

Chapter 11 - Haunted by an Evil Spirit

His courage increased his power, and his power increased his courage. It was a positive feedback loop.

He trained until sunset and actually felt hungry again. Right now, he was still very skinny, nowhere near as wide as Li Hu or Li Bao. Only he knew that none of the essences from the water deer meat had gone to waste. It had all merged with his body.

His body was like a bottomless hole, draining and absorbing all the alcohol and meat greedily, converting it into power.

After training, Li Qingshan sat down on the spot, closed his eyes, and settled down, feeling all the changes to his body. Overexerting his muscles and bones was extremely painful. He could still remember how he almost could not get out of bed from the pain on the second day of practising the Ox Demon's Fist of Great Strength.

On that day, the black ox had not urged him on either. He had forcefully endured the pain and gotten up to train. Only after a dozen or so days of consecutive training did it get slightly better. No, it should be that his tolerance had increased. Logically, his body should have gradually grown accustomed to it all after making it through the first few days, but the pain he experienced did not lessen at all. He still felt like he had only begun training every day.

Every single change his body went through was reflected in his heart with great clarity. Unfortunately, he could not sense any of the so-called qi. According to the black ox, only when one sensed the flow of qi and produced a trace of true qi would a grasp of the basics for any ability or technique be achieved. He had been cultivating for far too short a period.

At this moment, he suddenly felt a chill. It moved about behind his neck like a cold breeze.

However, there was no breeze at all, much less a cold breeze.

Is this the so-called qi?

Li Qingshan was elated. He concentrated on the cold sensation, but he gradually felt the chill penetrate his skin and enter deeper and deeper, reaching his bone marrow and even his soul. It was extremely cold and very unpleasant.

Li Qingshan shook his head. He stood up and practised a little more. The chill dispersed slightly, but it pestered him once again when he sat back down.

He had no idea what went wrong, so he went to the stream by his house to wash himself. The moon shone brilliantly that night. When he glanced at his reflection in the water, he saw a pale-white child with a stiff expression perched on him.

Even with his increased courage, he became covered in cold sweat from fright. Immediately, he thought about a movie from his past life called The Grudge.

If it were someone else, they would have definitely become stupefied, but Li Qingshan had lived with an ox daemon for so long after all. Using the reflection, he made eye contact with the child. The child only

seemed to be seven or eight years old. His expression was dull and stiff. Li Qingshan said to the child, "What are you? Why're you on me?"

However, the child only moved its head. The surface of the water rippled at this moment, and the reflection of the child vanished. However, the chill clearly remained.

Li Qingshan did his best to remain composed. I've run into a ghost. Why is this little ghost haunting me? I have to wait for brother ox to return so that I can talk to him. Fortunately, I won't be losing my life anytime soon.

However, he felt no confidence, only feeling fear. The coldness ate away at him faster and faster, so he began practising the Ox Demon's Fist of Great Strength again in a hurry. Only then would the cold sensation vanish. However, he was not a machine that knew no fatigue. He still needed to sit down and rest, which felt especially tormenting whenever it happened.

This lasted until the middle of the night, a time when yin qi was the heaviest.

The cold sensation had already invaded most of Li Qingshan's body. He felt no obvious pain. However, his arms and legs gradually grew numb, and his senses felt blurred.

An intense sense of danger made him wrack his brains as hard as he could.

He had heard that all people possessed yang qi, which could restrain creatures of the dead. He thought about how his blood vessels swelled as blood rushed through them when he practised the ability, which was why the little ghost had been afraid of approaching him. As a result, whenever he meditated, he did his best to replicate the feeling of when he practised. He closed his eyes, used his thoughts, and tensed his muscles. As expected, it was somewhat effective, allowing him to barely stop the attack of yin qi.

He lasted the night like that. His mind would be clear at times and sleepy at others, which was a vicious exercise on his mind and willpower. This situation continued until his willpower was close to collapsing.

With a rooster's crow, the sun began to rise, and Li Qingshan's eyes snapped open. Sunlight landed on his face through the trees, which was rather dazzling. The coldness on his body had vanished. The black ox looked at him from nearby with great fascination.

Li Qingshan said, "Where'd you go, brother ox? Did you know what I came across last night?"

"I came back a long time ago. Isn't it just a little ghost on you?"

"And you just watched on?"

"What am I supposed to do?"

Li Qingshan grimaced and said nothing. The black ox had told him a long time ago. "No matter what danger you come across, you better not rely on me, as I'm not even going to lift a finger to help out." Right from the beginning, the ox had never given him the opportunity to rely on it. Li Qingshan glanced at the gazelle by the ox's foot, which prohibited him from complaining even more. The black ox had already provided him with the most crucial assistance. He could not rely on the black ox for everything.

Under the warm sunlight of the rising sun, Li Qingshan stood up and loosened up. “Fortunately the little ghost won’t come out during the day, as I really can’t last much longer than that. Brother ox, I’m practising a daoist ability after all, yet I can’t even deal with a mere ghost?”

“If it were not for the ability you practised, you wouldn’t have even been able to last through the night. Once you achieve the strength of one ox, you’ll be brimming with vigour, and you obviously won’t be afraid of a mere ghost.”

“Then how much longer do I have to wait?”

“Apart from that, I have another idea.”

“What idea?”

“Ghosts are afraid of murderous and vicious auras the most. If you claim a hundred or so lives with your hands, I’ll guarantee you that anything evil will avoid you like the plague. That little ghost won’t even be able to get in a range of ten steps from you.”

Li Qingshan rolled his eyes. “Am I supposed to massacre the entire village?”

“It’s not like that’s impossible. What, you want to try it?” The black ox sniggered.

“Why don’t I butcher you into steaks first!” Li Qingshan ignored it. He dealt with the gazelle first. After eating breakfast, he tossed this matter aside for now and ignored his fatigue before applying himself to another day of cultivation.

However, as soon as he began cultivating, he felt that it was rather different from before. A thin, weak sliver of ‘qi’ flowed through his body. He would have never discovered it had he not been careful.

The qi was not like the true qi mentioned in those wuxia novels, stored within the dantian and flowing along the meridians. Instead, it flowed freely like a fish, passing through every part of his body. Whenever he punched out hard, the sliver would flow through his arms and into his fist. All of it would happen in a single moment.

His mind eased up, and the sliver flowed off somewhere. It was like a misbehaving child, basically beyond his control. He told the black ox about this.

The black ox was not surprised. Instead, it said meaningfully, “It’s all thanks to that little ghost that you were able to sense the existence of qi so soon. You can say that it’s a blessing in disguise.”

On the edge of life and death, Li Qingshan had used everything that his mind and willpower could offer to fend off the yin qi. The little ghost had departed, but the willpower lingered, turning into a trace of true qi.

“So this is true qi?” Li Qingshan gazed at his palm. “What exactly do you use true qi for?”

“Refining vitality into qi, refining vitality into qi. Is it just for this qi? What do you think its uses are? If you can’t sense qi, it’ll just be some peasant’s tricks even if you practise for your entire life. You won’t be able to achieve anything. As for the benefits, they are truly innumerable. You’ll just have to experience it yourself slowly.”

