

## Insanity 81

### Chapter 81: Rank two Initial stage!

The footsteps got closer, and soon the dark green trees at the side of the slope were forcefully separated. A tall man stepped forward, appearing in Fang Yuan's vision.

He had black short hair, each strand standing straight up. The upper half of his body was naked. He had a large and thick body, the entirety of his body muscles bright red colour.

He was almost two meters tall, and during the cold autumn, he gave off the feeling of a mobile cauldron, his every breath able to raise the surrounding temperature.

On his waist, several wild beast corpses were hanged. There were foxes, wild rabbits and chickens, not to forget the old wolf who had just left.

Seeing Fang Yuan, he was slightly shocked, but quickly took large steps and walked past Fang Yuan.

"Gu Yue Chi Shan." Seeing the large man's back leaving, Fang Yuan thought of his name.

He was a representative of the Chi faction, having Rank two upper stage cultivation. His experiences were similar to Fang Yuan even.

This person was also very talented, having very great strength from young. At ten he accidentally beat a family servant to death, and at twelve he could hold a heavy stone grinder and played it like a frisbee.

Back then, the family all thought well of him, thinking he was an A grade. But during the awakening ceremony, they tested that his talent was only B grade.

He had an originally wild and untamable nature, looking down on everyone. But he quickly changed after this experience, becoming more mature. Even with B grade talent, he was the top student in his level.

After a year of studying, he graduated from the academy and fought his way to the top. Years later, he had already become an elite among the clan's Rank two Gu Masters.

Happiness cannot teach a person life's true meaning, while only pain and suffering can.

"In the clan, a youngster attends the awakening ceremony at fifteen and enters the academy. At sixteen, they graduate from the academy and form a five person group and complete the clan's missions, at the same time inheriting the family fortune. From sixteen, they will fight and compete while continually raising their cultivation. As the missions get more dangerous, their status will also increase. Some die and some live. Some get injured, and their cultivation level drops, living a plain life thereafter. Some become a Rank three Gu Master after all the hardship and advance to clan elder, being one of the higher-ups."

Fang Yuan's gaze shone, thinking of many things.

The more a Gu Master cultivates, the harder it gets, and advancing becomes way more difficult. Coupled with dangerous and tough living environment, those that can advance to Rank three are few to none.

"Speaking of which, it is almost winter. That means I've spent almost a year at the academy. Each year there are two examinations. The first is the mid-year exam, with different contents each year. The second is the year end exam, and the contents never change, being arena fights. After the arena fight, I would no longer be able to stay at the hostel, and I would need to move out."

Move out, but stay where?

Fang Yuan could not live with his aunt and uncle, which was what they wanted.

In this world, sixteen meant adulthood, the age to start reproduction. Coupled with Fang Yuan's numerous secrets, he needed to live independently.

"In my previous life, after leaving the academy I was only Rank one middle stage. This time, the situation is much better, I would be Rank one peak stage by then. But with a C grade talent, coming this far is really an achievement. Although it had its costs, expending much of my primeval stones."

Fang Yuan's eyebrows raised, he did not have many primeval stones left.

Restricted by his talent, the primeval stones he expended for cultivation was much more than Fang Zheng, Chi Cheng or Mo Bei.

He raised six Gu worms by himself!

Furthermore, the Liquor worm's refinement, nurturing the aperture, using the White Boar Gu to increase strength — they all needed primeval essence. After the primeval essence was used up, with a C grade recovery speed, it could not satisfy his needs, so he could only use primeval stones and retrieve the natural essence within to replenish.

Luckily he had the Spring Autumn Cicada, and also retrieved two Gu from Earth Treasury Flowers, thus refining Gu worms did not expend much of his primeval stones. This made him feel slightly better.

But after this when he leaves the academy, he needs to rent a house and get some income.

After peak stage, it was to push for Rank two. This process would spend a lot of primeval stones.

After Rank two, he still had to combine Gu worms, and each combination attempt was a hefty cost.

With all these factors, he was even clearer that his financial situation could no longer support him. Furthermore, he still had to continue feeding his Gu worms and continue cultivating.

If it wasn't for the mid year exam where he used the wild boar tusks to exchange for quite some primeval stones and alleviated the pressure, he would not have survived till now.

"Primeval stones, primeval stones... the Flower Wine Monk did not give any primeval stones in his inheritance, what a shame. Extorting my classmates is still my most important source of income. But after graduating, the academy's allowance would stop, and I cannot continue extorting. But if I get first for the year end exam, I can get a hundred and fifty primeval stones as reward," Fang Yuan contemplated in his heart.

If he could get first place, the hundred and fifty primeval stones would alleviate his financial difficulty for a while.

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Time flies, autumn leaves and winter comes.

On the arena in the academy, three stages had already been built.

Beside the stage, near the bamboo walls of the arena, there were tents and long tables and chairs.

The academy elder, clan leader and a few other clan elders were sitting below the tentage cover.

There was a little snow in the sky.

Fifty-seven students stood straight on the arena. Each of their noses were bright red from the weather, and every breath they took had steam coming out of their noses.

The academy elder spoke loudly, "In a flash a year has ended. During this year you were trained in the academy and have started to grasp the qualities of a Gu Master. Tomorrow, you will have the year end examination to test the fruits of your hard work! Not only will the clan leader and clan elders come personally to watch, your family elders and seniors will also come to observe to pick excellent performing students to join their small teams."

"Your performances tomorrow, will to a large extent affect your future. Getting first place, not only is it a hundred and fifty primeval stones, but you also get an advantage in picking Gu worms! Now, start the final cultivation check in your academic life!"

Saying so, the academy elder nodded to a Gu Master beside him.

The female Gu Master received the instructions and called out the name from the list, "Gu Yue Jin Zhu!"

A young girl walked towards the Gu Master with a nervous expression.

The Gu Master stretched out her hand, touching the young girl's abdomen. She closed her eyes to feel, then opened her eyes and declared, "Gu Yue Jin Zhu, Rank one middle stage. Next, Gu Yue Peng."

One after another, youngsters went up to check. Then they walked back down and returned to the group.

Their expressions varied, some were happy while others were upset.

The worst result was naturally Rank one initial stage, all being the D grade talents.

A large number of the students were Rank one middle stage, and little of them were B grade, mostly C grades.

"Gu Yue Chi Cheng." The middle-aged female Gu Master called.

From the group, the shortest Gu Yue Chi Cheng puffed his chest and walked out.

After checking, the female Gu Master opened her eyes, "Gu Yue Chi Cheng, Rank one peak stage!"

Up till now, this was the first Rank one peak stage Gu Master.

The clan elders present turned their heads.

Some elders recognised, saying lightly, "This is Chi Lian's grandson, having B grade talent, no wonder."

Outside the tent, the youngsters also commented.

"Chi Cheng is Rank one peak stage, I wonder if Mo Bei is too? They are rivals after all."

"Being able to advance to peak stage, they are all A and B grades. Sigh, we C and D grades encounter bitterness that cannot be envied."

"Hmph!" Gu Yue Mo Bei snorted, seeing Chi Cheng's proud expression, he was annoyed.

Gu Yue Fang Zheng clenched his fists, his lips tightly shut, as if he was stifling in his emotions.

"Gu Yue Mo Bei." Soon, the examiner called.

The horse-faced Mo Bei quickly walked out.

"Gu Yue Mo Bei, Rank one peak stage." With this declaration, he walked back and stared defiantly at Gu Yue Chi Cheng when returning.

The examination continued, and the snow in the sky became smaller, until it vanished.

The cold chilly air was rather refreshing.

"Gu Yue Fang Yuan." The middle-aged female Gu Master called.

Fang Yuan walked up expressionlessly.

Soon after, she opened her eyes, looking at Fang Yuan in shock, before declaring, "Gu Yue Fang Yuan, Rank one peak stage!"

"Rank one peak stage, did I hear wrongly? Fang Yuan cultivated to this level?" The youngsters were shocked.

"Sigh, he's just lucky, having the Liquor worm to nurture his aperture. Even against the A and B grades, with his C grade he isn't at a disadvantage." Some youngsters said with envy.

Especially those C grade talents, they sourly said to console themselves, "This isn't much. The Liquor worm cannot refine Rank two primeval essence, Fang Yuan would no longer have such an advantage anymore."

"Even if he is peak stage, he is still a C grade, this is of no concern to us." Mo Bei and Chi Cheng stared at Fang Yuan, but quickly turned their attention to Fang Zheng, who was still waiting for his turn.

In their hearts, only the A grade talent Fang Zheng was a competitor.

"Brother, you've caught me by surprise. But from now on, watch carefully..." Fang Zheng looked at Fang Yuan walking down, his eyes shone and revealed an anticipating expression.

"Gu Yue Fang Zheng." The female Gu Master finally said.

"The A grade talent?" The clan elders focused their attention to Fang Zheng.

Fang Zheng walked out from the crowd, he could feel the pressure that these gazes were bringing him, causing him to become slightly nervous.

But when he saw the clan leader Gu Yue Bo's smile, the nervousness in his heart melted.

He walked in front of the female Gu Master.

She shut her eyes, and then abruptly opened her eyes, saying in shock, "Gu Yue Fang Zheng, cultivation level — Rank two initial stage!"

Boom.

The youngsters erupted into a wave of discussions.

"What, he reached Rank two?!"

"As expected of the A grade talent genius."

"Incredible, he left Mo Bei, Chi Cheng, and Fang Yuan in the dust."

"This Fang Zheng!" At once, Mo Bei and Chi Cheng stared at Fang Zheng in shock.

"Hehehe, actually higher than in my previous life..." Fang Yuan's eyelids drooped down as he laughed. He was not surprised, and after observing Fang Zheng's expression earlier, he could guess the result.

"A grade talent after all."

"The hope of our clan."

"This is the credit of clan leader's nurturing..."

The clan elders praised.

At once, Fang Zheng became the center of attention.

Half a year ago, Gu Yue Bo gave him a Jade Skin Gu and asked him to be the first person to advance to Rank two. He did it!

"Clan leader, I did not disappoint you, I did it! From now on, I will achieve even more, getting the approval of the clan elders and the people around me. Brother, I've left you behind, you are no longer the shadow in my heart. I, Gu Yue Fang Zheng, am no longer the one from back then!"

Fang Zheng yelled in his heart, his eyes shining with a kind of brilliance.

This brilliance, is called confidence!

Chapter 82: Start of the year end examination

The sun was bright after the snow passed.

Gu Masters streamed into the academy in the morning.

"The annual year end exam has begun again. Hehehe, I wonder if the scene I saw from more than a decade ago when I graduated will be seen again." A middle-aged Gu Master with long green hair cascading down his back stood outside the academy, reminiscing.

"Leader, get in, you love reminiscing." The young female Gu Master beside him had blood red lips, her hands placed in the pockets of her pants. There was a blade of grass in her mouth, and she rolled her eyes.

"Hehehe, Yao Hong, don't rush. We have to get in anyway. Since the clan leader had arranged it already, our new members have been decided long ago." The green haired Gu Master laughed.

"The A grade talent Fang Zheng?" The female Gu Master Gu Yue Yao Hong tutted in her mouth, saying unhappily, "The clan leader's idea is to get us to babysit him!"

"But this babysitting mission is not easy to accomplish." The green haired male Gu Master sighed, "Nevermind, let's go in."

As time passed, more and more Gu Masters entered the academy doors, and stood in the arena.

These were male and female Gu Masters. There were young faces, middle-aged, and old people as well.

Gu Masters after graduating would come out and form small teams to complete the clan missions. The Gu Masters that came to the arena were all the representatives of their groups, to assess the performances of the students and absorb them into their own teams.

To the small groups, this was injecting fresh blood and expanding their group.

To the newly joined members, under the guidance and teaching of the older members, they can swiftly adapt to the new environment and more effectively complete the clan missions and result in lesser deaths.

The sun gradually rose, as the students entered the fray.

"So many people today." The youngsters proclaimed.

"Quickly see, that is Lord Qing Shu. He is our Gu Yue clan's number one person among the Rank two, and he is known for his mild and amiable temper." A person pointed at the green haired male Gu Master and shouted.

"Chi Shan senior is here too."

"That is the Mo family's little miss Mo Yan!"

Qing Shu, Chi Shan, and Mo Yan were the rising stars of the Gu Masters, known by all students.

"Sigh, their teams are too hard to get in. I am only D grade, and my vital Gu is a Gentle Silk Spider, I am meant to be a support staff." A youngster sighed, then asked his friend, "You?"

"Oh, I got it settled with relationships. Through the godson of my uncle's cousin's sister."

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As the students observed the Gu Masters, Qing Shu, Chi Shan and Mo Yan also observed the students.

"Oh? There are two Gu Yue Fang Zhengs." Yao Hong saw Fang Yuan and Fang Zheng, shouting out subconsciously.

The green hair male Gu Master Gu Yue Qing Shu helplessly sighed, "Did you see the information I gave you yesterday? Fang Zheng has a twin brother, they look very similar in appearance, but his brother is only C grade talent."

"Oh so that's the case. I seem to have heard that the one who made poems when he was young was Fang Yuan? Are we getting him into the team?" Yao Hong patted her forehead with her palm, saying whatever she thought of.

Qing Mao shook his head, "The clan leader specifically mentioned, do not recruit him. He seems to be wanting to observe something. The brothers don't have a good relationship anyway. Even if we want to recruit him, Fang Yuan probably wouldn't join."

Yao Hong did not think much of it, muttering, "Among the groups, we are the publically acclaimed number one, joining us means a bright future. Any student would be interested. How could he be unwilling?"

Qing Shu laughed lightly, "That's because you don't know him, look at the information I sent you first."

At this time, the clan leader Gu Yue Bo, and the authoritative clan elders Gu Yue Chi Lian and Gu Yue Mo Chen entered, getting into the seats under the tentage.

"Not only the clan leader, but also Lord Chi Lian and Lord Mo Bei are attending this year."

Seeing this, not only the students but also the Gu Masters were excited, this did not happen in previous years.

"Nothing strange, Chi Lian and Mo Chen's grandsons are all in this year's class."

"Fang Zheng is the clan leader's successor, the hope of the future to go against Bai Ning Bing. The clan leader naturally has to observe carefully."

Discussions were aplenty among the people.

"Perform well brother." Mo Yan looked at Mo Bei among the people, silently praying in her heart. Her group had the most people, it was of the largest scale. Thus there were a bunch of Gu Masters around her, showing her imposing aura.

As her most intense rival, Gu Yue Chi Shan from the Chi faction was standing alone, his huge figure easily acting like a giant red tower in a sea of people, standing out extensively.

After checking out Chi Cheng, he retracted his vision.

With a speech from the clan leader, the year end exam began.

The three stages held fights at the same time.

At once, shouting noises, sounds of moonblades flying, and the sounds of punches and kicks as well as the discussions of the Gu Masters below the stages fused into a loud banter.

"This year's physical fighting skills is high." Soon, Yao Hong saw the difference.

"Hehehe, all thanks to Fang Yuan." Gu Yue Qing Shu laughed.

"What do you mean?" Yao Hong did not understand.

Qing Shu explained to her.

Yao Hong exclaimed in shock after listening, "Fang Yuan this lad, he's really daring, almost to the point of fearless. Hehehe, bullying even his own brother. This is interesting."

She looked towards Fang Yuan and Fang Zheng from the crowd, thinking internally — Which is the elder brother and which is the younger one.

"Next, Gu Yue Jin Zhu against Gu Yue Mo Bei." On the arena, the hosting Gu Master shouted.

Gu Yue Mo Bei leapt upwards, and Jin Zhu walked up the stage with a serious expression.

The two paid respects to each other and said no more, fighting at once. Moonblades danced in the air.

The two continued to shoot and at the same time, moving and evading nonstop.

Although a girl, Jin Zhu had good basic skills and was able to fight equally with Mo Bei for a while. But as time passed, her stamina could not keep up, and she started to be suppressed.

Finally, with her body full of sweat and having no energy left, she surrendered.

Mo Bei on the other hand was not even fazed.

"Increasing endurance Gu huh, probably the Yellow Camel Longhorn Beetle Gu...." Below the stage, Fang Yuan observed, quickly seeing through Mo Bei.

Fang Yuan had six Gu worms, but that was an exception. Among the people of his age, they all had one or two Gu worms.

Not only because of the financial stress of feeding Gu worms, but also because the Gu worm's usage needed constant practice to accumulate experience.

Greed for more would backfire. The students only started interacting with Gu worms, and just began on their cultivation journey. Two Gu worms were enough for them to practice.

Only an exception like Fang Yuan with his rich experience from his previous life, could easily grasp every Gu worm that comes into possession and use them to the very best he can.

The exam continued.

"Damn, jumping like a rabbit!" On another stage, a youngster angrily shouted, "Gu Yue Chi Cheng, you're not a man, do you dare to fight with me physically?!"

"Tsk, only a fool would fight close range with you." On the stage, Gu Yue Chi Cheng laughed in disdain. He used the Scarlet Pill Cricket Gu and jumped around, his body being very agile.

His opponent only had a Flower Boar Gu. Even if he could temporarily raise his strength by one boar, it was useless. Chi Cheng would not go hand to hand with him.



Finally, he got hit by a moonblade from Chi Cheng and lost too much blood, retiring from the fight.

The healing Gu Masters below the stage quickly rushed up and treated his injuries.

As time passed, more and more students were mercilessly eliminated, and many youngsters also started to show their abilities.

Chi Cheng, Mo Bei, Fang Yuan, Fang Zheng.....

Until noon.

The D grade talents were all eliminated. They had limited talent and all chose support-type Gu worms for production line or transport, which suited their lives. Thus, they had little help in battles.

"Little junior sister, your vital Gu is a Life Breath Grass right, my group needs a healer Gu Master."

"Senior, I wish to join your group, my vital Gu is a Moonlight Gu."

"Sorry, we are not lacking any attack-type Gu Master."

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The small groups quickly recruited newbies, and the students also chose the groups they wanted.

The fights on the stage did not have much visual appeal, and after a few rounds, there were not many highlights, it was even boring. This was because most people chose the Moonlight Gu, and to most people, the fight would start with shooting moonblades. Whoever expended their primeval essence first would lose.

If both parties had no more primeval essence, they would fight with punches and kicks. At the end, one will fall.

Be it students, Gu Masters, or clan elders, they got bored watching and some were about to fall asleep.

Until evening, there were only less than ten students left on the stage.

"Finally ending." Some Gu Masters lifted their spirits, shrugging off the sleepiness.

At this moment, the Gu Master shouted, "Next round, Gu Yue Fang Zheng vs Gu Yue Mo Bei!"

Chapter 83: Sweeping strong foes, Fang Zheng displays his skills

Fang Zheng and Mo Chen both walked up the stage.

"Fang Zheng, don't think that I will lose just because you have Rank two cultivation! Today I will challenge and beat a higher realm." Mo Bei gritted his teeth, his expression solemn, cheering for himself in his heart. Against the Rank two Fang Zheng, he indeed felt a strong sense of pressure.

"Come." Fang Zheng roared, rushing out ferociously.

Mo Bei's heart jumped, this Fang Zheng wasn't acting according to plan. Normally, they would first shoot moonblades before using hand to hand combat. But this time, he actually rushed up immediately, and wants to fight physically?

"Isn't he afraid of getting injured by my moonblade when exchanging punches and kicks?" Mo Bei was perturbed.

He was naturally not worried for Fang Zheng's safety, but knew that if they engaged in close combat, with such a short distance if Fang Zheng shot a moonblade, it was unavoidable.

Mo Bei quickly took a step back, attempting to pull some distance. At the same time, he shot out a moonblade with a flick of his wrist.

Fang Zheng was unfazed, taking a tumble and avoiding the moonblade, continuing his pursuit. At the same time, a lump of lunar energy collected in his palm.

Mo Bei looked at the moonlight in his hands that hasn't been fired and felt tense in his heart, quickly taking steps back.

Although he worked hard in close combat and also trained his moonblade, he was still inferior to Fang Zheng who was nurtured personally by the clan leader.

Mo Bei was not suited to this style of combat, and quickly fell into disadvantage.

"Eh? That side is interesting." The battle on this arena attracted much attention.

"They're actually fighting so closely, this Fang Zheng has guts." Yao Hong could now discern who is Fang Yuan and Fang Zheng. Fang Yuan had a cold expression and emitted an aura of maturity, while Fang Zheng was steel-willed, radiating a sunny aura.

"It must be the clan leader's teaching. Normally when students fight, they would be ten meters apart. Further than this distance and the moonblade would dissipate. If they fought closer than this distance, the students would not react in time." Gu Yue Qing Shu's gaze shone, "Fang Zheng's battle distance now has shrunk to six meters, but his ability to avoid the moonblade is proficient. It seems that not only is the clan leader helping Fang Zheng, but Fang Zheng also put in some hard work and went through much hardship."

"Little brother!" Mo Yan seeing Mo Bei forced into a corner by Fang Zheng, showed worry and panic on her face. She really wanted to go in and help out, giving Fang Zheng a good beating.

Chi Shan however was expressionless, only watching and not speaking. After Fang Zheng got close to Mo Bei and shortened the distance to six meters, he no longer got closer, but used the Moonlight Gu and entered a firing contest.

Mo Bei tried hard to improvise. His actions were in a mess, and many times he was almost hit by the moonblades, constantly in danger.

Fang Zheng on the other hand, already had his winning formula.

Even if he could not evade in time, he still had the Jade Skin Gu, and as long as he uses the jade green glow in time, he would be able to block the moonblade.

Seeing how Mo Bei was defenselessly beaten by himself, Fang Zheng's thoughts flew back to a time in the past.

Under the moonlight, the clan leader taught him the evasion movements step by step, unreservedly imparting him all the experience he had.

"Clan leader, I will not let you down." Fang Zheng's eyes shimmered with hope, he was getting braver as he fought!

"Fang Zheng, you have the talent and the endurance, studiously training. The result is all because of your blood and sweat. This is the fruits of your hard work, continue like this, Fang Zheng. Using this aura, go and show your brilliance!" Under the tentage, the clan leader excitedly cheered on inwardly, even though he looked like he was quietly watching the fight, his lips curled into a smile.

Although Mo Bei struggled furiously, resisting adamantly, but after fifteen minutes, his entire body was full of injuries, the blood oozing out and dyeing his shirt red.

The organizing Gu Master, upon seeing such a scene, announced, "The victory goes to Gu Yue Fang Zheng."

"I haven't lost yet!" Mo Bei shouted loudly, his entire bloodbathed body wavering in the air. But after struggling to no end, he was forced to receive treatment by the healing Gu Masters.

"A battle of such an intensity is already beyond the graduating standard."

"An A grade talent, is after all a genius."

"I heard he received personal guidance from the clan leader, can he not be amazing?"

Seeing such a result, the Gu Masters below the stage praised endlessly.

Gu Yue Fang Zheng panted as he walked down the stage. Three Gu Masters came to him and healed him, while also providing free primeval stones to allow him to quickly recover his primeval essence.

After resting for a while, he recovered to his peak condition and ascended the stage again.

This time, he was against Gu Yue Chi Cheng.

Chi Cheng looked at Fang Zheng, laughing dryly, "Very good! Fang Zheng, you defeated Mo Bei that rascal, if I defeat you now, it would be killing two birds with one stone."

He seemed very confident.

Fang Zheng's lips remained tight, as he said nothing but rushed towards him.

"Dragonpill cricket Gu!" Chi Cheng's thought flashed, and immediately an orange red-coloured glow came from both his legs. He leapt lightly and instantly retreated ten meters away.

The distance that Fang Zheng had just shortened was immediately lengthened.

"Hehehe." Chi Cheng got smug and laughed, "Fang Zheng, you have no speed increasing Gu, and with your two legs, you cannot catch me. Although this stage isn't big, it is enough for me to manoeuvre. Your tactic might have worked on Mo Bei, but against me it is ineffective."

"Is that so?" Fang Zheng stopped his movements and stood on the spot, staring intently at Chi Cheng.

He smiled, his eyes showing iron will, shouting loudly, "Continue dodging like that, but everytime you use the Dragonpill cricket Gu, you have to use a certain amount of primeval essence. You have merely Rank one peak stage green copper primeval essence, but I am already at Rank two red steel primeval essence, three times your endurance. Your talent is inferior to me as well. At the end, you would run out of primeval essence and the loser will be you!"

"You!" Chi Cheng was shocked, he only saw his advantage but did not notice his weakness. Right now, he could not help but agree with Fang Zheng, and his fighting spirit dampened.

"What, Fang Zheng is Rank two?!" The surrounding Gu Masters gasped. The examination results were only obtained the day before, thus they were only spread among certain people, so most of the crowd did not know about it yet.

"An A Grade talent no doubt, amazing, this Fang Zheng might really be the rising star of our clan."

"Bai clan has that Bai Ning Bing, he is really too powerful. If Fang Zheng can grow up, he might be able to resist Bai Ning Bing."

"This lad is interesting. Getting to Rank two in the academy and with such solid basic skills, this is such an uncommon scene. No wonder the clan leader poured so much effort into him," Yao Hong muttered.

Qing Shu replied, "The clan leader's guidance is only part of it, don't look down on this lad. Ever since he survived the assassination incident, he has become very hardworking, cultivating to the best of his limits, he is a good seedling, with both talent and hardwork. If he can grow up..., sigh, I feel like my burden is increasing."

"Hehehe." Clan leader Gu Yue Bo laughed lightly.

Chi Cheng's weak nature was analyzed by him to Fang Zheng. Now that he saw Fang Zheng using it to his advantage, Gu Yue Bo was very pleased.

"It seems that Fang Zheng is this year's number one." Beside the clan leader, Gu Yue Mo Chen said.

Gu Yue Chi Lian snorted, staring at the scene intently. He obviously wished for his grandson to win and defeat Fang Zheng, that way he would win honour for the Chi faction.

But things do not go as he wished, and on the stage after getting demoralized, Chi Cheng could no longer display his 100% ability against Fang Zheng, and made continuous mistakes.

Eventually, Chi Cheng was caught with a fatal flaw, and was swept down the stage.

"Gu Yue Fang Zheng wins!" Gu Master announced.

Gu Yue Chi Lian's face was black.

At once, Fang Zheng was famous, getting all the attention from the clan people.

"Fang Zheng beat Mo Bei and Chi Cheng simultaneously with wits and courage, it seems he is the first place this year," Some people praised.

"Makes sense, I think well of him as well. Too bad he cannot join our group." As the groups choose students, students are also choosing groups. A seeded student like Fang Zheng was already long booked.

"Fang Zheng is the clan leader's faction, while Mo Bei, Chi Cheng are the Mo faction, Chi faction's future leaders. This way, it seems that the Gu Yue Clan would be heavily dominated by the clan leader faction, suppressing the two clan elders." Some people could see even further.

On the other two stages, the battles continued.

Fang Zheng walked down the stage long ago, hearing the people's praises, his heart roaring as he felt himself being reborn.

Different, it was very different from before.

His heart was filled with the excitement of recognition, the anticipation of being appreciated, and the joy of being commended.

A gust of winter wind blew, and although he felt the chilly wind, Fang Zheng could only feel the sense of warmth like the summer day.

"Last match, Gu Yue Fang Zheng vs Gu Yue Fang Yuan!" A while later, an announcer shouted.

Chapter 84: Trample ruthlessly!

The final battle, Gu Yue Fang Zheng vs Gu Yue Fang Yuan!

"Oh, interesting."

"To think that at the end, it is a showdown between brothers."

"Fang Zheng..." Seeing this, the clan leader's smile faded slightly, "The greatest obstacle in your heart is your brother Fang Yuan. Go ahead and defeat him, you have red steel primeval essence while also having the Jade Skin Gu. With both offense and defense, you have the greatest advantage. Break apart this obstacle in your way, and you shall be reborn!"

The final match finally started.

The two brothers stood on the same arena, staring at each other.

The last remaining sunrays were like blood...

The light of the sunset was like a luxurious carpet for the arena.

Two very similar faces.

The little brother's fighting spirit burned on, while the older brother's gaze was deep as the abyss.

"Brother..." Fang Zheng's fists were clenched as he stared intently at Fang Yuan, speaking with a firm voice, "Admit defeat! I am already Rank two, and I have over 80% red steel primeval essence. Your green bronze primeval essence is only 44%, you have no chance."

Fang Yuan lightly looked at his brother, "You are surely clear about my primeval essence. But it's better if you don't spout nonsense. If primeval essence can decide the victory, what's the point of fighting?"

Fang Zheng was stunned, but soon he raised his spirits, and his vigor could be seen burning in his eyes.

In truth, in the deepest part of his heart, he also did not want Fang Yuan to admit defeat. But Fang Yuan was his older brother after all, thus in view of their relationship he had to say it.

If not, that would be too cruel.

"Since big brother is so determined, then I have no choice but to attack!" Before he finished his sentence, Fang Zheng rushed towards Fang Yuan.

"This again!" Below the stage, Mo Bei looking at this scene, gritted his teeth. He made up his mind to harshly train himself after going back and return this humiliation tenfold to Fang Zheng!

"Fang Yuan is finished, he does not have my Dragonpill cricket Gu." Chi Cheng folded his arms and smirked, enjoying Fang Yuan's troubles.

Fang Zheng sprinted and instantly shortened the distance. In his hand there was a ball of moonlight.

Fang Yuan's expression was like steel; there was not a single change as he looked at the charging Fang Zheng. He did not take a single step away but blue coloured moonlight also gathered in his right palm.

Suddenly!

Fang Yuan took a firm step after stomping the ground, and moved towards Fang Zheng instead of backing away.

"This!" Fang Zheng did not expect Fang Yuan's movement, he panicked internally and quickly fired a moonblade.

Fang Yuan rushed quickly, and twisted his body, avoiding the moonblade by a hair's breadth.

His expression was cold, without any shouting or aggression. But in his silence, there was an aura of absolute iciness emitting from him.

Fang Zheng subconsciously took a few steps back. His limit was six meters, but now Fang Yuan was five meters away from him. This time he had to be the one trying to increase their distance.

Dundundun.

Fang Zheng retreated while flicking his right wrist several times, sending moonblades flying to try and push Fang Yuan back.

Fang Yuan took fluid steps that were one after another, his body extremely agile. He moved intensely, and every time he managed to avoid the moonblade with no margin for error.

"This Fang Yuan is even more daring!" Yao Hong shouted.

"Such a battle, they've disregarded death already," Qing Shu also exclaimed.

"Another battle maniac!" Mo Yan gritted her teeth, giving a glance at Chi Shan who was not far away.

Chi Shan was expressionless, but his eyes glimmered occasionally.

The noise from the audience stopped, they were all captivated by the battle on the stage.

The moonblades and Fang Yuan brushed past each other. From time to time there was a blue light that would reflect upon Fang Yuan's face. His cold expression remained as it was without any change, and each time he narrowly evaded death, showing his extreme battle talent!

The clan leader and clan elders all showed a serious expression.

Chi Cheng and Mo Bei stared with their mouths wide open, looking at Fang Yuan dodging every single moonblade in an impossible manner.

How did he do it? Numerous students had a giant question mark on their heads.

Hmph, Fang Yuan who had 500 years of battle experience, how can he be compared to Fang Zheng who was only taught for a year by a Rank four Gu Master?

In Fang Yuan's eyes, Fang Zheng was as thin as a clear stream. No matter how the stream flowed, or turned its way among the mountain rocks, he could see through it clearly to the bottom of the river.

The moonblade's every attack was not instant, it needed a process. Fang Zheng had to flick his wrist, and that was the greatest foretelling.

In Fang Yuan's eyes, Fang Zheng's shoulder movement, the movement of his wrist, every step he took provided a large amount of information. Fang Zheng's every attack, evasion and dodging was easily seen through by Fang Yuan, even as to what was going on in Fang Zheng's head, Fang Yuan could guess to a degree.

Fang Zheng's mind right now was flabbergasted!

Fang Yuan was the obstacle in his heart for more than ten years, the shadow quickly expanding into darkness, dragging him into the abyss.

The nervous emotion made him forget to use the Jade Skin Gu. Fang Yuan's strong approach caused him to panic and he was unable to regain his tempo, thus not allowing him time to think.

This was the difference in experience, this was the difference between inside knowledge!

In Fang Yuan's perspective, his inside information was even more important than the Spring Autumn Cicada, it was his greatest reliance.

He was able to not rely on the clan leader, clan leader, family, friends, or Gu worms.

He had always and only relied on himself!

In this world, only oneself is the most reliable!!

Those teammates and battle partners, they were just the masks of weaklings, the excuse to anticipate help from others.

He finally reached near Fang Zheng!

Bam.

Fang Yuan's punch was pulled from a hidden angle, smashing right into Fang Zheng's stomach.

Fang Zheng's body curled as the force of the fist almost caused him to vomit. He quickly protected his head with his arms and took a large step back. At the crucial moment, it showed his steady basic skills.

"Where is he?" Fang Zheng's eyes stared wide, looking around from the gap between his arms, trying to find Fang Yuan's location.

"Behind!" With this thought, Fang Zheng felt a strong force at his waist.

He lost his center of gravity and fell on the ground.

But Fang Zheng had gone through tough training. With this movement he flipped around on the ground and at the same time, shot out a moonblade from his palm towards his back.

This movement was the battle experience imparted by the clan leader.

If it was a normal person, they might follow closely behind Fang Zheng. If they could not react in time, they would be hit by the moonblade. Even if the moonblade did not hit, they would be forced back.

But who was Fang Yuan? Even Gu Yue Bo could not compete with him in terms of experience.

Fang Yuan moved steadily, not giving chase. Instead, he moved in a circle and got near to Fang Zheng. The moonblade only managed to hit air.

Fang Zheng thought he was able to pull some distance and quickly stood up. He was about to reorganise himself but he suddenly heard a swoosh sound.

"This is the gust of a punch!" At that split second, Fang Zheng had such a thought.

Immediately after, he was harshly hit in the ear by Fang Yuan's fist.

Bam.

He immediately felt his vision darken, and a strong sense of dizziness caused him to lose balance, completely collapsing on the ground.

He sprawled on the ground for over two breath's time, and finally he recovered slightly. His vision became clearer, seeing Fang Yuan's two feet right beside him.

He suddenly understood how ugly his situation was. He was sprawled on the ground like a dog while Fang Yuan stared at him from that high position.

"Damn it!" Fang Zheng was furious and tried to get up.

Under everyone's eyes, Fang Yuan lifted his right leg and stepped down firmly.

Bam.

Fang Zheng's head was harshly stepped on, like a rock hitting the stage, making a loud sound.

"Fuck!" Fang Zheng raged and tried to get up again.



Fang Yuan stared coldly, trampling down once again.

Bam.

Fang Zheng's head hit the stage again. His scalp knocked open and blood bled nonstop.

"Damn! Damn it!!" Fang Zheng's teeth were about to be crushed from his clenching, and the rage in his chest burned through his entire body. He raised his head again, trying to get up.

Bam.

Fang Yuan's third step came down. This time he continued to step on his head, not letting go. Under the immense force, Fang Zheng's face was harshly squeezed on the stage floor.

Fang Zheng's face was almost deformed, and he breathed raggedly, struggling to no avail. He felt that on his head, there was a huge rock that would not move no matter how he struggled.

"Right, how could I forget, I have the Moonlight Gu!" Under the despair, Fang Zheng's inspiration struck, and he thought of the Moonlight Gu.

His right palm gathered moonlight again.

But how could Fang Yuan not notice?

With a light sound, he shot out a moonblade onto Fang Zheng's right palm.

Argh!

Fang Zheng cried out, the immense pain sending his body into a spasm like he was struck by lightning.

His palm was almost pierced through by Fang Yuan, showing his white bones. The Moonlight Gu on his palm was already struck a great blow, it was on the brink of death!

Chapter 85: Hot-blooded and cold-blooded

"These two brothers really aren't on good terms," Yao Hong mumbled.

"This Fang Yuan is too cruel, treating his brother like this," many people frowned unhappily.

"Fang Yuan is too savage, extorting our primeval stones for an entire year! Now he's treating his brother like this," the students gritted their teeth. Fang Yuan's coldness forced out their hatred towards a common enemy.

"Fang Zheng, stand up, stand up! Defeat Fang Yuan." Some unknown student shouted.

"Defeat Fang Yuan, defeat Fang Yuan!" Instantly, many youngsters shouted.

"This Fang Yuan, is indeed a hated person." Mo Yan snorted, enjoy his predicament.

"Fang Zheng, hang in there, stand up! Defeat this monster Fang Yuan!"

"Fang Zheng, stand up. We're with you."

"Fang Zheng, you can do it, you can do it!"

The crowd cheered on fiercely, and sounds of encouragement entered Fang Zheng's ears.

Huff! Huff! Huff! Huff!

Fang Zheng gasped heavily. As the sounds entered his heart it gave him an unimaginable strength!

The scenes of the past played in his head.

On the streets, the clansmen's comments.

"That's Fang Yuan, the future genius, he is not to be underestimated!"

"Who's that behind him?"

"Oh, probably his brother, who knows what his name is."

Uncle and aunt laughed, "Fang Yuan, now the entire village is discussing the new poem you wrote! This is very good, uncle and aunt are proud of you."

Fang Yuan waved his hand, saying calmly, "I only made those on a whim."

Uncle and aunt nodded, saying to Fang Zheng, "Learn well from your brother, if you are half as talented as your brother, we would not have to worry."

Under the moonlight, deep in the courtyard.

Clan leader Gu Yue Bo looked at Fang Zheng, saying gently, "Fang Zheng, have confidence. You must find your purpose, believe in yourself."

"But, sir clan leader..."

Gu Yue Bo patted his shoulders, encouraging, "The shadow in your heart, others cannot dispel it for you. You can only rely on yourself. I await that day."

The night before the year end exam.

Shen Cui looked at Fang Zheng with love in her gaze under the lamp lights, "Young master, I believe that you can get number one. I have always believed it! Work hard!"

The morning before departure.

Uncle and aunt stood at the doorstep, "Fang Zheng, after the year end exam, you would be leaving the academy. Seeing your growth, we are very happy! Go, go and show everyone the strength of an A grade!"

And.....

Under the setting sun, in a dark corner, a female classmate cried profusely, "The allowance is only three primeval stones, but Fang Yuan snatched a piece away, leaving me with two. I am almost unable to feed my Moonlight Gu at this rate."

Fang Zheng's heart softened, "This is my primeval stone, I'll lend it to you."

The female classmate took the primeval stone, saying with tears, "Fang Zheng, you are too nice, please defeat your brother and end his tyranny in the academy!"

Fang Zheng was silent.

A bunch of classmates appeared in front of him.

"Fang Zheng, you are an A grade talent, you can do it."

"Fang Yuan is too much, constantly bullying us, you are our only hope."

"Fang Zheng, from today onwards, we're with you, we will always support you!"

"Everyone..." Fang Zheng observed the surroundings, seeing the concerned pairs of eyes, and felt extremely touched.

Everyone...

Everyone has expectations of me.

My classmates, uncle, aunt, Shen Cui, and sir clan leader!

Everyone is waiting for me, looking at me, supporting me.....

How can I lose? How can I fall here? How can I!

Boom, boom, boom, boom.

His heart pounded in his chest, and Fang Zheng's eyes shone with brilliance.

I cannot fall here!

I will dispel the shadow and stand up!!

Fang Zheng's fists were tightly clenched, no longer feeling any pain at this point. He felt a lion in his chest, awakening from its sleep and opening its huge mouth to roar!

Hot-blood boiled in his body.

Stand up, stand up!

Break the shadows, break the darkness!

"ARGHHHHHHHH!" Fang Zheng opened his mouth wide to shout, his body starting to emit a green jade light.

"What's that?" The crowd silenced.

"Jade Skin Gu!" Someone shouted.

Bam!

The students roared towards the heavens.

"Fang Zheng, you can do it!"

"Fang Zheng, we have your back!"

Finally only one last cheer remained — "Stand up! Stand up!"

"Everyone..... I can hear your voices." Fang Zheng clenched his fist, his teeth almost crushed. Fang Yuan's pressure was no longer so imposing, he could finally get up, slowly and steadily.

The shouting intensified.

"He's burning with anger!!"

"He's going to do a comeback."

Gu Masters hearing such cheers and excitement from the crowd, were all starting to feel moved.

"That's right, Fang Zheng, that's right! Stand up, stand up, abandon the past, dispel the shadow and stand up, you will become a new person!" Clan leader's eyes shone with bright light as he cheered Fang Zheng on in his heart.

"Jade Skin Gu..." Fang Yuan's eyelids drooped. He pulled back his leg and saw Fang Zheng stand up slowly, the Jade Skin Gu's radiance turning his face green.

Fang Zheng had always been hiding this trump card up till now and did not reveal it to anyone, thus nobody knew about it.

"Fang Zheng got up!" The crowds' cheers exploded.

"He stood up!" Clan leader was moved, uncontrollably standing up from his seat. At this moment, he saw the rise of an A grade talent! He saw the future of the Gu Yue clan!

"I stood up, brother, I will defeat you!" Fang Zheng's eyes burned with determination, his entire body enveloped in bright green light like he was wearing a jade armor!

"Oh wow, this defense, even the moonblade can't pierce it. It seems Fang Zheng wins." Yao Hong raised her brows, blowing a whistle.

"Indeed, even with the Little Light Gu's reinforcement, hitting on this barrier, it would only cause Fang Zheng's primeval essence to be consumed faster. But comparing primeval essence expenditure, Fang Yuan is no match for Fang Zheng. After this match, Fang Zheng is going to rise!" Qing Shu laughed lightly.

"Fang Zheng had a Jade Skin Gu, but only used it now. It seems Fang Yuan's earlier attacks confused him. But now, victory is already waving towards him." Mo Yan folded her arms, her gaze slightly uncertain.

Time seem to have paused.

On the stage, the brothers faced each other.

The two's distance was so close yet so far.

Fang Zheng's firm determination, Fang Yuan's eternal indifference.

"Little brother..." He looked at Fang Zheng peacefully, his lips curling into a smirk, "Thinking of defeating me, you're still far from it."

He raised his right hand, his right arm flexing, pulling into a bow shape.

"Big brother, you've lost!" Fang Zheng felt amused in his heart seeing Fang Yuan's raised fist.

As long as he had primeval essence, even with the Little Light Gu's reinforcement, the moonblade could not break the jade colour barrier, not to mention his fist? Unless he used the Flower Boar Gu or the Brute Force Longhorn Beetle Gu to raise his strength. But even so, he would need a defensive type Gu.....

Fang Yuan did not say anything, but he used his fist to give the most straightforward answer.

The next moment, the right fist flew in the air and hit Fang Zheng harshly on the cheeks.

Bam!

After a loud crash, blood spilled as the jade light smashed to bits like broken mirror fragments dancing in the sky before vanishing.

"What?!" Fang Zheng was hit by such a shock once again, and after a stunned moment, his neck was almost broken as he hurriedly retreated.

Fang Yuan followed up closely, using a bow step and raising his left fist, pulling back and striking again upwards!

Bam!!

Fang Zheng's other half of his face was hit by the impact, his head rising high up with blood and broken jade light flying in the air.

Bam, bam, bam!

He took three steps backwards, his ears buzzing as a dizziness ten times greater than before assaulted him.

"How can this... be!" His vision darkened, and he collapsed on the arena —

Plop.

Fang Zheng fell on the ground, the light dissipating on his body as he fainted in the next moment.

The shouts and cheers came to an abrupt end.

The happy, excited expressions of the students were still glued on their faces, unable to change due to such a shock.

The entire arena was silent.

Fang Yuan's fists were bloody, to the point his bloody finger bones could be seen. Drops of blood fell and dripped on the stage.

Swoosh...

A cold winter wind blew, freezing away all the hot-bloodedness.

Fang Yuan's hair wavered in the air as he stood still on the stage. It was almost as if the heavily injured person with both his fists almost crippled was not him!

He looked coldly at the surroundings with a calm expression.

Everyone was silent.

In the tentage, the clan leader was still standing, staring dumbfoundedly.

"Sorry, I've let you all disappointed," Fang Yuan said lightly.

Chapter 86: Suspicion and probing

On the stage, Fang Zheng fainted on the ground with no more movements from him.

Fang Yuan however, continued with his cold expression, standing in the middle of the stage.

After a momentary silence, the crowds erupted.

"How can this be?" Some people hugged their heads, revealing an expression of disbelief.

"Two punches breaking the Jade Skin Gu's defense, this-this-this..." Some people were tongue-tied.

"Too savage, even the jade light got smashed by him, does he not feel pain?" Some female Gu Masters took in a chilly breath.

"Without any defensive Gu worm and using his bare hands to break the jade light, this is true blue self-harm!" Even male Gu Masters' eyes twitched upon seeing Fang Yuan's hands, and were shocked by his ruthlessness.

Being ruthless to others, that is easy, but being ruthless to yourself, that is hard.

Fang Yuan using his bare hands to break the Jade Skin Gu's defense, it was not only savage to his younger brother, but even harsher on himself!

"I'll go take a look." The academy elder could no longer stand it, and after saying so, he jumped onto the stage.

He first squatted down and observed the fainted Fang Zheng, sighing in relief as he found that Fang Zheng was not in a critical condition. His head just had a huge impact, causing him to fall unconscious.

"Unbelievable, with the Jade Skin Gu's defense, he still suffered such heavy injuries from someone using their bare hands." The academy elder was shocked internally, raising his head and looking at Fang Yuan, his eyes shining with a fierce light.

"Fang Yuan, I'll heal you." The academy elder stood up, taking a few huge strides towards Fang Yuan and grabbing his forearm.

Fang Yuan's arms were in terrible condition. Not only was the blood and skin vaguely mashed, even his bones were revealed. Because of the huge impact there were also cracks on the bones.

"How intense this pain is, yet he didn't even frown a bit." Even if it was the academy elder, his heart shuddered seeing such injuries.

His tone was complicated, saying to Fang Yuan, "Endure it, the healing is very itchy and also very painful."

Saying so, his five fingers spread open and emitted a wave of blue moonlight. The moonlight got brighter and caused the academy elder's right hand to be translucent from the shine.

At a glance, the academy elder's entire right hand was like a piece of blue jade, the blood vessels and bones were all turned into jade.

The academy elder lightly raised his right hand and covered Fang Yuan's injured fist.

It was just like a piece of cold jade touching on an injury that was mashed with blood and flesh. Fang Yuan felt a heart-piercing pain, but he gritted his teeth and did not make a sound.

The academy elder's hand emitted gentle moonlight and the moonlight nourished Fang Yuan's injured spot.

On the bones, the cracks started to mend, and the flesh and skin started to grow rapidly and heal.

Fang Yuan felt an intense itching, causing him to breathe heavily.

The academy elder's expression was calm. While healing Fang Yuan, he diverted a part of his concentration towards Fang Yuan's arm, and also inspected his aperture.

In the aperture, the black green-coloured copper primeval essence was raging like waves in the sea.

A white and fat liquor worm was swimming and playing in the primeval sea.

The four walls of the aperture were all made of white-coloured crystal walls. This showed Fang Yuan's Rank one peak stage cultivation clearly.

The academy elder did not look away, but continued to scan Fang Yuan's body.

Finally, he found that on Fang Yuan's palm, there was the Moonlight Gu and Little Light Gu.

"No other Gu worms, did Fang Yuan really use his own strength to break the defense of the Jade Skin Gu? Such strength is far beyond a mortal adult. He is only fifteen years old, how can he have such strength?" The academy elder's eyes shone with suspicion.

"Clan elder, thank you for your treatment." Fang Yuan took back his arm from the academy elder and shook it around.

Although there was still some pain, the injury had already healed. If this was back on Earth, such an injury would have taken a year or two to heal and would even leave some serious side effects.

This was the magical aspect of this world. Now that Fang Yuan's arms were healed, although he still felt like they were weak when he grabbed the air or waved them around, seven or eight days later, the strengthless side-effect would disappear.

But Fang Yuan was not grateful to the academy elder. His injury could also be healed by other healing Gu Masters, and he was well aware: the academy elder's motive was to inspect his aperture.

Fang Yuan had expected this from the start, so he left the White Boar Gu and Jade Skin Gu in the second secret cave. As for the Spring Autumn Cicada, with its Rank six status, if it wanted to hide, even the Rank four Gu Yue Bo would not find it if he inspected personally.

The academy elder did not find anything, and that caused him to frown. Although he was still suspicious in his heart, but in front of so many people, he did not have the proper opportunity to ask.

"Fang Yuan, you performed well, continue working hard." Finally, the academy elder patted Fang Yuan's shoulder and declared loudly, "This year's final exam, the first place goes to Fang Yuan!"

Ever since the academy elder's ascension to the stage, the audience watched quietly. After hearing his announcement, they started discussing fervently.

"To think that at the end, Fang Yuan had the last laugh!"

"He's merely a C grade, but he beat the Rank two Fang Zheng who has a Jade Skin Gu, did he cheat?"

"Probably not, from the academy elder's personal treatment and probing. If he did not find any problems, Fang Yuan probably did not cheat."

"Fang Yuan's fists were greatly injured, that's normal. But as a fifteen year old, having such strength that surpasses an adult by far, isn't it suspicious?"

"What is there to be suspicious about? There are always people who are born with strange talents. Either super strength, or super smart, actually Fang Yuan's strength isn't that scary, think about that guy." The speaking Gu Master indicated at the standing Chi Shan.

People were immediately enlightened, "Oh yes. When Chi Shan was still a kid, his strength was already greater than an adult, is Fang Yuan also such a monster?"

"That has to be it. When Fang Yuan was young, he could make poems. Those poems were famous around the village back then. We thought he was an A grade, but he turned out to be C grade, but it seems heaven has other plans and compensated him with strength."

"He is still a C grade anyway, if he was B grade he would be another Chi Shan. Hmph, nothing to be envious about, a Gu Master's cultivation relies on their talent. If I can get a Black Boar Gu in the future, I would have even greater strength than him. That is nothing much, he can only be arrogant for a while." Some people shrugged, speaking unconcernedly.

Fang Yuan walked down the stage, his eyes picking up the people's discussions as he smirked coldly inside his heart.

The Liquor worm's origin was already perfectly explained by Fang Yuan, but once the Jade Skin Gu was exposed, Fang Yuan would not be able to explain it. Thus, he had to keep this secret and could not use it in public.

As for these people's thoughts and explanations, it was the direction Fang Yuan wanted them to go. Or rather, even if the higher-ups were suspicious, they would only be suspicious of his mysterious backer.



"Half a year ago, I risked the danger and used the wild boar tusks to create a second layer of protection at the camp. It is finally coming into play." Fang Yuan eyes were dark like the abyss.

The Gu Yue clan leader did not sit down. He kept on standing and frowning deeply.

This matter had developed out of his control.

Fang Yuan getting first place, he did not really care much. It was just a year end exam's first place, it was nothing significant.

He was worried about Gu Yue Fang Zheng.

Undeniably, today's impact was too great on Fang Zheng.

If Fang Zheng was beaten completely from the start and lost the fight, so be it. But it just had to be at the point where he used his full strength and got a huge confidence boost, that he was sent sprawling by Fang Yuan's two fists.

Such a psychological trauma might negatively impact his growth.

"Under my guidance and arrangement, Fang Zheng was the first to advance to upper stage, peak stage and Rank two initial stage, continuously gaining success and confidence. But this confidence is probably gone by now. Sigh, my hard work has all gone up like smoke." Gu Yue Bo sighed deeply, naturally gaining a little sense of disgust and loathing towards Fang Yuan.

If Fang Yuan had lost to Fang Zheng, everything would have been perfect.

But he actually won, that is too... infuriating.

Not only the clan leader, but the other clan elders' were also full of solemn and complex gazes.

"Fang Yuan's strength is actually so huge, is he really a monster like Chi Shan?"

"Actually, he was strange from young, making poems when he was younger than ten, so his strength getting larger as he grew up is nothing strange."

"But there is another possibility, and that is human action. Fang Yuan has a mysterious backer, maybe the backer assisted him."

"But the person behind him, who could it be?"

The clan elders' hearts were overturning, but their expressions said otherwise.

Clan leader Gu Yue Bo went silent before revealing a smile, saying, "Fang Yuan, getting first place with a C grade talent, this is an unprecedented grand feat! Becoming first place, you have a hundred primeval stones as reward and also Gu worm choosing priority. Now, I shall reward you further, you can choose any small group you want and join it. Regardless of the group, whichever one you want, just say it and you can join!"

Upon saying so, all the Rank two Gu Masters and students stared at Fang Yuan in envy.

Small groups had their differences too, and joining a good group meant a bright future. Gu Yue Bo's reward was very generous.

"Although I made this decision on the spot, I believe the clan elders here would agree with me," Gu Yue Bo smiled even more intensely, looking at the clan elders beside him.

With Gu Yue Chi Lian and Gu Yue Mo Chen as the head of the clan elders, all of their faces were grim and some even frowned, but no one stopped him.

Fang Yuan's heart jumped.

Trouble had come.

Translator's Thoughts

Skyfarrow Skyfarrow

Will continue tomorrow, good night (u\_u)/

Chapter 87: Attitude is the mask of the heart

Fang Yuan could see the intentions behind such an action, this was a small probing (test) from the clan leader.

His gaze swept through the arena, the entire clan's best performing three groups were here. The clan leader's faction's Qing Shu group, Chi faction's Chi Shan group, and Mo faction's Mo Yan group.

If it was a regular student, joining any of the three groups meant getting a huge backer, representing a bright future.

But to Fang Yuan, it was the reverse.

In the clan's higher-up's perception, he was already part of a mysterious faction. Joining any of the three spelt trouble.

For example, if he joined the Chi Shan faction, the Chi family obviously know they did not recruit him, so their first thought would be — Fang Yuan is a pawn of another family, but now that he's joining our group, what intentions does he have?

Next they would think — The mysterious faction that recruited Fang Yuan earlier had already broken the rules, and now that Fang Yuan is present here, the clan leader would think that we were the ones who recruited him, so isn't this 'carrying the fault' for them? That will not do, we have to arrest Fang Yuan, keep a close eye on him and investigate him! We shall find concrete evidence and reveal the mysterious backer of his.

But the truth was, Fang Yuan has no backer!

"Once I join any of the three groups, it means I am offending one out of the three biggest factions in this clan. That will definitely not do! Sigh, I originally wanted to keep a low profile and join Jiang He's group, but Jiang He's group is backed by the punishment hall elder. Under everyone's watchful eye, if I join abruptly, that is inappropriate as well." Fang Yuan inevitably hesitated.

Gu Yue Bo's smile became even more intense, continuing, "Fang Yuan, if you don't choose, I'll select for you."

The clan elders beside him watched quietly with an unmoving expression, each of them standing like statues.

"Hmph, forcing me?" Fang Yuan's gaze shone, immediately guessing Gu Yue Bo's next words — either throwing him to Chi Shan's group or Mo Yan's group.

Gu Yue Bo knew in his heart that he did not recruit Fang Yuan. To him, this act can not only remove suspicion on him but also weaken his foe, as well as reveal the mysterious faction; it was killing three birds with one stone. It was a play that could divert the problem away — although seemingly simple, it was a strategic move showing Gu Yue Bo's experienced political ability.

"No, I must not let him dictate it. It seems I can only choose a crappy group." Fang Yuan was about to open his mouth and speak.

Suddenly at this moment, someone spoke, "Why don't you join our team. Our group is lacking an attacker."

Who said that?

At once, everyone turned around towards the source of the voice.

The person speaking was neither tall or short, with dark yellow skin that made him look sickly. A pair of triangular eyes shone with brilliance.

"It's the sickly snake Gu Yue Jiao San(1)." Someone pointed out his identity.

"Gu Yue Jiao San? It's just a trash team with no background!" The clan leader and clan elders all showed a disappointed expression.

"Jiao San..." Fang Yuan's eyes shone with an undetectable dark shine.

He and this Gu Yue Jiao San person had never met or spoken before, and he had no memories of such a person.

Why did Jiao San open his mouth and invite him into his team? Was it purely because he had gotten first place in the examination?

How can that be!

Only someone as childish as Fang Zheng would have such a naive thought.

But.....

Since Jiao San opened his mouth and invited Fang Yuan personally, such a situation was a good breakthrough point.

"The clan's higher-ups must be very disappointed now. Hehe." Fang Yuan smiled thinking of this, his eyes looking downwards, hiding the brilliance in his expression.

"Then I'll join your group," Fang Yuan agreed on the spot, blocking Gu Yue Bo's upcoming words.

"Is this Fang Yuan retarded?"

"Ignoring those top performing groups and joining the sickly snake's group!"

"He must be bonkers, Jiao San's personality, hehehe..."

The students and Gu Masters started to discuss, looking at Fang Yuan like he was a fool.

The clan leaders and elders' expression turned dim.

Today's probing was thwarted by this Gu Yue Jiao San! No... Maybe this Jiao San is also a pawn in this game, but no matter what, they must investigate on this Gu Yue Jiao San!

Three days later.

It had already been snowing for a day, and now that it was gradually getting smaller, pieces of snowflakes flew in the air gliding with the wind.

On Qing Mao mountain, there was a layer of white colour over it. Many branches were naked with no leaves, except the evergreen pine trees and Qing Mao bamboo, which had retained their original colours standing proudly in the snow.

A group of five people ran in the snow.

The leading person was neither short nor tall, bearing a sickly yellow skin — it was Gu Yue Jiao San.

As he ran, he turned towards the quiet Fang Yuan, smiling gently with kindness, "Fang Yuan, don't be nervous. Although this is your first clan mission, the contents are simple. Just follow us and learn along the way."

"Yes," Fang Yuan lightly replied, staring forward with a solemn expression.

It was already winter.

Running on the snow, the chilly winter winds were even more intense. Every breath was like eating snow dust, chilling his entire chest.

Fang Yuan's face was originally very white, and now that the snow shone on it, it appeared even paler. In the process of running, the snow kept falling on his short black hair, his shoulders and forehead.

What was different than before was that Fang Yuan had changed his clothes.

This was a dark blue coloured battle attire.

The attire had long sleeves and long pants, with bamboo sheets tied on his legs as wrappings, and bamboo shoes adorned his feet. On his head there was a bright blue headband, and the headband fluttered in the air as Fang Yuan ran.

On his waist, there was a loose belt.

The belt was navy blue with a bronze plate on it, carved with the number "1"; it was very much eye-striking.

This was a Gu Master's attire, showing Fang Yuan's status as a Rank one Gu Master.

The youngsters had to stay a year in the academy and graduate before they were allowed to wear this.

This attire had much meaning. Once worn it meant that one has transcended the realm of mortals, leaving the lowly life and stepping into the upper society, being the middle class of the entire human race. Even if Rank one Gu Masters were the bottom of this tier, from now on any mortal had to give way to Fang Yuan and pay respects to him.

Gu Yue Jiao San's gaze continued to shine. This battle attire when worn by Fang Yuan, coupled with his cold expression, showed the atmosphere of a cool and collected person.

While running, he continued asking Fang Yuan, "We are out on a mission, and normally we would have to rush when travelling, so running is a common thing. Are you used to it?"

"I can cope." Fang Yuan's words were precious like gold, using the corner of his eye to look at Gu Yue Jiao San.

Jiao San's warm and kind expression caused him to think about the legend of Ren Zu.

Words have it that Ren Zu used the Rules and Regulation Gu and obtained strength but lost wisdom, leaving behind three Gu worms. One was Suspicion, one was Trust, and another was Attitude.

Ren Zu grabbed the Attitude Gu.

Attitude Gu followed the betting rules, submitting to Ren Zu, telling him, "Human, you caught me, I can only curse my bad luck. From now on, I will be at your command. Wear me and you will be able to use my ability."

Attitude Gu's appearance was like a mask. Ren Zu put it on his face, but in the end he could not wear it. Even if he used a rope to tie it, it would still fall off.

"What's going on?" Ren Zu was troubled.

Attitude Gu laughed, "I know, human, you have no heart. Attitude is the mask of the heart, so without a heart, how can you wear me?"

Ren Zu realised at once, he had already given his heart to hope.

He was heartless.

Someone who is heartless cannot wear the attitude mask. In other words, to someone with a heart/an intention, their attitude is a mask.

"This kind and warm attitude is only Gu Yue Jiao San's mask, what is his real intention?" Fang Yuan pondered.

While the person "sickly snake" Jiao San observed Fang Yuan, Fang Yuan was also secretly observing him.

(1)Gu Yue Jiao Shan - His name Jiao Shan means three angles. Probably referring to his triangular eyes.

Chapter 88: Initial display of authority, picking on, and suppression

On the snow, five small groups were running.

Gu Yue Jiao San looked at the sky, saying, "The sky's getting dark, our mission this time is to collect 'permafrost decayed soil'. Although it is easy, it consumes too much time. We have to speed up, everyone follow me, try not to get left behind. Fang Yuan, if you are unable to keep up, just inform us. Don't worry, you are a newcomer, we will take care of you."

Gu Yue Jiao San smiled very amicably.

Fang Yuan nodded silently.

The other three members exchanged glances. The sky was actually still bright, Jiao San had no need to say this. In reality, he wanted to give Fang Yuan an initial display of authority.

The three knew this deep down, but did not expose him.

In actuality, these kind of authoritative displays were common. When a new member joins, the older members would usually exert their authority to get rid of the younger member's arrogance so that it would be easier to command and control them.

"Let's go." Jiao San said lightly, taking huge steps and being the first to rush out.

Fang Yuan's gaze shone, heading out with the same speed as the other three, following closely behind.

The bamboo shoes stepped on the snow, leaving behind traces of footprints.

The mountain road was full of obstacles, being difficult to manoeuvre. Especially with a layer of thick snow, it was even easier to fall down. At the same time, due to the snow cover, who knew if underneath it was sharp rocks or pitfalls?

If one stepped into a hunter's trap, they would be even more unlucky.

Living in this world was tough. Travelling seemed easy but in fact it had much to do with experience. Many newcomers suffered due to this.

Only through a long period of training, having gone through much hardship, a Gu Master that has accumulated much experience would be able to avoid these obstacles.

The chilly winter winds blew directly towards their faces as Fang Yuan strode through the snow.

At times he took small leaps, at times he ran long distances. Sometimes he sidestepped, sometimes he climbed, following closely behind Jiao San.

The entire Qing Mao was covered by a layer of snow coat, and many of the trees had naked branches, without a single leaf.

At times, squirrels or wild deer were frightened by these people and ran away quickly.

Thirty minutes later, Jiao San stopped in his tracks as he had reached his destination.

He turned over his head, looking at Fang Yuan, smiling, and praising, "Good job! You truly are this year's champion, following behind me and not losing your pace once."

Fang Yuan smiled silently. This kind of authoritative display, he was clear of it. In fact, sprinting in the snow had become a "traditional event". Many small groups used this to suppress the newcomer's arrogance.

The two stood on the spot and waited, until the remaining three members arrived.

Puff, huff, puff.....

They took deep breaths, their foreheads full of sweat, their faces red as they placed their hands on their waists, the last members plopping on the ground.

Jiao San harshly stared at them, barking, "Stand straight! Haven't you embarrassed us enough? Look at Fang Yuan, then look at yourselves. Hmph, after this mission, go back and reflect on yourselves."

The three immediately stood up straight, but lowered their heads. They were chided by Jiao San until they did not dare to raise their heads or rebuke him.

Only their gaze towards Fang Yuan changed.

"How strange, how can this Fang Yuan be so experienced? I did not see him fall even once!"

"Sigh, we only have normal strength, how can we compete with this monster?"

"Hmph, not only did we not get a show to watch, we even became the sacrificial lambs. This guy..."

"Enough, buck up." Jiao San pointed forward, "This small-sized valley is our destination. Inside, there are large amounts of permafrost decayed soil for us to collect. Let's split up here and harvest the frozen earth. An hour later, we will gather here. Kong Jing, distribute the tools."

Jiao San had just spoken, and the male member called Gu Yue Kong Jing stood up.

He opened his palm wide and a yellow light shot out from the aperture in his abdomen, landing on his palm.

The yellow light dispersed, showing its true form. A frog with a golden back.

This golden frog was plump with a giant snow white belly, causing its entire body to look like a ball when inflated. The frog's mouth and eyes were all at the top of its head due to this belly, being squeezed into a spot.

Fang Yuan's gaze shone, recognising this Gu worm.

This was the Rank two Gu worm — Large Belly Frog.

Soon after, Kong Jing's hands emitted traces of red steel primeval essence, and were absorbed by the frog.

Ribbit.

The Large Belly Frog screeched, opening its mouth to vomit out a steel spade.

The steel spade flew in the sky, turning large quickly. In the blink of an eye, it landed on the ground, becoming a large steel spade half the size of a person.

Ribbit, ribbit, ribbit.....

It called for several times, throwing up a tool each time.

Eventually, the snowfield in front of everyone had five steel spades, and five wooden boxes. The wooden boxes all had two ropes for carrying.

Gu master feeding Gu worms was a large burden. Thus, Gu worms were limited in numbers. During the initial stages, it was hard to single-handedly deal with different environments, and with different intensity of troubles, Gu Masters thus often worked in groups.

In a small group, there was someone doing reconnaissance, someone for offence, someone in charge of defence, someone healing, and someone as logistics support.

The Gu Master who stood up, Kong Jing, was a logistics support Gu Master. He controlled this Large Belly Frog, which was a support Gu worm, where its belly had another space that could be used as storage space.

Of course, every Gu had its strengths and weaknesses.

The Large Belly Frog's weakness was that not only was the storage space limited, every time it vomited an item, it had to croak once, and this was irritating. Especially when a Gu Master is hiding in the battlefield, if handled poorly, it would reveal one's location.

Another thing was, the Large Belly Frog could not store Gu worms, and it was not immune to poison, unable to store poisonous objects.

After distributing the tools, each of the group members had a steel spade and a box in their hands.

"Let's set off," Jiao San waved his hand, leading the party into the valley.

Fang Yuan held the steel spade and carried the wooden box, choosing another direction.

"He is after all a newbie, rushing in like that. Hehe."

"Is the permafrost decayed soil so easy to harvest? If he cannot differentiate it, he might get normal frozen earth, wasting his efforts."

"The truth is, it is really difficult to differentiate. The permafrost decayed soil's colour is around the same as normal frozen earth, especially under the cover of all the accumulated snow, so newbies can only dig relying on their luck."

The three members seeing Fang Yuan's backview laughed internally.

An hour later, they saw that Fang Yuan returned with an entire box of permafrost decayed soil, and were all stunned.

Including Jiao San, all their wooden boxes were only half-filled with permafrost decayed soil.

Seeing Fang Yuan's wooden box, they were almost ashamed to show their results.

"It is all permafrost decayed soil!" A member observed carefully and was even more shocked.



"Fang Yuan, how did you gather so much frozen earth?" A female member could not hold in her curiosity and asked.

Fang Yuan's brows raised, and the snowlight shone on his iris, showing a clear and transparent gaze.

He laughed lightly, "The academy elder said before, the permafrost decayed soil is a fertilizer created when the snow freezes the swamp. It has a tint of purple in the blackness, and is actually very smelly, but because it is frozen by the snow, it cannot be smelled. It is the Smelly Fart Fatworm's food. At the same time it is also very fertile, often mixed in the soil to grow crops, fruits and vegetables. The clan sending out this mission, is probably because they want to use it in the underground cave and fertilize the moon orchid flowers."

His words caused the four to be frozen on the spot.

"These theories are obviously learnt in the academy. But theory and reality are very difficult to be linked. Has Fang Yuan collected permafrost decayed soil before?" The three members looked at each other in shock.

Gu Yue Jiao San's gaze shone, saying, "Good job Fang Yuan."

As he praised, his usual warm and kind smile became a little forced.

Jiao San turned around, saying to the rest, "This way, our mission is completed. Everyone pass your spades and boxes to Kong Jing, and let's return."

When they got back to the village, it was already afternoon.

The five walked out of the internal affairs hall, Jiao San distributing the six primeval stones they earned. He got two pieces, while the rest of the members got one.

The primeval stones were so easily earned, so the members all broke into a smile.

Fang Yuan kept his primeval stone stealthily.

Only in his heart did he think, "When a newcomer joins a small group, the clan would usually give a large reward for the mission as a form of supporting the newcomer. Collecting the permafrost decayed soil mission, the reward was at most two primeval stones, but because of me there were three times more. According to logic, I should have gotten more stones. If the snow sprinting was an authoritative display, then having us purposely collect the frozen soil alone was a sign of picking on me, and the distribution of primeval stones is suppression already."

One or two primeval was not a concern for Fang Yuan. He was only wondering strangely — he and Gu Yue Jiao San never had any interactions, so why was he suppressing him?

"Unless..." An inspiration struck Fang Yuan.

Chapter 89: A sickly snake coiling around the legs

The five stood on the walkway.

Gu Yue Jiao San laughed kindly and said to Fang Yuan, "Little brother Fang Yuan, your performance really impressed all of us. It seems we did a correct thing inviting you to join us. You have just graduated from the academy, and might be unclear of some things. Let me introduce you to them."

"Firstly, the clan missions, each Gu Master must complete at least one a month. The more you complete and the more perfect it is, the higher your evaluation."

"Secondly, the missions are distributed by the internal affairs hall or the external affair hall, each Gu Master can only accept one. Once accepted, they must complete it."

"Thirdly, under special conditions, a Gu Master may choose to abandon a mission, but that will cause their evaluation to fall greatly. At the same time, Rank one Gu Masters have no rights to give up, and only Rank two Gu Masters do. But they can only abandon one mission a year."

"Fourth, the clan's evaluation is very important. It concerns your future in the clan, and the higher your evaluation, the greater your future and the brighter it is."

Fang Yuan listened, nodding. These things were already memorized by him. Gu Yue Jiao San was right and did not misdirect him, but many key contents were not spoken.

"Alright, the permafrost decayed soil's mission has just been completed. Next, I accepted a wild deer hunting mission. The danger is low, so it is suitable for you to practice." Jiao San said to Fang Yuan.

Fang Yuan laughed coldly in his heart, but said, "Thank you for your concern, group leader."

Gu Yue Kong Jing immediately followed up, "Little brother Fang Yuan, you should really properly thank the group leader. Although simple missions are easily completed, they have a small reward. The group leader's actions are to take care of you."

The other two female Gu Masters also spoke, "Yeah, yeah, little brother Fang Yuan, action speaks louder than words. Why don't you thank the group leader by treating him to lunch."

"Little brother Fang Yuan, you just left the academy, society is complicated. Human relationship is very important. If you don't know anything, just ask us during lunch."

Gu Yue Jiao San laughed, purposely waving his hand, "Don't put him in a spot, he just left the academy, he must be tight on primeval stones."

"How can that be! Besides, just being the first place in the year end exam gave him a hundred primeval stones as reward right?" A female Gu Master purposely said, and then showed an expression of envy, "I'm really envious of you, a hundred primeval stones is a huge sum even to us."

"Group leader, you've mistaken our little brother Fang Yuan. How can he be so stingy. Am I right, little brother Fang Yuan?" Gu Yue Kong Jing laughed heartily, as if he was very happy.

Another female Gu Master got nearer to Fang Yuan, as if they had a close relationship, saying, "Little brother Fang Yuan, a word of advice. You can choose not to suck up to us, but the group leader, you have to. You know, our group's evaluation has a portion written by the group leader. If he says you're outstanding, you're outstanding. If he says you performed badly, it means you really performed badly."

"That's right, that's right. Evaluation is very important to us Gu Masters, we need at least an outstanding evaluation to be noticed by the higher-ups. In the future where we have sufficient achievements, we would be able to work for several years less!" Kong Jing immediately followed up.

Throughout the entire process, Gu Yue Jiao San was smiling and watching.

Finally he waved his hand with a kind expression and laughingly said, "Ah, don't speak nonsense. I am always impartial when writing my evaluation, and will not be easily bribed by you. But don't worry Fang Yuan, you are a newcomer, so now that you're in our group, I will take good care of your evaluation."

If it were a normal teenager, they would've been led by the nose by these few people, feeling touched secretly. They are bullying a newcomer's ignorance and naivety.

But Fang Yuan's iris was calm as the sea.

Group leader being involved in the member's evaluation, that was the truth. This is the clan's system, giving the authority to the group leader, so that they can manage each small group.

But it is not as severe as these people said.

For the clan evaluation, the group leader's evaluation is only a very small portion, and it is still mostly attributed to the clan's internal affairs hall.

Or rather, even if the group leader had a great influence on it, so what?

Fang Yuan didn't give a damn about the evaluation.

He had already decided — quickly raise his cultivation, reach Rank three, and then leave this place. He had never thought of staying in this clan for over a hundred years to slog his life away.

To these ignorant and lowly peasants, the evaluation was the most important thing. But to Fang Yuan, it was lower than dog shit!

Thus, their somewhat threatening tone was of no use to Fang Yuan.

"I understand what you all have said. I still have something on, so I'll take my leave," Fang Yuan after being quiet for a while, said.

Eh?

At once, the four Gu Masters showed a shocked expression.

"What is the meaning of this? Did you not hear what we said earlier?" A female Gu Master stared with her eyes wide, screaming in her heart.

"Is your comprehension ability really okay?" Gu Yue Kong Jing at this moment, really wanted to grab Fang Yuan by the collar and ask him.

Jiao San's mouth twitched.

Fang Yuan's indifference caused their self-directed performance to look like a joke. It made the scheme that they set up become a laughingstock.

Seeing Fang Yuan turning around and walking away, the fury in his heart blazed on.

"Come on Fang Yuan, don't leave so quickly, don't listen to their nonsense." Jiao San controlled his temper and conjured a smile, quickly chasing up and blocking Fang Yuan, "You're going to rent a house right? Let us go with you. I have some personal relations, I am more familiar with the rental situation."

"I am indeed going to rent a house, I can't stay at the hostel anymore, do you have any ideas?" Fang Yuan raised his eyebrows, asking calmly.

"I know a few houses that are considerably cheap, and with good location." Jiao San smiled, leading the way.

...

"My house, fifteen primeval stones a month, no second price."

"Pfft, renting my house with eight primeval stones? In your dreams."

"You must pay a deposit, 25% deposit. Other vendors are doing this too."

"My house has good Feng Shui, and its quiet at night. More importantly, it is facing the clan leader's pavilion, you know how good the location is. It is really cheap, only twenty-five primeval stones a month."

All the way until night time, Fang Yuan did not find a house to stay.

"Little brother Fang Yuan, you're too stingy. The village is only so big, the prices are all like this."

"In my opinion, you should get the house near the clan leader's pavilion, the second floor is very spacious and the scenery is nice. Little brother Fang Yuan, don't be so thrifty, it is only twenty-five primeval stones. The reward that you got is enough for you to stay four months."

The two female Gu Masters continued to urge him on with ill intent.

Fang Yuan shook his head, "I do not have many primeval stones, I cannot be wasteful."

"Then rent an underground apartment, it's cheaper." Gu Yue Kong Jing's eyes shone with cold brilliance, suggesting.

Fang Yuan snorted in his heart, this Kong Jing has such a vile heart!

The village is already high in precipitation, and now that it is winter, the underground apartments would have poor airflow, and tenants would easily catch a cold. Even if there aren't diseases, it would cause problems in the long term.

Seeing that Fang Yuan kept his silence, Jiao San said, "Actually the big hall's first floor is good too. Co-staying with other people causes the rent to reduce as well."

Fang Yuan shook his head, "I want to stay alone, I do not like to stay with others."

Gu Yue Kong Jing snorted, saying unhappily, "You don't want this, you don't want that. I'm not trying to scold you, little brother Fang Yuan, but you're too picky and expect too much. With such high standards, it is not realistic."

Fang Yuan listened, laughing coldly in his heart while thinking, "Even if they fulfil the criteria, I would not accept any house you recommend."

His act of pacifying them was just for the sake of being careful, finding out if there are any traps.

Just as Fang Yuan was about to leave, Mother Shen appeared.

"Young master Fang Yuan, I finally found you. The academy can no longer be stayed at, and the old master and his wife have already prepared a banquet, specifically asking me to invite you home. Staying at home is so much better, there is no need for you to go about renting houses outside," She urged.

Finally here.....

Fang Yuan laughed coldly in his heart, this Mother Shen really found a good time. Finding him here at once, someone must have notified her!

Just as he had expected, the masterminds were his uncle and aunt!

And Jiao San was the chain that his uncle and aunt created to bind him.

Fang Yuan's silence looked like hesitation.

"Fang Yuan, why don't you stay at your uncle and aunt's house, why make life difficult? Renting a house will spend a lot of primeval stones." Gu Yue Jiao San spoke in a 'concerned' manner at an appropriate juncture as he looked at Fang Yuan, his eyes shining ominously.

Chapter 90: It's just a little wind frost

In the hall, the lights shone brightly.

On the round dining table, the wine was already cold, and the dishes were cool.

The brilliant red candle flickered and danced, projecting the shadows of Aunt and Uncle onto the wall.

The two figures' shadow combined into one, and swayed gloomily with the candlelight.

In front of them, Mother Shen was kneeling.

Uncle broke the silence, "To think this Fang Yuan is dead bent on going against me. Sigh, I wanted to calm him down with nice words and keep him in the house first before finding a reason to chase him out of the house. To think that he did not fall for it! He has made up his mind, rejecting my invitation without a single way to negotiate! Not even taking a step into my house!"

Aunt gritted her teeth, her expression slightly flustered, "This scoundrel is already sixteen years old, so if he wants the family fortune now we cannot deny it to him. Years ago we obtained that family fortune and it was clearly recorded in the inner affairs hall. Now that we cannot deny it, what shall we do now?!"

"Leave first." Uncle waved at Mother Shen to withdraw, laughing coldly, "Don't be anxious. Throughout the year, I have already been planning for this. First, to get back the assets, he needs to have Rank one

middle stage cultivation. He already achieved this and is even at peak stage, and gotten number one in the exam, that is very impressive. Hehe..."

"But, to successfully obtain his family fortune, it is not so easy! Rank one middle stage cultivation is only a pre-condition. To split the assets, Fang Yuan has to apply for it, and the internal affairs hall has to approve it and send him a mission to test if he has the qualifications. This is to prevent the clan from splitting family assets nonsensically, causing internal strifes and weakening the clan."

Aunt was enlightened, "This means that, he has to complete the mission before he can get his parents' inheritance."

"That's right." Uncle laughed sinisterly, "But the internal affairs hall's missions are sent to groups. The family asset mission will be the same. If Fang Yuan wants to complete it, he would have to rely on the group, he cannot do it alone. The family does this to make sure that the small groups stay united and increase their cohesiveness."

Aunt laughed loudly, "Husband, you're too smart. Getting Jiao San to recruit Fang Yuan — this way, if Fang Yuan wants to accomplish the mission, he would need their strength. But Jiao San is on our side, so Fang Yuan can never accomplish this mission."

Uncle's eyes shone smugly, "Hmph, even if he cannot get him into the group, I have other ways to deal with him. Not to mention completing the mission, even if he wants to apply for the splitting of the fortune and receive the mission, it might not be possible!"

...

Nightfall arrived and the snow stopped.

Fang Yuan walked on the streets. The bamboo houses along the way were all covered by a layer of white snow.

The snow that he stepped on emitted a light sound. The cold air entered his respiratory system, causing Fang Yuan's brain to be extremely awake.

After rejecting Mother Shen, Fang Yuan disregarded Jiao San and the group's advice and said goodbye to everyone, leaving by himself.

"So that's it." He walked and thought, "Uncle and Aunt are trying to trap and delay me, causing me to lose the chance to take back my inheritance."

"After the new year, I would be sixteen years old and be qualified to split the assets. My parents are dead, and my brother has new parents. If I am successful, the entire inheritance is mine. But to take back the inheritance, there are two crucial steps, each being extremely important."

"The first is to apply for the mission at the internal affairs hall without any other missions at hand. The second is to complete the mission to earn the rights to inherit the asset."

"Jiao San is in cahoots with Uncle and Aunt. Leaving aside the second step, he's already trying to trap me at the first step."

The clan rules state that Gu Masters can only be on one mission at a time. This is to prevent Gu Masters from hogging and causing negative competition in the clan.

Jiao San received missions consecutively. After finishing the permafrost decayed soil mission, he immediately accepted a new mission for catching wild deer.

The clan's missions were all given to groups, that is to say, according to clan rules, Fang Yuan has to finish the deer capturing mission before applying for his asset splitting mission.

"But at that point, I believe Jiao San would just accept another new mission. As the leader, when accepting missions, he will always be a step ahead of me, causing me to be unable to accept my mission, thus always stopping me." Thinking of this, Fang Yuan's eyes shone ominously.

These plots and schemes were irritating, like an invisible rope blocking Fang Yuan's progress.

But Fang Yuan did not regret entering this group.

At the arena, he was backed into a corner. Jiao San's invitation became a way for him to be free from the predicament.

If he did not enter the team, his uncle and aunt would have other ways to deal with him, this cannot be prevented and will be hard to defend against. But now that he is in the group, he can clearly see their schemes and easily counterattack.

"Solving this problem, I have my ways. The easiest way is to just eliminate Jiao San, or assassinate uncle and aunt, then no one would compete with me over the family assets. But this way is too risky, they are all Rank two Gu Masters and my cultivation is still too low. Even if I kill them I cannot get out of the troublesome aftermath. Unless there is a good chance for me to take advantage of... but these chances are usually by luck."

Fang Yuan could kill the servant Gao Wan and could kill old man Wang, but that was because they were mortals and servants, with life cheap as grass. Killing them was akin to killing a dog or pulling off weed, it was insignificant.

But assassinating Gu Masters is very troublesome.

Gu Masters were all Gu Yue clansmen, no matter which one dies, the punishment hall would investigate. Fang Yuan evaluated his own strength and knew there was too much risk in killing them now; he might even get killed. Even if he kills them, the punishment hall's investigation is even more troublesome. His future actions would be spied on and they might even find out the Flower Wine Monk's inheritance.

"Attracting a much larger problem when eliminating a small problem, that is not what a wise person does. Oh? I'm here," Fang Yuan spoke lightly, stopping at a worn out bamboo building.

This bamboo building was torn and worn out, like an old man about to die, panting for his last breath in the cold harsh winter.

Seeing this bamboo building, Fang Yuan's face showed a trace of reminiscence.

This was the room he rented in his previous life.

In his previous life, after being thrown out by his uncle and aunt, he had less than fifteen primeval stones left and had to sleep in the streets for a few days before finding this place.

This place was too worn out and had much lower rent than other places. In addition, while other places counted the rent by months, this place calculated it by days.

"I do not know about other places, whether or not they have uncle and aunt's traps. But my previous life's memories tell me that at least this place is safe." Fang Yuan rang on the door.

After half an hour, he established the renting terms and was brought to the second floor by the owner.

The floors were old, emitting dangerous and concerning sounds when stepped on.

The room had only one bed, and a blanket. The blanket had many patches but was still riddled with some holes, and the yellow cotton wadding leaked out from inside.

The head of the bed had an oil lamp. The landlord left after lighting the lamp.

Fang Yuan did not sleep, but sat on the bed and started cultivating.

As his primeval sea raged on in the aperture, every drop of primeval essence was black green.

The aperture's four walls were a white crystal colour, in a translucent state.

Rank one peak stage.

Suddenly, the green bronze primeval sea started to have currents, like wild beasts raging and suiciding towards the four aperture walls.

Bam bam bam...

The huge waves crashed onto the aperture walls, causing the little ripples to break into small droplets before dissipating.

After a while, the 44% primeval essence sea was quickly expended, with large amounts of primeval essence used up.

On the sturdy aperture walls, there was lines of cracks.

But just cracks were not enough.

Fang Yuan wanted to break through Rank one peak stage and reach Rank two, thus he needed to break this aperture wall completely, evolving through its destruction!

Black green primeval essence continued to attack the crystal wall, and the cracks increased, forming a giant piece. At some places, the cracks were even deeper, forming very evident lines.

As he used up the primeval essence, he did not continue to use primeval essence to attack, and the crystal walls started to heal, causing the cracks to vanish.

Fang Yuan was not surprised, collecting his spirits and opening his eyes.

The oil lamp had gone out already. There was not much oil anyway.



The room was dark, with only the window providing a little bit of light through the crack.

The room had no firepit and was not warm. Fang Yuan had sat on the bed for a long time without moving, and felt that the chilliness had intensified.

His dark iris fused with the darkness.

"To breakthrough Jiao San's lock, there is an easier and safer method. That is to advance to Rank two! Rank one Gu masters have no right to give up on missions, but Rank 2 Gu masters can do it once a year. If I advance to Rank two, I can give up on my mission and apply for the asset splitting."

"But to breakthrough to Rank two, it is not an easy task." Thinking of this, Fang Yuan sighed. Coming down from his bed, he strolled around in the tiny room.

From initial stage to middle stage, middle stage to upper stage, these are all small realms. From Rank one peak stage to Rank two initial stage, that is breaking through a large realm. Between these two cases there was an extremely different difficulty.

Simply put, to break the crystal wall, it needed explosive strength, forming a strong impact in a short time to smash the wall.

But Fang Yuan only had C grade talent, and the primeval sea is only at 44%. If he used his entire force to attack the wall, his primeval essence would be used up immediately.

Just like earlier, after his primeval essence was exhausted, he would no longer have the strength to continue. And the wall had recovery ability, so before long, it would heal up. Whatever Fang Yuan did earlier would have been wasted.

"Breaking the wall and reaching Rank two without special situations, one needs 55% black green primeval essence. But my talent is limited, having only 44%, thus people say that talent is the key in a Gu Master's cultivation!"

Thinking of this, Fang Yuan slowed in his steps.

Unknowingly, he had moved to the window, thus he opened the windows casually.

Every gust of wind shook the bamboo lattice window, and when opened the snow-covered mountain greets one's eye. (1)

Under the moonlight, the snow was like white jade, spreading out and letting the world resemble a crystal palace before one's eyes, untainted by dust.

The snowlight shone onto Fang Yuan's youthful features. His expression was peaceful and calm, his brow smooth, his pair of orbs looking like the ancient spring underneath the moon.

As the cold winds blew onto his face, the young man laughed, "It is merely a small bit of wind frost(2)."