

## Tales of Herding Gods Chapter 46-50

### Chapter 46: Dragon!

Qin Mu stretched out his hand to grab one and carefully took a bite. It had a spicy flavor which was spicier than Butcher's strong alcohols. In his stomach, there was a burning feeling, causing his vital qi to be abnormally active.

Circulating his vital qi, he actually felt a medicinal energy similar to the Vitality Reinforcement Pill which could raise his vital qi cultivation, however it didn't have as much effect as Vitality Reinforcement Pill.

"Is this creature plant or animal?"

Qin Mu grabbed a few more and saw these creatures had no eyes, limbs or orifice. They need to use their whisker-like tentacles to absorb nutrients from the moss, thus he can't determine whether they are plant or animal.

He only ate one while Hu Ling'er continued hopping around and eating to its content.

Walking deeper down, the air became cooler. Not knowing how far they went, they could hear the sound of trickling sound of water. There was a small and clear stream coming out the mountain wall. There were a few huge fish without any eyes living in the pool at the end of the stream. The few huge fish were also giving off a fluorescent glow. If they wanted to cross over, they would have to pass through the pool to get to the other side.

"These huge fish are very fierce, they will pounce towards any sound they hear and they are very powerful!"

Hu Ling'er whispered, "I shall throw the pebble over to distract the fish and we shall take the chance to rush over!" Once she had told Qin Mu her plan, she grabbed a pebble with her paw and forcefully threw it far away.

When the stone hit the wall, the few huge fish without eyes leaped out of the water and wiggled their tails in midair. Their four fins opened up like four wide wings and pounced towards the location of the sound!

"Now!"

Hu Ling'er guided Qin Mu and ran towards the other side of the pool. In the hurry, the youth heard a few crunching sounds and saw the weird fish colliding onto the wall and bit out a few huge holes in the wall with their ferocious mouths!

The exceptionally hard mountain rocks were like tofu in their mouths. If they bit into a human, the aftermath would be too horrible to contemplate!

As the human and fox ran to the other end of the pool, the few weird fish heard the sound of footsteps and flapped their fins to turn their direction, rushing towards them!

“Follow me, young master!”

Hu Ling'er rushed into the passage at the other end of the pool in an instant and Qin Mu followed. The passage wasn't wide so the few huge fish couldn't fly and had to use their four fins as legs to run after Qin Mu and the little fox in the passage!

“Are these still fish?”

Qin Mu's scalp turned numb and quickly followed behind Hu Ling'er. The weird fish chased after them for a distance and returned back into the pool to hide after they couldn't catch up to them.

Qin Mu let out a sigh of relief. The path in front of them gradually became wider and soon they had entered a trumpet shape cave. Suddenly the sunlight on crystalline waves shone down on him, making him look upwards and be stunned.

On top of his head, waves and waves of water flowed by. He could see schools of fishes swimming above him and even a huge golden turtle. There a huge fish that was like a small boat and also large-sized river beast.

A huge fish became excited when it saw Qin Mu and the little fox, making it open its ferocious mouth to pounce on them. However, it collided into an invisible water wall and bounced backward.

The huge fish shook its head in bewilderment and swam away.

“Surging River... This is the bottom of the Surging River!”

Qin Mu had a strange expression, “The Surging River is right on top of us yet the water is not flooding this place up...”

Looking forward, his heart tremored. One by one the dragon pillars appeared in front of him. Each of the dragon pillars was gigantic and dozens of yards tall. Standing tall under the river, the top of the dragon pillars was in contact of the river. The floor beneath their feet was paved out with white marbles. As the pavement extended out forward, there was a community of palaces just three hundred yards ahead between the two rows of dragon pillars.

The dragon pillars surrounded the community of palaces and withhold the river water from flooding in here.

However, many palaces had already fallen. Some huge change must have happened here causing this place to turn into ruins.

Hu Ling'er hopped around and stopped before the ruins of a palace. Qin Mu saw a mottled wall painting on a wall that was half collapsed. It was a painting of a dragon head elder inviting his guests to a banquet. The dragon head elder's guests were all strange creatures. There was a tortoise back old man, a snake tail woman, monk and also human.

Crash.

A pillar collapsed and nearly crushed Qin Mu and the little fox.

Hu Ling'er came to a huge hall which was already half collapsed and said, "This was where I found the ancient books."

Qin Mu walked closer. In the dilapidated hall, Qin Mu saw a hidden stone chamber built into the wall. The stone door had already collapsed. That was why the chamber was discovered by Hu Ling'er.

The stone chamber was already empty as the items inside were probably shifted away by Hu Ling'er.

"If you continue forwards, there would be great danger!"

Hu Ling'er pointed at the towering doorway ahead and nervously said, "It's very scary!"

Qin Mu looked at the doorway and he could faintly see a palace behind it. It was still pretty complete and hadn't collapsed yet. However, what's strange was there seemed to be a dense fog covering up what was inside, thus Qin Mu couldn't see clearly what's inside. He could only feel that the palace was floating in the fog while being faintly discernible.

"There's a terrifying fellow inside..."

Hu Ling'er's voice trembled and said, "Once you reach the door, you'll be able to feel his aura, then you will turn wobbly and be unable to stand..."

Qin Mu walked forward and Hu Ling'er mustered its guts to follow behind him. When they reached the doorway, Qin Mu could feel an extremely strong baleful atmosphere hitting him in his face, causing him to shudder in fear. It was half the sky being covered in dark clouds on a sunny day right in front of him and in the pitch black clouds, there was an extremely huge beast staring at him!

Divine, dignified, its power was not to be crossed. At the same time, it was a savage and sinister beast. This was the great danger Hu Ling'er had talked about!

Qin Mu took a deep breath and stabilized himself. His spirit also returned back to normal.

"Heaven's Eyes, Awaken!"

The vital qi formation crisscrossed in his eyes and created a layer of pupil markings as he looked into the dense fog behind the door.

Beside him, white fox's body had already gone weak and collapsed onto the floor with her belly on the floor. With difficulty, she moved her body slowly back to the direction where they had come from.

Qin Mu picked the limp white fox up, "Don't grab me, my heart is beating very fast, I'm going to die..."

"You're not going to die, the things in this dragon palace are however dead."

Qin Mu laughed, "Guess what I saw?"

Hu Ling'er didn't reply and waved her limbs in the air. Her tail also wagged left and right, seemingly trying to crawl away, unwilling to stay here for even a moment.

Qin Mu laughed, "I saw the Surging River Dragon King!"

"Ahhhh—"

The little white fox gasped and fainted, her limbs turning straight and stiff. Qin Mu waited for a moment and the little white fox secretly opened one of her eyes to look around. Qin Mu teased her again, "Surging River Dragon King."

Hu Ling'er's limbs became even stiffer and closed her eyes again.

"The Surging River Dragon King is dead." Qin Mu didn't know whether to laugh or cry. "There's only its bones left. Who knows how long the dragon king had been dead for. I managed to see his dragon bones in the fog."

Hu Ling'er immediately opened out her eyes, "It's dead?"

Qin Mu nodded his head, "You can finally be at ease this time. Follow me in?"

Hu Ling'er immediately shook her head and Qin Mu could only helplessly put her down. However seeing the white fox continued to weakly crawl outside with her tummy on the floor, Qin Mu picked her up again and placed her on his shoulder. Walking towards the door, the white fox was extremely nervous. With her furs all standing on ends, her claws gripped tightly onto Qin Mu's shoulder and her terror-filled eyes stared widely at the front, not daring to move even an inch.

As Qin Mu walked into the fog, Hu Ling'er gripped even tighter and her furry tail became extremely stiff.

After so many years, the dense fog didn't dissipate at all. However what's weird was that Qin Mu couldn't feel any humidity walking in the fog. He could only see droplets of water floating in the fog, quiet and unmoving.

He then saw numerous broken jades floating in the sky and other than that, there were also pieces of spirit weapons, broken bones, all silently floating around, as if there were not an ounce of weight. When he was in the doorway, he only saw the dragon bones and didn't see the rest of these kinds of stuff.

There must be a bitter battle here, even the skeletons and spirit weapons of experts were shattered! What exactly happened here? Did it happen before the Great Ruins' catastrophe or after?"

Qin Mu suddenly felt a sharp pain on his scalp. It was Hu Ling'er who had been scared to death by a floating skull and had jumped onto his head while gripping his scalp tightly, her body arching from fright.

The white fox trembled in fear, making Qin Mu's scalp trembling as well.

"Dragon!"

White fox screamed and swooped down from Qin Mu's head, clinging to his back. With her limbs latched onto Qin Mu waist, Qin Mu looked like he was carrying a white fur backpack.

### **Chapter 47: The Third Person**

In front of them, a huge dragon circled round and round the majestic palace, with its huge dragon head lying high on top of the great hall, looking straight at them.

This was a dragon's skeleton. The flesh of the huge dragon was gone and only the skeleton was left. Just the teeth alone was much taller than Qin Mu.

Even though the huge dragon had died, its might and extraordinary points were still visible. It must have been an extremely powerful being in its lifetime.

Qin Mu opened his Heaven's Eyes to take a look and he instantly felt as if the dragon's skeleton had come to life. With its divine glow piercing the heavens, the huge dragon seemed to be snaking around in his eyes. The huge dragon was clearly dead yet its demeanor and mettle made him feel that the huge dragon was still alive!

"Surging River Dragon King, a true dragon..."

Qin Mu looked at the huge dragon and his heart wavered. He thought of the fist skill Old Ma had taught him, the Tempest Of The Nine Dragons of Thunderclap Eight Strikes. The vital qi of Tempest Of The Nine Dragons was split into nine layers of force. The first layer was Rush Of The Raging Dragon, the second layer was Twin Dragon Twist. With every layer of strength, an extra dragon force would appear!

Training his fists since young with Old Ma, he had practiced this move countless of times yet he was always unable to grasp the essence of this skill. With his recent boost in cultivation, he then managed to raise the power of Tempest Of The Nine Dragons, however, when he had fought with Ming Xin, he was still at a disadvantage.

This could be partly due to him not cultivating the Rulai's Mahayana Scripture from the Great Thunderclap Monastery, but it was still mostly due to the fact that his nine dragon force in his fists only looked like dragons.

Looking like a dragon doesn't mean it's a dragon. The appearance may be there but the might isn't, therefore it would naturally shatter with a touch.

If the force in his fist was real dragons, even if he didn't learn Rulai's Mahayana Scripture, his Tempest Of The Nine Dragons would also be the true teaching!

This was because Tempest Of The Nine Dragons had also imitated the impetus of real dragons controlling the tempest. Amidst the great tempest, the divine dragons slaughtered its enemies. If he could manage to grab this essence, there would be no need for him to learn Rulai's Mahayana Scripture!

"Tempest of the nine dragons, tempest of the nine dragons..."

Studying the dragon's skeleton, Qin Mu subconsciously walked forward. In his eyes, there was only the dragon's skeleton as he studied the shape of the dragon, the structure of the bones, the dragon's might, the dragon's grace, and comprehending the dragon's aura and spirit.

He sank deeper and deeper into a trance the more he studied the dragon. As he moved forward, he started making strange movements with his arms and his body, subconsciously imitating actions of a real dragon.

This vital qi also unknowingly swam throughout his body like a real dragon, perfecting the bits and pieces with every circulation.

In his Spirit Embryo Divine Treasure, his spirit embryo also imitated his movement, as it inhaled and exhaled the vital qi. Something magical happened. The vital qi it exhaled out didn't enter Qin Mu's body and had instead swum around the spirit embryo's body, transforming into a small dragon. As the vital qi exhaled out increased, the little dragon gradually grew and became as tall as a human while coiling around the spirit embryo.

Hu Ling'er was originally frightened but as time went on, the fear in her heart diminished and she wasn't as frightened anymore. However as Qin Mu studied the dragon's skeleton, he had totally forgotten about her as well.

After some time, Hu Ling'er tummy started to growl and carefully climbed down from Qin Mu's back. She tiptoed her way back out of the underwater dragon palace not because she was scared of disturbing Qin Mu, but because she was scared she would alarm the dragon skeleton if she was too loud.

After an hour, the white fox came back from outside holding on to a sack. In the sack, there were all the strange creatures like the dandelion.

Hu Ling'er resisted the fear of the dragon in her heart and walked into the fog, back to where Qin Mu was. She climbed back onto Qin Mu back and sat on his shoulder, stuffing the creatures into his mouth.

As if he wasn't feeling anything, Qin Mu just ate whatever that entered his mouth.

Hu Ling'er fed him over twenty of those strange creatures before starting to eat them happily herself.

Qin Mu still had no signs of waking up as he continued to move forward freely with his eyes glued to the dragon's skeleton. Sometimes he even climbed up the dragon's skeleton and walked around on the huge bones.

Meanwhile, a green dragon coiled around his spirit embryo while letting out electrical sparks, however, Qin Mu was too focus on studying the dragon's skeleton and didn't notice.

Two days passed by like this. Qin Mu had eaten, drank, peed, pooped and slept here, and he had already become stinky, yet he still had no signs of waking up.

Hu Ling'er was also very patient and had taken care of Qin Mu all these while. When he was thirsty, she would use tree leaf to scoop water for him. When he was hungry, she would go and catch some of the

strange creatures. However, to catch them, she would have to pass by the pool and be careful not to get eaten by the weird fish. Luckily for her, she was pretty smart and had not slipped up.

And of course, when Qin Mu was discharging his bowels, she would still move away.

When the third day came, Hu Ling'er was fetching some water when she suddenly heard Qin Mu's astonished voice, "Why am I so dirty?"

Hu Ling'er was startled and surprised as she replied him bluntly, "It would be weird if you aren't dirty after standing here for three days!"

"It's been three days?"

Qin Mu was startled and cried out, "This is bad! The people in the village would definitely be worried sick for me not returning after three days! Quick, let's return!"

Suddenly, he stopped his footsteps and said, "If I go back now, I would definitely be scolded and even barred from coming out again. Since I'm already out now, why don't I take a look around in the dragon palace and see what treasures I can find."

In high spirits, he walked into the underwater dragon palace. Hu Ling'er followed him into the majestic hall however with her tiny guts, she only dared to stay around Qin Mu's legs and didn't wander around on her own.

The great hall was also shrouded in the fog which was even denser than outside, thus he couldn't see far ahead.

"Weird, where did this fog come from?"

Qin Mu was bewildered. This fog isn't mist and even with his Heaven's Eyes, he couldn't really see far ahead. The deeper he entered the hall, the denser the fog became and the lesser he could see. Hu Ling'er became even more afraid and bit on Qin Mu's pants to follow him.

At this moment, he heard a strange voice, which was gentle, serene yet giving off a sorrowful feeling. It was as if someone was singing a sorrowful song in the fog yet it was intelligible.

It was an ancient language which was mysterious and cryptic. It was as ancient as the god and devil language.

As Qin Mu listened to the song, he touched his face and realized he had been tearing unknowingly.

This song made him feel as if there was a woman floating around in the fog while singing out her heartbroken story.

Suddenly, the rings on the khakkhara monk staff started to ring loudly.

"Grandpa Ma said that the khakkhara monk staff had the effect of eliminating impure and wicked thoughts. When the heart wavers, the rings will ring. Every impure and wicked thought will make the

rings jingle once. Now that the rings are jingling non-stop, are my impure and wicked thoughts that much?"

Looking downwards, Qin Mu didn't know whether to cry or laugh. It turned out Hu Ling'er was shaking all over while grabbing tightly on his leg. Her tail was however on the khakkhara staff. It wasn't Qin Mu's heart that was in disorder, it was the little fox's.

"Ling'er, move your tail away." Qin Mu said.

Hu Ling'er moved her tail away and continued to shiver.

Qin Mu frowned. After Hu Ling'er moved her tail away, the khakkhara monk staff was still ringing away loudly.

"Could there be a third person besides me and Hu Ling'er? Could the wicked thoughts be from the third person? Could it be the singing woman?"

The khakkhara monk staff rang more and more violently. It was clear there was a third person here with too much impure and wicked thoughts. By sensing the thoughts, would the khakkhara staff ring non stop!

In the air, the song floated here and there, becoming more and more sorrowful.

Qin Mu looked downwards and felt a chill. In the fog, he could see a bony hand reaching for the khakkhara monk staff and before the hand could touch it, the hand silently retracted back as if it was electrocuted.

Qin Mu propped up the khakkhara staff and looked around, the corners of his eyes twitching from what he saw. In the fog, bony palms started to come towards him in all directions and only retracted back when they met the khakkhara monk staff.

The gentle song in the fog also started to become clearer as if it was beside his ears.

"What exactly is in the fog?"

His scalp turned numbed and Hu Ling'er had already climbed into his pants and onto his back and finally settled around his waist in his shirt. Only her furry head was out as she sneakily checked out her surrounding while shivering.

This sight was simply too scary, making Qin Mu flustered as well. However as the golden rings jingled, it had a calming effect and settled his heart down.

He composed himself. With this amount of hands, they are definitely not from the same person.

"No matter what it is, all shall retreat!"



Qin Mu's vital qi jolted and surged into the khakkhara staff. Raising the monk staff and giving a heavy slam, a loud clang rang out while the khakkhara staff shone in all directions. At the same time, an image of Buddha appeared behind his back while sitting cross-legged on the air, erupting in Sanskrit.

"So I have heard!"

The Sanskrit voice from the Buddha's image vibrated out, "Since time without beginning, all beings have been undergoing death and rebirth over and over simply because they have not been aware of the pure understanding which is the essential nature of the everlasting true mind. Instead, the workings of their minds are distorted, and because the workings of their minds are distorted, they are bound to the cycle—, cycle—, cycle—, cycle—"

## **Chapter 48: Dragon's Soul**

Hmmmm—

Behind Qin Mu, there was a circling wheel of light behind the Buddha's head shining brightly in all directions. Even the peculiar fog was cleared away by the Buddha's aura. Hearing a continuous clattering, Qin Mu took a look around and saw dried corpses dropping down one by one in mid-air, filling up the entire floor!

Other than the dry corpses, there were also skeletons with flesh missing, leaving behind only bones. However, the bones were adorned with baggy clothing that looked like palace outfits.

The fog around him had vanished, instantly clearing up his vision. However, the song was still ongoing but had sounded further away from him now. The song was still melodious and filled with pitiless sorrow.

Qin Mu dispersed his vital qi and the image of Buddha behind him disappeared.

"Why are there so many bodies hidden in the great hall? These bodies don't look like ordinary people..."

Qin Mu sized up the corpses and slightly frowned. There were too many corpses here and it was abnormal that they weren't decomposing. The Surging River Dragon King's body outside had already rotted away, leaving behind the skeleton. How was it that the corpses in the hall could be preserved until now.

"There's a possibility that these bodies had come in after the Great Ruins' catastrophe. They had found the path leading to Surging River Dragon Palace and entered this great hall, just like Hu Ling'er and me.

The corners of Qin Mu's eyes twitched and looked forward. The deeper part of the great hall was still covered in dense fog.

"What lies in the fog that had killed them and turned them into this state!"

His scalp turned numb as he gripped his monk staff tightly. The khakkhara monk staff was no doubt, a treasure that was worth an entire city. He had only fed his vital qi into the monk staff and such an astonishing power came forth.

It was Granny Si's wish for him to bring the monk staff out. Granny Si was very mindful of his safety and other than the monk staff, she had also transformed into different forms to protect him in the dark.

"Granny must have been worried sick for these few days..."

Qin Mu felt guilty but his spirits lifted up once again as he looked around, "The source of this fog, as well as the great danger, should be around this great hall! What was the thing that had killed these practitioners that had come exploring?"

At this moment, the fog deep in the hall surged forward to him and spread under his legs before rising up slowly. When the dry corpses on the floor were covered by the fog, they actually slowly moved their bodies and stood up peculiarly.

The fog rose higher and soon rose above Qin Mu's head. In the fog, the corpses started to float upwards. As the fog grew denser, the dry corpses vanished in the fog.

"Who's the ghost inciting trouble and mystifying me? Khakkhara!"

Qin Mu carried the monk staff and walked forward. After dozens of yards forward, the song felt closer and Qin Mu raised his monk staff to give a heavy slam. The Buddha's aura shone brightly and the Buddha's voice surrounded him. Behind his back appeared the image of Buddha once again and the Buddha's aura shone gloriously, vanquishing the fog and causing the dry corpses to fall to the ground once more.

"Little monk..."

A bone-chilling voice suddenly resonated out in the hall, however, it only said one phrase, making Qin Mu and little fox suspected that they had heard wrongly.

Qin Mu finally saw the source of the fog which was coming out from an ice sculpture in the dragon palace.

He finally walked up and saw a young dragon lying inside silently. There was a broken sword stabbed into its chest, piercing its heart.

Between the dragon pillars in the great hall, there was a huge green dragon slowly swimming to and fro. It didn't seem to have a physical body as it passed through the dragon pillars.

The song was coming from the green dragon and its gaze had never left the body of the young dragon that was frozen.

Its gaze was filled with tender affection and sorrow, just like its song, seemingly heartbroken about its child having left it.

This was a dragon's soul.

The soul of a dragon.

It could be the Surging River Dragon King or it could be the Surging River Dragon King's wife. It was a mother and the frozen young dragon should be her child.

She must have encountered the Great Ruins' catastrophe while her child suffered a sure death sword wound. She must have loved her child too much thus having frozen her child up as she died from the catastrophe. However, her soul still lingered around in this great hall, guarding her precious child while singing the nursery rhymes of the dragon race, hoping to wake her child up one day.

"Little monk, over here!"

Suddenly, the voice resonated out again and Qin Mu looked towards the source of it. Other than this mysterious ice block, Qin Mu saw another mysterious ice block in the hall. This mysterious ice block was hidden behind the ice block that had sealed the young dragon, both blocks being linked together.

In this ice block, a white eyebrow elder in purple clothes was sealed inside. The clothing on the elder should be an official robe which was a twilight robe that was embroidered with nine ornaments. On the waist hanged gold and jade pendants as well as a sword. On his head was a nine tasseled imperial crown while he had a plucking pose.

With a black banner in one hand, his other hand was deep into the other block of mysterious ice and grabbing onto a green egg sized bead.

He didn't know what was the green bead but the green bead had a small green dragon coiled inside.

"Was it this bead that had frozen the old man?"

Qin Mu blinked his eyes and walked forward to closely inspect the elder frozen in the ice, and then found the oddity. As his body moved, the eyes of the elder in the ice were actually moving as well!

"The voice really was his!"

Qin Mu was slightly frightened and turned his head to look at the dry corpses on the ground, instantly thinking of a possibility.

The elder in the ice should be the first person who had found Surging River Dragon Palace. When he found this bead in the ice and wanted to take away the bead, he was frozen in place.

To be able to survive in the ice for such a long time and not die was probably due to the black banner in his hand which had killed the practitioners that had entered the dragon palace after him and absorbed the essence and blood of them, therefore the practitioners had turned into dry corpses after their deaths!

Being sealed in the ice block until now, the amount of cultivation the elder could use shouldn't be much. In addition, by bringing the khakkhara monk staff into the dragon palace, Qin Mu was able to survive from the peculiar powers of the black banner and escaped unharmed under the protection of the staff.

“So it was the khakkhara of the old monk from Great Thunderclap Monastery. No wonder you were able to defend against the fog’s peculiar power.”

The elder in the ice was unable to open his mouth but he was able to project his voice out by his throat vibration, “You aren’t a monk of Great Thunderclap Monastery so why do you have the old monk’s staff?”

Qin Mu honestly answered him, “Junior here had defeated his disciple and won it.”

“Won it?”

The elder gave a laugh from his throat, “How would the old monk not be a sore loser? How old are you?”

Qin Mu replied, “I would be twelve this autumn.”

The purple clothed elder praised, “Twelve years old and you defeated the disciple of that old monk, truly outstanding.”

Qin Mu blinked his eyes innocently and asked, “Why is senior trapped here inside the ice?”

The elder chuckled and said, “There’s naturally a story behind this and it goes all the back to the beginning when... hey, don’t leave! Come back!”

Qin Mu stopped and said as if he was in a dilemma, “Senior, I’m in a rush to go home and have no time for stories.”

The elder coughed and continued, “Long story short, I had brought my various disciples to travel the Great Ruins and had stumbled upon this place by accident. Seeing the numerous dry corpses here, I knew it was this dragon bead causing mischief and having killed everyone that had entered here by absorbing their essence and blood, turning them into dry corpses. The reason for the bead doing this was to extend the lifespan of this young dragon! As a cultivator, I shall not condone this kind of behavior and was prepared to restrain this dragon bead in order to stop it from harming more people. However, I help made a mistake by not expecting this dragon bead to be the dragon bead of the dragon god, thus getting sealed here in the ice! None of my disciples were spared. Their essence and blood got absorbed by this dragon bead to extend the life of the young dragon!”

Hu Ling’er who was hiding in Qin Mu’s chest and peeked her head out, whispering, “Do you believe his story, young master?”

Qin Mu hesitated. His guess was the direct opposite of what the elder had said. The elder’s story was that the mother dragon had used the dragon bead to harm people by absorbing their essence and blood to save her child by extending its life. Furthermore, the elder was the righteous one which got schemed by the dragon bead.

Whereas Qin Mu’s guess was that the elder was sealed by the ice and to extend his own life, he had used evil arts to absorb the essence and blood of the practitioners here.

Qin Mu couldn't deny that both his guess and the elder's story could be true, but which was the true scenario?

Qin Mu looked around and saw the fog swarming towards him again and he immediately slammed the khakkhara monk staff on the ground!

"So I have heard!"

The image of Buddha appeared behind him again as his Sanskrit voice resonated out, "Since time without beginning, all beings have been undergoing death and rebirth over and over simply because they have not been aware of the pure understanding which is the essential nature of the everlasting true mind. Instead, the workings of their minds are distorted, and because the workings of their minds are distorted, they are bound to the cycle—, cycle—, cycle—, cycle—"

"The Buddhism of Great Thunderclap Monastery sure is skillful." The elder in the ice admired.

"How may I address senior?" Qin Mu dispelled the fog and asked.

The elder in the ice replied, "My name is Gu Linuan, tutor to the crown prince of Eternal Peace Empire and a lower first ranking official. If you can rescue me out of here, I can promise you endless wealth when we are back to Eternal Peace Empire!"

#### **Chapter 49: An Elixir Heart**

Qin Mu pondered over it. Li River Sect's sect master, Mu Beifeng was a lower second-ranking official while this Gu Linuan was a lower first ranking official so he definitely must be more powerful!

"What this senior said is true." He told Hu Ling'er.

Hu Ling'er was puzzled, "How do you know what he said is true?"

"The fog is produced by the dragon's soul."

Qin Mu pointed at the soul of the mother dragon swimming around. Wherever the soul of the dragon passed by, the fog would grow thicker and the dry corpses would stand up once again and float towards Qin Mu as if they could smell him.

"This kind of fog could make these dry corpses enter a not dead nor alive state. It's a method used to protect her son and also to protect this great hall." Qin Mu analyzed.

Hu Ling'er had also noticed this point. Once the fog that the dragon's soul had spat out was dispelled, the dry corpses would stop moving and drop back to the ground. When the fog shrouded the bodies once again, the dry corpses would come alive again and try to attack anyone that was near.

The dry corpses were like the guardians of this great hall, to prevent people from stealing the dragon bead and disturbing the "healing" of the young dragon.

And the source of these dry corpses would probably be like what the elder had said and was the doings of the dragon bead, absorbing every last drop of blood and essence from the practitioners that had trespassed into the dragon palace to extend the life of the young dragon.

Qin Mu was troubled, "Senior Gu, even though I may have the heart to help you but with junior's measly powers, I'm afraid there's no way I can do so."

Gu Linuan chuckled, "Of course you don't have the power to dissolve the mysterious ice of the dragon bead, however, I do. As long as you listen to my command, you can set me free! When I'm free, you can get whatever you want!"

His voice carried a hint of arrogance which showed that the tutor of the crown prince was an extremely high position.

"I may have been trapped in this mysterious ice but my cultivation is still here, thus it still can't freeze me to death yet."

Gu Linuan continued, "I shall use the last of my cultivation to move my sword out of the ice. With the sword, you shall slay the soul of the mother dragon! Once the soul is slain, the dragon bead will no longer be able to trap me! When I'm free, I can even reward you with this dragon bead!"

Qin Mu jumped in shock and cried out, "Slay the soul of the mother dragon? Senior, junior has just cultivated to the Spirit Embryo Realm and is a puny practitioner. How am I able to slay the soul of the mother dragon?"

Gu Linuan laughed coldly, "You naturally can't, but with my sword, you can! My sword is not an ordinary weapon nor is it that junk that you are carrying on your back. This sword is a first ranking sword from the Imperial Family! It was forged by the best treasures and blacksmiths that the Eternal Peace Empire had gathered! There are a total of sixteen first ranking officials and so there are a total of sixteen such swords. Each of the swords has their own name and my sword is called Junior Protector Sword!"

Qin Mu hesitated, "How's the sword compared to the monk staff in my hand?"

Gu Linuan sneered, "The old monk's khakkhara monk staff is indeed decent and the Great Thunderclap Monastery is also one of the huge well-known sects that are scarce in this world. However, how can a treasure forged by the power of a sect be compared to a treasure forged by the power of an empire? In the Eternal Peace Empire, there are even two to three huge sects like the Great Thunderclap Monastery."

Qin Mu's heart shook. He was also slightly puzzled and asked, "Since senior has this kind of treasure, why didn't you slay the mother dragon's soul?"

Gu Linuan was speechless and finally said after a while, "Originally I didn't think of the crucial point and only thought about eliminating the hidden danger of the dragon bead for our future generations, however in my carelessness I had fallen into this trap and before I discovered I couldn't break free from the ice. It was too late!"

“After being sealed, I could only cling to my vital qi to prevent myself from being freeze to death by the mysterious ice, even if I want to control my sword, I can’t do it in my weakened state anymore. Do you know how long I have been sealed here?”

Gu Linuan sighed, “An entire two hundred years! For two hundred years, I have been sealed here. It was exceptionally difficult for me to extend my life until now!”

Qin Mu sympathized with his plight and said, “Being sealed in ice for two hundred years, I’d have gone crazy if it was me. It’s pretty outstanding for senior to hold out until now.”

Gu Linuan sighed again, “Luckily you have come. I shall use my remaining vital qi to send my Junior Protector Sword out of the mysterious ice. Slay the soul of the mother dragon for me and free me!”

Qin Mu nodded his head and respectfully said, “Junior will do my best!”

Gu Linuan gathered his remaining vital qi and the sword at his waist started to move, however, it was very slow. After two hours, the hilt of the sword was barely revealed.

After quite some time, the entire hilt of the sword was revealed, however, the sword’s sheath was still frozen by the mysterious ice.

Gu Linuan seemed tired and his voice croaked, “My vital qi is almost depleted. Quickly slay the mother dragon!”

Qin Mu acknowledged and his vital qi thread which was as thick as an arm flew out and swept up the sword’s hilt. With a scraping sound, the Junior Protector Sword was out from its sheath and instantly shone brightly.

Qin Mu and Hu Ling’er’s eyes felt pain as if the sword light had injured their eyes. Only after some time did their eyes recover and be able to see clearly again.

“What are you doing?”

Gu Linuan didn’t know whether to laugh or cry when he saw Qin Mu’s extremely thick vital qi thread sweeping up his Junior Protector Sword to chase after the mother dragon yet was unable to land a hit, “What are you doing? Who manipulates sword like you do? Who taught you your sword control techniques? Who taught you sword skills?”

Qin Mu stopped and replied truthfully, “I don’t know sword control technique nor do I know any sword skills.”

Gu Linuan almost died from anger and his head started to ache. He then asked angrily, “Why do you carry around a sword pouch if you don’t know sword technique or sword skills?”

Qin Mu replied embarrassedly, “This sword pouch is very heavy so I carry it around as a type of training...”

Gu Linuan almost puked out blood. This kind of crude sword skill made him want to jump out of the mysterious ice more than anything.

“Alright, I shall impart to you sword control techniques by using qi to manipulate sword and sword skills.”

He suppressed his anger and continued, “Once you have learned them, you’ll be able to slay the mother dragon.”

Qin Mu shook his head, “I’m not learning.”

Gu Linuan flew into a rage. If he wasn’t sealed by the mysterious ice, he would have jumped out and beaten this rascal to a pulp.

“Granny said that there would be someone to teach me better sword skills and if I learn someone else’s sword skills, the person wouldn’t teach me anymore.”

Gu Linuan calmed himself down and laughed loudly, “Better sword skills? Do you know that the best sword skills in the world are the Eternal Peace Empire’s sword skills? Imperial Preceptor had brought together all sword skills in the world and summoned all the grandmasters of sword skills in the world to found the Eternal Peace Empire’s sword skills. Isn’t it the best sword skill if it’s founded on the wisdom of all the grandmasters of sword skill? Won’t it surpass the sword skills founded by the patriarchs of those so-called sword sects? These so-called sword sects mainly just follow the footsteps of their ancestors and remain stuck in the old ways, thinking that they are invincible, not knowing they were already left far behind!”

Qin Mu stared blankly. He felt Gu Linuan’s words were very logical and he had no way to deny it.

Because of the incident with the Li River Sect, he didn’t have any favorable impression of the Imperial Preceptor but he was still impressed with the Imperial Preceptor’s magnanimity.

To have such magnanimity to ignore the sectarian bias and difference between the sects, allowing the grandmasters of sword skills throughout the world to put their minds together to create a new sword skill entirely. It’s hard not to be impressed by this kind person.

“Not learning.” Qin Mu shook his head.

Gu Linuan had the urge to break the ice himself and ruthlessly whack Qin Mu’s ass. After all that he had said, he really deserved a beating for not wanting to learn.

After a while, Gu Linuan suddenly smiled, “Alright, I shan’t teach you sword skills. I shall teach you sword control techniques. Sword control techniques aren’t sword skills so it won’t interfere with you learning the other person’s sword skills.”

Qin Mu’s heart wavered and he nodded reluctantly.



“It seems like you aren’t a completely stubborn mule and know what’s good for you. This sword control technique is called Secrets Of Elixir Heart. It teaches you how to control a sword and doesn’t teach you sword skills.

Gu Linuan’s spirit vibrated and said, “What is elixir heart? Elixir is pure, a flawless jade, a Nine Transformation Spirit Pill, a flawless and exquisite heart so pure without any impurity. This sword control technique requires a pure and innocent heart to control the sword. When your heart is there, your sword would be there and it would be disadvantageous to not follow the directions! The incompetence of sword control techniques in this world stems from sticking to the old tradition! The first step to cultivate an elixir heart: Heart as fire, furnace in dantian, using the heart fire to cultivate true vitality. With the furnace as a field and the fire as seeds! Daring the Sun God for ten suns to rise, using the sacred fire of the blazing suns to burn gloriously...”

Qin Mu immediately put his mind down to memorize. The sword control technique of the Secrets Of Elixir Heart was profound and righteous, even when there was a mnemonic chant, if there was no one to explain the profound meaning of it, he wouldn’t have known how to cultivate.

Gu Linuan repeated the entire Secrets Of Elixir Heart once more and explained the profound of cultivation word by word. As he listened, Qin Mu’s heart was jumping up and down like a spirit monkey tweaking its ears and scratching its cheeks.

After some time, Gu Linuan finished explaining the Secrets Of Elixir Heart once more, “Go cultivate first before controlling the sword. If you are slow it would take ten days and two if you are fast before you can use qi to manipulate the Junior Protector Sword to slay the soul of the mother dragon! The little fox on your chest has also benefited with you and had the chance to learn the best sword control technique in the world.”

## **Chapter 50: Little Fox Demon**

Qin Mu was filled with gratitude as clasped his hands and bowed to the ground, “Thank you senior for your teaching. Junior will engrave them in my memory.”

Gu Linuan smiled, “If you know gratitude then quickly cultivate and slay the soul of the mother dragon! If you have any questions, feel free to ask me.”

Qin Mu immediately executed Secrets Of Elixir Heart. Secrets Of Elixir Heart requires one to see their dantian as a piece of field. To plow the dantian and plant sources of fire. When the ten suns rise in the sky above the dantian, they would nourish the sources of fire and strengthen them, turning the dantian into a furnace that’s blazing with raging sacred fire!

Once it attained a minor success, could one be considered to master the basic of elixir heart.

When the elixir heart attained minor success, one’s sword would follow one’s thoughts when they control sword, allowing the heart and sword to be as one.

It was easy to say but difficult to accomplish. To nourish the sources of fire into the sacred fire wasn’t that easy and to cultivate elixir heart was even more difficult, therefore elixir heart was split into nine

transformations. As long as Qin Mu can cultivate the first transformation, his skill in using qi to manipulate sword would surpass his previous ability and no doubt, catch up with the soul of the mother dragon!

“Hmm, your foundation is very solid!”

Gu Linuan was astonished. In just a short time, Qin Mu had already plowed his dantian and planted his sources of fire. The ten suns had also risen together and started nurturing the sources of fire.

This showed that Qin Mu’s cultivation was rather dense. If it was any other ordinary practitioners, they would probably have difficulty in planting the sources of fire much less making the ten suns rise. Only by consuming spirit pills and miraculous medicine continuously could one sustain their vital qi to plant enough sources of fire.

Qin Mu didn’t even need to consume spirit pill and miraculous medicine and was able to fill his entire dantian with sources of fire in one shot. In addition, he still had plenty of vital qi left to turn them into ten suns shining down onto his dantian. It was extremely rare for people to have this kind of cultivation in the Spirit Embryo Realm!

“With his horrifying cultivation speed, he won’t need ten days or two days, just one day and he would be able to attain the first transformation of the Secrets Of Elixir Heart, slaying the dragon and freeing me out of here!”

Gu Linuan’s gaze wavered, “Such an outstanding young genius, I don’t really want to kill him just like this.”

He gave a regretful sigh in his heart, “However the Great Ruins is the land gods abandoned. Even the bugs here are guilty much less the humans and they all have to die. Besides, I’m also hungry. I haven’t had anything to eat in the past fifty years...”

The time Qin Mu took to attain the first transformation was shorter than Gu Linuan had expected. It had already passed midnight and the sky outside gradually grew brighter as sunshine penetrated through the Surging River’s water and shined on the underwater dragon palace.

Qin Mu stood up and a thought flashed through his mind. Suddenly, his vital qi which was coiled around the Junior Protector Sword pierced through the dense fog with a swoosh, flying to and fro as swift as lightning!

Shii shii shii—

The piercing sounds of Junior Protector Sword sounded out as Qin Mu instantly controlled the sword to stab a hundred times repeatedly, dazzling one’s eyes.

Even though he didn’t know sword skills, just a simple stab from him was already much scarier than Qian Qiu, the disciple from Li River Sect which was known as sword sect!

Secrets Of Elixir Heart was indeed extraordinary!

Qin Mu once again expressed his thanks by bowing to Gu Linuan sincerely, "Thank you senior for imparting your skills. Junior will remember senior for as long as I live."

Gu Linuan laughed heartily, "You are also extremely talented to be able to thoroughly comprehend and cultivate the first transformation of elixir heart in such a short time. However, the little fox at your side isn't as fast as you. Quickly now, manipulate the sword and slay the mother dragon!"

Gu Linuan was beyond elated. With his freedom in sight, even great experts like him can't help swaying their minds by worrying about their personal gains and losses."

"This kid had such high talent and had also saved me, I somewhat can't bear to kill him..."

At this moment, Qin Mu turned around and left, bringing the Junior Protector Sword out of the dragon palace as his body vanished in the thick fog.

Gu Linuan stared blankly and didn't come to terms with what had just happened. Qin Mu had already brought the Junior Protector Sword and Hu Ling'er out of the dragon palace without even hesitating a step.

"You better come back!"

Gu Linuan roared in rage, "You broke your promise rascal! I had imparted my techniques and gave my sword to you, why don't you slay the mother dragon?"

Outside the palace, Qin Mu's voice sounded further and further away, "Senior, the mother dragon had indeed used the dragon bead to kill numerous practitioner that had entered this place, however, the dragon bead would only turn them into dry walking corpses. But, in the dragon palace, there are many corpses that didn't die at the hands of the dragon bead as they had not turned into dry corpses and had become skeletons instead."

Gu Linuan was startled, "When did you discover that rascal?"

"I had discovered it the moment I entered the dragon palace."

Gu Linuan gritted his teeth and retorted coldly, "Are you really only twelve? A twelve-year-old boy could notice all these things? To understand what had actually happened? To also beat me at my own game without batting an eyelid?"

"Junior is only twelve years old this coming autumn. I'm only eleven now..." Qin Mu's voice became softer and softer before vanished completely.

Vulgarities started to spew out loudly from the dragon palace, landing in the ears of Qin Mu and Hu Ling'er.

Hu Ling'er peeked her head out from his chest and asked puzzledly, "Young Master Mu, how did you know he had evil intentions?"

Qin Mu explained, "When we had just arrived, did you notice the numerous skeletons other than the dry corpses that had fallen out from mid-air when I used the monk staff to force back the fog?"

Hu Ling'er nodded her head. She had noticed the dried up skeletons wearing official robes being crushed by the dry corpses landing on them.

"The skeletons' clothing were official robes."

Qin Mu continued, "Gu Linuan had said that he had brought numerous disciples into the Great Ruins for training and discovered this underwater dragon palace. His disciples should have been killed by the dragon bead but if that's the case, the essence and blood in their body would have been sucked out instead, turning them into dry corpses and not skeletons. If they weren't killed by the dragon bead then how did they die?"

Hu Ling'er suddenly came to realization and immediately replied, "Gu Linuan had a very peculiar black banner in his other hand! During the process of getting sealed, he must have used the black banner to kill his disciples."

When he was sealed in the mysterious ice by the dragon bead and was unable to escape, he knew he would be stuck here for a long time. Conflicts happened over and over again among the officialdom. Even though they were his disciples, they were all officials of Eternal Peace Empire and had no master and disciple relationship. These people might not even inform the Imperial Family to come rescue him. After all, an empty seat that belonged to the tutor of crown prince was always beneficial to everyone."

Qin Mu nodded his head, "Since the Imperial Family might not rescue him, he could either give up or go through to the end by absorbing all the essence and blood of his disciples to prevent himself from dying from hunger after being sealed for too long. However his method was different from the dragon bead of the mother dragon, it was more peculiar and had absorbed the flesh of his disciples as well, turning them into skeletons. Did you remember when we just entered the dragon palace and my monk staff had kept ringing?"

Hu Ling'er remember the time when she was prone on Qin Mu's pants and was shivering tremendously. Qin Mu had even asked her to move her tail away.

I had thought it was the thoughts of the dry corpses that had affected the khakkhara monk staff, thus causing it to jingle non-stop. However dry corpses don't have conscious so I thought it was the impure thoughts of the mother dragon's soul. What was weird was when I reached Gu Linuan's side, the monk staff stopped ringing so it would definitely not be the impure thoughts of the mother dragon's souls and was Gu Linuan's instead.

Qin Mu continued, "The reason why the monk staff stopped ringing was because Gu Linuan had no more impure thoughts. Since we have the khakkhara monk staff protecting us, he won't be able to eat us so he would just have to use us to set him free!"

Hu Ling'er was flabbergasted. Only after some time did the little fox stammered out, "Y-young master, are you really only twelve years old?"

"I'm only twelve after autumn." Qin Mu gave an honest smile.

“You must be a fox demon too right?”

Hu Ling'er became excited, “You must be a male fox that had turned intelligent. The kind that's extremely clever!”

Qin Mu began to grumble, “You had no idea how I had spent my childhood! Since young I have been swindled by a bunch of old men and old lady, even before I had come out for hunting, granny had tricked me to grab an egg from the chicken coop. There was a hen dragon inside which I had no chance of winning! After getting chased and beaten by the hen dragon wherever I ran, granny took the chance to sneak over and grabbed the egg!”

After a while, they safely passed through the pool and walked out of the dragon king's temple.

Hu Ling'er raised the demon wind with her spell and Qin Mu traveled on the wind as they returned to the straw hut in front of the waterfall. Qin Mu was in a rush to return to the village so he bid goodbye to Hu Ling'er who smiled, “Why are you in a rush back when you are so dirty and smelly now? There's a pool beside my waterfall where you can take a shower first. I shall wash your clothes and let them dry. Won't it be better if you are wearing clean clothes? Furthermore, there are still some doubts about cultivation I have to consult you on.”

Qin Mu hesitated for a moment and wanted to reply her, however, Granny Si cold laughter sounded from inside the straw hut, “Shower? Cultivation? Is it to pluck yin to nourish yang or pluck yang to nourish yin?”

“Granny?”

Qin Mu was astonished and surprised, “Why are you here?”