

M. Slaying 141

Chapter 141: There's A Spy Among Us

The fog in the Valley of Bewildering Fog was so dense that it almost seemed solid. It looked as though it was flowing out of the mouth of the vast, desolate valley situated in between the two lofty mountains—appearing much like if a bottle filled with sheep fat had tipped over into the valley. On each side of the valley was a mountain covered with luxuriant forests that gave it a dark green peak—all of which concealed dense yin qi.

This valley was notorious for being one of the most dangerous places in the Southern Bastion Mountain. Cultivators who frequented the area were well aware of this valley, but no one knew what lay at the end of it.

With the Dark King Sect's Southern-Route and Southwestern Guiders leading the way, two groups of black-clad figures and their horses silently walked over to the mouth of the valley. Each of them had a dark gold token, which had been engraved with a number that represented their identity, hanging from their waist. The mood was stiff and heavy, perhaps from the excessive murderous intent that the people were exuding.

However, the black-clad figure walking at the very rear of the group on the right looked rather strange; he was trembling occasionally. Fortunately, the trembling wasn't severe. It was barely noticeable under his black robe and did not attract the attention of the people traveling with him.

Enough. That's enough. It's going to be troublesome if you shake any more than that.

Chu Liang had been continuously suppressing the righteous impulses of the Crimson Executioner with his divine sense, and it made him quite weary. The Crimson Executioner's impulses only manifested as a slight trembling on the outside, but it was actually about to explode with rage inside the White Pagoda's space.

Chu Liang understood that the Crimson Executioner had an urgent desire to slay demonic entities, but he had to take his level of strength into consideration. The Crimson Executioner's amplified power was dependent on his cultivation level.

Killing Master Lu, a cultivator at the sixth realm, had been an incredible feat. Chu Liang could tell that at his current cultivation level, he would need to exhaust almost all of his power to do that now. Moreover, if he missed the right timing or attempted it at an unfavorable location, he wouldn't be able to kill an unconventional sixth-realm cultivator.

The Dark King Sect was a powerhouse diabolical sect. Chu Liang felt that he wasn't confident he would be able to kill a somewhat vigilant fifth-realm cultivator from that sect, let alone a sixth-realm Guider... and two of them at that.

You want me to jump out and uphold justice at this moment... It seems you want me dead.

"It's impossible to get into the Deep Pool of Dreams by flying there. We can only enter it by traversing through the Valley of Bewildering Fog," the Southern-Route Guider said. Then he raised his hand, signaling for his group to stop walking. "The Valley of Bewildering Fog is full of miasma, poisonous fog, Sickie Ghosts, and lingering spirits. Everyone, be extra vigilant when you enter."

The Southern-Route Guider then pulled out a long white bone. He raised his other hand and scratched the bone, and a translucent ball of dark green flames burst into existence with a whoosh.

He continued, "The only way we can clear a route through the fog and the lingering spirits within it is by using a bone of a Sickie Ghost to form a netherworld-fire torch. Once we've entered the valley, follow closely behind this ball of hellfire. Do not rush ahead, and do not fall behind. If you were to get separated from the group, you may get taken away by the lingering spirits in the dense fog, doomed to linger here forever as one of them."

"Understood!" the Guider's subordinates replied.

Chu Liang finally figured out why the Guider, who had a high cultivation level, would need companions just to venture through the Valley of Bewildering Fog.

So, it turns out that being alone in the valley means you're at risk of getting possessed by lingering spirits.

Once the Southern-Route Guider was done warning his subordinates, he took the lead and stepped into the dense fog. The moment the bone torch he held came into contact with the fog, a strange hissing rang out, followed by faint blood-curdling screams.

At first, Chu Liang was puzzled. What exactly is a Sickie Ghost, and why is it so mystical? This is just one bone of a Sickie Ghost, yet it seems to have a consciousness and can even scream...?

However, at the next moment, he realized that the screams were not coming from the bone but from the fog!

Is this fog a living thing?!

Upon thinking that, Chu Liang immediately held his breath, not daring to inhale the fog. Nevertheless, after seeing the people ahead of him enter the fog one by one without any apparent issues, Chu Liang put on a bold face and walked into the fog as well.

Whoosh.

Chu Liang suddenly felt like he was under the sea. He heard the muffled sounds of thunderclaps and roaring wind, as well as blood-curdling screams and murmurs.

Many voices were beckoning him over, "Come... Come..."

Those indistinct voices were extremely enticing. It was highly likely that cultivators at a level below the Spiritual Awareness Realm, who had weak mental defenses, would be lured away.

This is so creepy.

Stranger still was that Chu Liang's surroundings were an endless sheet of white. It was difficult for him to see anything beyond three chi around him. He activated his divine sense and spread it as wide as he could, but he couldn't sense anything. This dense fog seemed to have isolated him from everything else!

After panicking for a moment, he spotted swaying green flames in the distance. The Southern-Route Guider had been right; the fog could only be dispersed by the netherworld fire.

Fearful of being left behind, Chu Liang hurriedly caught up with the group.

The group trudged through the thick fog for a while. However, before they could get very far, a shadowy figure whooshed past the rear of the group.

Chu Liang narrowed his eyes tensely, vigilantly turning his head back to look.

"It's a Sickie Ghost," Luo Yao's voice rang softly in Chu Liang's ears. She was using the skill Voice Transmission. "You shouldn't take action. I'll take care of the rear."

Luo Yao pushed Chu Liang forward, allowing him to join the front of the group while she took the rear.

Both Chu Liang and Pushan lacked skills that were similar to those of the Dark King Sect. Taking action could expose their identities, so it was best for Chu Liang to refrain from making any moves.

Luo Yao's ghost-control skills were somewhat similar to the Dark King Sect's soul-manipulation skills. Moreover, they were in an environment with low visibility. So, even if she were to use her skills, it was highly likely she would be able to keep her identity a secret. Nevertheless, Chu Liang felt rather grateful to her.

After a moment, Chu Lian stepped forward toward Pushan and heard him mutter an incessant stream of words.

"Oh? Young Hero Chu, you're here." Pushan noticed that the person behind him had changed to someone else. He turned toward Chu Liang and used Voice Transmission too to chat with Chu Liang privately. "Good timing. You didn't get to hear it earlier, but I was just telling Miss Luo about the origin of the Sickie Ghost. It's recorded in Buddhist scriptures that Sickie Ghosts are ghosts that fled to the world of the living after experiencing the bone-extraction punishment in the netherworld. Sickie Ghosts can reconstruct their bodies with bones that have yet to decompose..."

Chu Liang sighed inwardly.

He now had reason to suspect that Luo Yao had run to the rear of the group for two reasons. One reason was that she was concerned about him, and the other reason... was that she didn't want Pushan whispering in her ears anymore.

As Chu Liang listened to Pushan's incessant chatter, he wondered, If Lin Bei and Pushan were to have a chat, which of the two chatterboxes would tire out first?

Then Chu Liang suddenly heard a muffled roar behind him. Much of the sound was reduced by the dense fog; it would have gone unnoticed if it wasn't nearby.

"Raaaaaar!!!"

A towering shadowy figure suddenly rose behind Luo Yao!

The figure looked like a human, but it also looked like a praying mantis as it stood there with two massive saber-blade arms. When its figure came into full view, it turned out that it had a body composed entirely of bones!

So, this is a Sickie Ghost? It's another ghost that has a corporeal body.

The Human-Faced Xiao, Chu Liang's favorite ghost, was a ghost with a corporeal body, which was an extremely rare thing. The Sickie Ghost's bone body seemed to fall into the same category.

Luo Yao reacted amazingly swiftly. She had already finished forming a hand seal by the time the Sickie Ghost came into full view. A massive shadowy hand of a ghost emerged from behind Luo Yao, wrapped its fingers around the Sickie Ghost, and squeezed.

Craaack!

A string of cracks rang out as the massive ghost hand crushed the Sickie Ghost!

Chu Liang raised his eyebrows in surprise.

He could tell that the Sickie Ghost was roughly equivalent to a third-realm cultivator. It had great speed, offensive power, and a tough bone body. However, the Sickie Ghost hadn't even had the chance to use those things against Luo Yao. The young lady had slayed the Sickie Ghost swiftly and effortlessly.

This didn't mean that the Sickie Ghost was weak. Rather, it meant that Luo Yao was very powerful. Had Chu Liang been the one to deal with the Sickie Ghost, he would have needed to put in quite a bit of effort to slay it.

"Hmm?" the Southern-Route Guider, who was at the forefront of the group, uttered as he stopped in his tracks.

The rest of the party stopped too.

Despite Luo Yao's battle with the Sickie Ghost ending very quickly, the Guider still managed to notice it had occurred. He turned back and looked at the rear of the group. Chu Liang and his two companions tensed up simultaneously, uncertain if the Guider had noticed that something was off about them.

With the bone torch in hand, the Southern-Route Guider walked to the rear of the group and inspected the pile of broken bones on the ground.

"Great job," the Guider said two words of praise to Luo Yao. Then he told everyone else, "Collect these Sickie Ghost bones. We'll be relying on them to continue our journey. If these bones aren't enough to last the whole way, we'll have to take turns to hunt down the Sickie Ghosts. Let's have the Southern-Route Fiends and their Soul Subjugators be the first ones to do it."

After what they had experienced so far in the valley, everyone in the two groups understood that in this fog, the Sickie Ghost bones were like firewood—very important.

Hunting Sickie Ghosts in the dense fog was a very dangerous task. The Southern-Route Guider was clearly trying to demonstrate his sincerity regarding this partnership by letting his Fiends be the first one to take on such a risky task.

Hearing that, Pushan felt rather resentful toward the Southern-Route Guider and muttered, "If you want to show your sincerity, why don't you go instead? What's the point of sending your subordinates into danger?"

Chu Liang smiled as he transmitted his voice to Pushan, "It will be good for us to leave the party anyway. It will make it easier for us to take action."

"I know. I just felt like scolding him anyway," Pushan replied with a nod.

"..."

Chu Liang thought that he shouldn't have bothered saying anything.

They walked for roughly another hour. Chu Liang had no idea how far they'd walked, but the Southern-Route Guider waved his hand again at this moment, and the party came to a halt.

The Southern-Route Guider directed everyone to form a circle, enveloping them in the light radiating out from the bone torch.

Then the Southern-Route Guider said, "Southern-Route Fiends, I want the three of you to take your subordinates out to hunt the Sickly Ghosts. I'll give two bones to each team. Once the first bone burns out, you have to return to the group, regardless of whether you have anything to bring back."

The party didn't have many Sickly Ghost bones left—just the remainder of the Southern-Route Guider's stock and the bones from the two Sickly Ghosts that had attacked the party earlier. They had no idea how much longer they had to walk before they could get out of this valley, so they couldn't wait until they ran out of bones before hunting down more Sickly Ghosts.

"Understood!"

The three Southern-Route Fiends obeyed their Guider's command and left with their subordinates. Of course, Chu Liang and his two companions made up one of the three teams.

Their Fiend was at the forefront of their team, leading the way with a bone torch in hand. The three imposters followed behind him, calculating the distance from the main party to determine when they should take action.

Killing this Fiend was the first objective they wanted to achieve after entering the valley. The conditions were so perfect that it was as if the heavens had planned it.

While the three of them were silently waiting for the right time to do the deed, the Fiend walking ahead of them suddenly stopped in his tracks, his figure seemingly frozen in the distance.

"What's the matter?" Pushan asked him.

Time was of the essence; they should be searching for Sickly Ghosts urgently. It was rather strange that the Fiend had come to a sudden halt.

The Fiend turned around, and his icy gaze beneath his hood seemed to sweep over the faces of his three subordinates.

Then he said grimly, "There's a spy among us."

Ah?!

Upon hearing these words, Chu Liang was a bit stunned.

Only one spy?