

Chapter 42 - The Strength of an Ox

Li Qingshan breathed in deeply. “The White Bone Bodhisattva! The demonic path again!” Although he was clueless about the greatness of an eminent monk of buddhism who was about to attain the fruit of bodhsattva, he did know that this was probably a supernatural ability that surpassed his imagination.

Li Qingshan said sternly, “This ability is probably difficult to cultivate, right?”

The black ox said, “Yes. An ability like this involves all of life, death, and fortune. Not only does it require the cultivator’s soul to possess extraordinary talent, but it also needs to be refined with the blood of creatures on the brink of death, enduring the scorching of blood and qi to extract tremendous amounts of essence and vitality. He’s just using the blood of beasts as a substitute right now, but the best material for refinement is obviously human blood, particularly blood from practitioners of martial arts with vigorous vitality.”

Li Qingshan shivered inside. Anyone who heard about this cultivation method would only think of it as an evil art from the demonic path. And, in any legend or story, every single person who used human lives for their practice were antagonists, suffering horrible deaths in the end.

He could not help but ask, “Why are you practising this?”

Xiao An paled in fright. As he gradually recovered his intelligence, he too knew that this was a demonic path of extreme evil.

The black ox said, “Obviously, it is to help you. Heh, is this perhaps the superior way to control ghosts?”

Li Qingshan shuddered, unable to say another scolding word. He lowered his head, only able to smile bitterly. “It looks like we’ve both chosen the wrong master. We’re destined to walk to the very end of this demonic path.”

Only with that did Xiao An ease up and smile shyly.

A spotted deer moved through the forest quickly, dodging the chilly wind that tailed it like a shadow, but in the end, a hunting knife slit its throat. Before the spray of blood could even hit the ground, a porcelain jar caught it. As soon as the steaming hot blood fell inside, a chilling gale swept up a set of white bones that soaked in the blood.

The set of white bones sat with its legs crossed like an old, meditating monk. It actually gave off a mysterious aura that merged holiness and evil. If a monk were present, they might have been able to comprehend the buddhist truth of the impermanence of glory and decay, the passage and arrival of life and death.

However, all Li Qingshan saw was Xiao An possessing the bones, refining the blood and qi. The blood and qi rose up like blood-red tongues of flames. Xiao An furrowed his brows as his soul trembled, enduring tremendous pain.

Most abilities of the demonic path took shortcuts, but they would be dangerous, coming at great costs and requiring great risk. The pain from having blood and qi scorch his soul was even worse than having

flames burn his body. It required great willpower to remain conscious. Practising this ability was not something ordinary people could do.

Li Qingshan clenched his fists firmly. He only felt like flames were burning in his heart, so scorching that it was unbearable. The pain that Xiao An had experienced from the witch was probably not even a hundredth of what he currently suffered. Li Qingshan wanted to extend his hand to stop him.

The black ox said, "It's not just for your sake. You have things you want to do, dreams you want to fulfill. He does too. This is his freedom."

"His dream?"

"Yes. His dream is to help you." The black ox could not help but begin laughing due to the corniness, but he stopped when he saw how Li Qingshan did not smile at all. "You have no idea just how happy the little ghost was when I agreed. And he's very happy right now. As long as you can do what you want, you will have no objections or regrets no matter what you do. Isn't that what you said?"

Only after quite a while was all of the blood and qi refined, fusing with the white bone. The white bone gained a faint but dark red sheen.

Li Qingshan took out the spiritual ginseng and extracted another droplet of juice, dripping it between Xiao An's eyebrows. Xiao An closed his eyes and fell into a deep sleep.

Li Qingshan turned around and leapt back into the icy-cold water. Only like that could he calm his mind.

The days passed swiftly, and the myriad mountains were reduced to a beautiful, white landscape due to the snow. Li Qingshan entered the water to train everyday, basically only returning when he was covered in wounds. If it were not for his extraordinary physique and the constant nurturing of the spiritual alcohol, his body would have collapsed long ago.

Xiao An constantly hunted wild beasts. In the beginning, he only used the blood of small, herbivorous animals like wild hares and gazelles for his cultivation method, but afterwards, he used carnivorous animals that were very vigorous and fierce in nature like tigers and leopards.

The two of them seemed to be competing, desperately practising their abilities. The taste of the spiritual alcohol made from the spiritual ginseng became fainter and fainter.

This continued for a month. The waterfall continued to surge deafeningly as the whirlpools in the pool spun endlessly. A figure could be barely made out from the largest whirlpool in the centre as it moved through the water.

Against the raging flow of water, as if he were facing countless enemies, Li Qingshan used the Ox Demon's Fist of Great Strength. Every single move and form he used was exactly the same as it was on land, without the slightest error. Instead, it was filled with a heavy and consolidated strength.

The Ox Demon Stamps its Hooves stabilised his body, the Ox Demon Forges its Hide blocked the water flow, and the Ox Demon Butts its Horns attacked the whirlpool.

His true qi also revolved like the whirlpools, forming tiny vertexes. It flowed through his entire body, moving faster and faster.

The water in the pool surged ten times more violently than usual.

Li Qingshan threw a punch.

The water exploded with a thunderous boom as a terrifying aura rose from the water, startling countless birds and beasts.

Xiao An's heart leapt inside. It was as if some terrifying wild beast had just been unleashed, far more terrifying than any wolf, tiger, or leopard. He stared at the surface of the water. The water surface recovered its calm, while the large whirlpool that never stopped spinning actually vanished.

The black ox smiled with his eyes.

A large figure leapt out from the deep pool, landing on the rocks. Li Qingshan's bronze body was as sturdy as an ox's. He seemed like he had been chiseled out of rock. His every muscle was filled with explosive power.

He punched the rock below his feet, causing a thud. It did not sound like flesh colliding with rock; instead, it seemed more like rock against rock.

After a moment of silence, there was cracking. The huge rock that had been worn away by water for countless years cracked open before shattering.

Before the rock shattered, Li Qingshan had already leapt ashore. Looking at his hands, he murmured, "This is the strength of an ox?" He felt like his body possessed endless power. His whole body felt like it had just been remoulded. If he came across a third-rate master like the third boss again, he would only need a single hand to crush him to death. It would be impossible for a third-rate master to even touch a hair on him.

The black ox said, "You've finally gained a basic grasp."

Li Qingshan picked up the Stone Splitter and drew it, bending it into the shape of the full moon. The stiff, metal composite bow was now as soft as an ordinary wooden bow.

Thrum! Thrum! Thrum! Li Qingshan drew the bowstring in succession. He actually unleashed rapid fire arrows with a three stone bow. With his consecutive shots, the bowstring exploded loudly as the vibrating string seemed to be capable of cutting through air.

Li Qingshan felt like he still had remaining strength, so he did not stop. Roaring out, he shot up, down, left, and right—everywhere.

Strength, endless strength. It was as if as long as he wanted to, he could do anything and defeat everyone. Now this was the feeling of an ability. It was not like any martial art that belonged to mortals.

Xiao An watched on from one side in great admiration.

"Xiao An, it's time to leave the mountains!" Li Qingshan lifted up the porcelain jar and travelled away from the mountains. He was not going to the Black Wind stronghold; he was heading for Qingyang city.

The sound of the waterfall grew further away. The water in the pool surged once more, and the whirlpools spun again.

The two words, Qingyang city, hung high above the city gates. Li Qingshan gazed at it for a while. This was the city he had heard of since he was young, but today was the first time he had come here.