

Carefree 61

Carefree Path of Dreams

Chapter 61: Emerge

“This Yin Yang Jade came from the Five Ghosts Sect?”

Fang Yuan was shocked. “Is the news about the treasure fake too? Just to create chaos?”

“That’s right!”

Gui Wusheng nodded and appeared lost.

“To create confusion, you guys can even use the Yin Yang Jade as bait...”

Fang Yuan took in a deep breath.

To hide from the many martial artists, sacrifice would be required, and this was the sole purpose of the Yin Yang Jade.

With a [Martial Artist (8th Gate)] and a well thought-out plan, the Yin Yang Jade was safe. Unfortunately, they encountered Fang Yuan.....

“Good! However, the focus is not on the Yin Yang Jade...”

Fang Yuan threw the jade up in the air and became serious. “That what is your real motive?”

“Our real motive...”

Gui Wusheng became expressionless but slowly began to describe. “It is a treasure map! Or should I say, an incomplete scrap... Our Sect once received a copy, but it was lost. This is the second copy!”

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Luori City.

This city was at the extreme North of Lieyang County, and even further North of Shaoyang City. There was a ridge of mountains outside the city, called Xuanyan. Legend has it that there was fire everywhere and was extremely dangerous.

It was noon, and farmers were ploughing on their farms, businessman working in their shops. Often kids could be seen playing by the river, and it was a lively sight to behold.

“Hu...”

Just before the gates to the city were closed, a person in a cloak hurriedly rushed to enter Luori City.

“This place... Is indeed different from Shaoyang City!”

This cloaked person was Fang Yuan.

After Gui Wusheng’s tip-off, he hurriedly killed him and rushed to Luori City.

Compared to Shaoyang City, which was filled with martial artists, Luori City was more lively. The villagers were carefree, and no one would have thought that under this peace was a big mystery.

'Even if I said it out, no one would believe that most of the Sect masters of Five Ghosts Sect actually live here...'

Even though it was quieter than Shaoyang City, Fang Yuan could feel an immense pressure as he entered Luori City.

This wasn't a real feeling, but more of his imagination. It made him realise that this place was ten times more dangerous than Shaoyang City! A hundred times!

"I still cannot fight and win any Martial artist of 4 Heavenly Gates..."

Fang Yuan knew his own capabilities. He could easily defeat any [Martial Artist (7th Gate)], or be on par with a [Martial Artist (8th Gate)].

If he made use of his external martial arts techniques, he might get a chance at winning. However, against the martial artists of 4 Heavenly Gates who trained and fused their Yin and Yang, he would stand no chance.

Furthermore, the Sect Leader of Five Ghosts Sect was similar to Shi Yutong and had already attained Wu Zong!

"At the moment, I can only hope for an internal conflict for myself to reap the benefits afterwards... Hopefully, the news that I let out would be useful!"

In such a dangerous position, he could only keep reminding himself not to be too stubborn.

If he succeeded, that would be best, but if he did not, it was still alright, as staying alive was the most important.

Even if he did not get anything, in the end, he still would have the Yin Yang Jade as a consolation prize.

"I am about to break through the Death Gate, and by then the Yin Yang Jade would be useful in aiding me in my journey to become a martial artist of 4 Heavenly Gates!"

Fang Yuan thought for a while, walked along the streets and entered a hostel.

"It seems that Spirit Returning Sect is not foolish. Elder Han was lured to Shaoyang City, Shi Yutong couldn't locate him... If they received my anonymous letter they would surely come and fight over it... I shall be the coward to watch the fight by the side!"

After deciding, he booked a small room. Every day, it seemed that he was quietly practising his martial arts, but in actual fact, he was observing the movement within Luori City.

After all, he had already decided not to appear. If there was no response from the Spirit Returning Sect, or if the news came late, then he could only accept it.

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"The Five Ghosts Sect Sect Master being sceptical, did not really describe the real treasure map to Gui Wusheng. He only instructed him to spread the fake news. Only a few martial artists of 4 Heavenly Gates know the truth..."

Fang Yuan was practising his martial arts peacefully in the small room. White smoke rose from his head like fog, and it appeared like clouds were forming.

"[Eagle Claw Iron Skin Technique (Grade 7)] progress is filled, and now I just need to find an opportunity to break through the Death Gate..."

Breaking through the 8th Gate was extremely decisive. If breaking through failed, he would die, and there would be no second chance!

Although he was confident in his own foundation, Fang Yuan wanted to condition his body to the best it could be while breaking through.

"Rumble!"

His ears stood up as he heard the loud rumble.

"Hmm? They've started fighting already?"

Fang Yuan leapt over the wall and saw a bright crimson flash from within the city. Shoutings were heard and shadows flying around. He was happy to witness this scene.

With his abilities, it was impossible to stalk the Five Ghosts Sect and ambush them, but it would be a totally different story if the Spirit Returning Sect were to do it.

Without consideration, Fang Yuan jumped down and made his way towards the crimson flash.

"Ping! Ping!"

The nearer he approached, the louder the rumbling became, as though thunder roared ten times simultaneously.

A chaos of this scale would surely attract the attention of the soldiers and martial artists. However, no one dared to take another step towards them, and the whole mess was a good opportunity for Fang Yuan.

As he came closer, he realised that it wasn't a fight within the Five Ghosts Sect's compound, but in a rich businessman's manor.

At this moment, numerous shadows flew across the roof, and every action they took was full of strength.

"From the Spirit Returning Sect? All the way here?"

In the scene was a duo in black, surrounding an old lady clad in silver clothing.

Although these 3 people appeared lifeless, their moves were deadly and they appeared powerful. Even Fang Yuan himself was afraid to join the fight.

"Martial artists of the 4 Heavenly Gates!"

Fang Yuan hid to the side and stared at the old lady, shocked.

Even though all of them were martial artists of 4 Heavenly Gates, the old lady could sweep her crutch and pressure the other two. She was extremely strong.

“Cha!”

Out of a sudden, the old lady shrieked, and the lion head on her crutch pounced forward, breaking through the defence of one of the elders, as it touched his chest.

“Senior?”

The two elders retreated quickly, and the one which was touched by the old lady began to spit out blood.

“Good! Good! Good!”

The younger brother clenched his teeth, his eyes seeking revenge. “Elder Yan... Lady Yan! Today’s score will be settled, and we the Ghost Brothers will remember it for life!

Together with his brother, one was Yin and one was Yang, but against this Lady Yan, they realised that she already broke through 11 Gates, and have already fused her Yin and Yang to become an elemental energy martial artist!

At this stage, the only thing she needed to do was to train and get ready to break through Heaven Gate!

[Martial Artist (11th Gate)] are not to be belittled as they harnessed elemental force. It was therefore not so surprising to see her fend off two opponents by herself.

“Keke...”

Lady Yan kept her crutch, coughed a few times, hunched her back and lost all her craziness previously during the fight. “Cough... As I get older, my memory would fail me... Two of you, did you see me leave anything behind? Do a good deed and pass it to me, and I will offer tea, apologise and leave immediately, how does that sound?”

“What thing? We didn’t see anything!”

The Ghost Brothers appeared shocked and denied.

“Heh... I have not told you what is it, so why are you so quick to turn me down?”

Lady Yan shook her head, rolled her eyes and looked at the two of them. “What a pity, Yin Shizhong, Brother Yin is not here. He should have lured Elder Han away by now, right? Two of you cannot hold me back!

The Ghost Brothers looked aghast, but could not deny that she was stating the truth.

At this moment, Fang Yuan was hiding in the shadows. His hair stood on its ends as he became increasingly anxious. He took a deep breath and concealed himself even more.

“They cannot block you, but how about me?”

Behind Lady Yan was a fearless and cold-blooded voice. It was as though every word of his could freeze one’s blood.

While the voice was heard, Lady Yan immediately swung her crutch backwards with immense strength.

"Hong!"

The lion on the crutch opened its jaws and spewed crimson fire, accompanied with black smoke.

After striking, Lady Yan struck forward again, caught her footing and turned around.

Where she once stood was empty, and only the remnants of the raging fire were left behind, which stunned her.

"Very impressive, I've heard about stories of Lady Yan's 'Flaming Lion Crutch'. It was designed by Carpenter Lu, sturdy and able to spew poisonous fire from the top of the crutch. It is ranked 87th in the secluded mountains unique weapon ranking, and I've finally seen it for myself today..."

The voice came from behind Lady Yan. Although it sounded normal, it was a praise.

"Five... Ghosts... Sect... Master!"

Lady Yan turned pale and stuttered while saying out the name she feared most.

Only someone who had broken through the Heaven Gate attained Wu Zong and able to harness elemental force would be able to toy around with her!

"This is... Wu Zong?"

Fang Yuan shuddered and did not dare to look at the Five Ghosts Sect Master.

After all, based on rumours, the Wu Zong martial artist is extremely sensitive and would be able to sense when someone is looking at him. He then would feel the urge to kill those within 35 yards.

"Keke! Why would Sect Master find trouble with Lady Yan? If you have any vengeance, just deal with me!"

At this moment, accompanying bell ringing, Shi Yutong appeared and seemed welcoming. "I had a few suspicions when I heard about the news, but after seeing Sect Master here, I have no more doubts!"

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Chapter 62: A Mysterious Man

"Shi Yutong?"

Upon seeing a Wu Zong, like himself, appear, the sect head of the Five Ghosts Sect lost his interest in teasing and making fun of Lady Yan and stood still.

"Sect Head!"

Lady Yan immediately rushed to Shi Yutong.

Now that this respected woman was around, Lady Yan dared to look at the sect head of the Five Ghosts Sect.

The sect head of the Five Ghosts Sect had a small stature, almost like a dwarf. He wore an ice mask and rays of green light shone from his triangular eyes. This sight was sufficient to strike fear into anyone who looked at him.

"Someone leaked the news!"

At this moment, the sect head of the Five Ghosts Sect spoke in an icy tone.

If it was just Lady Yan who came, it would be easy to turn her away. Anyway, it could have been because they found some inconclusive traces of a horse.

However, now that Shi Yutong appeared personally, they must be very confident! Their determination seemed unflinching.

The loss of control in this situation unsettled the head of the Five Ghosts Sect.

The disciples of the Five Ghosts Sect glanced at each other and gathered behind their sect head. Both camps glared at each other as tensions soared. Anything could spark a war between the two groups.

Fang Yuan who heard the conversation from his hiding spot felt something was amiss.

According to his plan, the Spirit Returning Sect should have checked out and tested the situation and confirmed that everything was alright before attacking. This confrontation should not even be happening.

After all, the Five Ghosts Sect and the Spirit Returning Sect were equally powerful. Should they fight each other, both would suffer greatly.

Shi Yutong and the sect head of the Five Ghosts Sect were both smart people and they should have recognised this fact.

If this was so, what gave Shi Yutong the confidence to barge in like that?

Fang Yuan was unsure about this, but it did not seem to stop him from retreating.

At the same time, upon sensing the emerging tension and the incendiary desire for battle, the sect head of the Five Ghosts Sect smirked provokingly.

"Shi Yutong!"

The sect head of the Five Ghosts Sect spoke haltingly, "You seem intent on opposing everything I do. Is this your declaration of war against the Five Ghosts Sect?"

"Hehe...How would I dare? I am just here to ask you to return our item, that's all!"

Shi Yutong replied playfully in a tone which gave the impression that she was vivacious and quick-witted, which was typical of girls her age. The only problem was people who treated her like this sort of girl would definitely suffer a grotesque death.

"Snap!"

A flash of white light that seemed like lightning shot out of nowhere.

"It has begun...What exactly is the level of elemental force of a Wu Zong?"

In his retreat, Fang Yuan tried to get a glimpse of what was going on out of curiosity.

This scene was different from what he saw earlier between the martial artists at the Four Heavenly Gates. In this duel between the martial artists during elemental force, apart from the flash of light at the beginning, all was quiet.

"Is this...because both martial artists have perfected the art of using elemental force such that it does not manifest in other forms of energy, which explains why the effects are not visible to us?"

The powers of Shi Yutong and the sect head of the Five Ghosts Sect were so powerful they seemed godly. This scared Fang Yuan.

The strongest evidence of their powers was the sight of the martial artists who tried to creep forward to sabotage either of the duellists losing their power instantly, as though they were swallowed by a giant whirlpool.

"They moved!"

Of course, Fang Yuan was unable to catch sight of the two martial artists.

However, when he saw the disciples of the Five Ghosts Sect and Lady Yan use their Lightness Skill and sped for the city gates, he could not resist following them secretly.

"Eh? Is something wrong?"

At this moment, from all corners of Luori City, several silhouettes emerged and rushed off, using Lightness Skill, into the distance one after another. This startled Fang Yuan.

Despite knowing the two dueling were extremely powerful, as well as that the earlier unlucky few perished because they were too close to the duel, these people who still dared to follow them were definitely formidable martial artists themselves.

...

"Phew phew!"

Traveling at a blistering speed, they arrived at Xuanyan Mountain in no time.

This place was very different from Clear Spirit Mountain. Most of the knolls were bare, revealing the red boulders and soil of the mountain.

Even from the depressions of the mountain, one could feel the blistering heat emitted from there. It was obvious that inside the depression, there was a terrifying volcanic lava from the crater.

As for the natives living in the mountain and the martial artists, this Xuanyan Mountain was a place to avoid! If one were to fall into the crater, it did not matter how powerful the person was, one would completely dissolve into the lava.

"How dare you despicable and inferior people try to finish us off while we are fighting each other? You must have a death wish!!!"

All of a sudden, the Five Ghost Sect disciples and Lady Yan who were sprinting ahead halted, turned on their heels in mid-air and sped behind, all in sync with each other. One would not be able to tell that they were at each other's throats before this.

"As expected, the idea of watching the Spirit Returning Sect and Five Ghosts Sect destroy each other and picking up the scraps after that is not that realistic after all. They are already starting to clear the area..."

Fang Yuan silently tore off a piece of cloth from his robe and covered half his face.

At this moment, despite the intimidation by Lady Yan and the Five Ghost Sect disciples, there were still people chasing after the dueling pair. Those who still dared to do so were inner power experts who were at least at the 5th Gate and above.

Furthermore, the number of these people far surpassed what Fang Yuan expected.

"It seems like I am not the only intelligent person around!"

Upon seeing this, Fang Yuan immediately realised that of all these experts, a majority of them were not locals. Most of them moved in only recently, having the same intentions as him to strike when both sects were weak! What he did not know was how they got their information.

"Everyone attack together!"

A hideous voice rang out as a powerful force exploded, revealing a proud figure. This startled Lady Yan and the disciples of the Five Ghosts Sect and they exclaimed, "Dugu Hong?"

This man was a well-known martial artist who always trained on his own. He did not belong to any particular sect and roamed about freely. The reasons behind his sudden appearance were unclear.

"Since Brother Dugu made the request, we would definitely go along with you!"

Dugu Hong's order was answered by three martial artists at the same time as they leapt out. They were dressed like hunters, draping their backs with wolf-skin, and the wolf heads on their shoulders bore eyes that glistened.

"The Three Wild Wolf Brothers?"

The disciples of the Five Ghosts Sect became more troubled.

Although the three brothers were not on the same level as Dugu Hong, they were also formidable opponents who were experts at Yin energy. When the three of them combined their efforts, they could be equivalent to a martial artist at the peak of the 12th Gate.

"Haha...Lady Yan and disciples of the Five Ghost Sect, get out of the way if you do not wish to die!"

All these lone martial artists armed with extremely high levels of martial prowess who outnumbered Lady Yan and the disciples of the Five Ghost Sect charged forward.

"Kill!"

Lady Yan and the disciples of the Five Ghost Sect looked at each other, roared and stood their ground as they attempted to fight off the attackers.

"Bang bang!"

With the forces and energies from the various martial artists clashing with each other, a messy and ferocious war erupted instantly!

"All these martial artists are not familiar with each other and thus do not trust each other yet. As they fight they are constantly watching their own backs..."

Fang Yuan had no intention of joining in the fight and tried to swiftly skirt around the melee.

With Lady Yan and the disciples of the Five Ghost Sect fighting for their lives, and the martial artists on the other side refraining from over-exerting, the fight would definitely last a long time.

Of course, this would be exactly what Lady Yan and the disciples of the Five Ghost Sect wanted to achieve.

Instead of joining in the fight, why not take advantage of this chance to skirt around them and move to the front.

"Die!"

Just when Fang Yuan thought of this idea, he found out he was not the only who had the same thoughts.

Furthermore, the other person was his competitor in this situation.

Just as he moved around the fight and was preparing to move forward, a martial artist dressed in black crept up next to him and threw out successive punches with both fists.

Fang Yuan felt the force from the punches and then deduced that his competitor was also an expert at the 6th Gate at least.

Judging from the power of his opponent, his fists were no less lethal than a weapon. This caused Fang Yuan to remember a famous fighting technique.

"Wind and Thunder Palm? D*mn, rumour has it that this technique is immensely powerful. When it is executed by a martial artist at the 6th Gate, even a martial artist at the 7th Gate would be unable to meet this technique head on..."

As Fang Yuan thought to himself, he made use of the pitch darkness and sent his fist flying menacingly towards his opponent like a pestle.

"Snap!"

The force from Fang Yuan's fist contacted with that of his opponent's palm. At that moment, a hint of triumph crept into his opponent's eyes. But it changed also almost instantly into excruciating pain as the bones in his arm shattered. He was sent somersaulting backwards into the air, spilling blood as he went.

In just one move, this was even more powerful than a martial artist at the 7th Gate!

To describe the event in words did not do the sheer speed of it justice. In reality, everything seemed to happen in the blink of an eye.

After defeating his enemy in just one move, Fang Yuan did not turn back and skirted the main fighting area and headed deeper into the mountain.

Upon seeing this, Gudu Hong, the Wild Wolf Brothers and the rest were even more frustrated. Furthermore, Lady Yan and the Five Ghost Sect disciples were determined and desperate to prevent the other martial artists from chasing their dueling sect heads.

"To break through and arrive here...It must have been easy?"

As Fang Yuan sped along the mountain road, he visually surveyed his surroundings and realised the martial artists who were similarly able to break through or skirt past the fighting were like him. They were mostly between the 6th and 7th Gate and were not as recognised.

"Yeah... Lady Yan and the disciples of the Five Ghosts Sect found us too insignificant to hold us back. We are not as powerful and troublesome as Gudu Hong and the Wild Wolf Brothers. I never thought I would enjoy this 'privilege' of having inferior martial prowess..."

After turning around a peak, the company saw a huge volcanic crater.

Next to the crater, two people were exchanging blows at a speed so fast it looked blur to the naked eye. It was Shi Yutong duelling the head of the Five Ghosts Sect!

Seeing this, Fang Yuan felt confused and suspicious.

The precious treasure map had yet to appear, so why would these two respected and powerful martial artists expend all their energy fighting each other? Were they not afraid that the map might not even exist and thus create a lifelong enemy for themselves?

Or was it possible that both were extremely confident that they would completely defeat the other?

With this thought, Fang Yuan immediately stopped advancing. His goose bumps erected as he thought, "Oh no! There might be a trap!"

He immediately turned around and left without hesitation.

How could a broken piece from a treasure map be more valuable than my own life?

The risks at that point in time were far higher than what he had predicted and had already exceeded the profits he could hope to receive.

"Eh?"

Upon seeing how Fang Yuan decided to not pursue further, a few of his companions became suspicious too.

"I did not think that...there would be another enlightened person? What a pity..."

With a low noise coming from what looked like a common 5th Gate martial artist, the situation changed completely at that instant.

A layer of blood surfaced on his body. The martial artists around him were astonished. At that split second, his body disintegrated, and blood flowed out rapidly. The blood cluttered at his side and formed what seemed to look like several pythons writhing about.

"Blood Pythons...Attack!"

He pointed a few lucky survivors. The Blood Pythons immediately locked on their targets and charged. Fang Yuan was one of the targets.

"What an impressive technique! It's a spiritual knight!"

Seeing this startling and terrifying sight, one of the martial artists screamed aloud.

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Chapter 63: Reveal

"This is...."

Fang Yuan retreated but the Bloody Python was coming straight at him and an explosion was heard

"Bang!"

In this very short period of time, he could only execute the inner strength of the Iron Skin Technique to defend himself. A bright red light flashed across him.

"Piak!"

Fang Yuan's expression changed and could only feel intense pain on both of his hands. A powerful and corrosive energy broke through his defence and was spreading across his arms.

He was suffering till now as his inner strength of the [Eagle Claw Technique (Grade 7)] was deflected easily by that energy. This situation was similar to when a martial artist who was trained in inner power duelled with an expert in inner force.

"Puff!"

He rolled and landed on the ground. He was in shock and said, "Is this.....the elemental force? So the rumour of a well trained spiritual knight having the ability to leverage the power of nature is true!!"

"Eh?"

The explosion of the blood-coloured python caused the bodies of the martial artists who were defeated to disappear.

Fang Yuan survived as he managed to escape far away from the explosion. Plus, he was only badly injured, which meant he still had a chance of survival.

The mysterious man in black was surprised after seeing this. "You are lucky. Others who have tasted my bloody elemental force in normal circumstances would not have to think about surviving."

Looking at Fang Yuan who was unconscious, he moved 2 steps forward and a bloody bright light appeared on his right hand. It seemed that he wanted to end Fang Yuan's life.

"Ouch!!!"

At that moment, a shout was heard from the magma lake and it sounded urgent.

"Damn it! Can't even hold it longer, what a useless guy!"

The man in black changed his expression and abandoned Fang Yuan and galloped away.

"My Bloody Python will strike in all directions!"

The Bloody Python was executed along with a roar and it became more powerful and concentrated. It also gave out a noxious rotting smell.

"Spiritual knight?No! Another spiritual disciple that has not been promoted? So he is your backup?"

Shi Yutong said in a clear and loud voice which could be heard from far away.

'Shi Yutong was so capable that she could make the head of the Five Ghosts Sect use his backup move on her.....but his backup move is indeed incredible....."

There was a breeze and Fang Yuan who was 'badly injured' got up and frowned. He focused his inner forcefully on healing his injuries.

Previously, he was pretending to be unconscious actually. If the mysterious spiritual knight had decided to kill him, he would have fought for his life.

Luckily for him, Shi Yutong's skill was way superior and could manage to suppress the head of the Five Ghosts Sect and distract him, allowing Fang Yuan to escape and survive.

"But what about these injuries due to the elemental force....."

Fang Yuan was expressionless. He looked at his arm and frowned.

When he was attacked by the Bloody Python, his clothing on both of his arms was broken into pieces and this caused his exposed arm to be burnt. The wounds on his arm were so bad that he could see the bones of his arm.

Even his inner force couldn't help to heal his injuries fast enough and suppress it from spreading.

"This bloody elemental force acts like a poison? It is indeed powerful!"

He could feel intense pain and numbness from his injuries. Fang Yuan knew that if he still didn't receive any medical attention yet, his injuries would worsen and spread. By then, he would have to amputate both of his arms and his life would also be in danger!

"Since it is poison and the injuries are due to elemental force, normal pills shouldn't work....."

He frowned and took out two bamboo fruits with much difficulty. He swallowed them and thought about the Yama's Order he had with him. He then drank the whole bottle of Yama's Order as well.

"Hoo hoo!"

The bamboo fruit was indeed a powerful spiritual object. Once the fruit entered his stomach, Fang Yuan could feel a clear stream gurgling through his arms and his arms felt less painful.

"Luckily.....I have the bamboo fruit with me still. If not, with these injuries, I would really be in big trouble!"

Fang Yuan bandaged his wounds and lurked towards the magma lake to see what was going on.

"Whooo!"

The tremendous force from the one of the duelist's palm technique caused sound effects which sounded like the howling of the wind.

He could see the duel between Shi Yutong and head of the Five Ghosts Sect. Their moves were very fast and fluid. There were no explosions although there were loud noises created during the duel.

That mysterious disciple beside the both of them was circling 9 Bloody Pythons and murmuring incantations. This caused the Bloody Pythons to flank Shi Yutong constantly.

Shi Yutong was actually fearful of such spiritual attacks and it gave the head of the Five Ghosts Sect a chance for a breather when he was almost going to be defeated. Now, he had a chance to gain the upper hand.

As time passed, the three of them were fully focused on the fight and completely unaware of their surroundings.

"Haha....that is unfortunate!"

Fang Yuan felt regretful when he saw what happened.

Victory was about to land in on one of the party's hand. If he was an expert in 4 Heavenly Gates, he would be able to change the verdict of the duel.

However, he was just a [Martial Artist (7th Gate)] and he was injured. If he was to join in the battle now, he would definitely not survived through it.

"Patience! Patience!"

He advised himself silently and hid somewhere even deeper.

After all, he wasn't here to obtain something of value and since now he knew how powerful the spiritual knight was, it was not a good time for him to attack.

"Both Wu Zong and the spiritual knight are trained in elemental force. However, both would produce different effects....."

This battle was actually a good chance for him to learn and improve further.

"The spiritual knight is more focused on the conversion of his elemental force into spells.....On the other hand, Wu Zong also has elemental energy but one will use it to condition his or her body. Therefore, both have different uses!"

"However, according to what Shi Yutong said, the man in black has not been promoted to become a spiritual knight, but he is powerful enough to duel with Wu Zong....."

"However, Shi Yutong is highly skilled and was scheming. How could she land herself in such a disadvantageous situation?"

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Fang Yuan pondered over his thoughts and focused on hiding himself.

"I cannot give her any more chances as she is waiting for me to be lured out of the city and there will definitely be traps.....Blood Killer!!!"

The head of the Five Ghosts Sect shouted and his eyes were filled with anger. He seemed to have a secret technique and his energy surged. "Five Ghosts Soul Capturing Technique!"

He stretched his fingers and visible black smokes could be seen. It then became like a ferocious looking ghost which pounced forward.

"Wu! Wu!"

"Jie jie!"

"Hehe!"

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At that moment, there were many ghostly screams heard and 5 streaks of black smokes transformed into a giant ghostly claw. The claw fiercely clamped down like the Five Fingers Mountain.

"He released his elemental force to form that?"

Shi Yutong let out a surprised scream and she transformed into 9 silhouettes suddenly which darted off in all directions.

"Come down now!"

The head of the Five Ghosts Sect gave a ferocious look and pulled back both of his hands.

His Ghostly Claw tore through the silhouettes and left Shi Yutong in her original spot.

Shi Yutong's moves were impressive but the Ghostly Claw was much more superior!

"What are you waiting for?!"

After such a move, the sect head of the Five Ghosts Sect was already panting. He could not move to sustain his Ghostly Claw and could only shout in despair.

"Haha! Well done!"

Presented with this golden opportunity, the Blood Killer would not let it slip.

He used his Ghostly Claw to suppress Shi Yutong and the 9 Bloody Pythons were attacking her at the same time. "9 Bloody Pythons, you shall explode!!!!!!!!!!!"

"Hiss!"

As compared to how the Bloody Pythons attacked Fang Yuan previously, the Bloody Pythons revealed their tongues this time and made hissing sounds. Their scales were revealed clearly and they were indeed powerful.

Seeing that the Bloody Pythons were charging towards Shi Yutong, the head of the Five Ghosts Sect was elated.

"Whiz whiz!"

At that moment, there was a sudden change!

A few emerald flashes struck the pythons' heads.

"Puff! Puff!"

The heads of the pythons exploded one by one like explosives and blood splashed everywhere.

Suddenly, there was a sound of a flute coming from far and the notes from it were incredibly lively. Fang Yuan could feel the notes invigorating him as if he was in a different setting, filled with blooming flowers in spring.

"Sorry that I came late, please forgive me!"

From the sound of the flute, the head of the Five Ghosts Sect retreated and spat out a mouthful of blood. His Five Ghosts Soul Capturing Technique was then lifted.

A clear and spiritual female voice was heard along with the sound of the flute.

After the sound, a beam of emerald green light struck right beside the Blood Killer.

"Aahh...elemental blood defence!"

He shouted and a pool of blood appeared on his body. However, he couldn't avoid what was about to happen as the beam of the emerald green light struck through his body, leaving a bloody hole.

"A flute? A woman?!"

The Blood Killer covered his chest and seemed to have recalled something scary. He immediately escaped without hesitation!

Before he left, he gave a ferocious look and patted the head of the Five Ghosts Sect's back. He then placed a violet pill on the head of the Five Ghosts Sect's Yuzhen acupuncture point.

"Blood Killer....you?"

Seeing that his ally betrayed him, the head of the Five Ghosts Sect was in shock and wasn't ready to defend himself.

The pill that was placed by the Blood Killer was especially mysterious. The pill went through his skin and he could feel its effect instantly.

"Hoo! Hoo!"

The head of the Five Ghosts Sect kept panting and his face was blushing. Many of his veins started hideously to pop out like worms beneath his skin.

Suddenly, he shouted and pounced right at Shi Yutong like a crazy man.

The Blood Killer then managed to escape with this opportunity.

....

"Crazy Blood Pill?"

At that moment, a lady arrived at the scene. She was dressed in a green gown, wore a golden bangle on her head and had an emerald-coloured belt at her waist. She was beautiful.

Seeing that the head of the Five Ghosts Sect had become crazy, she joined in the battle. Both the lady and Shi Yutong managed to suppress him.

"Fortunately, you came just in time to help me. Otherwise, I would be in big trouble.....Why did you let the Blood Killer off?"

Shi Yutong asked.

The lady in green then answered with a laugh. "You overestimate me. Even though Blood Killer had not been promoted to become the spiritual knight, but right after he had seen my secret technique, he thought I was way more superior and thus he fled...."

Carefree Path of Dreams

Chapter 64: Resistance

"Seeing how things are, it seems that both Shi Yutong and the Five Ghosts Sect have their own ideas on how to defeat each other, and both had managed to get assistance..."

At the sound of the flute, the Blood Killer escaped and Fang Yuan managed to retreat as well.

"The only difference is that Shi Yutong's reinforcement came from outside the city, and only arrived after Lady Yan was discovered, and therefore Shi Yutong was forced to reveal herself to lure the head of Five Ghosts Sect out of the city...."

"Shi Yutong's skill was above that of the head of the Five Ghosts Sect, and her assistant could scare away the Blood Killer. She was totally in control of the situation, and they had no chance of retaliating!"

"Liyang County will be very different from this day onwards..."

Fang Yuan witnessed how the Blood Killer betrayed head of the Five Ghosts Sect and used him as a bait for him to escape, and knew that the head of the Five Ghosts Sect was unlikely to walk out alive under the attack of Shi Yutong and her strong assistant.

The Five Ghost Sect would crumble without their head, and other sects would take advantage of them once they were at their downfall.

...

“Whoosh!”

Fang Yuan flew into the woods, his eyes filled with fury.

“The Blood Killer is only strong in his spiritual spells. As for his martial arts cultivation, he is only equivalent to that of a [Martial Artist (5th Gate)]... Furthermore, he was hurt by the emerald flashes...”

“And as for me? I’ve recovered from eating the bamboo fruit, and although my external wounds look terrifying, my internal wounds have already recovered quite a bit, and I can even fight!”

Fang Yuan was unwilling to risk his life for a treasure map he knew little about.

But it’s different about the Blood Killer!

This person was a spiritual knight! ... Alright, according to Shi Yutong he was a spiritual knight-to-be, and badly hurt too. This was attractive to Fang Yuan, who wanted to observe spiritual spells in action.

With the intention to stalk the Blood Killer, the Blood Killer could not run away from Fang Yuan.

Indeed, after an hour, the Blood Killer stopped near a mountain spring to take a rest.

The bandage over his wound on his chest was red. He twitched and felt suspicious. “The spiritual weapon does not seem to be the widely-known Spiritual Emerald Silk! If the Spiritual Emerald Silk attacked me personally, I would never have the chance to escape... Could it be that someone is tricking me?”

After thinking, he felt extremely regretful.

He knew that with him and the head of the Five Ghosts Sect teaming up, they would just be able to take down Shi Yutong, but the moment her ally arrived, even if it was a young disciple, they would have won. This was the main reason why he escaped without a doubt.

The only thing was that betraying the head of the Five Ghosts Sect was akin to burning a bridge, and felt that it was a pity.

“Curse you! After I have officially become a spiritual knight, I will peel all your skins alive to vent out my anger and take my revenge...”

Blood Killer sighed, bent down and drank the spring water.

After quenching his thirst, he opened his robes, looked at the blood-red bandage, clenched his teeth and tore it apart.

“Piak!”

As the bandage fell apart, blood spurt out of the wound.

“Mm...”

He bit his teeth and was sweating profusely. His right arm was shivering as he retrieved a dark-green bottle from his pocket. He scattered some white powder onto his wound and began to bandage it.

Fang Yuan came out of hiding and took a few steps forward.

“Who’s that?”

As the Blood Killer looked up, his eyes revealed an emerald flash, as though he was an injured wolf.

‘I was discovered?’

Fang Yuan changed his mind, stood up and acted as though he was afraid. “Don’t... Don’t kill me...”

“Mmm?”

Blood Killer noticed his rotting arm and was perplexed. “You were that martial artist, but why are you still alive? How is this possible?”

He knew Fang Yuan was a [Martial Artist (6th/7th Gate)] and therefore was not on guard. Unknowingly, he took a few steps towards him as though he was a weak martial artist who was easily affected by his blood elemental force. He was suspicious as to how Fang Yuan survived his attack.

“This is the moment!”

Fang Yuan stood his ground and struck.

“Whoosh!”

He rushed forward and felt the air rush over his claws, as he made an eagle’s cry. He appeared next to the Blood Killer as his claws emerged, with a black spot on his palm; the poison from the mutated Pearl Tail Snake harnessed in his palms.

“Hmm?”

Even though he was injured, he remained calm as he looked at Fang Yuan attacking him, as though he was extremely confident.

“Mind Calming Spell!”

He bit his tongue and spit out blood towards Fang Yuan, and shouted.

“Wung!”

A weird vibration was felt as it travelled onto Fang Yuan’s body.

Fang Yuan was shocked, and at the moment he stood at where he was, maintaining his pouncing posture.

“Hehe... This Mind Calming Spell is indeed useful when dealing with normal people... Cough Cough...”

After two coughs, he examined Fang Yuan. “This person could survive my Bloody Python attack, it seems he is somewhat special. He would be a good ingredient for me to make a blood corpse... And while I am injured, I will need protection...”

“Dementor!”

He took two steps forward, and in his right hand was a dark-red pill. Mischief filled his eyes, as he exclaimed, “From today onwards, I am your master, and now, eat this!”

Blood Killer ordered and stretched his right hand out.

But at that moment, his expression changed.

Fang Yuan's expressionless face changed to one of mocking.

'This isn't possible, how can a normal human being who is not of Wu Zong level be able to escape my Mind Calming Spell... Could it be...'

Wild thoughts ran through his mind, quick as lightning.

There were very close to each other and it would be useless if any one of them tried to defend himself.

This golden opportunity was one that Fang Yuan wouldn't give up.

"Die!!!"

He focused his inner force and his words were loud as thunder. It was something he picked up from Gui Wusheng, and the Blood Killer was stunned for the moment.

His right hand struck out like lightning and formed an eagle's claw. He hooked on to the throat of Blood Killer, pulled with his might and a distinct fracture sound could be heard.

"Eagle Claw Technique! Black Sand Palm!"

After the first move, Fang Yuan continuously struck at the Blood Killer like raindrops, every move aiming at the Blood Killer's vulnerable spot.

After all, he was a cunning person and Fang Yuan was afraid to let him survive.

Fang Yuan was fortunate to be lucky.

Blood Killer's corpse landed on the ground, like a doll being abused.

"Phew..."

Fang Yuan heaved a sigh of relieve after witnessing his death but was afraid of the trouble which might come along.

To deal with a spiritual disciple was indeed not an easy task.

Even when he was injured, he could conjure up spells. If not for Fang Yuan's remarkable magic abilities, he would have been trapped and made his slave.

On hindsight, it was rather scary.

"However... Even though the elemental energy of the spiritual disciple is similar to that of Wu Zong, it was extremely different... Just now, it felt as though he had used up all his energy and had little strength left."

With combat experience, Fang Yuan realised a little secret of the spiritual disciple. "After all, their defence is average. Take for instance this Blood Killer. Without the help of the sect head of the Five Ghosts Sect's, he was no match for Shi Yutong... Only after attaining the level of a spiritual knight will be able to match up to a Wu Zong, or even surpass them..."

After thinking, he took a few steps forward and felt satisfied.

It was a good feeling to kill someone and take their treasure.

A spiritual knight would be scheming and Fang Yuan had to take precautions. He picked up a tree branch, carefully peeled open Blood Killer's clothing and found a cloth bag.

A few bottles within the bag were damaged from the fight, and the medicine powder was mixed together. Spiritual pills would be rendered useless by now as they were destroyed. Fang Yuan did not dare to touch any medicine or poison from the bag.

Other than these, there were other miscellaneous objects and a few taels of silver, which made him feel like it was not worth it.

"This can't be... I took such a risk to kill this spiritual disciple, and this is all I get?"

Looking at the rotten corpse, Fang Yuan remained speechless and even felt like whipping the corpse.

The good thing was that he wasn't such an extremist, and after rummaging through his belongings one more time, he stood up and sighed. "Ah... It seems that there is really nothing, I guess luck is not on my side!"

He remained silent as he looked at Blood Killer's corpse.

"You attempted to kill me first, and therefore it is only normal that you are killed by me. Just because you are a magical person, I will... dig a grave for you, so that you will not be eaten by wild beasts!"

Using his inner strength, it was effortless for him to dig a large hole in a short amount of time.

"Rest in peace!"

Fang Yuan struck his palm out and shoved the corpse and his belongings into the hole, and was about to cover the grave up.

At this moment, a jade-coloured object was revealed from the corpse, which stopped Fang Yuan in his tracks.

"Wait a minute... What is this?"

He grabbed a tree branch and flicked his arm out of the grave. The jade piece was clearly visible just beside the bone.

"What the..."

Fang Yuan spent a long time to separate the jade from the bone and appeared shocked. "This person is crazy, why would he hide this in his own body..."

If he didn't strike that many palms and claws on the Blood Killer till he was disfigured, he would not have discovered this piece of jade.

"What does this count as? Retribution? Since he could have hidden this piece of jadeite in his body, who is to say that there is no second piece, third piece... Even after his death, he is still asking to be tortured?"

He became speechless and vexed.

After a short while, he looked at the 2 looted objects that were washed and went into deep thought.

Because of the discovery of the jade, he had to force himself to do a thorough search on the corpse. His unintended move unknowingly brought him rewards.

Fang Yuan remained speechless as he looked at the loot.

"Treasure map... broken pieces..."

This treasure map was discovered in the Blood Killer's clothing, sewed in between the cloth. As for the corpse? After an intense search, Fang Yuan found nothing and proceed to bury him.

What appeared in front of Fang Yuan was an incomplete treasure map, similar to the one Han Shou had!

"This piece is the missing part of the treasure map, just lacking a corner! Who would've known that the Five Ghosts Sect had already obtained the treasure map and passed to the Blood Killer for safekeeping..."

This incredible encounter and miraculous turn of events left Fang Yuan speechless.

Carefree Path of Dreams

Chapter 65: The Death Gate

"Things are constantly changing in this world. Who can predict what is the next move?"

Fang Yuan had caused the Five Ghosts Sect Sect Master and the Blood Killer to be dead one after another. He managed to obtain pieces of the treasure map and was very happy with it.

With such treasure in his hand, he was naturally happy about it. However, he had only gotten two pieces and one last piece of the map was still missing. He was worried.

"No matter what, a treasure map that could cause the Five Ghosts Sect and a spiritual disciple to be so obsessed with would lead to a treasure that is extraordinary....."

"Of course, the most important issue is not this....."

Fang Yuan murmured and kept the pieces of the treasure map safely. His right hand touched a piece of jadeite and he kept silent.

That piece of jadeite was clear and shiny. It seemed that there were streaks of gold lines circulating in it, making it special.

Also, the Blood Killer had the treasure map sewn on his clothes but he hid the jadeite in his body, which clearly showed that the piece of jadeite was very precious.

"Just that.....I wonder what mystery this piece of jadeite holds!"

He stared at the square-shaped jadeite for a long time. He couldn't find any handwritings or symbols on it. It could reflect light when placed in water under sunlight.

"This is strange!"

Fang Yuan shook his head and kept the jadeite safely. He then continued on his journey.

During this trip outside the Qingye City, he battled in the jungle and killed Gui Wusheng and the Blood Killer. He also obtained a few treasures like the Ying Yang Jade, pieces of the treasure map and the mysterious jadeite. He even got to observe a battle between Wu Zong and the spiritual disciple. Thus, he gained quite a lot through this trip and was very satisfied.

The only thing that he wanted to do now was to cut off any relations between him and these incidents.

This was fairly simple.

After all, Fang Yuan didn't even reveal his face before.

Even though back in Shaoyang City, someone witnessed him leaving together with Gui Wusheng, nobody knew the outcome of the duel between the both of them. Fang Yuan could say that both of them were on par with each other and they fought till exhaustion.

But what about Gui Wusheng? The Five Ghosts Sect was crumbling and it would be normal for him to hide now, wouldn't it?

If it still looked suspicious, the rest could find the ghost of Gui Wusheng to testify.

"Next, if I were to remove all the traces I left behind here, that would be sufficient!"

Fang Yuan trekked through the forest and walked a big circle. He then exited the Xuanyan Mountain by another way and reached a nearby county. He then boarded a carriage and quickly went back to Qingye City.

.....

Days after, back at the inn where Fang Yuan was living in.

Fang Yuan, who was lying down, opened his eyes and was welcomed by a bright light.

"Hoo....."

Fang Yuan exhaled out a long breath and stretched himself.

"Once I have broken through the Death Gate, I will be reborn...I have finally attained [Martial Artist (8th Gate)], which is the Death Gate!"

He was not really surprised that he attained it.

After all, he was already in a state which he could attain a new level anytime.

In addition to the previous battles and the lessons learnt from the duel between Wu Zong and the spiritual disciple, his attainment was a matter of time.

Of course, the main contribution to his attainment was his daily intake of spiritual food, which allowed his foundations to become stronger and thus able to break through the Death Gate successfully!

Ever since he felt that he was ready to break through, Fang Yuan immediately found an inn and got the best room in the inn for him to prepare to break through.

This time, the breakthrough of the Death Gate was different for him as it felt as if he went for a nap.

Correct! He went for a nap!

If he was able to wake up from the nap, it meant that he broke through successfully. However, if he did not wake up, it meant he was dead!

Even though the concept was simple, it also had a possible scary outcome!

"Hmm?"

Fang Yuan got up and felt that both of his hands were sticky. It felt very uncomfortable and he rubbed his hands. A layer of dead skin then dropped off and it revealed a new layer of clear and bright skin.

"Reborn? I am really reborn!!!"

He looked at his hands happily and tore away the dead skin which was on his arm.

"Piak!"

It was as if a snake had changed its skin. On his arm, a layer of skin which contained traces of dirt and blood dropped off, revealing a smooth layer of new skin, perfect and without any scars on it.

"The cultivation of martial arts is actually considered a tough training. With a bit of talent, one can train his elemental force when he has attained Wu Zong....."

Fang Yuan gradually understood.

Under normal circumstances, most people would not be able to reach the lowest gate of a spiritual knight.

However, martial arts is different!

From the start, there were 3 gates, namely the Initial, Rest and Life. One who did not have prior experience would be able to break through and attain them in 3 years with hard work.

If one had prior experience, one could try to break through the Restriction Gate and strengthen one's inner power.

After the Pain Gate, one would have gained inner force and could improve his essence and spirit naturally. After the Death Gate, one's inner force would reach its peak.

Next, whether to take in both Yin and Yang or to combine them together, was part of the preparation needed to break through the Heaven Gate and train one's elemental force.

"This process is one step at a time and consists of 12 steps, which is different from the process which involves the spiritual disciple breaking through to become the spiritual knight. Hence, the former process is considered to be more favourable....."

At that moment, Fang Yuan did not look down on martial arts but felt full of respect for the creation of the 12 Golden Gates in martial arts.

The creator had given many who did not have prior experience a straight pathway to attain the Heaven Gate!

Correct, the Heaven Gate!

Fang Yuan recalled that the Blood Killer looked at him with disdain and knew what kind of impression spiritual knights and sorcerers had on normal human beings.

Then what about normal human beings? If one was to be able to break through all 12 Golden Gates and attained Wuzong, one would become immortal and would be able to reach the heaven!

"The Yin Yang Jade can be used right after the 8th Gate!"

Fang Yuan was not as petty as Gui Wusheng. Gui Wusheng was reluctant to use it for himself but Fang Yuan had decided to use it immediately to speed up his training process.

Of course, before using it, he wanted to have a look again at his stats window.

His stats window then appeared in front of him:

"Name: Fang Yuan

Essence: 5.0

Spirit: 4.9

Magic: 3.3

Age: 19

Cultivation: [Martial Artist (8th Gate)]

Technique: [Black Sand Palm (Grade 5)], [Eagle Claw Iron Skin Technique (Grade 8)]

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

"Eh? There is an increase in my magic, is it because of the breakthrough of the Death Gate? Or is it due to the effect of the spiritual tea which was triggered during the breakthrough? Or is it both?"

His essence and spirit had increased tremendously and Fang Yuan had expected it.

What surprised him was that his magic had increased by 0.3.

After all, he did not have any other breakthroughs other than his previous breakthrough of the 7th Gate.

"However, this is normal anyway....The prerequisite to being a spiritual knight or a sorcerer was to have a high level of magic! How could martial arts only help to improve one's body condition? It definitely had to improve one's magic as well!"

"Or maybe....attaining the 4 Heavenly Gates was not only to combine the elemental force of Yin and Yang but also to improve one's magic to prepare oneself for Wu Zong...."

"The 12 Golden Gates; I have broken through the 8th gate which is the Death Gate. Next up will be the 9th Gate, which is the Yin Gate, and then the 10th Gate, which is the Yang Gate, and then the 11th Gate, which is the Earth Gate and lastly the 12th Gate, which is the Heaven Gate!"

Fang Yuan took out the Yin Yang Jade. The piece of Jade was perfect and it had both red and black textures in it, which made it special.

This piece of jade could speed up the combination of Yin and Yang for a [Martial Artist (8th Gate)]. This was one of the secret processes of the Five Ghosts Sect.

Even though the Five Ghosts Sect had wanted to use this piece of jade to attract its enemies, the jade landed into Fang Yuan's hands in the end.

"This jade.....seems to be used in this way!"

Fang Yuan murmured and shipped his inner force onto his palms.

At that moment, there was a conversion and his inner force that was actually in 7th Gate previously was now smoothly transferred to the 8th Gate.

He noticed a swirl in the inner part of the Yin Yang Jade with the combination of Yin and Yang.

"Go!"

Fang Yuan shipped his inner force into the circulation of the Yin and Yang and his inner force went one round in the circulation and then back into his body.

"Hiss..."

At that moment, he felt a cold stream down his arms and then to shoulders and his chest.....and then finally to his lower abdomen.

"Is this.....Yin?"

Fang Yuan looked at the Yin Yang Jade and the textures on the jadeite were still clear as before. It seemed like it had not been used before.

"According to the Iron Skin Technique and the manuals from the Spirit Returning Sect, if a [Martial Artist (8th Gate)] wants to make a breakthrough, he would have to train hard daily and endlessly. As such, he should be able to get the Yin into his body in half a month or so, but now....."

He looked at his stats window again.

He saw his proficiency points for [Eagle Claw Iron Skin Technique (Grade 8)] had increased by 1%.

"My intake of Yin this time equals to half a month of hard work by a normal [Martial Artist (8th Gate)]?"

Fang Yuan's eyes glittered and said, "This Yin Yang Jade is good stuff. The Five Ghosts Sect is indeed rich with treasures....."

In fact, he was being whimsical.

Even though Five Ghosts Sect was rich, the Yin Yang Jade was considered one of the most precious treasures in there and was hidden well. Normal elders would not have known this piece of jade.

If the purpose was not to attract the enemy, Gui Wusheng would not have brought the jade out.

Even so, Gui Wusheng only had the right of safekeeping it and not the right of using it.

"Gui Wusheng that stupid idiot. He was probably controlled by the Five Ghosts Sect Sect Master..."

Fang Yuan then came to a conclusion. "If one does not know how to appreciate the treasure, even if the treasure was a gift from heaven, the treasure would hurt one instead!"

He got up and opened the windows. He breathed in deeply and looked at the Lieyang County silently.

With the Five Ghosts Sect Sect Master and the Blood Killer dead, the Five Ghosts Sect had no leader. In addition to the attack by the Spirit Returning Sect, the Five Ghosts Sect would definitely split and it was a golden opportunity for one to take advantage of the situation!

Since the Five Ghosts Sect had a piece of Yin Yang Jade, maybe they would have a second or a third piece of the same jade or something similar in value....

Fang Yuan was too imaginative and he grew greedy.

"Hold on a second, I have gained a lot from this trip and I should reflect and plan my next moves, instead of finding ways to get even more such treasures."

Fang Yuan's eyes glittered and thought, "Looks like I have improved too quickly. I better return home to continue on my cultivation, along with farming and making tea....."

Carefree Path of Dreams

Chapter 66: Cultivation

"Chirp!"

A black dot appeared in the blue sky and accompanying it, a bird's caw.

"Hu!"

A large eagle with metallic wings flew down and landed in front of Fang Yuan.

"I'm back!"

Fang Yuan walked forward and patted the Iron-tailed Black Eagle.

"Keke!"

Black Eagle did not appear to reject him, which pleased Fang Yuan, because he knew that they had gotten even closer than before.

"Is everything alright in the secluded valley?"

He took a few steps forward and reached the entrance. A white flash appeared and stopped at his legs. It was the Flower Fox Ferret.

All this while, they had no spiritual tea, and the two beasts also didn't know how to start a fire. They had no choice but to return to their old ways of hunting and eating meat raw and therefore, both of them longed for his return.

For instance, the Flower Fox Ferret had already caught two plump chickens and was waiting for Fang Yuan to cook them.

"Greedy fellow!"

Fang Yuan scolded him jokingly and entered his home.

Even though there were two spiritual beasts looking after the secluded valley, Fang Yuan was still worried and went around to check on things.

He arrived at the farm and firstly went to look for the Questioning Heart Tea. He couldn't contain his excitement as he noticed small leaflets sprouting from the branches of the tree.

This trip made him realise the importance of having higher than average magic points.

He owed it all to his magic points that he could survive the ordeal this time.

"This tea should be spring tea, as the season is coming soon..."

Fang Yuan was extremely pleased, as he arrived at the farm and realised almost all the Vermilion Jade Rice had been harvested. However, the surroundings were not barren.

Shrubs of Emerald Grass were sprouting around the farm in an orderly manner, full of life.

"The Emerald Grass is growing rather well!"

As it was the lowest form among spiritual plants, it only two purposes was to cultivate a plot of land and also be harvested as food for spiritual beasts. Fang Yuan scanned the area and could not find any plant with evolved special traits, and was a little disappointed.

"Let's take a look at the spiritual bamboo!"

With shocking healing abilities, the bamboo fruit could even heal wounds caused by elemental forces, and this made Fang Yuan realise the importance of it.

As he approached the bridge, he was overwhelmed with joy.

Beside the rock, a green bamboo stood tall and strong. Its branches were emerald-green and had no signs of rotting.

"When a spiritual bamboo blooms, fruits will form. It would then rot and die after its fruits ripen, and re-sprout into a new spiritual bamboo... This is because it cannot receive enough nutrients to sustain itself... But now, what is happening?"

Fang Yuan looked at his [Botany] and knew that this was one of the special traits that the spiritual bamboo evolved to have.

Even though the spiritual bamboo was not completely evolved, it already had certain traits of it being improved, and for instance this time, it did not rot.

"Keke!"

The Flower Fox Ferret pointed to a little bulge on the ground, as it tried to hint to Fang Yuan that it was something new.

"Eh? Could it be..."

Fang Yuan gently dug out the layer of soil above, and a purple shoot appeared.

"Indeed... When spring comes the bamboo will flourish, what an unexpected gain!"

It was different from the spiritual bamboo. Its bamboo trunk had a layer of purple and hidden within it, there was spiritual energy which emitted a pleasant fragrance.

"I could locate other bamboos by following its roots, and for this root..."

Fang Yuan followed then bamboo root and discovered a few more bamboo shoots. He gingerly covered the shoots with soil and was smiling from ear to ear.

"Keke.....Chirp Chirp..."

The Flower Fox Ferret was pulling at his clothes, its paws pointing about. Fang Yuan was amused, "You want to try the bamboo shoot?"

"Chirp Chirp!"

After hearing this, the black eagle at the side seemed to understand what was happening and appeared as excited as the Flower Fox Ferret.

"You guys... This spiritual bamboo is a treasure, how can we kill the source of our food?"

Fang Yuan continued, "There's quite a lot of spiritual bamboo within the red-eyed white king bird's nest, as well as other spiritual things... When we have a chance, I shall bring you guys along to loot the entire place!"

With his improvements in martial arts and his two spiritual beasts, Fang Yuan started to have ideas on the Green Peak once again.

"Chirp Chirp!"

The Iron-tailed Black Eagle had bad blood with the red-eyed white birds all along and was excited at the thought of Fang Yuan's suggestion.

Even though they have decided on the plan, it still wasn't easy to deal with the red-eyed white king bird.

After all, the king bird was equivalent to a martial artist of the 4 Heavenly Gates and would be even more unpredictable when angered.

The Iron-tailed Black Eagle was extremely lucky to have escaped the previous ordeal, and there was no way it could have escaped again given the same situation.

Furthermore, Fang Yuan had just returned and he should be resting and recuperating.

...

"Phew... I am finally able to rest after this hectic period!"

The next day, Fang Yuan held a teacup, took a sip and was in deep relaxation.

"Spiritual bamboo shoots for breakfast, coupled with Meditative Questioning Heart Tea. Even the gods couldn't ask for this!"

After mulling over it for the whole night, he gave in to pressure from both the Flower Fox Ferret and the Iron-tailed Black Eagle, and the three of them enjoyed the bamboo shoots for breakfast.

Of course, it was the three of them sharing one shoot.

Fang Yuan was shocked to his wits.

Regardless the crunchy texture, or the milky fragrance, or the sweet sap, they were all on a different level.

Of course, he became extremely regretful after eating it.

His was afraid that he would not be able to resist eating the remaining shoots, and he felt that it was such a waste to eat the shoots and therefore lose the fruit that it would bear in the future.

"Both of you have gained quite a bit..."

Seeing the both of them drinking the spiritual tea, eating the spiritual bamboo and strengthening themselves, Fang Yuan admired them.

After all, the spiritual beasts were different from humans; there are no gates for them. As long as they eat and drink to their fill, and grow to a certain age, they would automatically attain a higher level.

Comparatively, he needed to train hard, and would, therefore, feel that he had no choice but to accept the fact.

As a cup of Questioning Heart Tea entered his stomach, he began to forget his worries.

After a long while, he slowly placed his teacup down, and heaved a long sigh.

"The higher my magic, the harder it would be to increase it... Furthermore, the effect of the Questioning Heart Tea slowly seems to be unable to satisfy me anymore..."

This was normal. As time passed, the spiritual plants which were able to increase one's magic would be treasured by many, and would be called 'Deity Plants'.

Of course, being such a unique plant, the Questioning Heart Tea would definitely be beneficial to spiritual knights as well.

Fang Yuan realised that even though his body was less receptive to the Questioning Heart Tea, he could drink more of it instead of focusing in finding a better quality deity plant to replace it, and that would solve the problem.

"The most important thing now is to quickly break through the 4 Heavenly Gates! Fusing the Yin and Yang, to break the Earth Gate and Heaven Gate, all these should be extremely beneficial to my magic!"

After sorting out his thoughts, he crossed his legs and sat on the ground, and took out his Yin Yang Jade.

After playing around with the Jade, Fang Yuan knew how to use the Jade in general. Only the inner force of [Martial Artists (8th Gate)] would be able to enter the Jade, to be split it into Yin and Yang, and this would expedite the progress of cultivation by a thousand times.

"After the process, I would have lost around half of my Yang..."

The black and red stripes within the Jade became milder, and Fang Yuan felt that it was a pity.

Yin and Yang are the forces of the heavens, and they coexist, never alone but always together.

Whenever some Yin was taken, the same amount of Yang would be lost, in order for the forces within the Yin Yang Jade to remain balanced at all times.

As he had not broken the Yin Gate, he could only see the true Yang from the afternoon sun being lost, as he had no way to harness it.

"Keke!"

As he was sighing, a white flash appeared, and a paw came in contact with the Yin Yang Jade. It was the Flower Fox Ferret.

"Eh? What are you doing?"

Fang Yuan was confused, as he observed. The Flower Fox Ferret was actually harnessing the extra Yang for his own cultivation.

"Can spiritual beast cultivate their skills on their own?"

He felt that his view of the world was once again obsolete. The memories he had from another world made him aware that many demons would train under the moon, but this was the Yang from the sun, and it was completely different.

"Hiss!"

After taking in a shred of Yang, the Flower Fox Ferret held its breath, shook, and laid flat on the ground, as though it was drunk.

Fang Yuan had seen the Flower Fox Ferret in this state a few times before, while he was drinking the Questioning Heart Tea.

"It seems that it had entered a deep level of cultivation..."

Fang Yuan nodded his head, kept the Yin Yang Jade, and had a headache.

Afterall, there was another being at home who would be after his own treasures. To be on guard against it would not be easy.

Of course, he wasn't stingy about the Yang lost. To Fang Yuan, he would rather strengthen his spiritual pet than let it go to waste!

The only thing he was afraid about was that the beast might not be aware of how to harness it properly, and might take in too much Yang. This would not only spoil the Yin Yang Jade, but also harm the beast, and that wouldn't be worth it...

"Phew... If I continue to fuse my Yin every day, I should be able to achieve a breakthrough to 9th Gate in a few days time..."

Seeing the experience bar slowly being filled, Fang Yuan nodded his head and started to train.

To a [Martial Artist (8th Gate)], taking in Yin was the hardest of all. The fusion was much easier, and after 2 hours, Fang Yuan completed his training for the day. He felt as though a clear river was flowing through him, and was immensely satisfied.

Since he was in such a good condition, he decided to take the opportunity and took out a piece of jade.

This jade was different from the Yin Yang Jade. It was squarish, and it was as though a golden coin was swirling within it. It was indeed the jade Fang Yuan obtained from the Blood Killer.

He was completely relaxed and wanted to unveil the mystery of this jade.

"There seems to be no carving on it, and it does not seem like a key..."

Fang Yuan sighed and suddenly stuck it on his own forehead. He focused his magic on his forehead, as though he was gathering and pushing the magic upwards physically.

"Rumble!"

...

...

...

After a long while, nothing happened.

Fang Yuan rolled his eyes, took the jade down, and felt a little disappointed. "Indeed, the memories from the other world shouldn't be taken too seriously. Using magic to understand jades, this was most likely bullshit from the author..."

Even though it was as such, he felt that he understood something else.

Within this jade, there must be a secret, and the only thing lacking is the key to it.

[Carefree Path of Dreams](#)

Chapter 67: Mystery

"I'm here to see you, sir!"

Zhou Wenwu bowed respectfully and was also relieved to see Fang Yuan.

Previously, when Fang Yuan went out on a trip, Zhou Wenwu would feel unsafe. However, with Fang Yuan back, he felt much safer.

“Hmm!”

Fang Yuan crossed his knees and sat down. He then waved his hand and said, “How is everything in Lieyang County?”

He had about 10 days left before he had to go back to the sect. With the daily cultivations of body and soul, Fang Yuan’s [Martial Artist (8th Gate)] was much more stable than before. With the intake of the Yin, he had improved tremendously.

Zhou Wenwu was affected the most by his improvement.

To him, Fang Yuan was way more superior than the dead Elder Song!

Upon hearing what Fang Yuan asked, he then answered immediately, “Ever since the news of the injured Five Ghosts Sect Sect Master spread, there was chaos everywhere in Lieyang County. Everyone in the Five Ghosts Sect were panicking and some of the disciples had decided to defect. Some of the elders stayed indoors while some went missing. Meanwhile, there were other forces getting ready to join in this mess.....”

The situation was expected.

Without the suppression of the Five Ghosts Sect, the sect was already considered well organised if the sect did not split.

Also, there were loyal disciples who were still there, but there was a possibility that they might change their mindset as well.

“Is there any movement made from the Spirit Returning Sect?”

Logically speaking, Shi Yutong did not gain anything through this expedition and wouldn’t go back to the sect so easily before she gained anything.

If there was the help of the mysterious spiritual knight, there would be a possibility of losing the two counties.

“Under the leadership of Spirit Returning Sect Sect Master, Spirit Returning Sect controls Shaoyang City and two of the quarries in Lieyang County. After which, there is not much movement from them.....”

Zhou Wenwu was really telling everything that he knew about the sect.

“Really? It looks like the sect is confident in its preparation for its next move!”

Fang Yuan nodded his head upon hearing what Zhou Wenwu said. However, it was not an easy task for the sect take over the whole of Lieyang County. “But the sect only controls the two quarries.....but this should be sufficient for the sect to show its power. Very well!”

The more chaotic Lieyang County was, the more problematic it would become for the Spirit Returning Sect. However, to Fang Yuan, it would be more advantageous.

“Also, the Spirit Returning Sect incurred a big loss this time and even the Second Elder Han Yan was also injured badly and was currently recovering back in the sect. The sect was also on a lookout for any good doctors to help in the recovery and Master, please be extra careful!”

“One final thing.....”

Zhou Wenwu hesitated for a while before he continued, “The sect secretly ordered for me to collect intelligence about you.....and it seemed like it was an order given by a series of Sect Masters!”

“A series of Sect Masters....if it was Shi Yutong, she wouldn’t be so secretive about it. That means a certain person is very interested in me now?”

Fang Yuan stroked his chin and dismissed Zhou Wenwu. He then sighed and said, “Being too handsome is also a problem for me now....”

Jokes aside, he could sort of guess that this order was initiated by Lin Leiyue but it had nothing to do with the possibility that both of them still had feelings for each other.

Even if Fang Yuan had revealed a part of his ability, she would be very surprised by it and this would make her even more curious to find out more about Fang Yuan.

Outsiders wouldn’t know how Fang Yuan was like in the past and would only know there was someone powerful in the secluded valley.

However, Lin Leiyue knew the background of Fang Yuan.

Since she knew Fang Yuan was also a normal person in the past, she would then be even more surprised with the improvements Fang Yuan had in his abilities and skills.

Fang Yuan had expected this to happen but didn’t expect the other party to be so secretive in finding out more about himself. It seemed like Lin Leiyue was hiding a secret or something.

“Never mind.....I shall think of a solution on the spot when the time comes. I should get back to farming! And this.....”

Fang Yuan flipped his hands and an emerald green jade appeared.

He looked at the golden textures on the piece of jade was mesmerised by it.

.....

Spring had arrived in March. Birds were flying and chirping everywhere.

Winter had passed and the flowers were blooming. Fang Yuan came to the Vermilion Jade Rice farm specially during this time.

Looking at the consolidated Emerald Grass, the farm hadn’t become a waste as the colour of the soil remained pure black and it was still in good condition.

“This fertiliser.....has a beneficial effect on the farm!”

Fang Yuan wore a thick clothing. He carried a hoe and started to cultivate the Vermillion Jade Rice.

The seeds that were planted were chosen by him and were of high quality. The condition of the seeds remained well for a long period of time.

"I think there is no need for further expansion of the spiritual farm. The current size of the farm is sufficient....."

Beside him, the Flower Fox Ferret and the Iron-tailed Black Eagle were also helping out in the farming.

After a busy morning, Fang Yuan then made a pot of tea and enjoyed the tea with the other 2 spiritual beasts beside the spiritual farm.

"All the spiritual tea leaves have been picked. The bamboos are growing fast. I have also just planted the seeds for the spiritual rice and with the spiritual fertiliser added, this year's harvest should be a big one...."

Fang Yuan couldn't help but think of the Red-eyed White King Bird when he thought of the spiritual fertiliser.

Even though he already had plans to raid the nest once more, but with the Yin Yang Jade in his hands currently, he decided to postpone that plan and prepare himself for further improvements.

If he could break through the 4 Heavenly Gates, he would have no problem in dealing with the Red-eyed White King Bird.

Also, with the current happenings around him, he was not thinking about expanding outwards.

There were dark clouds everywhere in the afternoon and it looked like it was about to rain. It was also humid and this made it easier to fall asleep.

Back in his home, Fang Yuan sat down and ordered the 2 spiritual beasts to keep a lookout outside. He looked at the emerald green jade and was mesmerised even further.

There was a cool stream flowing down his fingers as he touched the piece of jade and this made him alert and not sleepy anymore.

During this period of time, Fang Yuan had been searching for the secret of this piece of jade and now he had managed to learn something about this piece of jade.

"The main criteria for being a spiritual knight was one's magical energy.....Hence, one should start by improving the magical energy.....This piece of jade is indestructible and inner force cannot even destroy it. However....."

Fang Yuan took a copper basin and it contained a red liquid. The liquid gave off a fishy smell and it was actually blood.

"This Blood Killer is so secretive in his movements. He is slightly evil and now even the things that he brought along with is also slightly evil in nature....."

He came to this conclusion about the piece of jade that the Blood Killer had hidden in his body after many rounds of unsuccessful experiments with it.

"Ploop!"

He was expressionless and he dropped the piece of jade into the basin.

Fang Yuan then stared at the basin.

Not long after, there was a change in the basin.

The golden textures on the jade seemed to be moving about and absorbing the blood as the colour of the liquid started to turn gold. Finally, the colour was back to blood red.

After a period of time, the emerald green piece of jade became red and the golden textures had become blood red in colour as well, which looked like the blood vessels of a person. The jade seemed evil.

“Are all spiritual knights.....that evil in nature?”

Fang Yuan then picked up the bloody jade and washed it with clean water.

The bloody jade was fine and glossy. The red textures in it were slightly moving and that made it a special jade.

“There is not much change!”

Fang Yuan placed the jade under the sun and couldn't find any handwriting or symbols. Even his inner force couldn't be shipped into the piece of jade.

He experimented for quite a while and then placed it on his forehead, in between his eyebrows while biting his teeth.

The position he placed the jade was called Yintang in traditional Chinese medicine. That position was also called Mind Palace in the world of inner power. This was an important acupuncture point as this was where one's essence, spirit and magic met. One who was highly skilled in medicine could decipher how strong a person is from his or her Yintang.

In this world, there was also another name for it, called 'Heaven's Eye'!

This name originated from an old anecdote. The anecdote stated that in the past, there was an immortal person who had three eyes. After generations, the Heaven's Eye closed gradually.

Whether the anecdote was real or fake, Fang Yuan was not really bothered by it. However, with his magical energy being concentrated between his eyebrows, he could observe his surroundings and hide.

“Pah!”

The position where he placed the bloody jade gave off a cooling sensation.

Fang Yuan concentrated his magical energy from the Mind Palace and started to explore the secrets of the bloody jade.

“Bang!”

A loud noise then came from his mind.

There were no obstructions this time and his spiritual mind managed to reach into the jade.

Fang Yuan felt as if he reached a chaotic space and there were numerous red handwriting appearing right in front of him. The handwritings were about a form of technique.

“It’s the Blood Magic Technique; Focused Magic Returning Scroll!”

At the start, a few of the handwritings were big in size, which made it very visible. The handwritings brought about a tense atmosphere and this caused Fang Yuan to be in shock.

He continued on looking at the handwriting and realised that the Blood Magic Technique taught one on how to concentrate one’s magical energy and attained the level of a spiritual knight!

However, it was not easy to attain it as the criteria required one to have magical energy that was beyond a normal human being. Furthermore, it was almost impossible for one to have such great amount of magical energy.

Also, the training process was gory. One example would be the ‘Blood Elemental Force’. One would have to concentrate 3 Yang and 7 Yin as a blood sacrifice. 10 sets of blood from 10 different people would be needed to build the foundations. The entire process was extremely cruel and the crueler the victims were treated, the higher the probability of success.

Seeing this, Fang Yuan frowned.

He knew that his character was not good in nature but if he were to execute this process, it would not do any good to his morals anyway.

After a long while, Fang Yuan then placed the bloody jade down and his face was pale white. He then shook his head and said, “Blood Magic Technique is way too evil and cruel. The risks are too high.....”

Even though this technique was very cruel, there were recordings at the back of the scroll which stated some tips used by different spiritual knights and disciples of different magical energy. The tips were also used along with other medicine and tools. The scroll also mentioned the formula on how to make the Crazy Blood Pill. This caused Fang Yuan to be interested in the scroll again.

Without knowing it, he had almost exhausted his magical energy and knew the hardships of a spiritual knight.

With his current level, he had already exhausted his elemental energy. Under normal circumstances, normal people would not have been able to discover the secrets of this jade, not to mention about using it for training.

[Carefree Path of Dreams](#)

Chapter 68: Flame Jade

“Although I can’t learn the Blood Magic Technique, the description of the uses of magical energy is still useful, maybe I can learn from it...”

After unveiling the secrets of the jadeite, he focused his energy on understanding the Blood Magic Technique.

Based on his prediction and the inscriptions on the jadeite, Fang Yuan was sure that the Blood Magic Technique was not a widely circulated technique among the spiritual knight community; it was merely a technique for those who wanted to hastily improve their skill through other means possible.

“In this Focused Magic Returning Scroll, there are only two steps. The first is to focus one’s Blood Elemental Force and become a spiritual disciple. The second step would be to break through and become a spiritual knight...”

Thinking of the scroll’s description, Fang Yuan shook his head.

Compared to the 12 Golden Gates, the cultivation method of the spiritual knights only consists of one step. If one did not have immense potential, it would be impossible.

“As for the training methods of elemental force, some of it might be relevant for me...”

Once a martial artist fused his Yin and Yang, and then through the Earth and Heaven, he would have formed elemental force.

The Blood Magic Technique’s description of harnessing the elemental force was entirely relevant and could be followed to the tee.

After all, Fang Yuan had enough magic, comparable to that of a spiritual disciple.

The Blood Magic Technique was not something suitable for him, and if he wasn’t desperate enough, he wouldn’t try to learn it.

“However, as for elemental force... It is something of a higher tier than inner force. It is sometimes called Heaven and Earth’s spiritual force, and its potential is immense and cannot be fathomed...”

Fang Yuan had witnessed a battle between Wu Zongs and a spiritual disciple and was extremely looking forward to attaining a whole new level as what he saw.

“Based on my potential, it should be possible for me to start gathering my elemental force!”

This was the final conclusion he ended up with after reading about the Blood Magic Technique and based on his own martial arts experience.

Although he could not adopt the training methods of the spiritual disciple wholesale, he could adapt it to his own training to expedite his progress.

After all, the Eagle Claw Iron Skin Technique could only break through 12 Gates, but to break through Wu Zong it was impossible.

In addition, the Spirit Returning Heart Manual that Fang Yuan had was also incomplete, and it was the important parts that were missing.

He had to plan for his future.

“Of course, I must not neglect my Meditative Tea Ceremony... especially the cultivation of the mind.”

The only useful power would be power that one could control. Fang Yuan did not want to lose control of his mind, especially when getting involved with this type of magic technique. Even though he was only adapting from it, he still had to take precautions.

...

The next few days were devoted to understanding the Blood Magic Technique.

This technique was a spiritual knight technique which required a deep understanding of it. Even though he was only adapting from it, he had to understand the entire technique, which led to him even sacrificing his sleep and meals, which showed the extent he devoted to understanding the technique. He had no further energy to find trouble for others.

“The 12 Golden Gates is merely a process to harness elemental energy. For a martial artist with average potential, he would have to take it step by step. As for the spiritual knights who have higher potential, they would ultimately end up on the same path... In theory, if I focused my elemental energy, I could instantly become Wu Zong! What a pity... The 3 Yins and 7 Yangs sacrifice as described in the Blood Magic Technique is full of implications, and other problems may surface, I cannot practice it...”

As he was farming he was mulling over this problem.

“As of now I have accumulated enough Yin, and I just need to wait for the right moment to break through into the 9th Gate and become a martial artist of the 4 Heavenly Gates...”

If this news spread, the entire Qinghe County would be in shock!

After all, what was the whole concept of the 4 Heavenly Gates? Within the Spirit Returning Sect or the Five Ghosts Sect, he would be top 5! It was no longer the majority of the martial artists, but the pinnacle!

If Secluded Mountain Prefecture knew about it, they would take Fang Yuan as the most talented young man in the martial arts world. Lin Huang or Lin Leiyue wouldn't even be considered.

Even as such, Fang Yuan didn't care much.

In his mind, he had a crazy plan.

“What's so great about breaking through the 9th Gate? 10th Gate, the Yang Gate, and 11th Gate the Earth Gate are all actually pathways to harness the elemental force, or should I say, the seeds to elemental force! Although I have no intention to learn the Blood Magic Technique, with the assistance of the Yin Yang Jade to fuse my Yin and Yang, it would be possible to obtain elemental force and attain the next level, the Earth Gate!”

Fang Yuan's eyes were filled with passion.

To focus his elemental energy and break through Wu Zong was too large a step. Furthermore, he had little information and fully based his assumptions on what was written on the Blood Magic Technique manual, and he wasn't convinced.

It would be different at the Earth Gate!

This Gate required the fusion of Yin and Yang to produce the seeds of elemental force. This would fulfil a large requirement to break through the Earth Gate.

With the Yin Yang Jade, he had enough knowledge of the Yin and Yang.

The most important was that he had the guidance of the Blood Magic Technique, and had no qualms about focusing his elemental force, so what considerations would he have in harnessing the seeds of the elemental force?

“If the plan works, I can break both the 10th Gate and the Earth Gate one after another!”

“If my guess is correct, the breaking through of the Heaven Gate is actually breaking through the control of Mind Palace! One’s magical energy would be surge, and when a martial artist reaches this stage, even if he loses focus he would recover in no time. He would have the chance to break through to Wu Zong and have the chance to harness elemental force... This is no problem to me!”

Fang Yuan heaved a long sigh.

To him, understanding the 12 Golden Gates were as simple as flipping his palm to look at his fingerprints, and he had no other doubts.

“Eh?”

He was stunned for a moment and looked at the farm.

After a downpour, the Vermilion Jade Rice seedlings began to sprout furiously in neat rows.

There was a particular patch which seemed empty, and it was as though the spiritual plants were dead.

Not just the Vermilion Jade Rice, but even the Emerald Grass had signs of withering.

“Could it be...”

Fang Yuan wasn’t disappointed; instead, he was rather excited about it as he rushed forward to examine it up close.

Indeed, in the middle of the barren patch were flame-like seedlings standing out, extremely eye-catching.

Fang Yuan examined it further and realised that it was shorter than the average seedling. It was a deep orange, with a streak of gold in the middle. The colour was extremely vibrant, like a flame.

Comparing the Vermilion Jade Rice to it would be like comparing the eyeball of a fish to a pearl. They were of a totally different level.

“Haha...”

Fang Yuan smiled as he saw the seedlings before him, and not long later, he could no longer contain his laughter and started to burst out laughing.

“Indeed... It’s a spiritual plant evolving a special trait! Level up!”

The Vermilion Jade Rice was a spiritual plant to begin with, and what entails after evolving the second time? Fang Yuan looked forward to it.

After all, this was still spiritual rice!

It was different from the bamboo fruit and other spiritual medicine. This was milder in magical energy and could be produced in masses and consumed daily!

This would be a priceless treasure for those big sects!

“Hmm, this seedling evolved from the Vermilion Jade Rice and is even better than it, I shall name it ‘Flame Jade Rice’!”

After a long period of examination, Fang Yuan stood up, swept the dirt away and looked around at the withered plants, looking helpless. “After evolving, the spiritual plant would steal the elemental energy from its surroundings. Both the Vermilion Jade Rice and Emerald Grass failed to survive...”

His thoughts linked to the bamboo fruit that he was holding in his hands all along.

It would not grow if it was planted here. Ultimately, the Flame Jade Rice was just a little better than the Vermilion Jade Rice.

What made Fang Yuan speechless was the fact that only one of the many evolved!

How many grains would there be? And how many batches did he plant already?

He might not even be able to harvest a bowl of Flame Jade Rice! Therefore, the priority now was for him to focus his efforts to let it grow, replant all the harvest and after a few seasons, only then would he start to consume it.

“Ultimately, it would be a gain, just that the starting would be a little troublesome...”

Fang Yuan bit his teeth and looked around. “Hmm... Given the surroundings of the secluded valley, it is impossible to plant the Flame Jade Rice in large scales!”

Unknowingly, he looked towards the mountainous ridges of the Clear Spirit Mountain.

....

“I want to meditate and break through gates, I wouldn’t be too worried if both you are guarding the secluded valley!”

After a good meal of Vermilion Jade Rice, Fang Yuan called to the Flower Fox Ferret and the Iron-tailed Black Eagle. “There is one thing you two should take note. Do not harm the spiritual bamboo, spiritual tea, spiritual rice, and especially the Flame Jade Rice! Remember, if you want to have a taste of it in the future, you need to listen to me!”

It was rare that he was fierce to the two spiritual beasts.

The two spiritual beasts were not stupid and knew that they should not jeopardise their long-term benefits just for short-term satisfaction.

Fang Yuan closed the curtains and cleared his mind.

This was the state of mind that he achieved through years of cultivation under the Meditative Tea Ceremony. Within seconds, all cluttered thoughts were cleared and peace was restored in his mind.

After these few months of cultivation and training, he knew that his foundation was stable. Although he felt nothing, he knew that the previous time he ate the spiritual bamboo, his elemental energy had improved.

At the 8th Gate, his abdomen was filled with Yin, and this was the perfect opportunity to break through!

Fang Yuan sat down as he tried to feel for the spiritual feeling. Within his body, the Yin energy swirled within him, as it began to fuse with his inner force. They were now a single entity.

...

Unknowingly, it was daybreak and the sunlight peered through his curtains.

"Kacha!"

Fang Yuan, who was sitting down on the ground, let out a long sigh.

"Whiz!"

A white flash as agile as an arrow shot out, and all around him, he felt cold, which lowered the temperature in the entire room.

"After fusing my Yin, would there be any changes to my stats window?"

Fang Yuan mumbled to himself, stood up, and felt newfound strength within him as he nodded his head.

"The 9th Gate, completed!"

Carefree Path of Dreams

Chapter 69: Elder Han

"How far is Qingye City from here?"

Along the old pathway, there were a few carriages moving. Suddenly, a pale hand stretched out and opened the curtains, which revealed a pair of eyes.

The hand was so pale that it looked as if it had lost a great amount of blood. The blood vessels along the arm were also visible.

The person whose hand was pale had a strange voice. His old raspy voice had a slight hint of youthful vigour in it. He was already panting after saying a few words, which clearly suggested that he was easily short of breath.

"Elder Han please hold on, we will be there in a few hours time!"

The person who was at the helm of the carriage was Lu Zhisen, who went to the secluded valley to seek medical attention previously.

The only difference was that now he was being polite and respectful instead of his usual recklessness.

“Hurhur....that’s good....after all, we have Lin Leiyue with us on this trip. Once we reached back home, you should have a big reunion with Minister Lin.....”

Elder Han looked middle-aged. His lips were red and his teeth were white. He had a beautifully shaped pair of eyes. With his pale cheeks, his facial features were handsome in a feminine way. This effeminate side of him was accentuated whenever he covered his mouth when he coughed gently. Even Lu Zhisen was disgusted by this.

However, no matter how courageous he was, he wouldn’t dare to do anything to Elder Han who had attained the 4 Heavenly Gates in the Spirit Returning Sect.

“Elder Han, you are being too polite!”

Lin Leiyue was riding on a red date coloured horse previously and galloped forward respectfully after hearing what Elder Han said.

In the sect, she was the junior of both Elder Yan and Elder Han. After all, to an expert in 4 Heavenly Gates, even the direct disciple of the sect head was not on the same level unless the disciple had very exceptional abilities.

“Cough....no harm.....hurhur.....”

Elder Han wanted to say something but his expression changed. He then started coughing and covered his mouth with a piece of white handkerchief.

After which, he saw blood on the handkerchief.

“Elder Han.....”

Lin Leiyue got anxious and said, “Have your injuries worsened?”

“Hurhur....hurhur....I won’t die don’t worry.....”

Elder Han waved his hands and replied proudly. “Hehe....the vice head of the Five Ghosts Sect’s Soul Searching Hand was indeed powerful. Unfortunately for him, I was still more superior and managed to kill him. If the vice sect head was slightly more powerful, I would probably not be able to survive. Even if I managed to survive, I would probably be a vegetarian from then onwards.....”

Even though he sounded defeated, Lin Leiyue still respected him.

After all, Elder Han got hold of his position as an elder in the sect 50 years ago and definitely had a vast experience in martial arts. Even though he was older than Lady Yan, he was still able to defeat many good young martial artists. Everybody in the Qinghe County would be afraid when they heard his name.

He was in such a state because he was ambushed by the Five Ghosts Sect.

“Please don’t worry, Elder Han. This doctor in the secluded valley is highly skilled and can cure many illnesses. He was also the one who cured Elder Zhao previously!”

Lu Zhisen said, “You are highly skilled and with the help of the doctor, you should be able to recover in no time!”

“Haha....thanks for your well wishes!”

Elder Han smiled but his deep expression showed that he seemed to be thinking of something else.

Lin Leiyue didn't seem to notice his expression and pondered over her thoughts silently. “Even though Elder Han had managed to defeat the vice sect head, one other person still managed to escape and this would mean serious trouble for the sect. Plus, with both Elder Yan and Elder Han being injured right now, the attacking power of the sect would be less.....Both elders had not recovered from their injuries and the doctors in the sect had no solutions to help them. This doctor in the secluded valley would be our final hope then.....”

As compared to Elder Han's injuries, Lady Yan's injuries were worse when she was fighting against a few experts.

However, Song Zhong was part of her faction previously, but he was killed by Fang Yuan.....

Not to mention anything about grudges but she would mind.

Even if Fang Yuan was willing to treat her, she would probably not trust Fang Yuan fully and she would think that Fang Yuan would do something harmful to her.

After all, if a doctor wanted a person to die without being identified as the murderer, the doctor would have many ways to do it.

In fact, Shi Yutong actually had another choice which was to seek medical attention from the alchemy master who had previously helped Lin Leiyue.

However, the alchemy master was a carefree person and isolated himself from the outside world. Plus the alchemy master had other commitments and why would the alchemy master accept a request made by the Spirit Returning Sect?

Previously, the alchemy master owed Shi Yutong a favour which was why he agreed to help Lin Leiyue. Since now the favour had been returned, it would be harder to ask the alchemy master for help.

“Elder Han, this doctor has a weird attitude and he set many rules....”

The memories of him being scolded by the doctor were still vivid in his mind. Lu Zhisen touched his head and remarked.

“Don't worry, I do understand. After all, I'm the one that require his help now....”

Elder Han smiled and looked at Lin Leiyue. “Lin Leiyue, I heard you were once engaged to this doctor and you even went to Shaoyang City?”

Upon hearing this, Lin Leiyue blushed. “Yes, you are correct!”

“That is unfortunate....”

Elder Han closed his eyes and didn't know who should he feel unfortunate for, Lin Leiyue or Fang Yuan.

'This person is mysterious. The head of the sect had instructed to keep Fang Yuan for the sect's use....at least not to let him go to the enemy's side....and also to find out the secret behind his fast advancement in his skills.....'

He then returned to his previously relaxed posture and gazed out at Qingye City in hopelessness.

.....

Back in the secluded valley.

"Hoo.....Haa....."

Fang Yuan was half naked and was regulating his breathing.

"Chirp! Chirp!"

Iron-tailed Black Eagle flew down from above. Its claws were like hooks and with its fast speed, it was indeed a powerful eagle.

"Keke!"

On the ground, a white light flashed past very quickly.

"You came just in time!"

With the attacks from air and land by the 2 spiritual beasts, a normal expert in 4 Heavenly Gates would also be confused.

However, Fang Yuan couldn't wait to take action when he saw this.

"Iron Skin Technique!"

He breathed in and could feel the energy surging. He then stepped his right leg out and the ground beside his leg split.

"Piak!"

The clothing on his leg immediately broke into pieces and it revealed his muscular legs and tightened skin. He was not injured at all.

"Hissss..."

The Flower Fox Ferret retreated and looked as if it had incurred a big loss.

"Hoo! Hoo!"

Just when it had just retreated by a few steps, a strong wind came and a giant eagle's claws came pouncing down.

"Haha....."

Fang Yuan laughed and lifted his right hand with his left hand at the bottom. This formed an eagle's claw shape and he aimed it at the sky.

"Chirp! Chirp!"

When the giant eagle's claws came, Fang Yuan's eyes glittered and grabbed with both his hands. "You better come down now!"

"Swish! Swish!"

Fang Yuan's attack was strong and swift. Both of his hands managed to grab hold of the giant eagle's claws and he lifted the claws fiercely.

"Bang!"

The Iron-tailed Black Eagle then fell to the ground forcefully.

With such strong impact, the Iron-tailed Black Eagle couldn't hold any longer even though it had tough bones. It let out a cry to admit defeat.

"Keke!"

The Flower Fox Ferret immediately raised both of its claws to admit defeat.

"Fine, I shall stop.....I was just warming up actually....."

Fang Yuan stopped and saw both the Flower Fox Ferret and the Iron-tailed Black Eagle were trembling. They were obviously injured by Fang Yuan's inner force. Fang Yuan then went forward and treat them.

'The inner force of an expert in 4 Heavenly Gates changes and is different from a normal inner force. Such inner force can defeat a low skilled martial artist easily....Of course, no matter what changes there are, elemental force is way superior compared to inner force and both types of forces are of different levels.....'

Fang Yuan gradually understood how it felt to be a [Martial Artist (9th Gate)].

Through his tough training, his skills had surpassed the two spiritual beasts and that meant a lot to him.

At least, the spiritual beasts which were previously living in the forests knew the concept of 'the weak losing out to the stronger ones'. They might become friends with humans but having a weakling to become their master was unacceptable!

The first step to tame a spiritual beast was to show one's dominance over it!

Similarly, in this case, Fang Yuan felt that the way the Iron-tailed Black Eagle looked at him was different now. The Iron-tailed Black Eagle was less proud now.

"With my current skills and the 2 spiritual beasts, dealing with the Red-eyed White King Bird shouldn't be a big problem for me now...."

Upon reaching this conclusion, Fang Yuan was slightly hesitant instead.

Even though he already had plans to take over the Green Peak, the Red-eyed White King Bird could, after all, fly. If he missed his shot and caused it to escape elsewhere, wouldn't he have to fear of it coming back in future?

"It is better for me to break through the 11th Gate first before moving on to take over the Green Peak!"

Fang Yuan wavered and looked at his stats window:

“Name: Fang Yuan

Essence: 5.9

Spirit: 5.8

Magic: 3.5

Age: 19

Cultivation: [Martial Artists (9th Gate)]

Technique: [Black Sand Palm (Grade 5)], [Eagle Claw Iron Skin Technique (Grade 9)] (with the addition of Yin’s inner force)

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

“The 4 Heavenly Gates, which was after the Death Gate, did actually help to improve my magic!”

Even though this was not the first time he saw his magic increase by a little, he felt happy still when he saw the increase.

From his conjecture, he had realised that attaining the 12 Golden Gates was similar to becoming a spiritual knight. This would allow a normal human being to become powerful.

As such, the process not only helped to condition one’s body and also improve one’s magic.

However, he didn’t expect this feature to only appear when approaching the 4 Heavenly Gates.

“With such big magnitude, it would still be difficult to attain the standard of a spiritual knight even if one was able to break through the Heaven Gate.....”

This was the reason why there were many martial artists who were of [Martial Artist (12th Gate)] but there was no one in Wu Zong.

The Heaven Gate was difficult to break through! Attaining Wu Zong was even tougher!

Carefree Path of Dreams

Chapter 70: Xuan Yin

After many days.

Fang Yuan was seated on an emerald rock and was frowning, as though he had doubts.

“After the 9th Gate, the next step is to harness the Yin to break the Yang Gate. But in order to fuse the Yin and Yang to form the elemental force while breaking through the Gate, I will need some help...”

Although Fang Yuan had the spiritual knight’s Blood Magic Technique, it was ultimately different from true martial arts.

The highest Gate he could attain through the Eagle Claw Iron Skin Technique was the 12th Gate. There was no chance of him breaking through Wu Zong, and realizing the true elemental force.

The only chance Fang Yuan had was through the Spirit Returning Heart Manual, which was incomplete. He felt that it was such a pity.

“The Spirit Returning Heart Manual is passed down by word, so must I really kidnap a Spirit Returning Sect disciple or elder to question him?”

He had a wild thought but dismissed it quickly.

“Chirp! Chirp!”

At this moment, there was a strong gust of wind as the Iron-tailed Black Eagle landed on the ground, chirping at Fang Yuan.

“Oh? Is someone arriving?”

Fang Yuan waved and sat down.

“Gong Gong!”

“Clang Clang!”

The sound of deafening gongs was heard from a distance and it drew nearer and nearer to the secluded valley.

“Another one who is giving me more experience...!”

Fang Yuan took a quick glance at his experience bar, and [Medicine] was filled up to a large extent and was almost equal to that of [Botany]. He laughed, stood up and walked out of the valley.

“Someone from the Spirit Returning Sect?”

In the pavilion, a crowd was waiting patiently and followed the rules. The one in front was his acquaintance, Lu Zhisen.

“The doctor has arrived!”

The usually rash Lu Zhisen became excited and greeted Fang Yuan the moment he saw him.

“Oh, it’s Elder Lu. Who’s injured this time?”

Fang Yuan was direct, but none of the Spirit Returning Sect’s disciples took it to heart. After all, a doctor who could make miracles would be rather different from other normal doctors.

“Cough cough... it’s me!”

The disciples made way and revealed an Elder Han in a wheelchair.

“I am injured and cannot properly offer you a greeting, please don’t take it to heart!”

Elder Han clenched his fist and greeted Fang Yuan. He appeared humble, which surprised Elder Lu and the other sect disciples.

Lin Leiyue was not here. When they returned to Qingye City, she immediately returned to her home. Even though she made the excuse up, it was clear why she didn’t come along with the rest.

“A doctor should have care like parents, why would I blame you!”

Fang Yuan intentionally deepened his voice and noticed Elder Han twitched his eyebrows as he laughed. It seemed that he agreed with Fang Yuan, but deep down knew that he was scheming and might not be that easy to deal with.

“Please!”

After he brought the patient into the Straw Pavilion, he felt his pulse. “Elder Han had sustained an internal injury for quite a while now, this is hard...”

At the same time, he felt emotional, for he had seen every elder, including the Sect Master of the Spirit Returning Sect.

“Doctor, you are indeed impressive. This injury was from the Five Ghosts Sect assistant Sect Master! Cough Cough...”

Elder Han explained, and Lu Zhisen revealed a delicate box.

“I’ve heard of your rule, and have no intention of breaking it. I present to you the Xuan Yin Heart Technique Manual, and hope you will accept it...”

Elder Han continued. “This heart manual came from the Five Ghosts Sect and can be cultivated up till the realm of Wu Zong without any problem. Furthermore, this is a complete copy of the manual. I’ve heard that you rendered assistance to Lin Leiyue at Shaoyang City, and I shall thank you for that. Please accept this manual as a form of my gratitude... Regardless if I will recover in the future, I shall send more gifts, which will surely satisfy you!”

“Xuan Yin Heart Technique? The Five Ghost Sect’s true magical technique?”

Fang Yuan was surprised and received the box. As he opened it, he saw a black scroll within, filled with tiny words describing the 12 Golden Gates as well as Wu Zong. Based on his current experience he could only understand the first few lines and knew that this was the real deal.

“This present... is worth too much!”

He closed the wooden box and had a serious tone. “Elder Han, are you sure you are willing to give this technique manual to me? Won’t there be implications? Furthermore, I know that any manual with the sect’s special technique that is able to break through to Wu Zong would surely be incomplete, and had to be filled up by the word of mouth and cannot be written down, am I right?

What was a sect’s special technique?

This meant that if Fang Yuan was willing, he could base solely on this technique to start his own sect!

This kind of sect foundation was akin to a magical weapon, so how could one give it up so easily?

“Doctor Fang is indeed wise!”

Hearing how Fang Yuan understood the crux, Elder Han’s eyes glittered. “This technique was stolen by myself, and since the Five Ghost Sect is almost destroyed now, you can accept this gift without any

worry for no one will find trouble with you... And as for the incomplete manual, I have already filled it up personally, and you can try it out to see for yourself, it would be fine..."

"Filled up?"

Fang Yuan frowned.

"That's right... I only had to capture a few disciples of the Five Ghosts Sect to obtain the remaining information, nothing too difficult..."

Elder Han laughed while Fang Yuan remained silent.

After capturing these people, there was no need for torture. They would automatically sell out their sect to ensure their own safety and preserve their own life.

'This came at such a good time...'

After all, he was looking for a technique that could attain Wu Zong. Never would he have dreamt that someone would deliver it to him. What a blessing!

Furthermore, Elder Han was an extremely suitable patient for him to test his skills on!

After fusing the Yin and Yang, seeds of the elemental force would develop to break through the Earth Gate. This was Elder Han, a [Martial Artist (11th Gate)]. But now, he had no strength and had to succumb under Fang Yuan's hands; what a scene!

'A martial artist of Earth Gate would have already harnessed elemental energy, and by observing this person's blood circulation and inner force, I can test my hypothesis further!'

Fang Yuan felt warm, and his glare made Elder Han feel uncomfortable for a moment.

"Please leave, I will start now..."

Fang Yuan retrieved his golden needles, told Lu Zhisen in a serious tone.

"Oh! Very well!"

Even though he wanted to watch Fang Yuan, he wasn't a fool and politely left the Straw Pavilion. He even closed the door after him, but no one really knew what he was thinking about.

"I will use my Golden Needle Acupoint Piercing Technique. If you feel any pain, do not use your elemental force to counter it, just relax and let nature take its course!"

Fang Yuan spun around and was uncertain. Even though Elder Han was powerful, he was powerless here. "I'm afraid that in your current state, even if you wanted to move you wouldn't be able to..."

"Very well!"

Fang Yuan's hands worked extremely fast, and 2 golden needles made their way towards Elder Han's forehead.

"Eh?!"

Elder Han's face twitched, remained motionless and fainted.

“Ping!”

His body fell to the ground. Fang Yuan first observed his palms as he appeared light-hearted. “You may seem to trust me completely, but you took precautions against me... Of course, it may be your habit as you roam the martial arts world for the many years, but I’ll let you know that your precautions were right...”

With such a good test subject in front of him, why would he not take full advantage of it?

Since he decided to make use of him, keeping him awake would be troublesome, so why not just make him faint?

“This is the rights of a doctor. Whatever I do is for your own good!”

Fang Yuan looked at the defenceless Elder Han, and his smile grew...

...

“Creak!”

After a while.

The door to the hut opened and revealed a somewhat exhausted Fang Yuan.

“Doctor, how is Elder Han?”

An anxious Lu Zhisen came over.

“It was fortunate!”

Fang Yuan wiped his fake sweat and smiled. “Bring him home first. After 7 days, return here for me to perform my acupoint piercing once again. Coupled with medicinal herbs, he should recover fully in half a year...”

Illness and injury might come in an instant, but recovering would take very much longer. Lu Zhisen understood that.

Thinking about how the people within the sect were all helpless when facing Elder Han, Elder Lu gained even more respect for Fang Yuan. He bowed, came into the hut and saw Elder Han lying there with a weak breath. His face had more life now, and Lu Zhisen was glad. “Thank you, doctor! I will return after 7 days!”

He then ordered the disciples of the Spirit Returning Sect to put down all their gifts and brought Elder Han back.

Fang Yuan sent them off, and only after they have disappeared from sight, Fang Yuan revealed a sinister smile.

It was true that Elder Han’s injury was hard to treat. If he did use his true [Medicine] skills, it would only take him half a month to save him. However, he wanted to delay his recovery so that he could use him more often as a test subject.

“Furthermore... This person has his guard up against me!”

What Elder Han did previously had worried Fang Yuan a little.

After all, he was the Spirit Returning Sect's Elder, who commanded a high position within the sect. His attitude would be equivalent to the Spirit Returning Sect's attitude, and so Fang Yuan could guess what the sect's impression of him was.

"This was reasonable though..."

Fang Yuan thought about this. If he was the sect and an uncontrollable factor appeared, he would be likely to react the same way as the sect.

The sect only had the intention to test him for now, and might even want to have him as an ally, but as for the future, no one knew.

"The good thing is that I have gained so much this time, therefore my prediction could be true!"

Thinking about his own little experiment, Fang Yuan clenched his fist in excitement.

Elder Han even volunteered himself as a test subject, which was of a great help to Fang Yuan.

After all, he could conclude that it was indeed possible to directly harness the seeds of elemental force. This was even more so after obtaining the Xuan Yin Heart Technique; it was as though the last piece of the puzzle appeared.

"Hmm, even Shi Yutong wouldn't have guessed that I only cared about how to breakthrough to Wu Zong, and not any other secret martial arts manuals. With the Blood Magic Technique as a reference, any wrongly filled up information would not be able to escape my eyes... Of course, I will have to take precautions against this Elder Han too!"

After thinking, Fang Yuan returned to the secluded valley, changed to a new set of clothes, ordered the Flower Fox Ferret to look after the house, and started to chase and follow the Spirit Returning Sect party.

It was a peaceful night in Qingye City.

Lin family's mansion was located in the central of the city. After the incident of Song Zhong and the collapse of Zhou family, Lin Benchu and Lin Dayuan were successful and managed to hold a strong image for the family. They even redecorated their entrance door and added a pair of green lion statues right outside the door.

Fang Yuan was familiar with this place. Back when he was a child, he visited this place before with Master Wenxin.

At this point, Elder Han and a few disciples from the Spirit Returning Sect were seeking shelter here as well.

Fang Yuan waited till the right time before he changed into his night combat outfit. He then snuck into the Lin family's mansion and ignored the guards and the disciples from the Spirit Returning Sect.

Even though it was late into the night, a few rooms were still lit.

Fang Yuan randomly glanced at his surroundings and snuck into Minister Lin's study room.

“Hoo! Hoo!”

He jumped softly and reached the roof. He then lifted one of the green tiles from the roof and looked inside the room.

Minister Lin was rich all of a sudden. Although his study room was messy and the books were piled up at a corner, there were many expensive decorations and antiques placed around the room.

Also, there was another person standing right in front of Elder Lin.

“Lin Leiyue! She is here also?”

Fang Yuan wavered slightly.

Of course, he was a [Martial Artist (9th Gate)] and both the father and the daughter didn’t notice him yet.

“What? You haven’t make a breakthrough?”

Minister Lin listened to what his daughter said and he gave a worried face.

Even though he became rich overnight, he knew that if his daughter still did not manage to make a breakthrough in time, her position in the Spirit Returning Sect would not be stable.

She was representing the Lin family, and if she did lose her position, the consequences would be dire.

“Don’t worry daughter....what exactly happened? With your talents....with your talents.....”

Minister Lin wanted to add on but he knew nothing about the concept of her being a spiritual being. He could only keep walking around and then he waved his hand. “If you need anything, you can just tell me!”

Even though Minister Lin clearly understood that even with the help from the Spirit Returning Sect and Shi Yutong, Lin Leiyue was not able to make a breakthrough, what could he do about it if the Lin family became bankrupt from this in the end? However, he felt that he shouldn’t mention this now and he gave a ferocious look.

“Father....there is no use....”

Lin Leiyue looked down at her dress and sighed.

“You.....sigh.....”

Minister Lin pitied his daughter and said, “You do know that Fang Yuan has just become an expert in inner force and he is well known in Qingye City. The Zhou and Zhang families now are taking orders from him.....”

Their disengagement was not a secret.

Obviously, it was like a tight slap in the face for the Lin family as Fang Yuan now managed to improve tremendously and become more well known.

Also, this happened when Lin Leiyue was still alive.

If she was dead or she was trapped in one of the gates for too long, Shi Yutong might lose confidence in her and by then, there would be no bright future for the Lin family.

If one managed to reach a very high level but fell from it, in the end, it would be a very big problem.

“Sigh.....”

Minister Lin sighed and said, “If we had known this would happen, we should not have even....”

“What was supposed to happen has already happened. You should say no more, Father!”

Minister Lin didn’t expect Lin Leiyue’s reaction to be this big after he said his sentence.

“Leiyue.....is it that you.....”

Minister Lin was surprised and seemed to have thought of something. He then shook his head and left the room silently.

Now, Lin Leiyue was the only person left in the room.

“Fang Yuan.....Fang Yuan.....”

From the silence, Fang Yuan could hear a whisper from Lin Leiyue. She then sighed emotionally.

“...”

Fang Yuan unintentionally heard her secret and left after covering the tile back.

With Lin Leiyue’s talents, it was indeed strange for her to be stuck at the Pain Gate for so long.

Only now then he realised he was one of the reasons why she had failed to break through.

“No wonder you came to inquire about me previously....”

Fang Yuan wasn’t that narcissistic to a level that he would think Lin Leiyue still had feelings for him. Now, he could make a guess easily. “Was it because of her evil side? I didn’t expect that I would affect her that much!”

During training, when one meets his or her evil side, there were only two solutions to this problem.

One could forcefully deal and remove her evil side, or one could.....

Upon thinking about the other solution, Fang Yuan was speechless and had a wonderful feeling about such happenings.

“Could this be her punishment to herself? Then this will be none of my business already...”

With his character, the opponent would not be able to deal with him in any way.

Fang Yuan could conclude that with his tremendous improvement, he would surpass Lin Leiyue and even Shi Yutong. This would also mean that Lin Leiyue would feel guilty of herself for her entire life for not being able to make that breakthrough.

Such punishment was crueler than taking her life away.

.....

Fang Yuan couldn't be bothered with what Lin Leiyue was feeling right now.

From the start, he was already not concerned with her matters and he could easily not be bothered by her. He then continued to search for Elder Han.

'From my acupuncture, he should have just woken up!'

Fang Yuan waited silently and suddenly heard a laughter from the courtyard below him. He then knew he located Elder Han and sneaked there.

"With my skills now, there will be a chance of me being discovered only when Elder Han fully recovers!"

Fang Yuan bypassed a few whispers and came to a room. He then concentrated his magical energy between his eyebrows and focused it outwards.

He had learnt this trick from the scroll in the Blood Magic Technique. After he executed this trick, he could see clearly what was inside the room. The furniture were placed nicely in the room and there was an old man lying down on the bed. The old man got up fiercely and spat out a mouthful of blood.

"Elder Han!"

A person came in anxiously and Fang Yuan could recognise that the person was Lu Zhisen.

"It is nothing.....I'm okay!"

Elder Han coughed out another mouthful of blood but he then felt better. "I'm hungry. Can I have a bowl of ginseng porridge...."

"Coming up!"

Lu Zhisen replied happily and asked, "You are better now, Elder Han?"

"I have recovered partially. This doctor Fang is indeed powerful. As compared to him, all the doctors back in our sect are useless!"

One could see that Elder Han's resentment for the doctors back in the sect was big. Elder Han then observed his surroundings and asked, "Are we back in the Lin family's mansion?"

"Yes, you have been asleep from the acupuncture till now. The doctor has prescribed you with medicine and reminded you to take a good rest. We will then go back to him after 7 days!"

"Hmm!"

Elder Han acknowledged and swallowed a spoonful of the porridge. He suddenly said, "Guan Feng, keep a lookout outside. I will need to speak to Elder Lu!"

"Yes, Elder Han!"

A voice from the outside acknowledged Elder Han's order and a few of the disciples from the Spirit Returning Sect then came to patrol the surroundings.

As such, to spy on them, one would either have to go head-on with the guards or find a way to sneak in.

Fang Yuan laughed and moved further away from the room. However, with the concentration of his magical energy, he was still able to hear the conversation inside the room clearly.

“With Guan Feng guarding outside, I feel much safer to speak to you....”

Elder Han nodded and his expression suddenly became gloomy. “How is Fang Yuan’s.....skills? You have duelled with him before so you should know?”

Lu Zhisen was surprised by Elder Han’s question and replied, “He is [Martial Artist (7th Gate)] and has not broken through the 4 Heavenly Gates.....I am ashamed that I couldn’t survive through a few of his moves!”

“Hehe.... I see, a [Martial Artist (7th Gate)]. He is well known in Qinghe County but with what I have seen now.....Fang Yuan has not revealed his full power yet.....”

Elder Han laughed and imagined a scene which Fang Yuan was charging right at him.

In fact, he had no intention to repel his attacks as he knew that he was injured badly and if Fang Yuan really had intentions to kill him, he would not be able to repel Fang Yuan’s attack.

However, Fang Yuan had a secret technique and if he executed it, his skills would be on par with a [Martial Artist (8th Gate)]! This would be his true power.

“Did you just mention.....the Death....the Death Gate? That....is impossible. He is still so young! This is only possible if he had started training while he was in his mother’s womb...”

Lu Zhisen’s voice was trembling, which clearly showed that he was surprised by Fang Yuan’s achievements.

He spoke halfway and realised that according to what the Lin family had learnt, Fang Yuan had only trained martial arts for a year!

“Do you understand my point? Even if the Lin family’s intel on Fang Yuan was wrong, he must be extremely talented to achieve such level even if he had started training since young.....If the sect head was not busy, she would have taken this matter into her own hands.....”

Elder Han closed his eyes and said, “You have known enough about him for now. I have duelled with him previously and I shall tell you more after I have recovered!”

“Yes, Elder Han!”

Lu Zhisen acknowledged and was worried.

“Haha....you thought I had done something funny to the Xuan Yin Heart Technique?”

Elder Han seemed to have seen through him and laughed. “I will still need his help to recover from my injuries. How could I do such thing and betray him at this point in time? What I gave him was indeed the original one!”

However, Elder Han did not mention that even though the technique he gave was original, through Shi Yutong’s authentication, when this technique was trained to a high level, there would be side effects. The side effects include a change in personality and the condition of the body and many more.

Such changes were gradual and would not be discovered if one did not train the technique to a high level.

But if one were to do so, it would be impossible to revert.

'Lin Leiyue is the next successor to the throne of the sect head. Fang Yuan can be persuaded to join their side and in future, it will be sufficient to just reward him. How will he then be able to improve further and become a threat to the new successor?'

'Furthermore.....the presence of Fang Yuan is just a big obstacle to Lin Leiyue. Lin Leiyue still haven't realised that I have been advised by the sect head before about this.....'

'After my recovery, I shall help to solve Lin Leiyue's problems!'

'As for Fang Yuan, I will need to know all his secrets and if I am successful, maybe I can reward him and have him by my side. If I am not.....hehe.....'

...

Under the flame, Lu Zhisen saw Elder Han's dull face darken. He instantly felt a cold stream rush down his spine and he shuddered.