

M. Slaying 155

Chapter 155: Evil Ksitigarbha

The next morning, Chu Liang woke up early, feeling refreshed as he leisurely finished his morning routine.

After spending a considerable amount of time navigating through the Valley of Bewildering Fog with members of the diabolical sect, the sight of the flowers, plants, and trees of Mount Shu Sect made him feel as though he had returned to the mortal realm. They gave off this friendliness and familiarity.

The swaying Golden Vein Berries above the small flower bed were adorable. Xiaoyu'er, who was busily watering the plants, was cute as well. The Golden-Furred Hou playing around by digging a hole was... well, let's forget about the Big Head.

The more Chu Liang stared at it, the more stupid it looked.

After breakfast, he headed to the Hall of Weapons on the Heaven-Reaching Peak to see Wen Yulong.

After killing the Southern-Route Guider, he obtained a statue with a storage space containing all the treasures of the Guider. However, Chu Liang couldn't open the storage tool, so he had no choice but to seek help from a professional.

Inside the Hall of Weapons, a very energetic young man could be seen.

"Senior Brother Chu, I've been waiting for you for a long time!"

"What good items did you get back from your adventure this time?" Wen Yulong asked eagerly.

By now, Wen Yulong had been conditioned that whenever Chu Liang returned from his adventure, something would be brought back for him to showcase his talents.

Honestly, this was a habit that Chu Liang had developed as well. Although Wen Yulong always managed to surprise him, Chu Liang realized that he would always end up admiring the work done by Wen Yulong.

The extreme flight, the Razor Leaf, the zongzi defense form, the Treasure Leaf Lamp, the Ghost-Slaying Sword of Divine Light, and the Orb Lamp Sword Technique...

If it were other ordinary disciples in charge of crafting weapons, the product would have matched what he had imagined. It would be absolutely impossible for them to achieve the same powerful effects using the same materials.

In other words, they would be mediocre.

"I have nothing for you to refine this time. It's about something else." Chu Liang sat down and took out the ominous-looking statue as he said, "I confiscated this statue which has a built-in storage space, but I can't open it. Can you help me open it?"

"Let me see."

Wen Yulong took the statue and carefully examined it for a while. His expression gradually became more serious.

After a while, he placed the statue on the table and said with a hesitant tone, "Senior Brother Chu, this is an Evil Ksitigarbha."

"Oh?" Chu Liang looked up.

He had heard of a Evil Ksitigarbha.

In Buddhist teachings, there existed the legend of Bodhisattva Ksitigarbha, who made a vow to never attain Buddhahood until hell is empty. However, in this world, the Dark King Sect also held a belief in Ksitigarbha, but they believed in the "evil" Ksitigarbha.

In the legend of the Dark King Sect, Ksitigarbha was an evil deity suppressed by deceitful gods in hell. It was bound by chains infused with 380 million strands of godly power, confined to the depths of the underworld. Thousands of fierce ghosts devoured its flesh daily, yet it remained undying, constantly yearning to return to the mortal realm. Followers of this belief anticipated the day when Ksitigarbha would transform into an evil ghost and return for vengeance.

As for what this Evil Ksitigarbha looked like and what teachings it had, Chu Liang had no idea.

"On the Catalog of the Mortal World's Ten Thousand Treasures, there is a diabolical enchanted tool that belongs to the Dark King Sect, and that enchanted tool is called the True Body of Ksitigarbha. According to legends, that item can summon the actual divine power of the Ksitigarbha from the realm of the dead. I am unaware of the authenticity of that legend," Wen Yulong said. "But the statue that you confiscated should be a counterfeit of the True Body of Ksitigarbha and should harbor some kind of power of guidance."

"I suspect that it can be traced through the legendary Evil Ksitigarbha."

This was somewhat frightening.

Chu Liang leaned forward, "Isn't it dangerous to have this thing in hand?"

"If I'm correct, this thing has the ability to summon a bit of the Ksitigarbha's divine power," Wen Yulong explained. "But the effect shouldn't be too outrageous to the extent that holding it would attract evil spirits. However, I still advise you to dispose of it once the items in the storage are taken out."

"Are you saying that you can take it out?" Chu Liang asked.

"It might be a little troublesome, but it should be possible." Wen Yulong said with a smile. "Leave it with me for a while. When it's about to be opened, I'll notify you to come over, and we can open it together."

Chu Liang knew that he was asked to be present during the statue's opening to prevent any suspicion of Wen Yulong taking valuable items. In the cultivation world, there have been cases of others opening storage artifacts on behalf of someone else, and doing so was considered an industry practice.

Although he wouldn't suspect that Wen Yulong would steal anything, there was no reason for him not to comply with this industry practice.

"Alright. Thanks a lot," he said.

"No need to thank me. This will cost you two hundred sword coins," Wen Yulong said as he held up two fingers.

"What?" Chu Liang frowned and said, "This should be easier than crafting an enchanted tool, right? Does it cost this much as well?"

"Hehe." Wen Yulong said, "The price of such tasks are determined by the value of the enchanted tool. This statue of Evil Ksitigarbha is a major item. I am not sure which diabolical cultivator you acquired this from but that diabolical cultivator must be a high-ranked disciple of the sect. The treasures inside this statue are definitely worth the price. In addition, I am most likely the only one among the disciples of the Hall of Weapons who can open such an item. If not, you would have to find someone at the level of an elder and the cost would be much higher."

"Oh."

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After leaving the Hall of Weapons, Chu Liang started planning. He realized that he needed to think of ways to earn more sword coins. He still needed to save money for the alchemy materials needed for Core Formation. One could never have enough sword coins.

As he left the Hall of Weapons, he saw the entrance of the Hall of Conservation and decided to step inside.

He had just acquired a new manual of divine skills and had been wondering if it was possible to exchange it for some rewards.

Of the manuals of divine skills he acquired, the Evil-Dispelling Spell was rewarded by the White Pagoda and there was no way he could cultivate this. Obviously, he couldn't hand this technique over to the sect. The Mystic Fingers technique was meant for thieves and Chu Liang felt reluctant to disseminate the manual for this technique. If the manual for this technique had been disseminated, it would no longer be considered a secret technique. Furthermore, he couldn't guarantee that this technique would never be recklessly used. And so, he could only submit the art he'd newly acquired—the Great Blood-Refinement Art: Divine Slaughter.

The inside of the Hall of Conservation remained as quiet as ever.

The young man with the square face, named Yuan Zhuo, was still seated there, quietly reading.

Chu Liang stepped forward and greeted, "Senior Brother Squ—uh. Brother Yuan[1]!"

Yuan Zhuo looked up and responded, "Junior Brother Chu Liang."

Despite having met briefly a long time ago, Chu Liang was somewhat surprised that Yuan Zhuo remembered his name.

"I have found another technique of diabolical cultivation. I am wondering if I can exchange it for some rewards," Chu Liang said.

"Let me take a look." Yuan Zhuo reached out his hand.

Chu Liang then handed over the Great Blood-Refinement Art: Divine Slaughter.

Yuan Zhuo scanned it with his divine sense and immediately said, "This is not in our record."

"Great." Chu Liang said with a smile.

Yuan Zhuo paused for a moment before advising, "Junior Brother Chu, forgive me for my word of advice. It's better if you don't cultivate this technique yourself."

"Ah?" Chu Liang asked, "Why?"

If Yuan Zhuo never mentioned this, Chu Liang was planning on practicing this.

"This diabolical cultivation technique emphasizes refining the essence and blood of living beings just before their death to strengthen oneself," Yuan Zhuo explained. "However, this practice goes against the principles of the Great Dao and inevitably accumulates karmic debts."

Yuan Zhuo continued, "In the diabolical sects, cultivators have ways to balance out the bad karma they accumulate. Some even make it their style of practice, seeking to offset the karmic debt as they progress. However, practicing such malevolent arts comes with consequences. The saying 'evil

begets evil' reflects the inevitable karmic debt. Even if they deceive themselves, they cannot deceive the Dao of Heaven. Attempting to offset the debt through techniques typically results in being trapped in the cycle of reincarnation. That's just the nature of it."

With this explanation, Chu Liang understood.

A classic example would be the Crimson Executioner. This rule likely had something to do with karmic debt, particularly concerning individuals whose qi was suffused with blood. When the Crimson Executioner encountered such people, it would become extremely agitated.

In the past, he did take the lives of several beings, but his intent was to rid the world of demons and evil. This action did not increase his karmic debt; rather, it accumulated merit.

However, had he killed for the purpose of extracting their essence and blood, there would have been karmic consequences.

Initially, Chu Liang thought he could hone his divine skills while slaying demons and monsters. However, reflecting on the current situation, he realized he had been too naive back then.

"If you were solely cultivating this particular technique, you wouldn't have to accumulate excessive negative karma. However, a cultivator should always exercise caution on their path. It's best to avoid unnecessary karmic debt. Otherwise, when you reach the Dao Attainment Realm in the future, this mistake may become a significant hurdle," Yuan Zhuo advised. "Furthermore, if you're interested in blood-refining divine skills, the Hall of Conservation can provide you with alternative options."

"The Hall of Conservation has such divine skills?" Chu Liang's eyes sparkled.

"Of course," Yuan Zhuo said. "This type of divine skill shouldn't be considered rare, but very few people practice it because cultivators have limited energy. They wouldn't be able to dedicate significant spiritual energy to enhancing their bodies. Typically, it's only after reaching the sixth realm that there's enough surplus energy to refine oneself."

Upon hearing this, Chu Liang understood one thing.

Compared to the disciples of Mount Shu at the Spiritual Awareness Realm, he had mastered numerous divine skills. In fact, even the execution of his Talismanic Sword Seal surpassed the average level.

He felt like he had learned so little because he hadn't devoted most of his energy to improving his cultivation.

The peaceful days he enjoyed were made possible by having the Large-Headed Doll handle the heavy toil for him.

Typically, a cultivator at this stage would be preoccupied with refining their cultivation skills and striving for a breakthrough into the Golden Core Realm. After attaining the Golden Core Realm, their focus would shift to breaking through into the Realm of the Five Elements. Each step of the journey primarily revolves around cultivation.

When it came to complex divine skills and techniques, individuals typically had to temporarily set aside refining their cultivation skills and focus on learning the techniques.

However, Chu Liang never had to worry about cultivation. He had plenty of time and energy to devote to improving his enchanted tools and divine skills.

"If you want, you can use the divine skills manual you submitted this time for another technique," Yuan Zhuo said as he stood up and walked towards the back.

After a while, he came back with a jade slip.

"It may take a bit more time to advance in the learning of this Blood-Refinement Technique: Divine Light, but it is a safer and more reliable cultivation method. This is the right way to make progress in your cultivation," Yuan Zhuo instructed.

Chu Liang accepted it and earnestly expressed his gratitude, "Senior Brother Yuan, thank you for your teaching."

Yuan Zhuo remained expressionless, saying, "It's not really teaching. I am just sharing some experiences."

As Chu Liang pondered Yuan Zhuo's words, he realized that Senior Brother Yuan had spoken with a sense of fairness and a commitment to the right path. He couldn't possibly be just an ordinary attendant.

Unconsciously, a hint of admiration appeared in Chu Liang's eyes.

As they were about to bid farewell, Yuan Zhuo suddenly raised his hand and said, "Wait! Your reward isn't sufficient for the value of this Blood-Refinement Technique: Divine Light. You need to offer more to cover the difference."

"Ah?" Chu Liang widened his eyes, surprised by the fact that he had to pay to make up the difference. He quickly asked, "How much extra do I need to pay?"

Yuan Zhuo's gaze flickered as he calculated, then replied, "Seventy sword coins."

"Hmm..."

Chu Liang pouted.

The light in his eyes disappeared.