

## Carefree 41

### [Carefree Path of Dreams](#)

#### Chapter 41: Breakthrough

It was dawn.

Fang Yuan came to a newly reclaimed farmland. Vermillion Jade Rice was grown on that farm, and he planted the seeds of the Emerald Grass there as well.

"The Emerald Grass does not require a good environment to grow in. It is able to gather earthly energy and make the soil fertile. The Emerald Grass complements the Vermillion Jade Rice when planted next to them!"

Planting a spiritual plant was a complicated process. Fang Yuan was very focused on it and only took a short break half an hour later to wipe his sweat.

"Phew....The newly reclaimed farmland has already reached its maximum capacity. There is not much land left in the secluded valley to expand the farm. Furthermore, the expanded farm will be exposed!"

He was helpless. "I may have to move the spiritual plant to another place in the future!"

What place would that be? It would be the spiritual land in Green Peak.

As that place was very secluded, a Wu Zong would never be able to realise that a farm did exist in that location and would only be troubled by the presence of the Red-eyed White Birds.

Fang Yuan had decided to relocate the secrets of the secluded valley to the new location after he had solved the current problem.

After all, he was different from Master Wenxin.

He had been attracting a lot of attention lately and this would increase the chances of others spying on him.

"However, the amount of Vermillion Jade Rice I have now is sufficient enough for the Flower Fox Ferret and myself to consume for quite a long period of time!"

Fang Yuan touched the Flower Fox Ferret's head and smiled.

The Spirit Returning Sect Head Shi Yutong could not make decisions regarding the spiritual land by herself. There was still a need to accommodate the needs of every faction as well as the export of spiritual plants. Even if the main disciples were allocated with some spiritual plants, it was not a large amount.

Fang Yuan estimated that they could either eat the Vermillion Jade Rice once a week or treat it preciously like a spiritual pill and only consume it when he was ready to break gates. After all, they were not as luxurious as him!

In fact, the previous amount of his consumption of the Vermillion Jade Rice could be 10 times more than Lin Leiyue's!

The Spirit Returning Sect was not luxurious enough to allocate such a large amount of Vermillion Jade Rice to just one person.

Shi Yutong had no idea about Fang Yuan's diet and thought that he must have been lucky to consume some natural spiritual treasure.

Even spiritual pills were not natural. They were scarce and could not fulfil the requirement of a daily supply of staple like the spiritual rice could.

This was the reason why Fang Yuan's foundations in martial arts were so scarily strong, as his Essence, Spirit and Magic increased tremendously like a rocket.

"Other normal human beings would benefit lesser after breaking through another gate as compared to me....."

Fang Yuan realised that the quantitative numbers in his stats window could be way higher than any other martial artist who was of the same level as him.

"Of course, after breaking through the 6th Gate, my inner power will be fused and become inner force. Then, things will be different. Unless I can increase the supply of the Vermillion Jade Rice further and maintain my head start, the others will eventually catch up in future!"

This was a bad news as it meant that Fang Yuan's advantage would be diminished. However, as he looked at his farm, he smiled brightly.

It was not difficult to eat the Vermillion Jade Rice every day, was it?

He not only had the Vermillion Jade Rice but also had the spiritual tea. He could drink it whenever he wanted to.

"Essence, spirit and magic could be considered as the three most important factors to one's cultivation. Of the three, Essence possesses a physical form, Spirit is dependent on Essence and possesses a form too. Only Magic is formless!"

"A rise in magical energy will result in stark improvements in many other aspects!"

Through the previous trip and a few fights, Fang Yuan realised the effect of magical energy.

Although he could not convert it to combat power directly, he could sense the enemy's moves and eventually predict the outcome of the fight even before it began, making it extremely useful.

This was also why he valued the Questioning Heart Tea even more.

After a hard day's work, Fang Yuan went to clean himself and changed into a new set of clothes. Then, he started to make some tea.

With his past experiences, he felt more natural when making the tea as he was much more familiar with the process, and there was much improvement this time.

First of all, the water used was different.

According to an old saying, the most preferred type of water when making tea would be to use mountain spring water, followed by water from a river and the least preferred would be water from a well.

Previously, Fang Yuan used the spring water originated from the secluded valley when making tea. The water was pure and sweet, and therefore could be considered to be of high quality. However, even since he had been to the spiritual land in Green Peak, he found a water source of even higher quality.

The water used this time was the spiritual spring water which he had gotten on the way when he collected the spiritual fertiliser.

Since the water originated from a spiritual land, the quality of it would naturally be higher than other normal mountain spring water.

Good water would have to be matched with a good tea set for making good tea.

Fang Yuan was using Master Wenxin's precious tea set, which was also considered a good set.

The spiritual tea made was already extraordinary on its own, and now paired with Fang Yuan's meditative tea ceremony.....

The Flower Fox Ferret was staring at the spiritual tea as the last step of the ceremony was completed.

"Try it!"

Fang Yuan served the spiritual tea to the Flower Fox Ferret.

"Keke!"

The Flower Fox Ferret brought its paws together, crossed its knees and sat down to enjoy its tea. It carefully licked the tea with its small tongue and was contented.

Even though Fang Yuan had already known the effects of the spiritual tea, he was still surprised after seeing the Flower Fox Ferret's expression.

"Achieving a pure and sincere heart was the key to meditation, only then can one purify one's mind and live without worries or anger, beyond life and death....."

He recited a few scriptures in his heart and his eyes glittered. This was the effect of spiritual tea clearing one's mind.

At that moment, he took another sip.

"Oooo...."

As the spiritual tea entered his stomach, a great sensation rushed in like waves in a storm.

Fang Yuan gazed; he did not know where he was.

A long time had passed and he finished the whole pot of tea unknowingly. Tears flowed down his cheeks.

"I had thought that it was bullshit when others said that a flower could represent the world and a blade of grass could represent the heavens. But now.... A cup of tea just changed my perspective on my life?"

Fang Yuan wiped his tears and remained silent for a while.

He felt as though he was reborn once more after drinking the spiritual tea.

It was easy to be reborn physically. However, how difficult would it be to be reborn mentally?

He could do it with the spiritual tea!

After a long while, he looked at his stats window:

"Name: Fang Yuan

Essence: 2.7

Spirit: 2.6

Magic: 2.0

Age: 18

Cultivation: [Martial Artist (5th Gate)]

Technique: [Black Sand Palm (Grade 5)], [Eagle Claw Iron Skin Technique (Grade 5)]

Skill: [Medicine (Level 2)], [Botany (Level 3)]"

"Ssss...."

Fang Yuan breathed in. "My magic has increased by 30%. Could it be due to the effect of the spiritual tea? No....or could it be due to my previous epiphany?"

Right after he consumed the spiritual tea from the meditative tea ceremony, he entered a strange but magical state, which made him felt as if he relived his whole life again.

Such a state was considered rare and precious. One such opportunity allowed his magic to increase by 0.5!

"I'm afraid that no other heavenly treasures can have the same benefits, right?"

Fang Yuan inhaled a long breath. He could feel the inner power bubbling vigorously in his lower abdomen. The inner power from the Grade 5 Eagle Claw Iron Skin Technique surged forth violently on its own and reached the bottleneck of the 6th Grade!

"Is this....what many martial artists have been wishing for....to attain a new grade naturally?"

Fang Yuan was surprised and immediately sat down. He ordered the Flower Fox Ferret to watch over him and then closed his eyes.

When a martial artist attempts to break through his current grade to attain new grade, it would most of the time be consciously using his inner power to break through, which was arduous.

However, there was another way to break through. One would be able to break through his current grade naturally if his inner power was strong enough. His inner power would automatically be adjusted to work in his new grade, allowing him to execute his techniques naturally.

The success rate was nearly 100%!

.....

At the same time, back in the Spirit Returning Sect.

"Sister Leiyue, please have some spiritual porridge!"

A female disciple carefully brought a wooden tray into the room. There was a bowl of Vermillion Jade Porridge on the tray.

She could not resist the aroma from the bowl of porridge.

"The Sect Head knows that you are about to break through to a new gate and she specially left a portion of hers for you! The portion is enough for 7 days and every meal will be spiritual rice."

The disciple swallowed her saliva and added. She was envious of Leiyue.

"Please help me to thank the Sect Head. You may leave now. I will be undergoing closed door cultivation. You will not have to come and attend to me other than when it's meal time from now onwards!"

Lin Leiyue stroked her hair.

Everyone in the sect had their own amount of spiritual rice and even Shi Yutong did not dare to change her portion.

However, since Shi Yutong knew that Lin Leiyue was about to break through the Gate, she gave her a portion of her spiritual rice as a form of support.

If Fang Yuan, nope, if the Flower Fox Ferret was here, it would not resist its temptations and would start consuming the spiritual porridge.

There was too much water, and too little spiritual rice when cooking the porridge. Of course, most importantly, the grain size of this spiritual rice was way smaller as compared to Fang Yuan's homegrown Vermillion Jade Rice grains.

However, in Lin Leiyue's opinion, isn't this how spiritual rice should be?

She could feel a warm sensation after consuming the spiritual porridge and her inner power started to surge.

"Let's start!"

Lin Leiyue closed all 4 doors and began the process of breaking through.

Every gate would become increasingly difficult! The 6th gate was the first of the 3 Perilous Gates. Once she had broken through those gates, her inner power would be fused into inner force!

Of course, if she failed, she would get injured badly.

This gate marked the difference between a real expert in martial arts and a normal martial artist. In the Spirit Returning Sect, a [Martial Artist (6th Gate)] would be capable enough to hold a senior position and repress anyone!

"I possess the Spiritual Moon Body and consumed the Frozen Moon Pill. I am quite confident since I fought against Song Zhong previously!"

Lin Leiyue clenched her fists and said, "With the help of the spiritual rice, I will be successful in breaking through!"

She crossed her knees and sat down. She regulated her vigorous inner power and began the process of breaking through.

"Bang!"

She sent her first wave of her inner power but was unable to break through the gate.

Lin Leiyue expected this to happen as breaking through the 3 Perilous Gates was not an easy task. She would consider herself to have failed only when she had exhausted her inner power.

Time passed quickly.

Lin Leiyue seemed to have forgotten how much time had passed.

In her body, her vigorous inner power was about to be exhausted and she was very close to breaking through the 6th gate.

There was only a straw left that could break the balance between the two.

"I cannot lose. I still want to see the outside world.....I want to surpass....Fang Yuan!"

While she was still conscious, a figure of a young man appeared in front of her. The figure was gigantic and shrouded her.

"Puff!"

She fiercely opened her eyes and spat a mouthful of blood.

She suffered a backlash after failing to break through the Pain Gate!

### Carefree Path of Dreams

#### **Chapter 42: Sixth Gate**

"What's the matter? Leiyue?"

"Ping!"

The door broke, as Shi Yutong entered. It was obvious that she was observing outside all along.

"Didn't you say you had 70 to 80 percent chance of succeeding? Why did you fail?"

She held onto Lin Leiyue's right hand, transferring her Wu Zong elemental force. Lin Leiyue's skin became flushed. "Mas... Master?"

"Eh... You foolish girl!"

Shi Yutong heaved a sigh of relief. "Luckily you previously took the Frozen Moon Pill which protected your meridians from being damaged... You were too rash this time!"

"I'm sorry..."

Lin Leiyue winced, unable to tell the truth.

The only thing she was clear on, was that the young man's shadow would be her motivation to break through the next gate.

If she could not break through this mental barrier of hers, it would be increasingly difficult for her to improve. Even with the help of spiritual pills, the improvements would be minimal.

...

Within the secluded valley.

Fang Yuan opened his eyes and appeared joyful.

"The 6th Gate of Martial Arts, the Pain Gate, is finally broken through!"

He sighed for a moment, approached an old tree, focused his inner force on his palm, and struck towards the tree trunk.

Ka!

A distinct sound was heard, as though something broke.

When Fang Yuan took his palm away, a distinct palm shape appeared on the tree trunk. Not only that, in the middle of the palm print were many tiny holes, with wood shavings falling out of them.

"Inner power and inner force are two different things. If the former is likened to a cotton thread, the latter will be likened to a steel wire!"

Fang Yuan took in a deep breath and knew that it was his luck that he could kill Song Zhong.

"The difference between Pain Gate and the previous 5 Gates is too large!"

He clenched his fist and felt the inner force building up within him. He looked at his stats window, and observed a drastic change:

"Name: Fang Yuan

Essence: 3.3

Spirit: 3.2

Magic: 2.0

Age: 18

Cultivation: [Martial Artist (6th Gate)]

Technique: [Black Sand Palm (Grade 5)], [Eagle Claw Iron Skin Technique (Grade 6)]

Skill: [Medicine (Level 2)], [Botany (Level 3)]"

"Eagle Claw Iron Skin Technique----- A combination of inner and external techniques, the technique, when mastered, would be similar to coating the entire body with iron, making it impenetrable by fire and water, as well as making the body difficult to wound. At the current 6th Grade, defence is enhanced! Eagle Claw's inner strength is enhanced!"

"[Eagle Claw Technique (Grade 6)] enhances Eagle Claw's inner strength! Strengthens defence!"

The inner strength within Fang Yuan was something he had experimented on before, but for an increase in defence capabilities?

He mulled for a moment and dispersed his inner strength to every part of his body beneath his skin.

"Shing!"

In a moment, his skin tightened and became metallic in colour. His inner strength circulated under his skin within him, like an armour.

"With this defence, I can go head-on against any normal swords or knives..."

Fang Yuan was impressed. "Such a shocking improvement in defence and attack! After breaking through the 6th Gate, I now have inner force, and am indeed very different from a normal martial artist!"

With his improvement, he began to think of dealing with the spiritual birds at Green Peak.

"With my skills, if those Red-eyed White Birds dare to fight me, regardless whether they are normal or spiritual they shouldn't pose any problem. As for the leader, the large eagle, there might still be a little trouble!"

Fang Yuan was longing for the spiritual land at Green Peak, in the depths of the Clear Spirit Mountain.

He could not stand how every time he had to scavenge the place for loot and deal with the numerous spiritual bird's attempt at stopping him.

"The spiritual land at the Green Peak is a good place to set up a campsite, and the earlier we leave for it the better!"

Only spiritual lands were best suited to grow spiritual plants.

As of now, Fang Yuan depended on his botany ability to cultivate spiritual plants, but the amount of effort he put in and the lack of a suitable plot of land was always a pity.

And it was not the safest place.

Therefore, it was a must to get rid of the Red-eyed White Birds and take over Green Peak spiritual land.

"At most, I shall fight with all my might against those white birds. I can kill some every day, and we shall see if they can breed faster than I can kill them!"



Fang Yuan revealed a sinister look on his face.

...

Within the mountains, it was confined, and unknowingly, ten days had passed.

The people of Qingye City began to return to their homes, after being chased away in fear of being killed by Song Zhong. It was as though everything began to revert back to the peace it had before.

As for Zhou Family, which was almost wiped out, they were beginning to be forgotten.

The influence that the Zhou Family once had was slowly being taken over by other families, and one of the main contenders was the Lin Family.

One fine day at Qingye City.

A young man entered the city, and nostalgia was written all over his face. "Qingye City is still as happening as before!"

It was Fang Yuan.

He spent his time cultivating more Vermilion Jade Rice, drank spiritual tea for every meal, and waited at the outskirts of the Green Peak spiritual land, waiting for his chance to deal with the Red-eyed White Birds.

[Eagle Claw Iron Skin Technique (Grade 6)] was impressive. He did not have to care when the Red-eyed White Birds flew and pecked at him, unless if they were pecking at the vital points on his body.

Using this special ability, he killed many Red-eyed White Birds and hid in the fog if he encountered the spiritual bird's nest. Every day he survived on bird's meat, spiritual tea and spiritual water. As for his martial arts and foundation, there were gradual improvements.

The flock of birds were observed to decrease in size as days go by.

Against a cunning Fang Yuan, the Red-eyed White Birds might even migrate to another place.

However, for now, Fang Yuan's focus slowly shifted to the Vermilion Jade Rice farm.

He faced a huge problem. He was running low on realgar powder, an important ingredient of the Still Fire Liquid...

Even though he stored up large quantities of it previously, the farm did consume a lot of Still Fire Liquid, and the expansion of his production would naturally lead to this outcome.

With this problem, no matter how unwilling Fang Yuan was, he had to leave to get more realgar powder, unless he wanted to witness the demise of his farm.

Secondly, he did not dare to push the flock of Red-eyed White Birds too much.

After his massacre, the remaining Red-eyed White Birds were especially fierce and cunning. When they encounter danger they would immediately squawk for help, and catch the attention of the flock and the bird king.

There was once when Fang Yuan failed to escape and was pecked by a furious bird flock. He sustained many wounds on his back and with much effort escaped alive.

After getting rid of the old, weak, sick and disabled birds, the remaining were tough fighters.

He did not want to push them too much, as those spiritual beasts had the wisdom of humans. If they were desperate, they might destroy the spiritual land, and it was an outcome Fang Yuan had to avoid at all costs.

"Shopkeeper! Give me 40 pounds of the best quality realgar powder! I want the best!"

It was the same shop as before, and Fang Yuan exclaimed the moment he entered the shop, as though he was an uncivilised and aggressive customer.

He earned quite a bit from his previous trip to the county, and a little money did not bother him.

"40 pounds?!"

The shopkeeper, who was originally smiling, appeared shocked. "This amount is too much, we only have 20 pounds here..."

"If that's the case, I'll have them all!"

Fang Yuan waved his hand proudly and was prepared to wipe out stock from the next shop.

"Yes of course..."

The shopkeeper looked down, chased his subordinates away and personally packed the realgar powder. Out of a sudden, he smiled and asked, "Eh? Have we met before, brother?"

He felt a sense of familiarity as he saw the young man.

"Yes! The previous time, I also bought realgar powder from this shop!"

Being a [Martial Artist (6th Gate)], Fang Yuan had little considerations and became more direct.

"Previous time, realgar powder! I remember it now, you were the one who sold the red ginseng, but the Zhou Family took it!"

The shopkeeper thanked Fang Yuan.

"That's right!"

Fang Yuan took the package over, and asked, "I've heard that something big happened in the county town, how's the Zhou Family doing?"

"Sigh..."

The shopkeeper shook his head. "What else? The servants were either killed or have run away, their shop taken over, and their residence has become a gathering place for beggars. What a pity, for Old Zhou's efforts to start the family business, and now it has all been completely destroyed..."

Fang Yuan remained speechless.

In the Zhou Family, Zhou Wenwu was still alive, and since Spirit Returning Sect was willing to punish Song Zhong, it seemed that there was a conclusion to the whole episode.

To regain the Zhou Family's reputation in Qingye City would not be easy. Even if Zhou Wenwu returned, he could only do so much, and could never hope for the Sect to help him, for the Sect was not a charity organisation.

"Who has the biggest clout in Qingye City now?"

Fang Yuan probed further.

"No doubt it would be the Lin Family, as Old Lin had a good daughter... Following, it would be Zhang Family, Guo Family, and all these are newly-built families..."

In reality, these two families were initially small families in Qingye City.

As their opportunity arrived, they rose to power and could be said to have leeches on Zhou Family's influence.

Those who win would rule, and those who lose would become beggars. Even though it was just a small city, it was like a bloodshed competition.

'Looking at things now, it would be extremely difficult for Zhou Wenwu to start all over again, but then again, none of this is my business...'

Fang Yuan shook his head, slowly walked out of the shop and disappeared into the crowd.

The shopkeeper looked at his silhouette, shocked.

...

"Master would like to purchase some realgar powder?"

"That's right!"

Fang Yuan explored the city, and as he was preparing to buy some provisions, several people appeared before him.

These few people wore uniforms and seemed to come from the same origin. All of them looked proud as they smiled, and the strongest among them appeared to be a [Martial Artist (3rd Gate)].

"I am Zhang Han, and my family has long heard of master's name, and want to make friends with you, master! This is a small gift, please accept it!"

Zhang Han waved his hands, and several servants carried a delicate box. Opening the box revealed top-quality realgar powder, and another box glittered, as it contained 2 rows of small silver ingots.

### Carefree Path of Dreams

#### **Chapter 43: Fawn**

A silver flash.

Two neat rows of silver ingots were so heavy the servant carrying it felt numbness in his hands.

Fang Yuan ignored the ingots, as compared to gold and silver, he preferred the box of realgar powder.

“Zhang Han? You’re from the Zhang Family?”

He looked at their leader and had a mischievous look in his eyes. “Do you recognise me?”

He knew that it was probably the shopkeeper who told the Zhang Family about him, and the Zhang Family’s influence was indeed strong; they could prepare the silver ingots and realgar powder in such a short period of time and even locate Fang Yuan to present him these gifts.

The new families within Qingye City were indeed capable.

“I do... Master Fang with magical healing abilities that saved Master Zhou from the brink of death, you are indeed the God of Medicine!”

Zhang Han smiled.

The news which actually shocked them was how Fang Yuan defeated Song Zhong in the county.

Elder Song was the God of Killing in the eyes of those in Qingye City.

So what if the Zhou Family was the strongest family in the city? So what if Master Zhou was the deacon of Spirit Returning Sect? If Song Zhong wanted the family to perish then they shall go!

But even the unruly Song Zhong died in the hands of Fang Yuan, so who would dare to offend him? Whoever wanted to survive in Qingye City would have to suck up to him.

‘Based on my master’s predictions, this person is probably a skilled martial artist who can harness inner force, but he is so young...’

Zhang Han looked at Fang Yuan’s face with admiration.

“I did not do anything to deserve this!”

Fang Yuan waved his hand to reject. “I cannot accept all these gifts!”

“Master is unsatisfied? Just tell us what you want, we will make it happen!”

Seeing Fang Yuan’s rejection, Zhang Han became anxious. After all, he was tasked by his family to make friends with this highly skilled doctor.

“I’m serious!”

Fang Yuan replied in a serious tone.

Since living with Master Wenxin in the Secluded Valley, both of them had weird temperaments.

Whatever they wanted, they would get for themselves, or trade with others, but they never received offerings from others.

Based on Master Wenxin’s explanation, it was hard to repay the favour if they accepted the gifts.

Thinking about it, only Old Tian, Minister Lin and a few other lucky ones had better relationships with the Secluded Valley and Fang Yuan only traded with them.

“Leave!”

Fang Yuan waved his hands.

“Master...”

Zhang Han bit his lips. In front of this young man, he felt pressured, and could not retaliate. He had no choice but to bring his servants back.

“If I accept rewards without doing deeds, I am no different from a thief!”

Fang Yuan looked at their silhouette and shook his head.

Unknowingly, he became the strongest influence within Qingye City.

After all, Old Zhou of the Zhou Family only broke through the 5th Gate and was a deacon of the Spirit Returning Sect, but that was all.

“Zhang Family, Guo Family were new families in the region, and they must have a few [Martial Artist (4th/5th Gate)]... Lin Family is even worse, as they only earned their reputation through Lin Leiyue in the Spirit Returning Sect...”

Fang Yuan thought for a while and became speechless.

A tiny Qingye City gave him a feeling that there were no true heroes, but many small contenders who fought for power.

“The world is huge, and Qingye City is too small. It’s like the outskirts of the outskirts... Even the entire Qinghe County was just a small secluded place...”

Fang Yuan was resolute on his viewpoint.

‘After I have trained hard enough, I must explore the world and see for myself the wonders around the world!’

‘Of course, I’ll have to take it step by step, and now, the most important is for me to break through the 3 Perilous Gates!’

The 7th Gate was the Shock Gate. After breaking through it, he would reach where Song Zhong once achieved.

Fang Yuan was extremely confident of himself.

“Shock Gate oh Shock Gate, harming the essence and manipulating the magic... This should be a test of a martial artists’ magic level! With the help of the Questioning Heart Tea and the Meditative Tea Ceremony, I am unafraid of this perilous gate...”

“And as for the 8th Gate, the Death Gate, If I don’t succeed, I will die. It is closely related to a martial artist’s Essence, Spirit and Magic points. My guess is that the higher one’s stats are, the greater the possibility of breaking through!”

Fang Yuan was extremely clear about the first 8 Gates and had no other doubts.

"If I break through the Death Gate and enter the 4 Heavenly Gates, I can indeed have my own way around Qinghe County. As for the Spirit Returning Sect, even the elders will have to make way for me!"

In the 12 Golden Gates, the 4 Heavenly Gates would come after the first 8 Gates!

Martial artists with such a cultivation level were among the strongest in the region and had the ability to start their own small clan. Even within Spirit Returning Sect, they could start a clan and create trouble.

"Under my care, the Flower Fox Ferret should be on par with [Martial Artists (7th/8th Gate)], similar to that of the red-eyed white birds. As for the bird king, its ability should be comparable to the ability of a martial artist in the 4 Heavenly Gates..."

Thinking of those spiritual beasts, Fang Yuan became vexed.

Without getting rid of all the red-eyed white birds, how could he take over Green Peak spiritual land?

As for the spiritual fertilizer, its magical capabilities would only increase after a long time, and new produce would not have much use. After taking over the spiritual land, those new produce would be able to aid the spiritual plants in their growth.

However, he did not know if there could be an even greater danger than the red-eyed white birds, lurking within the spiritual land.

'But this makes things interesting... Right?'

Fang Yuan touched his chin and realised the change in his personality since he first took up martial arts.

It was as though he had a new passion, and thirst for more?

'It seems that martial arts can mould one's character and is more beneficial than it may seem. After killing Song Zhong, my thought processes have become smoother and clearer. It seems like even my personality has become more active?'

Fang Yuan thought about it as he walked around a few shops to get more realgar powder, as he managed to fill his entire bamboo basket with it. He finally reached the entrance of the city.

"Ah! Spare my life! Spare my life!"

A crowd formed at the entrance, and screams were heard, which piqued Fang Yuan's curiosity.

He became even more surprised as he went up.

"Isn't he the shopkeeper from the provision shop? Why is he here? And who are those around him..."

Fang Yuan saw a flash as he witnessed the scene before him.

In the scene, the plump shopkeeper was lying on the floor, his face swollen and not many of his teeth were left. One of his legs was fractured and he was pitiful.

Two servants were around him holding whips and staring at him. The occasional whipping made the shopkeeper let out a cry of pain.

These two servants wore the same attire as Zhang Han.

"It's a... pity..."

Fang Yuan witnessed the scene but did not feel good about it. Instead, he shook his head, turned around and prepared to leave.

He knew that his previous rejection on Zhang Han's offer led Zhang Han to capture the shopkeeper who betrayed him, just so he could whip him in front of a crowd, just to let off steam and to let Fang Yuan see it for himself.

This was the sad thing about being servants, because if the owner wanted them to hit, they had to obey, and for no good reason they could be killed if the owner wanted them to!

"Doctor Fang!"

At the outskirts of the city, Zhang Han was waiting for him. "Are you satisfied?"

"The shopkeeper, is he one of yours?"

Fang Yuan showed no expression and asked.

"No, he was leaning towards the Zhou Family, but now he wants to lean towards my Family, he's just like a wild grass!"

Zhang Han shook his head and seemed unhappy. "Since he offended the God of Medicine, the previous beating was deserving..."

"Forget about it, it was just a small matter!"

Fang Yuan knew that if he did show his intentions, then Zhang Han might just let the plump shopkeeper 'disappear'.

What good did he gain from doing all that?

At the same time, he looked at Zhang Han and felt sorry for him.

Zhang Han appeared happy, but he would be dealt with the same way the shopkeeper was dealt with.

The head of the Zhang Family did not see to things himself but tasked Zhang Han to do it. Weren't his intentions obvious enough? He would rather be safe than sorry!

If Zhang Han succeeded, it would be a celebration.

If he angered Fang Yuan, he would be the one getting the beating and be taken as the sacrificial lamb.

"I have duly noted the Zhang Family's good intentions!"

Fang Yuan waved his hands and walked away. "I am an uncultured person who lives in the mountains, and I am not willing to be entangled with the affairs of the city. Your family can be assured of that!"

Zhang Han bowed with respect and looked as Fang Yuan walked away.

When Fang Yuan first spoke, he was just nearby, but at his last word, his silhouette could no longer be seen. Such lightness skill and inner power were of a totally different level.

"Could it be... really... inner force!?"

He was shocked, as his hair stood on its ends. He finally knew why the He Family wanted to suck up to him as much as possible.

Previously, Song Zhong could massacre the entire Qingye City, imagine what could this master do?

The only difference Fang Yuan had with Song Zhong was age. In the future, he could continually improve and enter realms he never thought was possible.

Zhang Han knew he couldn't, but couldn't help it but became jealous of Fang Yuan.

"Alright, everyone is dismissed!"

Zhang Han came to the crowd, dispersed the observers, and ordered the two servants to stop. He supported a weak shopkeeper up.

"Master Han... Spare... Spare my life, I shall not dare to do it again..."

The shopkeeper continued to wail, and those who hear and witnessed the scene would feel sad for him.

"Mm... You were not wrong to be loyal to my family, the only wrong you did was to offend that master..."

Zhang Han walked up and gently patted the cheeks of the shopkeeper.

"Of course, The Zhang Family knows how to distinguish punishment from reward! Just now, it was punishment, and now these are the rewards!"

He whipped out a cheque and waved it in front of the shopkeeper.

"Here you go, you can do anything you like from now onwards, even if it's to seek me for revenge, please go ahead, do you understand?"

"I don't dare! I won't dare!"

The shopkeeper wailed, looked at the bank cheque and was too confused to say anything at that moment.

### [Carefree Path of Dreams](#)

#### **Chapter 44: The Stalker**

"After the downfall of the Zhou Family, two families rose to power, the Zhang Family, and the Guo Family... I've heard of the Zhang Family before, and they used to have some popularity before. This time, they only brought out a small part of their savings... The actions of Zhang Han revealed how scheming the Zhang Family was... And as for the Guo Family, their influence had been growing, but it remained unclear as to how they did it."

Within the forest.



Fang Yuan was sprinting, and at the same time, his thoughts ran through his mind.

After breaking the 6th Gate, and with the birth of inner strength in his Eagle Claws, every aspect of him improved.

For instance, he could naturally concentrate his inner strength to his legs and ran faster than the average person. This was not lightness skill but was the simplest use of inner force.

With the help of his inner strength, Fang Yuan could traverse the forest as though there were nothing.

"Eh?"

As he approached the entrance to the valley, he realised a black figure kneeling down.

"Master Zhou, what's the matter?"

Fang Yuan went up to him and saw his shaggy look. It was a young man, and if it wasn't Zhou Wenwu, who else could it be?

"Doctor Fang? You... You are not in the valley?"

After seeing Fang Yuan, Zhou Wenwu's eyes lit up and gave him a kowtow. His forehead was bleeding profusely. "Thank you, master, for taking revenge on behalf of my family!"

The destruction of the Zhou Family was entirely due to Song Zhong.

Fang Yuan saved Zhou Wenwu's life before and even escorted him to Qinghe County to testify against Song Zhong. In the end, he even killed Song Zhong.

Fang Yuan earned his respects.

He frowned and left Zhou Wenwu alone. "Let's forget about what happened in the past, what plans do you have for the future?"

"I shall not hide my plans!"

Zhou Wenwu straightened his back and showed a stubborn look. "I am useless, but the sect has decided to pass on my father's role of a deacon to me!"

In actual fact, Zhou Wenwu's was much less skilful than Zhou Tong, but this was the Sect's way of compensating for his loss.

"I have decided to return to Qingye City!"

Zhou Wenwu clenched his fist. "I must rebuild my family's business here!"

"I see!"

Fang Yuan nodded his head, as this move of Zhou Wenwu was good.

The next step would be hard. How would it be possible to get Lin Family, Zhang Family and Guo Family to take a step back for the rise of Zhou Family?

Especially since these few families did gain from the downfall of Zhou Family, and they had their own plans up their sleeves.

Fang Yuan calculated that there wouldn't be much peace in Qingye City from now on.

"Then I shall wish Master Zhou all the best!"

"Ping!"

Zhou Wenwu gave another kowtow. "Master Fang is my benefactor, and also my family's benefactor! If you need a favour in the future, just inform me and I will see to it, regardless what it takes!"

Fang Yuan smiled. "It's alright, take care Master Zhou, I won't send you off, please return!"

He entered the valley, ignoring Zhou Wenwu.

Seeing Fang Yuan's silhouette disappear, Zhou Wenwu seemed disappointed and continued to kneel.

'Zhou Wenwu... He is indeed sincere!'

Fang Yuan returned to the pavilion, placed his goods, called the Flower Fox Ferret to check on Zhou Wenwu, and then continued to mind his own business.

Zhou Wenwu knew how powerful Fang Yuan was, and therefore did not dare to offend him.

Those words which Zhou Wenwu said actually meant that if one day the Zhou Family rose to power again, they would still be willing to obey Fang Yuan.

"Get help from other influential families? Zhou Family... It seems too big of a price to pay for them to start from scratch."

Fang Yuan shook his head.

He had the ability to help Zhou Family recover, but he felt that it was not worth the effort.

If he really needed the help of influential families, why would he need to look for the Zhou Family?

The Zhang Family seemed impressive, and he could become polite and ask them for help anytime.

"Mmm... After considering all the factors, I have to sacrifice too much, to gain too little. It doesn't make sense!"

Fang Yuan shook his head, continued to prepare his 'Still Fire Liquid', and took a stroll in his farm.

...

It was dusk.

A chill wind blew across the mountains, and the cold from the icy ground was biting.

Zhou Wenwu stubbornly continued to kneel on the ground, and his mind was lost as he stared at the flickering candle in the valley.

He was confident that by presenting even himself Fang Yuan would help him. However, Fang Yuan totally ignored his nonsense and closed the door on him, his mind set.

Fang Yuan wouldn't frown a bit even if he froze to death out here.

Being a son of the Zhou Family, Zhou Wenwu had the responsibility to carry on the family line, and if he really died kneeling out here, he would cease the family line.

The moon slowly rose higher and higher.

Zhou Wenwen took a long sigh as his entire body became stiff. After a long while, he finally stood up, gazed at the Secluded Valley for a long while, before taking his leave by limping towards the forest.

What he didn't know was that two men in black were observing him the whole while within the bushes nearby.

"Hey, he is just one person himself, how can he rebuild his family? Does he not know that the Zhou Family is history now?"

"Although the Zhou Family is destroyed, it only took a short span of a few weeks, and many relationships were established from the incident, especially how the Sect still acknowledged the family is one of their own, and that is the crucial part!"

The other person rebutted. "If they are not afraid of the Zhou Family's comeback, then why would master send us out to spy on him?"

"You're right about that too, but I'm wondering why can't we take things into our own hands and settle him once and for all in the forest!"

The first guy had a malicious look in his eyes.

"Are you crazy?"

The other man in black was shocked. "This person is now the deacon of Spirit Returning Sect. Even Song Zhong couldn't cover up the death of Zhou Tong, and he himself died in the end. Do you think you are more capable than Song Zhong? And you still want to kill another one?"

When he said this, the other guy remained speechless.

After half a day, he said, "We were lucky the owner of the valley did not promise to help him, otherwise, by his reputation and ability, our Guo Family will be in trouble."

"That's right... Zhang Family's actions were a joke. He is just an ordinary doctor with little martial arts, and they gave him so much respect, what a joke!"

"He was after all from a business family, and all they talk about is having peace and prosperity. But our family is different! We are based on our skilled martial arts! Every child at the age of 9 in our family will have to start picking up martial arts, and we have quite a number of Martial Artist in the 4th or 5th Gate. In addition... We still have Old Master!"

At the last few words, both of them softened, and they appeared respectful.

"As long as Old Master is around, our Guo Family will rise and become the number one family in Qingye City, or even number one in Jinjun County!"

"Hmph, if we were not that afraid of being at the top, our family could have ruled over Qingye City easily!"

The man in black announced proudly.

"There are many powerful people in the martial arts world, Take for example this secluded valley, once is was Master Wenxin, and now Doctor Fang Yuan with impeccable healing powers and unparalleled martial arts. If we treat him as our enemy, it would be a large obstacle for our family to progress!"

The other person sighed, and both men in black looked at each other, both wanting to find out how powerful he was. "Why not... Let's test him out first?"

Although it was just a thought, they unknowingly took a step forward.

"Both of us are going to ambush him, and since both of us are strong martial artists who have broken through the 2 Peaceful Gates, surely we can escape if we are no match for him..."

"Whoosh!"

Two shadows entered the valley and arrived at the pavilion.

'This legendary Secluded Valley looks normal...'

One of them appeared unsatisfied and mumbled under his breath.

The moment he spoke, a white flash appeared in front of them.

"Sssss!"

"Ahhh!"

A piercing scream was heard and echoed throughout the valley.

"What is this... creature!"

The other man in black retreated quickly, as he saw his companion fell to the floor with an arm detached, as blood spurted out.

"Hisss!"

In front of them was a white and large dog... white ferret?

"Mutated... Mutated beast?!"

The voice of the man in black trembled, as though he regretted his actions.

'The valley is indeed mysterious and scary, as they have a mutated beast to look after the living quarters?'

On the other hand, the Flower Fox Ferret was calmly stroking its own fur, and from time to time made some noise.

"Chiya!"

The door to the pavilion opened, and as Fang Yuan yawned he looked at both of the men in black. "More spies? I think my luck isn't too good these few days... I must warn those who might possibly do foolish things again, otherwise, it will be rather troublesome for me..."

"You are Fang Yuan!"

One of them said, "Why did you let the beast attack us?"

"Attack you? Haha..."

Fang Yuan laughed as though he had heard a good joke. "You two trespassed my valley, with ill intentions, and yet you dare accuse me? Both of you are indeed idi\*ts!"

"Idi\*ts?"

Both men in black looked at each other and did not quite seem to understand, but knew it should not be something good. Both of them stared fiercely at Fang Yuan.

They knew that the white ferret was extremely fast and they could never outrun it if they attempted to escape to the forest.

The only way out was to defeat its owner, Fang Yuan!

Even though they have heard of Fang Yuan's heroics, they have not personally seen it before and had a glimmer of hope in defeating him.

"To stay alive, it seems I have to personally fight my way out!"

Fang Yuan did not take them seriously. "Come, don't complain that I didn't give you the chance to strike first!"

"Kill!"

Both guys looked at each other as both of them, even the one with a broken arm, shouted and pounced upon him. His legs struck rapidly, so quick that there wasn't any shadow.

"Ferocious Tiger Palm!"

"Shadowless Legs!"

...

Palms and kicks flew in quick succession, but Fang Yuan did not dodge. He took in a deep breath, and his skin became a greenish-black.

"Ping! Ping!"

It was like raindrops hitting a banana leaf, continuous and distinct.

When everything was over, and both of them were exhausted, they were surprised to see Fang Yuan still standing. Fear was written all over their faces. "Eagle Claw Iron Skin Technique at Grade 6 - A professional!!! Who knew such a level could be attained?"

## Carefree Path of Dreams

### **Chapter 45: Infiltrate**

In the early morning, Fang Yuan put on rough clothing and tended to his garden leisurely.

No one would imagine that beneath this garden, there were 2 martial artist's bodies used as fertilizer!

"What about the Guo Family?"

Fang Yuan thought as he dug the ground.

The two men were not his match and were easily defeated. After another round of beating and using of drugs to threaten them, the two men spilt everything out.

The Guo Family was different from well-known Zhang Family. The Guo family was relatively unknown except for being a tyrant in a local village. They were able to bring down many from the Zhou Family due to their ruthlessness and their martial arts skills..."

Not even the Lin Family would provoke such a rabid family.

Fang Yuan was unhappy.

"Perhaps I should also discourage people from coming to me"

Fang Yuan thought.

He had been in the limelight previously. Now, everyone in the Qingye City knew about a Doctor Fang who could work miracles and was highly skilled in martial arts.

Fang Yuan wondered if he would still be able to tend to his field if people were to keep paying him visits to further their own agendas. He would also not be able to tend to his field if the Guo Family kept snooping around.

Fang Yuan took no notice of such a small family even if they had individuals that were highly skilled, as it was not an issue.

They did not cause much trouble when Zhou Tong was in charge which proved that they were nothing to be afraid of.

Of course, Fang Yuan felt that it was best to improve himself so as to have more confidence.

Fang Yuan blinked and the stats window appeared before his eyes:

"Name: Fang Yuan

Essence: 3.5

Spirit: 3.4

Magic: 2.2

Age: 18

Cultivation: [Martial Artist (6th Gate)]

Technique: [Black Sand Palm (Grade 5)], [Eagle Claw Iron Skin Technique (Grade 6)]

Skill: [Medicine (Level 2)], [Botany (Level 3)]”

...

“Ever since I obtained inner power, it has stimulated my spirit and essence to rise significantly. Could my solid foundation be the reason for the massive increase in their stats?”

Fang Yuan was vaguely suspicious. A normal 6th Gate Martial Artist would not be able to improve as much as him.

As for the increase in magic, it could be attributed solely to the effects of the Questioning Heart Tea.

Fang Yuan shared the tea with the Flower Fox Ferret once a day. While the effect of the tea was not as great as when he first drank the tea, he was satisfied with the constant increase in magic.

Overcoming the Shock Gate, the 7th Gate of the 12 Golden Gates, would test the magical energy of the martial artist.

At his current standard, he was 60% to 70% confident of overcoming the Shock Gate if he practised his Eagle Claw Iron Skin Technique enough!

Given such a success rate, it would shock many. Even Wu Zong Shi Yutong would be tongue-tied.

“Flower Fox Ferret, go and fetch the Still Fire Liquid!”

After much consideration, Fang Yuan fetched a few bamboo canteens.

The Flower Fox Ferret received the bamboo canteens and vanished in a puff of smoke. It was very different from the past.

“The Flower Fox Ferret’s powers have been steadily increasing as well. It is hardly afraid of the realgar powder now...”

Fang Yuan was astonished after witnessing the sight.

A main component of the Still Fire Liquid was the realgar powder, which used to be the bane of the Flower Fox Ferret. After the Flower Fox Ferret was retrained, it no longer feared the realgar powder and just disliked the smell of it.

After realizing, Fang Yuan experimented multiple times and came to a conclusion that the weakness of the Flower Fox Ferret was slowly diminishing.

“That’s right... the spiritual beast needs to grow and might eventually enter the realm of Wu Zong. How could such a big weakness remain?”

Fang Yuan rubbed his chin and guessed that it was either the effect of the spiritual rice and tea or the growth of the Flower Fox Ferret that resulted in the change.

There was not enough information to arrive at a definite conclusion.

“Keke!”

Not long after, the Flower Fox Ferret returned. It looked expectantly at Fang Yuan.

“You are getting more and more proficient... I know I know, you will get your spiritual tea today...”

Fang Yuan looked at the Flower Fox Ferret and the image of the Flower Fox Ferret passing away one day appeared in his mind. He could not help but feel sad at the thought.

“There is still one more thing!”

He stroked the back of the Flower Fox Ferret, his eyes cold, “I will be going out tonight. I need you to look after the house. Kill any intruders on sight!”

...

Qingye City.

It was a dark and windy night. The crescent moon was covered by a cloud and the horizon was grey and hazy.

“What a fitting night to kill a person!”

Fang Yuan raced off. His speed matched that of a speeding horse and in no time, he arrived at Qingye City.

The city gate was already closed. Fang Yuan could not help but laugh as he looked at the towering, mouldy city wall. He took out a long rope and a few nails and arrived at a corner of the city wall.

“Eagle Claw!”

Power surged into both his hands and he gained enormous strength. He gripped the stone wall and started to climb. Every now and then, he would hammer the nails into the cracks of the wall. These nails acted as footholds for him to climb up further.

When he was halfway up, Fang Yuan threw the rope up. The rope latched onto the stone.

“Woosh!”

With a hard pull, Fang Yuan landed lightly at the top of the city wall and vanished into the darkness without anyone noticing him.

“Sigh...At my current skill level, I still require the aid of tools. When I have mastered the Lightness Skill, this city wall would be nothing...”

Fang Yuan thought as he swiftly descended from the wall.

He was dressed in black attire and blended in with the darkness. As such, he went unnoticed by the drowsy soldiers guarding the gates.

“Guo Family...Guo Family...”

He knew where the Guo residence was as he had previously come to the city before. He stealthily made his way to the place.

Guo Residence.



The Guo family recently acquired their wealth and as such, their big house still preserved many characteristics that are similar to that found in villages. The house was heavily guarded by servants who were well-built. Even though it was the middle of the night, there were patrols with hounds patrolling the residence.

The Guo Family was first in Qingye City in terms of military might and martial arts skills.

Fang Yuan was unsure if it was the mannerism of the Guo Family or if the Guo Family had too many enemies to warrant such a level of security.

No matter how well-guarded the residence was, the walls of the residence were significantly lower than that of the city wall. Fang Yuan looked for an opening and leapt over the wall.

“Crack!”

Behind the wall was a garden. Fang Yuan landed on the grass which rustled.

He turned and swiftly ran towards the rocks.

“Woof Woof!”

Two well-built servants were patrolling the area with a large hound not far away.

The hound had silky black fur and bloodshot eyes. Its teeth were white and sharp. It stopped in its tracks, looked at the place where Fang Yuan landed and turned to look at the rocks.

“What’s wrong, Blackie?”

One of the servants was curious. He released the leash and allowed the hound to move forward.

The hound ran towards the corner of the wall and sniffed the ground before it ran towards the rocks.

The two servants looked at each other, both on alert. One of them reached towards his waist while the other gripped the gong.

“Good beast!”

Fang Yuan saw the hound approaching from his hiding spot. He focused his inner strength in his eyes and glared at the black hound.

In the study of martial arts, there was a saying where those highly-skilled were able to make their enemies cower just by glaring at them without leaving a finger.

Given his current level, Fang Yuan was nowhere near the capabilities of those in the legend. However, his magical energy was higher than that of a normal person and he was up against a simple-minded beast. Hence, he was able to handle the hound.

“Wuwu...”

The black hound shivered as it felt terrified like a lone horse in the wilderness stalked by a predator.

It whimpered before turning around and scampered away from the rocks.

“What’s wrong?”

The two servants were confused.

“Could it be that the hound is still hungry? Or that it is lusty? ”

The other servant relaxed and joked.

“What lusty? Did you think that everyone is like you, always looking for prostitutes in the street...my Blackie is...”

The servant chided. He stroked the black hound’s head and said, “Let’s go, our shift is almost over. Let’s return to our room, drink some wine and eat some meat...”

“I agree!”

The other servant nodded his head. Both of them walked off.

Fang Yuan waited for the sound of the footsteps to disappear before entering the inner area of the residence.

The courtyard was large and there were many buildings. The residence was built like a maze. Fang Yuan silently cursed himself for making a blunder as he did not gather sufficient information about the residence.

“Most residences are similar. Behind the living room would be the master bedroom...”

Fang Yuan scaled the wall and was elated when he saw a few lights.

Lighting up the lamps were costly. Only the owner could afford to light up the lamps to discuss matters.

As Fang Yuan edged closer, he realized that the security in that area was tighter and knew that he had arrived at the correct place.

An orange light lit up the surrounding. Two shadows could be seen from within the room.

“Father, I was incapable. The seventh and the eighteenth disciples have not returned!”

In the study room, the head of the Guo Family, Guo Jing was grovelling on the ground.

If an outsider were to see this scene, they would be shocked.

When did the hot-tempered and unreasonable head of the Guo Family become more docile and timid than a young rabbit?

“Hmmm?!”

Seated cross-legged on the mat was an old man with white hair and bright eyes. The old man turned his head in such an imposing manner that the room felt like it was struck by lightning. Guo Jing could not help but shrink away.

### **Carefree Path of Dreams**

#### **Chapter 46: Hiding**

"What happened, tell me about it!"

Old Master Guo had a loud voice and was very much louder than the average person.

"Yes, Father!"

Guo Jing stood up and bowed. "The only child left of the Zhou Family, Zhou Wenwu, returned to the city. I was worried and therefore sent both my nephews to investigate and stalk him... At first, they relayed a message back to inform us that everything was normal, but when they entered the mountains and head towards the secluded valley, there was no further news."

"The mountains? Secluded valley?"

Old Master Guo looked down, and then said, "The doctor who could work miracles? Fang... Fang..."

"Fang Yuan!"

Guo Jing felt unjust. After all, he lost two martial artists, which was a big deal to the Guo Family, not to mention the kinship they once had.

"After the incident, our people observed Zhou Wenwu returning from the secluded valley, but could not obtain information regarding our 2 brothers, I'm afraid... They're in trouble!"

"Bast\*rd"

Old Master Guo raged, and Guo Jing became confused, for he did not know if Old Master was angry at him, Fang Yuan, or his 2 useless grandsons.

"Did those two... ever get involved in any trouble?"

After calming down, Old Master Guo used a soothing voice, as he looked extremely serious.

"Never in their lives!"

Guo Jing shook his head. "This is a grave matter. In the entire household, only you and I know about this, not even the best second brother can know about it!"

"Good!"

Old Master Guo nodded his head but looked lost for the moment. "Since I was 18, I was tasked to infiltrate this place and stay hidden. That was 60 years ago, and finally came the long-awaited orders from the Master. It was the real Master's intention to make this family influential, so as to cover up the activities that we do, and it cannot be taken lightly! As long as we succeed this time, all our disciples will be able to come out of hiding and find the real Master..."

"I understand this!"

Guo Jing nodded his head as the eavesdropping Fang Yuan was shocked.

"After hearing what both of them said, it seems that where the Guo Family came from elsewhere where they were a big power, and are now secretly inserted into Qingye City? No wonder they could become such an influential family from nothing in such a short while, like a burning fire!"

"I am sure that they must have a similar plan in other counties... This was very well thought-out and a very well-kept secret, it is..."

At that moment, it was as though he saw a large and invisible net covering the entire Qinghe County.

The many disciples they had were like many tiny nodes, lying low but would all strike when the command was given.

With that thought, he immediately held his breath, consolidated his magical energy, and focused his attention in the room.

Their conversation was distinctly heard from outside.

"My Father!"

Guo Jing sounded as though he suspected something. "The sect's order for us was to lay low, wasn't it? Why the change?"

"This matter..."

Old Master Guo remained composed. "I've got some insider information. It seems that there was a traitor within the sect who stole an important treasure. He escaped in the direction of Clear Spirit Mountain and was highly likely to reach our vicinity. We could use this opportunity to come out, make use of all the manpower we have and cover up for the highly skilled martial artists that the sect had sent to deal with him. After all, Qinghe County is still within the control of the Spirit Returning Sect, and Shi Yutong's sect is not one to be trifled with...."

"The only problem is... It has been such a long time since the traitor escaped, and he might have already been long gone. The only reason why the sect is doing this is because they have not resigned to fate..."

At this point, Old Master Guo had disappointment written on his face.

On the contrary, Guo Jing looked happy.

Regardless, the Guo Family could take advantage of the situation and make its mark!

"Traitor... treasure..."

"Such a coincidence?"

Fang Yuan became increasingly shocked as he heard on. For a moment he thought of Han Shou, who died under his poisonous palms, and the hidden treasure map within his boots.

The lines on the treasure map were similar to that of a talisman, and it seemed that many details were missing. After trying hard to gather more information about the treasure map, he became confused himself and decided to give up and shoved it into a corner.

Now it seemed that this item was extremely precious, and the treasure of this strong influence opposing the Spirit Returning Sect! It seemed that they were willing to give up anything for this treasure.

'What a pity, what use would an incomplete map be?'

Fang Yuan shook his head and heard Old Master Guo. "Hmm, secluded valley... Who was Fang Yuan? How dare he touch my people, does he think I'm a weakling? Although we have a short history here, for us to exert our influence, we need to show others that we can fight."

"The news of our two martial artists failing their mission had spread, and as for Fang Yuan, he is already a highly skilled martial artist!"

Guo Jing sounded serious. "Father, although you have trained secretly and are a Martial Artist of the 6th Gate, that young man is younger than you..."

If his father was in his younger days, Guo Jing wouldn't worry for him.

But now, he was close to 80. Even though his inner strength was astounding, how could he match another martial artist of same cultivation level as himself?

"I know, but the people in the Guo Family are not cowards!"

Old Master Guo waved his hand. "Personally lead a troop to the secluded valley and gather information regarding Little Seven and Little Eighteen. If they are alright then escort them back and forget about the incident, but if they have died... Retreat immediately!"

"Retreat immediately!"

"That's right, I will personally inform the Sect Head to inform him on the suspicious areas of the secluded valley!"

Old Master Guo smirked. "Who asked for the secluded valley to be so deeply hidden within the mountains, so mysterious? Even if the traitor came from there I wouldn't be surprised..."

Guo Jing was surprised.

Although he knew that this was not true and even if the martial artists from the sect knew about this, they would rather kill all those suspicious than let anyone live.

"What a great plan, Father!"

He looked joyful.

Suddenly, he noticed his father frowning, as though he was anxious.

"Pa! Pa!"

At this moment, there was an applause heard from outside, as a man in black entered the room and walked in. "Good plan! Indeed a perfect plan!"

"A martial artist skilled in inner force!?"

Old Master Guo stood up looking angry and pulled Guo Jing behind. "Careful, Guo Jing, I will deal with this!"

He looked at the man in black and was under stress. "May I know who you are, and why did you trespass the Guo Manor?"

"Old Dog, you shall die!"

Fang Yuan did not want to speak a word to the old man. He struck out his right hand and his index finger pointed forward like a sword.

"Chi!"

His arm grew in size, and under his black outfit, his skin became black. Even the centre of his palm had a little black too.

Eagle Claw Iron Skin Technique, Grade 6! And there's Black Sand Palm too!

Fang Yuan mustered all that he could in one move!

He had to do it. After all, this was the heart of the Guo Family, and Old Master Guo's last sentence was heard loudly, as he did it on purpose to demonstrate his inner force. Footsteps were already heard rushing towards the room.

Even though a martial artist skilled in inner force could easily take out those using inner power, facing a large number of them all at once could still exhaust him out.

Fang Yuan eyes were deadly.

At the moment Old Master Guo outlined the devious plan, he knew that the entire Guo Family had to be destroyed!

"Eagle Claw?!"

Old Master Guo was stressed out. He punched both fists in the air, and mustered all the strength he could, like a giant. "Giant Spiritual Strength!"

"Ping!"

The fists and claws met, and Old Master Guo was forced a few steps back. He unknowingly imprinted his footprint into the ground, as his face reddened. He spat out a large mouthful of blood, but his injury could not compare to his shock. "[Martial Artist (6th Gate)]? How could you have such aggression?"

"Chi!"

Fang Yuan's black outfit was torn, which exposed his pitch-black skin. He quickly recovered from the injury he sustained due to his impressive physical condition and did not even take a step back after the first exchange of fists. He attacked once again like an eagle; his strength on his claws came from his abdomen to his arm, then to his palm, then to his fingertips. A popping sound was heard every time his inner force passed through.

"Die!"

"Eagle Claw Iron Skin Technique!? You are Fang..."

Old Master Guo was even more surprised, but he could not complete his sentence as he received another strike from his opponent.

"Hmph, Spiritual Giant Supporting the Heavens!"

He stretched out both palms and received Fang Yuan's claws that struck from above.

"Ping!"

The man in black could gain the upper hand against Old Master Guo, and from how he was shaking from withstanding Fang Yuan's strikes, he was obviously on the brink of losing!

'Faster! Even faster!'

He clenched his fists and was sweating profusely. He could only wait for reinforcements to arrive.

"You're not too bad, being able to withstand three claws from me!"

Fang Yuan exclaimed and struck another claw out.

"Mmm..."

Old Master Guo became pale and exerted all his strength to hold on to the claws. He felt relieved as he saw his servants arriving to help him.

In a blink of an eye, one claw broke free and went straight for his throat.

"Kacha!"

A distinct sound was heard as the servants entered the room, as they witnessed the scene unfolding right in front of their eyes.

The pillar of support for the Guo Family, the all-mighty Old Master Guo held his neck, fell to the ground and remained motionless.

"Thief!"

Guo Jing was angered. "I will kill you!"

"Then you shall die too!"

To remove weeds, you need to pluck them from the roots, and Fang Yuan understood this theory.

He rushed forward and struck out his claw at Guo Jing, who was attempting to hide among the crowd.

"I'll fight!"

Guo Jing swept his arms across. After all, he was an able [Martial Artist (5th Gate)].

Despite his attempts to summon forth his inner power, it crumbled upon clashing against Fang Yuan's inner strength.

"Kacha!"

Fang Yuan snapped his neck, not giving him any chances.

All the servants and even the descendants of the Guo Family took a few steps back, all afraid to make any eye contact with this man in black.

Fang Yuan let out a cold laughter, flipped over the manor's wall, and disappeared.

## Carefree Path of Dreams

### **Chapter 47: The Aftermath**

Back in the old mansion of Zhou Family.

Ever since the passing of Zhou Tong, the place became like ruins and many beggars came to gather here.

However, when Zhen Wenwu was back, he immediately took the place back under his control and operated it as a base camp.

Zhou Wenwu was wearing a mourning suit and gave his respect to a few tablets that were on the altar with incense. "Father.... don't you worry. I will revive the prestige of the Zhou Family...."

After the ceremony, he opened the door and felt sorrowful as he saw the dilapidated courtyard.

The courtyard looked much more deserted now.

'Minister Lin is an old fox. Even though I'm using the Spirit Returning Sect's name in my favour, he will likely not fall for it. He has stronger backers than me. How about targeting the Zhang and Guo Family? This will not be easy though....'

Zhou Wenwu gazed at the moon with a troubled look.

The Zhang Family did have a strong background and power which they accumulated over the years. Hence, it would not be wise to attack them.

On the other hand, the Guo Family was violent and unruly. One would need assistance to bring them under control.

"Fang Yuan was not willing to lend a helping hand, and a few relatives promised to aid us financially but the fund is still not in yet....ugh, and also my sister! No one knows whether she is dead or alive. This is indeed worrying me...."

Zhou Wenwu sighed and suddenly, his expression changed.

There was a loud and distinct noise coming from the Guo's mansion.

"Something bad happened....to the Guo Family?"

He climbed over the courtyard wall. Lights were shining everywhere and there were many screams and crying. He grew suspicious.

Even though he wanted to find out what was happening, he knew that since the Guo Family was being attacked, they would be on high alert. It was better for him not to bother them right now.

"Or maybe.... This is my chance to...."

Zhou Wenwu gave it a good thought and his eyes glittered. "I'm not sure how is Old Guo now...."

"He is dead!"

A voice was heard from behind, which frightened Zhou Wenwu.

"Are you.... Doctor Fang?"



This voice was very familiar and sounded youthful. Zhou Wenwu was dazed for a moment but was relieved after realising who was it.

However, his expression became serious when he saw Fang Yuan in his night combat outfit.

Fang Yuan was present in the city at this timing and coincidentally, something bad happened to the Guo Family. Could it be....

"You don't have to guess. Old Guo and the homeowner Guo Jing are both dead...."

Fang Yuan spoke in a deep voice.

"Aaahh!"

Even though he had guessed that Fang Yuan was behind it, Zhou Wenwu was still surprised and immediately kowtowed to Fang Yuan. "Thank you for helping me. I will do anything you want me to do...."

Fang Yuan waved and said, "You don't need to thank me. I am helping you this time because I will need your help in the future!"

In fact, Fang Yuan ambushed the Guo Family to gather more information and to scare them.

However, he changed his plans as he became furious after hearing some secrets. Hence, he killed the father and the son of the Guo Family to get the most out of the operation.

He could say that he was invited by Zhou Wenwu to assist him in taking down the Guo Family. Who else could reveal the truth? Not only did he benefit without costing him anything, he even managed to reap gratitude from Zhou Wenwu.

Most importantly, he gained a new assistant in the city. Zhou Wenwu could help him out and save him a lot of trouble.

"Old Guo is a 6th Gate Martial artist and is indeed an expert in inner force. Guo Jing is a 5th Gate Martial artist..... Both of them are the most highly skilled in the Guo Family. I have removed them for you. Do you know what to do next?"

Fang Yuan glanced at Zhou Wenwu and instructed him.

"Old Guo is a 6th Gate Martial Artist?!"

When Zhou Wenwu heard what Fang Yuan said, he sighed and was relieved that he did not rashly attack the Guo Family on his own. He then looked into Fang Yuan's eyes with respect.

Even an expert in inner force was defeated by him! How did Fang Yuan train his martial arts to such a state?

"Hmm, the rest of the Guo Family that are still alive are easy to deal with. If you can't even handle such loose ends...."

Fang Yuan said in a deep voice.

"If I fail to handle the loose ends, I would strip myself of my martial arts and I would not even think about reviving the Zhou Family anymore!"

Zhou Wenwu patted his chest and seemed confident. He then added, "What about the Zhang Family?"

"Hmm?"

Fang Yuan turned around and stared at Zhou Wenwu with a serious look.

"I'm thinking too much...."

Zhou Wenwu immediately broke out in cold sweat and started apologising after Fang Yuan stared at him.

"With the current situation of Zhou Family, removing Guo Family will be sufficient. Removing the Zhang Family will be too much!"

Fang Yuan said coldly.

Honestly speaking, the Zhang Family had more situational awareness and hence he had nothing against them.

Furthermore, with the current population of the Zhou Family, it was impossible for the Family to restore its power like before back in Qingye City.

The best outcome was to remove Guo Family for the Zhou Family to take over their assets and coexist with the Zhang and Lin families in a triangulated situation.

Zhou Wenwu should have known these principles but he was too focused on getting revenge and achieving his dream. Now, Fang Yuan reminded him of these principles, which made him admire Fang Yuan even more.

Fang Yuan was not only good in medicine and martial arts but understood the principles behind human relations as well. Was he born smart and talented?

Zhou Wenwu respected Fang Yuan and said, "Thank you for reminding me. I have understood your point."

"Very well, I have a few tasks for you to complete...."

Fang Yuan chuckled.

.....

The news of the Guo Family spread.

The Guo Family left the city the next day and relocated back to their original village. The family couldn't care less about those who plundered them at that time and were extracting their men from Qingye City. This was like a retreat from a losing party.

Looking at how sensible the Guo Family was in deciding to pull out from the city, Zhou Wenwu was satisfied with the number of valuable things that were left behind by the family as it was sufficient for his own needs. He felt that he could gain a foothold in Qingye City again.

This time, he was clear of the situation and secretly gathered enough men to wipe out the entire Guo Family completely.

The Zhou Family needed to be restored from scratch like the Guo Family, and hence one of the families in the city needed to be targeted in order for another family to take over. Guo Family was the best target in the whole of Qingye City.

The Guo Family also realised that without the two highly skilled martial artists in the Family, they were weakened.

During such times, the Lin and Zhang families were getting closer to the Zhou Family and had no intention of helping the Guo Family.

At the same time, everyone knew what the secluded valley was capable of and would, therefore, think twice before attacking the secluded valley....

Of course, Fang Yuan was not really interested in any of these affairs.

Zhou Wenwu would handle the loose ends on his own.

Fang Yuan was already back home in the secluded valley. After taking a break, he went to the Green Peak with the Flower Fox Ferret.

"Chirp! Chirp!"

A flock of Red-eyed White Birds were flying past and a giant Red-eyed White King Bird was leading the flock.

Fang Yuan hid in the woods and was irritated by their presence.

"These birds are getting more vigilant than before and they are hard to deal with now!"

The presence of these birds was a huge obstacle to his success in claiming this spiritual land. These birds had been giving him huge problems lately.

Notwithstanding anything else, in one instance, when Fang Yuan went to get some spiritual spring water and spiritual fertiliser, he had to be cautious of the Red-eyed White Birds, in case they came out of their nests and attack him. Hence, the amount that he had gotten was not sufficient every time. Sometimes, the Flower Fox Ferret would be surrounded by these birds.

"I will not be able to enjoy collecting the spiritual fertiliser if I don't get rid of them soon...."

Fang Yuan looked at the beach that was beside the Eye's Tear Lake. "Anyway, the longer the spiritual fertiliser is accumulated, the better it is. Also, the storage size of this beach is quite big to store a large amount of the spiritual fertiliser. Maybe I should not get rid of the birds for now first...."

Fang Yuan estimated that the best spiritual fertiliser that could really help in the growth of the spiritual plants would need at least 10 years of accumulation in order to produce such an effect.

With the time, he could make full use of the spiritual land. Wouldn't he be able to grow any kinds of spiritual plants?

"It is just that.....the rest of the Red-eyed White Birds are not a problem but the Red-eyed White King Bird is hard to deal with....."

Of course, he was gaining little from his hunts recently.

At least the number of the Red-eyed White Birds was decreasing and there were fewer eyes to keep watch over the spiritual land. This gave Fang Yuan many opportunities to secretly enter the spiritual land to obtain the spiritual spring water and other precious spiritual plants.

"Whoosh!"

He went to the other side of the cliff and suddenly hid into a nearby bush.

"A normal Red-eyed White Bird will be dead once it sees me. Even a spiritual bird can only last a little longer....."

Fang Yuan reached the One-eyed Spring and filled his bamboo canteen with the spring water to the brim. "This time.....maybe I should trek deeper in!"

In his heart, he already treated the whole Green Peak like his own land.

The spring water brought a cooling effect to the body. After Fang Yuan drank till his heart's content, he felt refreshed and continued to explore the inner parts of the secluded valley with the Flower Fox Ferret.

"Hmm, this spiritual land is definitely incredible....."

Even though he did not find any spiritual plants, there were many flowers blooming and the trees were bearing fruits at this unusual time. This scene filled Fang Yuan with emotions as he felt sorry for these plants.

"Wasted! Totally wasted!"

He looked at a piece of land which was fully grown with weed and felt distressed. "If this piece of land was used to grow spiritual plants, the food produced would be enough to last the both of us for an entire year. Damn those Red-eyed White Birds...."

He cursed softly.

After all, if he were to raise his voice, he might disturb the spiritual birds and they would come and surround the both of them. By then, they would be in big trouble.

"Logically speaking, this spiritual land in the mountain should have one or two types of spiritual plants growing.....Why are there none?"

As he went in deeper into the mountain, Fang Yuan frowned. He reached a big pit and squatted down. "The spiritual energy is stronger here as compared to the surroundings. Looks like there might be a spiritual object here before, just that it has been removed....."

He sighed and finally knew where the spiritual plants are.

If he was correct, it should be in the nest of the Red-eyed White King Bird!

As a spiritual beast, it would definitely hide the spiritual plants very well like how humans would hide their precious items.

"Hmm?"

At that moment, Fang Yuan's expression changed and hid behind a bush.

"Chirp!"

A black dot from the sky came nearer and nearer along with a deafening cry.

### [Carefree Path of Dreams](#)

#### **Chapter 48: Bamboo Fruit**

"Is that....an eagle?!"

With the black dot getting closer, Fang Yuan realised that the one who made a loud cry was a giant eagle. Its black feathers reflected a metallic colour under the sunlight.

"Spiritual beast! Definitely a spiritual beast!"

This black giant eagle was fast. Just as Fang Yuan lifted up his head, it already flew past the Green Peak and up into the sky.

"This is strange....how have I not seen this eagle before?"

Fang Yuan saw that the flock of Red-eyed White Birds were disturbed and had a suspicion. "Is it because of coincidence or is it because spiritual beasts are coming from elsewhere?"

"Chirp!"

At that moment, the entire flock of the Red-eyed White Birds around the cliff were disturbed. Under the leadership of a few spiritual birds, they circled around in the air in a formation like an army troop.

"Whoosh!"

The giant eagle was not intimidated by the formation created but flew straight into the Red-eyed White Birds.

"Chirp! Chirp!"

Mournful bird chirpings could be heard and big white feathers came falling from the sky.

The claws of the giant eagle were as sharp as a steel hook and the spiritual birds were struggling to avoid the sharp edge of the claws. The giant eagle also used its beak to peck through the head of one of the Red-eyed White Bird, causing the bird to die instantly, its body falling straight down.

"Eagle Claw! This is the real Eagle Claw!"

As Fang Yuan observed the battle of the spiritual birds intently, he felt like he had gained a better understanding of the Eagle Claw Technique.

"Chirp! Chirp!"

Finally, right after the giant eagle started to kill all of the other Red-eyed White Birds, a very loud angry chirp was heard from the top of the cliff.

A white giant bird appeared; it was the Red-eyed White King Bird!

It flapped its wings and flew right up into the sky to fight against the giant eagle. The giant bird gained the upper hand very quickly.

"Keke!"

The giant eagle fluttered its wings and dodged away from the Red-eyed White King Bird. It then used its sharp claws and broke through the defence of one of the Red-eyed White Bird by ripping the bird's body. The giant eagle showed defiance towards the Red-eyed White King Bird and flew out of the formation like an arrow. A few of its black feathers fell as it escaped.

"Chirp! Chirp!"

Dead spiritual birds were a rare sight even though Fang Yuan had come here many times to steal spiritual objects.

Looking at the damage caused, the Red-eyed White King Bird gave a long chirp and lead the formation of Red-eyed White Birds to chase after the giant eagle.

"Eh?"

Fang Yuan gave a cold look and realised something was different.

"The black giant eagle slowed down its speed on purpose. It wanted to give an illusion that the Red-eyed White Birds could catch up....What a cunning beast...."

Seeing the Red-eyed White King Bird leading the rest of the Red-eyed White Birds out of the nest, Fang Yuan's eyes suddenly glittered. "A chance for me!"

"Chirp! Chirp!"

The birds flew further and further away. Soon, they disappeared.

Fang Yuan followed the pathway and kept climbing up. "There should be something of great value in the Red-eyed White King Bird's nest! Even if there isn't, I shall let those Red-eyed White Birds have a taste of a big loss!"

He could only kill a few of them previously due to the presence of the Red-eyed White King Bird and a few of others. However, what about now?

"Chirp! Chirp!"

He appeared and the Red-eyed White Birds suddenly realised there was an intruder. The birds let out mournful chirps.

"Get out!"

The Red-eyed White Birds that were guarding the nest were weaker. Fang Yuan executed his Eagle Claw Iron Skin Technique and almost got every bird killed. Even though his shirt had been ripped quite badly, the Red-eyed White Birds were incurring much more damage.

"It is considered normal for eggs to be present in a normal bird's nest...."

At that moment, Fang Yuan was not attracted by the eggs and went straight up to the peak. He then leapt onto a plateau.

"Puff!"

Both of his feet landed firmly on the plateau with his right hand shielding his body. He then checked his surroundings for any potential threats or movement.

The plateau was connected to the cliff and there was a giant hole inside. The hole was where the Red-eyed White Bird's nest lay.

Seeing that an intruder had reached their nest, the Red-eyed White Birds got even crazier and went to fight against the intruder with no regard for their lives.

"Get out of my way!"

Fang Yuan shouted angrily. He fought against the birds and retreated a few steps back, and then got in deeper into the hole.

"Chirp! Chirp!"

Suddenly, among all the Red-eyed White Birds, a small spiritual bird with glittering feathers charged past all the other birds and straight at Fang Yuan.

Fang Yuan couldn't dodge in time. Instead, he released more inner strength. His shoulders started to vibrate like there was a sudden surge of energy.

At that moment, blood splashed everywhere!

Even though he had used his inner strength to defend himself, his shoulder was injured with a deep cut by a claw.

"There is indeed a spiritual beast guarding this nest and it managed to injure me! Good! Very good!"

He squinted his eyes and at the next moment, he leapt forward like a leopard and went straight at that spiritual beast while ignoring the rest of the birds.

"You shall have a taste of my Black Sand Eagle Claw Palm!"

His palm became black in colour like ink. His fingers and nails gave a metallic colour and a strange odour.

With the help of the system's function and his own research, Fang Yuan managed to combine the Black Sand Palm and the Eagle Claw Technique to form a new technique called the Black Sand Eagle Claw Palm.

Now, Fang Yuan could finally unleash the true power of the [Black Sand Palm (Grade 5)] by accumulating poison on the Eagle Claw, turning them into a truly lethal form!

"Chirp!"

This mutated Red-eyed White Spiritual Bird had a very fast speed. Once Fang Yuan missed his shot, it would escape to a far place.

If the spiritual bird was slower by a bit and its wings were scratched by Fang Yuan's Eagle Claw, its feathers would drop.

"Hehe!"

After one move, Fang Yuan stopped chasing and started laughing.

"Chirp! Chirp!"

That spiritual bird did not fly far and suddenly, it gave a mournful chirp. It then fell from mid-air and was dead. A breeze blew its feathers up.

That was the effect of the mutated Pearl Tail Snake's Poison. Its effect was so strong that an expert in inner force who had been poisoned by this poison would still be in trouble.

"Chirp! Chirp!"

Seeing that the spiritual bird was dead, the rest of the Red-eyed White Birds retreated and didn't dare to go forward. The birds had no choice but to let Fang Yuan enter the nest.

"Oh!"

The hole was not too deep and there was light shining through a gap in between the rocks. Fang Yuan walked a few steps and became alert. He then started smelling and said, "This is strange!"

By right, there should be a fishy smell in the spiritual beast's nest.

However, he could only smell fresh air and even the air smelled clean. The spiritual energy here was surprisingly copious.

At the end of the hole, there was a giant green rock and it had slight depressions in the middle. There were a few tree branches and feathers, which formed the shape of the giant bird nest.

"So this is where the Red-eyed White King Bird's nest lies?"

Fang Yuan moved a few steps forward and was disappointed that there were no spiritual beast's eggs.

Ever since he had adopted the Flower Fox Ferret as a pet, he became interested in adopting other spiritual beasts. It was very rare to find a spiritual beast like the Flower Fox Ferret who was willing to communicate with humans.

Fang Yuan was hoping that he could adopt one of the Red-eyed White Bird as the birds were considered spiritual beasts and could fly.

"Birds would become close to the first thing it sees as it emerges from its egg. If I managed to get the spiritual beast's egg and take care of it from young, the young spiritual beast can be tamed....."

Fang Yuan was filled with regrets as this Red-eyed White King Bird had not laid any eggs.



He went forward a few steps and looked carefully at the bird's nest. His eyes were attracted by something green in colour.

Beside the nest, there was spring water gurgling and flowing down, which formed a small lake.

Near the edge of the lake, there were a few strange bamboos being grown.

The bamboos were jade-green and as though the bamboos were carved with top quality crystal jade. The bamboos gave out spiritual energy and the polluted air was absorbed.

"Looks like these bamboos cause the air in this cave to be so fresh....."

Fang Yuan went forward to check out the spiritual bamboo.

"Eh?"

This time, he saw something different. He found some bamboo flower buds that were about to bloom.

"This bamboo is flowering?"

Fang Yuan then recalled an old record which stated: 'It is the circle of life. The bamboo sprouts a shoot once every 60 years. The shoot will then flower, and the flower will bear fruit and wilt. The fruit will sprout again, completing the circle.'

"The blooming flower of the Jade Bamboo is bound to produce bamboo rice which is also called the bamboo fruit."

"The legends of old spoke that a Phoenix would refuse to perch on anything other than a phoenix tree, to eat anything other than Lian Shi and to drink anything other than the best spring water. This Lian Shi they spoke of referred to the bamboo fruit!"

"Previously, the spiritual land had very few spiritual objects. I was guessing someone must have taken the rest of the spiritual objects and looks like I was correct. This Red-eyed White King Bird took everything!"

The hole was filled with spiritual light, which clearly showed that there were many spiritual objects present here.

However, there were some spiritual objects which could not be moved easily as they would be destroyed if they were rashly relocated. Hence, Fang Yuan did not dare to collect any of the spiritual objects since he did not make any proper preparations.

The spiritual bamboos, on the other hand, were grown singly and grew very quickly. Hence, the spiritual bamboos did not have this problem and could be moved easily.

Fang Yuan came to the spiritual bamboo and started digging using his Eagle Claw Technique. He was digging faster as compared to using a shovel. Not long after, he managed to dig the whole spiritual bamboo out along with its roots. The rhizome of the bamboo was in a good condition.

"With this spiritual bamboo, my trip is made worthwhile!"

Fang Yuan carried the spiritual bamboo happily and went to look for other spiritual objects.

"Keke!"

Suddenly, the Flower Fox Ferret, which was keeping a lookout, ran in anxiously.

"Is that....the black giant eagle?"

Fang Yuan came to the entrance of the hole and saw the black giant eagle. Previously, it was circling around the other Red-eyed White Birds, but now, it was charging towards him.

"It drew the Red-eyed White King Bird out of its nest to distract the bird so that it could come back to the bird's nest?"

He looked happy and said, "Looks like you were also coming for the treasures in the Red-eyed White King Bird's nest but unfortunately for you, I was here earlier to get them....."

At that moment, there were many white birds chasing after the giant eagle. The Red-eyed White King Bird was leading the other birds but it was still slower than the giant eagle and both of them became more distant.

Fang Yuan understood what was going on. The giant eagle was making a distraction for the Red-eyed White King Bird by picking up a fight with it and it used its faster speed as an advantage to draw them further away from the nest. Finally, the giant eagle then flew back to its target which were the treasures Fang Yuan looted from the nest.

However, this giant eagle was working alone and therefore incurred a big loss as Fang Yuan managed to reach the nest first.

"My apologies....All these stuff are mine now and I cannot give it to you!"

With the giant eagle charging right at him, Fang Yuan laughed out loud and his right hand was shaped like a black claw. He then grabbed fiercely and shouted, "Eagle Claw Technique!"

"Bang!"

The giant eagle flew right out.

The Red-eyed White King Bird was not too far away and when it saw what was happening, it was enraged and gave a long and piercing scream. The tip of its feathers was tinged with blood. The beast then flew over and accelerated at an alarming speed.

"Enraged? Then I ain't interested in playing with you guys no more!"

Fang Yuan laughed. He carried the spiritual bamboo and escaped quickly from the peak.

Back at the entrance of the hole, the giant eagle was surrounded by the angry Red-eyed White King Bird and it gave a mournful scream.....

"Chirp"

In the spiritual lands of the Green Peak.

Fang Yuan held a bamboo stalk that was jade-green and ran like the wind. Behind him was an army of spiritual birds and the Red-eyed White King Bird.

The Red-eyed White King Bird, King of Birds, directed most of its hatred towards the Iron-tailed Black Eagle, but Fang Yuan, the 'thief', did not escape its wrath either. White birds screamed in the air and prepared to attack.

"Damn it, my clothes..."

In order to protect the spiritual plants, Fang Yuan had to channel the power of the Iron Skin Technique, which protected him from the aggressive clawing and pecking of the birds. His clothes were torn such that he was almost naked.

Of course, his clothes were not his main concern, for the Iron Skin Technique was not able to keep the birds from tearing gashes into his skin every time they lunged.

"Are you not going to act now, Flower Fox Ferret?"

As he charged down from the Peak, Fang Yuan manoeuvred his body and ran towards the fog.

"Keke!"

A bright light flashed.

A white figure flew past at the speed of lightning and had one of the spiritual birds by the neck. Following a loud snap, the bird's head tilted at an awkward angle. It was dead.

"Haha...well done!"

Grabbing this chance, Fang Yuan sped into the mist and sighed in relief.

"Keke...keke..."

The Flower Fox Ferret dropped the spiritual bird and frolicked beside the spiritual bamboo. It wagged its tail at Fang Yuan like a pug, as if it wanted his approval.

"Hehe...seems like you know the value of the spiritual bamboo too. In order to protect it, I have suffered many wounds...ouch..."

Fang Yuan inhaled a breath of cold air and used remnants of his clothing to bandage his wounds.

"It's fortunate that Master left me some anti-scarring ointment. Or else I'd be disfigured..."

He gritted his teeth as he tended to his injuries, all the while glaring at the carcass of the spiritual bird.

"Great...we'll have this bird for dinner..."

As Fang Yuan concealed himself in the thick fog and heard the shrieks of the giant birds from a distance, he counted his blessings.

"To think that the King of Red-eyed White Birds could be this ferocious. If the Black Eagle hadn't challenged it first, I probably wouldn't have escaped..."

"Black Eagle, rest in peace! I'll be leaving now!"

Grabbing the spiritual bamboo and the carcass of the spiritual bird, Fang Yuan disappeared quickly into the fog together with the Flower Fox Ferret.

.....

The secluded valley.

Ever since Fang Yuan had demonstrated his power, no one had dared to trespass the mountains. Zhou Wenwu was also helping to keep an eye on the land. Everything was peaceful.

Fang Yuan entered the valley and ran straight to the gardens. He checked that the defence mechanisms and traps were in place before setting his heart at ease.

Although the gardens were located in a more secluded part of the valley, the variety of plants to be found there, including the spiritual rice and tea, were very valuable. Fang Yuan did not want to take any chances.

“In the future, when I move all these plants to the Green Peak, the valley will become just a living space. That would be the best arrangement. For now, I just have to be more careful, set traps and tell the Flower Fox Ferret to be on guard...”

Fang Yuan then left for the tea garden and patrolled the vicinity. He was reassured when he saw that the Questioning Heart tea tree was untouched, and he began to think.

He used to lead a simple life. Now that he had revealed his background, it would definitely attract unwanted attention and consequently trouble. Nevertheless, he had made significant gains in martial arts and had a formidable amount of inner energy. It would be enough for him to defend himself.

As long as the miraculous properties of the Questioning Heart Tea remained unknown, there would be no problems.

“But if these problems can be avoided, they should be avoided...”

Fang Yuan had a solemn look on his face and his thoughts moved quickly. “The best form of defence is still the Flower Fox Ferret. Or perhaps a few fatal traps in the vicinity of the gardens will do the trick, with poison in the mix, a poison as potent as the Pearl Tail Snake’s...of course, in the legends, the spiritual knights could set up powerful formations and borrow the strengths of heaven and earth. I don’t think it’s possible for me to do all that...let’s leave it for now...”

Fang Yuan had to make some decisions in preparation for his relocation to the Green Peak. Defence mechanisms were necessary.

“The best formations are still the ones described in the legends. Most of the conditions aren’t fulfilled though. I’ll have to look at the next best alternatives...”

With the Questioning Heart tea leaves, complemented by the Meditative Tea Ceremony, Fang Yuan’s magical energy had increased by leaps and bounds. He had met the requirements of becoming a spiritual knight, an alchemy master and the like.

Too bad these beings were mythological. Even if Fang Yuan had wanted to join their ranks, he could not.

“Eh?”

Fang Yuan was pleasantly surprised when he arrived at the Vermillion Jade Rice field.

In the field, shoots that bore a resemblance to red jade were growing strong with alarming momentum.

At the side, a row of emerald shoots had also emerged and were thriving.

“Emerald Grass! It really doesn’t take a lot for this plant to prosper.”

Fang Yuan squatted down and peered at the leaves of the Emerald Grass.

“Flower Fox Ferret, will you eat this?”

“Keke?!”

The Flower Fox Ferret looked conflicted and grabbed the spiritual bamboo at the side tightly with its claws.

It seemed like the Flower Fox Ferret preferred the bamboo to grass.

“Haha...you little clever thing!”

Fang Yuan gave a little smile.

“When the spiritual bamboos are grown, you’ll have your share.”

The bamboo was different from the other plants, for its growth was characterised by the branching out of its roots. If well taken care of, the bamboo plant would develop into a forest in a few years. It was one of the most valuable of the spiritual plants.

Otherwise, Fang Yuan would not be this excited to see the bamboo. He picked it without hesitation over the other treasures of the King of Red-eyed White Birds.

“Mm, here!”

Fang Yuan went around the garden and found a spot next to a hill of bluestone. He planted the spiritual bamboo there and then, and created a small irrigation ditch.

“Shhshhh”

The leaves of the spiritual bamboo were toyed with by the wind. Little white flowers on its stem were on the verge of blooming.

“Seems like the bamboo is likely to survive...”

Fang Yuan washed his hands, satisfied. He also looked towards his stats window.

“[Botany (Level 3)] – You are an expert among botanists and possess unimaginable powers. The plants that you grow have a small chance of evolving special traits!”

Fang Yuan had already seen this small chance for himself.

In the past, in all the gardens, only one tea tree had gone through a mutation. It was pathetic.

But it was that one tea tree that produced the Questioning Heart Tea, and together with the Meditative Tea Ceremony, produced an incredible effect on one's magical energy. To Fang Yuan, it seemed like everything in life was predestined.

Now, Fang Yuan had other plans.

This spiritual bamboo, spiritual rice and spiritual grace, could all be grown in bulk. Cultivated in large amounts, Fang Yuan could trigger more mutating yields as long as his luck was not too bad.

Mutations on the spiritual plants, what would the yields be like?

Fang Yuan looked forward to seeing the results.

"It's just that...levelling up my skills are way harder than levelling up my techniques! My Black Sand Palm and Eagle Claw techniques can improve so much with only a day's worth of practice. I always hit a bottleneck when it comes to my skills. It seems like I have to fulfil a specific condition before I can move on to the next level..."

Fang Yuan looked at his [Botany] and [Medicine] stats with some regret.

These two skills currently had 99.9% worth of proficiency points. All that was left to level up was that tiny bit, and it was taking a long time.

This situation reminded Fang Yuan of the previous bottleneck.

Without the help of spiritual plants, his [Botany] would not have reached level 3.

"Unless...if I want to level up in [Medicine], I have to keep on healing patients, or devise cures to difficult diseases. And [Botany], does it require the cultivation of a higher grade spiritual plant?"

These skills did not immediately translate into fighting power, but it would provide invaluable assistance in many other areas. Fang Yuan thought very highly of them.

"Alright, tea time!"

After Fang Yuan was done, he clapped his hands and brought the Flower Fox Ferret to his abode.

One cup of Meditative tea, to cleanse the soul. To forget material possessions and the self.

Fang Yuan felt a clear aura diffuse into his body. His magical energy had begun to increase slowly, and he entered a state of semi-consciousness.

.....

"Keke!"

After he had settled into reality again, Fang Yuan got to his feet, rejuvenated. He suddenly realised that the Flower Fox Ferret had ran to him anxiously.

"Hmm, something is wrong..."

From what Fang Yuan knew of the Flower Fox Ferret, it always stayed inebriated longer than Fang Yuan after a tea session. This was the first time it had gotten up earlier.

“Keke!”

Seeing that Fang Yuan was not really paying attention, the ferret became even more agitated and tugged on his pants, motioning for him to tag along.

“This...have you discovered something?”

Sensing that something was amiss, Fang Yuan followed the ferret out of the valley.

Having crossed a few rolling hills, Fang Yuan suddenly gave an exclamation. He knew what the Flower Fox Ferret had found.

Within his sight, was shrubbery that had been squashed by a gigantic and magnificent looking Black Eagle. There were huge gashes on its wings. The eagle had an electrifying look in its eyes and gave a defiant scream when it noticed Fang Yuan.

“The Black Eagle actually escaped...”

Fang Yuan was amazed and stepped forward tentatively.

“Chhhchhh”

The Black Eagle spread its wings and flapped mightily, only managing to raise a huge gust of wind before falling to the ground.

“This...what should we do? Kill it? Or ignore it?”

Fang Yuan gazed at the Black Eagle hesitantly.

But the Flower Fox Ferret jumped out hurriedly and clawed at the air.

“You want me to save it?”

Fang Yuan was not averse to saving the eagle. After all, he had ruined the plans of the eagle and had even dealt it a head injury. It would be appropriate if he made it up to the eagle.

“I could save it, but look at the state it is in...how do I do it?”

Fang Yuan stepped forward some more, and the eagle responded aggressively.

“Keke!”

Flower Fox Ferret cocked its head and ran to the side of the Black Eagle. It then began to twitter patiently, as if it was doing some explaining to the Eagle.

Following the ferret’s actions, the Black Eagle lowered its head. It was calming down.

Fang Yuan watched this happen with some amusement. He was impressed.

“Holy cr\*p...you’re a ferret. When did you learn to speak to birds?”

[Carefree Path of Dreams](#)

**Chapter 50: Healing**

"Hey... Black Eagle, you should know that I'm here to save you. Regardless of what happened previously, we're even here alright..."

Although he knew that the black eagle could not understand human language, Fang Yuan was still relieved knowing that the Flower Fox Ferret could translate for him.

After saying a few words to the black eagle, he turned around and returned to the secluded valley. He came out with many bottles of medicine.

"Chirp....."

Seeing Fang Yuan approach it, the black eagle became increasingly anxious but was comforted by the Flower Fox Ferret.

'The eagle and ferret have so much chemistry...'

Witnessing this scene, Fang Yuan took a few steps forward and began to examine its injury.

"Hiss..."

Fang Yuan was shocked. "No wonder it's a spiritual beast. It's able to undergo self-healing, and the wounds have already begun to heal itself..."

This was good news for Fang Yuan, as it meant that he did not have to use too much of this precious ointment.

"Phew!"

Fang Yuan took out bandages and medicine, tried to make himself look harmless and approached the black eagle. He was extremely focused and concentrated his inner force on his Iron Skin Technique to protect himself.

Even with the assurance of the Flower Fox Ferret, it was still hard to tame the black eagle. Wouldn't it be risky if it suddenly took a bite at Fang Yuan while he was treating it?

"Chirp! Chirp!"

Although the black eagle looked anxious, it tried to restrain itself and did not move.

"This injury..."

Fang Yuan noticed that its wound had already stopped bleeding, but broken bones and feathers were visible. They were in a gruesome mess with broken twigs and other plant matter. This would greatly hinder its path to recovery and the eagle would no longer be able to fly.

"The most important is to clear the foreign objects from the wound and correct the bone. It's going to be extremely difficult for the eagle to do it on its own, but if I were to help it..."

Fang Yuan stroked the wings of the black eagle.

The black feathers felt metallic to the touch, and it was a weird feeling.

"I'm going to start now, try to tolerate the pain!"



Fang Yuan focused, grabbed a tree branch and plucked it.

"Whoosh!"

A bloody arrow flew towards Fang Yuan, and the black eagle uncontrollably attacked, as it prepared to peck at Fang Yuan.

"Keke!"

The Flower Fox Ferret continuously tried to calm it down, and it took a while before the black eagle began to regain its composure.

"It seems... It's unappreciative of my efforts!"

Fang Yuan let out a long breath and extended 2 fingers out. Using his Eagle Claw Technique, he channelled his energy to his fingers, momentarily turning them akin to metal pliers. Then, He removed a piece of shattered bone using his fingers and threw it aside.

He felt enlightened after studying the wound inflicted by the Red-eyed White Birds on this strong black eagle, and he felt as though he gained a deeper understanding of the strength of the Red-eyed White King Bird.

'It seems... To defeat the king bird is no easy feat.'

As he thought to himself, his hands were quick and in no time, he cleared the wound and applied medication to it.

"Up next is to straighten the bones..."

Fang Yuan shook his head. "Even though you are a mutated species and your rate of healing is incredibly fast, you still need to give your feathers time to regrow, and so you won't be able to fly for the time being..."

In fact, this was the greatest worry for the black eagle.

Even though it was a mutated spiritual bird, it still needed to eat to survive, and especially in large amounts to quicken the recovery process.

"Don't you worry, since I saved you now, I will take care of you all the way till you have recovered!"

Fang Yuan comforted the black eagle as his hands felt its bones. He mustered all his strength and corrected the position of the bones!

"Kacha!"

A distinct sound was heard.

The black eagle winced, flung the Flower Fox Ferret away and tried to peck Fang Yuan.

"I knew it!"

Fang Yuan laughed and was already prepared for the black eagle's reaction. He took a step back, and suddenly punched towards its head.

"Peng!"

He landed a heavy fist on the forehead of the black eagle. Its eyes rolled, and it fainted on the spot.

"That's right... Finally, you're behaving!"

Fang Yuan wiped his hands. "I should have made you faint from the beginning!"

"Keke..."

The Flower Fox Ferret was watching at the side, full of pity for the black eagle.

"It's done!"

After dealing with the black eagle, Fang Yuan told the Flower Fox Ferret, "Up next, we shall set up a campsite here, and deliver food here once in a few days, and there should be no problem..."

However, his expression suddenly changed.

He noticed that the 'Skill' portion of his stats window had changed.

The digit '2' behind [Medicine (Level 2)] became blurred, jumped and transformed to '3'!

'[Medicine (Level 3)]? I have finally broken through!'

Fang Yuan was pleasantly surprised. 'Healing this spiritual beast was a blessing in disguise...'

He looked at the description for [Medicine (Level 3)]:

"[Medicine (Level 3)] - You are a professional within experts, a doctor who can make miracles. Will have a multiplied effect when dealing with complicated medical conditions! (Effect does not only apply to humans)"

"Does not only apply to humans..."

Fang Yuan looked at the black eagle, confused. "Could it be that I mastered veterinary without a master?"

At this moment, there were more changes to his stats window:

"Name: Fang Yuan

Essence: 3.5

Spirit: 3.4

Magic: 2.3

Age: 18

Cultivation: [Martial Artist (6th Gate)]

Technique: [Black Sand Palm (Grade 5)], [Eagle Claw Iron Skin Technique (Grade 6)]

Skill: [Medicine (Level 3)], [Botany (Level 3)]"

"Very well, it seems that skills would be harder to improve as compared to techniques, as there would be a special condition to be met before attaining a new level..."

Fang Yuan stroked his chin, deep in his own thoughts.

"The greater my skills, the higher the multiplier effect in the system... It seems that my title as the doctor who can make miracles happen would spread far and wide?"

The proficiency points for [Medicine (Level 3)] became zero and naturally required numerous hands-on practice before being able to fill it up.

Furthermore, to break through the bottleneck, he might have to heal certain rare and complicated medical conditions. All these would require him to set up a medicinal hall and do charity work.

"The idea of running this seems probable..."

Fang Yuan looked in the direction of Qingye City and zoned out...

...

Time passed and many days flew by in a blink of an eye.

The chaos in the Guo Family begun to settle down.

However, there were still rumours of a doctor who could work miracles living in the secluded valley. He was known to have a weird temper and one should never offend him.

Those who were curious and wanted to see the secluded valley for themselves were stopped by the Zhou Family outside the valley, which made the secluded valley even more mysterious.

It was dawn.

Fang Yuan walked out of his pavilion, sowed seeds, plucked weeds, fertilized his plants... After a round of chores, he proceeded to carry on with his intense martial arts training.

"The Eagle Claw Iron Skin Technique proficiency points have reached a maximum, and it's time to break through!"

After a session of training, Fang Yuan closed his eyes, concentrated his inner force, and spit out a bright white essence, like a sharp arrow ready to penetrate anything in its way.

"Hu... Out of the three Gates, Pain, Shock and Death, I can feel the Shock Gate now. Indeed, it's a test of one's magic points..."

His improvement in [Medicine] aided his progress in martial arts.

Fang Yuan understood that based on his magic points, he could undoubtedly break through the 7th Gate.

As for other martial artists, if they made any mistake while breaking the Gate, they would end up crazy and there would hardly be a cure for them.

"Keke!"

A white flash flashed by as the Flower Fox Ferret appeared in front of Fang Yuan, trying to explain something.

"Something has happened to the black eagle?"

Fang Yuan thought to himself. "By now, it should have recovered and be able to fly, right?"

The Flower Fox Ferret appeared surprised as though Fang Yuan guessed correctly.

It was reasonable for the Flower Fox Ferret to feel unjust. After all, all the food that was provided to the black eagle while it was recuperating was caught and delivered personally by the Flower Fox Ferret.

Now that it had recovered, it was sad to see it go without saying goodbye.

"Being a proud animal, since it allowed us to help it while it was injured, it would definitely remember our help and will reciprocate in the future..."

Fang Yuan stroked the Flower Fox Ferret. "You've come at the right time, let's drink tea!"

"Keke!"

The Flower Fox Ferret became excited after hearing about the Questioning Heart Tea.

By living in the deep mountains and leading a carefree life, as well as understanding the different spiritual plants and spiritual objects, Fang Yuan felt at peace as his thoughts and his martial arts began to settle down.

In technical terms, it meant that his foundation was solid, and the previous rushed efforts did not leave any hidden dangers behind.

With this benefit, it would still be worth it even if his progress bar did not fill up.

After drinking tea, Fang Yuan left the flower Fox Ferret to look after the valley, while he carried a small medical box and walked out of the secluded valley.

In front of the valley, there was a flat land, and on the flat land were three straw pavilions. Next to the huts was a small pavilion.

Many people walked past but no one dared to take a break here.

In front, a plump minister was anxious. Even though the weather was rather cooling, he was sweating profusely like ants on a hot wok.

"Keke... Old Lin is an acquaintance of the doctor who lives in the secluded valley. Why not just enter the valley, I'm sure the doctor would not scold you..."

A few people were resting in the pavilion. The first was Zhou Wenwu. He had good relations with the Lin Family at first, but after the Song Zhong incident, the two families drifted apart, and now their conversation became sarcastic.

"Haha... How would I dare?"

Minister Lin laughed but was troubled. 'Young Master Fang improved tremendously, and there were rumours that not only his [Medicine] was good, his martial arts was even better. Even Song Zhong was no match for him, so why would he give me any face? Those who offend him would be in deep trouble, and if he refused to heal the person, I might even lose my life too, so this cannot be taken lightly!'

"Doctor Fang is here?"

Fang Yuan's silhouette began to appear, and this shocked everyone.

"Mmm, everyone, listen up. Is everyone clear on the rules? Three patients a day, and all will have to come up with payment to satisfy Doctor Fang first... If this cannot be done, please take your leave..."

After his speech, he did not care less about others and entered the hut.

Regardless how influential or powerful these masters or martial artists were, all of them appeared humble before the doctor who would save their lives, like obedient rabbits in a queue, and this included Minister Lin.