

Immortal 1421

Chapter 1421: Mulberry Forest

"Mulberry Forest? Fengxi Boar?" Zu An thought to himself, this Mulberry Forest better not be as much of a scam as the Weak Water.

The Yayu explained, "The reason why it is called the Mulberry Forest is that there is a very large mulberry tree at the very center. The entire forest is formed from its branches."

Everyone who heard this was shocked. "This entire forest is actually just a single tree?"

Just how big does this tree have to be?!

When he received a definitive answer, Zu An asked, "Does that tree have its own consciousness? Don't tell me that it's some tree demon or something?"

"I don't think it's that type of tree demon you're thinking about. However, that mulberry tree is quite special, so it's not entirely impossible for it to have produced a bit of a hazy consciousness," Yayu said as an analogy, "It is just like the Weak Water. Outsiders might view it as just a dead substance, but I know that it actually has a will. That is why I was able to become close to it."

Zu An thought to himself, if that Weak Water ends up developing sentience, then that would be ridiculous!

"That Fengxi Boar was originally a wild pig. Its fur is sharp like steel needles and possesses tremendous strength. You all must be careful," Yayu warned.

"A wild pig?" Zu An became a bit absentminded. He suddenly felt the folk tales and legends of different civilizations all shared some similarities.

The east and west both had legends about a great flood. Meanwhile, the eastern legends had a Fengxi Boar, while in Greek mythology, there was a Hercules. Out of the twelve impossible missions that he had to complete, one of them was to slay a wild boar as well. Was this really a coincidence, or was it something else?

"Then does that Fengxi Boar have any weaknesses?" Yun Jianyue asked in a probing manner.

They really suffered badly because of the Yayu. In the end, they were only able to solve the situation because of a coincidence. She really didn't want to go through something similar again.

"Our domains do not intersect, nor have we had any conflicts. I do not know its weaknesses. I fear that I am unable to help all of you in this area." Yayu said apologetically.

"I see..."

Their group was feeling disappointed when Yayu suddenly said, "Right, it seems to be quite perverted. I wonder if this can be considered a weakness."

Their group thought, what kind of weakness is that? Isn't Zu An quite perverted too?

Furthermore, where would they even go to find a female pig at this point?

“Also, I heard that it was often lost in its thoughts and stared blankly at the moon in the evening. There are rumors that it is absorbing the moon’s essence to cultivate, but I do not think so. But I don’t know what it is doing either,” Yayu said. “I don’t know if this can help you or not.”

“It is quite useful. Thank you.” Everyone quickly expressed their thanks. It was definitely better than knowing absolutely nothing about that monster.

Zu An’s expression was strange. A perverted wild pig enters a daze under the moon. It’s not Zhu Bajie^[1], right?

...

There were no terrifying waves that appeared under Yayu’s lead. Furthermore, the Weak Water’s width also returned to normal. They quickly crossed the Weak Water.

They expressed their thanks to Yayu again, but Yayu said, “No, it should be me who thanks everyone. It is because of you all that I was able to be completely set free.” As he said this, Yayu’s figure began to grow indistinct. He gradually returned to his original appearance.

But when he saw the other party’s body turn transparent, as if becoming half real, half illusory, Zu An was startled. “Could it be that you...”

Yayu smiled and said, “Indeed. Your purification ability before was formidable. I was only able to resist it because there was an unrelenting resentment inside of me. Now that it has disappeared, of course I am going to disappear.”

Zu An felt a bit dejected. “I’m sorry for harming you...”

Yayu interrupted him. “There is nothing to apologize for. This is a release, a form of transcendence, something happy for me. I’ve already had enough of living as a monster. Thank you...”

His voice grew weaker and weaker. His body also turned into specks of light, eventually fading into nothing.

Everyone became silent when they saw this. This was clearly an enemy that they were trying to kill a moment ago, yet now, they instead felt a strange sense of grief.

...

Only after some time passed, did they collect themselves and continue on their journey.

Soon afterward, a verdant and lush forest appeared in front of them. At the very center stood a tree that seemed to reach into the heavens. Its branches were full of leaves that hung above everything like a canopy.

“This is probably the Mulberry Forest Yayu spoke of.” Yu Yanluo said with a sigh, “That tree at the center really is big.”

Yan Xuehen also looked surprised. “It seems like this tree is the result of the coalescing of the essence of the world. According to what Yayu said, this Mulberry Forest has already existed for a long time. After all this time, it should have already developed its own sentience...”

“Non-human things aren’t allowed to develop a sentience post-civilization.” Zu An suddenly recalled an online saying.[\[2\]](#)

“What?” The three girls looked at him in confusion.

Zu An’s face heated up. He explained, “It is most likely because the laws of this world are deficient, so that is why it couldn’t achieve such enlightenment.”

“That indeed seems to be the case.” The girls agreed with this judgment.

When they entered the Mulberry Forest, everyone maintained 120% vigilance. The branches really were everywhere, making it hard to see anything far away. Walking inside felt like they were going through a maze. Who knew where that Fengxi Boar was hiding? If it ambushed them, then they would be in trouble.

But the saving grace was that because the mulberry tree at the center was so large, it served as a landmark that prevented them from losing their way.

“How do you think we should go about looking for that Fengxi Boar? Should we set up a trap in the forest? Or what do wild pigs like to eat?” Yan Xuehen proposed.

Yun Jianyue shook her head. “The Fengxi Boar is a monster not inferior to the Yayu. It definitely has intellect on par with humans. Do you really think it’s some ordinary pig?”

Yan Xuehen’s cheeks heated up. She didn’t argue against her this time. Suddenly, Zu An’s expression became grave. “We might not have to find it. It will come to us.”

When they followed his line of sight, the three girls noticed that the trees in the distance began to shake violently. There were sounds of branches breaking.

Then, a huge monster suddenly charged out, releasing a roar similar to a dragon’s cry. The surrounding leaves all began to rustle.

Zu An thought back to how in his past world’s movies, the Eighteen Subduing Dragon Palms’ sound effects were made precisely from pigs. He didn’t expect that after this wild boar’s strength increased, its roar would actually really be similar to a dragon’s.

The huge monster in front of his eyes was like a small mountain. It was entirely dark brown and shining. Its two fangs were like two curved blades, shining viciously. Its four trotters were stone pestles, poking deep holes in the ground as it moved. The fur over its body was solid like needles. There was no need for any introductions, they knew that they already found their objective: the Fengxi Boar.

That Fengxi Boar’s nature was clearly irritable. When it sensed that they entered its territory, it was furious, steam coming out from its mouth from anger. Its trotters continued to dig into the ground as if it was going to attack at any time.

However, when it saw the beautiful appearance of the three ladies, it was suddenly stunned. As it stared at the three women, a huge smile appeared on its face. Then, viscous saliva trickled out of its mouth.

In the past, Zu An didn’t really understand the insult ‘pig brother’, but now that he saw this himself, he could only feel admiration for the creator of this phrase.

However, the three girls could no longer take it anymore. They felt incredibly uncomfortable and grossed out.

Yun Jianyue snorted, immediately taking out her Crescent Ring. It flew in a beautiful arc, slicing at that Fengxi Boar.

She was from the Devil Sect, her nature fierce to begin with. Now that she felt this much disgust, she didn't hold back at all. She intended to remove that pig's head right now.

When she was at her strongest, the Crescent Ring could flatten even a small mountain's peak, let alone some flesh.

That curved crescent was about to hit the Fengxi Boar's head when that monster moved its head fiercely. Its tusks smashed into her Crescent Ring.

A loud noise sounded. Then, the Crescent Ring was smashed flying. There wasn't even a single mark left on that thick tusk.

The huge force coming from the Crescent Ring was something even Yun Jianyue almost couldn't control. She quickly warned, "Be careful!"

The Fengxi Boar was furious about being attacked. It charged over.

Both the Chinese and Japanese languages had the phrase 'boar rush'. It described a powerful assault from the army.

This phrase was talking about normal wild boars. Right now, they were facing a monster that was more like a small mountain. When it ran at them, it shook the earth itself. They even found it a bit hard to stand still!

Chapter 1422: Seduction

Fortunately, none of them were inexperienced fighters. They quickly evaded using their respective movement skills. There was no need for them to even signal to each other, and they immediately counterattacked at the same time.

Yu Yanluo didn't use her World Painting. The boar was too strong; with her current cultivation, the painting wouldn't be able to trap it. Instead, she supported the others with runes while using her Medusa's Eye.

A layer of earthen yellow light surrounded the surface of the Fengxi Boar's body, but it actually wasn't affected that much by the petrification skill.

Yu Yanluo quickly warned the others, "Be careful. It's of the earth element. Its defense is extremely powerful."

Normally, even if one was the earth element and had some resistance against the Medusa's Eye, it wouldn't be able to nullify the effects to such an extent. However, the thick mixture of grease and earth covering the surface of the Fengxi Boar's body blocked the Medusa's Eye to some degree.

Zu An instantly dashed over to the Fengxi Boar's side at lightning-fast speed, stabbing his two swords straight into its body.

However, his eyes quickly narrowed. Even the two heaven-grade weapons, the Yin Yang Swords, actually couldn't pierce it even with the support of the Fire Phoenix and Blue Mallard's power. The sword tips felt as if they had stabbed into a hard mountain. The swords bent under the tremendous force, releasing a groan and seeming as if they could break at any time.

The Fengxi Boar turned around and tried to chomp down on Zu An. It looked clumsy, but it was actually strangely fast. Fortunately, Zu An had held back a bit after Yu Yanluo's reminder, so he used the sword's rebound force to quickly dart backward by a dozen or so meters into a tree. However, the boar's jaws bit fiercely through the place he had just been.

Such terrifying jaw strength was absolutely ridiculous! Zu An was even starting to doubt whether his body, which had been tempered by the Primordial Origin Sutra, could withstand such force.

That Fengxi Boar was about to chase after Zu An when a streak of light flew past it. It was Yan Xuehen's Flying Snow Sword.

If not for the danger of the situation, Zu An would have whistled in admiration. No wonder there were so many sword cultivators in the movies of his previous world. That kind of fighting style really was cool.

Yan Xuehen formed a sword-shaped hand seal. The Flying Snow Sword rushed forth like a shooting star, drawing streaks of cold radiance around the Fengxi Boar.

The Fengxi Boar relied on its thick skin to directly ignore the sword, however. A weapon that thin and weak-looking couldn't even break through its defenses.

What kind of person was Yan Xuehen, though? When she saw what had happened to her companions' attacks, she immediately understood how ridiculous its defense was. As such, she didn't attack its body, but rather aimed at its head. No matter how strong it was, its eyes couldn't be just as sturdy, right?

Sure enough, the Fengxi Boar panicked. It tried to dodge, but Yan Xuehen's sword skill was too fierce, preventing it from avoiding the attack. It roared in anger.

The others also snapped out of their daze. Yun Jianyue took out her Empress Lantern. Under the effects of the lantern light, the Fengxi Boar's body immediately slowed down.

When it saw that it couldn't avoid the sword, the boar decided to just close its eyes and face the attack directly. The sword stabbed into its eyelid. Even though there was a bit of blood, it clearly wasn't able to injure the boar's eyes.

Even its eyes are this thick?

Zu An took out the Nine Cauldron, taking the chance to engulf the boar with White Lotus Flame. He thought, Since this guy has strong physical defense, then let's give elemental attacks a try.

Sure enough, when the Fengxi Boar was wrapped up in White Lotus Flame, it screamed. Then, it shook its entire body. Countless steel needles covered in embers flew everywhere.

The group knew that they weren't really steel needles at all, but rather the Fengxi Boar's fur. Now that they had the White Lotus Flame on them, they had become even stronger. Zu An had no choice but to dodge them in a panic. The steel needles shot into the forest and passed straight through. The flames immediately set the trees alight, quickly forming a sea of flames.

The Fengxi Boar cried out, taking the chance to flee into the forest depths in alarm. Its body was like a burning fireball. However, the flames were already much smaller than before. After all, it still had the protective layer of grease and dirt around its body. After it had released all of its sharp fur, a lot of the flames had gone along with it.

Zu An was worried that the entire Mulberry Forest would be set ablaze. He quickly collected the White Lotus Flame again. However, the steel needles the boar fired out had already turned the forest into a sea of flames.

The group quickly tried to put out the fire, but how could the White Lotus Flame be that easy to extinguish? Furthermore, the Fengxi Boar had shot out too much of its fur, making the fire start from many different places. As soon as they put out one area, even more areas began to burn.

Yun Jianyue said, "I think maybe we should just let it be. Burning up this entire forest is fine too/ We'll just burn this Fengxi Boar here and save us some trouble."

Yan Xuehen said with a frown, "That might not be a good decision. That would harm the harmony of the world, which would lead to unpredictable consequences."

Yun Jianyue harrumphed. "Don't try to make yourself seem as if you represent the truth or something. Isn't that what our Holy Sect always does, and aren't we still fine and well?"

Zu An said, "This Mulberry Forest really is a bit strange. Did you forget about the Weak Water from before? If we really let it burn down the forest, forget about being burned ourselves, what if this forest has a will? That might be troublesome."

"Look at you, always speaking up for that stone cold woman. Did we meet each other first, or did you meet her first? It's almost as if there's something going on between the two of you or something," Yun Jianyue said unhappily.

"Witch, what kind of nonsense are you saying?!" Yan Xuehen exclaimed, her cheeks turning red. She felt guilty and didn't dare to look at Zu An.

Yu Yanluo quickly advised them, "Let's put out the fire, or else it will spread out of control."

Suddenly, a wave of dense gas spread outward. Then, a drizzle scattered across the surroundings. The burning flames were immediately put out.

"Why did it suddenly rain?" the group wondered as they gathered together. They all felt happy about the unexpected help.

As the fire died out, the rain also stopped.

"How could normal rain put out the White Lotus Flame?" Zu An wondered, puzzled. Even though the main body of the White Lotus Flame had already been collected, the scattered flames weren't things normal water could put out.

Yan Xuehen glanced toward the sky. She said with a puzzled expression, "That rain does not seem to have been naturally formed from the mountains and sky, but rather..."

"Rather like something this forest made itself," Yun Jianyue said, her expression turning grave. "Little An, you really might have jinxed it. This Mulberry Forest has also developed its own will."

Zu An swallowed and replied, "Something strange like that isn't too likely, right?"

Yu Yanluo's expression changed a bit. She asked, "Do you think it's like the relationship between the Yayu and the Weak Water? Perhaps the Fengxi Boar and this Mulberry Forest are already interlinked somehow."

"I don't think so. Otherwise, the Fengxi Boar's movements wouldn't end up accidentally hurting the Mulberry Forest," Yan Xuehen said. "It does not seem to bear malice against us so far. It should be fine as long as we do not provoke it."

The party all agreed with her analysis. After all, they only needed to kill the Fengxi Boar. Thus, they searched the forest for the Fengxi Boar's whereabouts. At first, they could still see its footsteps and the White Lotus Flame's burnt traces. The deeper they went into the forest, though, the fewer those traces became. Eventually, they all disappeared, and there were no traces left to be found.

The Mulberry Forest seemed to have a mysterious domain of its own that affected their divine sense. Additionally, Zu An discovered that there were clearly many small creatures in the forest, and yet the jade badge didn't allow him to use them as his spies.

By the time they searched for a few more hours, the sky began to darken. They weren't able to find the Fengxi Boar's whereabouts at all.

"This Mulberry Forest is too large, and the leaves are too lush and flourishing. It will be challenging for us to find the Fengxi Boar if it wants to hide," Yan Xuehen said.

"This really is strange... Aren't these monsters proud and powerful? Shouldn't they be the straightforward and aggressive type? Why are they all such scaredy-cats?" Yun Jianyue exclaimed in annoyance. The Yayu had been like that before as well; they had needed to really rack their brains to draw it out again.

They tried to brainstorm some more ideas, but all of them had to be discarded.

"Come look, the moon is out," Yu Yanluo said, suddenly pointing at the sky.

Zu An raised his head and looked at the sky. There was a bright moon in the sky that shone like a jade disk. It was bright and pure, beautiful and mysterious.

Just then, he suddenly thought of something. He asked, "Do you still remember when Yayu mentioned that the Fengxi Boar was perverted?"

Yan Xuehen's eyes lit up. She asked, "Should we try something along those lines?!"

Yun Jianyue snapped in annoyance, "What are you all looking at me for?"

Chapter 1423: Aloof and Seductive

Yan Xuehen had a strange smile as she said, "Since the Fengxi Boar's weakness is its perversion, of course we should face it with beauty! Furthermore, it just happens to be a full moon tonight. Yayu said that the Fengxi Boar often stares blankly at the moon, no? Everything has already been prepared; we just need the person now."

Yun Jianyue snapped in annoyance, "Then why aren't you going? Aren't you pretty good-looking too?!"

Yu Yanluo closed her lips tightly. She didn't dare to get involved in a fight between the two powerful goddesses.

Yan Xuehen replied, "Are you not always blabbing about how your charm skill is unrivaled? I do not know any, so of course I cannot be the one to go."

She couldn't help but grin as she spoke. She was always the one being bullied. Now that she was the one teasing Yun Jianyue, she discovered that she couldn't hold back her happiness. Sigh, why do I feel like I've become corrupted as of late somehow?

Yun Jianyue was briefly left at a loss for words. However, she reacted quickly and retorted, "Who said you don't know any charm skills? That pure and unsullied goddess act you put on always brings in guests from all sorts of different forces. In the eyes of men, they welcome you far more than me. What else could that be but a charm skill?"

Yan Xuehen's cheeks heated up. She was worried that someone could misunderstand and said, "Witch, what kind of nonsense are you saying? That is my personality. I always treat people kindly and they return the favor; what do you mean, a charm skill? It is your fault for always being so fierce and drawing public anger. Besides, you always feel that it is beneath you to use charm skills, so it is only natural that the righteous factions do not welcome you."

Yun Jianyue sneered. "Since you're so amazing, use that good personality of yours to bring out the Fengxi Boar."

"That thing is not even a person, so my personality will not work," Yan Xuehen said, directly rejecting that idea.

Yun Jianyue was so angry she began to laugh, saying, "Fine, it's not a person. But if your skills won't work, then why would mine?"

Yan Xuehen gave her a strange look and retorted, "Who is the one always bragging about her charm skills? How, as long as they were male, a target would be unable to escape your charm?"

Yun Jianyue was once again at a loss for words.

Yan Xuehen added salt to the wound, saying, "Wait, I always hear you brag about it, but I have never seen you really use it before. Could it be that you have never been that good at charm skills, so you just say those things to cover up the embarrassing truth?"

Yu Yanluo secretly clicked her tongue. Sect Master Yan always acted like a goddess who didn't get involved in secular matters, and yet now that they spent some time together, she had quickly learned how to become two-faced.

"Stone cold woman, do you think that your psychological attacks would work against me?" Yun Jianyue snapped, looking at her angrily. "Fine, today will be the day your horizons are broadened."

Zu An was speechless. You just said that you wouldn't fall for it, so why did you forget so soon?

"Fine, then we will just wait and see just how great the most formidable user of charm skills in the history of the Holy Sect is for ourselves," Yan Xuehen said. Her normally ice-cold eyes were now curved like crescent moons.

Yun Jianyue knew that she had fallen for the other woman's trick, but with her personality, she couldn't just take back her words. She could only harrumph and say, "Then you'd better get ready. I definitely won't do it again if I lure out that Fengxi Boar and you guys let it escape."

"Alright, alright. We get it already," Yan Xuehen said, a big smile on her face. However, she still discussed how they would face the Fengxi Boar again with the others.

All of them were experts, so they quickly drafted up a detailed plan to hunt it down. Then, they looked at Yun Jianyue with expectant gazes.

Yun Jianyue was furious. She hadn't expected that the first time she used her charm skill would be on a pig! Still, she was an extraordinary person. She quickly adjusted her mental state.

Then, they had to decide on a location. If they wanted to attract the Fengxi Boar, they had to find a place where it could see her. That meant it had to be a high place.

In the Mulberry Forest, the highest point was naturally the large mulberry tree at the very center. Thus, the group arrived at the very center of the Mulberry Forest. Even though they had already made their mental preparations, however, they were still shocked when they saw it with their own eyes.

The mulberry tree trunk was a hundred zhang in diameter, perhaps even wider. The entire tree was like an imperial canopy that covered the sky. The air around them was exceptionally fresh and clean, making the atmosphere feel carefree and relaxed.

Zu An thought to himself, The heaven-reaching divine trees from the legends of his previous world, or the tree from the Classic of Mountains and Seas, are probably only this large at most, right?

Yan Xuehen couldn't help but sigh in admiration, saying, "This place really is a natural paradise. If I could cultivate here normally, my rate of improvement could be around double."

"If you're willing, you can stay behind and live here long-term," Yun Jianyue said impatiently. She was obviously unhappy after falling for the other woman's trick.

Yan Xuehen didn't get annoyed when she heard Yun Jianyue's mockery. She obviously knew that they couldn't stay there long-term. In order to not provoke her as much, she decided to bring Yu Yanluo along and start laying out the trap.

Zu An initially planned to help them too, but he was stopped by Yun Jianyue. He asked curiously, "Big sis Yun, do you need me to help with anything?"

"Make sure to watch me properly later," Yun Jianyue quickly said.

Zu An was completely baffled and speechless. Eventually, though, he said, "Don't worry, I'll carefully protect you. I won't let that wild pig hurt you."

Yun Jianyue stared at him, retorting, "What kind of identity do I have? Why would I need your protection?!"

She paused for a moment, then snuck a look at the distant Yan Xuehen and Yu Yanluo. When she saw that they weren't paying attention, she quietly said, "I want you to watch carefully later. I don't want the first time I use my charm skill to be for a pig. It'll make me feel a bit better if it's for you."

"Ah?" Zu An exclaimed, feeling a bit overwhelmed by the favor.

Yun Jianyue quickly said, "Don't think too much of it. I'm not really doing it for you to see. It's just that you're the only man in our group. If there were any other man here, I would also invite him to watch. It would still be better than showing it to a pig."

Zu An endured his urge to laugh. He said warmly, "Okay, I'll make sure to properly admire it."

"Why does that sound so strange?" Yun Jianyue asked, her eyes narrowing. "Forget it. I'm going to make some preparations over there." Then, she floated over to a distant tree, deliberately moving out of view.

Zu An didn't know what she was really preparing for, but since she was intentionally avoiding the others, she had to have her reasons for doing so. He wouldn't try to dig too deeply. As such, he went to help Yan Xuehen and Yu Yanluo set up the trap.

"What did she tell you just now?" Yan Xuehen asked, feigning nonchalance. Yu Yanluo also immediately perked up her ears.

"Oh, she told me to be careful later, and that if she ended up wasting all of her efforts, she'd be sure to make me pay the price," Zu An replied ambiguously.

Only a dummy would tell the truth in such a situation. However, he couldn't tell a lie either, because that would easily be exposed in the future. That was why he had to say something that could be explained, but also something that wouldn't make others think weird thoughts.

Raising fish in a fish tank isn't so easy either... Do you think it's that easy for me?!

"Oh, is that what happened?" Yan Xuehen asked. She was skeptical at first, but after thinking about it, that did sound like the witch's personality, so she didn't say anything else.

Soon afterward, they finished their arrangements. Yun Jianyue also slowly walked out of the forest just then. Zu An's eyes immediately widened, as Yun Jianyue had changed into a pink dress that was more skintight than her normal attire. He could clearly see her slender waistline, as well as her impressive figure. When she walked, there was a clear ripple that even made him think of Big Manman at that moment.

Several thin strips of cloth fluttered around the dress, adding a bit of mysterious beauty to Yun Jianyue's appearance. Her waist-length hair was completely free. As her black hair fluttered around, it gave her an air of bewitching beauty. She had changed her makeup too, making her brows and eyes no longer seem as fierce and intimidating as usual. At that moment, she looked gentle and beautiful, full of tender feelings.

The moment she saw Yun Jianyue, Yu Yanluo couldn't help but give the nearby Yan Xuehen a look. Yun Jianyue's goddess-like appearance was too similar to Yan Xuehen's temperament.

Upon paying closer attention, however, she noticed that there were several differences. There was a strong aura of seduction emanating from Yun Jianyue's body too. She was actually able to combine such an aloof fairy-like appearance with an air of passion and desire perfectly!

Chapter 1424: Bewitching Dance

Yun Jianyue looked incredibly seductive, and yet she didn't really show anything either. The only part that could be considered revealing was her delicate collarbones.

Zu An remembered Qiu Honglei previously telling him that showing one's chest was something only those at the lowest level would do. The higher level one's charm skill reached, the purer one would become, and the more aloof and transcendent they would be.

In fact, according to that standard, Yan Xuehen was actually at the highest level too. That was why, when Yun Jianyue had first appeared, she had immediately been mistaken for Yan Xuehen.

Of course, Yan Xuehen's personality was much more indifferent and cold. In contrast, Yun Jianyue instead revealed charming traits that could tug at others' heartstrings. Forget about men, even Yan Xuehen and Yu Yanluo's hearts began beating quickly when they saw her.

"What kind of expression is that? Can I not choose to be feminine if I want to?" Yun Jianyue snapped, her eyes widening.

Zu An sighed and said, "The big sis Yun we know has returned. To be honest, that really is hard to get used to."

"What, do I not look good right now?" Yun Jianyue asked. Her brows furrowed a bit, and she sounded a bit nervous.

Zu An couldn't help but laugh, replying, "How could that be? Whether it's your current self or your past self, both are devastatingly beautiful. If anyone dared to say you aren't pretty, they would have to be blind."

Yun Jianyue now felt happy, replying, "Damn brat, no wonder you were able to trick so many girls. That mouth of yours is simply slathered with honey. Your ways are useless against me, though."

"Is that so? Why is there a huge smile on your face then?" Yan Xuehen retorted, ruthlessly exposing her.

"Hmph, can I interpret that as you being jealous? I'm not going to lower myself to your level," Yun Jianyue said. She was in a good mood and surprisingly didn't get angry.

"Me? Jealous of you?" Yan Xuehen exclaimed in annoyance. For some reason, when she saw Zu An praising Yun Jianyue with 'flattery', she felt angry inside. Even though she knew that there wasn't anything wrong with Zu An's praise, she just felt that he was kissing up to her rival.

"You're jealous that I can have the same temperament as you, right? It's just that I don't feel like doing that stuff you do," Yun Jianyue said disdainfully.

Yan Xuehen laughed, retorting, "Sure, then why not use this act once we get out? I will be sure to introduce everyone to the Devil Sect Master's other side."

"Hmph, I don't want to be like you and those other hypocrites," Yun Jianyue said. She knew she had to use her charm skill continuously to maintain such a state. She felt disgusted when she thought of having to use a charm skill on people she usually looked down on.

Zu An quickly interrupted them, saying, "Ahem, we should focus on preparing our trap for the Fengxi Boar."

"Leave that to me," Yun Jianyue said, smiling proudly. When she passed Zu An, she paused for a moment and told him through ki, "Don't forget what you said before."

Zu An smiled and said, "Don't worry, I promise I won't even blink."

A hint of red flashed across Yun Jianyue's cheeks. She quickly kicked off the ground and arrived at the top of the tree. Even though the mulberry tree was tall, Yun Jianyue's movements were light and graceful. The leaves were just like solid ground for her.

After nightfall, the winds became colder and stronger. However, that didn't affect Yun Jianyue at all. On the contrary, the light fabric of her dress fluttered around, making her look even more like a goddess.

She gave Zu An a deep look, then gently raised her wrist and got on her tiptoes. She was like a soft willow amid a breeze, looking as if she were dancing lightly and gracefully within the moon's silhouette. As the moonlight shone from behind her, her dress seemed to become translucent, further displaying her sweet, fair, and graceful figure. She almost looked as if she weren't wearing anything, and yet no one could see anything.

She had a sort of mysterious beauty that tested onlookers' patience. She didn't have to do a thing, and yet it was already enough to make their imaginations run wild.

Soon afterward, a gentle and sweet hum began to echo through the entire Mulberry Forest. It wasn't like any written song; instead, it was more like heavenly music that originated from the soul.

Zu An felt as if his hair had begun to stand on end. Yun Jianyue's moving dance, together with the voice that made one's imagination roam, made him feel as if countless succubi had surrounded him, whispering sweet words into his ears. Many lovely scenes immediately appeared in his mind. He even felt as if all of his blood had begun to boil. He unconsciously leaned forward a bit and covered his eyes with his hands, using his sleeves to hide his embarrassment.

This is bad! I'm going to make a fool of myself! Zu An's heart pounded like a drum. Even with his willpower, he seemed to be on the verge of breaking apart. The worst part was that Yan Xuehen and Yu Yanluo were right next to him. If he made a fool of himself in front of them, wouldn't his image be completely ruined?

Despite that, his body refused to remain under his control, and his instinctive reactions ran wild. The only way to just barely stop it was to avoid looking at the woman at the very top of the tree. However, the scene seemed to have some kind of bewitching power, making one completely unwilling to shift one's gaze away.

If that were all, however, with Zu An's willpower, he could still just barely look away. However, he had just promised Yun Jianyue not to, so how could he go back on his word?

As such, he just braced himself and continued to watch. Soon afterward, a pair of penetrating, beautiful eyes met his. It turned out Yun Jianyue had always been looking at him! Perhaps it was because she saw how hard-pressed he was, but a proud expression flashed through her eyes. Then, her movements became even gentler.

This woman is playing with fire! Did she forget that I'm her disciple's man?! Zu An thought, completely covered in sweat.

Meanwhile, Yan Xuehen's face was also flushed. The memory of the Great Snowy Mountains' hot springs kept appearing in her mind. She instinctively glanced at the man beside her. At that moment, she was shocked to discover that Yu Yanluo was also looking at Zu An with red cheeks and tender feelings. They were each stunned when they saw how the other was acting.

Yan Xuehen's heart jumped in alarm. She quickly regained her composure and said, "The Devil Sect's legendary Bewitching Dance and Charming Voice are outstanding, as expected."

Yu Yanluo had also remembered her activities with Zu An in the bedroom, so she was lacking in confidence as she exclaimed, "Ah, so this is the legendary Bewitching Dance and Charming Voice!"

With her status, she had naturally heard of those two astonishing skills. It was rumored that no man could resist their temptation, but she had never met anyone who had experienced them personally. They were probably the Devil Sect's most mysterious charm skills and definitely wouldn't be used on ordinary men.

They hadn't expected to have the fortune of seeing those skills today. Forget about men, even as women they could barely hold on!

Yan Xuehen secretly observed Zu An's expression. When she saw that he was completely red and sweating madly, she didn't get angry. Even though he was about to break down, it would be weirder if he didn't have any reaction.

On the contrary, the fact that he could hold on this long already made his willpower greater than that of countless men. Who would have thought that even though he usually acted so perverted, in reality, he was actually such a gentleman?

Just then, a boar cried out. With the rustling of leaves from the forest, a giant body jumped out and roared toward the woman in the moon. Its small eyes seemed to have already become a bit red.

Chapter 1425: True Form Revealed

So it was a perverted pig after all!

When they saw how the Fengxi Boar was about to go crazy while staring at Yun Jianyue's performance atop the tree, Yan Xuehen and Yu Yanluo both cursed it inwardly. Comparatively, Zu An's performance was far, far better.

The Fengxi Boar ran a few circles around the bottom of the tree. It then raised its head and looked at Yun Jianyue in a stupor. When it saw the beauty in the moon, it felt extremely impatient and uneasy, as if recalling something from the past.

After some time passed, it stopped being content with just looking. It stomped its four stubby legs on the ground, flying into the air with a scream. Its posture was extremely comical and funny, but its huge body made it look like a massive missile. If it rammed into something, forget about Yun Jianyue's delicate and slender body, even the big mulberry tree wouldn't necessarily be able to take it.

Zu An also snapped out of his daze just then. He immediately used Hundredwarble's mental attack on the Fengxi Boar. The boar's entire body trembled, and its body froze for a moment.

However, Zu An also felt a stinging pain in his head. When a mental attack like Hundredwarble was used against experts who had already condensed a soul, it would often deal a substantial amount of damage to the user too.

Despite that, Zu An relied on his powerful regeneration to use it anyway. A hint of confusion flashed through his gaze, as the moment he attacked the boar with the mental attack, he didn't seem to see a wild boar, but rather a strong man shrouded in black energy. The next second, however, the wild boar materialized again.

Could it be the mental rebound making me see something wrong?

While the Fengxi Boar was in a daze, a thick, taut rope suddenly shot out from the dense tree branches. It was like an iron chain, blocking the boar's path.

The Fengxi Boar finally snapped out of its daze, and a hint of disdain appeared in its eyes. It had great strength; in the past, humans had vainly attempted to tie it up with ropes, but then it had easily snapped them with only a slight struggle. Thus, it allowed that rope to wrap around it, intending to use the momentum of its charge to just run straight through and break it.

However, its eyes quickly narrowed. The rope had already been stretched to several times its original length from the boar's strength, its once-thick material becoming incredibly thin; it looked as if it could snap at any time. And yet, it just didn't snap.

Meanwhile, because the Fengxi Boar had suffered from the previous mental attack, its movements had been slowed, weakening its charge considerably. It was already too late to get out of the situation.

The extremely taut rope was like a bowstring that had been fully drawn. When the boar's body stopped moving, it was sent flying toward the ground at an even greater speed than its original charge.

The rope was naturally not an ordinary one; rather, it was made of the Jade Moon Serpent's tendons.

In the past, when Zu An had helped the crown prince complete his test in Westhound Tomb, those tendons were the spoils of war. Crown Princess Bi Linglong had given them to him. He hadn't expected they would be useful now.

Of course, just those tendons alone wouldn't be enough to stop the powerful Fengxi Boar. Fortunately, he had the assistance of runes Yan Xuehen had applied; only then could he take down the Fengxi Boar.

The Fengxi Boar lost its center of gravity as it struck the ground with a loud crash, causing it to sink into a hole; it was a pitfall Yan Xuehen and the others had set up previously. The boar roared furiously from within the pit. It had initially charged over out of lust, but it hadn't gotten to enjoy anything and had instead suffered miserably. The sheer difference between expectation and reality was too huge.

However, when it saw the crushed wooden stakes and sharp stones inside the pit, it thought to itself, You actually wanted to hurt me with this stuff?

It roared, intending to charge out of the pit to teach the ignorant people with shallow knowledge outside a lesson, but several blue lines suddenly shone around it. They surrounded the boar, forming a frightening diagram.

The boar could vaguely make out some fluttering flags within the forest. As a monster from ancient times, it immediately realized that it was inside a formation!

A painting scroll unfolded above it, covering the pit. It suddenly felt as if the world had changed. It was no longer in a mulberry forest, but rather in an unfamiliar place.

The painting was none other than Yu Yanluo's World Painting. However, its grade was insufficient to trap an ancient monster like the Fengxi Boar. Fortunately, she had Yan Xuehen to help her by setting up a great formation ahead of time. Then, using the World Painting as the eye of the formation allowed it to become many times more powerful.

Zu An and the others took the chance to rush into the formation, where he used the White Lotus Flame to engulf the Fengxi Boar.

The boar screamed in pain. It tried to shoot out the fur on its body, intending to burn the forest around it down if it had to. However, the huge formation contained a world of its own. There was no mulberry forest left!

As the controller of the formation, Yan Xuehen effortlessly helped the others avoid the crossbow bolt-like steel needles. At the same time, she used the Snowflake Sword. Cold air completely surrounded the Fengxi Boar.

Borrowing the power of the formation, the strength of her Snowflake Sword increased tremendously. When the cold air made contact with the White Lotus Flame, it turned into steam that surrounded the Fengxi Boar, making it cry out in pain.

Zu An was surprised. He hadn't expected the power of ice and fire combining to be so great. Hmm, no wonder there were so many guys in my world who liked to play with characters that used both fire and ice...

He didn't waste any time and took out his Universe Ring, using it to continuously strike the boar's head. While it was dizzy from the blunt force, he took out a long spear that had a blazing speartip.

It was a heaven-grade weapon Shang Liuyu had given him, something from the Dragon Palace: the Violetflame Snake Pike.

The Fengxi Boar's defenses were especially strong, and its retaliation was ferocious as well. Such a long-handled weapon was the best option against it. Zu An remembered that the hunters of his previous world also used spears to face wild boars.

Even though the Fengxi Boar's defenses were strong, after being injured by the White Lotus Flame and the Snowflake Sword, it had already weakened considerably. Furthermore, although it had stronger resistance to physical attacks, it definitely couldn't take on a spear shrouded in demonic flames. Thus, almost every thrust left behind a scorched, burning, bloody hole.

Even though the Fengxi Boar was thick-skinned, it still couldn't bear the endless attacks. It knew it would be in danger if this continued. Thus, it suddenly cried out and turned into black energy. Then, the black energy turned into countless smaller boars that ran in several different directions.

"Be careful! As long as a single little boar can get away, it will escape. It won't be so easy to make it fall for this kind of trap again!" Yun Jianyue called out. She was experienced and immediately recognized the boar's move as a brilliant self-preservation method.

Zu An didn't panic. If the Fengxi Boar maintained its large wild boar form, it might have been tricky for him. However, if it broke up into smaller parts, it would likely be troublesome for other people, but he definitely didn't lack area-of-effect skills.

Thus, he unleashed the Lion's Roar he had stolen from the Lion race. A terrifying roar filled the entire formation world. Such an AOE attack had limited effects on cultivators with higher cultivation, but now that the Fengxi Boar had turned into countless small boars, they had become much weaker individually. They were instantly confused by the Lion's Roar.

While the little boar were frozen, Zu An used his Blue Luan Sword Formation. Endless sword energy rained down from the skies, impaling all the boars to death. In the end, they dissipated into black smoke, which coalesced and reformed into the Fengxi Boar's large body once more. However, it was full of holes and on its last legs.

Zu An held the Violetflame Snake Pike in his hand and was about to end its life when the boar turned into a human, exclaiming, "Strong hero, spare my life, please spare me!"

The others were alarmed when they saw that. They hadn't expected the Fengxi Boar to actually be a person! After all, the Yayu had a human face but a snake body. It had many non-human traits. However, this guy was completely a human, from head to toe.

Zu An was even more shocked because this person was the same as the one he had seen when he attacked using Hundredwarble. Could it be the Fengxi Boar's true body?

"Who are you?" Yun Jianyue shouted.

The strong man gave Yun Jianyue a look, immediately recognizing her as the woman who had been dancing in the moonlight. A complicated expression that resembled a mix of infatuation and resentment appeared on his face. He quickly lowered his head and said, "My name is Pang Meng, and I used to be a hunter. In the past, I was sent by the people to eliminate the disaster that was the Fengxi Boar. Even though I managed to kill it, I was assailed by the black energy around it, and then inadvertently transformed into it. Thank you all for freeing me from this wretched plight."

Zu An and the others looked at each other in dismay; all of their expressions were strange. Why was it just like the Yayu? Could this be another person who had suffered a bitter fate?

Chapter 1426: Bite the Hand that Feeds

“You successfully killed the Fengxi Boar?” Yun Jianyue asked doubtfully. “Why did I hear that it was Yi who killed it?”

They had personally experienced how strong the Fengxi Boar was. It wasn’t something a normal person could defeat at all!

The strong man replied, “Yi was my master.”

The others were speechless, feeling truly shocked. This guy was actually Yi’s disciple?

“Just what is going on?” Zu An quickly asked for details.

When he saw that they didn’t intend to finish him off, the robust man who claimed to be Pang Meng began to explain, “Yi was indeed my master. In the past, I heard of master’s great reputation, so I traveled from afar to ask him to take me in as his disciple. Eventually, master was moved by my sincerity and finally agreed to take me as his disciple, teaching me archery skills. Later, he took me with him to defeat the calamity. Back then, when he faced the Fengxi Boar, I was with him.

“When we killed the Fengxi Boar, I accidentally let the demonic energy into my body. At first, there was nothing wrong, but later, I gradually began to turn into a demon. In the end, I became like the Fengxi Boar. I was too ashamed to face my master, and I was worried about hurting the people, so I hid in the Mulberry Forest.”

Zu An asked with a frown, “Don’t tell me your master just abandoned you?”

“I was too ashamed to meet him again, so at first, I deliberately hid from him. Later on, I heard that something happened to him. Meanwhile, my consciousness was gradually being overwhelmed by the demonic energy, causing me to fall into a muddle-headed state. I don’t know what happened afterward,” Pang Meng replied.

Everyone immediately recalled that when they were fighting the Fengxi Boar, there was black energy coming out from its body from time to time. Was this that so-called demonic energy?

“What happened to Yi?” Zu An keenly pinpointed what he was saying.

“I don’t know what happened to my master either. I couldn’t even take care of myself,” Pang Meng said, sounding wronged. “Thankfully, you brave warriors removed the Fengxi Boar’s demonic energy today, and that let me see the light again. You’ve all shown me such favor today. Even if I have to work like an ox to repay all of you in the next life, I won’t hesitate to do so.”

Zu An said impatiently, “I’m not even a farmer, so what would I do with an ox?”

Pang Meng was speechless. He was at a loss for words. Why didn’t this guy speak like a normal person at all? He suddenly didn’t even know what to do.

“That wild boar earlier was so perverted, but in the end, it was you?” Yun Jianyue asked with a frown. For some reason, when she remembered what had happened earlier and thought about what this guy looked like, she subconsciously felt a bit unhappy.

Pang Meng quickly exclaimed, “I’m being wrongly accused here! I was led by the Fengxi Boar’s demonic energy, and I didn’t know what happened! If I’ve offended this goddess in any way, I ask for your forgiveness.”

Yun Jianyue raised her brows. She hadn’t expected to actually be called a goddess by someone one day. No wonder that stone cold woman is usually so self-important. This feeling really isn’t bad.

Zu An asked, “Why don’t you introduce your master to us a bit? We’re pretty curious. What kind of person was he?”

Pang Meng said, “My master was a true hero among men. He excelled in archery and was known to be the number one at it. In his earlier years, he obtained the appreciation of the Celestial Emperor, who bestowed a red bow with white arrows to him. That made him even more unrivaled. Later, when Emperor Yao took the throne, ten suns emerged together and all sorts of monsters began to roam the world, so Emperor Yao sought out my master.

“Because the ten suns were the Celestial Emperor’s sons, master refused at first. The Celestial Emperor had treated him with great kindness, after all. Eventually, however, when he saw how the people were suffering, he could only give up on his personal feelings and agree to act. He used the red bow and white arrows the Celestial Emperor gave him to shoot down nine out of the ten Golden Crows...”

Zu An frowned. He had already heard most of that before. He took the chance to ask, “Who is the Celestial Emperor you speak of?”

“The Celestial Emperor is simply the Celestial Emperor, the emperor of the immortals in the heavens, and the most respected and most powerful being in the heavens above and earth below,” Pang Meng said. His voice was full of admiration, as if he really wanted to have similar prestige. He continued, “My status was too low, though, so I never had the opportunity to meet the Celestial Emperor.

“In the past, I asked my master about the Celestial Emperor out of curiosity. However, back then, he got really upset at me,” Pang Meng said with a sigh. “His mood must have been terrible when he had to personally kill the sons of his benefactor. From then on, everyone around master knew that subject was a taboo, so no one asked again.”

Yan Xuehen noticed the way Pang Meng had worded his sentence and asked, “Who was there at your master’s side, apart from you?”

When he saw her beautiful appearance, Pang Meng was stunned. However, he quickly lowered his head and replied, “Master always moved alone. Great heroes are always solitary individuals. Fortunately, at least martial mother accompanied him.”

“Martial mother?” Zu An’s group replied stunned.

“Martial mother was the Chang clan’s saintess. She was extremely beautiful... Ahem. I heard that they didn’t get along at first, but later, as they spent more time around each other, they gradually developed feelings for one another. Eventually, they became one and loved each other dearly.”

“Their affection for each other didn’t seem to be all that great to me.” Yun Jianyue harrumphed. “Didn’t Chang’e eat that medicine and ascend by herself, leaving Yi behind and separating them forever?”

Pang Meng’s expression changed a bit when he heard that, but he didn’t refute it, saying, “That can’t really be blamed on her. There aren’t that many people who could resist the temptation of immortality.”

Yu Yanluo gave Zu An a loving look, thinking, I wouldn’t make that kind of mistake.

Yan Xuehen also instinctively glanced toward Zu An. When she saw Yu Yanluo’s expression, she immediately withdrew her gaze, as if she had been zapped by electricity. What in the world is wrong with me? What kind of nonsense am I thinking?

Yun Jianyue also subconsciously thought that she wouldn’t do such a thing. However, she then realized that she didn’t even have a lover, so what was she getting so worked up for?

Then, Zu An asked some things about Yi. However, he noticed that apart from knowing a bit about his master Yi and Chang’e’s relationship, Pang Meng didn’t really know much about other things.

As if sensing his dissatisfaction, Pang Meng said apologetically, “The main reason is that I didn’t follow master for long. He was a habitually silent man, and he always moved from place to place, helping the people eliminate disasters. He rarely had any breaks. Later, I was infected by the Fengxi Boar’s demonic energy, and don’t know what happened after that.”

Seeing as Pang Meng had already told them pretty much everything that he knew, and that he had only become a monster while hunting down disasters in the past, but was now back to normal, there was naturally no need to kill him anymore. As such, Zu An released him from the formation.

Zu An then asked, “What do you plan to do now?”

“I don’t know. This world seems to be different from the world I recall. Besides, I don’t know how long I can remain in my current state either,” Pang Meng said, sounding a bit bleak.

Zu An fell silent. This person wasn’t an immortal, after all, nor had he eaten any undying medicines. The fact that he could exist for so long was solely due to the Fengxi Boar’s demonic energy. Now that the demonic energy had been erased, he probably wouldn’t be able to live for much longer.

“Are you still going to continue forward? Up ahead is Dongting Lake, the Xiushe Snake’s territory. That fellow is incredibly violent and extremely poisonous. You must be careful,” Pang Meng said. He then told them a bit about the Xiushe Snake’s characteristics.

...

The group thanked Pang Meng and bid him goodbye. Zu An said with a sigh, “Things actually went rather smoothly this time. I hope the Xiushe Snake isn’t that difficult to defeat too.”

Yan Xuehen looked at Yu Yanluo, saying, “Since it is a snake, little sister Yu should be able to speak with it.”

Yu Yanluo’s face heated up, but she said, “I’ll give it my best attempt.”

Zu An gave Yun Jianyue a curious look and asked, "What's wrong, big sis Yun? Why have you been quiet this whole time?"

"I don't like that person from before. The way he looked at me was strange. I can't help but feel as if he has some dishonest intentions," Yun Jianyue said.

Yan Xuehen had a strange look as she said, "Earlier, you... You... Who would still be able to look at you normally? Even Zu An, even he..."

Suddenly, a faint voice called out in their minds, "Be careful!"

The group was alarmed. When they turned around, they saw that Pang Meng had drawn a bow and aimed it at them. When he saw that he had been discovered, he immediately loosed the bowstring. Then, sharp arrows flew forth one after another, streaking toward the group like shooting stars.

When they sensed the ridiculous speed and terrifying aura of the arrows, they felt that were able to empathize a bit with the despair of the Golden Crows in the past.

As expected, Pang Meng's archery really was Yi's true inheritance!

Chapter 1427: Killer

Zu An and the others reacted quickly to dodge the incoming arrows. When they prepared to retaliate, however, they were shocked to discover that the arrows had actually curved in midair, circling around before going after them again.

"They even have heat-seeking properties?!" Zu An exclaimed, flabbergasted. However, he didn't have time to admire the arrows, because he hadn't expected them to be like that. The women had prepared to retaliate too, so they didn't have any opportunity to dodge.

Zu An used Grandgale to move in front of the three women. He had no time to bring out any weapons, so he sent a fist flying toward an arrow.

However, the arrows weren't tangible, and his fist didn't hit anything. The incorporeal arrows pierced directly into his body, causing bursts of bloody mist to spew forth.

"Ah Zu!" the three women all cried out in alarm.

"It's fine. I won't die from something like this," Zu An said with a pale smile. Fortunately, he had used the Heaven Devouring Sutra to neutralize quite a bit of the force at the last moment. Otherwise, if he had used his body alone to defend against them, no matter how tough he was, he would still have exploded under the four arrows.

As expected of someone the divine archer Yi had personally taught! These arrows were too powerful. He wondered just how powerful they would have been if Yi had fired them himself.

Seeing that there was no danger to Zu An's life, Yun Jianyue's gaze filled with killing intent. She quickly rushed toward Pang Meng.

Yan Xuehen's expression grew cold, and she rushed over with the Flying Snow Sword as well.

Yu Yanluo took Zu An into her embrace, tears falling from her eyes. She quickly applied medicine on his wounds.

When he saw that Zu An hadn't actually died from the arrows, a look of shock and regret appeared in Pang Meng's eyes. However, he knew that in his injured state, he wouldn't necessarily be a match for the two women. He could only toy with them slowly once he recovered completely. Thus, he turned into a streak of black energy and disappeared.

Yun Jianyue and Yan Xuehen were both dejected. It turned out the Fengxi Boar's demonic energy hadn't been eliminated from Pang Meng's body, or perhaps he had been the Fengxi Boar to begin with! More importantly, they had seen the speed at which the black energy disappeared. The two of them weren't at their strongest, so they wouldn't necessarily be able to catch up to him.

Just then, Zu An laughed coldly and taunted Pang Meng using the Fragrant Barf skill. "You want to run?"

The black energy paused for a moment, condensing into Pang Meng again. He stared at Zu An with red eyes and yelled, "I'm going to kill you!"

This guy was clearly worse than him in every way, so why did he have three women who were so beautiful at his side?

Even someone like you?

The women only cared about that guy, just like his martial mother who only cared about Yi!

At that instant, the man and his former master began to combine in Pang Meng's mind. His many years of hatred and grievance were multiplied many times over. He wanted to kill the three women's lover right before their eyes and make them clearly understand who the strongest man was.

He raised his arms, and an intangible bow appeared in his hand. Even though it didn't have a physical form, when he drew the bowstring that shouldn't have existed, an arrow of light condensed on it. The arrow contained a terrifying aura.

Right at that moment, a streak of poignant moonlight flickered past Pang Meng, and he was shocked to discover that his hands seemed to have left his body. Yun Jianyue had used the Star Shattering Imprint on her Crescent Ring, increasing its power tremendously.

The intense pain coming from his severed arms made Pang Meng come to his senses. Did I go crazy? I actually ignored the two women who were attacking me, all because I wanted to kill that man?

He was about to withdraw when the Flying Snow Sword pierced through his forehead like a streak of flowing light. He was completely stunned. He mumbled to himself, "Martial mother..."

Afterward, his body came crashing to the ground, completely devoid of life.

As soon as the two women released a sigh of relief, a strand of faint black energy appeared from Pang Meng's body and moved toward their group. It was clearly the Fengxi Boar's demonic energy, trying to find a new host.

Yan Xuehen and Yun Jianyue's expressions changed. If they were possessed by the demonic energy, that really would be a life worse than death. Unfortunately, they didn't know any skills that could deal with the energy. One of them relied on killing intent, while the other used a profound sect's techniques.

Just then, Zu An calmly intoned, "Dust to dust, earth to earth. What ought to have departed, do not remain here..."

The black energy seemed to have met something extremely terrifying. It released a miserable shriek before vanishing into thin air.

Yan Xuehen and Yun Jianyue both turned around to look at Zu An, looking a bit absent-minded. Because they were so powerful, they often ended up becoming shields for the people around them. They were always the ones who protected others. Now that they were the ones being protected, it really felt amazing. When they recalled how calm and steady Zu An had sounded just then, they felt a mysterious sense of safety.

The two of them realized they were in a daze. Their faces turned red from guilt. They quickly moved over to Zu An's side and asked, "Are you okay?"

"I'm pretty thick-skinned. I won't die," Zu An said. He tried, to show them a confident smile, but he quickly grimaced in pain, tarnishing his image quite badly.

"Don't do such reckless things in the future. I'm a powerful grandmaster. Did you think that I couldn't take one of those arrows?" Yun Jianyue replied, looking unhappy.

Yan Xuehen's face was as white as frost as she added "Right. With our cultivation, even though we are injured, we could still at least have taken an arrow each. You just needed to save little sister Yu."

Zu An chuckled. These two had already been famous for many years, but after being around them for so long, he had discovered that they were sometimes like little girls. Of course, other people would likely never have the chance to see this side of them.

He replied, "There was something strange about those arrows. You should have seen that from how I miscalculated earlier. It's better for me to get injured than for you beauties to have some bloody holes in your bodies, right? Either way, I recovered really quickly."

"Even if you recover quickly, that doesn't mean you shouldn't cherish your body," Yu Yanluo said as she gently touched the area around his wounds, her voice trembling a bit.

Yun Jianyue gave Zu An a conflicted look, saying, "Brat, you really do use your very life to flirt with women. No wonder Honglei... Ahem, you can use this stuff to deal with little sister Yu and the stone cold woman, but it's useless on me. Don't do this again in the future."

Yan Xuehen began to panic, exclaiming, "What does this have to do with me? Do not use that on me either."

Yu Yanluo said with a frown, "Ah Zu is already this badly wounded. Are you two really going to argue now?"

Normally, with Yan Xuehen and Yun Jianyue's status, who would dare to lecture them? For the first time, though, they didn't get angry and felt a bit guilty instead. They thought to themselves, had they gone

too far? It wasn't that they weren't grateful to Zu An, but rather that they couldn't express it too openly. Even so, they couldn't bring themselves to explain that out loud.

Sensing that the atmosphere was becoming a bit awkward, Zu An stepped forward to resolve things. He asked, "Right, did you guys hear a warning earlier?"

The three women were stunned. They all nodded, saying, "Yes. Just now, we did indeed hear a faint voice."

Just who did the voice belong to? They looked around, but they didn't see anyone. Cold wind rushed past them, and they couldn't help but feel a chill run down their backs.

Zu An suddenly thought of something. He turned around toward the large mulberry tree and called out, "It should be your respected self who warned us, right?"

"Who are you talking to?" The three women weren't stupid and reacted quickly.

A light breeze blew past them. The leaves rustled with a noise that resembled a person's voice, but it was extremely indistinct. "Indeed, it was this old one who warned you."

The group was stunned. This large mulberry tree really had developed sentience?

As if seeing through their thoughts, the big mulberry tree sighed. "The laws of this world are a bit deficient, so that is why I have not been able to fully take form. I have only developed a consciousness."

"Thank you, your respected self, for saving us," Zu An said, continuing to speak politely. After all, this entire place was the mulberry tree's domain. Offending it wasn't a wise choice.

"It cannot be considered saving you; it was merely a reminder," the large mulberry tree said, sounding deeply moved. "I simply did not want that Fengxi Boar to harm any more people."

Zu An was startled, asking, "Was that the Fengxi Boar the entire time? Then was he also fooling us by claiming to be Yi's disciple Pang Meng?"

"Those words were not spoken to deceive you either. He was indeed Yi's disciple Pang Meng. However, the master and disciple had a poor relationship, and it is rumored that he plotted to cause Yi's death," the mulberry tree said, revealing an earth-shattering secret.

Chapter 1428: Scratch My Back and I'll Scratch Yours

"He killed Yi?" the group exclaimed in shock. They had heard all sorts of rumors about Yi that practically portrayed him as the greatest hero alive. And yet, someone like that had died from being schemed against? Even though Pang Meng hadn't been weak, regardless of how they looked at it, he was still quite lacking compared to Yi, right?

The large mulberry tree's leaves fluttered in a strange rhythm as it said, "That was what some people who passed through Mulberry Forest said. Furthermore, from time to time, I saw Pang Meng enter a deranged state where he would repeatedly shout 'I'm sorry, master', 'Don't blame me, don't blame me', and other such things. I believe that should be enough to prove the rumors."

The group fell silent when they heard that. It seemed the rumors were most likely true.

Yun Jianyue said, "It isn't all that strange. No matter how powerful Yi was, he didn't have an invincible body. A spear you can see is easier to stop than a hidden arrow. Pang Meng was also Yi's disciple, so if he schemed against his master, he might very well have had a chance. Our Holy Sect had many powerful individuals who were killed by people close to them over the years."

The others thought to themselves that that was indeed the case. They couldn't help but sigh. Even a great hero like that had actually ended up falling at the hands of someone close to him.

"Right, what about Yi's wife, Chang'e?" Zu An asked. When he saw the women's weird expressions, he quickly explained, "Earlier, Pang Meng seemed to be calling out Chang'e's name before he died."

Am I really that much of a pervert in their eyes? No matter how pretty Chang'e is, she's still someone else's wife!

"In the past, some travelers who passed by this Mulberry Forest said that the reason why Pang Meng took Yi as his master was because he was an incredible archer himself, someone who had claimed to have skill not inferior to Yi's own. He was unconvinced of Yi's prowess and challenged him to a competition, and it was only after he lost that he took Yi as his master and learned his archery skills. However, others said that Pang Meng was completely stunned when he saw Yi's wife Chang'e and took Yi as his master in order to get closer to her," the great mulberry tree replied.

Zu An's expression was strange. He thought to himself, Even though Cao Zei died, his spirit seems to have existed even back then.[1]

The big mulberry tree couldn't even move, so the fact that it knew so much was already quite incredible. Just how gossipy were those travelers from the past?

"That Pang Meng was a shameless person, as expected!" Yun Jianyue harrumphed. She had already thought that there was something wrong with his expression back then.

Yan Xuehen and Yu Yanluo nodded in deep sympathy. As women, and furthermore extremely pretty women, they had always had many men around them. No matter how those men tried to hide it, however, the sinister thoughts within their expressions hadn't escaped the women's notice. Previously, Pang Meng's gaze had been filled with undeniable desire, but he had even tried to hide it. That only further proved there was something wrong with his character.

"I also heard a traveler mention that the reason why Chang'e ate the immortal medicine was not because she was greedy for immortality and abandoned Yi, but rather because she was forced to by Pang Meng. Helpless to do anything else, she could only eat the immortal medicine to protect herself," the giant mulberry tree said.

"Not even death can wipe out this despicable Pang Meng's crimes. Not only did he turn on his master, he even wanted to take advantage of his martial mother!" Yan Xuehen exclaimed in a rare show of anger. According to her values, even one of those acts was already disgraceful, let alone both of them!

"Indeed. Even in our Holy Sect, someone like that without any bottom line would be chopped up into pieces as punishment," Yun Jianyue said, no longer maintaining her charm skill. Even though her outfit was the same as before, she was once again full of killing intent.

Yu Yanluo felt a bit absentminded. In the past, hadn't all the disasters in Cloudcenter Commandery happened because her brother-in-law lusted after her beauty?

Zu An began to think to himself. Pang Meng had been a wild boar, so he couldn't help but think of Zhu Bajie. When he thought about Chinese mythology, he realized that it was precisely because Marshal Tianpeng[2] had harassed Chang'e that he was exiled to the mortal world and reincarnated as a boar. Was there a connection between the two stories?

Several dark green leaves suddenly fell in front of the group, and they subconsciously caught them.

The mulberry tree said, "The Dongting Lake ahead is full of miasma, making it easy for those who pass through it to die from its toxicity. Bring these leaves with you; they can shield you from the miasma. Furthermore, carrying them with you will help heal your injuries."

Zu An looked at the leaf in front of him. It was clearly different from ordinary mulberry leaves. It was emerald green and coursed brilliantly with light. Rather than a leaf, it was more like a jade pendant. Just holding it in his hand filled his body with a refreshing sensation; the fiery pain of his wounds quickly faded, and his recovery speed improved.

"Thank you, senior," Zu An said, feeling overjoyed. His injuries were one thing, but Yan Xuehen and Yun Jianyue's injuries were still limiting their strength. With the leaves, they could have hope for a complete recovery.

Sure enough, both women had excited expressions. They could clearly feel the wonderful benefits of the leaves. Thus, they both expressed their gratitude as well, saying, "Senior has given us something so precious. We really do not know how to repay you."

Yun Jianyue and Yan Xuehen had high statuses. Normally, others always called them 'senior' and not the other way around. However, in front of this tree that had lived for several tens of thousands of years, they didn't feel wronged calling it 'senior' at all.

Yun Jianyue was baffled, however. As someone from the Devil Sect, she was naturally cautious about everything. Why had this mulberry tree treated them with such kindness for no reason?

Just then, the mulberry tree spoke slowly in an aged voice, "These leaves are not particularly precious to me. Giving them to you is just like losing a few strands of hair; there is no need for such thanks. Rather, I am the one who should be thankful to you for eliminating the Fengxi Boar disaster. That fellow damaged so much of the Mulberry Forest with its mouth over the years. Fortunately, you finally dealt with him."

Zu An asked curiously, "Wait, if this entire Mulberry Forest is your body, why couldn't you deal with it?"

The giant mulberry tree replied, "The Fengxi Boar was an ancient monster, and it had fused with Pang Meng, making it difficult to deal with. Furthermore, my abilities are more aligned with life than death and destruction."

Zu An more or less understood what it meant when he sensed the powerful life force coming from the leaf.

“Does senior know anything about the immortal medicine?” Yu Yanluo asked. Zu An had asked several times about that subject; now, she was also interested. The tree had existed for a long time, so it could know some secrets of the past.

“I have indeed heard some things about immortal medicines. One is at Mount Kunlun’s Jade Lake, owned by the Queen Mother of the West. It is incredibly precious. Another is in the great wilderness, a Goldenrain Tree that grows on a red stone. However, I heard that it was seized by the human race’s emperor at some point,” the great mulberry tree replied.

Zu An was shocked, exclaiming, “There are actually two immortal medicines?”

The great mulberry tree replied with a chuckle, “Who said there was only one immortal medicine? Furthermore, there might be more than just those two. Only, they could grow in rare places, or their appearances could be too strange. Perhaps their surroundings are simply too dangerous, and that is why no one has discovered them yet.”

The group quickly became excited. They had thought that immortal medicines were nothing more than an unrealistic lie. They hadn’t expected such things to really exist! No matter how much a cultivator claimed to seek a simple life, one couldn’t remain indifferent upon hearing such a thing. Furthermore, cultivators fought against both people and the heavens in defiance of fate. If they didn’t have any desires at all, how could they possibly reach a profound cultivation realm?

The great mulberry tree said, “Immortal medicines have their own desire to grow. The most famous immortal medicines have already been monopolized by the strongest, and thus are not given out to others. Furthermore, they are intelligent. Even if you discover one, it does not mean you can catch it. However, if you can obtain an immortal medicine’s seed and you nurture it carefully, accompanying its growth, you might be able to make it acknowledge you as its master. Not only would it have its immortality-granting properties then, it could even greatly improve its master’s cultivation speed. It would be more useful than seeking out a mature immortal medicine directly.”

The group was shocked. They had never seen such information in any cultivation manuals. If word of that got out, it would completely topple many of the foundations of cultivation knowledge.

They continued to ask for information related to immortal medicines and the Celestial Emperor. However, the great mulberry tree spread out its wide branches as if they were its arms and said, “I do not know about these things. Do not forget that I am merely a tree. I have only heard a few things that passers-by idly chat about while passing through this forest.”

Zu An’s expression was strange as he thought, The things you said just now weren’t things ordinary travelers would know about, right? I wonder just what kinds of great figures stopped for some rest in this forest.

Seeing that they couldn’t get any more information, Zu An and the others thanked the tree again. He said, “Senior has helped us so much. I wonder if there is anything else we can do for senior?”

It was the mark of a decent person to repay the favors others showed them. Since the tree had given them such precious mulberry tree leaves and told them so many secrets, they had to show a bit of sincerity, at least.

Chapter 1429: Ferocious Maw

"You have helped me deal with the Fengxi Boar. I am already extremely grateful," the mulberry tree said. Its leaves rustled as if it were laughing, and it continued, "I am but a tree. I do not have so many desires."

The cultivators' faces heated up. This great mulberry tree had already lived for who knew how many years. It didn't care about any of their secular affairs, and was an individual of noble character and unquestionable integrity. It wasn't as calculating or scheming as ordinary people.

Zu An was a bit absentminded. Why did he feel as if he had heard the very same thing somewhere else? Previously, he had encountered the Silverflame Flowertree in the Yu clan's mines. It seemed to have said similar things. That guy isn't this great mulberry tree's descendant, is it?

However, when he recalled the Silverflame Flowertree's appearance, and how it wasn't similar to the great mulberry tree in the slightest, he felt that he was overthinking things.

...

Thus, the three of them thanked the tree again. After saying their goodbyes, they moved according to its advice, finally leaving the seemingly endless Mulberry Forest.

"Little An, were you watching carefully earlier?" Yun Jianyue secretly asked Zu An when she had a chance.

"Of course. I wasn't even willing to blink. Big sis Yu really is beautiful beyond comparison..." Zu An replied, naturally realizing what she was asking about. He wasn't stingy with his praise, immediately showering her in flattery.

Of course, those were also his true thoughts; the scene he had witnessed truly was beautiful. He never could have imagined that the normally ferocious-looking Devil Sect Master would have such a gentle and alluring side to her.

"Is that all you were thinking back then?" Yun Jianyue asked with an ambiguous smile and a thoughtful gaze.

Zu An's face heated up. He also calmly admitted, "Back then, many thoughts of violating big sis Yun appeared in my mind... I'm truly horrible..."

"Are you courting death?!" Yun Jianyue exclaimed. She had only planned to tease him a bit; how could she have anticipated that he would be so direct? It was now her turn to feel embarrassed. She quickly said with a stiff expression, "I'm Honglei's master; you'd better not think about that nonsense. There won't be a next time!"

When he saw that there were actually no Rage points, Zu An knew she wasn't actually angry. He couldn't help but grumble, "Who was it that wanted to dance for me anyway..."

"What did you say?" Yun Jianyue asked, a dangerous look filling her eyes.

"Ahem, I was saying that big sis' Bewitching Dance and Charming Voice were just too incredible, to the point that my brain couldn't even control my body anymore and there were only instincts left. That's why you can't blame this on me!" Zu An said, sounding 'wronged'.

"I didn't blame you though," Yun Jianyue said. She was very satisfied with his reaction, feeling that she hadn't shown this side of her that she had withheld from others for so many years for nothing.

"Right," Zu An said, his expression suddenly growing strange. "Did you change your clothes while hiding in the forest?"

Doesn't that mean the old mulberry tree saw everything?

That would normally have been something completely ordinary, but who would have thought that the old mulberry tree actually had its own consciousness?

What kind of a person was Yun Jianyue? She had been heavily influenced by the ways of the Devil Sect and immediately realized what Zu An was thinking. Her face heated up and she scoffed, "What kind of nonsense are you thinking? For people of my cultivation rank, changing while still covered is a basic skill. We do that precisely to guard ourselves from perverts like you."

"Why did I become a pervert?" Zu An replied, feeling wronged. However, he added, "Why don't you show me that dance alone next time? It's hard to really get into it when there are others watching."

"Get lost!" Yun Jianyue cried.

"Okay~" Zu An replied teasingly.

Yan Xuehen had already noticed them muttering to each other for some time. She had initially planned to just ignore it, but when she saw that the two were getting more and more into it, she finally couldn't take it anymore, asking, "What are you talking about?"

Yun Jianyue felt a bit guilty, but she reacted quickly, saying, "None of your business."

"You!" Yan Xuehen exclaimed.

You have successfully trolled Yan Xuehen for +122 +122 +122...

Zu An felt a bit depressed. Yun Jianyue was the one bullying you, right? Why are you getting mad at me?

He could only say, "We were talking about the healing effects of the leaves the old tree gave us."

Yan Xuehen was stunned. She was suddenly a bit embarrassed, feeling that she had misunderstood them. She quickly tried to redeem the situation, saying, "Those leaves are indeed quite miraculous. I noticed that even my old injuries showed signs of recovery. If this continues, I should be able to recover ninety percent of my former strength."

For injuries on the grandmasters' level, normally, they wouldn't improve at all without at least ten years of recuperation. However, the spiritual spring at Feather Mountain had recovered quite a bit, and now, with the help of the mulberry leaves, even making a full recovery was in sight. They felt a bit of disbelief.

"If this world's laws hadn't been lacking, that great mulberry tree might have already achieved great cultivation. Even the legendary daoist ascension wouldn't necessarily have been impossible for it," Yun Jianyue said, unable to hold back a sigh of praise.

...

As the group chatted with each other, a layer of white mist soon appeared in front of them. The earth beneath their feet also grew soft, and there were puddles everywhere around them. Despite that, they continued forward.

Zu An, who was walking at the forefront, almost had his foot sink into the ground. He quickly stopped, saying, "This should be the Xiushe Snake's lair, Dongting Lake."

He wondered if it had anything to do with the Dongting Lake of his previous world. However, the scenery before him didn't share even a hint of similarity with the Dongting Lake he remembered.

Yu Yanluo looked at the mist and said, "This is probably the miasma. Thanks to the great mulberry tree's leaf, though, I don't feel any abnormalities at all."

"This miasma is indeed poisonous," Yun Jianyue said, giving her surroundings a gentle sniff. "I reckon that the further in we go, the stronger its poisonous nature will be."

"With the protection of the mulberry leaf, we don't have to fear this miasma. It's the so-called Xiushe Snake that we have to be careful of. If it's hiding in the great marsh, it'll be extremely dangerous if it suddenly attacks us," Yu Yanluo said, feeling a bit worried.

"It's fine. Both the witch and I have already recovered quite a bit of strength. We will not have to be scared even if we face the Xiushe Snake now. What I am more worried about is that it might just hide in this swamp forever, making it quite difficult for us to find it then," said Yan Xuehen.

That had been one of the biggest problems when they faced the Yayu and the Fengxi Boar. They were in such a vast swamp; they really didn't want to have to go through that again if they could.

At first, Zu An had thought that the swamp was the kind that wouldn't let go once one stepped into it, slowly dragging people down. Now that he had entered it, however, he realized it was more watery than that. It was more like a particularly shallow lake.

Many trees grew in the water, with large root systems that all sorts of fish swam through. Apart from those fish, there were some other animals faintly discernible in the forest. Perhaps because they had already gotten used to it over countless years, the miasma didn't seem to affect them at all. The mountain range in the distance was also verdant and lush, appearing to be full of vitality.

The three women sighed in relief when they saw the presence of life. After all, there hadn't been many living creatures in the places they had passed through previously. This place seemed to have more life by far.

The group created a simple wooden raft to float on the water. At the same time, they searched for traces of the Xiushe Snake.

After some time passed, Yan Xuehen wondered in puzzlement, "Do you think water this shallow can really hide a massive creature like the Xiushe Snake?"

At first, they had thought that only the areas nearest the shore were shallow. Even after traveling on the raft for so long, however, they didn't find many areas that were more than a meter deep. Even the deepest parts were only a few meters deep at most. With their cultivation, they could even see the bottom of the lake. They really couldn't imagine a legendary giant monster hiding in such shallow waters.

"Look, there's actually a group of elephants there," Yu Yanluo said with a hint of excitement, pointing into the distance.

There were several elephants playing around in the water, looking simple and adorable. Because everything the group had experienced until then was too serious, when they saw that scene, they all relaxed quite a bit.

"Are these elephants not scared of falling into the marsh?" Zu An muttered to himself. In his previous world, when he watched nature programs, he had learned that elephants didn't really have any natural predators. However, because of their tremendous body weight, it was easy for them to fall into mud and be unable to crawl back up. In the end, they could die from such a thing.

To be honest, a marsh didn't suit elephants' normal lifestyle at all. However, Zu An noticed that the elephants were slightly bigger than the African elephants of his previous world. When they moved, their muscles seemed to flow with ki. He quickly realized that this was a world of cultivation, so how could there be ordinary elephants? They were clearly monsters, and it seemed that they weren't weak either.

The group of elephants eventually noticed Zu An's group. The massive elephant in the lead stood up. Its trunk rose into the sky, revealing its long tusks. It roared at them, almost as if it were giving them a warning. Furthermore, judging from its posture, it looked as if it would launch an attack at any time.

Zu An laughed inwardly, thinking, As expected, regardless of which world it is, male elephants are still irascible in nature.

The group didn't want to start a conflict with the elephants, so they tried to leave. Suddenly, however, a ferocious mouth burst through the water's surface, viciously gobbling up the giant elephant that weighed more than a dozen tons in a single bite.

Zu An's group was completely speechless.

Chapter 1430: Between Reality and Illusion

The reason why Zu An's group was so shocked was because the difference between before and after was just too ridiculous. Mere moments before, the massive elephant had put them under a lot of pressure. And yet now, the ferocious maw seemed to treat it as merely a small dessert.

The large elephant struggled frantically, but the bloody maw chomped down twice, crunching bones between its teeth.

Crunch crunch!

Just like that, the large elephant stopped moving. The elephant herd wailed, clearly heartbroken to witness their leader's fate. However, no one stepped forward to help it, and they all fled hurriedly.

The bloody maw gulped a few times, swallowing the elephant completely. Then, it seemed to have noticed Zu An's group, as a long body rose from the muck. It stared at them with strange, vertically-slitted pupils.

Only then did Zu An and the others see its true appearance. It was a giant black snake, countless times larger than the serpent they had seen in the marsh of Lord Sui's Tomb. It had a dark brown head that resembled a giant train engine, and its tan pupils looked extremely dangerous. From time to time, it flicked a black, forked tongue, making the group shiver in fear.

Zu An swallowed his saliva. There was a saying that went 'A man who is never content is like a snake trying to swallow an elephant', and yet just now, he really had seen a snake swallow up an elephant...

The giant snake appeared to look down on the group, thinking they had too little meat on their bones. It only gave them a look before turning around and leaving.

Just how did this guy hide in the shallow waters? they thought. The giant snake was clearly the Xiushe Snake they were looking for, though. They naturally couldn't just let it leave like that.

At that point, Yun Jianyue and Yan Xuehen had already recovered quite a bit of their strength, so they weren't scared of the colossal creature. They moved one after the other, sending the Crescent Ring and Flying Snow Sword at the snake's vitals.

However, the giant snake seemed to have not even noticed their attack. It continued to depart into the distance.

Yun Jianyue and Yan Xuehen were a bit upset. Wasn't this guy treating them with too little importance? They were grandmasters who had already been famous for a long time. Even earth immortals would be injured quite badly after ignoring their attacks like that.

However, the following scene made their eyes nearly pop out of their sockets. The Crescent Ring and Flying Snow Sword passed straight through the giant snake's body as if there were nothing there. Then, the snake began to fade into thin air, eventually disappearing without a trace.

"What's going on?!" The group gathered and looked at each other in dismay.

"Could it be a stealth skill, letting it hide near us while it prepares to attack?" Yu Yanluo asked.

They looked around vigilantly. However, Yan Xuehen shook her head and said, "I do not think so. I cannot sense its presence at all. Additionally, the Xiushe Snake's figure is too large. Even if it tried to hide, there is no way it could hide without revealing anything. The surroundings would expose it."

"You're right, I can't sense its presence either," Yun Jianyue said worriedly. With a wave of her hand, the Crescent Ring began searching in a wide radius. It vibrated as it traveled around them, but it didn't find anything.

Zu An looked toward Yu Yanluo and asked, "Were you able to communicate with it?"

Yu Yanluo looked confused as she replied, "I could sense that it was a snake, but when I tried to contact it, I couldn't succeed no matter what I did. I don't know why that is, though."

“Is this Xiushe Snake one of those legendary spatial element experts?” Yun Jianyue wondered, her expression turning serious.

Yan Xuehen’s expression changed as she added, “That would make things very difficult.”

The cultivators of this world usually awakened an element. Metal, wood, water, fire, earth, and others were the most commonly seen elements. However, there were some rarer elements like space or even the legendary time element. Such cultivators were just too rare; if they did appear, they were often extremely difficult to deal with.

For example, spatial element users could not only move wherever they wanted to; if they couldn't win, they could jump through space to escape. Furthermore, their bodies constantly faded between reality and illusion, making them hard to hit. Such an opponent was a headache for anyone to face.

It appeared as if their attacks had all missed because the Xiushe Snake’s body likewise faded between reality and illusion. When they thought about how they had to face such a creature, the group all felt their scalps go numb.

...

Then, they looked in the direction the giant snake had disappeared in. The water along the way wasn’t that deep, and it really didn’t seem as if it could hide the Xiushe Snake’s massive body. That made them even more certain that it had a spatial element skill.

They searched for a long time, but unfortunately, the Xiushe Snake was nowhere to be seen. They were at their wits’ end, but suddenly, they saw a small boat up ahead. There was actually someone standing on it!

The group was alarmed. Their first thought was that they had run into the Fiend Emperor. After all, his group was the only other one that had entered the Unknown Region. However, they then saw that it wasn’t the Fiend Emperor; rather, the figure looked like a fisherman.

“Be careful. Any human who can live in this Unknown Region might actually be someone extremely powerful,” Yun Jianyue said with a grave expression. Yan Xuehen and Yu Yanluo both nodded in deep sympathy, preparing to attack at any moment.

Meanwhile, Zu An was in a daze. Previously, in the secret dungeon of Brightmoon City Academy’s rear mountain, he had seen some humans too. They had even played a part in helping him out of a seemingly impossible situation against the emperor.

The person also noticed Zu An’s group, gesturing angrily toward them. Yan Xuehen and the other women became even more nervous. They all maintained their guard.

However, Zu An couldn't help but say, “It might not be as dangerous as you think.”

The others didn’t understand what he was saying. However, as they got closer, they noticed that even though the person on the boat looked strong and healthy, there weren’t any ki fluctuations coming from their body.

There could only be two reasons for that. Either the person had sought out the natural state and had cultivation much stronger than theirs, which would mean they naturally couldn't see through his cultivation, or it meant he didn't have any cultivation at all and was just an ordinary person.

"What are you all doing? You scared all of my fish away!" the person called out unhappily upon seeing their approach, in a strange tone that sounded like a dialect of some little-known place. However, it was still just barely intelligible.

The group thus became sure that the person was actually just an ordinary individual who didn't know about cultivation. The three women's faces all heated up. Making such a huge fuss over that really was a bit embarrassing.

Zu An took the chance to apologize to that person, giving him a silver tael. That person's discontented expression immediately changed to a big smile as he replied, "You're too polite! Actually, those fish weren't worth this much."

Zu An chuckled inwardly. In the past, he had read a saying in a book that went, 'gold and silver aren't naturally money, but money is naturally gold and silver'. Now, his personal experiences in this world had taught him that gold and silver really were the best money.

"There's no need for uncle to be so polite either. We just happen to have some things we need to ask you about," he said. In his position, he naturally didn't care much about one silver tael.

"Young master, please speak. If I know, I'll definitely reply," the fisherman said with an eager expression.

Zu An asked, "Does uncle know about the Xiushe Snake? Uh... It's that giant black snake-like thing. Do you know where it comes from and goes to? Where can we find it?"

The fisherman was stunned, asking, "What are you looking for the Ba Snake[\[1\]](#) for?"

Ba Snake? the group thought. Is that what the locals call the Xiushe Snake?

Judging from his tone, he clearly knew about the Xiushe Snake, which made them happy. Yan Xuehen took the chance to ask, "We heard that the Xiushe Snake brought disaster to Dongting Lake, bringing extreme distress to the local creatures, which is why we came to help everyone deal with the disaster."

They had thought that once he heard what they came for, the native inhabitant would receive them enthusiastically. To his surprise, however, his expression suddenly changed. He snapped, "I was going to say that your outfits are strange. So you were despicable eastern barbarians after all! This old one doesn't want your damn money. Get lost!"

He threw the silver tael he had previously already put away at them.

The sudden developments left the group confused. Zu An quickly said, "Uncle, there must be some misunderstanding. Who are the eastern barbarians? We've never heard of them before!"

"Leave, leave. Like I care if you're eastern barbarians or not. Since you came to kill the Ba Snake, this place doesn't welcome you. Get lost!" the fisherman yelled as he tried to drive everyone away with the bamboo pole in his hands, acting as if it would be inauspicious for him to even say another sentence to them.

