

## Chapter 21 - Buying Ginseng and Being Ambushed

Li Qingshan arrived at the finest establishment for alcohol in the town and bought over a dozen jars of fine alcohol, filling up the ox cart. Afterwards, he followed the detailed list the black ox had provided him with and bought most of the necessary items from the medicine store. However, the most important ginseng could not be bought there.

Within the largest inn in Cypress Stream town, a group of people with large bamboo hats and medicinal baskets on their backs drank tea quietly. Even when they were in the inn, they did not take off their hats or baskets.

From time to time, the shopkeepers of the larger medicine stores would enter the inn and open the baskets to take a look. Afterwards, they would put their hands into their sleeves and haggle prices with these people. If they were successful, they would take a packet of ginseng that varied in size from the baskets.

These people were ginseng foragers from the Ginseng King village. Similar to the Drawn Reins village, they resided deep within the mountains, but they made a living off gathering ginseng in the mountains. Obviously, they sold ginseng for the lowest price.

Li Qingshan parked the ox cart in front of the inn and looked around before striding to the corner. He said to the ginseng foragers, "I want to buy ginseng!"

The ginseng foragers saw how young he was and how he was dressed in tatters, so they scorned him. None of them actually answered him.

Li Qingshan frowned. He took out his remaining thousand or so silver notes from his clothes and placed it on the table, "I want to buy ginseng!"

With that, all of the ginseng foragers raised their heads. They were stunned. They had never expected Li Qingshan to be able to produce so much money. They looked at one another and finally, someone asked, "How much do you want?"

Li Qingshan already knew the price of ginseng, so they agreed on a price in the end. As such, he left with a huge bag of ginseng.

The ginseng foragers said quietly, "Should we just finish off this kid?"

"Searching for the spiritual ginseng is more important. That's a treasure worth a tremendous amount of gold. Regular people can prolong their lives if they eat it, while practitioners of martial arts can immediately become a first-rate master. Even overcoming the obstacles and reaching the innate realm won't be anything difficult."

"The spiritual ginseng is great, but there is only one of it, and we have to deal with that sickly bastard from the Drawn Reins village as well. A bird in one hand is better than two in the bush. Whoever is willing to do it, come with me."

Seven or eight of them stood up, grabbed the blades on their waists, and left by taking a detour.

Near the entrance, a person was hiding behind a post. He saw this before leaving silently.

Li Qingshan traveled on a cliffside mountain path alone with the ox cart, trying to make conversation with the black ox. Xiao An stuck his head out from the wooden tablet, listening to them talk quietly on the ox cart.

They arrived in a narrow valley, and the black ox suddenly stopped. He glanced back at Li Qingshan. "Your trouble is here."

With that, seven or eight figures appeared on the two ends of the path leading through the valley.

Li Qingshan identified them from afar with his eyesight. "You're... from the Ginseng King village?" These people all clutched the blades at their waists. They were clearly planning on killing then robbing him.

I still ended up underestimating the vileness of human nature! He could only sigh inside. He did understand the principle of keeping wealth hidden, which was why he had immediately set off with the ox cart to return to the village after buying the ginseng without remaining there for a second longer. However, he never expected these people to be so bold; they were actually trying to rob him in broad daylight.

It was rumored that these people who spent all day clambering about on cliffs, harvesting ginseng and other herbs, were extremely fierce and brutal with their attitudes and customs. Moreover, they all possessed martial arts. They could be as light as a feather and as nimble as a squirrel.

"Kid, there's something we want to discuss with you!" The leader said calmly as his eyes shone with derision. It was as if he were looking at livestock for slaughter. "Leave behind everything, and you can leave."

His calmness was not an act. They moved through the mountains frequently. Whenever they encountered lone travellers, they would just kill them and take their belongings. It was common practice to them, but after they were done, they obviously would not leave anyone alive.

The ginseng foragers sniggered as they surrounded him.

Seeing the danger approach, Li Qingshan suddenly shook the reins, and the black ox glanced at him. He was cooperative, charging forwards with the ox cart.

"You'll wish you had accepted that request in the first place!" The ginseng foragers called out and dodged to the sides quickly. A blade flashed from each side, swinging towards Li Qingshan on the cart.

The black ox twisted its head, and its only horn followed a strange trajectory. The leader saw the horn approach him, but he was actually unable to dodge it. It pierced his stomach viciously, nailing him against the rock face.

The ginseng forager's eyes remained wide open as blood spurted from his mouth. He refused to believe that he would die to the horn of an cow despite his martial arts.

At the same time, Li Qingshan leapt off the cart and dodged the two swings. His hand landed on the hilt of his steel blade.

The black ox drew out its horn and thought, From the perspective of an ox, I've already outdone myself. The rest is up to you.

The ginseng foragers cried out, "Big brother Geng!" This 'big brother Geng' was the one with the best martial arts out of all of them, but who would have thought that he would die in such a bizarre manner? They never would have imagined that the black ox was a monster.

Afterwards, they said viciously to Li Qingshan, "Kid, do you know what you've done? Originally, we planned on giving you a quick death, but just you wait now! We'll slice off your flesh piece by piece and feed it to wolves!"

Li Qingshan sneered, "Just with you lot?" However, he was extremely stern as he drew his blade slowly.

He had never thought that he would encounter two fights in a single day, with each time being more dangerous than the last.

As expected, it was easier to attract trouble now that he had martial arts. If he were just a helpless farmer's boy, he would have never been able to take on the people from the Drawn Reins village, nor would he have so much money to buy ginseng.

This was the most dangerous battle of his life so far. Even with a supernatural ability, he could not say that this would be a piece of cake. The black ox's words from the past flashed through his head.

Thoughts flashed through his head; a great battle was about to erupt at any time.

"Kill him!" There was a swift breeze and four blades wove into a net, engulfing Li Qingshan from behind.

The Ox Demon Forges its Hide was unable to block such blades, so Li Qingshan quickly made a judgement call. He did not even look back, charging forward instead and lunging at the three ginseng foragers. His mind was not focused on this dangerous battle right now. Instead, he constantly recalled the horn that the black ox had unleashed earlier.

The black ox would never help him repel the enemies. Otherwise, killing this group of ginseng foragers would have been a piece of cake given its power. Its horn held other meaning.

In the face of life-threatening danger, his understanding and comprehension had all been forced out. His eyes suddenly lit up. The Ox Demon Butts its Horns was about using every part of his body as an ox's horns, while a weapon was just an extension of one's body.

His perfectly straight, steel blade suddenly seemed to jump alive, travelling around a parrying blade.

With a spurt, blood sprayed into the air from a ginseng forager's neck as he fell backwards.

"Lao Cheng!" "This kid knows martial arts!" A series of cries rang out. The ginseng foragers looked at Li Qingshan; they were no longer as relaxed as before.

However, Li Qingshan's two arms received two wounds as well, but thanks to the toughness granted by the Ox Demon Forges its Hide, they failed to cut all the way through. Instead, it agitated his viciousness, and his eyes lit up like burning fire. "Come!"

The thicket on one side of the valley hid a group of people. They were only a few dozen meters away, yet no one in the valley managed to discover them even under the light of day.

Only the black ox glanced at them.

The person leading them was Huang Binghu. He smiled as he said to the people beside him, "Xiao Hei, are you convinced now?"