

Carefree Path of Dreams

Chapter 16: Breaking Through Gates

'There's more trouble!'

Seeing how helpless Zhou Wenxin was, Fang Yuan was speechless.

They must have a purpose other than apologising since they were so polite.

"Young Master!"

Indeed, Zhou Wenwu continued, "My father is sick, and I would like to trouble Young Master to take a trip and visit him. The entire Zhou Family will be so grateful!"

Old Zhou was already at his dying breath, and Zhou Wenwu felt desperate.

"Hmm, this is weird."

Fang Yuan felt suspicious, "Seeing how the Zhou Family and the Spirit Returning Sect are on good terms, did the Sect not render any assistance?"

"How is this possible?"

Zhou Wenwu replied, "The Sect's physicians have visited him, but were unable to find out the cause of the sickness. Based on what they said, if his sickness was so simple, then it wouldn't have evolved to this stage... If the Sect Master did not go travelling with his new disciple..... Sigh..... Such is life..."

"Now I understand!"

Fang Yuan scoffed. "Even the Sect's physicians couldn't tell what's wrong with him, how would I be able to?"

He glanced at the Zhou Siblings, "My apologies, I cannot help your father. The valley is cold, you two should take your leave!"

Without waiting for their reply, Fang Yuan walked back in, leaving the Zhou Siblings at the entrance.

"Brother... He..."

Zhou Wenxin waited for Fang Yuan's silhouette to disappear before acting up, "He's too..... full of himself, right?"

"Hmm, he's giving me some really weird vibes..."

Zhou Wenwu looked into the valley, eager to fight, but managed to control himself, "This valley feels dangerous... it seems perilous..."

"Is he really a spiritual knight?"

Zhou Wenxin shuddered in fear.

"No! They're different!"

Zhou Wenwu shook his head, and his face was full of sorrow.

Although the Zhou Family had a low position within the Spirit Returning Sect, it was still considered one of the best families within its vicinity.

Everybody would panic when Old Zhou pass away. At that point, even the Lin Family, with only one disciple in the Sect, would be above the Zhou Family.

"Zhou Family... Is this the end for our family?"

The mountain breeze blew, and Zhou Wenwu shuddered.

...

"Eh? We can't leave?"

Not long later, The Flower Fox Ferret came to report the news to Fang Yuan, who was busy practising his Black Sand Palm.

This spiritual beast became more and more human-like. It was able to convey simple messages to Fang Yuan, with the help of body language.

Fang Yuan estimated that its IQ was of a 10-year-old child.

"The Zhou Family is in a mess. If Old Lin wants to go ahead, so be it..."

Fang Yuan stopped thinking and started to dig in.

Since practising martial arts, his appetite grew. Luckily for him, there were plentiful amounts of food within the secluded valley.

The Pearl Jade Crystal Rice was a superior food and was able to sustain his enormous diet.

The sky darkened and the moon rose within the stars.

Within the valley came a continuous echoing of palm-striking.

Fang Yuan was sweating profusely but he was unaware, as he focused on his Black Sand Palm training.

He had only one thought, that he would master this skill today!

"In order to learn martial arts, one must break through the first gate. Only by breaking through this gate will I be a true martial artist!"

The feeling of the Pearl Jade Crystal Rice lingered in his mouth, as he felt a burst of energy within him. His limbs felt energetic.

"Breathe in... Breathe out..."

"Breathe in... Breathe out..."

Accompanied by his deep breathing was a flow of energy in his body, as though it was about to break through a gate.

"Black Sand Palm!"

He shouted, and struck his right palm out.

Peng!

The sandbag broke, and its fillings poured out.

Fang Yuan could feel that a long-awaited gate within him finally broke through!

Kacha!

A loud sound broke the silence, and large amounts of energy flowed within him, making him feel renewed.

"That's the first Golden Gate, I've succeeded!"

Fang Yuan clenched his fists, looked up and let out a cry.

The first three gates of the Golden Gates were Initial, Rest and Life. These three were the first level of cultivation within the world of martial arts. Failure to break through these gates would not hurt one.

In truth, even a normal person practising a martial arts manual over a long time would be able to successfully break through three gates.

But to Fang Yuan, it was a matter of days for him to break through his first gate. He had the potential.

Not just potential, but a good foundation developed in 18 years!

After all, the Pearl Jade Crystal Rice and other rare fruits did help in developing his foundation.

"Is this... how a martial artist feels?"

Fang Yuan stood on the ground and stared intensely at his hands.

He felt that all of his abilities improved after breaking through the first gate, as though he removed a restrictive barrier.

"To know in general, I will still have to refer to the stats board!"

Fang Yuan looked around, and the stats board appeared:

"Name: Fang Yuan

Essence: 1.1

Spirit: 1.1

Magic: 1.5

Age: 18

Cultivation: [Martial Artist (1st Gate)]

Techniques: [Black Sand Palm (Grade 1)]

Skills: [Medicine (Level 1)], [Botany (Level 3)]"

When he focused on his Techniques, the relevant information on Black Sand Palm flashed, "[Black Sand Palm (Grade 1)] - External technique, if mastered, one's palm

would be as strong as steel, and would be able to break metal. There are a total of 5 Grades. This technique might encompass a poisonous effect. Currently at Grade 1!"

"Even Magic has increased by 0.1?"

Fang Yuan sighed, "No... the effect on Magic must be due to the Questioning Heart Tea..."

He cleared his thoughts. The stats represented his physical fitness, which meant it would be increasingly hard to improve.

An increment of 0.1 had a different meaning between the different stats.

"By breaking through the gates and becoming a martial artist, would it result in an improvement in one's physical fitness?"

After realisation, Fang Yuan felt satisfied.

"Most importantly is that the Black Sand Palm is now an actual technique!"

As long as the technique was recognised by the stats board, it meant that it could be further improved with intense training, in a more systematic way. It was a good deal.

On the flipside, Fang Yuan was still a long way from being able to break through the first gate in every type of martial art technique, seeing how much effort was required just to break through the first gate.

"Unfortunately... .. I am unable to see my experience with the technique, otherwise, that would have been perfect..."

Fang Yuan let out a sigh.

Hidden at the back, Fang Yuan spotted an empty progress bar behind [Black Sand Palm].

The progress bar seemed blurry and required one's focus for it to appear. Once the focus was lost the progress bar would disappear.

"Is this... An original feature? Or is it that this stats board would monitor my progress and add more features as I improve?"

Fang Yuan knew that this progress bar would show his experience.

As for now, since the [Black Sand Palm] had just been registered, the progress bar would appear to be 0%. He focused on his [Medical] and [Botany] and unknowingly realised that his [Medical] had about 70% and should not be far from attaining the next level. As for [Botany], the progress was more than half. It seemed that using the spiritual fertilizer did help him improve his [Botany].

"With this experience bar, it would be much easier to track my progress in the future!"

On the route to becoming a martial artist, Fang Yuan felt full of energy, and without hesitation, started a new session of training.

"Black Sand Palm!"

After another session of training, Fang Yuan took a wooden board to test out his strength.

His palm struck the wooden board, but only a faint outline of his palm appeared. It seemed that his technique still had room for improvement.

"Stats board!"

In the progress bar, there was an improvement. Based on statistics, it seemed like there was almost no improvement.

"Does this mean that one can foolishly practise up to a million times and still break through the gates and attain the next grade?"

Fang Yuan could not hold his excitement in.

He knew that this was probably due to the fact that Black Sand Palm was a normal and widely circulated martial arts technique.

There must be certain criteria being met before one could really attain the next grade.

Taking [Botany] for example, he needed the help of the spiritual fertilizer before attaining the next level.

But compared to those who trained for years and were still stuck status quo, this was a huge improvement for Fang Yuan.

"Stats and the progress bar are physical quantities, and with hard work, there must be some sort of improvement!"

Fang Yuan sighed, "But who am I? Who am I to deserve good potential and luck?"

With hard work come rewards!

Many people could only wish for such progress.

Additionally, he could access his own stats window and his dream experience.

"I will unravel this mystery one day!"

Fang Yuan stared into the mountains, determined.

Even if he had the potential, he knew he needed to work hard and train hard.

Even if he could enjoy the riches of the world, he knew he had to worry and be even more cautious.

He wanted to improve himself, unlock his own potential and understand what was really happening to him.

"The journey ahead is arduous, but I will walk on!"

He let out a long sigh as Flower Fox Ferret witnessed everything that happened. It seemed to understand what was happening.