

Carefree 51

[Carefree Path of Dreams](#)

Chapter 51: Saving Lives

Since the advancement of [Medicine], Fang Yuan, wanting to further push the boundaries, ordered the Zhou Family to release some news and rules on his behalf.

He built a straw pavilion before the secluded valley, seeing only three patients a day. Patients wanting to seek treatment had to personally head down to the pavilion.

In addition, the consultation fees had to be paid first. Trespassing on the back of the secluded valley was also prohibited. Any trespassers would be instantly kicked out, never being allowed back for treatment!

Indeed, such rules were naturally infuriating.

But in their world, only the strongest had the say and there were many people more eccentric than Fang Yuan. The people of Qingye City had grown to accept such rules as quirks of the divine healer, choosing to place their faith in him.

What were these mere rules compared to one's life?

Over time, the rules set by Fang Yuan became commandments that were strictly adhered to.

"Today, it's a little odd!"

Fang Yuan sat resolutely, his face showing signs of suspicion, "Usually it's rare to even see a person in a day. This time I'm actually met with both Zhou Wenwu and Lin Benchu ..."

Thinking back to the most recent patients that he treated, most of them suffered exterior wounds caused by the blade or close combat. Suddenly, Fang Yuan had a conjecture.

"Come in!"

"My respects Master Fang!"

Lin Benchu ordered his men to stretch in a martial artist whose face was pale but lacked any presence of blood, looking just like a zombie.

Upon seeing Fang Yuan, Lin Benchu dared not overstep his position, completely adhering to the etiquette that he showed to Master Wenxin when they had first met.

He bowed, displaying utmost sincerity, "Please save him, Master Fang!"

"Medicine can't revive the dead. I need you, Minister Lin, to understand this point!"

Overhearing the correspondence between Fang Yuan and Minister Lin, Lin Benchu knew that knew that the favours that he accumulated in the past were of no use. He let out a bitter laugh, his heart experiencing an ineffable sense of regret.

Fang Yuan ignored him and walked forward to lift the white cloth so as to examine the injury.

"Eh?"

He instantly noticed something different from that one glance.

"How is it, Master Fang?"

Minister Lin asked uneasily as if he was afraid that Fang Yuan would reply with a 'No'.

"This person ... is probably someone whose skill was beyond the View Gate. He was only one step away from crossing the Pain Gate by condensing his inner force."

Fang Yuan glanced over at the slightly depressed chest of the body. He shook his head, "Moreover, the martial art he practiced was an extremely Yin fist technique. Overestimating his own abilities, he challenged an in-house expert. He crippled his own Yin technique and suffered injuries caused by inner force."

"Tsk..."

Upon hearing that, Minister Lin took a deep breath of cold air as his voice quivered, "Divine healer ... You are saying that he was injured by an inner force expert?!"

"What benefit do I get from lying to you?"

Fang Yuan looked at Minister Lin and rolled his eyes, "Who's the person that injured him? Where is he now?"

"Well, I am not sure either ... Regardless, this guy is a disciple of Spirit Returning Sect, Zombie Fist Feng Han. I plead you to quickly treat him ..."

Minister Lin's face revealed a shred of awkwardness, but he still sincerely knelt down to plead.

"This injury... Way too difficult!"

Standing up, Fang Yuan paced around for a few steps, before shaking his head again, "You must know that external injuries are easy to treat, but internal injuries are very challenging. I can't guarantee that I can heal this guy..."

With a sigh, Minister Lin's heart sank.

"However, saving his life and even allowing him to regain consciousness shouldn't be a problem..."

Fang Yuan's subsequent sentence caused Minister Lin to regain his vigor, his heart aching to shout words of abuse.

Fortunately, he himself knew that these were definitely not people he would want to offend. Thus, he promptly whipped out a box, "I heard that the divine healer has interest in various spiritual items. Pardon the old man's inability, but I specifically found a Vermillion Fruit"

"What? A Vermillion Fruit"

Fang Yuan laughed out, "Is it the legendary fruit that can immensely improve one's inner force, a mystical fruit that bestows power equal to ten years of hard work?"

"Yes..."

Minister Lin's face exuded a hint of awkwardness, "The Vermillion Fruit is an object of legend, so how could an old man like me obtain such a rarity? Well, I exhausted all my efforts to find this one fruit, I seek that the divine healer does not laugh at my incompetence!"

Fang Yuan rolled his eyes once more, almost believing that Minister Lin was playing tricks with him.

However, he still took the box. Upon opening the box, a dark red fruit was in sight.

This fruit was the size of a baby's fist and had the texture of a peach. While appearing ordinary, after meticulously feeling the fruit, Fang Yuan could sense a hint of spirituality.

"Eh... This is definitely a Vermillion Fruit..."

After confirming that the fruit was indeed a spiritual object, Fang Yuan felt an even stronger headache.

The Vermillion Fruit had a legendary reputation even amongst the ranks of other spiritual plants such as the Vermillion Jade Rice and the Emerald Jade Grass. It came as no surprise that the Vermillion Fruit had such stringent requirements for the environment it grew in.

Naturally, it would not sprout even after 8 or 10 years if it was casually planted in a random plot of land.

To make matters worse, this fruit had an extremely long period of maturity. 100 years could be considered as a single unit of time when describing the length of time required. Hence, one would only be expected to obtain this fruit through a chance encounter. Otherwise, only sects with a long history would dedicate the time to grow this fruit.

"If this fruit can sprout, my [Botany] skill will definitely see a breakthrough, but..."

Fang Yuan shook his head, "Unless... it's within the Green Peak Spiritual Grounds, along with my unique skills, there can be still some hope!"

"Divine healer... So what do you make of this situation?"

Seeing the uncertainty in Fang Yuan's face, Minister Lin asked anxiously.

There was definitely a case to be made with the presence of this spiritual object. Regardless of how preposterous the request was, he gathered his focus on this sole hope.

"Hmm... I will help on the account that you and my master knew each other!"

Fang Yuan carefully kept the box and took out a cloth pouch containing rows of thin golden needles.

With a needle in hand, his face turned serious and the aura surrounding him instantly changed.

"Whoosh!"

Minister Lin looked at this scene and was thrown into a trance. It was as though he was watching the reincarnation of Master Wenxin.

"Chi.. Chi!"

Fang Yuan's needles were seemingly flying, in a blink of an eye, he pierced over ten of Feng Han's acupoints.

Feng Han's face distorted, abruptly opening his mouth to spit out a mouthful of black blood.

"Hoo...."

Although he was only awake for a short instance, falling back into unconsciousness shortly, his breathing stabilised and his face had a pinker hue. One could clearly see that he managed to cling to what was left of his life.

"Thank you, divine healer! Thank you!"

Minister Lin was overjoyed and said emotionally, "Witnessing the divine healer's needles is like watching your master... I can't believe that despite the divine healer's young age, you managed to obtain the true skills of your master and even surpass his abilities!"

Bootlicking was free and hence he naturally continued to bootlick.

"Although I already knew this Golden Needle Acupoint Piercing technique beforehand, I still can't be compared to my master. With Level 3 Medicine, the effects are still magical!"

Fang Yuan felt ashamed but his act of brilliance managed to gain the respect of Minister Lin.

"The patient has been treated, Minister please return home. Forgive me for not sending you out!"

Seeing that Lin Benchu still had words to say, Fang Yuan decisively rolled up his sleeves and lifted his hand to gesture them out.

"Sigh..."

Lin Benchu joined his hands to bid farewell and along with his servants took their leave.

Fang Yuan glanced over at his back view and murmured, "Old sly fox."

If he were to really keep them around, it was not as if they would be honest and tell him the truth.

Rather than trying his luck getting answers out of them, he would rather look for someone else.

"Divine Healer Fang!"

An instant later, Zhou Wenwu entered and bowed. He spoke with a tone of utmost respect.

"Eh? Are you hurt?"

Fang Yuan shook his head and poked Zhou Wenwu with the golden needle.

"Thank you, divine healer!"

Zhou Wenwu suffered a minor internal injury and felt that his inner power flow was not smooth. Upon the jabs of needles, he instantly felt comfortable and displayed his gratitude.

"Don't mention the titter tatter, what's actually happening outside? The injured that the three big families are sending here is abnormally many..."

Fang Yuan frowned, "Also, these are wounds from fights. To think that these injuries come from dealing with merely Guo Family?"

"The divine healer knows it himself...."

Zhou Wenwu's face turned solemn, "The three big families reached an agreement to divide Qingye City. I was fully rested and obtained manpower to kill and establish dominance. The Guo Family was the best target! I discussed this plan with the divine healer before...."

"Indeed, but you met with trouble?"

Fang Yuan nodded his head.

In reality, he already knew from the get go that the Guo Family had issues but he deliberately kept it from this bunch of people, hoping that they could be the ones to draw out the problem.

"Previously, everything went smoothly. Although the Guo Family was brave, they were no match for the three families. Even some of their businesses were about to be lost...."

Zhou Wenwu started to have suspicions, "However, from three days ago, the Guo Family managed to get the help of a powerful ally, causing a great hit to us... There is another strange thing!"

"Oh? Quick, tell me!"

Fang Yuan waved his hand.

"The Spirit Returning Sect has somehow managed to catch hold of this and specially sent a group of people over. The first of which was Zombie Fist Feng Han, to think...."

Zhou Wenwu shook his head, clearly showing how surprised he was, "When all these news are reported to the sect, they will definitely send more people down. Maybe even an elder will personally lead a team!"

While saying this, he was full of confidence. After all, from his perspective, there was nothing that the Spirit Returning Sect could not resolve within the Qinghe County.

But Fang Yuan was pretty clear that the mysterious party supporting the Guo Family was someone with an unpredictable strength that could definitely match the power of Spirit Returning Sect.

"The battle of the two titans is nearing...."

Although he did not know how Guo Family managed to get the help of such a power, Fang Yuan was no longer kept in the dark and could understand the current situation.

And perhaps even Lin Benchu that old fox knew less than he did.

"Zhou Wenwu!"

Contemplating to this point, Fang Yuan made a decision.

"Your humble servant is here!"

Facing Fang Yuan, Zhou Wenwu was obedient as ever, bowing instantly and listening intently.

"The Guo Family incident has a complicated background...."

Continuing to contemplate, Fang Yuan did not want the periphery that he built up to suffer heavy casualties, "If the sect has any requests, you should do your best to fulfill them. But remember never to personally put yourself at the frontline. I wish you all the best!"

"Could it be that the divine healer feels that Spirit Returning Sect is at a disadvantage?"

Zhou Wenwu heart felt a perturbing chill, suddenly feeling a great sense of inscrutability.

Carefree Path of Dreams

Chapter 52: Winning Over

"Vermillion Fruit..."

After turning away someone who was seeking medical help, Fang Yuan glanced at the nearly filled proficiency progress bar while he tossed the box containing the Vermillion Fruit. He was satisfied.

This might give him the chance to upgrade his [Botany] to Level 4.

"It is impossible to grow Vermillion Fruits in the secluded valley, but it might be possible to grow it on the spiritual lands of Green Peak. Either way, it is always good to be prepared!"

As Fang Yuan entered the valley, the Flower Fox Ferret darted towards him and circled him continuously. It seemed to have sensed a gem on Fang Yuan.

"This seed is of paramount importance, I cannot allow you to eat it!"

Holding onto the box, Fang Yuan said, "Anyway the Vermillion Jade Rice is about to ripen soon, are you still worried there is not enough food for you it?"

"Keke!"

Upon hearing this, Flower Fox Ferret thought about it extensively before indignantly making a choice.

"That's right, good boy!"

Right after Fang Yuan's compliment, Flower Fox Ferret raised its paw and pointed towards the direction of the spiritual bamboo. Its intentions were crystal clear.

"What... you want the spiritual bamboo after they have borne fruit as compensation?"

Fang Yuan touched his forehead and said, "You are really insistent on not being short-changed...Eh? Wait!"

Fang Yuan smelled something fishy as he looked at the expression on Flower Fox Ferret's face. It looked as though he made a deal that was almost too good to be true. This aroused Fang Yuan's suspicion and he hurriedly walked towards the spiritual bamboo.

Before he even reached, he took in a deep breath and felt enveloped by a gush of current in the air.

"The purity of the air here is already almost on par with that of the spiritual land. What a pity it is still lacking in terms of spiritual energy..."

Shaking his head, Fang Yuan crossed the drain.

Next to a rock, a green bamboo looked as though it was brimming with life and energy.

"From what I saw earlier this morning, it looks extremely different...Is this because it has finally accepted this plot of land?"

Fang Yuan broke into a smile. This meant that the spiritual bamboo was completely alive. Furthermore, looking at the flower buds, it would only take a few days for it to blossom.

Fang Yuan finally understood why Flower Fox Ferret was willing to compromise on the Vermillion Fruit. It had set its sights on the spiritual bamboo!

Of course, if the Vermillion Fruit was perfectly undamaged, with its flesh intact, it would be a completely different situation altogether.

...

One night passed.

On the next day, Fang Yuan woke up early in the morning. He immediately felt there was something different about his surroundings.

"Could this be.....the spiritual energy produced by the spiritual bamboo? It could even travel till here?"

Appearing to be solemn, Fang Yuan was actually filled with astonishment at this discovery.

"Keke!"

Flower Fox Ferret sprinted towards Fang Yuan. It was obvious that there was important news from the garden.

Fang Yuan rushed over to where the spiritual bamboo was. The flower bud he saw the day before was in full bloom. Its pure white petals danced in the wind, releasing its spiritual energy. It also seemed to be causing a subtle resonance in the area next to it.

"Is that...the field of Vermillion Jade Rice?"

Fang Yuan tensed up and walked hurriedly to the side of the field. He was shocked at what he saw.

In front of him were several red stalks of rice. They were half the height of a grown man and bore enormous grains that bent the thick stalks of the plant.

"It ripened surprisingly fast! This is even faster than the previous harvest!"

Fang Yuan stepped forward and stroke the grains and said, "Furthermore, the quality appears to be more superior than the previous harvest. Even though there were no major and sudden changes, could it still have been gradually accumulated?"

Looking at this, Fang Yuan was filled with aplomb.

As long as he selected the best harvest and continued to grow them over the next few seasons, he would definitely be able to bring about a transformation in the spiritual plants.

Looking at the numerous fields nearby, Fang Yuan was suddenly touched and thought to himself, "Great! There is sufficient spiritual rice from the harvest this time for Flower Fox Ferret and me to consume over the year...There will even be leftovers after we leave behind those for planting and cultivation...If we can sell the rest, it would definitely bring in immense riches!"

The Vermillion Jade Rice was only the lowest grade of spiritual plants. There was even a department within the Spirit Returning Sect that sells it as a source of revenue.

Previously Fang Yuan was thoroughly shocked by the price of this sort of spiritual plants. Based on the quality of his recent harvest, he was sure that it would be in great demand on the market.

Of course, there would be people who did not deserve it but yet desired to obtain it.

"If it is just the Vermillion Jade Rice, it isn't such a big deal...furthermore...why would I even need money?"

Upon packing the last sack of Vermillion Jade Rice into the storage room, Fang Yuan broke into a wide smile of satisfaction. He thought, "Great, we shall eat Vermillion Jade Rice every day starting from today until we get sick of it!"

"Keke!"

Flower Fox Ferret which was next to him jumped about excitedly. It looked like it could hardly control its excitement.

With the spiritual rice, what else was there for Fang Yuan to fret about? He cooked a big pot of fragrant Vermillion Jade Rice right away.

The uniqueness of the flavour of the Vermillion Jade Rice this time was many times more intense than the flavour previously. The immense pleasure from eating the Vermillion Jade Rice was also intensified.

After a long time, Fang Yuan finally woke up from his deep sleep. He opened his mouth and released a breath of white gas.

He looked down and saw that he had already finished the entire pot of spiritual rice. Down to the very last cell in his body, he felt as though as he was reborn

"The effects of the spiritual rice are even stronger this time..."

Fang Yuan was extremely pleased. As he looked in the direction of the spiritual bamboo, he was filled with doubts as he wondered, "If the blossoming of the flower of the spiritual bamboo could actually accelerate the time taken for the spiritual rice to ripen, what type of spiritual bamboo is this? What are the uses of its fruits?"

His doubts were answered soon enough.

After three days, most of the flowers from the bamboo withered. They were replaced by green fruits which hung on the branches, brimming with life. It was a sight Fang Yuan had never seen before.

"Bamboo fruits...in the legends, they were the staple foods of the phoenixes..."

Flower Fox Ferret was already waiting patiently at the side for some time. Fang Yuan glanced at it, plucked a fruit and tossed it in the air.

"Shoo!"

In a flash, Flower Fox Ferret appeared on the other side of the rock with fruit in its mouth. It then devoured the fruit voraciously.

"What is it like?"

As Fang Yuan watched Flower Fox Ferret intently as he waited for Flower Fox Ferret to finish its meal.

"Keke...Keke..."

Flower Fox Ferret pretended to not understand Fang Yuan and pointed at the spiritual bamboo again. It was hinting that it could not taste the full flavours of fruit completely by just trying one piece. It needed a few more in order to get a sense of it.

"What a greedy rascal!"

Fang Yuan jokingly reprimanded. At the same time, Fang Yuan had a sense of assurance as he thought, "There should not be a major problem with it..."

At the same time, Fang Yuan plucked a fruit and tossed into his own mouth.

Crunch!

It had the flavours of a green apple. It was sweet and palatable. At the same time, it sent a warm sensation flowing smoothly down his throat.

"Erm... this is..."

Fang Yuan's eyes widened as he felt his strength, inner force, Spirit, and Magic recharged to its maximum at that instant. He felt comfortable and extremely energetic at the same time.

"It does not increase stats, could it be that it promotes recovery?"

He thought again, "Could this allow one to recover Essence, Spirit, and Magic in such a short time?"

As his train of thoughts led to Red-eyed White Bird's outburst, Fang Yuan finally understood why the spiritual bird treated the bamboo fruit as though it's a piece of treasure.

After its outburst, it would definitely deplete a lot of its energy which would mean a long recovery time. However, with the fruit, this time would shorten.

"Even during a duel when both sides suffer serious injuries, this fruit could be consumed?"

Looking at the spiritual bamboo, Fang Yuan was gradually enlightened. He thought, "No wonder, this bamboo fruit could even snatch a person away from the hands of death, which explains its immense value..."

"Hold on!"

Slightly worried, Fang Yuan looked at Flower Fox Ferret and asked, "You did not seem to expand a lot of energy today and you even ate one fruit before this, why are you still asking for more?"

"Keke?"

Flower Fox Ferret thought for a moment and began gesturing. Fang Yuan then realised the bamboo fruits could only induce recovery in humans. However, when consumed by spiritual beasts, especially birds, it appeared to aid in their growth on top of its recovery effects. As a result, it was no surprise the Iron-tailed Black Eagle and the Red-eyed White King Bird treasured it so much.

Fang Yuan broke into a slight smile as the thought of the Iron-tailed Black Eagle surfaced in his mind.

Recently in the deep valley, Fang Yuan came across several dead beasts such as wild boars and tigers. Their wounds looked like they were inflicted by an animal with razor sharp claws. These must be the Iron-tailed Black Eagle's acts of gratitude.

At this instant, Fang Yuan thought of an even better idea.

"Flower Fox Ferret...take these bamboo fruits and tempt the Iron-tailed Black Eagle into becoming our companion...No, tell the Iron-tailed Black Eagle that we would give it bamboo fruits if it ensured the safety of this valley. How about that?"

The Iron-tailed Black Eagle had a formidable strength. Even though it was slightly inferior to the Red-eyed White Bird, it had an advantage over most others as it could fly.

Generally, once it took flight and circled around the valley, nobody could come within 3 miles of the valley, not even the most experienced foot soldiers.

Actually, Fang Yuan had already thought about making use of the Iron-tailed Black Eagle for quite some time.

After he finally understood the instructions, the Flower Fox Ferret sped off into the vegetation with a few bamboo fruits.

...

"Caw Caw!"

In no time, along with an ear-piercing shriek, a deafening noise reverberated through the valley.

Fang Yuan hurried over and found a dead python that was as thick as a human's arm lying the ground. There were a few big holes on its body which fresh blood flowed out from.

"Eh? Golden Silk Python?"

Fang Yuan stepped forward to take a closer look. His face instantly lit up with joy as he thought, "Even though we do not have the snake gall, the skin and bones of a snake are also exceptional medicinal ingredients. Along with snake meat, we have sufficient food to last a few days..."

"Chirp! Chirp!"

Amidst the strong wind and loud noise, the Iron-tailed Black Eagle descended from the sky. From its back, a white little head emerged and hopped off gracefully and moved over next to Fang Yuan.

"Brother Eagle, have you considered my offer?"

Fang Yuan laughed and drew out a few bamboo fruits from his robes.

"Chirp! Chirp!"

Although the bamboo shoots did capture the Iron-tailed Black Eagle's attention, it tilted its head upwards, as though it was not easily swayed by Fang Yuan's gifts.

However, it was evident from the eyes of the spiritual beast that it was indeed tempted by Fang Yuan's offer.

"Keke Keke...Sssss..."

As Flower Fox Ferret gestured and explained, Fang Yuan quickly understood the situation. He remarked, "Oh, so Brother Eagle is unwilling to be the spiritual beast of humans? You misunderstood my intentions, I never thought of doing that. I only wanted to hire you that's all. You will help me to patrol and protect this area and I will give you the spiritual fruits as payment...if it is insufficient, there are spiritual tea and spiritual rice..."

Fang Yuan shook his head and ordered Flower Fox Ferret to translate it for the Iron-tailed Black Eagle.

"Chirp! Chirp!"

Flower Fox Ferret and Iron-tailed Black Eagle communicated through gestures and Iron-tailed Black Eagle eventually shook its head.

"What a difficult nut to crack!"

Fang Yuan wrecked his brain for a solution and told Flower Fox Ferret, "Flower Fox Ferret, let Iron-tailed Black Eagle know, we will not hire it. Instead, we are offering it...These spiritual fruits are the gifts we offer respectfully to it for its service in protecting the valley. How about this?"

Shaking his head, Fang Yuan sent the Flower Fox Ferret to translate his words.

"Chirp! Chirp"

As expected, the Iron-tailed Black Eagle nodded its proud head this time, intently eyeing the bamboo fruits in Fang Yuan's hand.

"Alright, there you go!"

Fang Yuan tossed the fruit into the air and watched the eager beast rushed to consume it. In his mind, Fang Yuan was speechless as he thought, "This beast is so ridiculously egoistic. This deal I made him was exactly what I proposed earlier. Fortunately, it met me, if not it would not be as profitable..."

[Carefree Path of Dreams](#)

Chapter 53: Urgent Matters

Autumn passed by slowly into the bitterly cold winter.

Snowflakes as large as goose feathers fell from the sky, blanketing the entire secluded valley in no time.

Fang Yuan opened the window and exhaled a mist of white air.

As he was an inner force expert, the temperature of the surroundings had little effect on his body. Even though he was wearing just a layer of thin clothing, he did not seem to feel cold at all.

"Chirp! Chirp!"

Iron-tailed Black Eagle called out in mid-air before landing steadily on the snow. It clutched a carcass of a young deer in its talons and looked at Fang Yuan intently.

Iron-tailed Black Eagle's was already extremely pampered by the offerings of spiritual items and other foodstuffs that Fang Yuan fed it daily. It seemed as if Fang Yuan were to chase it away, it would not be willing to return to its previous harsh lifestyle in the wilderness.

"Keke!"

Upon seeing good food, Flower Fox Ferret sped away, leaving shallow footprints in the snow that looked like plum flowers.

"Choo..."

Iron-tailed Black Eagle cried out when it saw Fang Yuan walking out. Its message was crystal clear.

"Oh? There's someone familiar approaching?"

Through some interaction recently, Fang Yuan managed to grasp some of the more basic terms of the language used by these spiritual beasts. However, he has yet to fully master them. Nonetheless, he was still definitely confident of the few terms he used to communicate with the Iron-tailed Black Eagle.

"Keep out of sight in the meantime..."

As he tended to the small deer in preparation for his next meal, he spoke to Iron-tailed Black Eagle without turning his head, "Relax, there will be a portion of spiritual rice and barbequed meat for you today..."

"Chirp Chirp..."

With Fang Yuan's reassurance, Iron-tailed Black Eagle then flew away reluctantly, disappearing into a tiny black speck in the sky in no time.

This was Fang Yuan's secret weapon; he could not reveal it to anyone so easily.

As for the existence of Flower Fox Ferret, it was no longer a secret to those close to him. Instead, the knowledge of its existence seemed to intimidate them.

"Zhou Wenwu would like to meet you, sir!"

Before long, Fang Yuan strolled to the small hut along with the noise of the gong. Here, he saw Zhou Wenwu with a large and thick wolf skin cloak draped over him as he waited alone.

"My greetings!"

Seeing Fang Yuan appear, Zhou Wenwu's eyes lit up as he stepped forward and showed his respects.

"Erm...you're not a stranger, please follow me into the valley!"

This man's loyalty and integrity could be trusted to some extent. In fact, they were put the test before. They were also secretly manipulated by Fang Yuan and Fang Yuan treated him differently from others.

"Have you found out what's the mysterious force behind the Guo family?"

Fang Yuan flicked off the snowflakes that had fallen on his body and asked Zhou Wenwu casually.

Seeing that Fang Yuan was not affected by the cold at all, Zhou Wenwu was filled with admiration and envy for him. He replied, "I've found out already and I'm here to report my findings sir!"

"Very well, let's discuss it in the valley. What a great timing, the spiritual rice is also ready!"

Fang Yuan looked into Zhou Wenwu's eyes. Although Zhou Wenwu seemed pure and innocent, Fang Yuan had the feeling that Zhou Wenwu was intently sizing him up. Recognising this, he said, "Based on your martial prowess, you have already reached the 5th Gate. What you need to do now is to strengthen your foundations and break through the Pain Gate!"

"The more solid and firm your foundations are, the higher the chances of breaking through the 3 Perilous Gates. Even in the event you fail, the negative effects will not be as severe...Have you finished the Vermillion Jade Rice from the last time? Take along another batch with you this time then!"

"Thank you, sir!"

Zhou Wenwu was instantly delighted.

After all, to be able to consume spiritual rice daily to boost his martial prowess was a privilege not even the direct disciples of the Spirit Returning Sect could enjoy.

He would be stupid to betray Fang Yuan. Additionally, Fang Yuan had already emplaced traps on his body as preventive measures.

Even though he did not say it explicitly, Fang Yuan had an immense reputation for being a divine healer. Any doubts Zhou Wenwu had were erased instantly.

Even if Fang Yuan were to order him to fight against the Spirit Returning Sect, he would still do Fang Yuan's bidding no matter what.

Despite this, Fang Yuan still had some reservations about him.

At least he was still able to maintain his possession of the spiritual tea and Iron-tailed Black Eagle a secret.

"Greetings esteemed ferret!"

After stepping into the valley and seeing Flower Fox Ferret, he became extremely humbled.

At that point in time, he already knew that Flower Fox Ferret was the guardian spiritual beast of the valley and its specific role was to watch over the Vermillion Jade Rice.

It was this sort of valuable secret that was worthy of the guardianship of a spiritual beast.

Remembering when he first saw Flower Fox Ferret, it did not pay him any attention. It was hugging onto a large porcelain bowl and concentrated all its attention on voraciously consuming spiritual rice from it. This scene agitated Zhou Wenwu extremely.

It was too embarrassing and intolerable!

Not only was he unable to defeat Fang Yuan's pet spiritual animal, even what he was eating was inferior to the pet's. What sort of miserable and pathetic situation was he in?

'At least it isn't too bad... Fang Yuan still gave me some of the spiritual rice after all, even though it was not as much as the ferret's...'

At this point, Zhou Wenwu was minimally comforted that at least Fang Yuan treated him as well as his own pet. However, what Zhou Wenwu did not know was that Fang Yuan did not value the Vermillion Jade Rice as highly as he did.

"Have a seat!"

Entering the abode, Fang Yuan grabbed a cushion and poured a cup of clear tea. Even though it was just common tea, Zhou Wenwu felt as though he was pampered beyond measure by this mere gesture and was struck beyond words.

"Have you found out the backers of the Guo family?"

Fang Yuan shook off the snowflakes on his body and sat down.

"Yes..."

As Zhou Wenwu mentioned this, he slapped himself on the face.

Even with Fang Yuan's prior cautioning and medical help to preserve his life, he still nearly lost his life to the Guo family.

"Ever since the failure last time, our sect repeatedly dispatched many groups of people led by elders to duel with the force behind the Guo family. After several intense duels, they finally found out that the force behind the Guo family was actually the Five Ghosts Sect!"

Zhou Wenwu said angrily.

"Five Ghosts Sect?!"

Fang Yuan frowned. It seemed that after all, he was not as familiar as the situation around him as he thought he was.

"This sect is extremely secretive and mysterious. They have always operated within Lieyang County. We also just found out that the ancestor of Guo family was actually a known disciple of the Five Ghost Sect...."

Zhou Wenwu sighed and continued saying, "The Five Ghost Sect is an extremely powerful sect in the Secluded Mountain Prefecture. It is almost as powerful as the Spirit Returning Sect. They are even more mysterious and brutal than the Spirit Returning Sect too. By activating their spies in the Guo family and even sending out experts this time, it seems like they are looking for something..."

"Oh? What are they looking for?"

Fang Yuan's heart skipped a beat and he enquired immediately.

"I am not too sure myself, but it definitely is a piece of treasure! It was stolen and taken away by a traitor, but a lot of time has passed since then. I'm afraid it's already lost..."

Zhou Wenwu shook his head and carried on saying, "The Spirit Returning Sect also suffered big losses. I also just heard that in this period of time, the Guo family have also suffered great losses. It also appears that the experts from the Five Ghosts Sect have realised that they are not gaining much from this area and are starting to pull out..."

"Pull out..."

Fang Yuan nodded his head and asked, "Is it because of the Spirit Returning Sect?"

"Correct!"

Zhou Wenwu nodded his head and habitually replied in a slightly proud tone saying, "Their actions have already startled our leader. They are even preparing to send Elder Han down. No matter how proud and daring the Five Ghosts Sect are, Qingye City is after all the territory of our Spirit Returning Sect! Only that..."

Zhou Wenwu then began to hesitate and stuttered, "...the retreat of Five Ghosts Sect seems to be because they are consolidating their forces for some far more important reason back home...our sect leader has already ordered us to investigate and our confrontation with them might carry on!"

"So, it's like that..."

After hearing this, Fang Yuan remained silent for some time.

It was obvious that whatever the Spirit Returning Sect was doing at this point in time was to some extent also helping him to avert disaster.

Unless the Spirit Returning Sect drew away most of the attention of Five Ghosts Sect, the Five Ghosts Sect might even head straight to the valley.

Fang Yuan was however puzzled at their decision to withdraw their forces now.

Qingye City was the territory of the Spirit Returning Sect and furthermore, they had the support of the Wu Zong.

It seemed reasonable for them to withdraw the moment they captured the attention of Shi Yutong. However, from Zhou Wenwu's account, it appeared they had an ulterior motive.

"It seems like...I really have to leave this valley!"

Waving his hand, Fang Yuan gestured for Zhou Wenwu to leave him. After intense consideration, he finally made up his mind.

Fang Yuan began to ponder over this incomplete treasure map that had captured so much attention from the Five Ghosts Sect. There was probably a lot more to it.

...

Guo family.

Several horse carriages were already lined up neatly in formation ready to set off. Members of the Guo family were looking distraught and several women were sobbing. After all, they were leaving their home for good and they did not know when they would be returning.

"Hmph, all you know is how to cry! What a burdensome bunch!"

From the side, a few stern-looking riders atop massive horses clad in black shouted angrily, "Stop behaving this way and move faster!"

"Master, why do we have to save this household? After all, apart from the elders of the Guo family, what business do these commoners have with our sect?"

One of the disciples who had a skull embroidered on the front of his robes complained to an elder next to him.

"Idi*t!"

The elder flew into a rage unexpectedly and said, "The elders of the Guo family sacrificed their lives for our sect and now in this conflict we caused more of their family to lose their lives. If we just abandon them like this, our other disciples will lose hope and confidence in us. You have to understand that it is precisely these commoners that form the roots of our sect..."

"Hmph, Spirit Returning Sect..."

The young martial artist scoffed, "Isn't it unnecessary for someone who is around 7th or 8th Gate to come along on this operation?"

"Hehe, if it was just inner force experts who came it would be easy..."

The elder shook his head and said, "It's just that I heard news that Elder Han was coming along with the reinforcements from the Spirit Returning Sect. He mastered the Yin and Yang energies twenty years ago and is already a martial artist of the 4 Heavenly Gates...I am reluctant to do so but I have to admit he is more superior than me!"

"This journey to Qingye City is really unpleasant..."

As if he was hit by some bad news, the young martial artist now looked down in distraught and said, "We have suffered too many losses...As for the Spirit Returning Sect disciples, despite suffering serious injuries, they could recover their old strength so easily so quickly..."

"Yeah, I have heard that there's a divine healer in this area. Apparently, he could even bring someone dead back to life. Rumours described him to be so divine and godly that it seemed ridiculous. But from

the looks of it, there seems to be some truth in the rumours. Should there be a chance in the future I would like to meet this person..."

The elder tugged on his horse reins and left without turning back, saying, "For now, nothing is more important than our sect's issues. When you get out of Qinghe County, escort this group of people to Lieyang County with the rest of your seniors. I am making a move first!"

After completing his sentence, he set his horse into a full sprint and disappeared in no time without even turning back.

Carefree Path of Dreams

Chapter 54: Attack

"Chang chang!"

"Chang chang!"

The ear-splitting sounds of a gong pierced the silence of the secluded valley.

"Eh?"

Fang Yuan, who was in the midst of his training, frowned and looked towards what seemed to be a large crowd gathering outside the valley and remarked, "Why are there still such unruly people? They must be from the Spirit Returning Sect or the Five Ghosts Sect!"

It was evident that given his capabilities, there was no doubt that he was the leader of the Qingye City. Even in Qinghe County, many of the martial artists showed him a great deal of respect.

After all, in the world of martial arts, nobody could guarantee that they would not get ill or injured, and not require the services of the divine healer ever.

It was probably either of those two who dared to do something like this.

With this thought, Fang Yuan strolled out of the valley without delay.

...

"Elder Lu, you cannot barge into the valley!"

Zhou Wenwu stood his ground in front of the valley, speaking righteously, "These are the rules set by Divine Healer Fang. If you continue to blatantly disregard them and offend him, Elder Zhao's injuries might worsen..."

This group of people belonged to the Spirit Returning Sect. At the front of the group, two disciples were carrying a stretcher. An elderly man whose breathing was extremely weak laid on it.

"Phew, phew..."

Elder Lu clenched his fist and his eyes were bloodshot with rage. He barked, "What do you know? If Elder Zhao loses his life, you will not be able to answer for it!"

These words increased the already high tension.

Looking at Elder Zhao on the stretcher, Zhou Wenwu was in a dilemma.

For any sect, martial artists beneath the 5th Gate were insignificant. Once a martial artist broke through the 6th Gate and developed inner force, the martial artist would be immediately bestowed an elder position. This was the true mark of an elite martial artist.

Elder Zhao was well known in Qinghe County for his Great Sun Technique and Cloud Stepping Technique. Unfortunately, while he was rushing to another person's rescue, he bumped into Gui Wusheng from the Five Ghosts Sect. Gui Wusheng was an infamous villain who was an 8th Gate expert who had broken through the Death Gate. It was rumoured that he already mastered the Yin energy and entered the realms of the 4 Heavenly Gates too!

A short battle later, Elder Zhao had been injured. Thankfully Elder Lu came just in time, and Gui Wusheng seemed to be in a rush, otherwise, he probably would have lost his life there and then

It was no wonder Elder Zhao was in such a depressing condition.

"Move aside!"

As he shouted, Lu Zhisen's temper rose rapidly as he glared menacingly at those who stood in his way.

"No way!"

Zhou Wenwu broke out in cold sweat but he refused to budge, explaining, "Divine Healer Fang is an inner force expert that broke through the Pain Gate. Elder Lu, please show some respect!"

"Hmph, there are so many rumours going about to the point that it's hard to believe them anymore. Even if he is at the 6th Gate, what could someone that just broke through do against my iron pole?"

Lu Zhisen remarked arrogantly. He was also speaking his mind.

After all, fighting against a newly advanced [Martial Artist (6th Gate)] would definitely not be a problem for him, considering his vast amount of experience.

Standing away from Zhou Wenwu and Lu Zhisen, Lin Benchu and the head of the Zhang household watched nervously in silence with a group of disciples from the Spirit Returning Sect.

They were naturally inclined towards supporting Zhou Wenwu as Lu Zhisen was an elder infamous for his recklessness. However, they also did not dare to bear the brunt of Lu Zhisen's murderous rage, hence they looked to Zhou Wenwu with respect and awe.

"Saving this person's life is extremely important and urgent! Get out of my way!"

Having lost his patience, Lu Zhisen swung his hand at Zhou Wenwu.

"Bang!"

Zhou Wenwu was hit by an enormous force which he could not resist even with his inner power of the 5th Gate. As a result, he was sent flying through the air.

Inner power indeed lost out when pitted against inner force.

Furthermore, Lu Zhisen did not expand all his power. Should he have used his weapon, Zhou Wenwu's brains would have been splattered on the ground.

Even so, Zhou Wenwu was sent soaring high into the sky.

"Bang!"

After landing with a dull thud, he realised that he was not injured at all. He was forcefully grabbed up by the neck by Fang Yuan with only one hand.

"Erm? So you are the Divine Healer Fang Yuan?"

Looking at the youthful Fang Yuan emerge from the valley, Lu Zhisen felt an uneasiness in his heart.

Fang Yuan looked incredibly young. He looked like he was younger than 20 years of age. Yet when he responded earlier by nimbly catching Zhou Wenwu with ease, his skills seemed to suggest otherwise. This confused Lu Zhisen greatly.

"Yes I am..."

Fang Yuan released Zhou Wenwu and while looking at Lu Zhisen, shook his head and said, "You refused to abide by my rules and yet you still expect me to tend to your patient?"

"You..."

Lu Zhisen's face flushed red with anger. Swinging out his right hand, he instantly grabbed a metal pole as thick as a teacup and threatened Fang Yuan, "You dare to refuse to treat my patient? Be careful of my Coiling Dragon Iron Pole..."

"Fu Ha ha ha!"

Seeing this, Fang Yuan could not resist breaking into laughter.

It was an entertaining sight watching Lu Zhisen's reckless and temperamental behavior.

Using force to threaten a doctor to tend to a patient? What's the difference between that and forcing a fengshui master to select a spot to bury one's ancestors? If Lu Zhisen intended to end his family line, he could continue trying his luck.

"Argh...This is pissing me off!"

Lu Zhisen's face was blood red and the veins on his forehead swelled up and protruded out. He slammed the iron pole on the ground and caused a tremor around him. Raising his immensely huge arm, he charged towards Fang Yuan.

"Hmm...6th Gate inner force?"

Fang Yuan's eyes flashed and opened his palm, spreading his fingers like an eagle's claw, creating a swishing noise.

"Sssss pa!"

With a loud explosion in the air, Lu Zhisen staggered two steps backward. It was evident Fang Yuan inflicted some damage on him.

"Ah... Dragon Subduing Pole Technique!"

With his eyes reddening further and his body bursting with rage, Lu Zhisen was going to give everything he had. Swinging the iron pole in his hand, Lu Zhisen brought it down with immense force.

"Good move!"

Fang Yuan moved forward swiftly and twisted his Eagle Claw. When he reappeared, he broke through the shadows created by the movements of Lu Zhisen's pole technique, grabbed onto the pole and forced it downwards.

"Bang!"

With a reverberating explosion, the Coiling Dragon Iron Pole deeply penetrated the soil, sending large amounts of soil particles into the air.

Lu Zhisen's face was now swollen and red. His nostrils were almost going to start bleeding. He grabbed the pole with two hands and mustered all his strength as he tried to yank it out of the ground. However, the pole did not seem to budge. It seemed as though the hand on top of the pole was like the Five Finger Mountain that physically repressed the Monkey God.

After the short exchange of blows, Lu Zhisen broke out in profuse perspiration. The colour drained from his face as he tried to catch his breath.

"So? Do you concede defeat?"

Fang Yuan asked with a smile. He was delighted with his own improvement.

"You...already broke through the Shock Gate?"

Lu Zhisen stuttered, but there was a degree of certainty in his voice.

In the earlier bout, Fang Yuan completely dominated the fight and displayed an impeccable character. Every move he made completely wowed the spectators. It was as though they were watching a renowned martial artist in action.

The intense concentration Fang Yuan had seemed unrivaled.

Lu Zhisen might have been a brute, but he was not stupid. He quickly got to his feet and respectfully apologised, "Sorry for offending you, I hope you would forgive me. Should you seek to dish out punishment, please just punish me!"

As Lu Zhisen conceded defeat, he remembered the brilliant and talented individual the elder accepted as a student.

In the past, the student improved at an incredible rate. But in comparison with Fang Yuan, it no longer seemed as impressive anymore.

"Eh?"

"This..."

Lin Yuanwai and the family head of the Zhang Family widened their mouths in disbelief. It was almost as if they were in a dream.

In just one bout, the fiery Elder Lu infamous for his reckless violence was brought to his knees.

Furthermore, he had a reputation for being a veteran expert martial artist who was gifted in strength, and unrivaled amongst 6th Gate martial artists.

Also, what did he just say? Shock Gate?

At that moment, everyone turned their gaze onto Fang Yuan. They now began to look at him in fear.

"If that's what you think, then so be it!"

Fang Yuan gave a vague answer, making it difficult for others to comprehend.

In reality, he had already broken through the Shock Gate long ago. Had he failed to break through this gate with the help of the Questioning Heart Tea, it would be ridiculous and embarrassing.

'Anyway, in terms of cultivation and combat power, considering I could defeat this person, it seems like my martial prowess has reached the highest levels at least in Qinghe County?'

Fang Yuan thought to himself and checked his stats window.

"Name: Fang Yuan

Essence: 4.2

Spirit: 4.1

Magic: 3.0

Age: 19

Cultivation: [Martial Artist (7th Gate)]

Techniques: [Black Sand Palm (Grade 5)], [Eagle Claw Iron Skin Technique (Grade 7)]

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

'In the blink of an eye, a year has passed, and I came from being a nobody into a highly skilled martial artist with miraculous healing skills...'

Fang Yuan thought to himself as he was flushed with a sense of accomplishment.

This massive advancement made by Fang Yuan affected Minister Lin greatly.

Looking at Fang Yuan, Minister Lin could only feel repeated waves of regret hitting him from inside, as though his heart was attacked by a venomous snake. It was excruciating for him.

Even though Lin Leiyue had Shi Yutong's blessings and the future of their sect seemed bright, it now appeared to be merely a hopeful expectation.

In terms of true power, reputation and position, Fang Yuan was no less inferior than Lin Leiyue.

Why was he so blind and wasteful to let go of such a desirable candidate?

He could only regret as it was too late.

Looking at the very impressed family head of the Zhang Family and the smug looking Zhou Wenwu, he felt very annoyed.

It seemed as though they were all ready to send the women in their own families to sleep with Fang Yuan to win his favour.

"An accomplished martial artist at such a young age!"

Lu Zhisen silently sighed. Looking at the frail and weak Elder Zhao lying next to him, he swallowed his pride and grudgingly dropped to his knees and begged, "Please try to save him divine healer! Should you want to dish out punishment, please just punish me!"

Seeing Lu Zhisen fall to his knees, and even Fang Yuan was moved.

Even though Lu Zhisen was a boorish fellow, it appeared even he had a soft side.

"Please recover!"

Waving his hand, Lu Zhisen involuntarily stood up almost immediately.

Fang Yuan continued to speak, "I shall forgive and forget your earlier transgression with what you have just done...Are you aware of my rules?"

For every person the divine healer in the deep valley healed, he demanded either a spiritual object or anything else that was valuable as payment.

"Yes! Of course!"

Lu Zhisen respectfully presented a silk booklet and said, "I obtained half of these random records. The materials inside include records by several renowned elders, as well as various stories of spiritual knights. Please accept this as payment!"

Carefree Path of Dreams

Chapter 55: Shaoyang City

"The Secluded Mountains Prefecture is one of the three prefectures in the country. It is also under the jurisdiction of the six counties, which Qinghe is a part of. It is home to several mysterious and special individuals..."

"In terms of martial arts, there are several talented spiritual knights, capable of fully mastering spiritual energy and lightness skill. Only the crème de la crème of martial artists can rival their skills..."

Fang Yuan sat cross legged as he prepared his tea.

The steam from the piping hot water simmered off once it came into contact with the cool surroundings as the stunning fragrance of the tea wafted out.

The small fireplace created a sense of comfort from the bitter cold environment.

It was a different experience reading his book in such an environment.

Elder Zhao from the Spirit Returning Sect suffered a life-threatening injury as he was hit by Gui Wusheng's Ghostly Claw and the Decomposition Toxins seeped into his bones. His condition was made worse by his internal injuries. However, with the combination of Fang Yuan's

Golden Needle Acupuncture and Yama's Talisman, Fang Yuan saved his life without a fuss.

After Elder Zhao's condition stabilised, Fang Yuan immediately sent off Lu Zhisen and the group of people who were thanking him profusely. He then began to read the book they gave him intently.

"Erm...in this journal, the time period is longer. Furthermore, the author's martial arts prowess is so advanced. It seems like he has reached the highest level of Wu Zong..."

After reading through the book once, doubts arose in Fang Yuan's mind.

Most importantly, the author recorded several legends regarding spiritual knights, traditional customs and even revealed some precious pieces of information regarding advanced martial arts. This pleasantly surprised Fang Yuan.

"I'm left with one remaining gate to clear to break through the 8th Golden Gates in the 12 Golden Gates. After I clear this, I must master the Yin and Yang energies for the 4 Heavenly Gates..."

Laying out the 12 Cultivation Levels of Initial, Rest, Life, Restriction, View, Pain, Shock, Death, Yin, Yang, Earth and Heaven in front of Fang Yuan, he only had five left to clear.

"At the 8th cultivation level, I must break through the Death Gate. At the 9th and 10th, I must master the Yin and Yang energies individually while at the 11th cultivation level I have to master combining yin and yang energies into one and to break through the 12th cultivation... At the 12th level, I must put in consistent effort in training to break through this level. After completing all these, I can finally get a taste of the exhilarating experience of being a martial artist of the highest level of Wu Zong..."

"Many gifted martial artists have failed at this stage but apparently after passing this stage one would enter an entirely different realm altogether. There are even changes in the form...for example, one would no longer train inner force but...elemental force!"

From these descriptions in the booklet, Fang Yuan was able to confirm that this author had already reached the Wu Zong level.

"According to him, it is only with the breaking of the Wu Zong and mastering of elemental force then one could be considered to be really set on the route of cultivation which can then be worthy of comparison with the spiritual knights and alchemy masters..."

While reading this particular paragraph of description, Fang Yuan sensed a hint of melancholy between the lines.

At this point, Fang Yuan's mood was also affected.

After all, it was extremely rare even for gifted martial artists who had renowned teachers to break through the 4 Heavenly Gates. Wu Zong was more about fate. Even if one were to train and prepare for his entire life, he also had to count on fate to succeed.

But as for spiritual knights and the like, they started training their elemental force straightway. Their strengths and abilities at the beginning were already on par with Wu Zong. This news could possibly disillusion several martial artists.

"In the first place nothing in this world is fair!"

Fang Yuan put down the booklet with a sigh. He was still very envious of spiritual knights and their kind, thinking, "Spiritual knights use elemental force and are able to manipulate nature, gaining the ability of Creation. For example, magical masters are able to arrange the key elements while alchemy masters can obtain the extremely beneficial essence from spiritual plants, grabbing the valuable fruits of nature. There are also the more mysterious dream masters....."

Fang Yuan no longer had further doubts about the martial arts route ahead of him before Wu Zong.

Fang Yuan was only slightly puzzled about how to become a spiritual knight.

"If we were to talk only about physical capabilities, there are not many people who are better than me I think. Especially in the aspect of magical energy..."

As for the honing of martial arts skills, it usually consisted of just building up and enhancing elemental energy. As for Fang Yuan's growth in the magical energy, he had the aid of the Questioning Heart Tea.

As for the requirements to become a spiritual knight, it seemed to be very similar to this magical energy.

Fang Yuan walked to the front of a bronze mirror and released all of his magical energy.

At that moment, the young man in the mirror looked incredibly vibrant and lively. He was almost shining with youth and vigour, like a luminous pearl in the night.

"Luminosity...magical energy of 3.0, and I can already accomplish something like that..."

Fang Yuan knew that it would be a pity if he did not attempt to train to be a spiritual knight with his current capabilities.

But becoming a spiritual knight was not a simple task. It required determination and will.

"When I leave this time, I have to also pay more attention to the details here..."

Fang Yuan made up his mind, but he was still slightly troubled.

As for all those spiritual knights, Qinghe Country was just a poor rural area. Even he had never heard about this area in the legends.

If he really wanted to find out, he had to travel out towards the Secluded Mountain Prefecture or even the capital of the country, maybe he had to even travel out of the country to search for it in order to have a glimmer of hope.

"Ow!!!"

After making up his mind, Fang Yuan got up walked to the garden and called out.

His voice reverberated around the valley and shook the ground.

"Chirp!"

"Keke!"

A big and small shadow from the sky and ground respectively sped towards Fang Yuan. It was Flower Fox Ferret and Iron-tailed Black Eagle.

"I'm going to travel out for a long period of time, this secluded valley will now be under your charge!"

Fang Yuan caressed the small head of Flower Fox Ferret and tossed a bamboo fruit to Iron-tailed Black Eagle.

Taking his spiritual tea, spiritual rice, and bamboo fruit, he hid them in separate places within the vast and huge Clear Spirit Mountain. Given the vastness of the mountain, not many people would be able to uncover his hiding spots.

After harvesting the crops for the last time, Fang Yuan set a fire and burned all the Vermillion Jade Rice plants into ashes. The barren Questioning Heart Tea tree and spiritual bamboo that were left looked a bit conspicuous, but it was extremely difficult to notice them. It would be far more challenging for someone else to take advantage of their beneficial properties in their current state.

Furthermore, with the protection of the two spiritual beasts, Fang Yuan felt more assured.

...

Lieyang County.

This was a part out of the six counties in the Secluded Mountain Prefecture. It had always been the territory of the Five Ghosts Sect and a neighbour of Qingye County. As it had a few gigantic quarries, the county was economically powerful and looked more developed than Qinghe County.

Winter passed and spring set in.

Within Shaoyang City, people who rested during the bitter cold winter resumed transporting huge amounts of mineral ores again.

These mineral ores of Lieyang harnessed some form of Yang energy. It was the blacksmith's favourite material to add to their works which included weapons. After the addition of these mineral ores through a unique process, the quality of the constructed weapons would be enhanced and maybe even transformed. It might also have some divine or holy properties. It was said that such weapons could defeat the most demonic entities and were thus known to be the divine and powerful weapons of magical troops.

Of course, this was just said in legends. However, the hard reality was that the demand for Lieyang mineral ores was far greater than its supply.

Furthermore, along the journey, the value of these mineral ores would increase along the way. By the time they reached the main mansion of the Secluded Mountain Prefecture, the price would increase by fifty percent. When they reach the capital of the country, the price would double. If one was willing to risk breaking the law and transporting it beyond the country's borders to faraway lands, the profits one could make would be almost uncountable. It was definitely enough for one to live the rest of his life in prosperity without having to work anymore.

However, several dangers and obstacles plagued this transportation route.

These merchants were only enticed by the sheer amounts of profits they could reap to take the risk of face the bandits and robbers along the way. They had to be brave, intelligent and extremely determined on their journey in order to succeed.

"Is this Shaoyang City?!"

As the horse carriage entered the gates of the city slowly, a jade-like hand pulled open the curtains and the person inside visually surveyed the different scenery the city held. The person was feeling incredibly excited.

"Miss, we have reached the inn!"

In front of the carriage stood a middle-aged man with a goatee. He looked like the hotel manager and at the same time, he also looked like he was the carriage driver.

"Great!"

The lady dismounted from the carriage. Her striking red robes incongruently stood out against the dull colours of her surroundings. Her eyes were glistening beautifully, but she covered half her face with a mask, eliciting looks of disappointment on those around her.

"Old Yu, thank you so much for putting on the disguise and for also being my carriage driver, it must have been hard for you!"

After entering the inn and requesting a suite, the lady removed her mask and revealed a gorgeous face. It was Lin Leiyue.

"I am honoured to work for you, Miss Lin!"

The middle-aged man smiled and wiped off the sweat from his face. The lines on his face changed drastically and he looked evidently more light-hearted.

If Fang Yuan was here, he would definitely find this man familiar. This was the man who forced Lin Yuanwai to back out of his marriage. He was the Cold-faced Iron Eagle, Yu Qiuleng!

"Elder Han has already notified us that he would link up with us as soon as possible to chase down Gui Wusheng!"

Lin Leiyue clapped her hands and a few skilled martial artists entered, ready to take orders.

"The Five Ghosts Sect has a mysterious background and they are unpredictable. When they were in Qinghe county they activated the spies they planted for many years. Their objective does not seem

trivial. You are the elite spies of our sect in Shaoyang County, support Elder Han and my mission this time and find out the objective of the Five Ghost Sect!"

"Yes Madam!"

All the martial artists bowed respectfully.

"Good, Yan San, Ma Si, Hou Wu, Zheng Liu...Four of you guard the four doors in Shaoyang County. The martial artists of Five Ghosts Sect have recently been gathering in this city. Make sure you get to know each of them inside out!"

"Zou Jiu, you will..."

Lin Leiyue looked as though she was issuing operational orders in an army. Her last order was to Yu Qiuleng, "Old Yu, I will put you in charge of the deployments of the Five Ghost Sect in this area!"

"Rest assured, I will not fail you!"

Yu Qiuleng replied in arrogant tone; he was confident that he would succeed.

He had no reason to believe otherwise.

Since the last time, Yu Qiuleng had made massive improvements in his martial prowess. He was also promoted to an elder in his sect. His confidence was bolstered, and he was extremely satisfied. This time, he was tasked with escorting members of the sect on this mission. It was a huge responsibility, an indication of his bright future in the sect, thus explaining his confidence and high morale.

Seeing this, Lin Leiyue cautioned him, "The Five Ghosts Sect is as powerful as ours, do not be complacent!"

"Very well said Miss Lin, I will remember it!"

Yu Qiuleng waved as he replied. Judging from his cavalier attitude, Lin Leiyue knew then that he did not take her words seriously.

Carefree Path of Dreams

Chapter 56: Sparring

As days and hours gradually passed, the whole Shaoyang City instead became more heavily guarded. With such a serious and solemn atmosphere, even the ordinary folks could feel it.

Every day, there would always be people coming from Lieyang County. Even martial artists from other counties flooded the city daily.

Needless to say, the people who couldn't be left unmentioned, were the disciples of Five Ghosts Sect, constantly fighting and killing on the streets and in the alleyways, almost as if there was no stop to the violence and mayhem.

Along with this, was news that a treasure had been spotted in Shaoyang City. The news spread far and wide, attracting even more warriors to come forth to the city.

"There's a treasure in Shaoyang City? Some claimed to have seen its shine, sparkling in the sky, lasting for many years?"

Fang Yuan was riding a green donkey; upon hearing the exaggerated rumors, he broke into laughter.

"Those rumors must be fake."

Traveling beside him was a man 7 feet tall, body bursting with masculinity, as muscular as a bull.

"This was personally said by brother, it cannot be any less true!"

This huge man was carrying an axe the size of a door, with an air of ferocity around him, he said, "It seems like you're a kindred spirit, why not come join us at Cow Head Mountain? We can eat huge blocks of meat, drink giant bowls of wine, talk about gold and silver, how enjoyable will that be, ha ha!"

"Oh no oh no, Brother Wang, I am honoured by your offer and hospitality, but my martial arts skills are not up to par, so I think I'll pass."

Fang Yuan discreetly rolled his eyes, unable to believe that this fool could be a mountain king.

He met this man on the road. After finding out that they both were heading to Shaoyang City, they had been traveling together ever since. His name, in particular, was very special. His surname was Wang and his first name was Fugui. The name Wang Fugui meant 'Rich King', and that already sounded like it belonged to a wealthy man.

From what Wang Fugui said, this Cow Head Mountain was also from Lieyang County and was supposedly very famous.

"Brother Wang, you're making the journey to Shaoyang City for the treasure too?"

Fang Yuan didn't want to talk about recruitment anymore and thus immediately changed the topic.

"We don't even know how the treasure looks like, even if we did, the experts will beat us to it, as if it's that easy to find it!"

A shrewd look flashed on Wang Fugui's face.

"Oh? I didn't think brother would be someone who understood the situation."

Fang Yuan was slightly surprised, "Then why are you heading to Shaoyang City?"

"Ha ha..."

Wang Fugui waved his hands in excitement and said, "Recently so many people are gathering in Shaoyang, and just as I was planning on gaining fame as a martial artist, I heard that Five Ghosts Sect has many senior martial artists here, even the junior ones are all here too! All I have to do is wait for a good opportunity to challenge them, beat them, and my name will spread throughout the lands. With such a good chance coming up, how could I miss it?"

"Oh I see!"

Fang Yuan cupped his hands together, at least he finally understood what the big fuss was about, and how it could still attract so many martial artists to come too.

People from the world of martial arts weren't passive and were not willing to miss out on any action if they heard of it. Needless to say, add on the promise of treasure, even while knowing that there might be danger, they would just walk straight up to face it without fear.

"Brother, even though your martial arts skills are bad, but your medical prowess is unmatched! If you could join Cow Head Mountain, and work for Brother Wang, then 1 of the 5 important positions will be left for you!"

Ever since Wang Fugui personally saw Fang Yuan save a grandfather and grandson with medical techniques, he had been wowed and totally admired Fang Yuan's medical skills, wanting to recruit him into the group.

Unfortunately, Fang Yuan had no interest in being a mountain thief, and thus there wasn't much Brother Wang could do.

"We've reached Shaoyang City!"

His eyes lighted up upon seeing the building in the distance.

"Oh? There are martial artists fighting..."

Wang Fugui saw that in front of the gates of the city there was a circle of sabre wielding martial artists. There seemed to be people fighting in the centre of the circle. Upon seeing that, Fugui excitedly said, "Everyone out of my way!", as he headed towards the circle.

He was huge, hence it was good to be allied with him.

Occasionally some martial artists flashed fierce looks, but upon seeing his body of steel, and the giant axe, they didn't dare to pass any comments. This allowed Fang Yuan to pass through easily.

As they entered the circle, it seemed like the battle was coming to an end.

The fight involved two martial artists, one old and one young. The old guy was graceful and had remarkable skills, but it was evident that he was already exhausted to his limit and was being forced to a corner by the younger guy.

"This youth had actually advanced to the 6th Gate, and became an inner force expert?"

Fang Yuan eyes flickered as he looked at the younger warrior.

He had nice eyebrows and a nice coloured skin. However, his face was extremely pale and he carried an aura of coldness. Wearing black, he was definitely a disciple of Five Ghosts Sect.

"Who's that?"

Fang Yuan saw Fugui's veins bulging in his neck, a look of eagerness on his face and was temporarily speechless.

"Ha Ha, looks like you're not from around here, you don't even know Ghost King!"

"Ghost King?"

Fang Yuan shrugged; he really haven't heard of this name before.

"This guy is one of the best disciples of Five Ghosts Sect! He was born gifted, at the age of 20 he obtained inner power and was able to break through the Pain Gate, being the first youth in Lieyang County to attain that!"

Wang Fugui's eyes never left the fight, and in acknowledgment he merely murmured.

"Oh..."

Fang Yuan was rendered speechless upon hearing his response.

Excluding himself, from the last time they met, even Lin Leiyue was still a few steps away from breaking through the Pain Gate. If this youngster had really done it then he would have set a new record.

With regards to the difference in skill between Leiyue and this youngster, oh well, Leiyue would have to commit suicide out of embarrassment.

After all, Ghost King was a merciless evil demon who managed to break through all 7 Gates in a year.

Fang Yuan was an intellectual, but was indifferent when it came to battles.

"Ghost King's martial art is graceful and elegant, just like how a spider spins its web, slowly but surely forcing its prey into a corner. The old man is already completely exhausted, its best if he surrenders early lest he suffers even more internal injuries."

"Five Moons Palm!"

Ghost King gave a shout, his right hand turning pale beyond measure, completely drained of colour, as he gracefully slid past the old man's defences and pressed his hand on the old man's chest.

"Argh..."

The old man's facial expression took a turn for the worse, as he rapidly staggered back, spitting out purplish black blood.

"Flying Crane has actually been defeated!"

"He is actually a renowned master of inner force in Lieyang County!"

"Seems like he's about to be replaced by the new generation of martial artists..."

"Ghost King's techniques are of such a high level, don't even talk about Lieyang County, even within Secluded Mountains Prefecture, I doubt there's many who can match up to him..."

"Hey! Everyone listen up!"

Ghost King eyed the whole circle and proudly said, "Shaoyang City is Five Ghosts Sect's territory, anyone who has any thoughts about competing with us better think twice, or you'll end up just like this old man!"

Upon finishing his sentence, he gave a cold smirk. Surprisingly, he and the other disciples did not enter the city. They all got on horses and rode off to an unknown destination.

Wang Fugui waited until they were gone before he indignantly said, "Hmph...that bold attitude of his."

"If I wish my name to be renowned throughout the lands, all I have to do is go up, challenge them and win, am I right?"

Fang Yuan's eyes were filled with ridicule.

Wang Fugui had natural strength and had trained in the brute strength of the Cow Devil Technique till the 5th Grade. Usually, there were few martial artists that could match up with someone like that, but it turned out that a master of inner power was one of those who could.

Wang Fugui's face broke into a smile and rubbed his head in glee but the moment he saw the Flying Crane walking away, all expressions vanished instantly.

Under the shine of the setting sun, the back of Flying Crane seemed like a defeated hero, causing a tinge of sadness to suddenly hit Fang Yuan.

It seemed like Ghost King's display of power was very effective, striking fear into the circle of martial artists that were watching the fight. Having been shocked by Ghost King's prowess, they suddenly became less rowdy and entered the city in a quiet and orderly manner.

"Let's go! I'll bring you to Fragrance Bar for a drink or two."

After entering the city, Wang Fugui shrugged off all past feelings of sadness and said, "My drinking tolerance is unmatched in Cow Head Mountain, believe me, I'm not making it up!"

"Ha Ha...I have other matters to attend to, please excuse me!"

Although Fang Yuan wanted to personally see whether Fugui's claim was true, after considering his own alcohol tolerance, he knew he was only going to embarrass himself and thus left immediately.

"Oh? What matters are you referring to? Could you be going to meet some beautiful maiden?" Fugui teased.

Suddenly, a carriage stopped in front of them and its doors swung open, revealing a young maiden.

"Brother Fang Yuan? Please come in!"

"You see! I really have matters to attend to!"

Fang Yuan rubbed his nose as he entered the carriage.

Wang Fugui stood there in a daze, only regaining his senses after a moment. Slapping his forehead, he said, "It's ok, Brother Fang Yuan really has matters to attend to, he didn't hide anything from me..."

Suddenly, he had a fit of anger, and scolded, "Choosing women over me? How can he leave Fugui alone here by himself! Hmph...I'll go drink wine by myself then."

"Maiden Lin! What a coincidence!"

The carriage had little room, and the air was filled with a fragrant smell.

Sitting opposite Fang Yuan was Maiden Lin. She had a peculiar look on her face as she gazed at Fang Yuan, leaving him confounded as to why she had such an expression.

Little did he know that Maiden Lin had failed before due to his mistake, and was embarrassed really badly. But she chose not to tell him out of fear that the Spirit Returning Sect would come knocking at his door.

Upon hearing that Fang Yuan's greeting came with a hint of alienation, Maiden Lin's eyes flicked as she said delicately, "I heard that your medical skills have exceeded all expectations, and have surpassed even that of your mentor. I am in awe of your achievement, but I wonder, what brings you here? Surely you know that currently Shaoyang City is filled with danger?"

Fang Yuan curiously asked, "I've heard that there was a treasure in the city, and have decided to come take a look. As long as I don't get caught up in the hunt for the treasure there shouldn't be too much of a problem... Is that the reason why Maiden Lin is here too?"

Maiden Lin laughed, as she admitted, "This was supposed to be a secret but for some reason it has been leaked out to almost every city and county around here. Now the daily influx of warriors has increased to unbelievable amounts..."

Fang Yuan's eyes flashed, "Wasn't the rumour spread on purpose?"

Maiden Lin shook her head, "Although taking advantage of the chaos to reap benefits will be good, but I definitely will not want to do it on such a large scale."

"If that's the case, this will be interesting..."

Fang Yuan rubbed his chin, deep in thought.

Carefree Path of Dreams

Chapter 57: Suspicion

The horse carriage stopped at the back of the large mansion and immediately two martial artists dressed as servants stepped forward and respectfully drew back the curtains on the carriage.

"This place...seems to be the backyard of a house belonging to someone from the upper class..."

Upon hearing the muffled commotion from the front yard, Fang Yuan silently nodded.

Fang Yuan was already impressed when he saw the technique and skill behind the tricks done earlier. Seeing that of the Spirit Returning Sect, Fang Yuan was also convinced that the Spirit Returning Sect was indeed able to rival the veteran sects. Their influence in this area was no less remarkable.

"This is the secret base for our Spirit Returning Sect. Apart from the martial artists from our sect, Master Fang you are our first guest!"

Lin Leiyue broke into a gorgeous smile as she led the way in front.

After making their way through a few smaller doors, they arrived at a garden. The garden was intricately arranged and designed. Even though the cold winter had yet to pass, signs of life and growth were beginning to emerge.

Next to the clear green pond, a moustached martial artist was practising the Eagle Claw Technique.

"Whoosh whoosh!"

Accompanying each strike the martial artist made, the force pushed the air around him along while creating subtle sound effects. It was as though a pond of still water was being disturbed.

"Old Yu!"

Lin Leiyue made what appeared to be a casual greeting. However, Fang Yuan narrowed his eyes to this.

Was not this the Cold Faced Iron Eagle Yu Qiuleng? The same person who followed Minister Lin into the mountain and then forced himself to break off his engagement?

In the beginning, Fang Yuan thought Yu Qiuleng's martial prowess were formidable. After watching Yu Qiuleng, he did not seem that powerful after all.

It even seemed like Yu Qiuleng's Eagle Claw Technique was inferior to Fang Yuan's.

"Erm, you are?"

Yu Qiuleng gently nodded in acknowledgement towards Lin Leiyue. Looking at Fang Yuan, Yu Qiuleng felt a tingling sense of familiarity. Frowning his eyebrows, his eyes glistened all of a sudden as he remembered, "The guy from Qingye city?!"

At this moment, a tingle of hostility crept appeared on his face as he thought, "How dare he still pester Maiden Lin?!"

"It's a misunderstanding Old Yu!"

Upon seeing this, Lin Leiyue hurriedly explained, "I merely bumped into Master Fang along the way. Furthermore, he is an accomplished martial artist and is famous in Qingye city for his medical prowess..."

"Hmph, it might just be a scam..."

Yu Qiuleng dismissively snorted. Even though he has heard some rumours, he stubbornly refused to believe that this teenager from the mountains could accomplish so much. He might have killed Song Zhong and Elder Zhong, but it might be because they were already in a precarious position and Fang Yuan probably killed them by pulling off a trick or two.

At this point in time, Fang Yuan was not displaying his martial prowess, and based on what Yu Qiuleng could see through his naked eye, he could not discern that Fang Yuan's capabilities were as good as what was being said.

"Oh? Looks like you do not like me very much?"

Fang Yuan laughed harmlessly, but there was a slight hint of anxiety in his eyes.

"Sir, reporting!"

At this moment, a disciple of the Spirit Returning Sect sprinted towards them with a messenger bird in hand, "We have just received Elder Han's message. He had already found the tracks of the elders from Five Ghosts Sect outside the city. Elder Han ordered us to reinforce them immediately!"

"This matter is of utmost importance, we will move off right now!"

Upon saying this, Lin Leiyue shot a pleading glance at Fang Yuan.

Seeing this, Fang Yuan decided not to mention the next training session he was thinking of suggesting.

Anyway, having seen Yu Qiuleng's pitch black face, he knew there would be trouble for him, so there was no hurry.

When an honourable man seeks revenge, waiting ten years to do so was not considered a long time. Even though he was not an honourable man, he could still wait a few days.

"Very sorry Master Fang, our sect needs to attend to a pressing matter!"

Lin Leiyue looked at Fang Yuan apologetically.

"Oh, it's alright, I shall take my leave then..."

Fang Yuan turned and prepared to leave.

"Do not let him leave!"

At this moment, Yu Qiuleng, who was remaining quiet, remarked, "This man has heard the secrets of our sects, we cannot let him spread them"

Yu Qiuleng was originally intending to kill Fang Yuan to prevent him from leaking the sect's secrets.

However, as the Spirit Returning Sect was a proper and respectable sect, and with so many junior disciples present, he could not surface his suggestion.

"Master Fang, are you willing to follow Lin Leiyue?"

Instantly reacting, Lin Leiyue remarked "What a coincidence! Isn't this why I came?"

Fang Yuan chuckled as this was also on his mind.

"Alright, let's delay no further, we shall move out this instant! There is no need to leave anyone here anymore!"

Being a decisive person, Lin Leiyue left instantly. In no time, a group of people hurriedly exited the mansion and rushed towards a location in the mountains.

...

"Click Clack!"

The horses they rode took them at a blistering speed.

"Maiden Lin, can you tell me, what is the treasure you were talking about?"

Amidst the galloping of the horses, Fang Yuan's voice resonated clearly in Yu Qiuleng's ears. Fang Yuan's question alarmed Yu Qiuleng.

"Given what has occurred, Leiyue has nothing to hide. The treasure is said to be a piece of Yin Yang Jade!"

Ignoring the cautionary cough from Yu Qiuleng who was beside her, Lin Leiyue replied immediately.

"Yin Yang Jade?"

Fang Yuan was slightly confused. After a moment, he remembered reading about it in a journal somewhere. His eyes brightened as he thought, "Isn't Yin Yang Jade the item stated in legends that could merge the Yin and Yang energies and accelerate a martial artist's advancement in skills?"

After the 8 Gates of the path of a martial artist, it was the 4 Heavenly Gates!

Discounting the Earth and Heaven Gate, the Yin Gate and Yang Gate at the start precisely required the merging of the Yin and Yang energies!

This Yin Yang Jade was a famous treasure of generations. It was said that the jade was a natural gem which contained yin and yang energy and could immensely improve foundations of the martial artist. It was said that it could also break through the Yin and Yang Gates. It was indeed a much sought-after treasure.

A martial artist from the 4 Heavenly Gates could easily be one of the top five martial artists regardless whether he was in the Spirit Returning Sect or the Five Ghosts Sect!

This explained the importance placed on this treasure and the elaborate actions taken by the two big sects as well as many other martial artists to try to attain it.

"Obtaining this Yin Yang Jade is equivalent to reserving a spot in the ranks of highly powerful martial artists at 4 Heavenly Gates in the future..."

Fang Yuan nodded and glanced at Lin Leiyue.

It was obvious that this operation taken by the Spirit Returning Sect to obtain this treasure was most likely for Lin Leiyue.

However, Lin Leiyue was still injured which made Fang Yuan slightly unsure about who the treasure was for. He was even more incognisant if the person responsible for this was actually him.

'It is easy to defeat your external enemies, but difficult to overcome your inner demons!'

Being aware of Fang Yuan's gaze, appearing to be slightly embarrassed, Lin Leiyue lowered her head. She was however thinking, "To defeat my inner demons and take down my enemy's strong points, it was originally sufficient for any of the elders to defeat Brother Fang in front of me. However, Elder Han's report came all of a sudden and I was unable to adapt my plan in time. Fortunately Elder Han is present, it might even be easier to accomplish the mission!"

Elder Yan and Elder Han were the left and right pillars of the Spirit Returning Sect. Both were top martial artists of the 4 Heavenly Gates!

"The Little Frost Mountain is right here!"

A junior disciple who arrived at the entrance to the mountain dismounted immediately. He summoned a messenger bird and nodded at Lin Leiyue.

"Dismount and enter the mountain!"

Lin Leiyue did not hesitate. Her will at this point in time was indomitable.

"Move!"

Yu Qiuleng took the initiative and led the way. At the same time, he shot a provoking glare at Fang Yuan.

After all, in the dense and old forests in this mountain, an "accident" would, after all, be quite a common occurrence.

Although it seemed like nothing would happen at that point in time, should they get into a fight with the people from the Sect of the Five Ghosts, some fratricide might be inevitable.

However, after entering the mountain, Fang Yuan's behaviour caused Yu Qiuleng to view him in a different light.

The path was filled with multiple boulders and blocked by thorny plants...

In the true old forests in the deep mountains, there was not even a path to follow. Even for veteran martial artists, it was extremely difficult for them to navigate.

The people brought out by the Spirit Returning Sect were all respectable martial artists who could still manage the difficulty of the path. Yu Qiuleng was trying his best to conceal his discomfort as he waited to ridicule any mistake made by Fang Yuan.

Fang Yuan was still patient and uncomplaining. He did not seem to slow down by the natural obstacles and looked more at ease and comfortable in his surroundings than Yu Qiuleng. As he moved swiftly through the obstacles, he casually enquired, "Do the communication methods used by your sect still work in an area like this? Also, are there any more instructions given by Elder Han?"

"The methods of our sect are impeccable!"

Yu Qiuleng replied grudgingly.

He was shocked at Fang Yuan's bravery as well as his remarkable Lightness Skill. However, even then Yu Qiuleng convinced himself that Fang Yuan's ability was only limited to his slightly superior Lightness Skill.

It must be acknowledged, that once someone has made up his mind about a certain issue, it would be extremely difficult to convince him otherwise.

"Rustle rustle..."

Suddenly, everyone emerged from the dense jungle into a clearing.

They saw a valley ahead of them and messenger bird circling in the air, emitting ear piercing cries.

"Elder Han is right in the valley, follow me to see him!"

Yu Qiuleng took the lead and entered without hesitation.

Fang Yuan surveyed the hills on both sides and tensed up his brows. He touched an object in his robes, took a deep breath and entered the valley.

"Where is Elder Han?"

After walking a few metres, Lin Leiyue surveyed the thin fog around them. She instantly asked, "Why have we not sent out a message? This area gives me a bad feeling. We cannot be careless, let's retreat from this valley!"

"This....."

Just as Yu Qiuleng was about to speak, the swooshing of arrows flying continuously sounded.

Arrows flew from the opposite end.

"Ah!"

Some disciples who were hit dropped to the floor instantly. They died almost immediately after exclaiming and black blood flowed from their wounds.

"It's a trap!"

Lin Leiyue drew her long sword and ordered, "Retreat!"

Fortunately for them, they did not enter too deep into the valley and were thus not fully entrapped. After an exhausting escape, they found they had lost half of their original manpower.

"The arrow tips are poisoned!"

Thinking about the earlier scenes, Yu Qiuleng broke out in cold sweat.

Had he continued to advance into the valley, they would have been attacked from all sides. Under the shower of that many arrows, their martial prowess did not matter as they would all be killed by the sheer number of poisoned arrows.

"It's a surprise you are able to discover my location, no doubt you are a talented disciple of the Spirit Returning Sect!"

A feminine looking young man, accompanied by an applauding bunch of disciples from the Five Ghosts Sect, emerged arrogantly and slowly from the valley.

"Caw caw!"

The circling messenger bird automatically landed on his arm obediently. This caused colour of Yu Qiuleng's face to become worse than that of a corpse. "How is this possible?"

"Haha... Let me reveal to you, as long as it's not a spiritual beast, it cannot resist the influence of the Temptation Pellet!"

Fang Yuan met this young man before. He was Lin Huang.

At that moment, Lin Huang drew out a pink pellet and fed it to the messenger bird. He shook his head in disappointment and said, "Had you guys entered the trap fully, all of you would have been dead and I would not need to do anything. Now I must come out of the valley to ensure my job is done. Tell me... the method by which you all would like to die by?"

Lin Huang visually surveyed the body language of Yu Qiuleng and Lin Leiyue. Initially slightly aggressive, Lin Huang became calmer but began to verbally provoke them, "Isn't this legendary psychic who is also

the beloved student of Shi Yutong? Hehe... If I capture you, wouldn't this make the Spirit Returning Sect beg?"

"Dream on!"

Yu Qiuleng let out a thunderous roar and launched himself at Lin Huang with the immense energy of a hawk.

It was clear to him that in their unfavourable situation, the only way to turn the odds around was to bring the fight to Lin Huang himself.

Carefree Path of Dreams

Chapter 58: Defeat

"Eagle Claw!"

Qiuleng was a calm person but was not known for being submissive. Despite being surrounded by enemies, he was still constantly thinking of ways to turn the tables on them.

He recognized Lin Huang, who was the favourite disciple of Five Ghosts Sect's Sect Head, and the head of all disciples. His power and position would be equal to Lin Leiyue's. Even though he has heard of Lin Huang breaking through the 6th Gate, but when it came to experience, there was no way Lin Huang could surpass him!

If he could retaliate in one move, he might even win the battle!

By then, Qiuleng's Eagle Claw Technique was at full force, it was as if he was an eagle circling high above, and black-coloured eagle claws came crashing down like a thunderstorm. The two disciples by Lin Huang's side let out a scream, and instantly flew backwards from the attacks.

"Alright! Everyone stop!"

Lin Huang burst into laughter. His right hand turned pale and flexible, as if it had no bones inside and is drained of all blood, and made the next move. "Five Yin Hand!"

"Bang!"

Qiuleng's Eagle Claw and Lin Huang's Five Yin Hand came in contact. There was a change in Qiuleng's expression, and he flew back instantaneously.

Lin Huang's feet shifted at lightning speed and floated towards him like a ghost. "Leaving? How about seeking permission from my Ghost Shadow Steps first!"

His footsteps became unpredictable, and suddenly he was right by Qiuleng's side, with fingers black as ink. "Ghost Claw!"

"Splat!"

Lin Huang's reached out with fingernails like jade pieces emitting a hint of evil. With a twist of his hand, both of Qiuleng's hands retracted back quickly as if he got bitten by a snake. Before he knew it, there was a mark on his chest.

"Puff!"

Qiuleng's facial expression shifted again, as he spat out a mouthful of blood and fainted on the ground. His face slowly turned black, and the 5 punctures on his chest spouted out blood as black as ink.

Within the mere exchange of a few moves, Spirit Returning Sect's last hope was defeated!

After witnessing the difference between both competitors, Leiyue was lost for words, as if her heart was hanging over a cliff.

"Cold Iron Eagle Yu Qiuleng? Is that all there is? How is your Eagle Claw compared to my Ghost Claw?"

Lin Huang's laughter was filled with disdain, and his eyes swept the room coldly. "Apart from Lin Leiyue, everyone else who is irrelevant is to be killed with no exceptions!"

"This Lin Huang seems to have concealed his flaws quite well..."

A thought flashed by Fang Yuan's mind as he saw this scene. "This martial art seems to be of higher level than what was displayed before... Being ruthless and evil, and only one step away from Shock Door, what a character. In due time, it is not impossible that he could become extraordinary, unfortunately..."

Regardless of right or wrong, he could not possibly just offer up his head to someone who wanted to 'kill all with no exceptions'.

There was also Yu Qiuleng.

"Initially I was thinking of finding an opportunity to teach you all a lesson, but judging from the situation, if this drags on, this person might just die from his injuries... Save me some trouble, may peace be with you!"

Even up till then, Fang Yuan still had the mood to think of irrelevant things. He took a big step forward, pushed both his hands out, and the few Five Ghosts Sect disciples who were charging towards him flew backwards.

"Eh?"

Lin Huang seemed a bit taken aback. "An inner force expert? You aren't from Spirit Returning Sect?"

"Hmm... Not really, but it seems like you still won't let me go!"

Fang Yuan shrugged his shoulders. "Where is Elder Han?"

"Obviously that Old Hag Han is under the control of our sect's experts, no need to count on him to save you all!"

Lin Huang looked at Fang Yuan's young face signifying his tender age, and felt a wave of anger surge through his chest. He licked his lips and said, "With your talent, you have definitely surpassed Lin Leiyue.

I didn't expect Qinghe County to harbour such a young talent! What a pity that you can't live past today...".

"Oh really? Unfortunately, I am always one to disappoint!"

When Fang Yuan heard that, he tried his best to stifle his laughter.

Leiyue looked at these two about to battle, her fists tightly clenched, and her eyes filled with worry.

"Fang Yuan may be an expert in inner power martial arts, but he just advanced to his current level. Lin Huang is far more experienced than him, not to mention that he has Five Ghosts Sect's support when it comes to divine power and techniques. Fang Yuan is but a mere commoner, so what good techniques could he have? Even Elder Yu lost! There really isn't much hope..."

She clearly knew that even if there was Lin Huang as the only opponent, based on the huge difference in their powers of Inner Force and Power, he could defeat all of them one by one. Thus, escaping was definitely not an option.

A group attack? There were far more Five Ghosts Sect's disciples on the other side than there are us, with even bigger weapons like bows and arrows!

Thus, their only hope would be Lin Huang being defeated and captured during a solo fight.

It's just... Was that even possible?

Lin Leiyue looked at Fang Yuan's back silhouette, her heart filled with mixed feelings and emotions, with a tinge of anticipation that couldn't be explained.

"Young Master, just kill them on the spot. Is there really a need for you to be directly involved?"

A man dressed in black beside Lin Huang waved his hand, and more than ten Five Ghosts Sect disciples appeared with bows and arrows. A sense of danger washed through Lin Leiyue's heart.

"That would be unnecessary, this is our fight, no one is to interfere!"

Lin Huang shook his head, as he looked at Fang Yuan with a glimmer in his eyes.

This was not his arrogance talking. It was apparent that when martial arts were being competed with inner force, even if they were unable to handle the archers, they could still retreat back into the woods. They could use both offensive and defensive strategies. If they started fighting like guerrillas, they might even be able to kill a few of them, and that would be rather troublesome.

Especially if all the arrows were fired at the same time and all the low-level disciples were killed, the opponent would have less to worry about and could escape immediately, sabotaging the mission.

The only chance would be using Lin Leiyue's disciples as bait, forcing Fang Yuan to engage in a battle with him.

Lin Huang had confidence in his own skills, even Yu Qiuleng lost to him in combat, how much threat would a 6th Gate martial artist, that had only recently advanced, be?

"Alright, you may begin!"

Fang Yuan stood in the arena, his spiritual energy however was continuously focused on his surroundings.

By now, the yin poison had already entered Yu Qiuleng's bones, and he had reached the point of no return. He waved his hand, inviting Lin Huang to make the first move.

"You should know that I'm one to bear grudges!"

Initially Lin Huang was not keen on talking, and wanted to change the topic of conversation to stall for time. All it took was one look for him to know that even the gods were unable to save Yu Qiuleng now.

Fang Yuan was far from ready to let this incident go, considering how Lin Huang just had ill intentions towards them.

But right now, his actions and appearance indicated that he did not consider Lin Huang as a threat at all!

This blatant act of 'disregarding' immediately angered Lin Huang.

Considering himself as the best, this behavior was completely unacceptable.

"You're dead meat!"

Protruding veins appeared on Lin Huang's forehead, even his usually pale skin reddened due to his anger. He floated forward like a ghost and thundered, "Five Yin Hand!"

"Swoosh!"

Fang Yuan glanced at him from aside, and flicked his right hand.

"Swoosh!"

Amidst the flow of air and friction, the cry of a hunting eagle was heard.

Lin Leiyue closed her eyes, it was as if she saw a handsome spiritual bird, with both wings extended, gliding down gracefully with its sharp claws out!

An Eagle Claw executed with both its shape and spirit!

Compared to this Eagle Claw, Yu Qiuleng's version was just child's play!

"Crack!"

A loud bone-breaking sound was heard.

With a loud cry, Fang Yuan held onto Lin Huang's right arm and twisted it into an unnatural position, and he promptly fell to the ground and passed out immediately.

Defeated in just one move!

Master Lin Huang, the treasured disciple of Five Ghosts Sect's master, an expert in Inner Power, the champion of Lieyang County's teenage martial artists, defeated in just one move?

With such a stark difference between the two battles, both the Spirit Returning Sect and the disciples of Five Ghosts Sect were lost for words, left in disbelief.

"Fang Yuan... became this powerful?"

Lin Leiyue let out a sigh, and she felt as though the shadow he left in her heart had enlarged yet again. It was as if there was a huge storm cloud weighing her down, and it kept growing.

"Young Master... lost?!"

"Quick! Save Young Master!"

All the Five Ghosts Sect disciples were at a loss.

Seizing the opportunity, Fang Yuan lunged at the archers. Like a tiger leaping into a herd of sheep, with a few casual swings of his hand, the archers flew out one by one, and passed out on the floor.

"Nice!"

As much as there was bitterness in her heart, Leiyue was elated by watching how the tables had turned. "Catch them all, especially that young master!"

"This isn't good, Young Master... Elder Yu... is dead!"

A Spirit Returning Sect disciple was about to help Yu Qiuleng up, however upon seeing his complexion and checking his breath, the disciple's expression changed drastically and he started screaming maniacally.

"What?"

Lin Leiyue's body stumbled backwards.

This ambush cost them an elder, so even if they did catch Lin Huang, it was very probable that they would be punished when they got back.

However, it was right then that something unexpected happened!

Amongst the Five Ghosts Sect disciples, a dark shadow lunged out at lightning speed towards Fang Yuan. With a wave of his hand, several Frozen Stars appeared instantaneously.

"Zip!"

The concealed weapons broke through the air, and there was a huge amount of power focused onto the concealed weapons. It was obvious that an inner force expert had launched it.

There was another elder hiding among the Five Ghosts Sect disciples!

Facing this kind of situations, even if the Spirit Returning Sect elders were to come forward, as long as it was not Elder Yan, Elder Han or Shi Yutong, that person was bound to lose.

It was just bad luck for the other party to go against Fang Yuan!

Fang Yuan's magical energy had already reached level 3', and with enough attentiveness, no one nearby would be able to conceal their actions from him!

"Haha... I've been waiting for you for a long time!"

With a loud laugh and no time to spare, he folded up his sleeves and caught the concealed weapons and tossed them out fiercely.

This might sound simple, but without precise control of the body's inner force, it would be nearly impossible to execute that move.

The Five Ghosts Sect elder who appeared was obviously a lot better than Lin Huang.

"You should be lying on the ground too!"

Fang Yuan however was indifferent. After taking away the concealed weapons, he lunged at the black shadow with a claw.

Grade 7 Eagle Claw Iron Skin Technique, with Black Sand Palm!

"Bam!"

The surrounding trees were shaking, countless leaves and branches came showering down.

A gush of blood spurted out, but it was not from Fang Yuan, but from the body of the Five Ghosts Sect elder who suddenly appeared!

"You... broke through the Shock Door, and are at the peak of the 7th Gate!"

With a trembling voice, he exclaimed. The dark shadow fell to the ground, exposing an elderly face, with blood flowing out of his nostrils and mouth.

"What? The 7th Gate?"

Lin Leiyue covered her lips, all thoughts of her fighting for power with Fang Yuan instantly flew out of the window.

After all, the Shock Door could only be attempted when the martial artist's magical energy had peaked, there were no shortcuts for it.

Even the most talented martial artists had to train for a few years, maybe even more than a decade! It was not rare to see people training their whole lives, but still unable to break through the gate.

But Fang Yuan broke through it in such a short period of time?

By now he had not even reached his 20s. With such talent, he could really be considered a demon!

[Carefree Path of Dreams](#)

Chapter 59: Gui Wusheng

Silence!

The silence was deafening!

Not a single person made a sound. It was as if they were choked by a noose.

What happened just now?

The rising star of the Five Ghosts Sect, Lin Huang, a Martial Artist (Grade 6), was struck by Fang Yuan's Eagle Claw. It was uncertain if he lived.

An elder of the Sect, who was more highly-skilled, was similarly struck down like a fly.

"Could it be that he is the old monster in disguise?"

Even Lin Leiyue was shocked and looked at Fang Yuan differently.

"Yin Wujiu?!"

She stepped forward and exclaimed again.

"Yin Wujiu? Who is that?"

Fang Yuan asked.

Lin Leiyue looked on in horror, "He is an elder of the Five Ghosts Sect and was fellow disciples with Gui Wusheng. He had long surpassed the 7 gates but was unable to break through the Death Gate. He is extremely cruel and legend has it that he single-handedly kill all his enemies, leaving no one behind..."

"Given his character and martial arts skill, I am afraid he would never be able to break through the Death Gate. It would be the correct decision not to attempt it..."

Fang Yuan shook his head.

The Death Gate was the last of the Three Perilous Gates. Failure to break through the gate would result in death! There was no doubt that most highly-skilled practitioners were stuck at this gate.

After all, who would dare to gamble their life?

"Gui Wusheng... This name sounds familiar..."

Fang Yuan furrowed his brows.

"Gui Wusheng is even more skilled than his junior. He was a martial artist that had broken through the Death Gate. He is the leader of the group of Five Ghosts Sect's martial artists in Qingye City and ranked top 5 in the Five Ghosts Sect!"

Lin Leiyue wanted to roll her eyes. She explained.

"This man's Ghostly Dark Claw is very powerful!"

Upon hearing this, Fang Yuan remembered that the elder of the Spirit Returning Sect that he had treated was wounded by Gui Wusheng.

"Luckily, it is not Gui Wusheng leading the troops, if not..."

Lin Leiyue shooked her head.

"Haha...cough cough..."

At this time, Yin Wujiu, who was collapsed on the floor, laughed and spat out a mouthful of fresh blood, "My senior...would not forgive you!"

"Cut the crap!"

Fang Yuan use his left hand and pressed against the old man's skull, "Where is the Yin Yang Jade? What is the Five Ghosts Sect up to?"

"Crack!"

Yin Wujiu lost his courage as he felt the Eagle Claw's strength increasing.

While Fang Yuan was a free-lance martial artist who did not belong to a particular sect, he was still rather carefree and cavalier. Furthermore, given his age, the typical hot-hotheadedness of a young man like him meant that he could kill Yin Wujiu if he were provoked into a fit of rage. Even if people attempted to avenge him, it would not bring Yin Wujiu back to life.

"This matter had always been anchored by my senior. I am not too sure..."

Yun Yujie laughed bitterly, "All I know is that the Yin Yang Jade does exist...furthermore..."

"Enough!"

A loud explosion echoed in the valley.

"Hmmm?"

Fang Yuan lifted his head, "A highly-skilled opponent?!"

A man's shadow appeared in the ravine.

His beard was white and his eyes were like that of a hawk's. As he walked, the surrounding fog warped around him.

"Gui...Gui Wusheng!"

Lin Leiyue's face turned deathly pale.

The martial arts techniques of the Five Ghosts Sect were mostly Yin in nature. Long-term practitioners often suffered negative side effects to their appearances, causing some to look like to zombies.

However, looking at Gui Wusheng's robust features, it was obvious that he had overcome the restraints and reverted those negative side effects.

"He had definitely broken through the Death Gate and is only one step away from the 4 Heavenly Gates!"

The immense pressure caused Lin Leiyue to retreat. She looked at Fang Yuan's unyielding posture and feared for him.

"Senior?!"

Yin Wujiu's voice was fearful instead of grateful when he saw Gui Wuzheng.

"Hmmm!"

Gui Wusheng exclaimed, "Useless fellow! If I had not come forward, would you even betray our master?"

"Cough cough..."

Fang Yuan coughed, "Are the two of you done?"

"Unbelievable...It is truly unbelievable..."

Gui Wusheng examined Fang Yuan and said, "To think that a young lad of your calibre is here in my valley! It looked like I did not make a wasted trip here!"

"You overestimate me!"

Fang Yuan concentrated and realized the gap in power between Gui Wusheng and him.

While the Death Gate might appear to be insurmountable, it was still possible to break through it.

Furthermore, his stats were increasing at a rate that Gui Wusheng could not match due to his consumption of spiritual rice every day.

He also had a few tricks up his sleeves. As such, he did not fear Gui Wusheng.

Gui Wusheng was even more intrigued when he saw how composed Fang Yuan was. He exclaimed, "Good! You are able to keep your composure in front of me. That is hard to find. Which sect are you from? If you are not from any sect, why not join the Five Ghosts Sect? I can guarantee that you would be treated similarly to me!"

He was experienced and recognized that Fang Yuan did not belong to any sect.

Lin Leiyue's heart fell when she heard what Gui Wusheng said.

"Enter the Five Ghosts Sect?"

Fang Yuan appeared to seriously consider the offer before shaking his head, "Sorry, I am not interested. It would be kind of you if you would tell me the location of the Yin Yang Jade. I would be so grateful..."

"Sigh... What a shame!"

Gui Wusheng sighed with his hands placed behind his back.

"Oh? Why is that so?"

Having undergone 10-odd years of being nurtured by Master Wenxin, Fang Yuan had long treated him as a teacher and a father. There was no way Fang Yuan would destroy that relationship by joining another sect.

"It is a shame that you have to die today even though you are young and talented!"

Gui Wusheng's face was sinister, "Die!"

"Boom!"

His words overflowed with power. It was as if there was the clap of thunder directly beside his opponent's ears.

Lin Leiyue paled. Fresh blood trickled from her ears.

"What a technique! If Fang Yuan was complacent, he would not live!"

Lin Leiyue immediately turned her attention to the scene as soon as she regained her senses. What she saw surprised her.

It was impossible to follow the fight with the naked eye. All she could see were flashes of two shadows fighting each other.

"The Eagle Claw Iron Skin Technique?"

Gui Wusheng gazed at Fang Yuan's torn sleeves and cuts on the arms, his face turned dark.

The technique Gui Wusheng had just used was capable of disabling a Martial Artist (7th Gate) momentarily and could ensure a swift victory by following up with a decisive strike. It was not easy even for a Martial Artist (7th Gate) to counter it. Gui Wusheng had once used this tactic to kill a Martial Artist (7th Gate).

He was therefore shocked when he saw that Fang Yuan was unaffected by the technique and even engaged him in battle immediately. Furthermore, Fang Yuan's Iron Skin Technique was perfect. There was no way Gui Wusheng could kill him in a single strike.

"Not bad! This is indeed the Iron Skin!"

Fang Yuan let out a deep breath. He looked at his surroundings and realized that the disciples of the Spirit Returning Sect and the Five Ghosts Sect had not recovered.

Gui Wusheng's technique was a psychological attack which tested one's magical energy!

Fang Yuan was not afraid of any martial artist in this aspect. His vigorous magical energy allowed him to instantly recover from Gui Wusheng's technique.

He would have been able to put Gui Wusheng at a severe disadvantage if he had learnt the methods to counter the attack on magical energy.

As it was, Gui Wusheng was shocked.

He looked at Fang Yuan's youthful face and could only think of 1 word: Monster. It would be best to get rid of those talented enemies as soon as possible.

Gui Wusheng did not hesitate any longer. In a flash, he created multiple shadow clones and rushed forward. Throwing his palms outwards, he conjured a whole sky full of black blood-thirsty bats.

"18 Black Bats Palm!"

Yin Wujiu let out a surprised gasp as he recognized that this was Gui Wusheng's trump card. He could not believe it.

He would never imagine that his senior, who had broken through 8 Gates, would use such a technique and all his energy against the youth facing him.

"Good move!"

Fang Yuan shouted. His Iron Skin technique formed an armour-like protection beneath his skin and acted as another layer of protection.

His arms had turned black with the sheen of metal. His palms started to emit the poison of the Pearl Tail Snake!

"Gui Wusheng had forced him to give his all with his relentless attacks!"

"Eagle Air Strike!"

"Whoosh!"

Lin Leiyue stumbled back a few steps amidst the strong gust. She was already in a daze.

From her perspective, she saw a majestic eagle charging straight into the wall of ravenous bats and took them head-on.

This level of battle had greatly outstripped her capabilities as well as that of the disciples in the Spirit Returning Sect.

Even those highly-skilled martial artists from the Five Ghosts Sect could be killed by the ghost bats if they were to enter the battle.

As such, all they could do was to watch the two high-leveled martial artists battle as they moved deeper into the dense forest.

"What should we do....without the head of the sect?"

A disciple of the Spirit Returning Sect asked as he looked at the wake of destruction caused by Fang Yuan and Gui Wusheng.

"We..."

Lin Leiyue looked on.

At the moment, Lin Huang was unconscious. With Yin Wujiu heavily wounded, the Five Ghosts Sect no longer had any skilled masters. The sect's power and influence were greatly diminished.

Her side was the same with Yu Qiuleng gravely wounded.

She secretly rejoiced that she brought Fang Yuan along which had prevented the downfall of her fellow disciples in the sect.

"We..."

Lin Leiyue walked away before suddenly turning around and drawing her sword, "Kill!"

"Swoosh!"

A disciple of the Five Ghosts Sect who did not manage to dodge in time had his throat slit open and he toppled over.

"If we are leaving, we might as well kill Lin Huang and Yin Wujiu!"

The remaining disciples of the Spirit Returning Sect and the Five Ghosts Sect plunged into battle following Lin Leiyue's outcry...

Carefree Path of Dreams

Chapter 60: Winning

A few screams were heard along the main road.

"Aahh, my face. Don't hit my face! Aahh!!"

"Stop hitting, I will give you all the money!"

"You are a good man so please spare me! Spare me please!"

.....

These few rookies who had just integrated into the world of martial arts were bruised badly. The few of them handed over everything that they had.

"Isn't this better now? This whole area belongs to me...."

Wang Fugui happily showed his superiority and punched the young martial artist who talked back to him previously. He then took a gold and silver-thread pouch from him and stopped as he was satisfied with what he had gotten. He then said, "You all are considered lucky today. If you all were at my Bull's Head Mountain, you few weaklings would have lost a few of your own....Now get out of here!"

He lifted his leg and kicked an unlucky one who fled the slowest. That unlucky one rolled and crawled and was wishing so badly that he should have been born without his legs.

"Tut Tut...."

After they fled, Wang Fugui counted how much he had gotten and was satisfied. "There are so many easy targets right here....Plus, many of them are rich. Unfortunately, I can't relocate my home to this place...."

"Hehe! I can buy myself a few drinks at the brothel again today!"

Wang Fugui played with the coin pouch and wondered, "Not really sure where Brother Fang Yuan is now...."

However, when he was on his way back home, he saw a group of martial artists running towards him angrily. The ones leading the group were the few young ones he bullied just now.

"That's him, the tanned one. Don't let him escape!"

The few bruised young ones looked at him and their eyes were filled with anger.

"Woah, time to run!"

Wang Fugui immediately ran in the opposite direction and retreated into a nearby jungle under the hot pursuit of the group of martial artists.

Even though their lightness skill were not that great, they were all trained in martial arts and had a great amount of physical strength. Hence, it didn't take a long time for them to catch up in the jungle.

"F*ck!"

Wang Fugui cursed while he escaped frantically. "If I was near the Bull's Head Mountain now, they would have lost me....and I could even request a group of men to help me. This place here is so deserted and it is difficult to even find one who can lend a helping hand right now.... Damn....."

He cursed halfway and stopped suddenly with his eyes wide open.

Two people appeared right in front of him with a speed that was not easily distinguished by a naked eye. The two swiftly cleared the nearby trees to make a pathway.

"This is not good!"

Looking at how powerful those two were, Wang Fugui gave a weird cry and rolled clumsily out of the way.

"Kill him!"

"Don't let that evil thief get away!"

While Wang Fugui managed to dodge out of the way, the group who were chasing him ran straight into the danger he dodged to avoid.

"Whiz! Whiz!"

Silhouette sped past with immense forces!

A few screams were then heard. Many of the martial artists were sent flying about as they spat out blood from their pale faces.

"Aahh.... Old Zhong is seriously injured!"

"Even a [Martial Artist (6th Gate)] with inner power is also badly injured...."

"Please spare us! Please spare us!"

"Don't come any further.....Aahh...."

....

No matter how much they pleaded for mercy, the silhouettes ruthlessly ignored their desperate pleas and finished them off gruesomely.

Their deaths were considered to be of slightly useful as it slowed down the two silhouettes. One of them was a white-haired old man who was exhausted. He stepped on one of the heads of the dead martial

artists and propelled himself off the ground. The force from this pushed the head down into the chest of the dead body.

"Gui Wusheng.....don't you dare to escape!"

Then came the voice of a young man. A pair of arms reached out ferociously for the figure in front. It seemed as if though the pursuer was very determined to rip the person in front to shreds.

"This figure.....this voice....Why do both features seem so similar to Brother Fang Yuan's?"

Wang Fugui spat out the grass that went into his mouth and stared on in awe.

At that moment, one of the survivors from behind exclaimed.

"Hold on a second! Gui Wusheng! Could he be that famous elder from the Five Ghosts Sect and who was an expert in Death Gate?!"

"Look at how murderous he is, who else could it be other than him? He looks like he has broken through the 4 Heavenly Gates....."

"But it looked like he was at a disadvantage.....my goodness. I wonder who was the one that was chasing him?"

A few of the young martial artists lost their limbs while some of them were still spitting out blood and in shock. A strong man carrying an axe came to them and mocked them. "I know the person who was chasing the old man. However, you all don't have to know as you all are going to be dead soon....."

.....

"Black Sand Eagle Claw Palm!"

"Ghostly Dark Claw!"

In the mountains, the scenery objects on both sides were destroyed.

Fang Yuan's eyes focused and he fluttered forward suddenly. Once again, he duelled with Gui Wusheng.

"Bang!"

It was incredibly powerful but it was not as destructive as before.

Both of them were now near their limits.

However, in actual fact, the opponent was an expert and he deliberately caused Fang Yuan to overexert much of his inner strength.

Just that every time this happened, Fang Yuan would swallow down a bamboo fruit quickly. His essence, spirit and magic would then recover immediately.

The spiritual bamboo fruit not only helped in the growth of spiritual beasts, it also helped in recovering one's essence, spirit and magic. This was one of the backup moves Fang Yuan prepared this time.

"This again!"

Gui Wusheng was extremely depressed to see his inner strength being exhausted and while Fang Yuan was recovering so quickly.

From the start, he was suppressing the cunning Fang Yuan. However, Fang Yuan was well trained in martial arts and was difficult to deal with. Fang Yuan also had the spiritual medicine which allowed him to recover quickly. Hence the fight dragged on and on for nearly 3 days!

Even though Gui Wusheng brought some pills as well, how could those pills be compared to the phoenix's bamboo fruit? The bamboo fruit was definitely way more superior.

In the beginning, it was Fang Yuan who was escaping from Gui Wusheng. Now, it was the other way round.

Also, if Fang Yuan managed to catch up this time, Gui Wusheng would be dead!

"What a cunning lad indeed. From the start, he pretended that he was not my enemy and led me into the mountains to prevent me from calling for help.....Luckily there are signs of human habitation here, which suggest that the city should be nearby..."

Even so, Gui Wusheng had to admit that he started to become fearful of Fang Yuan during the fight.

Fang Yuan couldn't be defeated easily and could recover so quickly. If he was not a monster then what was he?

Even if Gui Wusheng managed to escape today, it would be hard to say whether he would even want to take revenge on Fang Yuan in the future.

"Now!"

Fang Yuan's eyes focused.

His abundant magical energy allowed him to feel a drop in Gui Wusheng's vitality.

It was similar to a string breaking when stretched past its limit.

At that moment, Gui Wusheng was reaching near his limit. However he still had a glimpse of hope, but it was this hopeful thought that brought about his downfall.

"Die!"

Fang Yuan did not hesitate and shouted.

"Die!!!"

His voice was so loud like thunder and it almost deafened Gui Wusheng's ears.

"Aahh.....my Paralysing Scream!"

Gui Wusheng was shocked and couldn't avoid what was going to happen.

"Eagle Claw Palm!"

At that moment, Fang Yuan immediately caught up with him and took a shot. Fang Yuan broke all his limbs!

"Snap!"

Gui Wusheng fell to the ground softly and was in shock.

"Haha.....I've finally won!"

With his wisdom in martial arts, he actually managed to defeat an expert in Death Gate. Fang Yuan was very impressed with himself and was at a loss for words. He couldn't wait to cry into the air and rejoice.

"How is this possible....how could you have known my secret technique?"

When he was conscious again, this was the first sentence he said.

"Your secret technique.....involves the display of your magical energy isn't it? It wasn't that difficult, was it?"

Fang Yuan went forward and punched his lower abdomen. Fang Yuan then gave him a few slaps, causing Gui Wusheng to be injured badly in the face. The force of these blows knocked out some of his teeth into a bloody mess.

There was no other way. In his dream world, things like 'tearing tendons', 'committing suicide', 'poison in one's mouth' and many more left deep impressions on Fang Yuan.

Now, Gui Wusheng's limbs were broken, his martial arts abilities stripped off and his teeth knocked out. If he could still commit suicide in this short period of time, Fang Yuan would really be impressed by him.

"Oh....I.....understand now. You.....are naturally born with stronger magical energy...."

Gui Wusheng couldn't speak properly but he managed to express what he meant clearly. "This is heaven's will! Heaven's will!"

"Whatever you say!"

Fang Yuan then impolitely searched Gui Wusheng's body for something of value to keep.

There were many bottles and cans on his body and most of them contained things like poisonous powder, medicine, flammable items and coins.

Fang Yuan smelled a few medicine bottles and threw them away.

Gui Wusheng didn't even poison him. Plus, Fang Yuan was highly skilled in medicine and had Yama's Order with him to remove any kind of poison. Hence, the poison made by Gui Wusheng was nothing in his eyes.

However, Fang Yuan's eyes glittered when he opened a wooden box.

Inside the box was a piece of jade. The piece of jade was clear and shiny. There were faint black and red textures inside it and the textures seemed to be moving, making it special.

"Is this the Yin Yang Jade?!"

Fang Yuan murmured and couldn't believe his eyes. How could he be able to get hold of such treasure in a farce?

Clearly, he wasn't prepared to receive anything good, was it? This was simply like a gift straight from heaven and coincidentally, it landed on him.

"Something is not right. What is actually going on?"

Fang Yuan, of course, couldn't believe that he would be so lucky. He immediately grabbed Gui Wusheng by his collar and questioned him.

"Haha.....you really think I will tell you?"

Life was slowly fading from Gui Wusheng's eyes.

Fang Yuan kept silent for a while and slowly said, "You may not know yet that I am Fang Yuan and I live in the secluded valley!"

Gui Wusheng's expression changed upon hearing what Fang Yuan said.

No matter how ignorant he was, he heard about the famous doctor in Qingye City.

"As a doctor myself, I have many ways to make people speak. I do not wish to test these methods one by one on you....Plus, you do have relatives, friends and disciples don't you?"

Fang Yuan said in a deep voice.

"You....are a member of the martial arts world and how could you go against the principle of not hurting one's family....."

Gui Wusheng struggled and said.

"Who told you that I was a member of the martial arts world?"

Fang Yuan glanced at him and gave a jocular look.

Gui Wusheng remained silent and Fang Yuan saw through him. Gui Wusheng was pretending to be sanctimonious but he was actually indifferent from any other people. He could do anything if he forced himself to do so.

After a long period of silence, he finally admitted defeat. "This Yin Yang Jade was actually a treasure of the Five Ghosts Sect...."