak lady. There were thousands of you! If it was me that failed this badly, I'd slit my own throat!"

The bearded strong man quickly said, "Young Master, that tanned strong man is an innate expert. He covered himself with a layer of Qi that was impenetrable by arrows, and easily captured the leader of the troops."

"Innate expert?" Gu Shiyou was so infuriated that his teeth were clenched. "These are all excuses of the weak who are scared of death! So what if he is an innate expert? Could he possibly kill thousands of people in such a short period of time? There is a limit to one's Innate True Origin, and with thousands of men surrounding them, that guard could only kill a few hundred people. Could the rest not capture that Pei San?"

The bearded strong man said bitterly, "Young Master, it is not that we city guards are cowardly and fear death. It is just that Pei San is even stronger than his guard."

Gu Shiyou was stunned.

"Our men had surrounded him, but with a single chop of his hand, tens of men who had gathered around were killed." The bearded strong man said.

“Blade light shot out from his body? That means that he is also an innate expert,” Gu Shiyou’s face paled.

One innate expert as a guard was enough to instill fear in Gu Shiyou, but to think that Pei San was also an innate expert... Gu Shiyou had to reconsider carefully. Tie Yi Hall only had three innate experts in total, while Gui Yuan Sect only had four, including Teng Qingshan.

It was very hard to attain the Innate Realm, but that Pei San and his subordinate were both innate masters.

“What is their background?” Gu Shiyou started to hesitate.

“Young Sovereign, that Pei San even got our men to bring word back to Young Sovereign,” The bearded strong man said.

“Shoot,” Gu Shiyou kept a serious look and said.

“That Pei San said...” The bearded strong man said bitterly, “Tell that Gu Shiyou, if he doesn’t wish to die, then don’t come and bother me!”

“What arrogance,” Gu Shiyou squinted his eyes.

The bearded strong man started to feel uneasy. Based on his understanding of the Young Sovereign, whenever he came across such humiliation, he was doomed to burst into fury.

“Get everyone to retreat,” Gu Shiyou ordered icily. “One more thing...I will be returning to Qing Hu Island later. Go inform my Martial Sister and her company.”

“Yes,” The bearded strong man immediately took his leave.

.....

On the Anyang River, a two-storied leisure boat steadily floated along.

Du Mengjuan sat on the upper deck of the boat, playing the seven-stringed zither as the music echoed throughout the banks of the Anyang River. A boatman in black was rowing the boat, while

the man in purple, ‘Pei San’, was at the front deck, casually lying down on a wooden chair, listening to the music of the zither, swaying and humming a small tune.

“Master, do you think that Gu Shiyou will be sending more men after us?” That strong man ‘Tie Ta’ stood behind Pei San.

Pei San closed his eyes and hummed a small tune. “Hmm? Relax. If that Gu Shiyou was really so foolish, then there would be no way he could be listed on the «Earthly Ranking». But this trip to Yangzhou was really quite enjoyable. That Teng Qingshan was better than I had expected, and in addition, I even found such a good master of the zither like Dujuan.”

“That Teng Qingshan is really good, to be able to attain the Innate Realm at the age of seventeen. Only the demonic monk ‘Xiang Fanchen’ from hundreds of years back would be comparable.” That strong man ‘Tie Ta’ was also full of praise. “However, that Teng Qingshan practices the spear, while the Gui Yuan Sect’s spear art is only mediocre. Master, do you think that Teng Qingshan’s talent would be wasted in the Gui Yuan Sect?”

“Just wait and see! Won’t we find out after waiting for a few decades?” After saying this, Pei San closed his eyes again, humming a small tune.

The leisure boat steadily headed to the west.

……

Gui Yuan Sect, in Zhuge Qing’s room.

The afternoon sunlight was shining into the room through the windows. Zhuge Qing was just finishing sewing a blue dress on the table. She was also sewing on pockets on the inside of the dress.

“Brother Teng should be returning from the Boorish Desolate now…” A smile broke out on Zhuge Qing’s face. For this blue dress, she had selected the material herself, such that the inner layer was snow silk. The insulation of this outer gown was comparable to

that of a top quality fur coat, and it could even fend off ordinary arrows.

“Father said that he would help me bring up the issue of marriage…I wonder what Brother Teng…” Thinking of this, Zhuge Qing blushed.

At that moment, through the windows, Zhuge Qing saw a figure heading over.

“Father?” Zhuge Qing put down her sewing needle and walked out of the room.

“Qingqing, are you not practicing your sword in the afternoon?” Zhuge Yuanhong smiled and said.

“Mmm,” Zhuge Qing nodded. Of course she was not practicing her sword, she was making clothes.

“Oh right, your Martial Brother Qingshan just came back today,” Zhuge Yuanhong said.

Chapter 181: The Magical Effect of the Scarlet Fruit Wine

“Martial Brother Qingshan is back?” Zhuge Qing couldn’t help but feel a sense of joy. She then remembered that her father, Zhuge Yuanhong, would help her as the matchmaker. So she involuntarily felt slightly nervous but also anticipatory.

“Yes.” Zhuge Yuanhong smiled and said, “I, your father, told him that I will arrange his marriage.”

Zhuge Qing bit her bottom lip and stared at her father.

Seeing his daughter act like this, Zhuge Yuanhong couldn’t help but sigh helplessly. Actually, when his daughter asked for the complete version of the « Vigor of the Reckless Bull »Spear Art for Teng Qingshan, he realized that his dearest daughter harbored some affection towards Teng Qingshan.

“I told your martial brother, Teng Qingshan, that in the Gui Yuan Sect, there are a few granddaughters of the elders like your cousin and martial sister, Liu Xiang. They are all nice girls…….” Zhuge Yuanhong was still speaking when Zhuge Qing became worried. Why did her father help these other girls? If Teng Qingshan married someone else, what would she do?

Seeing the worry in Zhuge Qing’s eyes, Zhuge Yuanhong laughed and said, “Alright, Qingqing! I will be frank. Your martial brother Qingshan has devoted his body and mind on cultivation and doesn’t want to get married now. Therefore, he rejected all those girls.”

Zhuge Qing felt perturbed and looked at her father nervously.

“As for you, Qing Qing……” Zhuge Yuanhong smiled and continued, “He did not reject, but only said that he did not want to get married right now.”

Zhuge Qing froze for a second.

“Your martial brother, Qingshan, is an amazingly talented person.” Zhuge Yuanhong sighed emotionally and said, “I forgot to tell you. He has reached the Innate Realm! A seventeen-year-old innate expert! In all nine areas of the land, he is the only one in five hundred years!”

“Martial Brother Qingshan reached the Innate Realm?” Zhuge Qing was also shocked by the news.

“Alright, Qingqing. Father still has some errands to run. I need to go to the Martial Pavilion.” Zhuge Yuanhong immediately left, leaving Zhuge Qing on the path alone.

Zhuge Qing stared at her father’s back as he disappeared into the distance and said softly, “Father, thank you.” Zhuge Qing was very smart. She understood the words that her father said just now were just to make her feel better.

……

In the afternoon, the sun was shining brightly, but Zhuge Qing was feeling depressed.

She turned and stepped back into her room.

“He doesn’t want to get married… Isn’t that hinting at rejection……” Zhuge Qing stood dumbly as she stared at the cloak on the table. “However, Big Brother Teng reached the Innate Realm at the age of seventeen, so he must be completely focusing on cultivating, unlike me, who thinks about nonsense every day. Yes, I can’t hold him back…… Sincerity can make metal and stone crack!”

Taking a deep breath, Zhuge Qing sat back on the chair and continued sewing the cloak.

Although she was encouraging herself, it was obvious her father failing to matchmake her with Teng Qingshan still affected her. So while she was sewing the pocket, her thoughts wandered involuntarily.

“Ow.” Zhuge Qing immediately pulled back her left hand.

A needle-pricked wound appeared on the left index finger and fresh red blood flowed out. This needle-pricked wound wasn’t small. Zhuge Qing hastily grabbed a xuan paper beside the table and immediately wrapped it around her index finger.

“Aiya, what should I do now?” Zhuge Qing stared at the clothes.

Although she pulled her hand back very quickly, two drops of blood still fell on the pocket she was sewing and the two drops of blood seeped through the Snow silk and the cloth. Zhuge Qing immediately flipped the cloak over and checked and saw that it was alright. There were just two drops of blood that seeped through the snow silk and cloth and only a deep red color with the size of a fingertip was seen outside.

The cloak was azure stone color and so, the drops of blood weren’t obvious.

“Once it’s dried, no one will see it.” Zhuge Qing heaved a sigh of relief.

…

In the Gui Yuan Sect, at Teng Qingshan’s residence.

“Crack!” The yard door opened and Qingyu was seen skipping and jumping into the yard with a bright smile on her face.

“Qingyu, your brother is back!” A bright and clear voice sounded.

Qingyu was surprised and looked into the yard carefully. She immediately rushed over as she shouted, “Brother!” Like a cheerful bunny, she dashed into the yard and hugged Teng Qingshan who was sitting down. “Brother, it’s great you came back. I have been thinking about you these days. I waited for you every day, and I couldn’t eat nor sleep.”

“Really?” Teng Qingshan winked and said, “But I noticed that my sister doesn’t even come back home for lunch.” Teng Qingshan

came back during the morning and ate lunch with cousin Teng Qinghu. As for his sister, Teng Qingyu, she was nowhere to be seen.

Through Teng Qinghu, Qingshan found out that Qingyu and Zhuge Yun were often together.

Teng Qinghu, who was at the side, also teased, “Right. I ate with those soldiers of mine these days and didn’t really see Qingyu.”

“Cousin!” Qingyu cast a glare at Teng Qinghu and looked at Teng Qingshan helplessly, “Brother, I didn’t know you were back, otherwise, I would have waited for you even if it meant not eating any lunch.”

“Alright.” Teng Qingshan smiled and said, “Regarding this matter between you and Little Yun, the Sovereign has told me..... and I have agreed. After the Yearly Sacrifice, I will bring Father and Mother here, and if they give their permission, this matter between you and Little Yun is settled.”

No matter how carefree Qingyu was, she still blushed when she heard Teng Qingshan’s words.

“Cousin, Little Yu! This is a precious item I brought back from the desolate land.” Teng Qingshan said and pointed at the gourd on the table. “Little Yu, your cousin was asking me what this was just now, but I did not tell him.” Teng Qinghu could only blinked his eyes as he listened and laughed awkwardly, “Qingshan, you can tell us now. What is that thing?”

“Don’t ask me now.” Teng Qingshan said and handed the two bowls beside him to Qinghu and Qingyu.

Then, he pulled the plug out of the wine gourd and poured out the Scarlet Fruit Wine.

“Walla~~” The light red liquid flowed out from the mouth of the gourd, and the aroma of the wine permeated the air. Qinghu and Qingyu couldn’t help but sniff and smell. The two small bowls

were soon filled to the brink.

“Finish it.” Teng Qingshan said.

“Yes.” Qinghu and Qingyu were already salivating when they smelled the aroma of the wine, and with no hesitation, they held the bowl up and drank.

Gulp~~

They emptied the bowls in one gulp.

“My whole body is sweating.” Teng Qinghu said in shocked. As for Qingyu beside him, her face was flushed red all over.

After a while.

“How do you two feel?” Teng Qingshan looked at Qinghu and Qingyu who were still in shock.

“My Dantian has become a lot larger.” Qinghu was shocked as he replied.

Qingyu was also shocked and answered, “All my bones and muscles have gone through a transformation. It seems like my entire body feels energized.” With this, Qingyu ran to the man-made hill beside the pond and grabbed a rock that weighed a thousand Jin. She exerted a bit of strength with her small arms. Phew! The rock that weighed a thousand Jin was lifted high up.

“When... when did I become so strong?” Qingyu was shocked.

Since she was young, Qingyu had never really trained and only began cultivating her inner strength when she joined the Gui Yuan Sect. Although she had inner strength, Qingyu relied on her physical strength just now. Her physique did not change, but her physical strength actually improved a lot.

“My strength has increased.” Teng Qinghu forcefully chopped the air with his hand, and a fierce gush of wind blew.

“Good. Drink half a bowl.” Teng Qingshan said and poured the Scarlet Fruit Wine again.

“Drink it.” Teng Qingshan said.

Qinghu and Qingyu were very surprised and immediately finished the wine.

“How do you feel now?” Teng Qingshan asked.

“Not much.” Qingyu shook her head and said, “My whole body is burning comfortably, but my Dantian and body seem to have no changes.”

“Qinghu, what about you?” Teng Qingshan asked.

“My Dantian hasn’t changed, but my physical strength has improved,” Qinghu said in an unbelievable tone. He could feel the changes in his bones and muscles distinctly. However, the improvement this time was a lot smaller than last time.

Teng Qingshan nodded as he listened.

“This Scarlet Fruit Wine has no use to you guys anymore.” Teng Qingshan said. At the Steel Arms Monkey Mountain, those Steel Arms Monkey and even the demonic beasts vied to get a drink of the wine. However, as you drank more, the effect would decrease until there is no effect anymore.

One more thing!

The better your physical qualities, the more Scarlet Fruit Wine you could absorb. If your body was originally weak, you would absorb less of the Scarlet Fruit Wine.

For example, Qingyu, a girl, had ordinary physical qualities. Thus, no matter how powerful the Scarlet Fruit Wine, she could only gain a strength of two to three thousand Jin and obtain the strength of a Second Rated warrior.

As for Qinghu, it was obvious that he absorbed a lot when he drank the first bowl, and he absorbed some more after he drank the second time. He gained a lot more strength than Qingyu did.

...

Most arms of the demonic beast Steel Arms Monkey had a strength of ten thousand Jin, and Steel Arms Monkeys were able to obtain Scarlet Fruit Wine often..... It was obvious that the effect of the scarlet fruit wine had its limits. However, before Teng Qingshan first drank the Scarlet Fruit Wine, his physical strength had been almost two hundred thousand Jin!

His body was so strong that it was a lot stronger than a Steel Arms Monkey.

His first sip of the Scarlet Fruit Wine caused his physical strength to improve greatly. However, as he drank, the effect weakened. When Teng Qingshan drank one-third of the wine gourd, the wine became useless.

However, because he drank it, his physical strength increased by 20,000 Jin.

Now, Teng Qingshan's physical strength measured a total of 240,000 Jin.

Although he was only at the state of Hollow Dan, with the attribute of his physical strength, he was able to fight an innate expert of the True Dan Realm.

"Qingshan, my strength increased by at least eight thousand Jin!" Teng Qinghu exclaimed happily as he said, "I feel that there is only a little difference between just using my physical strength and inner strength.

"Was it really that much?" Qingyu frowned.

Teng Qingshan smiled. "Qingyu, the stronger the body, the better it can absorb the effect of the Scarlet Fruit Wine. However, you are a girl and aren't pressured to train your muscles. If you do train and become more muscular than Little Yun, then you better be careful in case Little Yun is afraid of marrying you."

"He wouldn't dare." Qingyu glared and immediately blushed as she said, "Brother, it's still early."

“Haha……” Teng Qingshan laughed and looked at his cousin Teng Qinghu, “Cousin, although you gained the strength of eight thousand Jin, this Scarlet Fruit Wine is not completely finished. Practice hard everyday, and your physical strength will still increase.”

“Really?” Qinghu couldn’t help but feel great joy.

“Of course.”

Teng Qingshan nodded. After he ate the Black Fire Spirit Root he clearly knew the Scarlet Fruit Wine and Black Fire Spirit Root only temporarily improved his ability. However, as he trained, the Black Fire Spirit Root and Scarlet Fruit Wine would still develop slowly. He drank one-third of the Scarlet Fruit Wine, but only a small amount of it was effective.

“However, the effect of the «Godly Tiger Form Technique»has weakened a lot.” Teng Qingshan had also noticed.

As time passed, it would become increasingly difficult to improve.

Teng Qingshan guessed that in the end, even if the energy of the scarlet fruit wine was within his body, the «Godly Tiger Form Technique»wouldn’t be able to transform this energy into concrete strength! The «Godly Tiger Form Technique»was a consummate technique of the Xing Yi Martial Arts in the previous world, and the effect on Teng Qingshan’s body would continually decrease.

One day, the «Godly Tiger Form Technique» would be completely useless!

Due to the cultivation of the Internal Martial Arts, Teng Qingshan’s body had reached an incredible level. He needed to create a consummate technique of the Internal Martial Arts that would be a lot better than the «Godly Tiger Form Technique».

Chapter 182: The Fourth Strike

Living uninhibited as the Black Armored Army's First Commander, Teng Qingshan was normally free to do anything.

For cultivating, Teng Qingshan bought a spacious mansion not too far away from the northern end of Gui Yuan Sect, in Jiangning County. The previous master of the mansion was a great salts merchant. In order to complete a large business transaction, he had to obtain a large amount of class; thus, leading him sell the mansion. Teng Qingshan spent a total of 300 thousand taels of silver to buy it!

Early in the morning, in front of Gui Yuan Sect's large northern entrance, the guards were wearing black armor and standing upright. The pedestrians on the street didn't dare approach this large northern entrance.

"Lord Commander!" Seeing the five people approach, these guards immediately bowed and saluted them.

"Mmm."

Teng Qingshan laughed and nodded his head before finally bringing his sister, Qingyu, his cousin, Qinghu, as well as Zhuge Yun and Zhuge Qing forwards. They crossed Gui Yuan Street and followed the Dadi Canal as they walked towards the north. The northeastern area of Jiangning County City was a merchant district.

The mansions that were near Jiangning County all held expensive price tags.

After only walking about two kilometers, Teng Qingshan stopped.

"It's this one." Teng Qingshan pointed towards the entrance. The entrance of the mansion was six to seven zhang wide, and on both sides of the mansion, there were stone sculptures of horses raising

their hooves; this brought a hegemonic atmosphere to the mansion. The original board, that was on top of the entrance, had already been taken down.

“Master!” Upon seeing Teng Qingshan, the middle aged man standing in the entrance immediately called out.

“So expensive.” Zhuge Yun took one glance and his eyes couldn’t help but light up. He let out a sigh, “Elder brother, from the exterior, this mansion of yours seems to be quite large. It occupies a plethora of fields right? Although our Gui Yuan Sect takes up a large amount of space, we have too many people. My place only has a couple of rooms and is nowhere near as big as yours.”

“It occupies approximately ten fields.” Teng Qingshan said.

“Wow, ten fields.” Qingyu and Qinghu were also surprised.

“Everyone please enter and take a look.” Teng Qingshan immediately brought them in. There were rock gardens, lotus ponds, flower gardens, stone sculptures and pavilions scattered all throughout the landscape, giving prominence to the enormous space that was there. In the mansion, after walking a while, Qingyu had even lost track of where she was.

It was obvious that this Yang Prefecture merchant clearly understood how to live pleasurably.

“Master.”

“Master.”

On the path, the mansion’s maids deferentially called out when they saw Teng Qingshan.

“You also have this many beautiful maids.” Zhuge Yun sighed.

“Such a large mansion requires myriads of people to simply sweep and water the garden. Therefore, I dismissed a portion of the maids and left one half. If I had kept even fewer, I would have had no way of taking care of such a large mansion.” Teng Qingshan

said, “I completely dismissed the former guards since I have personal ones.

“That’s right, our Black Armored Army’s guards are obviously much better than those random guards.” Zhuge Yun said.

In capacity of the First Commander, he possessed many personal guards.

If these personal guards and their commanders lived outside, the personal guard would have to follow the commander around in order to protect him – this was the Gui Yuan Sect’s rule.

“He!”

“Ha!”

Upon walking to a spacious martial training field, there were already a plethora of personal guards in the process of morning training.

“Brother, how are we to live in such a large mansion?” Qingyu whispered.

“Having bought such a large mansion, our residence is only secondary; in the future, mother, father and the other Teng clansmen are of primary importance.” Teng Qingshan said, “Without flourishing and enduring power, when I die of old age, the Teng Jia Village will face all sorts of dangers in the countryside, which is why it’s better if they enter the city. The inside of the city is the safest. Trying to fit 2000 people in this mansion will make it a bit crowded, but a few hundred shouldn’t be a problem!”

Teng Qingshan had already mapped out a way out for Teng Jia Village.

Staying in the countryside forever definitely wouldn’t do. Teng Jia Village had craftsmanship, passed down by their ancestors, for forging weapons; moreover, it wasn’t the least bit inferior to Yi City’s best craftsmen. Since this was the case, even if they entered

the city, the Teng Jia Village's clansmen wouldn't just sit there and eat the mountain clean.

(TL: Sit and eat the mountain clean= not work and exhaust all the resources ie. useless trash)

"Mhm." Qingyu was exalted when she heard this.

"I will discuss this matter with Mother and Father when I bring them over." Teng Qingshan laughed as he spoke.

They continued walking in the mansion.

"Big Brother Teng." Zhuge Qing laughed and said, "You moving into a new residence is a joyous occasion. I have no means of gifting anything too expensive...mhm...here!" As she spoke, she retrieved the package that was on her back and handed it over to Teng Qingshan. Zhuge Qing clasped the package and stared at Teng Qingshan with her crystal clear eyes.

"You even have a gift." Teng Qingshan laughed in surprise and received it.

"Brother, the material was personally selected by little Qing. It's the natural snow silk from within the sect. From start to finish, it was all personally made by little Qing. Open it up and take a look; put it on and examine little Qing's needlework." Qingyu proceeded to say. She also secretly winked at Zhuge Qing, who couldn't help but flush red.

"That's right, unwrap it and take a look." Zhuge Yun also urged.

Teng Qingshan laughed as he opened it. Inside was an azure robe; the texture was rather soft and comfortable. It was most likely top quality material.

"Hu!" After unfolding it, Teng Qingshan proceeded to put it on.

"The size is perfect." Teng Qingshan also looked at the interior of the robe. The inside was a layer of natural snow silk, "Little Qing's craftsmanship isn't bad." Suddenly, Teng Qingshan's gaze fell on

the natural snow silk pocket.

The natural snow silk was white, and the smear of a dark red bloodstain was very obvious.

All the while apprehencious of Teng Qingshan discovering it, upon seeing Teng Qingshan's expression Zhuge Qing thought: "He saw it!" She couldn't help but flush red and embarrassingly said: "Brother Teng, that, that, that was because I was careless and pricked my finger with a needle. The blood then dripped there."

"Pricking your finger... sister, you still prick your finger even with your level of craftsmanship?" Zhuge Yun said in astonishment.

"I was careless." Zhuge Qing proceeded to say.

"Thank you for your trouble little Qing. This piece of clothing is truly quite good." Teng Qingshan laughed, "The interior's natural snow silk makes it very comfortable to wear."

Zhuge Qing couldn't help but laugh when she heard this.

.....

In the Gui Yuan Sect, those at the lieutenant level of the Black Armored Army could live outside the sect. As for commanders and elders, there was no need to explain further. As for Law Enforcing Elders, the power they possessed was astonishing.

Teng Qingshan's formal date of becoming a Law Enforcing Elder was set on the third day of the 11th month.

.....

The mansion bought by Teng Qingshan was named the "Teng Mansion" by his sister, Qingyu. According to Qingyu's reasoning, when she saw other mansions named "Li Mansion" and "Guo Mansion", she was very jealous. Therefore, she chose the name "Teng Mansion" for their own mansion!

In the future, the Teng Jia Village's clansmen would also live

here. Hence, Teng Mansion was a fitting name.

On the night of the 2nd day of the 11th month.

Teng Qingshan stood alone in the martial training field of Teng Mansion.

“Hong!” “Hong!” “Hong!” “Hong!”.....

Continuous sounds of explosions resonated from the martial training field. Only Teng Qingshan could be seen in trousers and a bare torso. Sweat permeated his entire torso. His left hand grasped the Reincarnation Spear’s middle section, and his right hand grasped the tail end of the spear. He abruptly thrust his right hand forward, and noiselessly, the strength created by his two hands became completely different.

“Weng!”

An indistinct mirage appeared on the spearhead.

“Hmph!” Teng Qingshan suddenly loosened his left hand. His right hand stayed on the Reincarnation Spear and borrowed the momentum to create a savage thrust.

“Pu!”

A fire-colored spiral of energy unexpectedly coiled around the spearhead and formed a spiral-shaped, fire-colored, Innate True Origin. It surprisingly revolved around and condensed at the tip of the spearhead. Such a strong spiral structured Innate True Origin momentarily compressed into a single point on the tip of the spearhead!

Space instantly compressing into a single point would contain extreme pressure, and the might of the ensuing explosions would be very shocking. One could only imagine Innate True Origin doing this.

“Hong!” The Reincarnation Spear’s spearhead let out a deafening explosion sound. The surrounding blades of Qi flew wildly, and a

large ditch appeared in the ground. One could only imagine if this spearhead had pierced someone in front of it, how terrifying the sudden explosion would have been.

Ever since he had reached the Innate Realm and the Innate True Origin was able to circulate within his body, Teng Qingshan had already finished half of the fourth spear of his Five Elemental Spear Arts.

“It’s not right, it’s not right!”

Teng Qingshan frowned and shook his head.

Since it was only an experiment, the Innate True Origin used was very sparse.

“Such a small amount of Innate True Origin, condensing into a single point, is unable to combine with the Reincarnation Spear’s natural penetration strength. It’s not even worth trying to use all my energy in this strike.” Teng Qingshan inwardly shook his head. The Five Elemental Spear Art’s fourth strike was a combination of «Legacy of the Ultimate Flame» and the Tiger Cannon Fist’s realm of conception.

According to logic, when he performed it, a strong Innate True Origin would form a vortex at the spearhead! Subsequently, the vortex’s energy would compress into a single point on the spearhead! This was the first step!

The second step was in accordance with Tiger Cannon Fist–an eruption of the strongest internal energy through the Reincarnation Spear–creating a shocking penetration force. Merely such a step caused a force not weaker than the Toxic Dragon Drill. As for the first step where Innate True Origin compressed from a vortex into a single point, its strength was also close to the Toxic Dragon Drill.

Once the two steps combined, the power would be extremely terrifying.

“Combining both steps truly is too hard.” Teng Qingshan shook his head.

The required control over the Reincarnation Spear was too harsh.

One had to have first used the theory behind Legacy of the Ultimate Flame to cause the Innate True Origin vortex to compress into a single point. From there, one had to immediately change to the Tiger Cannon Fist to emit energy, causing the entire body’s energy to transfer through the Reincarnation Spear and explode. Furthermore, one had to cause the power of both stages to erupt together! Only then would one achieve the strongest outcome!

“I only used an extremely small amount of Innate True Origin, and I wasn’t even able to accomplish this. What should I do?” Teng Qingshan was somewhat distressed.

This question had caused him vexation these past few days.

If Zhuge Yuanhong knew about this, he most likely would have been stupefied.

The difficulty of this strike was too high.

No matter whether it was the requirement for one’s mental stage, strength, Innate True Origin, or even control over the Reincarnation Spear, it was pitiless to the extreme.

“The biggest obstacle is causing the Innate True Origin vortex to compress into a single point. One must absolutely have the mental state where he or she can find a trace of hope amidst despair. However, the Tiger Cannon Fist requires an angry and berserk mental state... these two mental states vary drastically.” Teng Qingshan pondered a long while when his face suddenly changed, “That’s not right! Wrong, wrong, wrong!!! That method of controlling Innate True Origin is wrong!”

Teng Qingshan’s eyes lit up, and he instantly began experimenting again.

Just at this time—

“Brother!” His sister, Qingyu, ran in, “You’re still training?”

“Did something happen?” Teng Qingshan looked at his sister inquisitively.

Tomorrow is the day when you officially become a Law Enforcing Elder. Tonight, myself, little Yun, and little Qing intend to bring you to Yeyou Canal and celebrate beforehand.” Qingyu proceeded to say. Teng Qingshan looked at the color of the sky and smiled as he nodded his head, “That’s fine too. Let me shower and change clothes first.”

Looking at Teng Qingshan leave, Qingyu excitedly needed her fist: “Hehe, little Qing, whether it succeeds or not is up to you.”

Chapter 183: The Turbulent Undercurrent

The base of Gui Yuan Sect was divided into two by the Yuyang Grand Canal. The canal within the range of the base was around twelve Li long.

And every night, the young men and women in Gui Yuan Sect loved to come to the canal for some sightseeing

In Gui Yuan Sect, at the dock beside Longgang.

Walking with sister Qingyu, Teng Qingshan looked at the boats along the canal and saw young men and women entering the boats in pairs.

“There are quite a lot of boats,” Teng Qingshan sighed with emotion.

“Indeed! But Brother, you have been holding onto that Reincarnation Spear throughout the day. So unromantic,” Qingyu intentionally sighed emotionally and immediately saw two figures in the distance. She hastily waved her hand and shouted, “Quick. Come here! Here!”

With just one glance, Teng Qingshan saw clearly that the two figures walking towards them were the brother and sister of the Zhuge family.

“This should be Big Brother Qingshan’s first time visiting the canal at night, right?” Zhuge Yun said with a smile, “Let’s go to the dock.” The four then walked towards the dock. There were many boats hung with lanterns tied up at the dock, waiting for business. Zhuge Yun shouted, “Uncle Wang, we will rent your boat.”

“Alright!” The white haired boatman smiled as he responded.

Teng Qingshan and the other three people went onto the boat.

“Eh?” When Teng Qingshan stepped in and gazed around, he noticed that in the center of this boat was an aisle, while the two

sides of the boat were divided by a covering screen and partitioned into four areas. Normally, these four areas allowed four couples to admire the night scenery of the canal with some privacy.

“Brother, you and Little Qing sit that side. Your responsibility is to take care of Little Qing…….” Qingyu smiled strangely as she said that. She then walked behind the screen with Zhuge Yun and sat down, causing Teng Qingshan and Lady Qing to be unable to see them at all. Likewise…….Qingyu and Zhuge Yun also couldn’t see Teng Qingshan and Zhuge Qing.

The boatman was outside on the deck blocked by a covering screen, so he couldn’t see what was going on inside.

“It is indeed a great place for dating.” Teng Qingshan couldn’t help but smiled helplessly as he thought.”It must be Little Yu and Zhuge Yun that thought of this idea.”

“Big Brother Teng, let’s sit down.” Lady Qing bravely sat down first. Lovers would normally sit closely together on one side, but it was obvious that Teng Qingshan and Lady Qing have not reached that point and so they sat opposite each other. Between them was a short table.

There were fruits, sweet biscuits, and snacks on the table and a small red lantern hung on the side.

“Walla~~” The sound of the flowing river rang.

If Teng Qingshan turned his head, he could see the flowing river beside him. Under the dim light of the lantern, the goddess-like Lady Qing sat quietly opposite him. The scene was quite dreamy indeed.

“The scenery is quite good,” Teng Qingshan spoke, “Oh right, Little Qing, eat something.” Teng Qingshan pushed the plate filled with sweet biscuit to Lady Qing.

Lady Qing responded with a “Yes” and took a crispy sweet biscuit, biting it gently.

It was obvious that she was rather reserved, to the point that she was blushing slightly.

“Big Brother Teng, Father will announce you as the new Law Enforcing Elder at the great hall tomorrow. After you become the Law Enforcing Elder, will you still be the First Commander?” Lady Qing immediately asked, since they were sightseeing the canal at night and it would take more than two hours. How could they continue this awkwardness for more than two hours?

“I will do as Teacher mentioned and temporarily be the First Commander,” Teng Qingshan answered.

“Being the Commander of the Black Armored Army can be difficult at times,” Lady Qing sighed emotionally as she said, “Being the Law Enforcing Elder is easier. This position is super high, and normally has nothing to do.”

Teng Qingshan knew clearly that only the ones that had reached the Innate Realm could be the Law Enforcing Elder.

However, the innate experts are divided into three levels: Emptiness Dan, True Dan and Golden Dan. Of course, Gui Yuan Sect wouldn’t let the Law Enforcing Elder’s training be hindered by a heavy workload since these innate experts were the pillars of a sect. By relying on them, Gui Yuan Sect could ensure its status.

“Eh. Look. That seemed to be Commander Teng.”

“That is Commander Teng.”

“The person sitting opposite him is……the daughter of the Sovereign, Lady Qing, right?”

At this moment, two boats went passed each other and the young men and women on the other boat saw Teng Qingshan and Zhuge Qing clearly.

“Martial Sister, tell those martial sisters of yours to stop dreaming. Commander Teng has Lady Qing.”

Martial Brother, those martial sisters of mine are just thinking about it and dreaming. Commander Teng is extremely talented, and Lady Qing has the appearance of a goddess. They are meant for each other. I didn't know they were together. There were also no rumors in the sect but we actually saw it today.

The sounds of the discussions gradually became inaudible as the two boats distanced.

As Lady Qing heard, she was blushing to the point her ears turned red.

Seeing Lady Qing acting this way, Teng Qingshan thought to himself, "This young girl is so sensitive." The dim light of the lantern shone on a beautiful shy girl sitting on the floor. There was no other sounds beside the sound of the wind and water. The ambience was very romantic indeed.

……

On the other side of the boat, Qingyu and Zhuge Yun were laughing secretly.

"Little Yun, you just heard those people, right? Hehe. Wait until the thing between my brother and Little Qing spread throughout the entire Gui Yuan Sect, by that time……" Qingyu was laughing to the point that her bright eyes narrowed.

"Yes. Even if there's nothing between those two, as the rumor spread, something will change. Plus, my sister does like your brother. Also, it's extremely difficult to find a girl in Jiangning County City that is even more beautiful than my sister……. Of course, Qingyu, you are as beautiful as my sister," Zhuge Yun hastily added.

"Hmph." Qingyu then humphed in satisfaction.

To be honest, there were many beautiful young girls, but……..it was the pure aura that Zhuge Qing had that shocked the hearts of men. Even Teng Qingshan was slightly shocked when he had first

met Zhuge Qing, and other people like Teng Qinghu stared in awe at Zhuge Qing when they had their first meeting.

It was normal to have an affection towards Zhuge Qing. Lieutenant Bai Qi was an example. Who didn't pursue Zhuge Qing?

Almost everyone felt a sense of inferiority when they were before Zhuge Qing. Like Teng Qinghu, although he harbored a romantic affection towards Zhuge Qing, he knew that the difference between him and Zhuge Qing was too big.

Harboring an affection towards Zhuge Qing was normal!

It would not be normal if a guy didn't like Zhuge Qing!

……

The boat continued cruising along the canal. After two hours, it was bedtime for many people in the Gui Yuan Sect and the temperature had decreased by a lot. On this canal, the wind blowing during the night was even colder.

"Whew! Whew!"

As the gusts of wind blew during this night, Lady Qing shivered and her face turned pallid. Her physical qualities had not been good since she was young.

"You knew it would be even colder during the night, why didn't you wear more clothes." Teng Qingshan took off the Azure Stone colored Cloak and wrapped it around Lady Qing. This cloak was the one given to Teng Qingshan by Lady Qing and was made of snow silk. Despite being light, it was very good in providing some warmth.

Lady Qing grabbed the cloak and huddled up inside it feeling the warmth within the cloak.

This was Teng Qingshan's warmth.

Lady Qing bit her lips and glanced at Teng Qingshan, who was only wearing a sleeveless shirt. Even though the cold wind blew

fiercely, Teng Qingshan felt nothing. In the past, Teng Qingshan even had the audacity to enter the Frost Jade Pool, so the cold didn't bother him.

After a while.

"We have reached the shore," The boatman announced.

Qingyu and Zhuge Yun stood up and walked to the other side. When they saw Teng Qingshan and Lady Qing, they couldn't help but laugh.

"Brother, Little Qing is wearing your cloak," Qingyu purposely teased.

"Alright. Let's go ashore." Teng Qingshan also stood up. Teng Qingshan admitted that the current romantic ambience and being alone with a goddess-like woman would be able to melt the heart of men. However, Teng Qingshan did not feel anything the whole journey and time just wasted away.

"Yes." Lady Qing also stood up. She stood close to Teng Qingshan and said, "Big Brother Teng, the cloak....."

"You wear it home and give it to me next time," Teng Qingshan said.

"Yes." Lady Qing nodded as a smile crept up her face. As Zhuge Yun and Qingyu saw this, they glanced at each other and smiled. The plan tonight produced a somewhat good effect.

.....

While the men and women in Gui Yuan Sect were cruising the canal without worry, the highest authority of Jiangning County ——Zhuge Yuanhong was furrowing his brow.

In the study at night

The dim candle light swayed as Zhuge Yuanhong sat before the desk with knitted brows.

"The situation has become this serious." Zhuge Yuanhong stared

at the secret letter on the desk as he said that.

A middle-aged man dressed in grey stood in front of the desk and nodded in response, “Sovereign, a while ago, our men hiding there only noticed a bit of the movement in Xuyang County and Tiannan County. However..... today, massacres happened in many cities of Xuyang County and Tiannan County, and many people died.”

Among the thirteen counties of Yangzhou, nine counties were managed and controlled by Qing Hu Island, one county was managed and controlled by Gui Yuan Sect, while another was under the control of Tie Yi Clan. The remaining Xuyang County and Tiannan County were still in chaos.

A great amount of killings happened in Xuyang County and Tiannan County during the same day. This was not a small issue.

“Are you sure it’s Qing Hu Island?” Zhuge Yuanhong asked.

“Not sure. According to the information that we have now, the people that made the move used many different identities like gangs, or small sects, etcetera.” The middle-aged man dressed in grey reported, “However, adding up the many sources of information we found, that was definitely a unified movement. The speed of this move was incredibly fast. Beside Qing Hu Island, I couldn’t think of any other sects possessing such ability.

Zhuge Yuanhong gazed at the south and responded, “Qing Hu Island has prepared for a very long time. If It didn’t make its move, it would seem ordinary, but once it makes its move.....”

The first sect of Yangzhou would be Qing Hu Island!

However, Qing Hu Island only ruled the nine counties. There was not a day that went by in which Qing Hu Island did not want to obliterate Gui Yuan Sect and Tie Yi Clan and rule the entire Yangzhou. But Qing Hu Island must consider..... Once the battle began, even if Qing Hu Island managed to destroy Gui Yuan Sect and Tie Yi Clan, its power would weaken.

Could the weakened Qing Hu Island guard the entire Yangzhou?

One of the Eight Supreme Sects, Xiao Yao Palace, which ruled Qingzhou, might be a great threat at that time.

“This Qing Hu Island has endured for so many years,” Zhuge Yuanhong said, “These movements are definitely not that simple! Although it’s just against Xuyang County and Tiannan County, the whole situation is already very bad! This might cause a war that affects the entire Yangzhou!”

The middle-aged man dressed in grey also became stern.

When thinking about the enormous sect, Qing Hu Island, it was impossible for Gui Yuan Sect or any other sects to feel relaxed.

Qing Hu Island had the power to control nine counties, and so its manpower was a lot greater than that of the Gui Yuan Sect and Tie Yi Hall.

“Have all the disciples in the region of Xuyang County and Tiannan County check carefully! Once they discover something important, inform me immediately!” Zhuge Yuanhong commanded.

“Yes,” The middle-aged man dressed in grey answered.

“Leave first.”

Zhuge Yuanhong was left alone in his study. He gazed at the night sky through the window with misty eyes. What was going through his mind was unknown. As he stood there unmoved, the dawn of the next day arrived.

Chapter 184: Drastic Changes

It was the third of november, and snow cascaded from heaven, covering the ground. The gusts of wind between the heavens and earth roared and cried loudly.

Yet, it was very quiet in the gloomy Great Hall.

Zhuge Yuanhong silently sat alone on the seat of the Sovereign. The others had not arrived.

The meeting time was after morning training, so it was obvious that Zhuge Yuanhong had come too early.

“Qing Hu Island...Qing Hu Island……” Zhuge Yuanhong narrowed his eyes as he said to himself, “These fights happened in the cities of Xuyang County and Tiannan County on the same day. Even the blind could guess that Qing Hu Island was behind these fights. Gu Yong……. Are you reminding me that you are about to make your move?” Among the people of Zhuge Yuanhong’s generation, there were a few that Zhuge Yuanhong approved of.

Gu Yong was one of those people!

Gu Yong, the Island Lord of Qing Hu Island! He was said to be one of eight people with the greatest power in the entire Nine Prefectures.

Gu Yong and Zhuge Yuanhong were almost the same age. When they were young, they were the most famous people in Yangzhou. Now, one of them was the Island Lord of Qing Hu Island and the other was the Sovereign of the Gui Yuan Sect!

“However, if you really want to devour my Gui Yuan Sect, I will knock out all your teeth!” Zhuge Yuanhong said as an icy coldness flashed across his eyes.

Who didn’t know of the wisdom and intelligence of the Gui Yuan Sect’s Zhuge?

Zhuge Yuanhong treated people with humility, but not many people dared to offend Zhuge Yuanhong.

……

In the midst of the fierce wind, two young disciples finally entered the Great Hall. The two disciples were the servers that specifically served tea and poured water.

“This damned weather. It’s snowing heavily, and the gusty wind is blowing fiercely. Why did the snow come so early this year?”

“Who knows. Jiangning County City is near the East Sea, and it normally only snows during late winter. It did come early this year, which is weird.” The two young disciples murmured. Because of the heavy snow and fierce wind, this Great Hall became quite gloomy. The two disciples then went to light the six lampholders near the wall.

The lampholders were forged with first-class bronze, and each one was crafted magnificently.

Normally, the six lampholders would be lit during gatherings in the Great Hall at night or during a gloomy day.

“Chi!” One lampholder was lighted.

The entire Great Hall became a lot brighter.

“Ah.” As a disciple turned and walked towards another lampholder, he saw the figure seated on top of the Great Hall in the distance and was startled.

“Sovereign.”

“Sovereign.”

The two young disciples reacted.

“Oh, you two light the lampholders first.” Zhuge Yuanhong said calmly.

“Yes.” The two young disciples immediately became restrained

and didn't dare to make any sounds. Soon after the arrival of the two brothers, a Law Enforcing Elder, Protector and others came in one after the other. Everyone was surprised that the Sovereign actually came so early today, and each of them sat down according to the assigned locations.

As the six lampholders burned for a while in addition to the great number of people, the Great Hall seemed to have become a lot warmer.

The multitude of the Black Armored Army came here together. Teng Qingshan, Pang Shan, Zhang Feng, and Guan Lu naturally sat at the front while the other lieutenants sat behind them.

"Teacher." Teng Qingshan and the others bowed.

"Yes." Seeing Teng Qingshan, Zhang Feng, and Guan Lu, Zhuge Yuanhong nodded with a smile, "Sit down first. Let's wait for the two Law Enforcing Elders."

Teng Qingshan was slightly surprised, "Teacher came early today."

Soon, an old man dressed in simple linen clothes walked in shoulder to shoulder with a cold-looking middle-aged man dressed in white. The Law Enforcing Elders naturally sat at the frontmost of the two left and right rows. The two smiled and noded towards Teng Qingshan while ignoring the others.

"Teng Qingshan, you are quite good." The cold-looking middle-aged man sitting in front of Teng Qingshan said with a smile.

……

Outside the Great Hall, the sound of the wind was roaring, and the snow was falling heavily. While it was completely silent in the Great Hall, just the "ChiChi" sound came from the lampholders. Everyone was staring at Zhuge Yuanhong and waiting for the Sovereign to speak.

"Since the founder established our Gui Yuan Sect, it has been

over one thousand years, and we have numerous disciples now. However, since over thousand of years, only less than forty people have reached the Innate Realm." Zhuge Yuanhong said loudly, "Among the forty people, the oldest one had reached the Innate Realm at one hundred thirty-six years old! In addition, the youngest one had reached the innate realm at twenty-eight years old.

Many people in the Great Hall clearly knew that the Sovereign, Zhuge Yuanhong, reached the Innate Realm at the age of thirty.

"However, a new innate expert has appeared in my Gui Yuan Sect! And he is only seventeen!" Zhuge Yuanhong said with a clear and loud voice and extremely proud tone, "In all Nine Prefectures and in five hundred years, there has only been one! The only one! Everyone should know his identity by now."

Everyone turned their eyes towards Teng Qingshan. Some looked at him with excitement, admiration, astonishment, and envy……

"Qingshan!"

Zhuge Yuanhong said loudly, "He reached the Innate Realm at the age of seventeen. Haha. I only reached it at the age of thirty. If a person started cultivating at the age of five, Qingshan has only cultivated for twelve years. In comparison, I cultivated for twenty-five years to reach the Innate Realm, which is two times slower than Qingshan! I don't feel ashamed but proud! Because he is my disciple! Because he is the disciple of the Gui Yuan Sect! He is not of the other eight sects. So what if the other eight sects are powerful; the number one talented person in five hundred years is in the Gui Yuan Sect!"

As the people in the Great Hall listened, their hearts swelled with pride.

Indeed.

The number one talented person in five hundred years belonged

to the Gui Yuan Sect!

“Qingshan.” Zhuge Yuanhong looked towards Teng Qingshan.

Teng Qingshan immediately stood up.

“From today onwards, you will be the third Law Enforcing Elder of our Gui Yuan Sect and the youngest one in history! ” Zhuge Yuanhong stared at Teng Qingshan and opened his mouth slowly, “Regarding cultivation, I don’t need to tell you much! I just want to tell you..... I hope that a dozen years from now, the disciples of my Gui Yuan Sect will feel proud because of you! The Gui Yuan Sect will be glorious because of you!”

As Teng Qingshan listened, he could feel his chest burning hot.

“This is the Law Enforcing Elder token. Keep it carefully!” Zhuge Yuanhong said as he handed the token over seriously.

Teng Qingshan also accepted it solemnly.

“Congratulations, Teng Qingshan.” The white-haired old man opposite Qingshan said with a smile.

“Our Gui Yuan Sect has one more Law Enforcing Elder now.” The cold-looking middle-aged man laughed.

The ambiance of the Great Hall was filled with happiness, and everyone congratulated Teng Qingshan. Even the envious Zhang Feng also congratulated Teng Qingshan. This was because everyone knew clearly.....that an amazing, talented person in the Gui Yuan Sect could make the Gui Yuan Sect even more powerful in the future.

The Gui Yuan Sect possessing greater power only benefited everybody.

At this moment, as everyone was laughing, drinking tea, and chatting in the Great Hall, a figure suddenly dashed in rapidly.

“Sovereign.”

A loud shout caused the entire hall to become quiet, and many

people turned to looked at the door angrily. When everyone saw the figure, they were slightly surprised.

The middle-aged man dressed in gray ran into the Great Hall and said hastily, “Sovereign, an urgent secret letter.”

Zhuge Yuanhong furrowed and yelled, “Close the door!” Although the disciples guarding at the entrance of the Great Hall were confused, they still closed the door of the Great Hall. The Great Hall darkened slightly with only the six lampholders illuminating the surroundings.

“Give me the secret letter.” Zhuge Yuanhong said.

That middle-aged man immediately handed the rolled-up paper, and Zhuge Yuanhong lowered his head to start reading.

The people in the Great Hall all turned silent. Everyone could sense that the atmosphere was not right.

What could cause this secret letter to be sent to the Great Hall? Couldn’t it be given two hours later? Through this, one could see how urgent this thing is.

Why did the Sovereign order the door of the Great Hall to be closed before he even read the secret letter?

These things caused everyone to feel confused and anxious.

“Hmph, as expected.” Zhuge Yuanhong sneered and scanned the multitude in the Great Hall. Everyone looked at the Sovereign as they waited for an answer. Zhuge Yuanhong said with a loud and clear voice, “Yesterday, many fights for power happened in the cities of Xuyang County and Tiannan County. The people who were killing were just some gangs and small sects.

Many people in the Great Hall were confused.

Tiannan County and Xuyang County have always been chaotic. Was it weird to have fights?

However, a keen-minded Teng Qingshan and others had noticed

the problem.

“Struggles for power on the same day?” Teng Qingshan felt dubious as he thought.

At this moment, Zhuge Yuanhong said loudly again, “I guessed last night, the chaos in the cities of Xuyang County and Tiannan County have pacified. And this morning, the cities of Xuyang County and Tiannan County have declared that from today onwards..... Xuyang County and Tiannan County are ruled by Qing Hu Island!”

The expression of everyone listening changed dramatically!

“Qing Hu Island conquered those two counties?”

“How could it be that fast?”

Everyone was shocked and terrified. Everyone understood how horrifying the meaning was behind this news!

“This news came at the fastest speed!” Zhuge Yuanhong looked at everyone and said with a stern face, “From today onwards, of the thirteen counties of Yangzhou, eleven counties are ruled by Qing Hu Island. They have the greatest advantage. Everyone could see that Qing Hu Island conquered Xuyang County and Tiannan County with an extremely rapid speed!”

Teng Qingshan also felt worried.

“Why was it so fast? It was obvious that Qing Hu Island had made preparations a long time ago. Many sects and gangs in Xuyang County and Tiannan County belong to Qing Hu Island. They were confident that they could conquer Xuyang County and Tiannan County with one move. However, why didn’t they make their move in the past but only waited until today?” Zhuge Yuanhong’s eyes became fierce as he said.

Many of the Elders and Protector broke out in cold sweat.

None of them were stupid.

That Qing Hu Island possessed extremely powerful ability. They had the power to dominate Xuyang County and Tiannan County a long time ago, so why wait until today? And why even declare it to the public?

“I knew Gu Yong was ambitious when I first met him!” The cold-looking middle-aged man roared angrily.

“If they have the audacity to come, we won’t let them go easily.” Pang Shan said furiously.

Everyone realized……

This Qing Hu Island dared to announce that Xuyang County and Tiannan County are ruled by them. The meaning was very clear ——Gui Yuan Sect and Tie Yi Clan, you two better wait to be cleaned up by Qing Hu Island!

Nobody doubted whether Qing Hu Island had the ability to obliterate the Gui Yuan Sect and the Tie Yi Hall.

After all, the roots of Qing Hu Island were too deep, and they had too many people.

For example, the Black Armored Army of Gui Yuan Sect had only six thousand people, but the Silver Dragon Army of Qing Hu Island had eighty thousand! Although the quality of the entire army was slightly weaker, there wasn’t much difference. The worst thing was that Qing Hu Island had a lot more innate experts than both the innate experts of Gui Yuan Sect and Tie Yi Hall!

Qing Hu Island ruled the nine counties and had developed for many years. Its ordinary men, elite experts, and innate experts definitely overpowered their opponents.

“Qing Hu Island had never made their move because it was afraid that obliterating the Gui Yuan Sect and the Tie Yi Hall would cause a loss in a huge number of people and would give advantages to other big sects.” Teng Qingshan also felt a pressure that he had never experienced before as he thought to himself. “But now that

it had to audacity to do so, it meant that it obviously had confidence! It endured for such a long time. If it did not make its move, it would seem ordinary, but once it moved……”

The facial expression of the other people in the Great Hall became ghastly. Some were even terrified to the point that drops of sweat covered their forehead.

Once the battle really began……

The Gui Yuan Sect might be razed to the ground!!!

Chapter 185: Take the order!

The doors of Gui Yuan Sect's Great Hall were shut.

"Chichi~~ The sound of the six lamps burning was very clear in the great hall, as opposed to its distinctly frozen atmosphere. Many people were covered in sweat. Some were pale white as they tightly clenched their fists.....Even the leaders of Gui Yuan Sect were very nervous under the pressure of an upcoming attack from Qing Hu Island's great army.

"Look! Look at what you all have become!" Zhuge Yuanhong shouted angrily.

The people in the great hall quivered, looking towards Sovereign Zhuge Yuanhong.

"Qing Hu Island's army has not yet arrived! They haven't even sent their men to attack us, yet you are all already terrified to this point! If you guys continue to act like this, we should not fight and just surrender." Zhuge Yuanhong's cold eyes swept past the crowd of people as he said, "Elders, Protectors, commanders, and lieutenants, tell me! If we surrender, would Qing Hu Island let us live?"

Silence!

The group of people listening was clear on the fact that Qing Hu Island wanted to unify the entire prefecture of Yangzhou. If Qing Hu Island really did attack, it would never let the powerful members of the Gui Yuan Sect survive. Qing Hu Island might forgive the people at a lower position, but it would definitely kill all the elites and those of higher positions incase of any future trouble!

"If they want to attack, then come! Who is afraid?!" A muscular man whose face was covered with hair roared furiously, "Our Gui Yuan Sect's Jiangning County has eighty thousand city guards! Six

thousand Black Armored Soldiers! Gui Yuan Sect has over ten thousand core disciples and several tens of thousands outer disciples. With so many people guarding the cities inside Gui Yuan Zhong. I just don't believe that Qing Hu Island can charge in that easily!"

The deep and metallic voice of Pang Shan, the second commander of the Black Armored Army, rang, "My father, uncle, grandpa, and all the elders of every previous generation have been in the Gui Yuan Sect! One sentence——If our sect is obliterated, all members of my Pang family will die first!" As Pang Shan spoke, his eyes were slightly red, as if he was about to eat someone.

"The second child of the Pang family is truly a man! A silver-haired elder laughed and said, "The members of my Feng family vow to live and die with our sect!"

"Kill! Killing one is enough, and killing two is a profit."

.....

Many courageous men in the great hall gnashed their teeth and shouted. In the Nine Provinces, death could be seen anywhere. Those that could make it to the higher positions were mostly brave and courageous people. They did feel a sense of fear when they thought of the horrifying scene of the sect being obliterated, but after that, it's madness!

They won't let Qing Hu Island go easily, even if it meant death!

Gui Yuan Sect had firmly established itself in Jiangning County for over one thousand years. Like how the Feng family, Pang family, Zhuge family, and many other families had served Gui Yuan Sect for generations. Since childhood, the children of these families had been taught to fight for the sect! Generation after generation, the belief of living and dying with the sect had already been planted deep in their souls!

If they betrayed the sect, the world would laugh at them! The

world would look down on them! If they fought a bloody battle for their sect, even if they died, others would hold them in respect when they were mentioned!

The sect supported you, gave you secret cultivation methods of inner strength, and status.....

During this crucial time, you fight to the death for your sect!

“Good!” Zhuge Yuanhong stared at each and every person below and heartily laughed, “No disciple of Gui Yuan Sect is afraid of death!”

“If you lose your head, it’s just a scar as big as a bowl. What’s there to be afraid of?” The sturdy bearded man also shouted.

“Well said, Martial Brother.” Zhuge Yuanhong said with a smile, “Since the founder established our Gui Yuan Sect, no one could obliterate our sect for over a thousand years. Not even Qing Hu Island! I can tell everyone now.....if you all listen to my orders, Qing Hu Island won’t be able to destroy Gui Yuan Sect!”

Everyone looked at Sovereign Zhuge Yuanhong with a shocked expression“Why is Teacher so confident?” Teng Qingshan was also very surprised.

The wisdom of ‘Gui Yuan Sect’s Zhuge’ was known by the entire world. If an ordinary person said that, the listeners would only think he was bluffing. However, since it was Sovereign Zhuge Yuanhong that said this, although it was slightly incredible, everyone believed it——Maybe the Sovereign can really keep Gui Yuan Sect safe!

Zhuge Yuanhong was the stabilizer of Gui Yuan Sect!

Zhuge Yuanhong smiled as everyone looked at him. The smile had a confidence that everything is under control!

“A bloody battle. You all must prepare yourselves for death.” Zhuge Yuanhong scanned the multitude of people.

Teng Qingshan could feel his blood burning..... Massacre? He has never been afraid of a massacre! In his previous life, since he was seven, he had spent his time in massacres and slaughters. No one was better than Teng Qingshan at killing enemies while surviving in the midst of millions of soldiers and horses.

“Of course, currently Qing Hu Island has only declared Xuyang County and Tiannan County as part of their territory and did not mention anything about obliterating my Gui Yuan Sect and the Tie Yi Hall,” Zhuge Yuanhong smiled and said, “Therefore, everyone can relax slightly. Yes.....I will arrange a banquet this afternoon.

“Everyone stays in the great hall today,” Zhuge Yuanhong said, “According to my assumption, if Qing Hu Island wanted to make a move against Gui Yuan Sect, it should be today. If they did not send any men today.....then I suppose we would have to wait for a couple of days.”

Everyone nodded, but none of them relaxed because of Zhuge Yuanhong’s words.

Everyone understood that the possibility of Qing Hu Island making a move was extremely high.

.....

The executives of Gui Yuan Sect gathered in the great hall so that they could take the Sovereign’s orders at any time. Everyone chatted while waiting nervously..... During the afternoon, they all ate lunch in the great hall.

In the afternoon, the snow stopped.

Everything between the heavens and the earth was white and the radiance illuminated the great hall. However, as the high positions of Gui Yuan Sect were chatting with each other, every one of them was paying attention to what was going on outside as they waited for the news. Many protectors, and lieutenants were taking deep breaths, closing their eyes, or hitting their own head gently.

It was obvious that the anxious waiting had produced an intangible mental pressure which caused everyone to bear a mental burden.

Dong! Dong! Dong!

Rapid footsteps came from outside the great hall and almost in an instant, the elders, protectors, commanders, and lieutenants in the great hall turned their heads and looked outside. The middle-aged man dressed in grey was seen running into the great hall with a stern face.

“Whew!” Many people in the hall stood up involuntarily.

“Sovereign.” The middle-aged man dressed in grey immediately handed the rolled-up secret letter to Sovereign Zhuge Yuanhong.

Zhuge Yuanhong furrowed as he read the letter carefully.

Everyone in the hall was holding their breath as they stared at Zhuge Yuanhong..... No one knew what was written in the secret letter. The hall instantly became so quiet that the sound of a needle dropped on the ground would most likely be audible.

“Pipa!” The sound of the lampholders burning caused everyone to quiver secretly.

Zhuge Yuanhong read the secret letter for a long time.....

“Why did it take him so much time to read it?” Teng Qingshan also felt breathless because of this heavy atmosphere. He stared at his teacher Zhuge Yuanhong.

Finally——

Zhuge Yuanhong turned his eyes away from the secret letter and looked at the crowd as he stood up.

Zhuge Yuanhong’s hair was down and he wore a white, loose long cloak. However, at this moment, he stood before the seat of the Sovereign with an imposing manner as sharp as a trenchant sword. He scanned the crowd and spoke calmly, “Let’s prepare for

war!”

Silence!

In the enormous great hall, not a sound was heard. Zhuge Yuanhong’s calm words, “Let’s prepare for war” seemed to have caused everyone to see the scene of the a bloody battle between millions of soldiers. This was no ordinary war, but the war that determined the life or death of Gui Yuan Sect!

“Whew!” The two Law Enforcing Elders stood up.

“Whew!” Teng Qingshan stood up.

Pang Shan, Zhang Feng, Guan Lu, and the other elders also stood up. The lieutenants, and protectors also stood up one by one. Each and every one of them looked very calm.

Since this morning, they had waited for six hours!

The tormenting six hours.. Everyone still had a hint of hope that Qing Hu Island would choose to not wage war. Everyone waited nervously and anxiously, enduring the torment that they had never experienced before. In the end, when Zhuge Yuanhong said, “Let’s prepare for war,” everyone reacted calmly instead.

The result was out——War!

There was no other choice!

“According to the news, the twenty thousand men of Qing Hu Island ‘s Silver Dragon Army garrisoned at the border of Xuyang County has advanced, charging towards Chu County! The number of innate experts in the army is unknown,” Zhuge Yuanhong said calmly, “It is obvious that Qing Hu Island had planned to obliterate Tie Yi Hall first and Gui Yuan Sect next!”

The crowd was secretly shocked.

Twenty thousand Silver Dragon Soldiers? The Silver Dragon Army was on a par with the Black Armored Army. But the Black Armored Army had only six thousand men. Yet, Qing Hu Island

actually dispatched twenty thousand men to annihilate Tie Yi Sect? Plus, the number of innate experts was still unknown. This was just the first wave! Who knows if there would be a second wave of soldiers.

“I expect that the men Qing Hu Island dispatched to attack Gui Yuan Sect have already departed, but I just haven’t received any news.” Zhuge Yuanhong stilled spoke with a calm voice.

“Teng Qingshan, Pang Shan, Elder Yan, listen!” Zhuge Yuanhong‘s eyes swept past the crowd.

Whew!

Teng Qingshan, Pang Shan, and the white-haired old man among the two protectors stood up.

“You three will lead the three thousand men of the First and Second Division of our Black Armored Army and advance to Yanjiang City at the south of Jiangning County at full speed! Lead the city guards of Yanjiang City and guard Yanjiang City!”

“Yes!”

The three people clasped their hands and answered simultaneously.

……

The entire Black Armored Army became astir. The Black Armored Soldiers in the first and second teams could only say a few words to their relatives. They then immediately donned their heavy armor, mounted their horses with weapons in hand, and rapidly gathered in the training field.

From the time Zhuge Yuanhong gave his order to the time Teng Qingshan and Pang Shan transmitted the order and gathered the soldiers, only one hour passed.

In the training field at the military camp of the Black Armored Army.

There was the dark mass of three thousand Black Armored Army soldiers mounted on war horses arranged in formation. The formation of the soldiers wielding long spears, the formation of soldiers wielding sabers, the formation of archers..... The three thousand Black Armored Soldiers were like an ambushing enormous beasts, not emitting any sound.

Teng Qingshan wore his Darksteel Heavy Armor and helmet and was mounted on the Dark Demonic Horse with his Reincarnation Spear in hand! Teng Qingshan cast a glance afar, where his sister, Qingyu, was at.

Teng Qingshan, Pang Shan, and Elder Yan were mounted on their horses as they stared at Sovereign Zhuge Yuanhong who was in front.

“Qingshan, you are the First Commander, so you will lead this trip! ” Zhuge Yuanhong ordered, “You must also listen to the advices of your martial uncle and Elder Yan.”

“Yes.” Teng Qingshan answered.

“Alright. You may depart.” Zhuge Yuanhong said solemnly.

Teng Qingshan pulled the reins and turned the horse around. Facing the soldiers, he lifted his Reincarnation Spear and yelled loudly, “Depart!” His voice resounded above the entire training field.

Rumble~~~

The three thousand Black Armored Soldiers set out orderly like a black dragon. Without stopping, the Black Armored Army advancing towards the north entrance with an imposing manner. Every warrior knew that this was a huge battle and as Black armored soldiers.....the brightest moment was the time when this bloody battle starts.

“I wonder how many people can make it back from this war.” Teng Qingshan also advanced slowly.

“Big Brother Teng!” An anxious voice came from behind.

Teng Qingshan turned his head and looked behind the black armored soldiers. Zhuge Qing was seen standing in front of Qingyu, waving her hands. Her face had a worried expression as she shouted, “I will wait for your return!”

Teng Qingshan’s heart couldn’t help but skip a beat and waved his left hand as he left with the great army.

Chapter 186: Golden Scale Guards

As Zhuge Qing watched Teng Qingshan disappear into the crowd of the Black Armored Soldiers, her eyes reddened with glimmering translucent tears. The order for the army to set off was truly too quick. There were many people who did not even know about it. Zhuge Qing had also only heard about the news by chance when she stepped out of her chamber. She couldn't control herself. At that moment, her face turned pale with fright and rushed out toward the military drill ground.

However, the moment she rushed over, Teng Qingshan was already gone!

...Gone to engage in this bloody battle against Qing Hu Island?

Zhuge Qing was afraid... afraid that she would never see Teng Qingshan again. As she watched the grandiose Black Armored Army leave, Zhuge Qing called out rashly, "Big brother Teng, I'll be waiting for your return!"

For a young woman to shout loudly, 'I'll be waiting for you to come back!' in a public place with a lot of people... This was something that required an astonishing amount of courage.

"Qingqing." Zhuge Yuanhong walked over. Looking at his own daughter, he couldn't help but sigh.

"Father." Zhuge Qing suddenly threw herself into her father's arms, no longer able to stop the tears she had been holding back all this time. This was the first time Zhuge Qing fell in love with someone. So, when she saw Teng Qingshan lead the army in its departure, Zhuge Qing was genuinely very afraid. She feared that the next sight of Teng Qingshan would be his corpse!

"Don't cry. Your Elder Martial Brother, Qingshan, will come back," Zhuge Yuanhong consoled.

Zhuge Qing raised her head to look at her father.

"I've dispatched Elder Yan to go with them. He's a Golden Dan Innate Expert. Qingshan himself is also an Innate Expert. I am sure he will be safe." Zhuge Yuanhong said.

"Qinghu Island doesn't have any Golden Dan Innate Experts?" Zhuge Qing asked worriedly.

"They do, but they have to deal with two major sects at the same time. Moreover, they also left many experts behind to guard their headquarter. So, there won't be many experts during the first wave of attacks on Yan Jiang City," Zhuge Yuanhong said. "The sect can't guarantee that Ten Qingshan won't suffer even a bit of injury. All real expert have to experience all sorts predicaments and temper oneself through life and death situations before reaching the pinnacle."

Regardless of whether it was the young Zhuge Yuanhong or the many powerful experts today, tempering oneself through life and death situations was something almost every expert had to go through.

Otherwise, no matter how gifted and talented they were, they wouldn't be able to grow and go through a transformation. Indeed, experiencing real battles of life and death was necessary.

Brother, Cousin, you two must come back!" Qingyu was also watching the troops of the Black Armored Army leaving to the north. She couldn't help but bite her lips as she watched. Although Qingyu always seemed nonchalant, she did grow under Teng Qingshan's care. Therefore, she viewed her parents and Teng Qingshan as the most important people in her life.

...

On a public road outside Jiangning County-City, 3,000 Black Armored Soldiers were currently advancing swiftly to the south. Teng Qingshan, Pang Shan, and Elder Yan were all riding Black Nightmare Horses at the forefront of the army. Only the four great commanders, as well as the Law Enforcing Elders and the

Sovereign could be assigned with the Black Nightmare Horses, which were viewed as the best of the three great dragon horses.

The three Black Nightmare Horses were dashing so fast at the forefront of the army that Teng Qingshan and the other two could not feel even the slightest bump on the road.

"Qingshan, Qingqing really treats you well. It really is rare for an educated and well-balanced young lady to yell out, 'I'll wait for your return' in a public place with so many people," Pang Shan said with a grin from beside Teng Qingshan. "You better not let her down."

Teng Qingshan just responded with a smile.

Earlier, when Lady Qing yelled loudly... That moment had indeed shocked Teng Qingshan. The worry and fear revealed in that pair of eyes, which leaked glimmering tears, managed to split open Teng Qingshan's icebound heart.

"Martial Uncle, Elder Yan. Are the two of you familiar with Qing Hu Island's Silver Dragon Army?" Teng Qingshan asked.

That gray-haired Elder Yan said hoarsely, "The Black Armored Army can fight against that Silver Dragon Army... However, the strongest troop of Qing Hu Island isn't the Silver Dragon Army. It is actually the Golden Scale Guards! They are the most elite troops formed entirely of First Rated Warriors."

"Golden Scale Guards?" Inwardly, Teng Qingshan was startled.

They were formed entirely of First Rated Warriors? Amidst the 6,000 soldiers of the Black Armored Army, the experts who had reached the realm of being a First Rated Warrior were probably only a few over a hundred.

Beside them, Pang Shan also said solemnly, "That Qing Hu Island occupies nine counties, so they have many experts. Their Golden Scale Guards have a total of 2,000 people, and they're Qing Hu Island's most terrifying army. The moment these 2,000 Golden

Scale Guards really start killing their way over here... they can kill every one of our Gui Yuan Sect's 6,000 Black Armored Soldiers."

"2000?" Teng Qingshan inhaled a mouthful of cold air.

It was no wonder the other members of the Gui Yuan Sect's upper echelons had been that nervous in the main hall... The difference was really too great.

"Many of these Golden Scale Guards will definitely have wanted to stay behind to guard the headquarter. Those who are actually coming out for the battle are just a portion of them," Elder Yan said.

Teng Qingshan's expression turned grim.

"Martial Uncle, Elder Yan," Teng Qingshan started.

"Hmm?" The two people turned to look at him.

"There's one matter that I'm most worried about," Teng Qingshan said in a deep voice. "Qing Hu Island may send the Golden Scale Guards out first as the vanguards and have the Golden Scale Guards take the first step and kill until the army of Qing Hu Island reaches Yan Jiang City. As for the speed of the Golden Scale Guards, I'm afraid it may be even faster than the speed of our Black Armored Army. If that's the case, can the city guards hold off the Golden Scale Guards?"

Pang Shan and Elder Yan also began to worry.

Yan Jiang City's city guards had the greatest number of defenders out of Jiangning County's nine great cities. However, even then, they only had 10,000. For this army of 10,000 city guards, it was already considered pretty good if the soldiers had a basic essence of being able to lift up 500 Jin."

"With just several hundred Golden Scale Guards, it's likely that they would be able to swiftly break open a gap, behead the Guard General, and cut open Yan Jiang City," Pang Shan said.

"Elder Yan, why don't the two of us hurry over to Yan Jiang City first?" Teng Qingshan suggested.

"The two of us?" When Elder Yan heard this, he considered it for a moment and then nodded. "Alright. As long as there aren't too many Golden Scale Guards, there will be nothing to worry about with the two of us providing assistance to the army of 10,000 city guards."

After all, Elder yan was equivalent to a Golden Dan Innate Expert. So, if he and Teng Qingshan went together, it would be like having two pillars in the army. If they really had to take the time to kill, Elder Yan alone could kill several hundred Golden Scale Guards!

"Martial Uncle, take command of these Black Armored Soldiers and rush over quickly," Teng Qingshan said.

"Mm, you two be careful," Pang Shan said with a nod.

"Giddyup!""Giddyup!"

Teng Qingshan and Elder Yan pressed their horses' abdomens lightly from both sides, and the two Black Nightmare Horses speed immediately increased rapidly.

"Hu! Hu!"

The two shadows flickered. Then in the time of a breath, they disappeared beyond a distance of a hundred Zhang. All that was left behind on the snowy grounds were obvious horseshoe prints.

The Black Nightmare Horses, the best out of the three greatest dragon horses in the world, could travel 5,000 Li in a day. Their speed was just as one could imagine.

...

"Clop! Clop! Clop!"

The urgent-sounding clops made by the horseshoes could be heard as many warhorses dashed across the public road, kicking up

up a lot of snow. There were scales on the armor worn by the soldiers who rode these warhorses. The entire armor was pitch-black, except for the shoulder and arm plates, and the like. Those parts were bordered with golden stripes. The armor made from scales with this kind of composition would be even more complicated, cost more, and require a more astonishing level of crafting skill to manufacture than the Gui Yuan Sect's full body type heavy armor.

Of course, these armors would provide better protection during crucial moments.

"There's only a distance of 30 Li left until we reach Yan Jiang City." Riding a warhorse and dashing right at the forefront, there was an elderly man who was dressed in a set of full body, dark golden battle armor and had two graying patches of hair on his temples. "Elder Hu, I think that it is possible that Gui Yuan Sect still doesn't know that Qing Hu Island is attacking..."

Behind him, there was a gray-robed middle-aged man. The middle-aged man said nonchalantly, "We had better seize Yan Jiang City as fast as possible. The army behind us will catch up very quickly. After we seize Yan Jiang City, the other troops can catch up uninterrupted from afar later on.

"Elder Hu, I just don't understand. Why is the Island Lord so cautious when it comes to dealing with the Gui Yuan Sect? Mounting a sneak attack to seize control of Yan Jiang City, consolidating our moves at every step... First eliminating the Tie Yi Sect in one step, and then waiting for many experts to convene before bringing our main forces up to surround and wipe out the Gui Yuan Sect. In my opinion, wouldn't we succeed if we deal with them the same way we dealt with the Tie Yi Sect, which is by killing our way over there in one shot?"

"Hmph. Elder Tie, don't underestimate that Zhuge Yuanhong! If you underestimate him, the consequences will be terrifying," that middle-aged man said. "At the last remaining five Li before we

reach, dismount and use Qing Gong to approach them."

After all, the vibrations caused by the hooves of their horses would make it easy for the opposing party to discover them.

...

It was Winter, and the sky had darkened really early on.

There was a great number of soldiers standing on top of Yan Jiang City's walls, as well as many soldiers patrolling back and forth with an unprecedentedly heavy atmosphere. Actually, early this morning, Yan Jiang City's City Lord and the captain of the city guards had already received a letter warning them to shut the city gates and take precautions as Qing Hu Island's troops might very well attack them.

Additionally, not long before that, the Gui Yuan Sect had also received an order... which mentioned that Qing Hu Island's troops might attack them at any time now.

"Every one of you, open your eyes wide. Endure this for a little while more. Once it's night time, the Black Armored Army will rush over here. When that time comes, we'll be able to relax." A lean man dressed in black armor was walking on top of the city wall, with several elite guard soldiers following behind him.

The color of the sky had gotten dusky. Fortunately, there was snow, so the guard soldiers could see clearly into the distance.

"Enemies!" A mournful shout suddenly rang out.

All the guard soldiers on top of the city walls got a fright. Each one of them opened their eyes wide and peered into the distance, below the city. "Where are they?" That captain of the guard soldiers then leaned forward, resting his torso on the city wall, and looked over. This time, his complexion changed uncontrollably, and he suddenly yelled, "Archers, get ready!!!"

All he saw in the distance, below the city walls, were hazy shadows approaching rapidly.

To one's surprise, these people had a layer of white cloth wrapped around the armor they wore. From head to toe, their entire bodies were all wrapped in white cloth. On the snowy ground, these soldiers, whose bodies were completely covered in white, were totally unremarkable.

Just as the soldiers of Yan Jiang City noticed them, those white-clothed troops had already charged forth and reached a point of 50 Zhang outside the city.

"Attack!"

A loud shout emerged from amidst those snow white soldiers below. Then suddenly, the speed of all those soldiers, whose entire bodies were snow white, shot up rapidly as they no longer cared about hiding their presence.

"Hu! Hu! Hu!"

Every one of them seemed like a vigorous and nimble leopard. Covering two to three Zhang with one step, they charged into Yan Jiang City like bolts of lightning.

"Experts. They're all powerful experts." The city guards' major captain, Wu Hao, looked below at the running speed of those snow white soldiers, and he was stunned. Immediately after, he opened his eyes wide and roared in a loud voice, "Shoot! Shoot your arrows!!!" On top of the city wall, the densely packed guard soldiers raised their bows and suddenly shot their arrows toward the snow white soldiers below.

"Whoosh! Whoosh! Whoosh!"

The arrows filled the sky and cascaded down on the earth like locusts!

"Puchi! Ssla!"

All kinds of noises rang out, and the white clothes on the bodies of those snow white soldiers were torn off. However, every one of them was wearing black armor, and the city guards' arrows

couldn't do any damage.

The moment the city guards' major captain, Wu Hao, saw their enemies' armor, his expression changed greatly. "Golden Scale Guards!"

However, the ordinary guards did not recognize this battle armor.

"Get boiling hot water and hot oil, quickly!" Wu Hao shouted.

They just saw these Golden Scale Guards speedily charge to the foot of the mountain. The tall, 10-Zhang-high city wall was something that First Rated Warriors were incapable of jumping over. However, many Golden Scale Guards suddenly stepped and split open the ground, leaping up four or five Zhang. After that, they abruptly stuck their daggers in the city wall and hung on there.

In an instant, several tens of Golden Scale Guards 'hung' themselves on the city wall. Soon after, they used their strength to jump up once more.

"Pour!!!" Major Captain Wu Hao bellowed fiercely.

"Hu!" Boiling hot water and oil rained down heavily straight from above. There were no gaps in this downpour of water and oil. No matter how good the armor's defense was, it would not be able to defend against boiling hot water and oil.

"Ah! Ah!" Many Golden Scale Guards jumped away to avoid the downpour, but many of them still got scalded. However, these were, of course, just light wounds.

"Fire!" That major captain shouted again.

Many torches were thrown down from the top of the city wall. The ground below was already covered in hot oil. The moment the torches were thrown down, an overflowing and enormous disaster was ignited below the city wall, and there were also flames on top of the wall. Clearly, they desired to use the blaze to help stop these

Golden Scale Guards. Unfortunately, Qing Hu Island's number one elites, the Golden Scale Guards, could not be stopped this easily.

Chapter 187: Stones That Cut Through The Air!

Under the walls of Yanjiang City, flames burned to the heavens, melting the snow in the surroundings.

On the snowfield in the distance, Elder Hu, the middle-aged man wearing a grey cloak, and Elder Tie, the one with grey hair at his temples, stood shoulder to shoulder as they watched the siege battle confidently.

“Brothers, attack!”

A Golden Scale Guard, whose body was completely enveloped by the heavy armor, roared loudly. This Golden Scale Guard, who was originally at the back, accelerated dramatically and went three to four Zhang forward in one step, bringing a gust of fierce wind as he dashed towards the city wall. The arrows made “PingPing” sounds as they darted towards him, but they were only able to leave white marks on his armor.

The few hundreds Golden Scale Guards separated and charged forward.

“Bang!” The leading Golden Scale Guard stomped on the ground and jumped up. He leaped across the six to seven Zhangs wide and stepped onto the knife that was stabbed into the city wall by the fellows in the first wave.

The purpose of the first wave which numbered over ten golden scale guards was to leave the knives on the wall so that everyone could have a foothold.

Whew! Whew! Whew!

Over ten Golden Scale Guards stepped onto the knives almost simultaneously and rocketed up with a leap.

“Pour!!!” A hoarse roar came from the top of the city wall.

“WallaWalla~~~”

Burning metal pots were tumbled forcefully, and boiling hot water and oil was poured down ruthlessly. Under the cascading hot water and oil, the first ten Golden Scale Guards that leaped up lowered their heads and held onto the top of the wall desperately, letting the burning oil and water fall.

Deep and hoarse roars rang from these Golden Scale Guards’ mouths.

“Kill!” The fingers and faces of those Golden Scale Guards were cut and slashed by sabers. Normally, a few soldiers would attack these Golden Scale Guards at the same time.

“Clang!” “Clang!”

The iron gloves, helmets, and masks produced sparks of fire, making many of the Golden Scale Guards fall to the ground, but more Guards rushed to the top of the wall. One of the leading Golden Scale Guards flashed a horrifying smile and roared, “Brothers, kill!” The roar resounded above Yanjiang city.

“Kill!”

“Kill!”

The Golden Scale Guards all emitted roars of blood-lust.

“Bang!” With a slap, a city guard’s head cracked and his brains splattered. The guard then pulled out the saber sheathed around his waist and started slashing crazily. The Golden Scale Guards were like wolves among a flock of sheep.

“F*ck.” A middle-aged city guard lifted a pot of hot oil and poured it towards a Golden Scale Guard that was charging forward.

Hua!

As the Golden Scale Guard was caught unprepared, the hot oil permeated through the mask and onto his face.

“Ahhhhhh~~~” The Golden Scale Guard emitted painful cries and

grabbed his own head as he rolled on the ground, writhing in pain. The skin on his face and eyes was completely burned and he was in so much pain that he yanked off his helmet. It was obvious that the helmet he was wearing was now filled with hot oil, but——

“Puchi!” The middle-aged city guard waved his saber forcefully and cut off the head of this Golden Scale Guard.

“Uncle Liu, good job.” A young city guard at the side shouted excitedly.

“Watch out.” The facial expression of the middle-aged city guard changed drastically.

“Whew!” A sword figure flashed across and the young man widened his eyes as blood flowed out continuously from his chest before he collapsed to the ground. With a “Whew” sound, a gold-colored figure dashed towards the middle-aged city guard and shouted, “You killed my brother! Die!” This gold-colored figure was extremely angry.

“F*ck.” The middle-aged city guard roared and charged forward.

……

“Get lost.” Wu Hao, the chief of the Yanjiang city guards, kicked at the speed of lightning from the side, and the Golden Scale Guard was kicked to the air and fell down from the top of the city wall.

Wu Hao was the chief of the city guards, thus, he was naturally a First Rated Warrior.

“Now it’s bad.” Wu hao glanced at the city wall and saw that over hundreds Golden Scale Guard had rushed up within a short time. The city guards relied on their great number of men to be able to hold out against the Golden Scale Guard. “Within a short while, over a hundred of my men have died. If this continues, and few hundreds more dies, we would probably have to flee.”

“The Black Armored Army won’t be able to make it in time.” Wu Hao’s facial expression changed.

Three Golden Scale Guards surrounded him like three iron demonic beasts and Wu Hao had nowhere to escape.

“Clang!” “Puchi!”

A part of the limbs flew up.

“Pu!” “Pu!” “Pu!” “Pu!” “Pu!”..... . .

A series of ear-piercing sounds rang.

“I.. I didn’t die?” Wu hao widened his eyes and saw that the three Golden Scale Guards around him have been shot through the head. A bloody hole appeared on each of their helmets and the three Golden Scale Guards collapsed on the ground. However, it wasn’t just these three Golden Scale Guards that collapsed. In a blink of an eye, over ten Golden Scale Guards fell!

This caused the Golden Scale Guards on the wall to be shocked.

Whew! Whew!

Teng Qingshan dressed in a Darksteel Heavy Armor and Elder Yan dressed in a simple armor appeared on top of the wall.

“Qingshan, not bad.” Elder Yan smiled and moved.

“Clang!” “Clang!”.....

A bright silver sword light flashed continuously and a figure dashed at incredibly fast speed. Wherever the figure passed, Golden Scale Guards would fall.

“Innate expert!!!” A terrified scream rang.

“Go die.” Teng Qingshan scanned the top of the wall with cold-looking eyes. He held a bag of stones in his left hand and placed it on the ground. Grabbing the stones with both of his hand, his hands seemed to have transformed into illusions. The stones in Teng Qingshan’s hand became terrifying weapons!

“Pu!” “Pu!” “Pu!”.....

Compared to Elder Yan, who had reached the Golden Dan of the

Innate Realm, Teng Qingshan's stones were even scarier. Since the moment those Golden Scale Guards saw Elder Yan coming, they immediately dodged and backed away, thus, Elder Yan still needed to rely on speed to approach them.

Teng Qingshan, however, was different.

The moment a stone flew out, it meant the disappearance of a life.

With the force of Teng Qingshan's fingers, the stones that were thrown had a force that could be compared to the high caliber sniper rifle in his previous world. Every stone had the power to penetrate the hard helmets and heads of those Golden Scale Guards. Also, with the skill Teng Qingshan had in concealed weapons, the aim of each and every stone was perfectly accurate!

His right and left hands were like two Barrett Model Sniper Rifles and the shooting speed was two shots in one second! The bullets were the cheap stones.

……

As the sky darkened, a slaughter was happening on top of Yanjiang city wall!

Previously, it was the Golden Scale Guards who were slaughtering the ordinary city guards, but now it was Teng Qingshan and Elder Yan slaughtering these Golden Scale Guards.

"Withdraw!"

"Retreat!!!"

Furious roars came from the snowfield beneath the city and the Golden Scale Guards rapidly jumped down from the top of the city wall. Even though these Golden Scale Guards were fleeing, the stones still assaulted them through the air and penetrated the heads of four Golden Scale Guards. The other Golden Scale Guards then arrived under the city.

However, when the Golden Scale Guards arrived under the city, they were still shot through the head one by one and collapsed on the ground.

“Run, run, quick run!” The Golden Scale Guards ran faster than leopards. They were near the point of a mental breakdown. As they were running, their friends were still collapsing helplessly around them as the powerful ear-piercing sounds of stones breaking through the air rang in their ears. They kept running and when they were over ten Zhangs away, the stones stopped coming. However, the Golden Scale Guards didn’t dare to stop. They continued running until they were around a hundred zhang away.

On the snowfield.

Those Golden Scale Guards turned and looked at their friends. Each and every one of them looked pale as they sat helplessly on the ground with fear in their eyes.

“Haha, victory!’

“We won!”

The city guards on top of the Yanjiang city walls cheered excitedly. The siege battle just now had caused them to feel terrified, but they won in the end. The city guards that lost their brothers and friends even kicked and hit the dead Golden Scale Guards to vent their anger.

“Whew.” Teng Qingshan stood on top of the city wall and looked at the Golden Scale Guards on the snowfield in the distance and said to himself, “They fled really quickly.”

Teng Qingshan clenched his fists. Within a short while just now, he shot so many stones with extremely high speed. Each stone would have to have an extremely powerful penetrating force..... This required Teng Qingshan’s ten fingers to possess great skill and ability. Fortunately, Teng Qingshan practiced his ten fingers since he was young.

“Qingshan.” Elder Yan, whose body was stained with blood, walked forward with a shocked expression.

“Elder Yan.” Teng Qingshan smiled and turned around.

“I have never heard of your concealed weapon techniques.” Elder Yan stared at the bag at the side. Probably no one would believe that the concealed weapons that took the precious lives of the Golden Scale Guards were just normal stones that could be seen everywhere. “How many Golden Scale Guards did you kill just now? Should be around one hundred, right?”“I killed eighty-two of the Golden Scale Guards at the top of the wall and thirty-three of the Golden Scale Guards under the city.” said Teng Qingshan.

“I killed eighty-two of the Golden Scale Guards at the top of the wall and thirty-three of the Golden Scale Guards under the city.” said Teng Qingshan.

Although Elder Yan saw it with his own eyes, he still couldn’t believe it as he said, “I only killed 21 Golden Scale Guards, but Qingshan, you killed 115 Golden Scale Guards.

“Elder Yan.” Wu Hao, the chief of the city guards, rushed here and said with respect. He then looked at Teng Qingshan and paused for a second. Among the four commanders, Wu Hao only knew three……. Yet, he did not know the person before him. However, Teng Qingshan obviously wore the clothes of a commander, so he immediately deduced the Teng Qingshan’s identity.

“Thanks Commander Teng for saving my life.” Wu Hao said respectfully. Yet, in actuality, he felt shocked as he thought to himself, “Commander Teng’s concealed weapon is really terrifying. The Golden Scale Guards just kept collapsing.”

……

The city guards on top of Yanjiang City wall were lifting the corpses of their buddies as the scent of blood permeated through

the top of the city wall.

Under the city, at a snowfield hundred Zhang away from the city wall.

“Centurion Liu, did you say you didn’t see what the concealed weapon was?”

As it was hundred Zhang away, and due to the speed and size of the stone, even an innate expert wouldn’t be able to see it.

The Golden Scale Guard was covered with blood. His eyes were filled with fear as he said, “Elder Tie, I only heard ear-piercing sounds and my brothers collapsed one after the other..... They died too fast.. too fast and fell one after the other. We jumped down the city wall to escape, but the ear-piercing sounds still continued. It was too fast. As we escaped from below the city walls to here, a group of our brothers still died within seconds. ”

“Elder Tie!” “Teacher!”

A sad and shrill voice rang and a young man whose face was covered with tears knelt before the two elders. He cried and said, “Please kill that murderer and avenge my big brother. Teacher!!!” The Golden Scale Guard that escaped from the battlefield had lost the courage to charge forward again.

This young man had no confidence in him being able to get revenge by himself, and so, he could only beg his teacher!

“Camp here!” The middle-aged man wearing a grey cloak ignored his disciple and commanded apathetically.

Elder Tie and Elder Hu were near the campsite.

“The surprise attack to take the city has failed!” The middle-aged man wearing a grey cloak looked at the campsite and said, “These Golden Scale Guards have lost their morale!”

Elder Tie, the one with grey hair at his temples, felt heartbroken and angry, “Elder Hu, five hundred Golden Scale Guards! Qing Hu

Island has only two thousand Golden Scale Guards! Within a short period of time, about one hundred fifty people died! Qinghu Island has never experienced such losses. Who created this horrifying concealed weapon that has the power to penetrate the helmets of the Golden Scale Guards? And within a short period of time, over a hundred were killed. How many concealed weapon experts are on the walls of Jiangyan city?"

"As expected, Gui Yuan Sect has been hiding its light under the bushel!" The grey-cloaked middle-aged man said as he looked at Yanjiang City from afar, "After we conquered this Yanjiang City, we better catch these concealed weapon experts alive!"

Chapter 188: Obliteration of a Sect!!!

“The plan formulated by the Island Lord is safe indeed. We should first obliterate Tie Yi Hall and gather more manpower. We should then move slowly and steadily on as we obliterate the Gui Yuan Sect.” Elder Tie had to admit, “Previously, I despised the Gui Yuan Sect, but I didn’t expect that during the first battle, concealed weapon experts from Gui Yuan Sect would appear, and it is obvious that there are more than one! That Zhuge Yuanhong..... I wonder what his next move is!”

The middle-aged man wearing a grey cloak sighed emotionally and said, “Zhuge Yuanhong is ranked number six in the «Heavenly Ranking», while our Island Lord is ranked seventh. Zhuge Yuanhong’s wisdom is immeasurably deep..... Island Lord’s slow and steady method was to pressure through the use of force! With this steadiness as our forte, we must not give Zhuge Yuanhong any opportunities.

“Compared to Zhuge Yuanhong, the Sovereign of Tie Yi Hall is much more inferior.” Elder Tie laughed, “With the speed of the Silver Dragon Army, they should have arrived in Chu County City by now.”

The middle-aged man smiled. “Yes, with my Martial Uncle as the leader, the ten innate experts led twenty thousand Silver Dragon Army should have advanced towards Chu County City. There are three Golden Dan Innate experts among the ten innate experts..... Tonight, Tie Yi Hall will definitely be obliterated. When Tie Yi Hall is obliterated, the ten innate experts will come meet us while the Island Lord will bring men from Qing Hu Island here. Once we’ve all gathered together, razing Jiangning County City to the ground would be an extremely easy thing!”

“After tonight, Tie Yi Hall will no longer exist.” Elder Tie let out a sad sigh but excitement could be seen in his eyes.

If Qing Hu Island remained motionless, it would seem ordinary, but once it moved, it would move like a thunderbolt.

Qing Hu Island must unite Yangzhou before the other sects in the world realizes the situation. If there was a long delay, it would be troublesome.

During the night, the cold wind blew fiercely!

Inside Chu County City, flames shot to the heavens. The earth and the sky were dyed red and sounds of clashes rang through the entire Chu County City, as if millions of thunderbolts were booming in the sky above the city.

The base of Tie Yi Hall is the city within the city!

Same as the Gui Yuan Sect, its base was located at the interior city of Chu County City. At this moment, the eight thousand Tie Yi soldiers of Tie Yi Hall, six thousand city guards, over ten thousand core disciples and several tens of thousand fringe disciples, they all fought bloodily under the lead of the seniors of the clan.

“Fire!” The Tie Yi Hall expert wearing an armor shouted.

On top of the interior city walls, numerous Tie Yi Hall experts were seen on the watchtower. Each and every one of them were using Thundering God Crossbows, a very terrifying kind of bow. It was powered by the feet and relied on the strength of both the feet and the hands to shoot two arrows at once. The arrows that shot through this kind of bow had the power to penetrate heavy armor!

However, the creation process of the Thundering God Crossbow was extremely complicated. As the materials needed to make the bow were extremely expensive, Tie Yi Hall only had a total of two hundred of these bows. The Thundering God Crossbow that had the power to penetrate the heavy armor required the archer wielding it to have great ability and skill. Only the ones who were able to exert the strength of four to five thousand Jin are able to use the bows effectively.

Although the Thundering God Crossbow had amazing power, the aim of this bow was slightly weaker.

Of course, when the two armies battled, the defect of this bow was nothing.

Xiu! Xiu! Xiu! Xiu!

At an instant, along with ear-piercing, whistling sounds, few hundred arrows slashed through the air and cascaded on the Silver Dragon Army. Immediately, the bodies of many Silver Dragon Soldiers were penetrated and collapsed to the ground.

“We won’t kill those who surrenders!”

“We won’t kill those who surrenders!”

The voices of the Qing Hu Island’s experts resounded above Tie Yi Hall’s interior city.

“Want us to surrender? In your dreams!”

“Killing one is enough, killing two is a profit. Brothers, kill!” Under the lead of some people, the Tie Yi Hall’s disciples slashed and fought crazily. They have never fought this madly before.

……

On the third floor of a tower at Tie Yi Hall’s campsite, a tanned man dressed in black stood before the railing and quietly watched the battle on the city walls of the interior city. When the light of flames flashed on his face, his face shone a red glow, but when the radiance of the fire wasn’t flashing, his face was dark. “Puchi! ” “Puchi!” The Silver Dragon Army shot two arrows into the window of this tower.

“Sovereign!” An unkempt silver-haired elder dressed in armor hastily said, “Qing Hu Island sent many innate experts. Zhao Danchen, Yuwen Liufeng, and the others have all arrived. They killed Elder Deng Geng and Elder Wu! Our elite disciples leading the army are being slaughtered by them. When the ones leading

our army died, all our disciples were dying as if they were gifting their lives away! Too many of our Tie Yi Hall's disciples died!!!"

The silver-haired elder wept bitterly as he spoke.

Two of Tie Yi Hall's three innate experts has died and sovereign Nie Rong was now the only one left

"Kill!!!"

"Martial Brother!!!"

Bitter and mournful voices came from afar and many of Tie Yi Hall's disciples were acting crazy. When the innate experts, elders, Protectors, and powerful experts were easily slaughtered by a group of innate experts, no one could lead the Tie Yi Army, so Tie Yi Hall became disorganized.

"Sovereign, you should run.... We can't defend against them anymore." Tears streamed down the silver-haired elder's face as he said hastily.

"Nie Rong, surrender yourself!!!" A loud and clear voice resounded above Tie Yi Hall.

"Martial Brother! I will leave first! Haha, the boys of Qing Hu Island have——" The deep and bold voice suddenly stopped.

"Teacher, I will leave first!"

.....

"Teacher!" A figure dashed up the third floor of the tower. It was a young and handsome man with wounds on his chest and a broken right arm. The moment he reached the third floor, he immediately knelt and cried, "Teacher, our Martial Brothers and Sisters.....have all died!!! We can't defend against them! We can't defend against them!!!"

Nie Rong stood in the tower silently. He didn't even turn his back.

He stood silently as tears trickled down his face.

“All of you, leave!” Nie Rong spoke with a hoarse voice.

“Teacher!” The young man with the broken arm knelt on the ground and cried until his body trembled.

Nie Rong took out the two Black Iron Treasure Map that looked slightly incomplete. The places that looked incomplete were the edges of the Black Iron Treasure Map, while the map had no damage. However, the bottom of the second Black Iron Treasure Map was damaged..... It originally had a line of words here ——“For those who hold the treasure map, he who enters by force is bound to die. One must remember, to get the treasure, one must bring along one of the nine cauldrons!”

The two treasure map both had damages at their edges.

If just the two treasure map were seen, one would think that the treasure maps had no damage, and wouldn’t even expect that there was a line of words at the bottom of the second map.

“Martial Sister, the responsibility of rebuilding Tie Yi Hall will be on your shoulders.” Nie Rong muttered. He knew clearly..... That all three innate experts of Tie Yi Hall must die. If one survived, Qing Hu Island would never give up on pursuing. Nie Rong then looked afar and saw that a great number of Qing Hu Island’s men have broken through the walls of the interior city.

Nie Rong looked at these two treasure map and said with a ghastly expression, “Qing Hu Island! Qing Hu Island! You obliterated my Tie Yi Hall so I won’t let you enjoy a happy life! Go take Emperor Yu’s Treasure.....”

With this!

Sou!

Nie Rong transformed into a beam of black light and dashed rapidly towards the east.

“Haha, Nie Rong. Seeing that the situation is bad, you wanted to escape?” A loud guffaw rang.

“You want to catch me? In your dreams!” Nie Rong laughed arrogantly……

……

Third of November, late at night. The ten innate experts, eight hundred Golden Scale Guards, and twenty thousand Silver Dragon Soldiers of Qing Hu Island charged towards Tie Yi Hall. Six thousand men of the Tie Yi Army died, seven thousand core disciples died, and the rest were either heavily wounded, surrendered, or captured. Over ten thousand city guards died, the remaining ones either scattered, or surrendered. Over ten thousand fringe disciples died, the rest either scattered or surrendered.

Tie Yi Hall’s two Law Enforcing Elder, Deng Geng and Wu Fantong dead!

All the elders and commanders, dead!

Sovereign Nie Rong, dead!

As of today, Tie Yi Hall was obliterated!

The ten innate experts of Qing Hu Island left Chu County during the night and quickly headed towards Jiangning County…….They prepared to meet up with the great army to fight against the Gui Yuan Sect.

During dawn, the first gleam of light was seen.

On top of the Yanjiang City Walls, Teng Qingshan and Elder Yan stood shoulder to shoulder. Both of them had a ghastly expression…… Just now, the news reached Yanjiang City——Tie Yi Hall was obliterated!

“It’s the end for Tie Yi Hall.” Elder Yan said as he let out a sigh.

“Qing Hu Island is a lot more powerful than Tie Yi Hall. It obliterated Tie Yi Hall in one night.” Teng Qingshan also felt sad. When he met Gu Shiyou and the others, he didn’t notice how

powerful the younger generations of Qing Hu Island was, but when Qing Hu Island made its move, it obliterated Tie Yi Hall like crushing dry weeds and smashing rotten wood.

“It is not only stronger than Tie Yi Hall, but a lot stronger than our Gui Yuan Sect.” Elder Yan felt slightly helpless as he said.

The fox feels sad when the rabbit dies!

Tie Yi Hall and Gui Yuan Sect were both ranked second in Yangzhou. If Tie Yi Hall was obliterated in one night……For how long would the Gui Yuan Sect be able to endure?

“Teacher said he has confidence that he could protect Gui Yuan Sect. Was he really confident, or was he just pretending to be calm to pacify everyone?” Teng Qingshan really didn’t know……how the Gui Yuan Sect could defend against Qing Hu Island! Maybe there was no solution, but just a method of keeping everyone from feeling despair.

The present state of Tie Yi Hall might be the future state of Gui Yuan Sect!

“We can only listen to Teacher now.” Teng Qingshan knew that his ability on leading in such a big situation wasn’t very profound.

“Qingshan, Qing Hu Island’s Silver Dragon Army has camped under the city. A great battle will probably happen today.” Elder Yan looked under the city and saw the big camp.

Teng Qingshan looked at the camp under the city and said, “Elder Yan, we have three thousand Black Armored Soldiers. We should rely on the advantage of the city wall, the advantage of being on top! Although they have the ten thousand men of the Silver Dragon Army and the three hundred plus Golden Scale Guards….. However, the Golden Scale Guards are nothing. Plus, the number of people charging up the city walls every time is limited, so we can definitely win!”

A smile also appeared on Elder Yan’s face.

Gui Yuan Sect might be obliterated, but……at least they should win this fight happily! And kill enough to cover the loss!

……

Under the city, the great army of Qing Hu Island had already begun to assemble.

Elder Hu, the middle-aged man wearing a grey cloak and Elder Tie, the one with grey hair at his temples, and the muscular man, whose body was completely enveloped by heavy armor, gathered together.

“Now, the Black Armored Army has arrived Yanjiang City. This Black Armored Army are no ordinary city guards or soldiers. Our Silver Dragon Army still needs to rush up the city walls. The number of people charging up the city wall must not be a lot, as charging forward…….meant death.” The muscular man hastily said, “We relied on ten innate experts to obliterate Tie Yi Hall and rapidly broke through, but we only have us three. The only three innate experts here….. We don’t know the number of innate experts in Yanjiang City.”

Qing Hu Island has only twenty-one innate experts. To obliterate Tie Yi Hall, they sent ten. They needed some to guard their base, so naturally they could only send few of innate expert to Gui Yuan Sect.

“I saw that gramps, Yan Motian, but I did not see the other innate experts.” Elder Tie said.

Elder Hu spoke, “The Island Lord said that if the surprise attack failed, then we should move slowly and steadily and should not hurry. The concealed weapon expert….. If Zhuge Yuanhong is hiding in Yanjiang City, what will happen to the three of us if we rushed to the city? Do Zhuge Yuanhong and Yan Motian have the power to kill us three?”

Among the three of them, there was only one Golden Dan Innate

Expert. The muscular man was a True Dan innate expert, and as for Elder Tie, he has only reached the Emptiness Dan of the Innate Realm.

“I have a plan!” The muscular man suddenly said.

Chapter 189: Vermilion Tiger Roar

“What plan? Do you have the audacity to fight Zhuge Yuanhong.” The middle-aged man wearing a grey cloak sneered.

“No, of course not.” The muscular man laughed. “Elder Hu, Zhuge Yuanhong is the Sovereign. Thus, he should be at Jiangning County City. The possibility of him being at Yanjiang City is extremely low. My plan is..... to decrease the morale of the Black Armored Army and cause them to disintegrate internally.”

Elder Tie and the middle-aged man wearing a grey cloak both looked at him.

“I think only those of high positions know the news of the obliteration of Tie Yi Hall. They didn’t dare to tell the disciples because if the disciples felt despair and fear, many cowardly ones might feel devastated and flee.” The muscular man said.

Indeed..... If the disciples in the sect knew the obliteration of Tie Yi Hall happened in one night, many people in the Gui Yuan Sect would feel fear.

Since, even Teng Qingshan and Elder Yan felt helpless when they heard the news. How could ordinary disciples feel anything less?

“What do you mean?” The eyes of the middle-aged man wearing a grey cloak brightened.

“We should challenge the men of the Gui Yuan Sect at the frontline.” The muscular man laughed and said, “Also, We should also announce the news of the Tie Yi Hall’s obliteration! Their army would then be in a state of agitation!” Normally, before a battle between armies of two large sects, the leading experts would play a major role. A duel would regularly be called upon between these experts.

Defeating or killing the leader of the opposing army could cause the morale of that army to decline greatly.

“Announce the news of the obliteration of Tie Yi Hall..... Hmm.. not bad. Did you mean a duel at the front line?” The middle-aged man wearing a grey cloak furrowed.

“What I meant was.....” The muscular man immediately said.

The next morning, the sun had crept up into the sky.

On top of the Yanjiang County City, three thousand Black Armored Army soldiers were leaning on the wall. Every one of them was eating breakfast. The city walls were stained with the blood from yesterday’s battle, and under the city, the army of Qing Hu Island was gathering.

“They want to attack the city?” Teng Qingshan stood on top of the city wall and stared at Qing Hu Island’s camp in the distance.

“Isn’t it better if they attack? We will be able to kill more.” Elder Yan flashed a faint smile as he said.

Rumble~~~

The city walls beneath his feet trembled.

“Eh!” Teng Qingshan focused his eyes on the army under the city.

In the distance, the army of Qing Hu Island had assembled and was advancing towards Yanjiang City orderly. The Silver Dragon Army consisting of over ten thousand men approached like a black flood pressing forward. The color of the Silver Dragon Army’s heavy armor was also black. There were just silver stripes on the edges of the arm guard and helmet.

“On your guard!” Teng Qingshan shouted.

“Hua!”

The Black Armored Army soldiers who were originally eating breakfast or sleeping rapidly stood up. All the soldiers gripped the weapons in their hands and saw that the Silver Dragon Army below were pressing towards them. Three thousand Black Armored Army soldiers against ten thousand Silver Dragon Army

soldiers! Of course, the Black Armored Army had the advantage of the city wall.

“Stop!” A loud shout rang, and the entire Silver Dragon Army halted. They stopped when they were eighty Zhangs away from the city wall.

Dressed in a white long cloak, an elder with grey hair at his temples walked to the front line and looked up at the top of Yanjiang’s city wall.

“What does he want to do?” Teng Qingshan and Elder Yan were both puzzled.

“I am Tie Wanmao, the Law Enforcing Elder of Qing Hu Island. I have news to tell you all..... Last night, the great army of Qing Hu Island razed Chu County City to the ground and obliterated Tie Yi Hall. Nie Rong, the Sovereign of Tie Yi Hall, and the two Law Enforcing Elders have died. Almost all of the core disciples and Tie Yi Soldiers of Tie Yi Hall have died..... From now on, there is no more Tie Yi Hall in this world!” Elder Tie said with a clear and loud voice.

The voice traveled through the air and everyone in the Black Armored Army heard it.

“Impossible!”

“Obliterated in one night?”

“Tie Yi Hall is obliterated, and our Gui Yuan Sect will be next.” Many Black Armored Army soldiers were bewildered. None of these ordinary soldiers knew of Tie Yi Hall’s obliteration..... They just became aware of it at this moment.

The facial expressions of Teng Qingshan and Elder Yan changed drastically.

“Not good!” The two glanced at each other and immediately understood what each other had in mind.

Even Teng Qingshan and Elder Yan felt shock and helplessness when they first received this news, How could these ordinary soldiers feel any less? The Gui Yuan Sect and Tie Yi Hall had existed for over one thousand years. These soldiers thought that even if they were to be obliterated, they wouldn't be obliterated that easily.

But who would have thought that Tie Yi Hall was obliterated in one night!

Then what about the Gui Yuan Sect?

An ambiance of fear and anxiousness permeated the entire Black Armored Army.

"Lies!" Elder Yan roared, "Tie Yi Hall was obliterated in one night? Why didn't we know? Qing Hu Island's bluffing ability is getting better and better. If you said Tie Yi hall was obliterated, I could say.... Qing Hu Island attacked Tie Yi Hall and suffered heavy casualties. Don't show off your eloquence here."

When the Black Armored Army soldiers heard this, they felt slightly better——Maybe the news was really fake.

"Bluff? Haha..... Yan Motian or any powerful one from Qing Hu Island can easily win against your Gui Yuan Sect, so obliterating you guys is an easy thing. Let me ask you! If Elder Hu of Qing Hu Island challenge you to a duel at the frontline, would you have the audacity to accept this challenge?" Tie Wanmao shouted at the frontline. At this moment, the middle-aged man wearing a grey cloak looked towards Yan Motian.

On top of the city wall, Yan Motian furrowed his brows.

Elder Hu?

The possibility of winning was low. If he lost, it might be the end for the three thousand Black Armored Army soldiers.

"Haha....." Tie Wanmao laughed, "Qing Hu Island has numerous powerful ones, and many are stronger than me. Besides Elder Hu,

there's me, Tie Wanmao. I will issue a challenge today. Does anyone in the Gui Yuan Sect have the audacity to fight me?" Scanning the group of people on top of the wall, a smile gradually crept up his face.

The Black Armored Army on top of the city wall suddenly clamored.

"Just a clown!"

With a sneer, a black figure leapt down from the city wall and descended on the ground.

……

On the snowfield under Yanjiang City, a black figure dressed in Darksteel Heavy Armor and Tie Wan Mao, who wore a white cloak, looked at each other.

"Say your name!" Tie Wanmao yelled. Simultaneously, he felt confused. According to the information they had, the Gui Yuan Sect had three innate experts and none of the innate experts assumed the position of the Black Armored Army's commander.

Therefore, he would surely win if he issued a challenge. Plus, this would be a blow to the morale of the Black Armored Army.

"Gui Yuan Sect's Teng Qingshan!" Dressed in Darksteel Heavy Armor, Teng Qingshan said coldly with his Reincarnation Spear in hand, "Remember my name in case you don't know who kills you when you met the God of Death."

"What an arrogant fellow." Tie Wanmao sneered. Knowing that he was about to fight Teng Qingshan, he felt even more confident.

Teng Qingshan, seventeen years old! The number one on the «Hidden Dragon Ranking».

"Just a Postliminary expert. He really wants to die. He's even fighting me in a full suit of heavy armor. Does he not know that wearing heavy armor affects speed?" Tie Wanmao sneered secretly

and said as he unsheathed his saber, “Teng Qingshan, this saber is called the Storm Saber. This is the saber that will take your life.”

Teng Qingshan lifted his Reincarnation Spear and pointed at Tie Wanmao with the tip of the spear.

“I will take your life within three moves!” Teng Qingshan said coldly.

When his words came out!

“Three moves!” Pang Shan shouted loudly.

“Three moves!” All the Black Armored Army soldiers immediately yelled.

……

The Black Armored Army felt anxious and scared when they heard Tie Wanmao’s words regarding Tie Yi Hall. When Tie Wanmao provoked….. the Black Armored Army soldiers felt restrained and upset, but none of them dared to step up. When Teng Qingshan accepted the duel and said “I will take your life within three moves”, all of the Black Armored Army soldiers felt pleased.

“Three moves!”

“Three moves!”

Everyone started shouting.

The two armies were poised for battle while Teng Qingshan and Tie Wanmao faced each other at the front lines.

“Arrogant fellow.” Tie Wanmao was so angry that he laughed, “I will kill you in one move!”

With a furious roar, Tie Wanmao held his Storm Saber and dashed towards Teng Qingshan like lightning. Meanwhile, Teng Qingshan stood at the same spot like an enormous mountain in a full suit of heavy armor and the Reincarnation Spear in his hands.

“Huch~~~” An ear-piercing weird sound rang.

An azure sword light trembled along a mystical pathway. Under the high speed, the seven holes on the Storm Saber simultaneously produced an ear-piercing sound wave. The instant it approached Teng Qingshan, the sound emitted by the Storm Saber suddenly changed into a boom——“Rumble~~” A thunderous sound rang in their ears.

“You dare show off?” Tie Wanmao sneered in his heart and said, “Die!”

The three thousand Black Armored Army soldiers held their breath as they watched Teng Qingshan. They hoped that Teng Qingshan could bring honor to the Gui Yuan Sect! He would also bring honor to them!

Teng Qingshan stood at the same spot and finally moved!

“Boom!” A fiery red wave of q=Qi exploded from Teng Qingshan’s skin, and he seemed to have become a burning man.

“Innate!” Tie Wanmao was shocked.

“Innate? A seventeen years old innate expert?” Elder Hu was also shocked.

“One!”

A deep roar rang to the heavens.

The Reincarnation Spear in Teng Qingshan’s hand shone with a fiery glow. The Black Armored Army soldiers and Silver Dragon Army soldiers watching only felt their vision blur for a second before the fiery red glow and the azure light clashed together. Still, the azure light actually backed away!

“What a weird force!” Tie Wanmao hastily backed away.

“Puchi!” The defensive strike instantly transformed into an attack as Transmutation Unity Law transformed into Pursuing Shadow. A lightning-like rapid thrust aimed at Tie Wanmao’s

throat.

“Two!”

“So fast.” Tie Wanmao hastily dodged.

Teng Qingshan was like a fire god in the flames. Coldness flashed in his eyes under the mask as he yelled, “Now!” The Reincarnation Spear produced a mystical force.

“Buzz!” The spear shaft trembled.

Arrogant!

Reckless!

“Chi Chi~~” The spiral-shaped fiery-red Innate True Origin revolved around the tip of the spear like a sharp cone. It then rapidly compressed and coalesced into a deep red dot on the tip of the spear. The Reincarnation Spear shot out like a blazing dragon at lightning speed, and Tie Wanmao didn’t have time to dodge.

“Pu!” The tip of the spear pierced into Wanmao’s chest and actually pierced through his inner armor instantly.

Tie Wanmao widened his eyes.

“Boom!” An ear-piercing boom rang, and the spinning fiery-red Innate True Origin shot in front with the force of the spiral. The Silver Dragon Army soldiers in the distance dodged in fright and waited for the Innate True Origin to dissolve. The Silver Dragon Army soldiers then stood orderly and looked at Teng Qingshan, who was enveloped in the heavy armor.

Teng Qingshan lifted his Reincarnation Spear and shouted, “Three!”

“Three moves!”

“Three moves!”

The entire Black Armored Army was excited, and the cheers and applause continued nonstop.

Teng Qingshan scanned the Silver Dragon Army soldiers and cast a glance at the ground. On the ground, Tie Wanmao had already been burned into dust by the extremely high heat produced by his Innate True Origin. Only just some small bones, inner armor, and the Storm Saber were left.

“Whew!” Teng Qingshan turned his head and leaped forcefully. He jumped over ten Zhang high and arrived on top of the city wall.

He turned and looked at the Silver Dragon Army under the city.

The Black Armored Army cheered continuously while the Silver Dragon Army was obviously subdued.

“The power of Vermilion Tiger Roar was as I expected. Thirty percent of the full force could kill a Hollow Dan innate expert easily.” Teng Qingshan said secretly. Actually, when Teng Qingshan was researching the Vermilion Tiger Roar, he had an idea. After going sightseeing with Zhuge Qing at the canal, he went home and tried the new method, and as expected, it succeeded on the first try.

On the city wall.

“Elder Yan, the morale of our Black Armored Army was greatly boosted. If this Silver Dragon Army has the audacity to attack the city, that would be the death of them.” Teng Qingshan turned his head and looked at Elder Yan.

“Qingshan, look. This was the information that just arrived when you went down to fight.” Elder Yan handed a secret letter.

“Secret letter?”

Teng Qingshan took the secret letter solemnly and lowered his head to read——

“Gu Yong, the Island Lord of Qing Hu Island, is leading a great army to Yanjiang. Abandon Yanjiang City and lead the army back to Jiangning quickly!”

Chapter 190: Retreat and Pursued!

After the heavy snow, it became even colder.

The cold wind blew fiercely, and the chilly air hovered over Yanjiang City. However, the hearts of Teng Qingshan and Yan Motian were even colder.

Teng Qingshan's cold eyes looked through the helmet's visor and swept past the Silver Dragon Army below. He then said with a deep voice, "Elder Yan, according to the timing, the information would need six hours to reach the Sect and two to four hours to reach us from the sect. This means that……the army of Qing Hu Island had probably advanced for eight to ten hours!"

Yan Motian said solemnly, "If Qing Hu Island advance at full speed, they would arrive under Yanjiang city by today!"

Because they didn't know enough information, they could only deduce an approximate time.

Teng Qingshan sneered coldly, "Gu Yong, the island lord of Qing Hu Island actually led the army personally! They also attacked Tie Yi Hall first and Gui Yuan Sect second. Now their men are gathering, and the total number of men dispatched to attack the Gui Yuan Sect must be even more than the number of men dispatched to attack Tie Yi Hall. They really have a high regard for our Gui Yuan Sect!"

Having a high regard was not a good thing now. The men of the Gui Yuan Sect would rather Qing Hu Island look down on them and dispatch fewer people.

"Once Gu Yong leads his army here, we wouldn't be able to escape even if we wanted to. It is time to retreat." Yan Motian muttered helplessly, "I originally wanted to take this chance and kill more of Qing Hu Island's men, but…… Qingshan, as you killed that Tie Wanmao, our army's trip was worth it."

Teng Qingshan turned his head and smiled. “Tie Wanmao? Too arrogant. He can only bully the postliminary experts.”

“Commander Pang,” Teng Qingshan yelled.

In the distance, Pang Shan immediately walked towards Teng Qingshan and Yan Motian.

“We still have to leave even if we feel bitter.” Teng Qingshan let out a sigh secretly and immediately began discussing the plan of retreat with Pang Shan and Yan Motian.

……

Under Yanjiang City, corpses scattered on the ground. Some Silver Dragon Army soldiers were commanded to collect the corpse of the Law Enforcing Elder, while the other Silver Dragon Army soldiers were discussing softly and occasionally looking at a figure on the top of the wall who wore a black heavy armor and held a silver-colored Reincarnation Spear.

“Elder! General!” One of the two Silver Dragon Army soldiers held the bag of the remaining corpse, while the other held the Storm Saber, inner armor, and arm guard.

“Put it down.” The middle-aged man wearing a gray cloak ordered calmly.

“Yes.”

The two Silver Dragon Army soldiers then placed the bag, the Storm Saber, and inner armor on the ground.

“Elder Hu!” Beside the middle-aged man wearing a gray cloak, a man dressed in heavy armor roared furiously, “Founder Zhao and the others led a great army and obliterated Tie Yi Hall. None of their ten innate experts died. However, at our side, Elder Tie died under Yanjiang City! This is a great embarrassment. Should we let it slide like this?

The middle-aged man cast a glance at him and asked, “General

Lan, what do you want to do? The opposing side doesn't even send men out to battle. What can you do? Attack forcefully?"

"However, the first Qing Hu Island's member that died is an innate expert! And he was killed at the front line! This is a great shame!" General Lan glared fiercely. The anger he felt could not be pacified. He then continued, "We should attack forcefully. I just don't believe that we can't take this city!"

A glint of mockery flashed across the eyes of the middle-aged man wearing a gray cloak as he said calmly, "If we attack forcefully, It would be impossible to break through the city gate as the city gate is bulky and must be heavily guarded. What if we climbed up the city walls? The enemy's advantage is the city walls. Although Qing Hu Island has over thousand Silver Dragon Army soldiers, only a small amount of our men can climb up the city walls and attack. They would only be devoured by the Black Armored Army! Also, don't forget.....they have concealed weapon experts hiding somewhere.

"Concealed weapon experts?" General Lan gasped.

Of the five hundred Golden Scale Guards, one hundred fifty Golden Scale Guards died within a short while. General Lan remembered distinctly the images of the Golden Scale Guards collapsing one by one.

"Tie Wanmao dying is a minor thing." The middle-aged man said calmly. Tie Wanmao was already over one hundred years old and was still at the state of Hollow Dan of the Innate Realm. With his old age, it would be impossible for him to reach the state of True Dan of the Innate Realm. Qing Hu Island didn't really value a person like this.

The ones who Qing Hu Island truly valued were Elder Hu and Zhao Danchen, the few who had reached the Golden Dan state of the Innate Realm!

"However, Teng Qingshan's ability is a major thing!" The

middle-aged man looked down at the corpses on the ground.

“Teng Qingshan.” General Lan, the muscular man, stared at the hole at the center of the inner armor and said, “A seventeen-year-old innate expert! As for the last strike…….the power was so strong that Elder Tie’s body was instantly burned. I am afraid it is extremely hard to fight against this Hollow Dan innate expert. In all the Nine Prefectures of the land, this Teng Qingshan is second to the Demonic Monk of the Mani Temple in thousands of years.”

Elder Hu raised his head and looked at the walls of Yanjiang City in the distance at the death god-like black figure in heavy armor.

“No, he’s even scarier than the Demonic Monk!” Elder Hu said with a deep voice.

“Eh?” General Lan was surprised, “Six hundred years ago, Demonic Monk Xiang Fanchen reached the Innate Realm at the age of sixteen.”

Elder Hu looked at Teng Qingshan in the distance and said slowly, “The Demonic Monk was specially taught in Mani Temple and practiced one of the four Heaven Class manuals «Golden Buddha», As for Teng Qingshan, he lived in the forest since he was young. He had no teacher and relied on himself. I have never seen his spear techniques before, so he must have created the spear techniques himself! He had just reached the Innate Realm recently and could already kill Elder Tie, an expert who had been in the Innate Realm for over ten years….. Just imagining the future Teng Qingshan makes me feel terrified.”

“If the Gui Yuan Sect was given ten more years, it would be very difficult for Qing Hu Island to obliterate the Gui Yuan Sect.” Elder Hu said slowly, “It’s good that Elder Tie died. Through his death, Qing Hu Island was able to become aware of the terrifyingly talented Teng Qingshan. No matter what, we must catch Teng Qingshan alive. If he can’t be caught, then we must kill him!”

Hearing Elder Hu’s words, General Lan nodded quickly.

A terrifying talented person who was on a par with the Demonic Monk, Xiang Fanchen. Plus, he was an enemy. If Teng Qingshan wasn't killed, they would live in absolute terror.

Unfortunately……

They did not know that Teng Qingshan was not an inexperienced talented teenager. He had lots of experience in pursuing, tracking, escaping, and many other skills. You could say that there were only a few who could stand shoulder to shoulder with him in the entire Nine Prefectures.

With the experience of being a hitman in his previous life and his ability in controlling his body perfectly, who could pursue and kill him?

……

As time passed, the men of Qing Hu Island were resting under the city. They were waiting for the arrival of the great army.

"General, general!"

A Silver Dragon Army soldier immediately rushed into the tent. General Lan and Elder Hu were drinking tea as they awaited the great army.

"What is it?" General Lan furrowed.

"General!" The soldier hastily said, "The Black Armored Army of the Gui Yuan Sect is fleeing from beneath the city wall.

Whew! Whew!

General Lan and Elder Hu instantly dashed out of the tent and looked at the Yanjiang City Wall in the distance. It was true….. On top of the city wall, there were over several hundreds of Black Armored Army soldiers. These Black Armored Army soldiers were rapidly escaping from different passageways. Within a few seconds, all the Black Armored Army soldiers disappeared from the top of the city wall.

“Golden Scale Guards!” Elder Hu roared horrifyingly.

Tremble!

Over three hundred Golden Scale Guards dashed out speedily.

“Charge up there with me.” Elder Hu took the lead and darted towards the city wall with the speed of an arrow. Behind him, over three hundred Golden Scale Guards also dashed towards the city wall.

“Dong!” “Dong!”.....

The gathering drum sounds rang to the heavens, and ten thousand Silver Dragon Army soldiers rapidly assembled.

.....

Elder Hu leaped up the city wall easily, but with his six senses, he could not hear any breathing sound on top of the wall.

“They all escaped?” Elder Hu was shocked.

Whew! Whew! Whew!

Behind him, the Golden Scale Guards leapt up to the top of the wall like nimble leopards.

“Follow me.” Elder Hu ordered, and they jumped into the city from the top of the wall. They then realized that.....there were no guards at the city gate, but simply huge wooden beams blocking the gate. The thick and black metal bolts also locked the gate.

“Open the city gates.” Elder Hu yelled. Yet, he was looking at the North.

The stores on the street were closed, and blurry black figures could be seen in the distance. Elder Hu could distinctly feel the trembling of the earth, which was caused by the dense sounds of galloping hooves.

The Golden Scale Guards rapidly moved the huge wooden beams away and pulled open the bolts of the gate. With a “Bang!”, the city

gates opened.

Immediately, a large amount of Silver Dragon Army soldiers mounted on horses dashed into the city rapidly as a roar sounded, “Charge! If you kill one Black Armored Army soldier, you’ll receive one hundred taels of silver as a reward. If you kill one sergeant, you’ll receive one thousand taels of silver as a reward……” Hearing this, the Silver Dragon Army soldiers clamored as they pursued speedily.

As the opposing side could be busy fleeing, pursuing would be very easy.

……

After all, the number of Black Armored Army soldiers was too large. Although they fled orderly, the soldiers at the rear of the army were approximately two Li away from the pursuing Silver Dragon Army. However, there were too many soldiers, and the speed of each horse was different. So the soldiers at the front could go as fast as they wanted, but the soldiers at the back couldn’t go as fast.

“Haha……..brothers, kill.”

The Silver Dragon Army soldiers roared as the horses they were mounting galloped, causing the entire Yanjiang City to tremble.

The distance between the Black Armored Army and the Silver Dragon Army was gradually decreasing.

“Quick, quick!” Teng Qingshan roared furiously. He and Yan Motian and were at the rear of the Black Armored Army while the Silver Dragon Army was approaching.

One Li, half a Li, eighty Zhang, fifty Zhang, thirty Zhang…….

“Xiu!” “Xiu!” Arrows came from behind and shot into the Black Armored Army soldiers at the rear. “Clang” “Clang” sounds were heard, and a few lucky arrows pierced through the chinks in the heavy armor.

Whew! Whew!

Like a gust of wind, the Black Armored Army all rushed out of the north gate of Yanjiang City. At this moment and at the two sides of the north gate, a few hundred Black Armored Army soldiers were gathered there. Twenty Black Armored Army soldiers were grabbing a rope used to trip the horses with ten people gripping each side.....After the Black Armored Army soldiers rushed out of the north gate, the Silver Dragon Army rushed out to pursue!

“Pull!” A loud roar sounded.

Ropes used to trip the horses were pulled out from the muddy ground. The height of the ropes was not high, just around one to two Chi higher than the ground. Each rope was four Zhang away from the other rope, and there was a total of five thick ropes used to trip the horses. Outside the gate of the city, in addition to the one hundred soldiers grabbing the ropes, there were other Black Armored Army soldiers with sabers in their hands.

“Rumble~~~”

The horses dashing at full speed tripped and crashed to the ground, causing the earth to tremble. The Silver Dragon Army soldiers were thrown into the air. The speed of the galloping horses was faster than some cars in Teng Qingshan’s previous life. Although they were strong, they still received a concussion from the heavy crash.

Whew! Whew!

The fully prepared Black Armored Army soldiers thrust the sabers in their hands toward the Silver Dragon Army soldiers’ visors! Because humans needed to breathe and see, there were definitely openings.

War sabers thrust down ruthlessly!

Puchi! Puchi!

Fresh blood splattered.

“Ah~~” Painful cries rang to the heavens. Many Silver Dragon Army soldiers were killed before they could even regain consciousness from the fall.

“Ambush!!!” A hasty shout rang.

“Neigh~~”

The neighs of the horses and the furious roars continued nonstop. The entrance of the city was a complete mess. The warriors who didn’t manage to stop jumped down from their horses. The entrance of the city was instantly blocked by the fallen horses, the corpses of the Silver Dragon Army soldiers, and the ropes used to trip the horses.

“Let’s go!” Teng Qingshan shouted.

The Black Armored Army immediately mounted their horses and rapidly fled, leaving the snowfield covered with hoof prints.

Chapter 191: Enemies At The Gates

At the north gate of Yanjiang City, many dead Silver Dragon Army soldiers lay before the north gate. Their blood seeped into the snowfield, and the scene looked sorrowfully beautiful.

“What happened?” With a furious roar, General Lan jumped down from his horse and rushed to the city gate.

“General, we were pursuing the Black Armored Army. Who would have thought that they would ambush us here? Just now, we lost thirty-six brothers.” The centurion of the Silver Dragon Army reported. When General Lan heard this, he was so angry his eyes seemed to pop out, and he yelled, “Useless! You didn’t kill a single enemy, yet you lost thirty-six men!”

Just then.

“The Black Armored Army planned this in advance.” A calm sound rang out. General Lan turned and saw that it was Elder Hu, a middle-aged man wearing a grey cloak.

Elder Hu continued saying, “There are traces of ropes and footprints on the ground here! The Black Armored Army soldiers must have retreated separately. Some of the Black Armored Army soldiers retreated to the north gate while still on guard. The other Black Armored Army soldiers then followed suit and retreated as well..... and when we had chased them up to here.....”

So here we are, and there’s no need to say what happened next.

“What should we do now?” General Lan looked at him.

“Wait!” Elder Hu wasn’t nervous at all. “The Island Lord is leading the army here, and they are about to arrive. We should meet up with the Island Lord, Martial Uncle, and the other innate experts and set out to obliterate the Gui Yuan Sect.” With this, Elder Hu immediately turned and walked back to Yanjiang City.

At noon, Gu Yong, the Island Lord of Qing Hu Island, arrived at

Yanjiang City with five hundred Golden Scale Guards and twenty thousand Silver Dragon Army soldiers. And so, there were a total of eight hundred Golden Scale Guards and thirty thousand Silver Dragon Army soldiers in Yanjiang City! When it was the afternoon, the great army left Yanjiang City and set out towards Jiangning County City.

The sun descended down the west mountain, and the sky gradually dimmed.

The great army of Qing Hu Island formed a long line, akin a dragon whose end could not be seen. The vanguard was already near Heyuan City, which was in the region of Jiangning County City and only three hundred Li away from Jiangning County City. Yet, there were no guards in this Heyuan City.

It was obvious that Jiangning County had already abandoned this city.

“It’s late. We will rest in Heyuan City tonight.” A deep-sounding voice rang.

“Yes, Island Lord.”

……

In the house of the mayor of Heyuan City, Elder Hu and General Lan were following Gu Yong, the Island Lord dressed in a yellow cloak. Gu Yong had big eyes, bushy eyebrows, and long untied hair. His eyes were usually half-closed with a quick glint of brilliance. He seemed like a lion that had restrained its wrath.

“Elder Hu, Martial Brother Lan, let’s sit there.” Gu Yong spoke.

The three then sat around a stone table under the shelter.

“Eh?” Elder Hu turned to look afar and smiled. “Island Lord, it seems like my martial uncle

and the others have arrived.”

Gu Yong also smiled and stood up. The three then stared into the

South.

Men and women dressed in different color cloaks or armor walked in. There were a total of ten people, and two of them were women. These ten people each emitted a different kind of aura. Some seemed divine while others emitted an aura of menace. Some seemed friendly and amiable while others seemed proud and aloof.

“Fellow sect members.” Gu Yong smiled. “All you elders have worked hard in this battle against Chu County.”

“Island Lord!” The leading handsome teenager grinned and said, “Tie Yi Hall only had a total of two True Dan innate experts, and Golden Dan innate experts. Ten of us went, so of course it was easy. “ Although the handsome teenager looked like a teenager with fair and healthily ruddy skin, his hair was completely silvery white.

This person was the number one of Law Enforcing Elders——Zhao Danchen!

Zhao Danchen, a Golden Dan innate expert ranked tenth of the «Heavenly Ranking».

In all nine areas of the land, Gu Yong, Zhuge Yuanhong, and Zhao Danchen in Yangzhou were all ranked top ten in the «Heavenly Ranking», which was quite amazing.

Of course……the family left by the Heavenly Emperor of Qin Mountains, Eight Supreme Sects——Yongzhou’s Ying Family! Emperor Yu’s Hall of Yuzhou left by Emperor Yu and the number one of the Eight Supreme Sects, left by Martial Ancestor Shakya ——Mani Temple. These three sects were the ones with the deepest roots.

Because each of these three sects inherited the descendants of Heavenly Emperor of Qin Mountains, Emperor Yu, and Martial Ancestor Shakya many people thought that super powerful experts hid among these three sects.

For example, Mani Temple occupied the land in two prefectures, but none of the sects could affect it.

Since ancient times, Heavenly Emperor of Qin Mountains, Emperor Yu, Martial Ancestor Shakya, and the Poetic Sword God Li Bai were the strongest individuals and had reached an unbelievable state. The ones who inherited their legacy could not be underestimated. Although the land united by Emperor Yu had disintegrated, Emperor Yu's Hall still existed even after a thousand years. Thus, one could see how deep the roots of these sects were.

"Island Lord, this is the original version of the treasure map." The silver-haired handsome teenager took out two pieces of the black iron with broken sides.

"Eh?" Gu Yong said as he took it.

"After killing Nie Rong, the Sovereign of Tie Yi Hall, we took these two iron pieces." Zhao Danchen immediately took out the copies of the map and gave it to the Island Lord, Gu Yong.

"It is the Emperor Yu's Treasure Map." When Gu Yong saw, he broke out in a guffaw as he said, "Haha..... This material is Yu Rock, which was refined by Emperor Yu in the past. After being passed around for thousands of years, even this Yu Rock has broken apart..... From this, you can see how fierce the competition for Emperor Yu's Treasure Map is. Who would have thought that this treasure map would be in Qing Hu Island's hands at the end."

The lady in a purple cloak smiled. "Island Lord, Nie Rong saw that the situation was bad and wanted to run, but fortunately, Martial Ancestor Zhao stopped him. Otherwise, Nie Rong might really have escaped."

The silver-haired handsome teenager, Zhao Danchen, smiled faintly.

"Since Emperor Yu's Treasure Map is in Qing Hu Island's hands, we can wait a few days. Let's obliterate the Gui Yuan Sect first and

search for Emperor Yu's Treasure free of worry." Gu Yong then showed a stern expression as he said, "All Elders, during the attack led by Elder Hu against Yanjiang City, an unexpected thing happened. Tie Wanmao.. Elder Tie fought with Teng Qingshan and was actually killed. "

The expression of the ten innate masters changed drastically.

"Island Lord, that Teng Qingshan....." Each one of the ten innate masters stared at Gu Yong.

Gu Yong nodded and said, "Teng Qingshan has already reached the Innate Realm. A seventeen-year-old innate expert who could kill Elder Tie. His potentially is too terrifying..... Therefore, during this obliteration of the Gui Yuan Sect, the first task is to kill Zhuge Yuanhong, and the second is to catch Teng Qingshan alive. I believe you all can catch Teng Qingshan alive, right?"

"Leave it to me." Zhao Danchen replied.

"Since Elder Zhao said so, I will be at ease." Gu Yong smiled and nodded, "However, you all must not let your guard down during this attack against the Gui Yuan Sect. When Zhuge Yuanhong was young, I fought with him for quite some time. He always has many tricks, so killing him will be very difficult."

The crowd nodded.

If it was an individual fight, none of the people here had the confidence of defeating Zhuge Yuanhong since Zhuge Yuanhong was ranked number sixth on the «Heavenly Ranking». Most importantly..... Zhuge Yuanhong hadn't fought for six years!

Six years?

With Zhuge Yuanhong's talent and perceptivity, who knew what level Zhuge Yuanhong reached during these six years and what powerful techniques he created? There was a big difference between those at the same realm with different unique techniques. Teng Qingshan was an example. Although he was at the Emptiness

Dan state of the Innate Realm, his Toxic Dragon Drill was a lot stronger than the Pursuing Shadow.

And the Vermillion Tiger Roar was even more powerful than the Toxic Dragon Drill.

Of course, each had its advantages and disadvantages. For example, Pursuing Shadow had the advantage of quick speed and continuous moves. On the other hand, the Toxic Dragon Drill had the advantage of the fastest instantaneous speed and amazing force and the disadvantage of a vulnerability instantly after the performance. As for the Vermillion Tiger Roar, it possessed the greatest power, but its use wasted too much Innate True Origin, and the speed of the move was not swift.

Similarly, the Vermillion Tiger Roar had a process of accumulating energy; thus, the speed was slightly slower.

……

Different kinds of unique techniques possessed different kinds of power.

Among the experts who had reached the same Golden Dan state of the Innate Realm, one might be ranked first on the«Heavenly Ranking» while the other might be ranked last. Why was that? They were indeed at almost the same realm, but their unique techniques were not.

The fifth of November was a gloomy day.

The snow had not melted completely. The gusts of cold wind blew recklessly at the armored soldiers on top of Jiangning County City.

“Fifty thousand city guards, twenty thousand fringe disciples, five thousand core disciples, and three thousand Black Armored Army soldiers….. Although there are a lot, could this number of people defend against the army of Qing Hu Island?” Wearing his Darksteel heavy armor and Darksteel helmet, Teng Qingshan held

his Reincarnation Spear as he made an inspection around the top of the city. Yet, he felt slightly worried.

The number of city guards was indeed great, but ten city guards couldn't even compete with one Black Armored Army soldier.

"Through the advantage of the city wall, we should be able to defend against them." Teng Qingshan said to himself, "I am just worried……that the group of innate masters will kill the innate masters of the Gui Yuan Sect first. That would be bad." The city walls as high as ten Zhangs couldn't obstruct the innate masters.

Once the Sovereign, elders, and commanders were killed, the ending would be obvious.

"Qingshan." A gentle voice sounded.

Teng Qingshan turned and saw Zhuge Yuanhong in a white long cloak and untied long hair in the distance. He carried a long sword on his back and stood on the top of the wall. The cold wind blew and his long cloak fluttered. Zhuge Yuanhong seemed to be about to leave with the wind. At this moment, the brave core disciples and Black Armored Army soldiers on the city wall felt slightly anxious.

Only Sovereign Zhuge Yuanhong appeared unworried.

"Teacher." Teng Qingshan walked forward.

"The men of Qing Hu Island have arrived. Just stay around me later. Don't separate more than ten Zhangs away from me." Zhuge Yuanhong said.

Although he felt confused, Teng Qingshan still answered, "Yes, Teacher."

"They are here?" Teng Qingshan looked into the distance and finally managed to see a small figure far away.

……

One hour later, the army of Qing Hu Island gathered three Li

away from Jiangning County City. The vigorous and dense Silver Dragon Army seemed like the endless cold sea water during a gloomy day. Just the thought of Qing Hu Island frightened many city guards and fringe disciples.

“Zhuge Yuanhong!!!”

A deep-sounding voice which seemed like the voice of god came from far away and resounded in the entire Jiangning County City.

“Gu Yong!” Zhuge Yuanhong shouted as he looked three Li away.

The elegant Zhuge Yuanhong and the dominating Gu Yong stared at each other from afar.

On top of the wall, Teng Qingshan and the other two Law Enforcing Elders stood behind Zhuge Yuanhong while the three commanders, Zhang Feng, Guan Lu, and Pang Shan, and many elders also gathered here.

“Eh? Thirteen people?” With Teng Qingshan’s eyesight, he could clearly see the thirteen people standing in front of the army three Li away.

The thirteen people spread out into a straight line, and the person in the center was clothed in a long gold-colored cloak. The thirteen people standing there gave Teng Qingshan more pressure than the great army.

The rumbling sounds came from afar again——

“Zhuge Yuanhong, I led the army personally today, but I am reluctant to slaughter the Gui Yuan Sect easily. I will give you six hours! If you open the gates, and the whole sect surrenders within six hours, I will give the Gui Yuan Sect a way out. If not, six hours later…….I will burn the Gui Yuan Sect to the ground!”

The deep-sounding voice was like the rumble of thunder resonating in the sky.

Chapter 192: Fight! Let's Fight!

The voice of Qing Hu Island's Island Lord, Gu Yong, was still reverberating throughout the sky. Teng Qingshan stood on top of the city wall, watching from afar. All he saw was an ant-sized figure speedily breaking away from Qing Hu Island's camp. This figure dashed very quickly until a distance of roughly 80 Zhang before the city wall.

He was currently using both his hands to carry a tube-shaped object with a height of over one Zhang.

"A waterclock?" Teng Qingshan furrowed his brows and thought to himself.

On the Land of the Nine Prefectures, there were a variety of tools to measure time: sundials; hourglasses; waterclock; and so on. The principle of the waterclock's workings was that there was a small hole at the bottom part of the waterclock. Then the water inside the waterclock would flow out incessantly at a constant speed. As it flowed, the engraved measuring needle on the surface of the water would slowly drop down.

When the water was emptied out, the tip of the engraved measuring needle would be exactly level with the top of the waterclock.

One load of water can generally continue flowing slowly for 24 hours.

"Zhuge Yuanhong!" That massive voice once again sounded. "You've seen this waterclock as well. Six hours! You only have six hours!"

Standing on the city wall with his white robes fluttering in the wind, Zhuge Yuanhong opened his mouth to speak for the first time. His clear and sonorous voice also broke through the skies over to the other side. "Gu Yong, my Gui Yuan Sect has been

established in Jiangning County for over 1000 years already. You want to turn my Gui Yuan Sect into a piece of scorched earth... This won't be an easy thing to do. To refrain from harming our friendly relationship, it would be better if we don't use weapons."

"Haha..." Gu Yong's answer was merely a chain of loud laughter.

The two great and unique experts, who were ranked 6 and 7 on the "Heavenly Ranking", were three Li away from each other as they finished their simplistic dialogue.

...

Before the camp of Qing Hu Island's army, 13 innate experts were currently gathered together.

General Lan, who was wearing body armor and a helmet, said with a laugh, "It's already at this stage, yet Zhuge Yuanhong is surprisingly still relaxed and calm, even saying 'To refrain from harming our friendly relationship, it would be better if we don't use weapons.' It's truly hilarious! Wait till we've wiped out his Gui Yuan Sect, then we'll see if he gets anxious!" The other innate experts also began to laugh, with confidence filling their laughter.

"Elders, you absolutely must not underestimate Zhuge Yuanhong," Gu Yong said while smiling. "Go according to what we planned beforehand. Firstly, work together to kill Zhuge Yuanhong. Secondly, capture that youth named Teng Qingshan alive.

"Relax, Island Lord."

Those innate experts smiled while nodding. They were confident, but they weren't arrogant.

"Everyone, return to the large tent and rest. We will prepare to attack in six hours," Gu Yong instructed. Actually, the reason for the delay of six hours was because of two reasons. Firstly, the Silver Dragon Army had a bumpy journey rushing over here and were fairly fatigued. So, they had to rest for six hours to allow for

their physical strength to return to peak condition. Secondly, it was to let the Gui Yuan Sect's soldiers and disciples spend these six hours in fear.

Those words that Gu Yong had just said were enough for fear to sprout in the hearts of many people among the Gui Yuan Sect.

For them to spend six hours in fear, their morale would surely drop to the lowest point.

On the city wall, there were several tens of thousands of people gathered, numerous and close together.

A cold wind blew, lifting up Zhuge Yuanhong's long hair that was draped loosely over his shoulders.

"Junior Martial Brother Pang," Zhuge Yuanhong instructed, "Go to the inner city and handle the deployment of the troops there." A part of the Gui Yuan Sect's troops was on top of Jiangning County-City's wall, and another part of the troops was in the inner city.

"Yes, Sovereign." Pang Shan bowed.

"Sovereign, if anyone fled in fear, what should be done?" He then asked.

Zhuge Yuanhong said apathetically, "The lower-ranking disciples who fled before the battle will be thrown into the dungeons! If they rebel, they will all be executed! If the Commander, Law Protector, or anyone ranked higher than the aforementioned positions in Gui yuan Sect tried to escape, their Dantian will be destroyed and they will be thrown into dungeons! The rebels will be executed as well.

"Yes, Sovereign," Pang Shan responded.

The higher a position one had in the sect, the more severe their punishment would be.

Actually, after Teng Qingshan and the others retreated to the Gui Yuan Sect yesterday, the Gui Yuan Sect had then speedily

assembled their troops. The noncombatant members among the fringed disciples were already dismissed. Most of the core disciples, the wives and children of the Black Armored Soldiers, and those whose strength was too weak had already left the Gui Yuan Sect and entered other parts of the County City.

Everyone else had to engage in battle!

"Commander Teng, have some lunch." A metal lunchbox was handed to Teng Qingshan. However, it was already past midday at this time.

Once he took the lunchbox, Teng Qingshan lifted open its lid and started to eat. And soon, he had completely emptied the lunchbox.

"It took one night for the Tie Yi Sect to be wiped out. As for Gui Yuan Sect..." When Teng Qingshan thought of how they would be fighting at close quarters with over a hundred thousand martial artists in six hours, his heart shivered slightly. However, it wasn't because he was afraid for himself. Rather, he was worried for his friends and family. "Will my cousin and Little Yu be able to stay alive in this melee?"

In the midst of this fight at close quarters against a magnificent army with thousands of men and horses, even Teng Qingshan didn't have a 100% certainty of being able to stay alive, let alone Qingyu and Qinghu.

As Teng Qingshan thought about this, he felt even more uneasy.

"Teacher, I'll go to the inner city to take a look." Teng Qingshan looked toward Zhuge Yuanhong. Previously, Zhuge Yuanhong wouldn't let Teng Qingshan leave his side for more than 10 Zhang.

Zhuge Yuanhong glanced over at Teng Qingshan. "Go. Come back in six hours."

"Okay."

Teng Qingshan nodded and ran toward the south.

The inner city and Jiangning County-City had two walls which matched up with each other. This was because the Gui Yuan Sect's inner city was positioned in the Jiangning County-City's southeastern district. So, the inner city's eastern and southern walls were part of the county city's eastern and southern walls.

Qing Hu Island's army, inside Gu Yong's large tent:

There was an enormous map hung on the side of the large tent. It was a detailed map of the entire Jiangning County.

Gu Yong was currently standing in front of the map, analyzing it attentively.

"After several thousand years, there have indeed been great changes." Gu Yong's brows knitted together as he carefully examined the map. "However, according to Emperor Yu's treasure map, this treasure should have been hidden in Jiangning County during this era... But as several thousand years have passed, the geography and land had changed it would definitely be really difficult to find." He carefully analyzed its geographical location.

"Father," a voice suddenly came in from outside the large tent.

Gu Yong turned around at once and said with a smile, "Shiyou, come in." However, when his gaze swept over a square table inside the large tent, his smile instantly disappeared. Gu Yong walked over to the square table with a cold expression. His gaze fell upon a sheet of paper on the table, and he picked up the paper.

"Father." Gu Shiyou walked in and looked at his father puzzledly.

Seeing the contents on of the paper, Gu Yong's expression turned unsightly. He then shouted loudly, "Shiyou, ask Elder Zhao, Elder Yuwen, Elder Hu, and Elder Wen to come see me."

"Yes, Father." Gu Shiyou was greatly startled.

Of the thirteen innate experts, five were Golden Dan Innate Experts. The five Golden Dan Innate Experts were Gu Yong and the four Elders which Gu Yong had just summoned.

"Why is Father suddenly gathering the four Law Enforcing Elders?" Gu Shiyou didn't understand, but he sensed that...

Something major had occurred!

...

In Gui Yuan Sect's inner city, there were 3,000 soldiers of the Black Armored Army, 30,000 soldiers of the City Guard Army, 4,000 core disciples, and 20,000 fringed disciples, causing the entire inner city to be filled with people.

Inside a watchtower, there were only two people, Zhuge Yun and Qingyu.

"Qingyu," Zhuge Yun, who was dressed in full body armor, held Qingyu's hand and said softly, "Six hours later, the sky will already be dark. When we engage in this battle tonight, there's a chance that we might not be able to stop them. If our Gui Yuan Sect really can't stop them and our troops begin falling apart... there will definitely be many people fleeing. It will be very chaotic, but you must remember to mix in with the large quantities of people and horse, and escape at that time."

Qingyu, who wore a suit of Red Scaled Battle Armor, said, "Leave with me."

The moment the battle armor made from the Red Scaled Beast was brought back, the Sovereign bestowed two sets to Teng Qingshan, who then gave them to his cousin, Teng Qinghu, and his younger sister, Qingyu.

"Enough!" Zhuge Yun shouted loudly in anger.

Qingyu was startled. Zhuge Yun was a very optimistic person; he rarely spoke in such a tone!

"Qingyu." Zhuge Yun's eyes opened wide, appearing as round as a ball. There were even visible veins in his eyes. "I'll speak with you honestly. When I think of what will happen six hours later, I'm afraid! One night. The Tie Yi Sect was destroyed in just one night.

Even if the Gui Yuan Sect can hold up by some fluke, there will definitely be many people who will die. I'm the Young Sovereign. I'm Zhuge Yuanhong's son! I can't run away! But you... Qingyu, I don't want to see you die. Do you understand?"

Qingyu's eyes reddened as she shook her head and said, "No, if you're to die, then we die together!"

"Qingyu, Little Yun," a voice rang out.

The two people turned to look. There was a black figure currently at the doorway of the watchtower.

"Brother!" Qingyu yelled.

"Little Yun." Teng Qingshan stared at Zhuge Yun. "Tonight, many people will die. I'll be in the outer city fighting at close quarters with the people of Qing Hu Island! According to the inner sect's rules, my younger sister is allowed to leave. However, because of you, she stubbornly wants to guard the city with you. So, you must protect her well!"

Amongst the core disciples, those who hadn't been in the sect for long and those who were weak were allowed to leave.

Qingyu had only entered the Gui Yuan Sect for approximately half a year. That period of time was too short, so she was allowed to leave the Gui Yuan Sect. However, because of Zhuge Yun... Qingyu refused to leave.

"Qingyu... will definitely stay alive and well. I promise you!" Zhuge Yun said while gritting his teeth.

Teng Qingshan cast a glance at Zhuge Yun and turned to look at Qingyu soon after.

"You're really headstrong," Teng Qingshan said with a sigh. He really didn't want his sister to be in such a dangerous place. He had even considered bringing his younger sister out by force. However, yesterday night, his younger sister's determined expression had caused him to change his plan... If it were him and Little Cat, she

would probably also refuse to leave despite being at death's door.

"Brother..." Qingyu's voice was really soft.

Teng Qingshan reached out a hand and rubbed her head just like he had done back when they were young.

"Remember, stay alive." Teng Qingshan's eyes turned somewhat red.

"Brother, we'll have breakfast together tomorrow." Qingyu's tears flowed out uncontrollably.

Teng Qingshan looked at Zhuge Yun and then at his younger sister.

"Mm, we'll have breakfast together tomorrow." Teng Qingshan then immediately turned and left... Perhaps, this might be the last time he would see his younger sister.

However, life was the course of events that resulted from one's choices.

Should one choose to leave their lover and protect their own life...

Or should they share the same fate as their lover?

Teng Qingshan respected his younger sister's choice.

"Fight. Let's fight!" Teng Qingshan left the inner city and returned to the outer city.

...

As time passed by, the winter day darkened very early. When it reached the five-hour mark, the sky became completely dark.

On the city wall, everyone held their weapon close at hand.

"It'll reach six hours very soon," Teng Qingshan said while looking below at that waterclock.

Suddenly, Teng Qingshan heard some footsteps approaching. He turned and saw Qinghu standing beside him.

"Cousin, if I never brought you here to the Gui Yuan Sect, you could be living very happily in the Teng Family Village. I suppose you'd even have a wife and a son. Do you regret it?" Teng Qingshan said gloomily.

However, Teng Qinghu grinned. "What's the point of saying all these? None of the men from our Teng Family Village are afraid of death! I do have some regrets. I regret never getting married. If I die, I won't be able to pass on the family name."

"However, I, Teng Qinghu, have also been the Black Armored Army's Centurion! It's still better than being an ordinary villager. F*ck it, let's kill ruthlessly tonight..."

Teng Qingshan patted Qinghu's shoulder without saying much.

Then Teng Qingshan's gaze fell to the waterclock below.

"The six hours are up!" Teng Qingshan's pupils contracted.

"Boom! Boom! Boom!" The drum rolls that sounded like the heavy pounding of a person's heart rang out. A clamor arose in Qing Hu Island's camp three Li away from the city.

On top of Jiangning County-City's wall, every soldier there held tightly onto the weapons in their hands.

"F*ck." Teng Qinghu gritted his teeth as he stared into the distance.

Teng Qingshan gripped the Reincarnation Spear and looked into the distance as well.

Chapter 193: Celebration

On top of the city wall stood endless rows of Gui Yuan Sect's warriors. They held cold-looking sabers and spears that reflected an icy glow in the dark night. In their bloodshot eyes, determination and madness were seen! They will fight to death for Gui Yuan Sect!

Fight!

Fight!

"Huh?" Teng Qingshan furrowed and saw that the Qing Hu Island's Silver Dragon Soldiers were vigorously riding their horses at full speed.

Over ten thousands horses galloped through the wind!

The earth trembled!

"What are they doing? Are they going to smash against the city wall?" Teng Qingshan felt confused and he wasn't the only one. Many men of Gui Yuan Sect were confused. The great number of the Silver Dragon Soldiers galloped for a distance of around one Li and suddenly... made a turn! They actually rode north west.

There are a few side roads on the public road outside the east gate of Jiangning County City.

One heads directly south to Heyuan City, Yanjiang City and other places in the south.

The second one heads all the way north till Xuyang County.

The third one heads northwest, it goes around Jiangning County City and all the way west to Yi City, Huafeng City and other places in the west.

"Do they intent to attack the north gate?" Teng Qingshan was shocked. If they route around, it is totally possible to attack the north gate and even the west gate! One should know that among

the four gates of Jiangning City, the east gate was the most heavily guarded one.

“Commander Zhang, lead one thousand five hundred of your black armored soldiers and assist the north gate.” Zhuge Yuanhong commanded.

“Yes.”

Zhang Feng chose one thousand five hundred black armored soldiers and speedily headed to the north gate.

As the great number of army galloped northwest, the thirteen innate experts of Qing Hu Island actually followed the army.

“Eh? Those thirteen are also going to the north gate. It looks like they are about to attack the north gate. Could it be that they have spies at the north gate?” Teng Qingshan felt puzzled as he thought. At the side, Zhuge Yuanhong immediately ordered, “Elder Feng, choose ten thousand city guards and rush to the north gate with me.”

With the command given, the men immediately speeded to their destination.

Teng Qingshan and the other two Law Enforcing Elders also rushed to the north gate with Zhuge Yuanhong.

As Teng Qingshan and the others ran along the city walls, Qing Hu Island’s men galloped along the roads outside the city. The men of Qing Hu Island have to take many detours on the royal road to reach their destination. Plus, the speed of the innate experts’ Qing Gong was even faster than the horses that Qing Hu Island’s men mounted.

It was a dark night. At the north gate of Jiangning County City, torches were placed on top of the wall

There were already five thousand city guards there already. The four innate experts of Gui Yuan Sect rapidly arrived the north gate.

“Teacher, Qing Hu Island wants to attack north gate? But why would they do this when they have thirteen innate experts... Do they have spies at the north gate?” Teng Qingshan asked worriedly.

“Just watch.” Zhuge Yuanhong was calm like usual.

Finally, the vanguard of Qing Hu Island charged to the side road two Li away from the north gate, but the weird thing was... they didn’t turn and charge towards the city gate. They continued west on the public road.

“They are attacking the west gate?” Yan Motian furrowed.

The three Law Enforcing Elders were confused and puzzled.

What is Qing Hu Island planning...?

“We just need to watch those thirteen innate experts.” Zhuge Yuanhong smiled calmly and said. Soon, Gu Yong and the his group of men were seen mounted on their galloping horses and following the army.

“Go to the west gate.” Zhuge Yuanhong ordered.

“Feng, lead your men and head to the west gate with me.” Zhang Feng and his one thousand five hundred soldiers had just ran all the way from the east gate to the north gate, but they could only continue and run towards the west gate.

.....

At the West Gate of Jiangning County City.

The black armored soldiers had great endurance and each one of them was dressed in heavy armor.

“F*ck, Qing Hu Island made us ran such a long way. We must kill all those bastards later.” Some of the black armored soldiers were burning with anger. Everyone was slightly worried because of the incoming army of Qing Hu Island, but although they were worried, none of them were afraid.

Even if they die, they will die on the battlefield!

However, who would have thought that the men of Qing Hu Island actually took one big detour around the city after they left the east gate and headed to west gate? Isn't it obvious that they were toying with the men of Gui Yuan Sect?

Teng Qingshan stood on top of the city wall and looked into the distance.

Qing Hu Island's vanguard had already charged towards the crossroad.

Clop! Clop! Clop! Clop!

The dense sounds of the hooves caused the earth to tremble. The Silver Dragon Soldiers actually continued riding their horses to the west.

"What are they playing at?" Teng Qingshan was so surprised that he stared with his mouth agaped.

"They are still heading west?" Dashing behind, Commander Zhang Feng was also astonished.

Jiangning County City wasn't that big. When they arrived the west gate, they still continued to move further west...

"Rumble~~~" The great number of army continued west at full speed.

On the wall of Jiangning County City, the soldiers were shocked. They had already prepared to face death and sworn to fight to the death.

"Too strange!" Yan Motian laughed and said, "That Gu Yong threatened us in the afternoon that he will burn Gui Yuan Sect to the ground six hours later, but what is he doing now? Running from the east gate to the west gate and still continued westward? Do they plan to run ten Li and then run back to attack us?"

If it's really that way, then the men of Qing Hu Island must not

be in their right mind!

“That is really weird.” The cold middle-aged man with a stern face smiled. “Let’s see which way the thirteen innate experts will go.”

A smile also appeared on Zhuge Yuanhong’s face.

Finally ——

Among the great army of Qing Hu Island, soldiers at the center galloped to the sideroad outside the city. Gu Yong and the other innate experts rode together and galloped towards the west as well.

If they continue west, they would reach Yi City and Huafeng City.

“Gu Yong!” A clear voice echoed between heaven and earth. Zhuge Yuanhong stood on top of the city wall and said with a smile, “Sorry, I can’t escort you out!”

“Haha, Zhuge Yuanhong, I underestimated you!”

Gu Yong’s deep-sounding voice also echoed in the air. The thirteen innate experts soon disappeared from sight, while the the great number of Qing Hu Island’s soldiers continued westward...

On top of the wall of the west gate, Teng Qingshan, Elder Yan, Elder Zhu, Commander Zhang Feng and many black armored soldiers looked at Sovereign Zhuge Yuanhong.

Every single one of them was dumbfounded!

Qing Hu Island retreated!

The army of Qing Hu Island retreated before they even attacked! Qing Hu Island mustered a large force and they even threatened them in the beginning, but they retreated cowardly in the end. If you aren’t stupid, you could tell through the conversation just now, especially the words “Zhuge Yuanhong, I underestimated you.”... that Qing Hu Island’s retreat definitely had something to do with Sovereign Zhuge Yuanhong!

“Are you all dumbfounded?!” Zhuge Yuanhong laughed. Zhuge Yuanhong, who had been calm this whole day, finally laughed heartily. “City guards, continue to patrol the city wall tonight. Food and wine will be given to everyone later. Of course, pay attention to the men of Qing Hu Island, in case they come back.”

“Yes, Sovereign.”

The guards all cheered.

“Black Armored Army, return to the inner city.” Zhuge Yuanhong grinned and said, “Gui Yuan Sect will celebrate tonight!”

Immediately, everyone on top of the city wall started to cheer.

……

Tonight, six thousand black armored soldiers, over ten thousand core disciples and tens of thousands fringe disciples began celebrating crazily. Everyone came back from hell and so they were all excited. Although everyone was prepared to fight to death, if they could protect Gui Yuan Sect without fighting, that was even better!

Brothers, friends, and relatives won’t have to die!

Teng Qingshan was happy as well.

Gui Yuan Sect was protected without sacrificing anyone. Teacher, Tian Dan and the other brothers in black armored army, and his family members won’t have to die!

……

In Gui Yuan Sect, the light of the torches illuminated the entire sect. Lanterns and torches were seen everywhere. Gui Yuan Sect was bustling with noise and excitement. It was even more lively than the yearly sacrifice! Gui Yuan Sect was safe! Because of that, each and every disciple was extremely excited.

“Haha, didn’t Gu Yong, the Island Lord of Qing Hu Island, say

arrogantly that he would raze Gui Yuan Sect to the ground in six hours?”

“Yes, that Gu Yong was extremely arrogant, but he still ran away cowardly in the end.”

“Our Sovereign is the powerful one! He didn’t make any move, but he still scared Qing Hu Island away.”

The disciples of Gui Yuan Sect also celebrated joyously.

“Brother!”

“Little Yu.”

Teng Qingshan hugged his sister Qingyu tightly. Being with his family made him happy and was a great feeling.

“It’s all thanks to Teacher that we could win this battle without sacrificing anyone.” Teng Qingshan looked into the distance at Sovereign Zhuge Yuanhong, who was drinking and chatting with some elders. Gu Yong, the Island Lord of Qing Hu Island mustered forces and gathered at the city gates. He even threatened the Gui Yuan Sect. It was definitely not an act! However, why did Qing Hu Island gallop to the west in the end? Why did they stopped battling? What did teacher do that the thirteen innate experts chose to retreat without even a fight?”

Teng Qingshan felt extremely puzzled.

……

As the Gui Yuan Sect was celebrating, the men of Qing Hu Island were advancing quietly in the night. The thirteen innate experts gathered together.

“That was really embarrassing! We of Qing Hu Island attacked with a great number of people and even threatened them. However, we retreated without even fighting, I am afraid…… this will make us the laughstock of the world.” Zhao Danchen, the silver haired handsome youth said bitterly.

Dressed in yellow cloak, Gu Yong shook his head and sighed, “It was me that underestimated Zhuge Yuanhong and Gui Yuan Sect.”

“Did that Zhuge Yuanhong really break through the Golden Dan of the Innate Realm and reach the profound Emptiness Realm?” Elder Hu, the middle-aged man dressed in grey, still couldn’t believe it. Gu Yong let out a sigh and said, “I was looking at the map in the tent at that time and a few moments ago that paper wasn’t on the table yet. Within seconds, the paper appeared on the table!”

“I was the only one in the tent! If he could put a paper on the table without me noticing and even leave silently, this meant that he… definitely broke through the Golden Dan of the Innate Realm.” Gu Yong sighed, “Therefore, I don’t doubt the words, ‘Both sides will suffer great loss’ written on the paper.”

“Since over thousand of years, none in the Gui Yuan Sect could break through the Golden Dan of the Innate Realm.” These Innate experts felt heavy-hearted.

Could it be that someone in this generation of the Gui Yuan Sect made a breakthrough?

“Don’t think too much about it.” Gu Yong said calmly, “We must admit that the Gui Yuan Sect is strong! However, Qing Hu Island gained abundantly through the obliteration of Tie Yi Hall. We found Emperor Yu’s Treasure Map. If we obtained Emperor Yu’s Treasure, Qing Hu Island might stand shoulder to shoulder with Mani Temple one day! According to the geographic changes that have happened for over thousand of years, I have checked carefully and confirmed that… the location of Emperor Yu’s Treasure should be the Great Yan Mountain at Yi City of Jiangning County.

Chapter 194: Realm of Emptiness

In the Gui Yuan Sect at Jiangning County City.

After the earlier hustle and bustle was over, it was already past midnight, and the Gui Yuan Sect was covered in complete darkness, save a few stars twinkling in the night sky. It was impossible to tell that it had just faced the threat of obliteration just by looking at such a peaceful scene.

In Zhuge Yuanhong's study.

The study was illuminated with the faint glow of a white candle. At this moment, there were four people in the study—Zhuge Yuanhong and the three Law Enforcing Elders!

"Why did Teacher want to meet us?" Teng Qingshan thought as he felt puzzled.

"Today was a day worth remembering." Elder Yan Motian's entire face was red, his whole body emanating the thick scent of alcohol as he said, "I would have never imagined that……this Gu Yong would actually lead his Great Army of Qing Hu Island only to flee like a coward in the end. Haha……This feels great! The only thing that makes me unhappy is those craven bastards! Two protectors and one lieutenant actually wanted to escape before the battle even started. Hmph!"

The cold-looking middle-aged man at the side nodded and said, "Those people should be executed!"

According to the Sovereign's command, if protectors, lieutenants, or anyone holding a higher position were to ever flee right before a fight, then their punishment would be the destruction of their Dantian, along with imprisonment for a long time. If they were to resist, then they would be sentenced to death! If those of a lower rank were to desert, then they would be imprisoned. If they resisted, then they would be put to death as

well!

However, the protectors, lieutenants, and elders knew of the obliteration of Tie Yi Hall, and naturally felt some fear.

“This could not be avoided,” Zhuge Yuanhong smiled calmly as he said, “It has been long since the Gui Yuan Sect faced such a predicament! Many protectors, lieutenants, elders have never experienced such a large crisis! When you have to make a decision between living or protecting your sect to death, choosing to save your own life is not such a strange thing!”

Teng Qingshan also nodded and said, “One can only see a person’s true self in times of crisis.”

“What you just said is correct,” Zhuge Yuanhong said as he looked at Teng Qingshan and said, “Qingshan, I heard you killed Qing Hu Island’s Tie Wanmao when you were at Yanjiang City! Is this true?”

“Yes,” Teng Qingshan nodded.

“Qingshan killed Tie Wanmao at the frontlines with only three moves!” Yan Motian praised, “His spear technique is really powerful.”

Zhuge Yuanhong smiled. “It looks like Qing Hu Island already knows that Qingshan reached the Innate Realm! Qingshan…….from now on, you must be wary of the men of Qing Hu Island.”

“Be wary of them?” Teng Qingshan felt his heart skip a beat.

The men of Qing Hu Island would try to kill him?

The cold-looking middle-aged man said apathetically, “Qingshan, Sovereign is right. You must watch out, as Gu Yong of Qing Hu Island is an extremely ruthless person! As of right now, only the Qing Hu Island and the Gui Yuan Sect are left in Yangzhou. As long as Gui Yuan Sect exists, then it would be like a fish bone stuck in their throat! As for you…a seventeen year-old innate expert? In

their eyes, you are a much bigger threat than I am."

"Qingshan, Elder Ni is right," Zhuge Yuanhong said solemnly, "Of course, as you have only just reached the Hollow Dan of the Innate Realm, they won't act now. If your improvement in the future is just as astonishing as it is now, the men of Qing Hu Island would probably use some underhanded methods to get rid of you!"

Yangzhou, one of the Nine Prefectures.

Qing Hu Island and Gui Yuan Sect were the only sects left in Yangzhou. The relationship of these two sects was obvious.

Although their relationship was calm and respectable on the outside, both sects would not hesitate to destroy the other.

"Teacher. I understand," Teng Qingshan nodded.

Right now, Teng Qingshan didn't pose a threat to Qing Hu Island. No matter how talented he was, Qingshan was still just a Hollow Dan innate expert. Qing Hu Island could easily kill him just by sending a few innate experts.

However, he would definitely a threat after dozen years!

"However, Qing Hu Island wouldn't dare to openly offend Gui Yuan Sect now." Zhuge Yuanhong said, "Besides, you have just reached the Hollow Dan of the Innate realm, so they are not in a hurry. They will probably make a move when you reach the True Dan of the Innate Realm. If you ever reach the Golden Dan of the Innate Realm……Qing Hu Island would no longer wait."

Zhuge Yuanhong smiled and said, "Of course, assassinating the talented disciple of other sects is a very embarrassing thing! As one of the Eight Supreme Sects, they usually would not do such a thing. However, if your cultivating speed is still as fast as before, they would have no choice but to do so."

Teng Qingshan also understood this principle.

Some people cultivated quickly at first but slowed down as time

went on.

If Teng Qingshan were to reach the True Dan of the Innate Realm at the age of fifty and the Golden Dan of the Innate Realm at the age of one hundred, then Qing Hu Island would not see Teng Qingshan as such a huge threat!

Assassinating the talented disciple of another sect was something that people looked down upon.

Qing Hu Island's reputation was very important. They would only shamelessly assassinate Teng Qingshan as a last resort, such as if his cultivation speed maintained its shocking speed. For example, if Qingshan kept cultivating at the same speed and reached the True Dan level at the age of twenty and the Golden Dan level at the age of thirty, then Qing Hu Island would be forced to act.

Of course, Gui Yuan Sect would do everything in their power to protect Teng Qingshan!

"This is a form of training for you too," Zhuge Yuanhong smiled and said, "With the protection of Gui Yuan Sect, the occasional assassination attempts would only bring about benefits to your cultivation."

One's state of mind would only be trained in times of crisis, making breaking through to the next realm much easier.

"Teacher, did you say that Qing Hu Island wouldn't dare to openly offend our Gui Yuan Sect?" Teng Qingshan asked."

"Qingshan, good question. I was also confused. Sovereign?" Yan Motian also looked at Zhuge Yuanhong and asked, "What did you do to terrify them to the extent that they actually fled without even attacking?" The cold-looking middle-aged man at the side also looked at the Sovereign puzzledly. The three Law Enforcing Elders had no idea.

"It's most likely that only the Sovereign knows this secret."

Zhuge Yuanhong glanced at the three and said, “You three might have made guesses in your hearts, but do not worry, as I will just tell you guys!”

“In our Gui Yuan Sect……” Zhuge Yuanhong said confidently, “there is an Emptiness Realm Expert!”

“An Emptiness Realm expert!”Elder Yan and Elder Yi both gasped. They both were astonished and happy!

“The Emptiness Realm?” Yet, Teng Qingshan was confused.

“Teacher, what is the Emptiness Realm?” Teng Qingshan asked.

Elder Yan, who was off to the side, said in surprise, “Qingshan, you don’t know?”

Teng Qingshan shook his head in response.

“Qingshan practices the«Dark Moon Spear Technique»,” Zhuge Yuanhong explained, “You two practice a Heaven Class secret technique. The last pages of the Heaven Class secret technique describe the Emptiness Realm, while Qingshan’s«Dark Moon Spear Technique» is only an Earth Class secret method and only explains the Golden Dan of the Innate realm.”

Hearing this, Elder Yan and Elder Ni understood.

Teng Qingshan then finally understood that the Realm of Emptiness was only described in the Heaven Class secret methods.

“Qingshan, among the Eight Supreme Sects, the Mani Temple is a Buddhist sect that practices the Sarira, pursues the Arhat, and tries to reach the Realm of Buddha. As for the other seven sects, their disciples train their Vitality into Qi, their Qi into Spirit, and their Spirit into Emptiness! Training one’s Vitality into Qi is what Postliminary Realm experts do, while Training one’s Qi into Spirit is what Innate Realm experts do. As for Training Spirit into Emptiness, this is the training of the Emptiness Realm!”

Teng Qingshan immediately understood.

“Qingshan, didn’t you ask me before what realm that Demonic Monk Xiang Fanchen of six hundred years ago was in? He was an Emptiness Realm Expert!” Zhuge Yuanhong exclaimed.

Teng Qingshan still remembered……

Teacher said that Xiang Fanchen, the Demonic Monk of Mani Temple, had been invincible under the heavens.

“An Emptiness Realm Expert who was invincible under the heavens? Teng Qingshan was surprised and said, “Now that Gui Yuan Sect has an Emptiness Realm Expert, wouldn’t that mean……”

Elder Ni interrupted and said, “Although Emptiness Realm Experts are quite rare in this world, it’s impossible to have only one or two. Otherwise… a single Emptiness Realm Expert would be able to conquer the entire world. It is rumored that each of the Eight Supreme Sects of the Nine Prefectures has an Emptiness Realm Expert!”

Zhuge Yuanhong hastily said, “Qingshan, remember that this is just a rumor. Mani Temple, the Ying Family, and Emperor Yu’s Hall were all created by powerful experts surpassing the Emptiness Realm, while the other five sects were created by Emptiness Realm Experts. However, the Emptiness Realm is just too difficult to attain! Therefore, whether or not each of the Eight Supreme Sects have an Emptiness Realm Expert remains unknown.”

Teng Qingshan furrowed, “This is a secret?”

“The lifespan of an innate expert is around two hundred years! As for an Emptiness Realm Expert, their lifespan is usually around five hundred years. No one is immortal.” Zhuge Yuanhong said, “Once a person reaches the Emptiness Realm, he can at most live to be five hundred years old! If the Emptiness Realm Expert of a sect died before the birth of a new Emptiness Realm Expert, then that would leave the sect extremely vulnerable to outside threats! ”

Hearing this, Teng Qingshan understood.

An Emptiness Realm Expert was similar to a nuclear weapon from Earth.

If a country had a nuclear weapon, then it could threaten other countries without fear of any consequences. However, if a country had no nuclear weapon, it would be bullied!

“Therefore, the existence of an Emptiness Realm Expert in our sect should be kept a secret! Zhuge Yuanhong smiled and said, “What just happened now is an example! Gu Yong found out that Gui Yuan Sect has an Emptiness Realm Expert, and now they wouldn’t ever dare to touch us for a few hundred years because the revenge of an Emptiness Realm Expert is horrifying!”

“Plus, with an Emptiness Realm Expert instructing the sect....then the possibility of another Emptiness Realm Expert in the sect during the next few hundred years would be greater. This is also why the Eght Supreme Sects are deeply rooted in stone.”

Teng Qingshan sighed as he listened.

The Emptiness Realm……

This was the absolute trump card of a sect! If a sect has an Emptiness Realm Expert, others wouldn’t dare to offend it. It’s no wonder that Qing Hu Island fled so cowardly! An Emptiness Realm Expert could live for five hundred years, which was a long time; however, it was rumored that each of the Eight Supreme Sects of the Nine Prefectures had an Emptiness Realm Expert. Again, this was just a rumor.

“Maybe one of the eight sects is a hollow radish,” Teng Qingshan said with a sigh of relief.

TL: Pretending to have something they don’t.

So that was why Teacher was so calm. He had a trump card!

The next morning, at the foot of the Great Yan Mountain.

The army of Qing Hu Island had advanced overnight and set up a Li wide camp at the foot of the Great Yan Mountain

In the big tent where the Island Lord Gu Yong was at.

“Island Lord, this Emperor Yu’s map was made a few thousand years ago. The geographical changes after that amount of time are just too great! It is now very difficult to find Emperor Yu’s Treasure.” The thirteen innate experts stood before the maps as they scrutinized and compared the pieces of the treasure map with a map from two thousand years ago.

This was even copied from the stone tablet.

Gu Yong said with a deep voice, “According to Emperor Yu’s Treasure Map, the location of the treasure should be in the lake! In addition, according to my research, the Great Yan Mountain used to be two separate mountain ranges separated by an enormous lake a long time ago. Who would have thought that after ten of thousands of years, the lake would disappear and the two mountain range would also become one!”

The treasure was in the lake.

The location of the lake should be today’s Great Yan Mountain.

But now, there is only one mountain, and no lake at all.

“Everyone, tell me, how should we find Emperor Yu’s Treasure?” Gu Yong questioningly looked at the other twelve innate experts.

Chapter 195: Catching people

The silver-haired handsome youth, Zhao Danchen frowned, “The lake is beneath the mountain. If Emperor Yu’s Treasure is hidden in the depths of the lake, then it has to be under the mountain range.”

“Uncle. The treasure has to be below the mountain. There is no question about it. However, the Great Yan Mountains stretch over hundreds of Li from north to south. For such a huge mountain range, even Emperor Yu wouldn’t have been able to flip it.” Elder Hu shook his head. All of the thirteen innate experts were quiet.

Ever since they figured out that the Gui Yuan Sect had a powerful individual in the Realm of Emptiness, their stress had skyrocketed.

A sect with an expert in the Realm of Emptiness was residing alongside their Qing Hu Island in Yangzhou. This was a major threat! There were countless practitioners in this world. The Eight Supreme Sects had quite a large number of innate experts who supported and ran the sects. They were the essence of the sects. As for the experts in the Realm of Emptiness...

If one sect could have a single person enter the Realm of Emptiness, then its existence would become indestructible. After all, even in all of the lands of the Nine Prefectures, there were probably at max only ten people who had entered the Realm of Emptiness!

Who would have thought there would be such a powerful individual in the Gui Yuan Sect!

As a result, Gu Yong desired the treasures of Emperor Yu even more than ever.

“Master,” The woman in purple robes spoke, ”The people who know Great Yan Mountain the best are the people who live there. This is especially true with the local villagers who make a living by

hunting. They enter the depths of this mountain all the time. They should know the mountain better than anyone else. If we ask them… We should be able to find the treasure quickly."

Gu Yong's eyes brightened, "Now that's a good idea!"

Zhao Danchen nodded his agreement, "Using the villagers to find the treasure is indeed a sound plan."

"Brother Lan! You go inform the army right now. We are leading the Silver Dragon Army into the mountains to gather villagers! Remember, the villagers have to be familiar with the depths of the mountains!" Gu Yong ordered.

"Understood, Master."

……

The orders were quickly carried out. The Silver Dragon Amy split into groups, each with a hundred riders. One after another, the small groups departed, heading south or north along the base of the Great Yan Mountain Range. They searched every village in their way.

"Go! Go! Go!"

The soldiers moved swiftly. Their horses' hooves drummed against the earth like thunder. Hundreds of Silver Dragon riders rode their war horses at top speed along the main roads. All of their black heavy armor were decorated with silver. The sight of this mighty army terrified any bystanders.

"There is a village in the front. Let's go!" One of the leaders yelled.

"Yes, Young Master."

The army quickly changed its course. The heavy thundering of the horse hooves had alarmed the villagers a while ago. Numerous militia in the village gripped spears tightly in their hands while the front gate was shut and locked.

“Humph!” The Young Sovereign Gu Shiyou charged in the front. As a cold light flashed across his eyes, the black spear in his hand turned into a dark shadow——

Puff!

The spearhead pierced through the closed gate doors in a split second, shattering the gate latch. In the next second, the mount crashed into the gate, sending the gate doors swinging open forcefully.

“Everyone watch out!” The clansmen in the village all scrambled around to take cover.

“Wu.” The hundreds of riders only stopped their horses after they had stormed into the spacious training grounds of the village.

Gu Shiyou glanced at the fearful villagers around him and ordered harshly, “Get your clan’s chief over here!”

Soon a muscular man holding an iron spear and wearing a pelt robe stepped out from the crowd. His hair was as messy as a haystack. He spoke respectfully, “Lord! What orders do you have for Tie Jia Village?”

“Listen up. Get your three best hunters out. We are taking them with us on a trip,” Gu Shiyou ordered coldly, but his glare was colder, “Remember, I want the three best hunters! If you lie to me, humph…I believe Qing Hu Islandwill only need a few minutes to completely annihilate the very existence of your little village. “

That threat turned many clansmen’s faces as white as the newly fallen snow. The children were terrified of making even the slightest sound.

The chief’s heart sank at the name of Qing Hu Island.

Just by observing the invaders’ armor and horses, the chief already realized that they were nothing like the White Horse Gang. The White Horse Gang was absolutely nothing compared to these people in front of him, no matter how he looked at it. To destroy

his entire village...a few minutes should definitely be enough for these riders.

“Thank you, exalted guests of the Qing Hu Island, for valuing the men of my Tie Jia Village. Lao San! Tiger! Iron Head! You three go with the officials of Qing Hu Island!” The chief immediately replied.

Upon the chief’s order, three strong men walked out. Gu Shiyou glanced at the three.

“You three, get on the horses of my soldiers! Quick! Get on there!” Gu Shiyou ordered.

Even though the three hunters were cautious, they still picked three Silver Dragon soldiers hurriedly and got on their horses.

“Let’s go!” Gu Shiyou shouted, turning his horse.

Immediately, hundreds of riders stormed out of the small village and vanished along the main road, leaving the villagers fearing for the fate of their three clansmen..... This was the way of this chaotic world. One should be satisfied that his or her clan still existed at all.

.....

Gu Shiyou and his men rode along the foot of Great Yan Mountain northwestward. They captured 27 men in total on their way. They grabbed three hunters from every village.

The 27 hunters on the war horses running on the main roads were all in distress. None of the 27 were cowards, but who didn’t tremble in fear upon hearing any mention of Qing Hu Island?

In their eyes, the Gui Yuan Sect was the god of Jiangning County City. However, Qing Hu Island was much more powerful than the Gui Yuan Sect. For Qing Hu Island to kill the feared

White Horse Gang, it would be as easy as crushing an ant, let alone them.

In front of the people of Qing Hu Island, these brave men had no choice but to bow their heads and obey their orders like obedient dogs.

“Stop!” Gu Shiyou yelled out another order.

Almost instantaneously, hundreds of soldiers all stopped. Gu Shiyou turned to look at the wary hunters, “Let me ask all of you! At the foot of the Great Yan Mountain, which village’s hunters are the best?”

The hunters exchanged glances with each other.

“Speak up!” Gu Shiyou’s face darkened.

“Within tens of miles of here, the best hunters are, without a doubt, from Teng Jia Village!” A lean man finally spoke up, “Most of our hunters don’t even dare entering the depth of Great Yan Mountain. But it’s different for the hunters of Teng Jia Village! No, lord. There is nowhere in the Great Yan Mountain too dangerous for those hunters.”

The bald guy right next to the lean man continued, “The men of Teng Jia Village are the best you will ever see here. That year, thousands of mounted gangsters attacked the village, screaming doom for the village. Guess what? Teng Jia Village send them stumbling back, crying for their mothers.”

“Even the White Horse Gang doesn’t dare to ask Teng Jia Village for a protection fee.” All the men suddenly spoke up. Anyone could hear the obvious respect and envy they had for Teng Jia Village.

“There is a great hero in that village. He is called Teng Qingshan! He is a commander of the Gui Yuan Sect’s Black Armored Army. When he was only ten, Teng Qingshan killed a hoard of wolves in the Great Yan Mountain like cutting grass.”

Teng Qingshan was something one must mention if one was to talk about Teng Jia Village.

“En?” Gu Shiyou frowned a little. Soon a grin snuck its way onto

his face. Gu Shiyou thought to himself, “What a coincidence. That Teng Qingshan indeed came from a village in the mountains of Yi City. To think I would actually find it, what a nice coincidence.” Gu Shiyou knew quite a bit about Teng Qingshan.

“You guys point the way. We are going there right now.” Gu Shiyou commanded

“Sir, with all due respect, that’s the home of one of the Black Armored Army’s commanders.” All the captured men looked at Gu Shiyou worriedly.

“I commanded you to point the way.” Gu Shiyou bellowed.

“Yes.” The men bowed their heads. They didn’t dare to defy the orders of this Young Sovereign.

The horse hooves flew along the main roads again. Gu Shiyou took a look at the scenery spreading out in his sight. The mountain rose up on his side, and the other side, the farm lands extended out.

“Teng Qingshan grew up here?” Gu Shiyou thought, “A nobody from nowhere in the mountains!” In the past, when Gu Shiyou compared himself with Teng Qingshan, Gu Shiyou still held some pride in himself. Now knowing that Teng Qingshan was already an innate expert, Gu Shiyou had nothing but envy and jealousy!

Growing up in the middle of nowhere, Teng Qingshan entered the Gui Yuan Sect at the age of sixteen. So how did he become an innate expert at the mere age of seventeen? Gu Shiyou simply couldn’t make any sense out of it.

On the other hand, Gu Shiyou missed something. Gu Shiyou might want to be famous, but Teng Qingshan was different.

Teng Qingshan’s first priority was to ensure his clansmen, the people in Teng Jia Village, could live a prosperous and peaceful life. To do so, he knew he needed to be powerful since there were two thousand clansmen behind him. Reaching the summit of fame

and glory was his secondary goal.

……

Teng Jia Village, the biggest village within tens of miles.

“Hei!”

“Ha!”

A large group of muscular men were practicing the “Tiger Fist” passed down from Teng Qingshan. Some were wearing a single thin piece of clothing, while others’ upper bodies were completely naked all in the dead of the winter! Normally, practicing their skills with the spears exhausted them after a long time, but not practicing “Tiger Fists.” Practicing this only made them feel more energized.

Now, Teng Jia Village had a large group of people who possessed monstrous strength.

The weapons warehouse of Teng Jia Village.

After the expansion, the weapons warehouse was large enough for ten blacksmiths to work at the same time.

“Steady! A’gen, when you swing the hammer, make sure you are steady, not fast. Every swing should land firmly.” Teng Yongfan wore a thin shirt with his hands behind his back. He paced the space between the furnaces, occasionally shouting out instructions. The entire weapons warehouse was in full swing.

There were about twenty or so people in the weaponry warehouse.

“Stop!” Teng Yongfan suddenly shouted.

Everyone in the warehouse, from the ones moving supplies to the ones tempering the steel, stopped. A silence settled down in the room. Everyone felt the trembling ground in this silence.

“Horses! Such a heavy sound, I can even feel the ground trembling. Those war horses should be carrying some heavy loads

and racing pretty fast." Teng Yongfan frowned.

"Wait here. I will be right back." Teng Yongfan grabbed an iron spear and walked out swiftly.

"Understood, Master."

A young man from the clan rushed to Teng Yongfan, who was not far from the warehouse. The man yelled, "Chief! There is a huge group of armed riders outside. Guessing from their horses and gears, they should be on par with brother Qingshan's Black Armored Army. However, they are definitely not the Black Armored Army."

Teng Jia Village had settled down long ago. The former chief Teng Yunlong resigned to enjoy the peace of retirement. Teng Yongfan inherited the title of the clan chief.

Teng Yongfan's son was a commander of the Black Armored Army. He was an excellent blacksmith himself. After he had some achievements in practicing the Tiger Fist, his own personal power had grown tremendously. Teng Yongfan was unquestionably the best person for the position of clan chief.

An ominous feel rose in Teng Yongfan's heart, "Not the Black Armored Army? Not good!" He ran towards the training field without any delay.

Chapter 196: Teng Yongfan

At the training field of Teng Jia Village.

The villagers had just stopped practicing the Tiger Fist, and steam was coming out of their bodies. After the heavy snow, the cold river froze. However, the men of the Teng Clan were obviously strong as they held their Red Tassel Spears and stared at the outsiders in the center of the training field.

There were over a hundred heavy armored cavalry.

“Yes, not bad.” Gu Shiyou was mounted high on his horse. He scanned the men of the Teng Jia Village and the frightened, anxious women and children. The corner of his mouth curved into a smile as he said, “As expected of the number one village within a distance of over ten Li. Half-naked in this cold winter.....Not bad.”

Although Gu Shiyou said so, he looked down on these uncultured people. As the young Island Lord of the Qing Hu Island, he could burn a village like this to the ground with just one word!

If it was a normal village, he could slaughter it if he wanted to.

However, this was Teng Qingshan’s hometown!

If this was known by the world, the world would say that Gu Shiyou envied Teng Qingshan and vented his anger on Teng Qingshan’s family members. Gu Shiyou would be mocked by the world!

Such trouble should not involve family members!

This was a principle that the cultivators believed. If you seek revenge for a proper reason and distinguish clearly between kindness and hatred, no matter how many people you kill, the world would say nothing.

“Teng Qingshan actually grew up in a poor uncultured place like this?” Gu Shiyou asked himself.”

At this moment, all the clan members dashed out from the corners of Teng Jia Village.

“My Lord!” A deep-sounding voice of an old man rang.

Gu Shiyou turned and saw that the one talking was a strong, silver-haired elder. This was the old chief of Teng Jia Village, Teng Yunlong. At this moment, Teng Yongfan finally arrived and ran to Teng Yunlong’s side.

“Master!” Teng Yongfan whispered.

Teng Yunlong glanced at Teng Yongfan meaningfully. Teng Yongfan had just assumed the position of chief. In the past, the dealings of such large matters were handled by Teng Yunlong.

“I wonder why you all came to Teng Jia Village? If there’s a request, the clan members of Teng Jia Village will do it with all our effort.” Teng Yunlong smiled. As an old man who had lived in this chaotic world for almost his whole life, he could tell that the heavy armored cavalrymen were not weaker than the Black Armored Army at all.

Therefore, he didn’t dare take any chances.

“You are the chief?” Gu Shiyou looked at Teng Yunlong.

“Indeed.” Teng Yunlong was in front of his disciple, Teng Yongfan. At this moment, Teng Yongfan was anxious……He knew that if someone was to be in trouble, the chief would be the first. Teng Yunlong answered that he himself was the chief for Teng Yongfan’s sake.

“Listen carefully.” Gu Shiyou scanned the group of people below him and said, “Choose the three best hunters of your Teng Jia Village and obey Qing Hu Island’s orders temporarily!”

“Lord, may I ask? What will our three clan members be doing?” Teng Yunlong asked.

“Shut up!”

Gu Shiyou reprimanded him, and a cold gleam flashed across his eyes as he said, “Just listen obediently. If I didn’t ask you to ask a question, you are not allowed to ask! If you ask again……I don’t mind killing some people!” The Silver Dragon Army soldiers behind Gu Shiyou held their long spears as they looked at the Teng Jia Villagers with eyes full of bloodlust.

“Yes, yes.” Teng Yunlong hastily responded.

“Three best hunters of the Teng Jia Village!” Gu Shiyou turned and cast a glance at the other hunters on the horses of the Silver Dragon Army soldiers. He then continued, “However, I have heard from the hunters of the other villages that the hunters of Teng Jia Village are the best. The leader of the hunters is named Teng Qinghao, and the number one expert in Teng Jia Village is Teng Yongfan! Therefore, these two must come with us!”

When Teng Qingshan was young, his father, Teng Yongfan was the number one expert in the village.

After practicing the Tiger Fist, Teng Yongfan’s ability was second only to Teng Qingshan. After Teng Qinghu and Teng Qingshan went to the Gui Yuan Sect, Teng Yongfan naturally became the number one expert in the village.

“Brother Fan.” The facial expression of Yuan Lan, who was behind Teng Yongfan, immediately changed drastically.

Teng Yongfan held his wife’s hand and appeared very calm.

“Lord.” Teng Yunlong became nervous and said, “Teng Yongfan is the number one expert of Teng Jia Village indeed, but he is also the number one blacksmith in my village. Therefore, he does not enter the mountain. He is not a hunter.” Teng Yunlong’s words were not entirely true. Although Teng Yongfan was a blacksmith, he did join the hunting squadron when he was young.

He only stopped joining the hunting squadron when his blacksmithing skills became better and better.

“Whew!”

A black illusion appeared.

Teng Yunlong’s facial expression changed, and he only had the chance to block his chest. He felt a tremendous pain in his hands, and the sounds of bones breaking rang.

“Pa!”

Teng Yunlong was thrown into the air like a ragged sandbag.

“Master!”

“Old Chief!” Anxious voices resounded. There were two young villagers at the location where Teng Yunlong fell, and those two young villagers immediately held onto the old chief.

“Clang!”

“Clang!”

Seeing this, many men in the village became furious and actually wore their heavy armor. They looked at the outsiders with eyes full of bloodlust. When Teng Jia Village was weak, they dared to fight the mounted bandits to death. Now, Teng Jia Village was strong……Although they were shocked and afraid of the power of the heavy armored cavalrymen, if a fight were to happen, no one would be afraid!

“Master.”

“Father!”

Teng Yongfan and Yuan Lan ran to Teng Yunlong’s side. At this moment, blood trickled down the corner of Teng Yunlong’s mouth. His hands trembled, and the white bones within his bloody hands could be seen.

“Cough, cough……” Teng Yunlong coughed and forced a smile, “Yongfan, Yuan Lan, I am alright…… thanks to the cultivation of the Tiger Fist. Although my hands are disabled, my life is saved.” After Teng Yunlong practiced the Tiger Fist, his body and internal

organs became strong. He resolved the force of the strike through his hands.

Although he was injured, Teng Yunlong's life was not taken.

"Teacher!" Teng Yongfan's eyes reddened as he was almost crying. The hands of his master, Teng Yunlong, were disabled!

"You are over forty years old. Don't be like this. When I was young, your grandpa and I killed those beasts at the Great Yan Mountain. Didn't we continue to kill those fierce beasts even when we were heavily injured?" Teng Yunlong smiled as he calmed Teng Yongfan. As an old man, Teng Yunlong's ability to withstand forces was stronger.

"Old man, I just said that you can only listen! I did not take your life this time, but next time……" Gu Shiyou still said coldly.

However, he secretly felt shocked.

In order to make the men of Teng Jia Village fear him, he casually struck the old man with his spear. Although it was just a simple hit, he used his full strength. He guessed that the old fellow would definitely die, but this old chief of Teng Jia Village was stronger than he had expected.

"Do the men of Teng Jia Village want to fight with the Silver Dragon Army of Qing Hu Island?" Gu Shiyou asked as he scanned the furious men of Teng Jia Village. The injured Teng Yunlong, who was struggling to stand up through the support of Teng Yongfan, stood up and smiled. "How would a poor village have the audacity to fight the men of Qing Hu Island? Wouldn't that be seeking death?"

Gu Shiyou smiled.

Teng Yunlong immediately continued, "Lords of Qing Hu Island, you guys might not know that Teng Qingshan, the number one commander of the Gui Yuan Sect's Black Armored Army, is my grandson!"

The training field of Teng Jia Village became quiet.“It’s alright if you make Teng Jia Village send three hunters; however, Teng

“It’s alright if you make Teng Jia Village send three hunters; however, Teng Yongfan is Qingshan’s father. Plus, he is a blacksmith and not a hunter! So it doesn’t make sense for him to follow the lords of Qing Hu Island.” Teng Yunlong stared at Gu Shiyou. In a clan, the chief was the most important. How could the chief be taken away easily?

Gu Shiyou narrowed his eyes as he thought,

“This old fellow is so troublesome.”

If Teng Jia Village had not mentioned Teng Qingshan, he could have pretended to not know and take Teng Yongfan away.

However, Teng Jia Village actually mentioned it!If the news that he forcefully took the father of an innate expert to do hard labos was spreade out all over the world, it would sound very bad.

“Qing Hu Island is one of the Eight Supreme Sects of the Nine Prefectures!” Teng Yunlong said to himself, “According to the books, the greater the sect, the more they value their reputation. If I did not say Qingshan’s name, they might pretend to not know. Now that I said it, they should restrain slightly.”

“The Gui Yuan Sect’s Commander Teng?”

A surprised expression appeared on Gu Shiyou’s face as he scanned the surroundings, “I really didn’t expect that this Teng Jia Village was the hometown of Teng Qingshan.”

“However!”

Gu Shiyou’s face became cold again. “I must take Teng Qinghao and Teng Yongfan away. This is a military order! A military order is like a mountain. Qing Hu Island is the number one sect of Yangzhou. It is impossible to change a military order just for a commander of the Gui Yuan Sect. As for the fact that Teng Yongfan is the father of Teng Qingshan.....I will tell this to the

general of my Silver Dragon Army! If the general changes the military order, Teng Yongfan will be sent back.....But as for now, he must come with us!”

“All those who disobey will be killed!” A fierce coldness was seen in Gu Shiyou’s eyes as he roared.

Teng Yunlong felt his heart sink.

He understood..... The men of Qing Hu Island were really taking Teng Yongfan away! If Qing Hu Island was determined to take Teng Yongfan away, what excuse couldn’t be used?

.....

The people in the training field became restless. Many clan members were angry.

“I will go with you.” Teng Yongfan stood up.

Many people became worried.

“Brother Fan.” Yuan Lan grabbed his hand. She was so worried that she was almost crying. Teng Yongfan turned his head and smiled as he caressed his wife’s face, “Lan, you know I have to go!”

Tears flowed down Yuan Lan’s cheek.

He understood! It was obvious that the men of Qing Hu Island wanted to take Teng Yongfan away. If he did not obey, many people would die today.

“Fan, Qinghao, I will go with you guys.” A middle-aged man with gray hair at his temples walked out with a bow and arrows on his back and a long spear in his hand.

“Father.” Teng Qinghao looked at the middle-aged man with a surprised expression.

It was Teng Yongxiang, the Spear Art Master of the clan. Teng Yongxiang was already over fifty years old. Because his wife died of a sickness long ago, Teng Yongxiang valued his son, Qinghao, greatly. The men of Qing Hu Island did not come with friendly

intentions, so he was worried about his son.

“Yes.”

Teng Yongfan and Teng Yongxiang glanced at each other. They had been together for more than many years. If they went together, they wouldn’t give up easily when they faced a problem.

“Qinghao.”

“Father.”

Teng Qinghao’s wife, young son, and daughter held on to Teng Qinghao. Teng Qinghao caressed his kids’ heads as he said, “Listen to your mother when I am not at home, okay?”

“I know, Father.” The eyes of both his son and daughter were filled with tears.

“Get on the horse.” Gu Shiyou frowned and yelled.

Teng Yongfan, Teng Yongxiang, and Teng Qinghao smiled at their clan members. Among the three, Teng Qinghao and Teng Yongxiang carried bows and arrows on their back, while Teng Yongfan held a Damascus Steel Spear. The three then separated, and each mounted a horse with a soldier of Qing Hu Island.

“Depart!” Gu Shiyou ordered.

One hundred heavy armored cavalry units then averted and left at lightning speed, leaving the worried clan members of Teng Jia Village.

Chapter 197: Let the madness take over!

Teng Qingshan, who was at Jiangning County, knew nothing about the things happening in the Great Yan Mountain of Yi City.

In the Teng Mansion at Jiangning County.

In the pavilion, Teng Qingshan was in a azure long cloak and sat quietly before the stone table. A thick thread-bound book was placed on the table——«Dark Moon Spear Technique», and the book was opened to the latter half.

“According to the description of the «Dark Moon Spear Technique», the Minute Subtlety in the Hollow Dan of the Innate Realm has two parts. As my Vermillion Tiger Roar has extremely high requirements regarding the Innate True Origin, it’s obvious that I have understood the Minute Subtlety in my own body.” Teng Qingshan understood this.

The realm of the Minute Subtlety was divided into two steps——

One was the Minute Subtlety of your own body while the other was the Minute Subtlety of space!

“According to the book, ‘Spirit’ can leave the body and diverge to a distance of one Zhang. If you can continue for fifteen minutes, then it is considered a success. To be able to attain the Minute Subtlety of space……the understanding of your true self and selflessness is the most crucial point.” Teng Qingshan closed his eyes and tried to push his mind out of his body. As Teng Qingshan had the experience of controlling flying knives, he easily moved his mind out of his body.

However, in the past, his mind had something to rely on——the flying knife!

Now, it was empty.

“Eh?”

Teng Qingshan frowned and opened his eyes, “This ‘Spirit’ doesn’t have an item to rely on, and it only scatters around the body, but the consumption of energy is shocking.” It was just a short while, but Teng Qingshan already felt slightly dizzy. It was like the time of hitman training, when he was so hungry that he almost fainted.

“The consumption rate should not be that fast.” Teng Qingshan tried again.

Although the battle between Qing Hu Island and the Gui Yuan Sect did not really start, it gave Teng Qingshan great pressure.

It was obvious——

He used up all his power to fight a True Dan Innate Expert! But in this huge land of the Nine Prefectures, his own ability could only keep himself out of risk. If something happened, it would be difficult to help. This unknown mental pressure caused Teng Qingshan to work even harder, so he wanted to make a breakthrough as early as possible.

First, he now wanted to cultivate from the Hollow Dan of the Innate Realm to the True Dan of the Innate Realm!

The second was to create an Internal Martial Arts technique that was better than the «Godly Tiger Form Technique» and any other techniques: A technique that could make the body even stronger! However, it was too difficult.

……

Qingyu walked past the courtyard cheerfully and saw Teng Qingshan in the pavilion. She then said to herself, “Brother is really not tired……Doesn’t he know that he should accompany Little Qing if he has nothing to do?” As soon as she thought of Zhuge Qing, Qingyu laughed secretly. “Hmph, just wait a month, when Father and Mother will be here during the Yearly Sacrifice. By that time, Father and Mother would definitely value Little Qing

greatly with her culinary skills, character, and appearance. Hehe..... Brother, by that time, Father and Mother will scold you, so let's see how you will react."

"Just one more month.....Yes, I really miss Father and Mother."

Qingyu then stopped smiling as she stared to the west.

She had been with her parents since she was young. She had a benevolent, kind mother and a gentle but stately father. She had eaten food made by her mother for over a dozen years.....Qingyu really missed her parents.

"Just wait one more month," Qingyu said to herself.

The center of the nine prefectures, Yuzhou!

In the Hebei County City of Yuzhou.

Hebei did not snow a few days ago, but it did today. The snowflakes cascading were like light feathers and covered the ground. This morning, when the civilians of Hebei County opened their windows, they found that it was already a world of snow, and the snow had accumulated three Chi deep.

Through this, you could see how heavy the snow was!

In a study at the Wan Mansion in Hebei County City, eighteen people gathered here.

There were elders, young men, and women among the eighteen people.....

A paper was placed on the desk in the study, and there were many words written on it.

The letter mainly talked about the obliteration of Tie Yi Hall! In addition, that Qing Hu Island attacked the Gui Yuan Sect but failed. They rerouted and camped at the Great Yan Mountain of Yi City.

.....

Silence!

After they read the letter, they became quiet for a long time.

“Everyone.” The women wearing a flower, cotton-padded jacket said, “The Sovereign and the others have died. The most important thing to do now is to rebuild Tie Yi Hall. Fortunately, copies of the secret arts and methods of our Tie Yi Hall hd been moved here already. Now, everyone, just prepare according to the plan.....”

It would take a very long time for a sect to build its foundation.

For example, good achievement would only be attained by taking in good and talented disciples with good understanding and endurance. However, this was a long process. One should know that only one innate expert would appear in ten million! If Tie Yi Hall wanted an innate expert, the only way was to.....accept numerous disciples.

Just cast a big net and catch the fish. If the number of disciples increased as time passed, maybe an innate expert would appear tens or hundreds of years later.

“Qing Hu Island!” A silver-haired elder with bloodshot eyes clenched his teeth and said, “Tie Yi Hall will get revenge for all the disciples who died! Even if it takes a hundred years or even a thousand years, we will get our revenge eventually!”

“We must get our revenge.”

These eighteen people were the most loyal ones chosen by Tie Yi Hall. They were the eighteen people most trusted by the Sovereign of Tie Yi Hall, Nie Rong.

The woman wearing the flowery, cotton-padded jacket said as coldness flashed in her eyes, “According to the plan, Tie Yi Hall will no longer be called Tie Yi Hall. It will be called the Xue Yi Sect! The Xue Yi Sect will never forget this hatred, no matter how many years pass!”

TLN: Xue Yi Sect. “Xue” means Blood.

“Martial Sister Hua.” A slender young man said, “We should choose a location to build the Xue Yi Sect and take in disciples..... One step at a time. The Xue Yi Sect can only be qualified as an excellent small sect when the first innate expert appears, but the birth of an innate expert will take many years. If it can be achieved within a hundred years, then that will be considered good.”

The eighteen people knew of this.

It was extremely difficult for Tie Yi Hall to rise up again after obliteration. However, since they were still here, it meant that there was still fire.....there was still hope!

“Martial Sister Hua, we were destined to sacrifice our whole lives for the sect and live ordinary lives.” The slender young man said with a deep voice. He was at the pinnacle of his youth, but he had to abandon his wife and change his name for his sect. He was willing for his sect, but he still had a sense of bitterness in his heart!

“We can still get our revenge on Qing Hu Island once, and it won’t reveal us.” The slender young man said.

The other seventeen men looked at him.

“Martial Brother, tell us.” The woman wearing the flowery, cotton-padded jacket said.

“According to Emperor Yu’s Treasure Map, one must have one of the nine cauldrons to enter and search for the treasure. Otherwise, it’s death.” The slender young man said, “We all know this! However, when the Xue Yi Sect searches for Emperor Yu’s Treasure, it will be hundreds of years from now.....Therefore, I think we should tell the world——The great army of Qing Hu Island is camped at the Great Yan Mountain because Emperor Yu’s Treasure is at the Great Yan Mountain!”

“Yes.”

The eyes of the elder wearing the white fur coat brightened. He hastily said, “That great army of Qing Hu Island is camping at the Great Yan Mountain. Once the news spreads..... It will attract many powerful ones! Like Emperor Yu’s Hall! Emperor Yu was their Martial Ancestor, so would the Emperor Yu’s Hall give up? Once Emperor Yu’s Hall steps in, the great army of Qing Hu Island will definitely be at a disadvantage!”

“If the news spreads, then all the supreme sects will probably send men to the Great Yan Mountain!”

“However, if the supreme sects do not believe the news completely and do not dispatch enough people, the great army of Qing Hu Island will be at an advantage! A battle will definitely occur for Emperor Yu’s Treasure.....When Qing Hu Island experiences losses due to fighting, they will have no choice but to compromise with those sects, but then all of them will realize in despair.....that those who entered the maze of the Emperor Yu’s Treasure without one of the nine cauldrons will die!”

“Good!”

“This will not only cause many men from Qing Hu Island to die due to Emperor Yu’s Hall, but also the men from the other sects.”

“As for the other sects, they covet Emperor Yu’s Treasure. Therefore, they can’t blame anyone even if they died!”

.....

These eighteen people had just experienced the obliteration of their own sect; thus, they felt great when they thought of the deaths of the supreme sects’ experts. For revenge.....these eighteen people began spreading the news in many places, spreading the news of Emperor Yu’s Treasure.

It was obvious.....

A huge storm was coming!

In this chaotic world, everyone had different destinies and

encounters. Each sect also had different destinies and encounters.

For instance, the small sects of Xuyang County might be obliterated at any time. Now that Qing Hu Island united Xuyang County, it was the end for all the small sects there.

Nobody paid attention to those small sects!

The obliteration of Tie Yi Hall drew the attention of the people in this world because Tie Yi Hall was a lot more powerful than the small sects of Xuyang County! In comparison, Tie Yi Hall had existed for over a thousand years and was more fortunate than the small sects of Xuyang County.

……

Some consider themselves with bad fortunes, but there are people with even worst fortunes.

Some consider themselves with good fortunes, but there are people with even better fortunes.

The small sects of Xuyang County envied Tie Yi Hall and the Gui Yuan Sect.

Tie Yi Hall and the Gui Yuan Sect envied the powerful Qing Hu Island. They hoped that they themselves could overtake Qing Hu Island and become number one in Yangzhou.

As for Qing Hu Island? Qing Hu Island hoped to stand shoulder to shoulder with Mani Temple! Even if they couldn't be on a par with the Mani Temple, they could at least overtake Emperor Yu's Hall and the Ying Family!

……

As for individuals.

Gu Shiyou, the young Island Lord of Qing Hu Island, was of good descent and had been under the spotlight as the talented one since he was young. However, when Teng Qingshan rose to fame abruptly, he started to feel psychologically unbalanced.

Teng Qingshan was already very strong. He could fight the True Dan innate experts at the age of seventeen, but he would not feel satisfied. He would continue to pursue the culminating point.

……

Teng Yongfan was an ordinary man. When he was young, he hoped to have an excellent son. He didn't wish his son would be better than Teng Qinghu, but he hoped that his son wouldn't be too inferior when compared to Teng Qing hu. God gave him a son, and his son's performance extended far beyond his expectations! His son made Teng Jia Village so strong that the mounted bandit gangs had no audacity to offend them.

If Teng Qingshan did not exist, many clan members would die when the mounted bandit gangs fought for power, even if Teng Jia Village was not obliterated.

However……

It was also because of Teng Qingshan that Gu Shiyou wanted to take him away forcefully today!

So was Teng Qingshan's existence good or bad?

In the heart of Teng Yongfan, an honest and simple man, the answer was obvious——He was very proud to have a son like this! What did men living on this earth wish for? A son like this could lead the people of Teng Jia Village out, and Teng Jia Village would be envied by the civilians of other villages.

This was enough.

In this chaotic world, people died ever yday! Everyone was important in the eyes of their own family members. No one was more precious than another. Even superior Lords of a clan, Sovereigns, and Heavenly Ranking masters would die if they had to die!

This was the chaotic world.

Because Teng Yunlong understood this, he endured when many women of Teng Jia Village were taken by the gangs of mounted bandits!

Because Teng Yongfan understood this, he went with the men of Qing Hu Island!

Teng Qingshan also understood this and could only hold the long spear in his hand and fight the enemy when Qing Hu Island attacked.

……

Emperor Yu’s Treasure!

This was a treasure that could make an individual stronger and a sect richer and more powerful. It was obvious….that once this news spread, a bloody storm would come!

Chapter 198: Bottomless Pit

A group of heavily armored soldiers escorted the nine hunters to the Great Yan Mountain. Wherever the group of people passed, the nearby thorns and weeds trembled, causing the accumulated snow to fall.

“Awooooo~~”

The sounds of faraway wolves howling into the night sky would occasionally reach their ears.

“Those beasts are doomed,” Teng Yongxiang said with a smile. Holding his steel spear, Teng Yongfan smiled in agreement. As this was going on, Teng Yongfan was silently calculating in his mind, “There were a total of 180 hunters caught by Qing Hu Island when we last gathered. Qing Hu Island captured three hunters from each village, which means that Qing Hu Island caught hunters from a total of sixty villages! These hunters and soldiers have now each split up into 20 teams of 9 hunters and 50 soldiers.”

At this moment, in the Great Yan Mountain, the twenty teams spread out as they searched for the treasure.

It was not just them searching. Thousands Silver Dragon Soldiers were also participating in this treasure hunt. Small teams of three to five people scattered and searched in the Great Yan Mountain. Unfortunately, the Great Yan Mountain was a lot bigger than the Blazing Mountain. If there were no locals guiding the soldiers, then the men of Qing Hu Island would be searching like a blind person and the search would never end.

“With fifty heavily armored soldiers escorting us nine hunters, it would be very difficult for us to escape!” Teng Yongfan thought to himself.

“All nine of you, how far away is the Bottomless Pit?” The fifty Silver Dragon soldiers, each of them with the physique of a bear,

all yelled.

Among the nine hunters, the six hunters from the other villages obeyed the hunters of the Teng Jia Village.

“My lords,” Teng Qinghao hastily replied, “The Bottomless Pit is around twenty Li away from here. We should definitely be able to get there by evening.” While the distance between two points on a straight line might seem close on this Great Mountain, the mountain path leading to their destination was narrow and rugged with many valleys and obstacles in the way. Therefore, people had to take many detours to reach their destination.

“All of you, go faster. Don’t dawdle,” scolded the muscular black bear-like man as he continued forward.

“Brother Qinghao, the men of Qing Hu Island won’t kill us, right?” The hunters from the other villages approached Teng Qinghao and whispered.

“We will see one step at a time,” Teng Qinghao whispered back.

Teng Yongfan was thinking back on the scene of when the 180 hunters were all gathered together and interrogated by Gu Yong, the Island Lord of Qing Hu Island. Teng Yongfan thought to himself, “That Island Lord of the Qing Hu Island first asked if we had ever seen an enormous ancient palace in the great mountain… After we answered no, he then asked if we had ever come across any tunnels or deep pools that led underground……”

“It’s extremely obvious that Qing Hu Island is searching for an ancient palace! Furthermore, this ancient palace is most likely under the Great Yan Mountain!”

Teng Yongfan figured this matter out quite easily.

“There’s actually an ancient palace under the Great Yan Mountain?” Even as Teng Yongfan thought this, he still couldn’t believe it.

……

Deep into the Great Yan Mountain, a great number of soldiers camped in a spacious area on the river bank.

Inside a big tent were thirteen innate experts all sitting on chairs.

A woman dressed in a purple cloaked frowned as she asked, “Twenty teams of hunters and nine thousand Silver Dragon Soldiers have been searching for four hours, and there is still no news of anything being found?”. Among the troops that were searching, the twenty teams of hunters and escorts were made up of a total of one thousand Silver Dragon Soldiers. Including the thousands of scattered soldiers, there was a total of ten thousand Silver Dragon Soldiers searching.

“Don’t be in such a rush. I believe there will be at least some news before night time.”

Most of the elders were leisurely drinking tea in their seats.

“Island Lord,” Zhao Danchen looked at Gu Yong, who had his eyes closed as he rested. Gu Yong opened his eyes as Zhao Danchen continued speaking, “Thirty thousand of our soldiers are stationed in this Great Yan Mountain..... If this information were to be spread, would this attract the attention of others?”

Gu Yong flashed a faint smile as he said, “Elder Zhao, so what if we draw the attention of others? The army of Qing Hu Island has already obliterated Tie Yi Hall and is now preparing to attack the Gui Yuan Sect..... So what if we’re stationed in this Great Yan Mountain? Even if the other sects were to find out, they would only feel confused. Is it even possible for them to connect this to Emperor Yu’s Treasure?”

“If you elders saw that Xiao Yao Palace suddenly deployed its army over at some random mountain, what would you all think?” Gu Yong asked as he stared at the other twelve.

“I would probably suspect that Xiao Yao Palace found some huge mine on the mountain,” Zhao Danchen laughed.

The elder also laughed when they heard this.

All thirteen of them knew that they came here for Emperor Yu's Treasure. They were nervous and worried that others might suspect that something was going on at this mountain. If they really did act stealthily and the other great sects took notice, then the other sects would be suspicious.

Now, the great army was openly stationed in this mountain.

It was almost guaranteed that all of the other sects would think that Qing Hu Island had possibly discovered a huge mine, and would try to occupy it as well!

"In the last few thousand years, no one has ever found Emperor Yu's Treasure; therefore, no one would dare think that we have come here for Emperor Yu's Treasure, so don't worry and be bold." Gu Yong smiled. Although he was smiling, Gu Yong was still slightly worried as he thought to himself, "Do the remaining survivors of Tie Yi Hall know of this secret?"

Although he was slightly worried, Gu Yong could do nothing about it.

It was impossible to pull up all the roots and kill every single person during an obliteration of a great sect that had existed for over a thousand years.

Tie Yi Hall was an example. Just the disciples and soldiers at Chu County alone numbered over ten thousand strong. Tie Yi Hall also had disciples garrisoned at other places. No matter how powerful a sect was, it would be impossible for a sect to annihilate all the disciples of such a deeply rooted sect like Tie Yi Hall! Therefore, if one were to raze such a sect to the ground, just killing the core members and innate experts was enough.

This was because the remaining survivors would just be a few random postliminary experts. Could a dozen postliminary experts ever obliterate Qing Hu Island?

If Qing Hu Island were that easily to destroy, that it would have been impossible for it to exist for so long.

“I have to find Emperor Yu’s Treasure as soon as possible and take it away!” Gu Yong said to himself.

“Island Lord…Island Lord!”

Shouts of excitement suddenly drifted in from outside as a figure dashed in without knocking.

“Island Lord, the underground lake has been found!” The middle-aged man said excitedly, his eyes beaming.

“Whew!”

The thirteen innate experts all stood up almost simultaneously in excitement. Gu Yong stared at the middle-aged man and hastily commanded, “Quickly, tell us the details of the situation.”

“Yes, Island Lord.” The middle-aged man took a deep breath and said, “This was what happened. One of the twenty teams found a bottomless hole among the bushes, and said that the deep hole was so immeasurably deep that even they didn’t dare to enter. Twenty Silver Dragon soldiers then went down slowly with the help of ropes and vines. After about an hour, a few terrified Silver Dragon Soldiers ran out from the deep hole. As they were escaping, a fearsome demonic beast dashed out from the hole in pursuit.

“A demonic beast?”

The eyes of Gu Yong and the other twelve innate experts brightened.

Actually, they already knew that the location of Emperor Yu’s Treasure would be a place filled with abundant Spiritual Qi of Heaven and Earth; therefore, it was not weird for the underground lake to have demonic beasts. In fact, the appearance demonic beasts there meant…….that it was highly possible that they have found the right place.

“It was a Stone Crusher that was one Zhang long. As the demonic beasts and the soldiers fought, the other Silver Dragon Soldiers in the surroundings joined in. After killing large number of Silver Dragon Soldiers, causing the Stone Crusher fled back into the hole. In this fight, four hunters and sixty-eight silver dragon soldiers were killed by the Stone Crusher while over twenty people were injured.”

“It seems as if this Stone Crusher has not evolved yet,” Gu Yong said.

The Stone Crusher was a demonic beast that lived underground, and was covered with tough scales. Its teeth and four claws could easily pierce through rock. Such a creature was the arch nemesis of the heavily armored Silver Dragon Soldiers, as the Stone Crusher could easily tear their heavy armor apart.

“The two survivors who escaped from underground said that they found an underground lake inside the cave when they were at the depth of eighty Zhang. The underground lake was enormous! An area of at least a hundred Zhang of the underground cavern was filled with water. Because the underground cavern had no light, they didn’t dare to swim too far and immediately headed back up, but while they were climbing up, they were attacked by the Stone Crusher.”

Hearing this, Gu Yong and the others felt a sense of joy.

“The lake was a huge lake that was around one hundred Li wide,” Gu Yong still remembered what was recorded in the book. “A lake of that size sunk underground and was covered by mountain rocks. I truly didn’t expect that there for there to be so much lake water left.”

“Lead the way,” Gu Yong commanded.

Immediately, the thirteen innate experts headed towards the location of the deep hole as quickly as possible.

……

A few hundred Silver Dragon Soldiers had already gathered there. As Gu Yong and the other twelve innate experts arrived, everyone stepped aside to make way.

“Island Lord, this is the deep tunnel that leads underground,” a guide said. Following the guide, Gu Yong walked over to the deep tunnel.

The weeds around the deep tunnel were cleared, revealing the dark and deep hole that was three to four Zhang wide. The bottom of the hole was not visible. Black bloodstains and pieces of meat were seen mixed in with the mud beside the deep hole. There were also many deep craters in the ground. It was obvious that a big fight had just occurred.

“Good,”

Gu Yong commented as he nodded.

“Sovereign, what should we do with those hunters?” General Lan whispered.

Gu Yong turned and casted a glance at him as he said coldly, ”Kill all of them!”

The hunters knew that Qing Hu Island was searching for either a mysterious palace, a deep tunnel, or a deep pool that leads to the underground……Therefore, the hunters must be killed! Although the other supreme sects did not know that Qing Hu Island was searching for Emperor Yu’s Treasure, it was better to be on the side of caution.

“Yes,” General Lan answered.

“Also, command the Silver Dragon Soldiers to make this deep hole the center of camp and to camp five to six Li around it.” Gu Yong was clear that it was impossible for thirty thousand people to seal off the entire Great Yan Mountain. He could only reduce the blockade around this place.

“Issue the assembling order and the execution order,”

Gu Yong gave few orders at one time.

……

“This deep pool is really cold. The winter is so cold, but the deep pool is even colder.” The few Silver Dragon Soldiers on the foot of the mountain looked at the Frost Jade pool. However, after they touched the pool water and felt the low temperature, none of them dared to enter the pool.

“Xiu!”

An ear-piercing sound rang to the heavens.

The few soldiers looked up.

“It’s the assembling signal. Go, stop the search. Let’s get there quickly.” The Silver Dragon Soldiers immediately headed to the assembling location.

……

According to the rules set previously, once the gathering signal was heard, all teams must stop search and assemble towards the location of the signal. A few moments after the gathering signal was heard——

“Xiu!” “Xiu!” “Xiu!”

Three ear-piercing sounds then rang to the heavens.

This was the signal to kill all the hunters!

Chapter 199: Execution!

The military camp, Great Yan Mountain.

The young Island Lord, Gu Shiyou, was practicing with a black long spear in his hand, but when the three ear-piercing sounds blared, Gu Shiyou couldn't helped but look up towards the sky.

"Kill all of them?" Gu Shiyou furrowed. He knew this signal.

"Doesn't this means that Teng Qingshan's father will die?"

When Qing Hu Island had been taking the hunters captive, the decision to capture Teng Yongfan had been purely made by Gu Shiyou himself. Although Qing Hu Island thought that Teng Qingshan posed a threat, since Teng Qingshan was only a Hollow Dan innate expert, the people in the higher positions of Qing Hu Island paid no attention to him. Despite the fact that the elders weren't worried, Gu Shiyou felt slightly worried.

Teng Qingshan was born a peasant, but was ranked first on the «Hidden Dragon Ranking». Gu Shiyou could tolerate the fact that Teng Qingshan was ranked higher than him, and even trained with all his effort to surpass Teng Qingshan.

However, he soon learned that Teng Qingshan had reached the Innate Realm!

Gu Shiyou, who'd been successful his whole life, couldn't endure it anymore when he knew that Teng Qingshan had reached the Innate Realm at the age of seventeen. Therefore, his dark thoughts had emerged, and he'd forcefully taken Teng Yongfan captive. If this act could draw Teng Qingshan here, then Qing Hu Island wouldn't mind killing Teng Qingshan.

"Teng Qingshan, your father's death wasn't my order." Gu Shiyou smiled evilly and said, "Actually, your father's life is pretty good, as another 179 hunters will be dying with him."

……

In a valley at the Great Yan Mountain, Teng Yongfan along with eight more hunters were gathered, along with the Silver Dragon Soldiers.

In the bushes of the valley, an immeasurably deep hole that was three Zhang in width was seen. Actually, there are many deep holes like this in the Great Yan Mountain.

“Hey, you guys!” A one-eyed Silver Dragon soldier yelled, “When will the leader and the others come back up?”

Teng Qinghao shook his head helplessly, ”Lords, even us hunters have no audacity to enter this Bottomless Pit. Who knows how long it will take? However…with the ability of the twenty lords, everything will be fine.” As the new leader of the Teng Jia Village’s hunter squad, Teng Qinghao was quite experienced. He’d met the Leader of the White Horse Gang and the City Lord of Yi City, therefore, he wasn’t afraid.

“Hmph.” The one-eyed soldier grunted.

At this moment.

“Xiu!” An ear-piercing sound rang to the heavens.

“Eh? The assembling signal?” The thirty silver dragon soldier sitting on the ground looked up at the sky.

“It looks like they’ve found it.” The one-eyed soldier walked to the bottomless hole and yelled into the hole, “Leader, it’s the assembling signal! Let’s go back.” “Go back, Go back…” Echoes resounded in the deep hole.

“Everyone prepare to return.” The one-eyed soldier then said.

At this moment——

“Xiu!” “Xiu!” “Xiu!”

Three successive ear-piercing sounds rang, and the Silver Dragon soldiers that were about to stand up froze. They all knew the meaning of this signal, as they’d been told before they came.

Immediately, the thirty Silver Dragon Soldiers glanced at each other meaningfully!

“We have to walk back again.” The hunters all stood up.

“Whew!” A strong gust of wind blew.

“Pu!” A cold glow flashed as a quick saber slashed across the throat of a young man. A head flew up, and a gush of blood spurted out from the neck.

After a hunter was killed, the one-eyed soldier roared, “Kill!”

Almost at the same time, the thirty Silver Dragon Soldiers pounced towards the other eight hunters. The hunters only had simple red tassel spears, while the Silver Dragon Soldiers were well-trained. Plus, there were a total thirty of Silver Dragon Soldiers. If the thirty silver dragon soldiers couldn’t even kill these nine hunters that weren’t heavily armored, then they would become laughing stocks!

“Pu!” “Pu!”

As the hunters had been caught off-guard, two more hunters were killed. Simultaneously, the thirty Silver Dragon soldiers separated in an orderly fashion and seemed to be about to encircle the hunters. At this moment, the hunters were like stuffing that was about to be wrapped in a dumpling wrapper.

“Quick, run!” Teng Qinghao yelled.

The remaining six hunters immediately fled towards the north.

“Quick, run!” Teng Yongfan roared nervously. Because the Silver Dragon Soldiers were about to form their encirclement, if they ran any slower, they’d be dead.

“F*ck.” A middle-aged man in danger held his red tassel spear and thrust it towards the incoming silver dragon soldiers.

“Clang!” The tip of the spear only left a white mark on the heavy armor.

“Whew!” The Silver Dragon soldier ruthlessly slashed the throat of this hunter. And thus, another one had died!

It was obvious that, among the remaining hunters, the three members of the Teng Clan were the strongest and the fastest.

“You guys can’t escape.” A sneer resounded. The thirty Silver Dragon Soldiers had completed their encirclement. The facial expression of Ten Yongfan, Teng Yongxiang, Teng Qinghao and the other two hunters changed drastically as the thirty Silver Dragon Soldiers began closing their circle, pressuring the five hunters.

“Charge!” Teng Yongfan yelled, and suddenly leaped up.

“Puchi!” The Damascus Steel Spear hit a silver dragon soldier in front with the force of a swimming dragon, and made an ear-piercing whistling sound. Such an imposing manner caused the facial expression of the other three Silver Dragon soldiers in front to change drastically, as they immediately blocked with the sabers in their hands.

“Bang!” Clashing sounds rang.

Teng Yongfan actually smashed a Silver Dragon Soldier into the air, and knocked two of the other soldiers to the side. One should know that when Teng Qingshan was young, his father, Teng Yongfan, was the number one expert of Teng Jia Village. Both his arms had the strength of over one thousand Jin. Teng Yongfan had also practiced the Tiger Fist for a few years, thus, his physical strength had increased to over two thousand Jin.

Because he’d practiced the Tiger Fist, he also had inner strength within his body, and at this instant, his explosive strength was almost four thousand Jin!

Normally, a Second Rated Warrior had the strength of two thousand Jin, and sergeants normally has the strength of a Second Rated Warrior. Teng Yongfan had practiced the big pole spear, so

his spear arts were obviously strong. If it was a one on one fight, none of these thirty Silver Dragon Soldiers could win against him. Unfortunately…the opposing side had too many people, and all of them were dressed in heavy armor!

“Let’s go.” As Teng Yongfan yelled, Teng Yongxiang, and Teng Qinghao followed hastily.

Whew! Whew! Whew!

The three tried to run

If they could escape that easily, the Silver Dragon Soldiers wouldn’t be qualified as the elite troops of Qing Hu Island. When three soldiers fell, the other soldiers immediately joined together to fill the gap.

“Encircle!”

A cold roar rang, and sabers slashed forwards. Facing a great number of sabers slashing towards them, Teng Yongfan and the others became anxious.

“Pu!” “Pu!” During this encirclement, the other two hunters died before they could even emit howls of bitterness.

“Clang!” “Clang!” “Clang!” …….

All three members of the Teng Clan practiced the Tiger Fist and the big pole spear, therefore, they were nimble, and their spear arts were swift. The three actually blocked many sabers together.

“Qinghao.” Teng Yongxiang kicked the saber that was slashing towards his own son away. He was obviously distracted when he tried to save his son. A “Pu” sound rang. No matter how fast Teng Yongxiang dodged, the slash of a saber had still left a large wound on his body, and blood began to flow.

“Father.” Teng Qinghao was extremely shocked.

Almost in an instant, the enclosing ring was sealed tight again.

“Qinghao, go!” Teng Yongxiang grabbed Teng Qinghao’s waist,

and his right arm immediately exerted a great force.

Whew!

Teng Qinghao, who weighed over a hundred Jin, was thrown into the air and flew out of the encirclement.

“Puchi!” The Silver Dragon Soldiers took the chance and stabbed Teng Yongxiang’s chest.

……

As soon as Teng Qinghao descended to the ground, he turned and looked. The roundness of his pupils could be seen as he glared furiously. “Father!” A painful and sad cry sounded.

“F*ck!” Teng Yongxiang started to feel dizzy once he was stabbed in the chest. He actually roared and instilled his remaining strength into the Damascus Steel Spear in his hands.

“Center Thrust!”

Teng Yongxiang yelled!

Xiu!

It was the use of Teng Jia Village’s spear arts, the Center Thrust and the Trembling Lance. As a Spear Arts Master, Teng Yongxiang had practiced the Center Thrust for over forty years. His use of the Center Thrust, when used in the last seconds of his life, were as quick as lightning!

“Clang!”

The tip of the spear penetrated the mask and through the head of a Silver Dragon Soldier! Among the thirty people, this was the first Silver Dragon Soldier that had died.

After killing the Silver Dragon Soldier with the use of the Center Thrust, Teng Yongfan widened his eyes in anger, before he finally stopped moving.

“Catch that punk.” The one-eyed soldier yelled

“Father.” Teng Qinghao wiped his tears and immediately fled towards the distance at lightning speed. No matter how painful and how furious he felt, he had to run! His father had died for him. Otherwise, with the spear art of his father, the Spear Arts Master, it would’ve been impossible to die that fast.

……

“Ah~~~” Teng Yongfan had already suffered three wounds. At this moment, he was like a fierce tiger. He pounced like a tiger and waved his Damascus Steel Spear tyrannically! A soldier that was about to pursue Teng Qinghao actually collapsed from the hit. Teng Yongfan then stretched out his left hand and grabbed the ankle of this soldier. He smashed the soldier towards the ground as if he was lashing a whip.

Bang!

This smash cracked the head of the Silver Dragon Soldier, and even knocked his helmet off.

Whew! Whew!

The madly furious Teng Yongfan used the body of the dead Silver Dragon Soldier to strike a few Silver Dragon Soldiers into the air. He then threw the dead body forcefully at a soldier that was chasing after Teng Qinghao in the distance, causing the soldier to fall flat on the ground.

“Kill him!” The soldiers were extremely angry.

Just killing a few hunters could result in casualties? This was too embarrassing.

……

Teng Qinghao’s face was covered with tears, but he still ran like a leopard and dashed into the forest. The two pursuing soldiers soon lost sight of Teng Qinghao, because…this was the Great Yan Mountain! As for Teng Qinghao? He was the leader of the hunting squadron!

Teng Qinghao was very familiar with this Great Yan Mountain.

Of course, the most important reason was that Teng Yongfan had stopped numerous soldiers. Otherwise, the great number of soldiers could dash with the use of their inner strength, and encircle Teng Qinghao; it would then be impossible for Teng Qinghao to escape.

In the forest, Teng Qinghao occasionally found two to three soldiers as he ran, and he could only avoid them by hiding carefully. These soldiers were all heading towards the center, where the gathering location was at. After Teng Qinghao ran for while, he didn't see any more soldiers.

Teng Qinghao gnashed his teeth and looked back.

His father had died for him!

As for Teng Yongfan? Although he hadn't seen Teng Yongfan die, he'd seen Uncle Yongfan encircled by the group of Silver Dragon Soldiers. Teng Yongfan hadn't had any heavy armor, but the enemies had. After Teng Yongfan killed two to three Silver Dragon Soldiers, he'd most likely been killed by the enemies.

"Father, Uncle Yongfan, I will avenge you two. I'll get revenge for you!" Teng Qinghao hid among the bushes as he said with a ghastly expression, "I must tell Qingshan about this!"

As Teng Qinghao faced this immense Qing Hu Island……

He could only think of Teng Qingshan!

Teng Qingshan had never failed them, thus only Teng Qingshan could solve this!

"Revenge must be taken!" Teng Qinghao then fled and dashed at lightning speed.

Chapter 200: Bad News

In the Great Yan Mountain, the twenty Silver Dragon Soldiers were enraged as they encircled Teng Yongfan, attacking him!

“Ha!”

Teng Yongfan glared fiercely. He held up his arms high in the air, as if he was about to hammer down on red hot iron.He swung the Damascus Steel Spear in his hand, making it seem like an enormous guillotine had just passed by!

Whoosh!

As the soldiers saw this, they backed away, dodging the attack. Immediately, a huge gap appeared in the circle around Teng Yongfan. In this critical moment, Teng Yongfan could only rely on this move as a last resort to avoid being simultaneously cut by a group of people!

Teng Yongfan’s crazy swing definitely contained the strength of a few thousand Jin.

If the soldiers were hit, then their body would still be hurt by the impact, regardless if they had heavy armor on or not.

“This man has great physical and inner strength. Brothers, watch out! Let’s tire him out!” The one-eyed soldier hastily roared as the twenty Silver Dragon Soldiers continued to encircle Teng Yongfang. They were like a pack of wolves circling tiger, with each “wolf” taking turns to bite. Every time Teng Yongfan attacked, the soldiers would immediately dodge.

The worst thing about this situation was that this group of people wore heavy armors, making it almost impossible for Teng Yongfan to injure them.

“Pu!” Another wound appeared on Teng Yongfan’s left arm. He now had more than ten deep cuts on his body. Fortunately, his practice of the Tiger Fist was considered successful, letting him

slow the flow of blood through his slight muscle and inner strength control.

“Don’t run!”

Teng Yongfan roared and forcefully leaped forward as he was cut, his left hand turning into an iron claw as he grabbed onto the wrist of a soldier. “Good!” Teng Yongfan’s eyes brightened and used the body of this soldier as a weapon, recklessly throwing him into the air——

Ka!

Who would have known that the force from being thrown in the air would be too great, causing the soldier’s hand to tear off? The soldier’s hand wearing the gauntlet was left in Teng Yongfan’s hands, while the rest of his body howled in pain as it flew away! Since the armguard was not connected to the glove, with a strength of a few thousand Jin exerting on the weak wrist, it wasn’t weird for the wrist to break apart.

The soldier flew into the air and smashed three soldiers.

“Ahhhh~~!” The soldier that lost his hand howled in pain.

Holding the broken hand, Teng Yongfan shouted arrogantly, “You’re all bastards, come! I will kill as many of you as I can today! Come, bastards!” With bloodshot eyes, Teng Yongfan had already gone mad. He doesn’t care about injuring himself anymore. He will grasp every chance——

If he has the chance to kill one, he will do it!

The soldiers looked at each other.

“Brothers, don’t be afraid of getting hurt. Just kill him with all our effort!” The one-eyed soldier roared angrily, and the twenty soldiers immediately charged desperately forward.

At first, the soldiers wanted to kill Teng Yongfan without getting hurt.

However, now it seemed that was impossible.

“F*ck!” Teng Yongfan’s whole body was dyed red by blood. He glared at the leading one-eyed Soldier with bloodshot eyes. At this moment, he had no regard for the trenchant sabers slashing at him. With a deep roar, he jumped and leaped out like a tiger!

The desperate leap actually helped him dodge many sabers.

The bulky arms that had forged iron for years were raised up high and the powerful strength was instilled within the Damascus Steel Spear in his hands. “Die!” Teng Yongfan yelled as his eyes widened!

A streak of black lightning!

Teng Jia Village’s only offensive technique —— Center Thrust!!!

The one-eyed Soldier also roared as he slashed his saber!

“Clang!”

A clear sound was heard. The Damascus Steel Spear went past the saber and penetrated the mask and through the other eye of the one-eyed soldier instantly.

Pu!

The long spear pierced through the head!

“Ah!” Teng Yongfan’s body shuddered as a saber was slashed heavily across his back! “Pu——”A crazy amount of blood splattered. The scene was heartbreaking.

Although he had been wounded by sabers many times, none of the wounds were deadly. However, this slash instantly weakened Teng Yongfan’s lower body. His lower body couldn’t feel anything and… Teng Yongfan began falling towards the ground.

“Ahhhhhh!!!” As Teng Yongfan emit the last roar, he turned and threw the long spear in his hand with all his strength.

“Xiu!”

The long spear became an illusion in the middle of the air and hit the chest of a Silver Dragon Soldier, denting the heavy armor. The soldier was knocked far away by the impact.

“Kill him!” Seeing that Teng Yongfan had already collapsed on the ground, the other soldiers immediately encircled.

“Roar~~~”

A deep, terrifying roar that could shake the souls of men suddenly came from the hole several Zhang away. Just hearing the roar caused the twenty Silver Dragon Soldiers to turn and look with fright... At the bottomless Pit, a figure was seen dashing out rapidly.

“Quick! Quickly run!” The eyes of the person that dashed out was filled with fear.

“My Lord!” The twenty soldiers were shocked as the person that dashed out was their centurion leader of the twenty people who entered the Bottomless Pit!

“Whew!”

A black figure dashed out of the hole and instantly pounced on the centurion.”Ah!” A bitter and painful scream sounded and stopped immediately. A heavy and disgusting smell came along with the gust of wind and permeated the air. This disgusting odor was like the smell of dead fish. Seeing the monster, all the soldiers froze.

It was a monster that looked similar to a centipede. Its body was two Zhang long, but it was only three Chi high. The sharp claws resembling blades on its body flashed a cold gloss, and so did the pitch-black scale armor on its body.

There was only a black dot in each of its large eyes, and the other areas of its eyes were pale white.

Two fangs stretched out from its mouth like big scissors.

“A demonic beast!”

After the demonic beast killed the centurion, it immediately pounced at the other soldiers. At this moment, Teng Yongfan, who was on the ground, gnashed his teeth and thought to himself, “There’s no other place to run!” Although he couldn’t feel his lower body, with the strength of his arms, he darted towards the hole. Seeing this, the demonic beast immediately pounced on Teng Yongfan.

“Puchi!”The demonic beast tore one of Teng Yongfan’s legs off, causing blood to flow non-stop. Teng Yongfan immediately supported himself with his hands and entered the Bottomless Pit without slowing down.

“Roar~~”

In the midst of the roars of this demonic beast, the Silver Dragon Soldiers began fighting back. After over dozen men had died, the rest fled crazily.

During the evening, at the edge of the Great Yan Mountain.

Teng Qinghao looked far away at the Teng Jia Village below the mountain and carefully scrutinized. He then said to himself, “No soldiers of Qing Hu Island!” With this, he immediately dashed towards the Teng Jia Village. For caution’s sake, he did not enter the front door, but rather climbed over the west wall into Teng Jia Village.

Actually, all the soldiers of the Qing Hu Island had already assembled at another location.

Even if there are soldiers patrolling, it would be impossible for the soldiers to garrison in the village.

On the training field of Teng Jia Village, many villagers gathered here with anxious hearts.

“Why haven’t the Chief, Great Master and brother Qinghao returned yet?”

“Wait a while. They will definitely be back.”

“Sister Lan, The chief will be back soon.”

Yuan Lan was already over forty years old. Her hair was yellowing slightly, and a few white hairs could be seen. Her eyes were red and puffy as she stared at the gate of the training field and into the distance. She was waiting... waiting for her man to appear in her sight.

“Brother Qinghao is back.” Suddenly a shout of joy rang.

Everyone immediately turned to look at the source of the voice. To the west, an unkempt and dirty man was running to the training field with a few clan members. It was the leader of the Teng Jia Village’s hunting squadron.

“Qinghao!”

“Father!”

Teng Qinghao’s wife and children immediately dashed to the west happily. The other clan members also followed excitedly.

“Qinghao is back. Brother Fan and Yongxiang should be back too.” Yuan Lan finally showed a happy expression and also rushed towards Teng Qinghao quickly.

Teng Qinghao held his son and daughter and tears flowed uncontrollably.

Almost...

He almost couldn’t see his kids and his wife again.

“Qinghao, where are your father and your Uncle Yongfan?” The old chief Teng Yunlong hastily asked.

Teng Qinghao froze and looked at the crowd. When he saw Yuan Lan, whose eyes were puffy and red, looking at him, he gnashed his teeth and answered with a deep voice, “Those Qing Hu Island bastards were ordered to kill all the hunters! My father died to save me. Uncle Yongfan was encircled by those soldiers... and I was the

only one that escaped.”

“What... what did you say?” Yuan Lan widened her eyes. She couldn’t believe it.

“Uncle Yongfan was encircled by a group of Silver Dragon Soldiers... I did not see Uncle Yongfan die, but... ” As Teng Qinghao spoke, the volume of his voice gradually decreased.

Everyone became quiet.

Teng Yongfan was encircled by a group of soldiers when he wasn’t wearing any heavy armor. Everyone could guess the result.

“No... no... !” Yuan Lan shook her head as she mumbled.

She refused to believe that... the man who had spent all these years with her died! Since she could remember, they had been together. They were childhood friends who got married. A long time after they got married, they had a son——Teng Qingshan. Three years later, they had a daughter——Teng Qingyu.

In all these years, the couple has never fought.

Their relationship was not the kind that shook the heaven and earth, nor did they understand such a relationship. She only knew of cooking and sewing clothes for her man... Such caring and support for each other was already very deep. In the many years that had passed, they were already like inseparable lovebirds.

“No... no... !” Yuan Lan’s face turned pale.

“Lan Lan!” Teng Yunlong shouted.

“Pu!” A trickle of blood flowed from the corner of Yuan Lan’s mouth as she collapsed helplessly onto the ground.

Teng Yunlong held his daughter in law and ran towards the doctor’s house in the village.

“Quick.” Teng Qinghao said hastily, “Find a horse, I am going to Jiangning!” Teng Qinghao returned to Teng Jia Village to find a horse to get to Jiangning City. If he relied on his feet, when would

he arrive?

“Qinghao, don’t worry.” His wife hastily said, “After you, your father and our chief were taken away by them, the old chief immediately arranged Uncle Yonglei and some men to go to Jiangning County to find Qingshan. They probably arrived at Jiangning by now.”

……

The sky darkened as evening arrived. At the doors of the Teng Mansion at Jiangning County.

The one armed Teng Yonglei and the other three men of the Teng Jia Village arrived, led by a Black Armored Soldier.

“This is the residence of our Lord Commander.” The Black Armored Soldier said.

“Thanks.” Teng Yonglei said gratefully and immediately walked towards the big door. When the guards at the door were about to stop him, Teng Yonglei hastily shouted, “Qingyu!”

Qingyu, who was just walking past the front courtyard, turned to look and immediately felt a great joy. “Uncle!” She shouted and immediately dashed out cheerfully.

“Uncle, Brother Qingyang, why brings you guys here?” Qingyu was obviously very excited.

“Quick, lead me to your brother.” Teng Yonglei hastily said.

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