

M. Slaying 311

Chapter 311: I'll Take on the Task Too

Chu Liang and Jiang Yuebai walked along the street to the station of the City Supervisory Division in Shaonan Town, only to find that the other two people in their group were missing. As they turned around, they saw Xu Ziyang and Ling Ao trailing far behind.

"Senior Brother Xu, Senior Brother Ling, why are you walking so slowly?" Chu Liang said with a smile.

The two behind them were silent for a moment, then Ling Ao spoke up, "Tired from walking."

What?

If you're going to lie, at least make it convincing. This street is so short that the old man selling sugar paintings could push his cart from one end to the other and back again in no time, Chu Liang thought to himself.

Without further discussion, an officer from the City Supervisory Division quickly came out from the office, greeting them with a smile, "Are you young heroes from the Mount Shu Sect? I am Chen He, the officer of the City Supervisory Division in Shaonan Town."

"Greetings, Officer Chen," Jiang Yuebai said with a slight bow.

Since she was the head disciple, she was still the representative and leader when all four of them were outside.

"Please come in, I will explain the strange case in detail," Chen He said as he gestured politely.

On the way, he roughly explained the situation of the station here in Shaonan Town.

Despite hiring heroes from the nine provinces, the Imperial Supervisory Bureau still faced a manpower shortage. In general, major cities had a City Supervisory Division led by a city supervisor, with surrounding smaller towns having offices managed by deputy officers dispatched from this division.

Chu Liang and the others were familiar with Du Ce, the city supervisor from Misty Waters City, and Chen He, the deputy officer under his jurisdiction. So, when something happened, they sought help from Mount Shu again.

Usually, villages and towns like this wouldn't have a station.

However, Shaonan Town, located next to the Osmanthus River, was busier and wealthier than most small towns because it was a major hub for water transportation. And so, a station was set up here.

Chen He and his brother Chen Luo were the only staff at this station, and both of them were merely at the third realm of cultivation.

After leading them inside and taking their seats, Chen He sighed with relief and said, "Now that you're here, I can finally relax. The past two days have been incredibly stressful."

"Officer Chen, don't worry. Tell us about the strange case first," Jiang Yuebai reassured him.

Chen He didn't waste any time and got right to the point, "Recently, it was the Flower Hairpin Festival in Shaonan Town..."

This beloved festival, a longstanding tradition in Shaonan Town, was celebrated every year in mid-September.

The Osmanthus River was named for the moon osmanthus flowers that adorned its banks, renowned for being more beautiful and fragrant than any other types of osmanthus.

Every year, as the moon osmanthus flowers by the river burst into full bloom, the city's residents would gather by the riverside on clear nights, reveling in the enchanting beauty and sweet fragrance of the flowers.

During this time, people would partake in the ritual of exchanging flowers. Elders would pin flowers on juniors to symbolize hope and blessings, while juniors would pin flowers on elders to show respect and admiration. Businesses also participated in this tradition by pinning flowers on customers, expressing welcome and gratitude.

The most anticipated event was the flower exchange between young men and women. If a young man fancied a young woman, he would ask to pin a flower on her. If she wasn't interested, she would politely refuse and avoid him.

Of course, some brave young women would take the initiative to pin flowers on young men.

However, this flower exchange didn't imply anything serious. It was just a way for people to show mutual affection and spend some time together, getting to know each other—a charming tradition for meeting someone special.

"Even accepting the flower doesn't mean anything," Chen He emphasized. "Shaonan Town is not a place with loose morals."

Every year, some outsiders would mistake this as an opportunity for romantic encounters, trying to take advantage of the flower-hairpinned girls, only to face severe consequences.

But on the opening day of the Flower Hairpin Festival, something unusual happened.

There were three eerie incidents where pairs of young men and women encountered a mesmerizing beauty dressed in white during the flower exchange. Captivated by her, the young men decided to pin flowers on her hair instead. Soon after, they met a tragic and gruesome death.

Two of them met unnatural deaths and only one survived because he did not approach the white-clad beauty.

"Hold on..." Chu Liang picked up on the crucial detail. "Was the third man spared because he didn't abandon the person he chose in the beginning?"

"Not exactly," Chen He clarified. "Last night, just as he was about to approach the ghost, my brother intervened. We were patrolling by the river when my brother spotted the ghost and engaged her in a brief fight, ultimately saving the third victim."

Jiang Yuebai looked around and asked, "By the way, where is your brother now?"

"He's bedridden now," Chen He said.

Oh.

No wonder they asked for help.

...

The news of the haunting over the past two days couldn't be kept secret, and the number of people visiting the river had drastically decreased. No matter how ceremonious the Flower Hairpin Festival was, it couldn't compare to the importance of life.

There were still a few people wandering around, perhaps those who hadn't heard the news, but upon seeing the empty streets, they quickly went home.

Xu Ziyang sat upright on a rooftop by the river, carefully scanning the surroundings.

Across the river, hidden in the darkness of a dense treetop, Ling Ao, dressed in black, kept watch.

The female ghost would only appear when a man was about to pin a flower on a woman, suggesting she might have a lingering grudge about such situations. If she were an ordinary evil entity, her ability to defeat a third-realm cultivator would indicate considerable power, and she wouldn't behave in such a repetitive and predictable manner.

But based on the description, the female ghost should be a vengeful spirit, which meant that things were different.

Vengeful spirits, no matter how powerful, were driven by their lingering grudges. Whenever they witnessed a scene that reminded them of their grievances from life, they would appear.

But at that moment, with so few people on the streets, the female ghost couldn't possibly appear.

As evening fell, they devised a plan: two of them would disguise themselves as a young couple, romantically pinning flowers, in a bold attempt to lure out the vengeful spirit.

There was no debate about who would play the girl; there was only one female member on the team.

Fairy Jiang was the perfect choice.

As for the boy, there were three candidates. Chu Liang laughed and said, "Why not let the head disciple choose one of us to be her partner?"

Jiang Yuebai pouted and said, "Choose what? The boy luring the vengeful spirit will be in the most danger. Naturally, it should be you, the clever one who's always scheming."

Junior Officer Chen He, who had been standing quietly in the hall, finally spoke up, albeit sounding hesitant, "If that's how it is, as the junior officer of Shaonan Town, I can't just stand by. If it's truly dangerous, I'll take on the task..."

"That won't be necessary," Chu Liang said, standing up abruptly. "We disciples of Mount Shu have always taken it upon ourselves to eliminate demons and defend the way. How can we back down at such a moment? Officer Chen, just wait for our good news with peace of mind!"

Xu Ziyang and Ling Ao had no intention of competing with Chu Liang. Xu Ziyang was wholly dedicated to restoring the glory of Mount Shu, while Ling Ao was fixated on surpassing the three geniuses stronger than him one day...

Thus, they each found their posts and waited.

A gust of night wind blew past.

A small boat sailed on the river, with a handsome young man in brocade standing at the bow. It was Chu Liang. He gazed quietly ahead, where Jiang Yuebai was waiting for him on the shore.

Everything was proceeding in an orderly manner according to the plan.

But before the boat could reach the shore, Xu Ziyang's gaze suddenly shifted to the distance, and his eyes shone with a sharp intensity!

There's demonic qi!

Although their goal was to catch the female ghost, they couldn't ignore the presence of demons. The second he sensed the demonic qi in the wind, Xu Ziyang flew up several zhang into the sky against the flow of the wind.

The Force Slayer was instantly drawn!

As the Eldest Senior Brother of Jade Sword Peak, he had the most experience in the martial world among the four of them and knew this was different from fighting in an arena on Mount Shu.

In battles with evil entities, every moment could be a life-and-death struggle. There was no room for hesitation!

Swoosh—

The sword light surged forth, piercing towards the source of the demonic qi.

But the demonic entity fled swiftly, disappearing into the nearby osmanthus trees and seemingly blending in. Following the residual stream of qi, Xu Ziyang's sharp eyes locked onto it, and he pursued relentlessly.

"Evil thing, don't you dare leave!"

Chapter 312: The Young Madam of the Shen Family

Whoosh.

A fragrant breeze wafted out as the barely visible, floating white figure rushed into the Moon Osmanthus Woods at lightning speed.

Xu Ziyang gave chase with sword qi radiating from his hand. He moved with an astonishingly fierce momentum!

Xu Ziyang swung his sword down on the white figure, but the white figure turned into osmanthus flowers and showered down from the sky like rain. The next time the white figure appeared, it was

on an osmanthus tree several dozen zhang away. This demonic entity had a demonic spell that transformed osmanthus flowers into its clones, and it had cast that spell very swiftly!

Nevertheless, Xu Ziyang was no ordinary person. He immediately threw his sword, Force Slayer, into the air. It transformed into a myriad of sword lights and flooded the woods, forcing the white figure out from amidst the osmanthus trees.

Once the demonic entity left the woods, it could no longer use the transformation spell from before, so it fled into the distance. Xu Ziyang left the woods too, in close pursuit of the white figure. In a flash, they left Shaonan Town and entered the outskirts of the town.

There was a massive manor up ahead! It had high walls, spacious courtyards, pavilions, and buildings—all of which had been built using the mountain as the foundation. The manor had probably looked grand in its heyday, but it was all in ruins now, with only broken walls and crumbling structures remaining.

For some reason, just the sight of this manor gave off a sinister aura.

The entrance gates of the manor still had half its signboard remaining. Upon closer inspection, it read "Shen."

The white figure paused briefly outside the manor, seemingly hesitant to enter. Under the moonlight, Xu Ziyang could faintly make out that the white figure was indeed a woman dressed in white.

Hearing the sound of rushing wind behind her, the woman dared not stay put there and quickly fled into the manor.

Xu Ziyang dived in after her.

Upon entering the manor, the air around him suddenly felt different. The gentle night breeze turned into a chilling cold, and the wails of ghosts rang faintly throughout the manor. This was likely a ghost lair.

Shaonan Town was such a prosperous place. It was surprising that evil spirits were gathering in a place so near the town.

With his sword in hand, Xu Ziyang scanned the dark ruins of the manor at lightning speed.

He was uncertain of the situation he was in. The surging evil yin qi indicated the evil creature that's the source of all that yin qi had to be extremely powerful.

Xu Ziyang had initially thought was just an ordinary case, but it now seemed much more complicated.

He turned around, intending to retreat for now.

...

Meanwhile, Chu Liang was still on the small boat on the river, and he had not noticed that Xu Ziyang was gone. His divine sense had only enveloped an area of several dozen zhang around him, so he was only vigilant to changes within that area.

The small boat slowly approached Jiang Yuebai standing on the shore. Her long dress and hair fluttered gently in the breeze as the radiance of thousands of stars shone down on her.

Chu Liang couldn't help but wonder, If the vengeful spirit were to appear, what form could it take to outshine Senior Sister Jiang?

Moments later, the boat reached the shore.

Just as they had planned, Chu Liang jumped ashore and walked over to Jiang Yuebai.

He asked her softly, "Miss, would you care to join me for a boat ride?"

The corners of Jiang Yuebai's lips rose slightly, forming a small smile. She didn't say a word; she just slowly tilted her head a little.

The silver moonlight cast down on her slender neck, highlighting its graceful outline. It was so smooth that it looked like her neck had been sculpted from white jade.

Chu Liang was so entranced by the sight that a moment passed by before he finally remembered to raise his hand and break off a sprig of flowers.

He was about to place it in Jiang Yuebai's hair and tuck it behind her ear. However, a chilly wind suddenly blew past them.

Jiang Yuebai's gaze turned cold. She whispered, "It's here."

Chu Liang looked up and saw an elegant and beautiful figure standing under a moon osmanthus tree in the distance, slowly beckoning to him.

Hmm...

"She is indeed very beautiful. It's no wonder that she was able to enchant so many people. Still, she's nowhere near as beautiful as Senior Sister Jiang," Chu Liang muttered to himself.

"Hurry after her. Don't let her get away," Jiang Yuebai urged.

"Ah." Chu Liang blinked. "I was thinking that. How did I accidentally say it out loud?"

Jiang Yuebai rolled her eyes at him, feeling happy and amused at the same time.

Chu Liang then pretended to be enticed by the woman in white and walked toward her.

As he got closer, he saw the female ghost's bleak, icy expression. She appeared to be around twenty years old, and she was shrouded in a heavy cloud of yin qi.

It was obvious at a glance that she wasn't a normal young woman. If the ghost's victims had been lucid, it would have been very easy for them to see that there was something off about her. That meant the men had likely been under effects of a spell of sorts, as opposed to being blinded by lust.

Seeing Chu Liang approach, the ghost stared straight at him.

Chu Liang asked her, "Miss, are you traveling alone? May I accompany you?"

Just like Jiang Yuebai had done earlier, the woman in white tilted her head slightly too.

Chu Liang raised the sprig of flowers and brought it toward the ghost's head. Right then, the sprig turned into half a golden brick.

It had been quite a while since Chu Liang had last hit someone with a brick. He had a slight itch he needed to scratch. The last person he'd hit with a brick had been Xu Ziyang.

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Xu Ziyang looked cautiously at his surroundings.

He was sure he'd just exited the manor's courtyard. Yet, right after he took one step of the entrance gates, a bustling scene appeared before him.

This was a lively front courtyard of a manor. It looked identical to the courtyard he'd left just a moment ago, but the sun was shining brightly now, and a group of people were busy decorating the manor with red lanterns and banners.

The steward of the household was a man with a mustache in the shape of 八, and he was currently directing the servants.

He said, "Let's hurry and get everything set up. I'll check the inside and outside of the manor for any mistakes. The news of our young master's wedding has spread throughout Shaonan Town. It has to be grand and impressive!"

As the servants worked, they gave cheerful replies.

"Got it!"

"Our young master is finally getting married. We're all happy about it too, so we'll definitely do our best to make this a grand wedding!"

"Yes, the young master always treats us so well. And our young master has helped many poor people both inside and outside the town. He's wealthy and virtuous; he deserves a good wife."

Xu Ziyang carefully observed the people around him as they talked and smiled. They seemed so real. If this was an illusory technique, then it had to be at least on the same level as Shadow of Radiance.

Just like Chu Liang was doing with the female ghost, Xu Ziyang intended to do something to break this illusion. He was going to use his strongest sword technique.

Xu Ziyang formed a hand seal. He was about to unleash the Heavenly Sword Seal!

"Don't do that!" a voice cried out with alarm. "Doing that will wake it up!"

Xu Ziyang immediately paused the execution of the Heavenly Sword Seal and turned to look at the person who had spoken.

It turned out to be a young woman dressed in yellow. She seemed to be around seventeen or eighteen years old and had light freckles on her beautiful face.

Earlier, she had seemed no different from the other people in the courtyard. Xu Ziyang had thought she was a servant girl and just a part of the illusion. However, now that she was conversing with him, it was clear that his assumption had been wrong.

"What did you say?" Xu Ziyang asked.

He focused his qi on the young woman, ready to strike with his giant sword at any moment.

"Don't do that. There's an evil spirit in the depths of the courtyard. If you do that, you'll wake it up. Once it's out, everyone will suffer!" the girl said.

"Then, who are you?"

"I am the young madam of the Shen Family.[1]"

...

Boom!

Chu Liang's brick was anything but ordinary.

The woman in white had almost no time at all to react before Chu Liang smashed the brick into the back of her head.

She let out a blood-curdling scream. "AAAAAAHHHHHH!!!"

The woman clutched the back of her head with her hands. Black qi burst out of the head wound, and another face showed itself there behind her hair!

When the black qi stopped blasting out of her head, cracks appeared on that second face. It seemed like Chu Liang had shattered it.

This was the power of the Demon-Revealing Brick! He just needed to smash the woman's head once to get instant results as to whether she was a ghost!

After getting hit by the brick, the female ghost's true form was revealed, but she wasn't severely harmed. Instead, she became more ferocious.

Clutching the back of her head, she viciously opened her mouth towards Chu Liang and spat out a ball of red light!

However, Chu Liang had already mastered the close-combat Brick Combat Technique to the point of perfection. Using the Turbulent Stream Movement Art, he swiftly moved behind the ghost... only to quickly realize his mistake. He'd forgotten that the ghost had actual eyes on the back of her head.

As Chu Liang's right hand swung the brick down toward the ghost's head, the ghost's second face spat out another ball of red light. The red light instantly wrapped around Chu Liang's wrist.

That was when Chu Liang could finally have a good look at what the red light was. It turned out to be a blood-red tongue—the ghost's tongue!

The other ball of red light turned around in midair and threw itself toward Chu Liang!

The ghost had two tongues, but Chu Liang had two hands too. He formed a sword seal with his left hand, summoning his Dustless Sword!

Whoosh.

At such a close distance, the Dustless Sword pierced through the ghost without any delay!

The ghost let out another blood-curdling scream. "AAAAAAHHHHHH!!!"

Another bloody hole had appeared in her body, which had cracked like shattered porcelain. Yet, the ghost was still alive!

The ghost was certainly powerful; it was no wonder that the Shaonan Town's City Supervisory Division hadn't been able to deal with her.

The force of the flying sword sent the heavily injured ghost flying backward several zhang. Then while still in midair, she suddenly twisted! Her neck didn't move, but the rest of her body turned, and her back became her chest. Then she turned into a beam of white light, intending to flee!

This was quite surprising. Who knew that there would be an advantage like that with having two faces?

Nevertheless, just as she began to flee, a black-robed figure blocked off her escape route! Chu Liang didn't even need to give chase!

Ling Ao had dashed over from a distance, swiftly outflanking the ghost! He moved so quickly that he looked like a streak of black lightning under the moonlight!

The ghost's scarlet eyes locked onto Ling Ao's radiant eyes, which were filled with golden flames, and there was a sudden flash of white!

From Ling Ao's perspective, the ghost's grotesque face had transformed into one of exquisite beauty, and her figure had become incredibly alluring. She was no longer a sinister and terrifying ghost but a delicate and frail beauty.

The beauty was in a panic from being chased down and looked extremely pitiful.

She called out to Ling Ao in a weak and delicate voice, "Young hero, save me—"

Ling Ao's gaze flickered as he looked at this frail beauty.

His right hand immediately ignited with a burst of golden flames, and he thrust it forward fiercely. He punched the ghost in the face!

Wham.

Ling Ao's punch flattened the ghost's porcelain-like front face!

The ghost fell to the ground, with both faces letting out screams of agony. Ling Ao's punch didn't just leave the ghost's front face in a recessed state; it had caused her rear face to protrude!

The powerful attacks that Chu Liang and Ling Ao had dealt the ghost should have been enough to kill a century-old vengeful spirit. However, this ghost still hadn't disappeared, which was quite strange. Regardless, this made things convenient for Chu Liang.

He raised the Dustless Sword and went after the ghost, aiming to slay it first! His swordlight swiftly descended toward her!

Chu Liang was in a great hurry. He couldn't let anyone else take the kill!

"Don't kill me!" the ghost wailed.

Despite that, the swordlight didn't slow down and was about to cut the ghost down!

"I'll take you to find treasure!" the ghost pleaded loudly.

The swordlight immediately vanished.

However, the icy tip of the sword's blade was still pointed at the ghost.

Chu Liang looked down at her. "Oh? Do tell me in detail."

Seeing that she now had a chance of surviving, the ghost hurriedly said, "Don't kill me. I'll tell you everything!"

Jiang Yuebai quickly stepped forward and raised her hand, placing a talisman on the ghost's front face. Thinking it wasn't safe enough, she placed another one on the ghost's rear face. This way, the ghost could no longer behave malevolently.

Then Jiang Yuebai asked, "Where did you come from? Why are you killing people here? And what about the treasure you mentioned? Explain everything clearly."

The three young cultivators surrounded the ghost. With their six eyes staring at her, the ghost didn't bother making any futile attempts to escape. She just sat down cross-legged, seemingly resigned to her fate.

The ghost then began telling them her story.

"I was originally the young madam of the Shen Family Residence just outside Shaonan Town..."

Chapter 313: The Ghost Domain

"Over a decade ago, the Shen Family was one of the wealthiest in Shaonan Town. They spared no expense in constructing this Shen Family Residence just outside the town," the woman in yellow explained to Xu Ziyang.

"There was a precious bottle that had been passed down through our family for generations. One day, I accidentally knocked it over, releasing a terrifying evil spirit!"

With a look of horror, she said, "As soon as the evil spirit emerged, it turned the entire Shen Family Residence into a ghost domain. Everyone in the family became vengeful spirits, trapped here forever."

"Because I was closest to it, I gained more power and can still retain my consciousness. But they..." she said as she pointed to the servants, "...keep repeating the same actions from that fateful day, eternally bound to the Shen Family Residence."

"Evil spirit..." Xu Ziyang said, scanning the courtyard. "If this happened over a decade ago, the City Supervisory Division would have noticed by now. Even if they couldn't handle it, they would have reported it to the Imperial Supervisory Bureau. There's no reason it should still be like this."

"They probably visited before..." the yellow-clad woman said, her voice trembling as she seemed to recall a terrifying scene.

"At that time, a powerful force descended and battled the evil spirit from the bottle. The entire Shen Family Residence was on the verge of collapse, and our souls were nearly shattered. In the end, the force failed and all their efforts were in vain, but they managed to place a restriction around the garden, preventing anything inside from leaving and anyone outside from entering."

Even the Imperial Supervisory Bureau had only managed to seal this evil spirit?

Xu Ziyang frowned, puzzled, as he had encountered no obstacles when he entered.

The woman in yellow continued, "But a few days ago, it seemed someone broke the restriction outside and entered this ghost domain. He stole something very important from the evil spirit. If the evil spirit awakens and finds out, it will surely be furious."

Is that so... Xu Ziyang pondered slightly.

The woman in yellow continued, "So don't wake it up. I'll help you get out of here. Since the restriction is broken, some vengeful spirits have escaped through the damaged areas. As you are a living person, it should be easier for you to leave. Whatever you do, don't go near the evil spirit! Otherwise, you will be trapped here forever!

...

The ghost with a cracked face bowed her head and recounted softly, "The Shen Family was a wealthy household in Shaonan Town. It's said that they were a consort family from the previous dynasty. When the dynasty fell, someone escaped from the palace and brought many valuable items with them when they sought refuge here."

Chu Liang and the other two listened quietly.

"Among those items was a very mysterious precious bottle from ancient times. When I married into the Shen Family, I was curious about it and accidentally knocked over that bottle. A spirit appeared from the bottle, claiming it could grant me any wish..." the female ghost said.

"I wished to become more beautiful, and it granted my wish.

"Later, other members of the Shen Family heard about this and came to make their own wishes," she spoke angrily. "But a young maid, who was in a relationship with someone outside the residence, leaked this information.

"That person then sold the information to court officials. The imperial court's men immediately stormed the Shen Family, aiming to eliminate any remnants of the previous dynasty and seize all treasures. With no cultivators in the Shen Family, the members of the Shen Family were swiftly massacred.

"Although the precious bottle had powerful magical abilities, it could only grant wishes. Before he died, my husband wished upon the bottle for everything to return to how it was.

"Who knew..."

"The bottle transformed the Shen Family Residence into a ghost domain, and those of us who had just died became spirits, bound to the Shen Family Residence, endlessly repeating the past. It's more of an eternal curse than a rebirth!

The woman in white said, "The imperial court couldn't take the precious bottle, so they set up a restriction to prevent anything inside from leaving. A few days ago, the restriction was broken, and I found a damaged spot to escape through. I initially hoped to find someone to rescue us, but once outside, my mind often became clouded, driven by lingering grudges to kill..."

"But I only killed those who deserved it!" Her tone suddenly turned fierce. "If those men hadn't been driven by their lust, how could I have lured them?"

"Anyway, don't kill me. I'll take you to the precious bottle. It can grant any wish you desire!" The woman in yellow spoke with a voice full of temptation.

"Is that so..." Chu Liang said with a nod. "Let's store this ghost first and report to our seniors at Mount Shu for further decisions. If the court couldn't handle this treasure, we probably can't take it either."

As for the wish-granting claim, he only believed half of it. After all, one could never fully trust a ghost's words.

"Yes," Jiang Yuebai replied, taking out an enchanted tool. With a swift motion, she raised her hand and captured the vengeful spirit, planning to deal with it later.

"Eh?" With everything settled, Chu Liang looked around and wondered, "Where's Senior Brother Xu?"

Xu Ziyang and Ling Ao were supposed to handle the ambush from afar. The vengeful spirit had been dealt with effortlessly, but Xu Ziyang was still nowhere to be seen.

Even as Chu Liang expanded the reach of his divine sense and scanned the surroundings, there was no sight of Xu Ziyang.

"Maybe he went back for something?" Ling Ao said, "Let's check the station."

The three of them returned to the City Supervisory Division station.

Officer Chen He had been in the office all along and said that he hadn't seen Xu Ziyang return.

"That's strange. He left without saying a word. Is he in danger?" Chu Liang asked.

"Senior Brother Xu is very powerful; he shouldn't let himself fall into danger so easily..." Jiang Yuebai said.

A fifth-realm cultivator in one of the sects within the Divine Nine and Terrestrial Ten would indeed be considered formidable in the world of immortal cultivators. They would rarely encounter opponents as powerful as themselves.

"But there is something eerie about Shaonan Town," Chu Liang pondered. "We should go out and look for him, starting from the riverbank and searching outward."

Ling Ao said, "Instead of searching aimlessly, it will be much faster using the immortal art, Searching the Heavens and Earth."

Chen He replied, "But that's not something that can be done quickly. Our chief officer in Misty Waters City, Du Ce, can do it, but it will take some time for him to get here."

At that moment, Jiang Yuebai smiled and said, "I can do it."

...

Whew—

The three returned to the riverside building where Xu Ziyang had previously hidden. There were indeed signs of a struggle.

Jiang Yuebai formed hand seals, her eyes shining brightly. In an instant, a powerful divine intent swept across the entire Shaonan Town.

Her Searching the Heavens and Earth technique might not literally search throughout the heavens and earth, but it was powerful enough to scan and detect everything within the small town.

In her eyes, the whole world turned blue and white, with only the aura of Xu Ziyang, which was turned red by her divine intent, revealing a faint path.

"This way!"

Jiang Yuebai immediately led the way, flying ahead, with Chu Liang and Ling Ao following closely behind.

They passed through the Moon Osmanthus Woods and continued beyond Shaonan Town, eventually spotting an abandoned garden ahead.

By now, the sky was gradually turning brighter, allowing them to see a "Shen" character on the signboard.

The three of them paused briefly outside, observing the surroundings.

Chu Liang frowned and asked, "Could this be the Shen Family that the ghost mentioned?"

Jiang Yuebai nodded and said, "This is the only garden near Shaonan Town, so it must be the Shen Family Residence. However, I cannot probe further inside the residence with my divine skills. I can only sense that Senior Brother Xu's aura entered through this location."

"Then let's go in and take a look," Ling Ao suggested.

Chu Liang shared the same thought. Despite the uncertainty of the situation, they were strong enough, so there was no need for excessive caution.

Just as the three were about to proceed, an old watchman emerged from the side.

"You can't go in," the watchman warned in a raspy old voice, "and even if you try, you won't succeed."

"Oh?" Chu Liang turned and asked, "Why do you say that, old man?"

"This is the abandoned Shen Family Residence..." the watchman said. "The Shen Family, remnants of the previous dynasty, conspired with demonic forces to rebel against the imperial family. When their plot was discovered, they were all executed by order of the imperial court."

"The entire family became vengeful spirits, haunting this place. Experts from the Imperial Supervisory Bureau set up a restriction to prevent the spirits from leaving and anyone from entering. If you approach carelessly, you might get injured by the restriction."

As he was warning them, before they could even finish their conversation, they suddenly heard a swoosh.

It turned out to be a flying sword coming from the direction of Shaonan Town, heading straight into the abandoned Shen Family Residence without any obstruction.

Chu Liang and the others turned to see this before they looked back at the old man.

The watchman was momentarily stunned, then scratched his head, "Huh—what's going on here?"

Chapter 314: With You Here, I Feel Better

Xu Ziyang followed the woman in yellow through a dimly lit corridor, the glow of red candles casting flickering shadows. Faint joyous music played in the background, but in this gloomy and eerie setting, the hoarse and low tones sounded more like mourning music than a celebration.

"The path ahead will be dangerous," the woman in yellow turned back and warned.

"Okay," Xu Ziyang said with a gentle nod. A trace of exhaustion and gloominess occasionally flashed in his eyes.

After passing through a moon gate, the chilling wind intensified around them. They had taken only a few steps when a sudden coughing sound broke the silence.

"Cough, cough..." An elderly woman, moving with a staggering gait, was tending to the flowers and plants in the courtyard. When she noticed someone enter, she asked, "Who is it?"

"Granny Lin," the woman in yellow explained, "I'm here with a friend, just passing by."

"Oh..." The old woman looked up at Xu Ziyang with a faint smile. "Where did you come from, young man?"

"Mount Shu," replied Xu Ziyang.

Immediately after he spoke, he leaped into the air! In the next instant, thick black vines surged from under his feet, bursting through the ground and swiftly morphing into arms with sharp claws, all reaching out to seize Xu Ziyang!

The seemingly harmless old woman had actually launched a sneak attack while asking questions, revealing her incredibly sinister nature!

Swordlight swirled around Xu Ziyang, instantly severing the black claws. When he glanced back at the old woman, her left arm had vanished!

"I didn't catch you with one hand?" Even though the old woman had lost an arm, she still sneered as she spoke and then shook her remaining arm.

With a crack, her right arm also shook off and fell to the ground.

Suddenly, black hands emerged from the ground in layers, resembling the branches of a tree.

Seeing the increasing number of limbs, Xu Ziyang wasted no time. He was surrounded by golden light as his geng metal qi filled his body, transforming him into a vajra warrior.

This was the fifth-realm Metallic Body!

Swish—

As a streak of golden light flashed by, Xu Ziyang lifted his fingers and formed a finger seal, invoking the art of thunder as he pressed the seal against the old woman's forehead.

Boom!

A black hole formed above the old woman's head. Her body began to crack into pieces with smoke swirling around. In an instant, she disintegrated into countless specks that dissolved into the world around her.

The woman in yellow looked on with a flicker of fear in her eyes. Perhaps witnessing Xu Ziyang swiftly and decisively kill the ghost made her realize that she too could end up in a similar fate as that old woman.

In fact, if she hadn't warned Xu Ziyang not to alert the evil spirit, Xu Ziyang would have used a more powerful sword technique to eliminate the old woman even more quickly.

As the black arms covering the ground disappeared, leaving freshly turned black soil behind, she sighed and explained, "Granny Lin was the residence butler's mother, responsible for tending to the plants in the residence. She was always a kind and gentle old lady. But now, she's met such a tragic end."

"It doesn't matter," Xu Ziyang said with indifference, "I have assisted her in finding peace in the cycle of reincarnation."

The woman in yellow was stunned by Xu Ziyang's resolute tone that conveyed the message, "I killed her for her own good."

After a brief pause, she said, "Let's continue walking."

They passed through the garden and arrived at a place with a pond and rockery. They were just about to circle around the rockery.

The woman in yellow suddenly said, "Be careful of this pond!"

As soon as she spoke, a giant fish with black spots leapt out of the pond, its mouth gaping wide like a blood-filled basin, emitting a deep roar.

"Roar—"

In terms of pure yin energy, it was even stronger than the old woman from earlier.

But this time, Xu Ziyang acted with even greater decisiveness. With a swift horizontal slash of his sword Force Slayer, his figure blurred as the three-zhang sword light cleaved the black fish cleanly in half.

Boom—

As the black fish disintegrated in mid-air, the woman in yellow remained composed. She led him forward as she explained, "This fat black fish was originally a pond ornament and it has always

been quite clever. It used to play dead to scare the family. Everyone in the family loved this fish... but it transformed into this monstrous form."

Along the way, they dealt with two or three more ghosts, each being stronger than the last, but it made little difference. In front of Xu Ziyang, getting rid of them didn't pose much of a challenge.

After spending some time, the woman in yellow finally led him to a section of the courtyard wall, where there was a gap in the wall.

"You can get out through this gap," the woman in yellow said, "Once you're out, run far away and don't come back."

Xu Ziyang looked at the dark gap, which indeed seemed to lead to another world. He appeared ready to move, but before doing so, he turned back and asked, "Did you see a demonic creature that barged into this place before I did?"

...

"The area that my divine sense can scan inside is limited, so we must be careful," Jiang Yuebai calmly reminded.

As the three stepped into the abandoned Shen Family Residence, they immediately felt ghastly winds and became alert.

After crossing the empty front courtyard, they were startled by shouts and the sounds of fighting coming from the other side of the wall!

Since they weren't sure if it was Xu Ziyang or the person who had flown in earlier with the sword, Chu Liang, being the closest, was the first to draw his Dustless Sword and swiftly fly to the top of the wall.

As he peered over the other side of the wall, he saw a green-clad cultivator fighting with a ghost who was dressed as a maid. The ghost maid looked terrifying with her long, messy hair and hollow, bleeding eyes. Her ten blood-red claws were ready to strike the cultivator in green, desperate to land a fatal blow.

It was surprising to see the green-clad cultivator, who was at the third realm of cultivation, struggling against this relatively weak vengeful spirit. He seemed to be running out of energy and soon fell into a disadvantage.

As Chu Liang watched, the ghost's dark hair suddenly came alive. Thousands of strands sprang up, swiftly entangling the cultivator's limbs and binding him tightly!

However, her actions clearly indicated she had no intention of killing the cultivator. Instead, she seemed determined to take him away somewhere.

At this moment, Chu Liang stopped observing and flew out with his sword.

Swish—

With the activation of his two ultimate-tier Golden Cores, foundational qi surged into the Dustless Sword, transforming into powerful sword qi!

The ghost didn't even have time to see Chu Liang clearly before being killed with a single sword strike!

Boom.

After the ghost disintegrated, the cultivator collapsed to the ground, breathing heavily and looking visibly weak.

"Young hero, thank you for saving my life..." he said, lying on the ground but still mindful enough to express his gratitude.

"No need for formalities." Chu Liang helped him up, preparing to ask why he had barged in.

But then, the green-clad cultivator noticed Jiang Yuebai and Ling Ao approaching and suddenly asked, "Are you Fairy Jiang from Mount Shu?"

"Yes, I am." Jiang Yuebai nodded lightly.

"I've seen you in Jiangnan..." the man said with a smile. He looked up and continued, "You must have been invited by my older brother? I didn't expect him to act so swiftly, bringing three of Mount Shu's top four disciples to rescue me. I'm truly sorry..."

Hearing his tone, Chu Liang immediately guessed who he was.

At the station in Shaonan Town, there were two cultivators: Chen He and his younger brother, Chen Luo. Chen Luo had been injured recently, but the appearance of this person matched the description of Chen Luo.

Only Chen Luo knew that the top four disciples of the Mount Shu Sect had been sent to handle matters in Shaonan Town.

"So it's Officer Chen." Chu Liang smiled and nodded, "No need to apologize, we..."

"We did not come here to rescue you in the first place," Ling Ao interjected.

"Uh..." Chen Luo's smile froze for a moment.

Chu Liang silently nodded to himself, thinking that while this way of speaking lacked social grace... It was quite satisfying.

Jiang Yuebai timely asked, "Officer Chen, why did you enter this abandoned Shen Family Residence?"

"Haaaaa..." Chen Luo sighed lightly.

He took out a half-withered white moon osmanthus petal and showed it to the three.

"I came to find my lover. Her name is Mu Xi... She is a flower demon who lives in the Moon Osmanthus Woods."

"Whoa!" Chu Liang exclaimed slightly.

This guy, despite his weak cultivation level, has commendable courage. As a government official of the City Supervisory Division, he dared to defy the norms and fall in love with a demon.

"Mu Xi gave me this moon osmanthus petal earlier, allowing me to sense her condition and location. I can feel that she is here and in great danger..."

A Moon Osmanthus Flower Demon?

The three of them frowned slightly.

"This abandoned Shen Family Residence should have been inaccessible, but the restriction suddenly disappeared. This place is full of dangers. If we don't find Mu Xi quickly, she will be in danger!" Chen Luo said anxiously.

"We came here to find Senior Brother Xu from the Mount Shu Sect as well. Maybe they are in danger together." Chu Liang said. "Let's search together then. Officer Chen, do you know the specifics of this abandoned Shen Family Residence?"

Hearing this, Chen Luo said, "This abandoned Shen Family Residence was here even before my brother took office in Shaonan Town. It has always been sealed by a restriction, with only some information about it left by the previous officer in charge."

"The Shen Family was once a wealthy household in Shaonan Town. However, they were later accused of being remnants of the previous dynasty and plotting a rebellion. During the court's investigation, despite the Shen family having no cultivators, two experts from the Imperial Supervisory Bureau died in their house! Later, it was discovered that not only the court officials but the entire Shen family had died there. This place became known as a land of death."

"Coincidentally, the master of South Melody Conservatory in the Terrestrial Ten passed by and sealed this place, claiming that there was something demonic within and forbidding anyone from approaching. She said the evil thing would vanish in twenty years. The court also sealed the news, stating that the Shen family rebelled and this place harbors vengeful spirits, forbidding anyone to approach.

"It's almost twenty years now, and the restriction has suddenly lifted..." he said with a worried tone. "I'm uncertain whether it's a blessing or a curse."

"Whether it's a blessing or a curse, we will need to explore and find out." Chu Liang raised his hand and took out a puppet pill.

Whizz—

With a sudden burst of light, the divine ability Army of Beans was invoked, and the puppet materialized, leading the way with swift strides.

"Let the puppet scout ahead, and we'll follow closely," Chu Liang instructed.

Jiang Yuebai glanced at Chen Luo and asked, "Officer Chen, can you manage?"

Upon hearing this, Chen Luo wanted to say "yes" immediately, but his weakened body prevented him from feigning strength. He was already seriously injured, and his fight with the ghost earlier had completely drained his energy.

Despite his injuries and his brother's warning against interacting with the demoness Mu Xi, Chen Luo rushed here alone because Mu Xi was in danger.

It seemed he was going to be a burden at this point.

Before he could contemplate the decision further, Ling Ao bent down and hoisted him onto his back. "I'll carry you," he said.

"Haaa..." Chen Luo sighed, feeling deeply moved. Although this person doesn't speak in a way that pleases others, he has a kind heart, Chen Luo thought to himself.

Feeling a bit embarrassed, he added, "Sorry for the trouble."

"No problem," Ling Ao said, "It's rare to have someone weaker than me in the team. With you here, I feel better."

"..." Chen Luo fell silent for a moment, thinking to himself, He has a kind heart, but why does every word he says seem so irritating?

Chapter 315: Wake Up. It's Time To Work.

Chu Liang used one of his puppets to clear the way. The four people in his group then moved swiftly across the courtyard. In the blink of an eye, they arrived at the sheltered walkway that ran through the courtyard, surrounded by mountains and rivers.

That walkway was split off into several paths.

"Which way should we go?"

This question stumped everyone.

It was impossible for them to split up, and if they chose the wrong path, they might miss the target they were looking for. However, they didn't have any clues to guide them. Were they going to have to rely entirely on luck?

Chu Liang pondered for a moment before saying to Jiang Yuebai, "Senior Sister Jiang, release the ghost."

"Release her?" Jiang Yuebai asked puzzledly.

Nevertheless, she turned her hand over and brought out the female ghost.

"So, you've already captured her!" Chen Luo exclaimed in surprise.

He had been severely injured by that ghost.

The white-robed female ghost remained silent.

She and Chen Luo had a grudge against each other. However, at this moment, one of them was on Ling Ao's back, and the other in Jiang Yuebai's grasp, so neither of them were in the mood for a quarrel.

Chu Liang asked the female ghost, "You said you would take us to find the treasure. The treasure you mentioned should be here, right? Where is it? Take us there quickly."

The female ghost looked around. She seemed surprised that they had managed to enter the courtyard of the abandoned Shen Family Residence by themselves.

After pondering for a moment, she pointed to one of the paths and said, "This way."

"Let's follow her," Chu Liang told the others.

As the group followed the ghost's lead, Jiang Yuebai asked worriedly, "Can we trust her?"

"Of course not," Chu Liang answered calmly. "Everyone else says there are vengeful spirits and evil creatures here. She's the only one who says there's treasure. It would be strange if the words of a vengeful spirit could be believed. She's probably trying to trick us."

Then Chu Liang's tone changed. "But... she'll definitely take us to the most dangerous place precisely because she's trying to trick us. If Senior Brother Xu and Miss Mu Xi have landed in a dangerous situation, it's very likely that's where they are. Even if we know it's dangerous, we still have to go and check it out."

Jiang Yuebai nodded slightly.

Hearing that, the white-robed female ghost leading the way stiffened.

The things that you two are saying right behind me... I guess you must think I'm very foolish?

She turned around and said, "Young heroes, there wasn't a single shred of a lie in what I said. It's all ____"

"True, right?" Chu Liang interrupted her. "The treasure that grants wishes might be real, but even if we find it, we'll probably have to pay a heavy cost to fulfill our wishes. There's no such thing as a free lunch after all. I understand that much."

"We're in a hurry, so just take us to find whatever treasure or evil thing, and let's see what's so mysterious about it. Otherwise... You know, I have an old ghost. His surname is Fei. If you keep talking nonsense, I'll throw you in to live with him for a few months."

The white-robed female ghost stared blankly at Chu Liang. Had he seen through her from the very first word she'd said?

Regardless, all she could do was behave obediently and do as she was told. So, she turned around and continued leading the way.

Their journey along the path was quite smooth, and it wasn't long before they arrived at one of the courtyard's walls. The middle section of the wall had collapsed, leaving a dark, gaping hole that looked like a portal to another world.

Chen Luo shouted, "Mu Xi is in there!"

He held out a severely withered moon osmanthus petal, which was emitting a faint glow. The petal had lost its connection with Mu Xi when they entered the courtyard, but the connection had just been restored! This indicated they were very close to Mu Xi.

Chu Liang looked at the hole. "It seems all we can do is go in and take a look."

Whoosh.

Chu Liang first sent one of his puppets into the dark hole. However, as soon as the puppet went in, Chu Liang lost connection with it.

"It's a hidden realm...?" Chu Liang muttered.

The severed connection wasn't due to an attack but because they were no longer in the same world. Chu Liang had yet to develop the ability to use Army of Beans across realms.

"Forget it. I'll go in and take a look myself," Chu Liang said resolutely.

Senior Brother Xu and that flower demon may be in danger.

Chu Liang wasn't sure about what the situation was like inside the hidden realm, but he still intended to go in. It was a dangerous situation, but he had the life-saving jade talisman that Venerable Wen Yuan had given him. That made him a little more courageous.

"I'll go with you," Jiang Yuebai immediately told him.

"I have a way to ensure my survival, so don't worry."

"I don't feel at ease with you going in alone..." Jiang Yuebai shook her head. "Besides, I'm the head disciple. I should be at the frontline in such times."

Seeing the concern in her eyes, Chu Liang wanted to say something.

Instead, it was Ling Ao who spoke up. "No matter which of you goes in, the one who remains will worry. It's better if the two of you just go in together. I'll stay behind to protect this guy."

"..."

Hearing Ling Ao's blunt words, both Chu Liang and Jiang Yuebai blushed.

Jiang Yuebai turned around. "I would worry about any disciple of Mount Shu."

Then she hurriedly plunged into the darkness without looking back.

Chu Liang quickly added, "That's right, that's right."

Then he jumped in too.

Ling Ao's upper lip curled in disdain and annoyance. "If there's nothing going on, why are the two of you feeling embarrassed?"

With the knowing expression of a person with great life experience, Chen Luo nodded and said, "Indeed."

...

There were red candles, banners with celebratory words, and vibrant red ribbons hung high at the Shen Family Residence.

A servant girl in yellow clothes was dusting an old storeroom, but she seemed to be lost in thought.

This was the scene Chu Liang and Jiang Yuebai saw when they arrived in the hidden realm.

It seemed as if they were looking at a shadow play[1], appearing both real and illusory.

"Why was the young madam born so beautiful, while I was born to be such a plain-looking servant girl? Because of that, she's the object of everyone's affection... Even Brother Su Qian wants to adorn her with flowers... If she wasn't married, wouldn't she have snatched Brother Su Qian from me?

"We're childhood sweethearts, yet I'm nothing compared to taking a glance at her?

"Men..."

She wiped a shelf absentmindedly and accidentally knocked off a box. The long wooden box fell to the ground with a thud, giving her a fright.

Looking down, she saw a pure white, high-necked porcelain bottle roll out of the box. It rolled several times over, but fortunately, it wasn't broken at all.

The servant girl was about to put the bottle back in the box when the voice of an elderly old man rang out from the porcelain bottle.

"Do you have a wish?"

"I..." the servant girl uttered, feeling startled.

Yet, as if bewitched by some power, her first reaction wasn't a fearful one. Rather, she actually thought about her wish.

She stated, "I want to become the young madam..."

"I can fulfill your wish. You just need to drip one drop of your blood in here, and your wish will come true..." the voice said temptingly.

"Really?"

The servant girl fell into a daze. After hesitating for a moment, she actually bit her finger and let a drop of her blood fall into the porcelain bottle.

Whoosh.

A dazzling burst of darkness[2] surged out from the porcelain bottle and converged to form a stooping elderly man.

The elderly man gently placed his hand on the servant girl's head, and the darkness engulfed her. After a while, the darkness dissipated, revealing that the plain yellow-robed servant girl had transformed into a white-robed beauty!

She now looked identical to the white-robed female ghost!

So... she went through something like this, Chu Liang thought.

The lights and shadows suddenly shifted, turning into a young man in luxurious clothes. He looked at the porcelain bottle, appearing just as shocked as the servant girl from before. Like her, he too was bewitched and lost his sense of fear.

"I... I want to become an official of the imperial court..." he said slowly. "The Shen Family's business is booming, but if I don't become a government official, that business will be like a duckweed, with no roots to lay down[3]."

"You just want to become a government official?" the black-robed elderly man asked enticingly in a deep voice. "Don't you want to dream bigger? I can make anything happen, including... what your ancestors wanted. I could overthrow the current dynasty and place you on the emperor's throne..."

"Huh?" uttered the young man in luxurious clothes, with his mouth opened wide in surprise. After a long pause, he said, "I do not dare to be that ambitious. I'd be very satisfied just becoming the prime minister."

The lights and shadows shifted once again.

This time, a plainly dressed man appeared.

Looking at the precious bottle, he made a wish. "I wish to own a business as large as the Shen Family's and become a wealthy landowner!"

The lights and shadows continued to change. It showed each member of the Shen Family and their servants enter the storeroom to make a wish and drip a drop of blood into the bottle.

The darkness from the bottle appeared more and more magnificent like a bubble with a colorful reflection of light. Eventually, it burst with a pop!

Everything before Chu Liang and Jiang Yuebai disappeared in an instant. Only the black-robed elderly man remained.

He turned his gaze toward Chu Liang and Jiang Yuebai.

"What is your wish?" the elderly man asked with the same deep, raspy voice from before.

Jiang Yuebai shook her head.

Chu Liang looked at the elderly man for a moment.

Then he suddenly smiled and said, "Well, I do have a wish."

"Oh?" The black-robed elderly man looked at Chu Liang. "Tell me. I can grant any wish."

"My wish is for you to grant me three wishes."

"Hmm?"

The black-robed elderly man stiffened, and his gaze turned dark.

After a while, he raged, "If you don't request a wish from me, you will never be able to leave! Good luck to you!"

Then the elderly man vanished with a swoosh.

Chu Liang and Jiang Yuebai's surroundings plunged into darkness.

Chu Liang made a hand seal, activating the Intense Illumination Seal. Light immediately flooded the space. It was about the size of an average room, with curved white porcelain walls all around and a smooth porcelain floor underfoot.

"We seem to be inside the precious bottle," Jiang Yuebai said.

Chu Liang agreed. "That certainly seems to be the case."

He tried slashing through the white porcelain wall with his sword.

Clang.

Chu Liang's sword qi hit the wall, but it didn't even leave a mark. It just made a dull sound.

"It's so hard," Chu Liang muttered.

Jiang Yuebai summoned her sword and performed the Heavenly Sword Seal.

A massive swordlight descended with an explosive smash!

Boom.

Jiang Yuebai's sword qi flowed all over the room. Nevertheless, after the sword qi dispersed, the white porcelain wall remained unscathed.

"It seems to be an enchanted tool that we can't break at our current level," Jiang Yuebai remarked.

Chu Liang looked up and saw nothing but a pitch-black shadow overhead. There was no exit in sight.

"It seems we can't break out. But if that old man is so powerful, why doesn't he just kill us? Why insist on us making a wish?" Chu Liang wondered. He thought about it for a moment. "It can't... be out of kindness, right?"

"This reminds me of a legend from the Southern Regions," Jiang Yuebai said. "In ancient times, there was a shaman god who created many kinds of evil spirits. One of them was the wish-fulfilling spirit. It gained power by absorbing the desires people had when they told it their wishes. The shaman god let their wish-fulfilling spirits roam the world to fulfill the wishes of their followers."

"That's... kind of them?" Chu Liang mused. "But looking at the fates of those who made wishes, there must be a price that has to be paid, right?"

Indeed, anyone would be very enticed by the idea of having a wish of theirs fulfilled. However, the people whom Chu Liang and Jiang Yuebai had seen in the lights and shadows earlier... It didn't seem like any of them ended up living a good life. That meant there was something odd about that legend.

"I don't know about that." Jiang Yuebai shook her head. "But even if he can't do anything to us, we still can't get out right now."

"That's right. Are we going to die here together?"

Jiang Yuebai didn't respond.

"If that's the case, I'll ask him to fulfill my wish. I wish he could let you out and that you'll live peacefully and happily until you reach a ripe old age," Chu Liang said tenderly.

Jiang Yuebai stared at him for a moment. "Stop pretending. I know you have a way to get out."

"Hehe..." Chu Liang stopped his little act and scratched his head. "Why do you have so much confidence in me?"

Jiang Yuebai smiled. "You're not someone who gives up easily."

Grinning, Chu Liang flipped his hand over and took out a large, sleeping butterfly from his storage tool.

He whispered, "Wake up. It's time to work."

Chapter 316: The Descent of the Heavenly God

"What is this?" Jiang Yuebai asked.

"That mysterious beast egg I stumbled upon some time ago—this little fellow hatched from it," Chu Liang replied with a smile. "Don't be deceived by its size; it's a master burrower."

As he spoke, he gently placed the tiny golden butterfly on the white porcelain wall beside him, rousing it from its slumber.

Though still a bit groggy, the butterfly began to nibble.

Crunch, crunch...

Faint gnawing sounds filled the air as the seemingly indestructible wall, impervious even to the Heavenly Sword Seal, was gradually worn down by the diligent little butterfly.

Its bites were small but incredibly fast. Before long, the butterfly had burrowed itself into the wall, entirely absorbed in its task.

Jiang Yuebai watched with a thoughtful expression as the little golden butterfly worked its magic.

Soon, it chewed through a hole. Through the palm-sized opening, they could see a similar space on the other side. Inside, a girl in a white dress lay softly on the ground, seemingly unconscious.

"There's more than one hidden space here?" Chu Liang mused. He then instructed the butterfly, "Chew upwards."

The little golden butterfly obediently changed direction, gnawing upwards. Despite the enchanted wall being one of the hardest substances in the world, the butterfly navigated through it as if it were swimming in water.

After a while, a sliver of light suddenly pierced through from above.

"What are you doing?!"

A shocked and angry voice rang out, and the black-robed old man reappeared instantly, his face contorted with ferocity and rage.

He never expected these two young people to be able to break through the ten-thousand-year-old unbreakable bottle!

"Stop immediately! If you don't want to make a wish, I'll let you out!" he roared repeatedly. "If you don't stop, I'll make you suffer eternally!"

Chu Liang's eyes narrowed and his mouth twitched as he adopted the familiar expression of Di Nufeng.

The message was clear: If you dare, come at us.

At that moment, the black-robed old man's vulnerability was exposed. Despite his mystical powers making it difficult for him to be punished, he couldn't harm anyone who had yet to make a wish.

"Arggggg! Come and kill them for me!" the black-robed old man roared.

The light above the bottle's mouth intensified, as if a lid had been lifted, revealing bright daylight. Numerous vengeful spirits peered down from above.

These were all entities that had made wishes to him in the past.

"I will give you ten times your strength, kill the two of them for me!" the black-robed old man shouted loudly.

The vengeful spirits obeyed his command and charged down fiercely!

If the opponents were ghosts, Chu Liang and Jiang Yuebai would never feel afraid. As they both wielded their swords, sword qi erupted forth with powerful intensity!

Swoosh—

The two ghosts at the forefront were obliterated instantly, leaving not even a trace of ash.

However, the sheer number of vengeful spirits was overwhelming, and in the blink of an eye, they surrounded the two of them.

Jiang Yuebai remained unfazed. With the execution of her hand seals, her entire body transformed into a pool of thunder! As she executed the exorcizing thunder technique, the vengeful spirits instantly evaporated!

"Five-Lightning Heart of the Sky!" she invoked.

Meanwhile, Chu Liang was not far behind. He summoned the Ghost-Slaying Sword of Divine Light and swung it rapidly, creating an impenetrable defense!

"Orb Lamp Sword Technique!" he called out.

The surrounding vengeful spirits were swiftly cleared away.

"If I hadn't lost the two drops of the shaman god's blood essence, you would have never had the chance to behave so rebelliously," the black-robed old man raged. "Fine! Even if I have to use the last bit of my blood essence's original power, I will make sure you die!"

With a roar, he waved his hand, and the white porcelain walls on both sides disappeared instantly.

It turned out that this bottle contained three hidden spaces. Besides the ones where Chu Liang and the girl in the white dress were, the third space was filled with black-gold blood!

When the wall disappeared, the pool of blood immediately flowed out, emanating a dangerous aura with divine smoke rising from it.

"Let's go!"

Chu Liang and Jiang Yuebai moved in perfect harmony.

As the blood pool surged out, Jiang Yuebai quickly executed the art of ice and conjured several ice walls. Although they melted almost instantly, they managed to hold back the blood pool for a brief moment.

Taking advantage of the moment, Chu Liang used Dimension Compression to instantly appear beside the girl in the white dress, lifting her up in one swift motion.

Immediately, the two of them flew upwards together!

"Do you think you can escape?" the black-robed old man sneered as he merged into the blood pool, becoming one with it in an instant.

The blood pool roared and churned, coalescing into a giant human form. The vengeful spirit now had a corporeal body!

Whoosh—

Chu Liang and Jiang Yuebai traversed the bottle's mouth, and with a flash of light, they suddenly appeared outside the collapsed wall.

The scene behind the wall quickly shifted, with light and shadows twisting into the image of a large white porcelain bottle.

Ling Ao and Chen Luo, who were waiting, were both taken aback. When Chen Luo saw the person Chu Liang was carrying, he immediately cried out, "Mu Xi!"

"She's fine, run quickly!" Chu Liang shouted as he fled without pausing. "If we don't hurry, we'll be in big trouble!"

Ling Ao reacted swiftly, immediately grabbing Chen Luo and following at high speed.

As Ling Ao and Chu Liang flew swiftly in coordinated movements, they created a stable space for Chen Luo and Mu Xi, allowing them to maintain equilibrium despite their motion.

While this was happening, Chen Luo just kept shouting, "Mu Xi, are you alright?"

Following closely behind Chu Liang and Jiang Yuebai, the giant burst forth from the pool of blood, standing seven to eight meters tall and radiating an overwhelming murderous aura!

According to his statement, this power came from a single drop of the shaman god's blood essence.

Even after countless years, a drop of blood essence from a powerful ninth-realm expert, once capable of shaking the world, still retained its terrifying power!

The giant transformed into a cloud of blood, enveloping everyone, leaving them with no choice but to flee for their lives!

But the abandoned Shen Residence was within the vengeful spirit's domain, and it had boundaries. How could they keep running?

Seeing that they were nearing the courtyard wall with no way out, Jiang Yuebai turned around, shouted clearly, and unleashed the Heaven-Raising Sword!

An overwhelming wave of sword qi blasted out as the immortal art was executed, shaking the heavens with its power. However, when the sword struck the blood cloud, it was instantly swallowed, not even causing a single ripple!

"This drop of the shaman god's blood essence is unbeatable unless we eliminate the vengeful spirit!" Chu Liang's thoughts raced, and a bright idea flashed in his mind. He shouted loudly, "We have to break the porcelain bottle that holds him!"

As he spoke, he unleashed a Heavenly Sword Seal, blasting it towards the distant porcelain bottle!

But the blood cloud swallowed it midway!

Driven by anger and fear, the black-robed old man knew he had to kill these intruders because they had discovered his weakness!

After being bitten through by the little golden butterfly, the porcelain bottle's engraved enchantment was no longer intact. It was now breakable. Once the porcelain bottle was shattered, his soul would have nowhere to reside and would dissipate into the heavens and earth.

It's all this fellow's fault! The black-robed old man roared inwardly.

The black-robed old man roared, and the blood cloud surged like a waterfall, covering the sky and engulfing everyone!

"Die!"

The group was cornered, with no way out in sight.

But at that moment, the surging cloud of blood suddenly stopped moving!

Boom—

A dull thud echoed from behind the cloud of blood.

A towering figure emerged behind them, radiating divine might as if a god had descended!

Metallic Body of the fifth-realm!

Form of the Heavens and the Earth!

Three-Headed and Six-Armed Form!

Each of the six arms held a Heavenly Sword!

Instantly, the disciples from the Mount Shu Sect recognized the techniques. It was a combination of the Hundred Swords Seal and the Heavenly Sword Seal! First, the Hundred Swords Seal multiplied into six swords, and then each sword executed the Heavenly Sword Seal!

Executing these sword techniques in this combined manner was a hundred times more difficult than performing them individually.

As Chu Liang watched this scene, he realized that Senior Brother Xu's strength had elevated to another level since their last fight.

Indeed! The god-like figure that appeared out of nowhere was Xu Ziyang!

...

Previously, the woman in yellow had attempted to lure him into the porcelain bottle, but Xu Ziyang had already sensed that something was wrong...

"You said you gained more power because you were near the bottle containing the evil spirit," he said with a gaze as sharp as lightning. "But as we've continued along this path, the vengeful spirits have been getting stronger. This means we're heading straight towards the evil spirit, aren't we?"

"If I'm not mistaken, this entrance doesn't lead outside but to the space where the evil spirit resides."

"..."

And so, Xu Ziyang had been watching from outside all along, waiting for this moment to step forward!

The black-robed old man, being in the form of this vast blood cloud, was about to devour Chu Liang and the others. It did not expect such a powerful force to emerge from behind.

Time seemed to come to a standstill.

Xu Ziyang was showcasing his full power, wielding six Heavenly Swords and combining their strength into a single strike!

Destroying the world!

Boom!

Although the crucial part was done when the little golden butterfly broke the enchanted pattern on the porcelain bottle, the remaining parts of the bottle were made of a material that others could not easily break.

However, Xu Ziyang's strike was so powerful that nothing could withstand it!

"Ahhhhhhh—" The black-robed old man let out a cry, unwilling to accept defeat.

He had existed for tens of thousands of years, facing countless Eminent Ones. And now, his existence was dissipated by a group of youngsters? Unbelievable!

How could he accept this without feeling any grudge?

Boom!

The giant shattered the porcelain bottle, causing the blood cloud in the air to fragment and fall as a cascade of blood. Everyone dodged, not daring to let even a single drop touch them.

The blood rained down on the ground, making a sizzling sound as if it were burning. Instead of disappearing, it re-coalesced into a fist-sized globule of blood essence.

The entire illusion cast over the abandoned Shen Family Residence collapsed as well.

Boom—

The violent sound caused the earth to shake and the mountains to tremble!

The old night watchman outside the abandoned garden stumbled in fright, nearly falling to the ground. He turned back in terror as he cursed, "Fuck! What the heck is going on?"

Chapter 317: They Are Truly Good People

As the sunlight shone on their faces, they realized that the abandoned Shen Family Residence became entirely different.

All the ghastly wind and demonic aura had dissipated, leaving only the broken walls and ruins to record the decades of hardship. The once-prosperous scenes were like a fleeting dream.

At the moment the porcelain bottle shattered and the wish-fulfilling spirit disappeared, all the ghostly entities that came into existence through the spirit also vanished. The white-clad woman captured by Chu Liang and the yellow-clad woman captured by Xu Ziyang wailed loudly as they both dissipated.

When the white-clad woman vanished, the remaining half of a jade pendant fell from the air. This was an item she had left behind.

Chu Liang caught the jade pendant and found that the character "Shen" was engraved on it. It had been split into two, but it clearly exuded faint spiritual energy. Still, its purpose was unknown.

Since it wasn't anything valuable, Chu Liang didn't bother to share it with everyone and simply stored it away.

He had acquired incomplete gadgets like this more than once, keeping them in case they proved useful later.

For example, the half iron plate for the Blue Dragon's hidden realm saved his life last time.

However, the floating globule of blood in front of him wasn't something he could take on his own.

In fact, it wasn't just him. No one present could move this drop of blood.

Jiang Yuebai stepped forward and attempted to collect the drop of blood into a container. However, as soon as her foundational qi touched it, the blood boiled, instantly dissolving the qi.

"Can't collect it?" Xu Ziyang thought for a moment and took out an enchanted tool jade box used for storing spirit herbs. He removed the herbs inside and tried to slowly scoop up the drop of blood with the jade box.

Sizzle—

The jade box instantly corroded, leaving a large hole.

One could easily imagine that if their flesh came into contact with it, extra holes would form in their bodies.

Moreover, this drop of blood radiated evil, fear, anger, cruelty, greed, and various negative emotions. As they got closer, they immediately felt its influence.

Fortunately, they were cultivators and sensitive to changes in their mental state, so they quickly distanced themselves from the shaman god's blood essence.

"No wonder this wish-fulfilling spirit was so evil. It drew its power from this thing. It would be strange if it weren't evil," Chu Liang remarked.

"This drop of blood is able to devour the greed of humans, so every time someone makes a wish to the wish-fulfilling spirit and drips a drop of blood filled with greed into the bottle, the wish-fulfilling spirit would be given more power," Xu Ziyang continued. "He must have just awakened in the Shen Family back then and was quickly fed by the Shen Family's greed, gaining great strength."

Through his interaction with the yellow-clad woman earlier, he had gained a rough understanding of the Shen Family's situation.

The yellow-clad maid was the first to interact with the wish-fulfilling spirit and her first wish was to exchange bodies with the white-clad madam of the family.

This was the start of the nightmare for the Shen Family.

After becoming the madam of the family, she told her former lover about wish-fulfilling spirit, which gave outsiders the chance to interact with the wish-fulfilling spirit, which eventually resulted in the wish-fulfilling spirit being reported to the imperial officials.

A huge disaster then struck the Shen Family.

What they didn't know was that once the wish-fulfilling spirit granted their wish, the deal was completed. They would become slaves to the wish-fulfilling spirit, bound to the contract by the drop of blood they had given. When the officers from the Imperial Supervisory Bureau came to take the porcelain bottle, the wish-fulfilling spirit sacrificed everyone in the Shen Family Residence, turning them into vengeful spirits and using them as the source of power to kill the two officials from the Imperial Supervisory Bureau.

Later, an Eminent One passed by. Although she couldn't destroy the porcelain bottle, she took a drop of the shaman god's blood essence and then set up a restriction around the residence. She estimated that the power of greed that the wish-fulfilling spirit had absorbed would dissipate after twenty years. By then, she would return and store away this porcelain bottle.

According to the explanation added by Chen Luo, this Eminent One was likely the Master of the South Melody Conservatory.

Yan Yingluo, the Master of the South Melody Conservatory, was as beautiful as a deity and was famous throughout the nine provinces many years ago. At her peak, it was said that her followers spanned half of the Yu Dynasty.[1]

But she retired at her peak, announcing that she would no longer go on tours, which caused quite a stir. Shortly after, she took over as the Master of the South Melody Conservatory, and people then understood that she had made significant breakthroughs in both her cultivation and status.

"But recently, a second person also took a drop of the shaman god's blood essence. It was because this person lifted the restriction here that the white-clad vengeful spirit was able to escape and kill people during the Flower-Hairpin Festival," Xu Ziyang added.

As for the identity of the person who took the second drop of the shaman god's blood essence, that remained unknown.

Regarding the Shen Family, Chu Liang still had some doubts after hearing the story.

For example, the wish-fulfilling spirit could only make the wish-maker its slave after fulfilling their wish. In the illusion, the young master of the Shen Family wished to become the chancellor.

If the wish wasn't granted, he shouldn't have become a vengeful spirit. If it was fulfilled, he hasn't heard of a chancellor in the Yu Dynasty with the surname Shen in the past decade.

Another example was the investigation of the Shen Family by the court due to their status as relatives of the previous dynasty, during which two officials from the Imperial Supervisory Bureau died. Why didn't the imperial court take further action? If the Master of the South Melody Conservatory could obtain a drop of the shaman god's blood essence, surely the many powerful experts in the government could have handled the situation. Why did they allow this place to remain sealed for twenty years?

But so many years had passed.

Chu Liang and the others, being just outsiders who had heard only parts of the story, couldn't possibly know the entire truth of the situation. However, there was no need for them to dwell on it.

...

In the end, everyone stayed and guarded this place while Chu Liang went back alone to inform the elders of Mount Shu. The Weapons Master brought a special enchanted tool and finally collected the drop of the shaman god's blood essence.

The higher-ups of the Mount Shu Sect took this matter very seriously.

A drop of True Dragon's blood essence at the seventh realm could grant Ling Ao, despite being at the third realm of cultivation, enough power to be ranked among Mount Shu's top four. The blood essence of the shaman god at the ninth realm contained power beyond the spiritual—it could be considered divine. If it fell into the wrong hands, it could bring about another disaster.

Logically, the Shaonan Town outpost should report this matter, and officials from the Imperial Supervisory Bureau should visit to claim possession of this drop of blood essence. In the struggle for such precious items, neither the imperial court nor the immortal sects would act generously, and disputes often arose.

However, since Chen Luo and his lover were both saved by the disciples of the Mount Shu Sect in the abandoned Shen Family Residence, Chen Luo was too embarrassed to compete for the precious item with the Mount Shu disciples. He simply wrote in his report that by the time he arrived, the shaman god's blood essence had already been taken by the Mount Shu Sect.

The girl named Mu Xi woke up later.

She explained that she was worried about Chen Luo's injuries, so she left the Moon Osmanthus Woods to check on him. Suddenly, someone attacked her from behind. As she was frightened out of her wits, she fled without even looking back.

In fact, the four from Mount Shu had been on guard at the time, waiting for the evil spirit to appear.

This was why Xu Ziyang suddenly sensed a demonic aura and went after it.

From Mu Xi's perspective, the more she ran, the more that person pursued, and the more they chased, the faster she fled. In her panic, she found herself in the abandoned Shen Family Residence, where the restriction had been lifted and a vengeful spirit then lured her into a porcelain bottle.

The black-robed old man immediately appeared and asked her to make a wish. However, before she could respond, the timid Mu Xi fainted from fear.

Perhaps for this reason, when Chu Liang and Jiang Yuebai entered again, the black-robed old man created an illusion. It seemed he wanted to explain the situation to them and prevent them from being too frightened.

But who was the bad person that chased Mu Xi into the abandoned Shen Family Residence?

Upon mentioning this, Chen Luo was filled with such righteous indignation while all the other Mount Shu disciples turned and looked away.

"I suddenly remembered I left my clothes hanging on the hilltop. Brother Chen, I'll be leaving now," Chu Liang said hurriedly, cupping his hands in farewell.

"I have urgent matters to attend to at home," Ling Ao said succinctly.

"Now that this matter is settled, we have many things to report to the sect. We won't be returning to the station," Jiang Yuebai said in a serious tone.

Xu Ziyang said nothing and had already flown away on his sword.

Chen Luo held Mu Xi in his arms, gazing into the distance, and sighed, "Why did they all leave so quickly? I wanted to invite them to a nice meal to thank them! Darling, we really have to thank these Mount Shu disciples. If it weren't for them, we might never have seen each other again."

Mu Xi also said, "They are truly good people."

...

Outside Shaonan Town, a luxurious painted boat drifted serenely on the waters of the Osmanthus River.

On the deck of the boat, there was singing and dancing, with a dozen lightly clad dancers swaying gracefully. Around them, guests sat at tables, clapping and enjoying the performance, raising their glasses in a lively banquet scene.

However, behind a closed door in the cabin, the atmosphere was thick with an aura of death.

A tall man with red hair and a beard, dressed in a black robe that exposed his chest, sat cross-legged at the table. He said with a frown, "The members of the Mount Shu Sect took the drop of shaman god's blood essence? This really ticks me off."

Opposite the red-haired man sat a handsome teenager with a silver scale on his forehead. His skin was as white as jade, and his entire presence appeared like a sculpture. His eyes gleamed with a golden hue.

He gently poured wine into a cup on the table and said with a smile, "You broke the restriction. It's no surprise that outsiders noticed the abandoned Shen Family Residence and took the drop of the shaman god's blood essence."

"Then why did you only let me take one drop?" the red-haired man complained. "If we had killed the wish-fulfilling spirit and taken two drops, wouldn't it have been better? Do you have any idea how beneficial even one drop of the shaman god's blood essence is for me?"

"Can you kill that evil spirit? If you can, wouldn't you have done it?" the handsome young man sneered.

"If you helped me, we could have killed it," the red-haired man retorted.

"Why should I help you? That thing is useless to me," the handsome young man blinked as he spoke. "You need to understand, they sent me to watch over you and to make sure that you won't cause any more trouble. I'm not here to be your subordinate."

"You..." the red-haired man was speechless with anger.

"That fool Lu Chengchou couldn't be patient and started the attack prematurely. Now, all that's left of him is a fragment of his soul, living a fate worse than death. Young Noble Xunyang took Lu Chengchou in out of kindness, but this only brought suffering upon himself. Now, Young Noble Xunyang is wanted by the nine provinces and has been forced to flee to the Far West, living like a savage," the handsome young man said coldly. "I will not suffer for your foolish actions. If something happens to you, I'll be the first to run far away."

The red-haired man was left speechless. After a long pause, he said, "Can't you drop your attitude? Since we joined the Celestial Charm Sect, we're considered fellow disciples..."

"Sigh—" The handsome young man raised his cup and interrupted him, "Let's get this straight, we're not fellow disciples; we're accomplices."

"That's still fighting side by side..." the red-haired man replied.

"We are colluding for misdeeds," the handsome young man said coldly. "You're not seriously going to talk to me about camaraderie, are you? If you did, that would be hilarious."

"Hmph!"

The red-haired man realized he couldn't win the argument and felt he had suffered a great loss. In his frustration, he angrily slapped the table, causing the food and drinks to splash.

The handsome young man gently raised his finger, and the spilled food and drinks stopped in mid-air. They then returned to their cups and plates as if they had a life of their own.

He continued, "If you had the power to kill me now, would you hesitate to do so?"

Upon hearing this, the red-haired man's heaving chest gradually calmed. After a brief moment of contemplation, he shook his head and replied, "Not at all."

Chapter 318: I Don't Recommend It

When Chu Liang returned to Silver Sword Peak, he felt like it had been a lifetime ago since he was last there.

The reason wasn't that his last mission had been particularly arduous. Rather, it was because Silver Sword Peak had been quite empty and unfrequented for decades, but now it was bustling with an endless stream of visitors. It was so lively that the noise from the activities could be heard from all over Mount Shu.

Seeing how lively Silver Sword Peak was, many members of Mount Shu's other peaks were so envious that their eyes practically glowed red with anger.

In their eyes, Silver Sword Peak's visitors were not people but sources of sword coins! Shiny golden sword coins were flowing into Silver Sword Peak so easily!

The sect had increased the peaks' allowances by thirty percent, but that was insignificant compared to Silver Sword Peak's income.

Chu Liang's creation, the Berry Wonderland, was a unique and novel attraction in the world of immortality cultivators, and it had become famous far and wide due to several rounds of advertising.

However, a berry-picking garden didn't actually have much practical value; it shouldn't have been able to become this popular. Chu Liang had predicted that the novelty of the Berry Wonderland would only last for perhaps ten to fifteen days. After that, the large crowds would reduce to a more regular stream of customers. He would have been satisfied as long as the Berry Wonderland could

produce a stable flow of income. Nevertheless, if it ended up being an unprofitable venture, it had been within his plans to shut the Berry Wonderland down.

Yet, even after all this time, business was still booming at the Berry Wonderland! In fact, it was doing even better than before! This was beyond Chu Liang's expectations.

Then he saw a letter from Celestial Pivot Pavilion outside his cabin, and he finally understood why this was happening. The letter was from Zhang Xiaohan. She'd sent it to Chu Liang yesterday, expressing her sincere gratitude to him.

Chu Liang's story, The Legend of the Berries, had been a hit! The first half of the love story between a human and a demon had successfully captured the interest of the gazette's readers, and of course, it was human nature to want to read the second half.

Therefore, a large number of readers wrote to Celestial Pivot Pavilion, urging them to release the rest of the story sooner. It was too painful to have to wait a month.

Consequently, the higher-ups at Celestial Pivot Pavilion decided to release a special mid-month issue just for Zhang Xiaohan's piece, dedicated solely to the second half of The Legend of the Berries. This was unprecedented at the Celestial Pivot Pavilion!

After the second half was published, The Legend of the Berries spread by word of mouth and became extremely popular. Consequently, many immortality cultivators wanted to visit Silver Sword Peak to see the special plant of the fruit that had been mentioned in Stealing Fruit From the Mountain of Immortals. It also made many ordinary people yearn to visit Mount Shu's Silver Sword Peak just to see the fruit from the legend.

Chu Liang thought about it for a moment. There seemed to be a deep reason for The Legend of the White Snake's great popularity across the nine provinces.

Humans and demons were real in this world; they weren't just mythical beings. That made the story very relatable and much more significant to the people in this world.

Imagine just walking along and suddenly encountering a beautiful snake demon who insists on marrying you, helps you with your career, gives birth to your son who becomes a top scholar... And she still loves you even after being imprisoned under a pagoda for decades... Just the thought of it is quite exhilarating.

It seems that literature and culture are indeed the keys to extending the life of a business!

Chu Liang pondered for a moment and then wrote a reply to Zhang Xiaohan.

Miss Xiaohan, you needn't thank me. Thanks to your sect publicizing my peak's Golden Vein Berries, my business has become much more well known. I should be the one thanking you instead.

Actually, there are many more stories about the Golden Vein Berries.

Did you know that in the Far East, there was once a powerful deity dynasty?! And in that dynasty, there was a family of commoners that one day discovered an unfamiliar fruit growing in their fruit garden. It was the specialty fruit of my peak—the Golden Vein Berry.

When the family cut open the berry, they found a chubby little baby crying inside!

[1]

That family's surname was Meng, and the baby was born from a berry, so they named the child... Meng Jiangnu.

...

After sending the letter to Zhang Xiaohan, Chu Liang shut the door of his cabin and prepared to have a joyous session of rewarding himself once again.

During this trip to the abandoned courtyard of the Shen Family Residence, he had slain more than a dozen vengeful spirits. It had been quite a fruitful endeavor, which meant he could reward himself over a dozen times today and be a dozen times happier.

Chu Liang entered the White Pagoda's space in a cheerful mood.

Outside, the Berry Wonderland was flourishing, and inside, the Large-Headed Doll was enveloped in a haze. Chu Liang felt happy to see that he was thriving both inside and out.

Chu Liang thought, I should find time to visit the South Melody Conservatory again and ask Miss Xue for some help so that I can upgrade my Golden-Core Puppet's circulation to Perfect Qi

Circulation. With my dual ultimate-tier Golden Cores and my dual meridian systems in a state of Perfect Qi Circulation, my cultivation speed will soar.

Ordinary geniuses could no longer compare with Chu Liang now. Even if Chu Liang were vastly inferior in terms of natural talent, his dual ultimate-tier Golden Cores could make up for the difference and even swiftly help him surpass it. He might be cultivating too quickly compared to his peers, but who would complain about that?

Everything was going great for Chu Liang. The only exception was that Liu Xiaoyu'er was busy acting as the fruit garden's mascot, so it was an inconvenient time for Chu Liang to ask her for help with his rewards.

Chu Liang gazed at the dozen or so cells containing the phantoms of the vengeful spirits like a stingy landlord inspecting his properties. He smiled for a while before stepping forward to refine them.

Boom.

There was a flash of light.

A long item floated out of a cell, covered in white light.

[Chain of Resentment: It can silently connect two beings, causing them to harbor strong resentment toward each other for a quarter of an hour. However, the distance between them must be within two zhang. It is ineffective against people at a higher realm and people in the seventh realm.]

Huh?

Upon seeing the item description, Chu Liang thought of his other two divine skills, the Evil-Dispelling Spell and Mystic Fingers. Both skills were very unusual and mysterious.

After gaining some understanding of the Great Dao, Chu Liang knew that the Evil-Dispelling Spell was derived from the Great Dao of the Seven Emotions, and Mystic Fingers was derived from the Great Dao of the Universe. Both of these Great Daos were minor parts of the Great Dao.

That was why these mystical skills were useless against those who had reached the Dao Attainment Realm. Once a cultivator had reached the seventh realm, they could utilize their immense understanding of their Great Dao to effortlessly cast these mysterious spells. Additionally, they had a certain level of immunity to spells derived from other types of Great Dao[2]. That meant they did not need to fear the spells of other cultivators.

This Chain of Resentment also seemed to fall within the scope of the Great Dao of the Seven Emotions.

Chu Liang proceeded to refine the next phantom, and he was given another Chain of Resentment. It seemed the White Pagoda had produced items with the same attribute as the vengeful spirits that the wish-fulfilling spirit had created. However, these special gadgets might have amazing effects if they were used well, so it wasn't a bad thing to have more of them.

After rewarding himself, Chu Liang felt refreshed, so he prepared to head over to the Berry Wonderland and have a look at how it was doing.

He'd left it to his teacher to watch over the Berry Wonderland for the past few days. Liu Xiaoyu'er, Lin Bei, and Shang Ziliang were busy at work inside and outside the Berry Wonderland, while the Golden-Furred Hou and the Baize youngling guarded the place.

Chu Liang himself hadn't gone over there much. He had truly been too busy.

As soon as Chu Liang stepped out of his cabin, he ran into Chen Su.

"Junior Brother Chu, where are you headed?" Chen Su asked as she approached.

Chu Liang replied truthfully, "I'm going to the fruit garden."

"If it's not urgent, come to the Hall of Alchemy first. The Alchemy Master heard you were back from your mission and sent me to ask for you immediately," Chen Su said with a smile.

"Ah," Chu Liang uttered, smacking his forehead.

He had forgotten all about his promise with the Alchemy Master.

Chu Liang had agreed to go to the Hall of Alchemy at least once a week to learn alchemy from the Alchemy Master after the Mount Shu Summit was over. The previous day was a week after his last session with the Alchemy Master, but he had been unable to meet with the Alchemy Master due to his mission.

Chu Liang replied, "Okay, I'll go right away!"

Since he wanted to learn alchemy, he had to do it diligently.

However, the Alchemy Master had only taught Chu Liang the theoretical fundamentals of alchemy so far; he hadn't given any lessons involving practical work. Consequently, Chu Liang found the lessons rather boring.

Nevertheless, he understood that theory was like the foundation of a building, and the practical work was whatever was built on top of it. The stronger the foundation, the taller the building could be built. Therefore, Chu Liang studied these theoretical fundamentals very seriously and took the initiative to improve his understanding of alchemy.

Upon arriving at the Hall of Alchemy, Chu Liang found it was emptier than usual. No one was going in and out of the hall, and it seemed that all the disciples were in their rooms practicing alchemy.

Seeing Chu Liang, the Alchemy Master showed a bright smile that was full of kindness.

When this kid was only Di Nufeng's disciple, I truly hated him so much that I would gnash my teeth in anger. But when this genius became my nominal disciple, I just can't stop grinning from ear to ear.

These were the Alchemy Master's true thoughts.

"I was held back by my mission yesterday. I hope you won't blame me, Elder," Chu Liang said, greeting the Alchemy Master with a bow.

"It's fine. That was the sect's first mission after the Mount Shu Summit, so it's quite important. I heard you and the others did very well. You killed all the evil spirits as planned and even retrieved a

drop of a shaman god's blood," the Alchemy Master praised. "You always somehow manage to leave us pleasantly surprised."

"It was a joint effort. I just contributed a small part of it," Chu Liang said modestly.

That was indeed the truth.

During the battle at the Shen Family Residence, it had indeed been Chu Liang who released the little golden butterfly, which had been vital in causing major damage to the wish-fulfilling spirit's precious bottle.

However, Senior Sister Jiang remained calm and led the team well as the head disciple, so some of the credit goes to her. Senior Brother Xu descended like a god and saved everyone from danger, so some of the credit goes to him too. Ling Ao carried the injured Chen Luo steadily and made sure he was comfortable... so Ling Ao contributed as well...

In short, it was a team effort.

Seeing how modest Chu Liang was, the Alchemy Master gazed at him even more fondly.

The Alchemy Master said with a smile, "Get ready. I'll teach you how to concoct a pill today."

Chu Liang grinned. "You're finally letting me use the furnace?"

"Yes. You could have started using it much earlier, but I wanted to help you build a solid foundation. Today, I'll teach you how to concoct a relatively basic pill. You can concoct high-grade Green Pills, so this pill shouldn't be a problem for you."

"What is it?"

"It's the Spirit-Concentration Pill. You haven't concocted this pill before, have you?"

"Ah..." Chu Liang was a little taken aback. "Indeed, I haven't. But why this pill?"

"Firstly, it's one of the pills that's simpler to concoct, so it's suitable for you to practice with," the Alchemy Master explained. "Secondly, the price of the Spirit-Concentration Pills in Taotie City has suddenly soared. I've issued an urgent order to all my disciples to make Spirit-Concentration Pills. We should concoct more of these pills and sell them in Taotie City for a big profit."

"Uh, well..." Chu Liang scratched his head awkwardly. "I'm fine with learning how to concoct the Spirit-Concentration Pill, but... I don't recommend producing them on a large scale."

"What do you mean?" the Alchemy Master asked puzzledly.

"What I mean is..." Chu Liang chose his words carefully. "What if the price of the Spirit-Concentration Pills in Taotie City suddenly drops? The martial world is full of uncertainties..."

Chapter 319: The Six Demon-Eliminating Treasures

Taotie City, Yunlai Pavilion.

Wen Yulong, whose face had become slightly rounder, sat at the table and said to Chu Liang, "As you requested, I've scheduled their arrival times very close together, and the waiting room is right next door. The walls have been specially treated to ensure they're not soundproof."

"Excellent. You've worked hard these past few days," Chu Liang said, glancing at Wen Yulong. "You've worked so hard that you've even gained some weight."

"Hehe, it's no trouble at all," Wen Yulong replied with a wave of his hand. "Manager Zhang from Precious Pill Pavilion should be arriving soon. I'll go greet him."

Precious Pill Pavilion was the same shop where Chu Liang had previously bought Spirit-Concentration Pills. It was one of the largest pill shops in Taotie City and had assisted Chu Liang in contacting several other pill shops for their stock.

Later, when they discovered that the market demand for Spirit-Concentration Pills far exceeded supply, they realized the reason why Chu Liang had made that purchase. And so, Elder Sun quickly contacted Wen Yulong, expressing his eagerness to buy back the Spirit-Concentration Pills.

When Chu Liang arrived in Taotie City today, Elder Sun immediately sent his steward over to negotiate, and Chu Liang gladly agreed to the meeting.

"Young Hero Chu!"

Before long, Wen Yulong walked over with a middle-aged cultivator. The man had a long, thin face and sharp eyes. Although his cultivation level was not high, he appeared quite shrewd.

"Manager Zhang," Chu Liang greeted, rising from his seat.

"Young Hero Chu, your foresight is impressive. I must commend you for that," Manager Zhang remarked with a smile.

Even the most oblivious could see that Chu Liang's purchase was no coincidence. Who would just so happen to buy such a large quantity of Spirit-Concentration Pills for no reason? Considering the consequences, it was clear that he intended for the purchase to influence the market.

"It was just a coincidence," Chu Liang replied with a smile.

"The demand is currently high and urgent. Let's not beat around the bush," Manager Zhang said with a straightforward approach. "When you initially requested a discount, Precious Pill Pavilion readily offered it in good faith to foster a positive relationship with you. Now, we are proposing to repurchase this batch of Spirit-Concentration Pills at the original price. Would you consider this offer, Young Hero Chu?"

The original price he referred to was one sword coin for two pills, whereas Chu Liang had purchased them at a discounted rate of two sword coins for five pills.

With 150,000 Spirit-Concentration Pills, Chu Liang could instantly make a net profit of 15,000.

However, the discount was mutually agreed upon initially. Without it, Chu Liang would not have made the purchase, and Precious Pill Pavilion had also profited significantly from the deal. However, if Chu Liang mentioned that the Precious Pill Pavilion had also made money, it would seem like he was pressuring Manager Zhang and making Manager Zhang feel uneasy or guilty.

The market price had increased significantly since Chu Liang's purchase. Manager Zhang's mention of good faith was aimed at securing additional profit from Chu Liang.

But if Chu Liang refused, he might gain a reputation for being untrustworthy. With him being new to Taotie City, this could make things more difficult for him in the city.

With just a few light-hearted words, Manager Zhang had forced Chu Liang into a state of dilemma.

Chu Liang smiled as he stood up and walked slowly towards the wall, speaking loudly, "Elder Sun has indeed treated me well. While one sword coin for two pills is much lower than the current market price, it's not out of the question..."

"You can't agree to it!"

The room door was suddenly pushed open with a bang.

It was Manager Liu from Charming Pill Pavilion in the city. He had been waiting in the room next-door for his meeting with Chu Liang. Upon hearing Chu Liang mention selling a large quantity of Spirit-Concentration Pills at one sword coin for two pills, he couldn't remain seated any longer.

Charming Pill Pavilion had always been the biggest competitor of Precious Pill Pavilion. How could he stand by and allow Precious Pill Pavilion to gain such a significant advantage?

"Manager Liu, what are you doing..." Chu Liang said, appearing somewhat flustered. "Weren't we scheduled to meet later?"

"I was waiting, but I couldn't sit still when I heard that you were about to be deceived," Manager Liu said loudly, "One sword coin for two pills may be the original price, but the current price of Spirit-Concentration Pills in Taotie City has skyrocketed. This is practically robbery! Listen to me, Young Hero Chu, Charming Pill Pavilion will certainly offer you a much better price!"

"We're in the middle of a business negotiation. Why are you interfering?" Manager Zhang retorted, clearly angered. How could he not be frustrated when the profit that was within his grasp had just slipped through his fingers?

Manager Zhang continued shouting, "Business is all about negotiation. If Young Hero Chu wants to sell at a low price out of consideration for our friendship, or at a high price, we can discuss it. What's it to you? Don't you understand the principle of first come, first served?"

At that moment, a faint glow suddenly flashed between the ankles of the two and disappeared instantly.

It was the Chain of Resentment...

Manager Liu, who was already anxious, stared at Manager Zhang's face and suddenly felt an inexplicable surge of anger. "To hell with first come, first served!" he shouted.

He actually threw a punch!

But before he could even swing his punch, the even angrier Manager Zhang had already acted!

The two of them immediately started brawling!

Chu Liang and Wen Yulong couldn't just stand by. They each grabbed one of them, shouting, "Stop fighting!"

The brawl spread from the private room to the bustling first-floor hall. Immediately, the fight caught the attention of those in the hall, and people began discussing it loudly.

"What's going on?" asked many curious onlookers.

"Hehehe! I know!" At that moment, a helpful insider laughed loudly. "The supply of Spirit-Concentration Pills is getting very low, and those two managers from the pill shops are fighting over buying them!"[1]

"What?" The crowd exclaimed in surprise. "Has the supply of Spirit-Concentration Pills gotten this bad?"

...

Meanwhile, three streets away, a crowd had gathered, creating a commotion over another matter.

This place was called the Pavillion of Celestial Fate.

The Pavilion of Celestial Fate stood out as one of the premier large-scale sellers of valuable items in Taotie City. Its wide array of goods rivaled the resources of a major immortal sect.

A small portion of the goods were sourced or acquired directly by the Pavilion of Celestial Fate itself, but most were consigned by outsiders for sale. At the start of each month, the Pavilion of Celestial Fate hosted an auction where rare and unique items often appeared and sold for very high prices.

Today, seven days before the auction, was the day when the Pavilion of Celestial Fate displayed the items to be auctioned to the public.

Each time this occurred, a crowd would gather to see if there was anything they desired, while others simply enjoyed the excitement.

On the white jade board hanging outside the pavilion, rows of large characters in golden light described the items, including treasures like the Millennium Jade Lingzhi and the Fiery Qilin Egg.

But there was one item that was the most eye-catching.

"The Demon-Subduing Pestle!" someone exclaimed.

"Is it Mount Shu's Demon-Subduing Pestle?" someone asked.

"How could it be Mount Shu's? Mount Shu lost it in a hidden realm four hundred years ago. According to the rules of the martial world, whoever retrieves it from the hidden realm afterward owns it!" someone shouted.

"This was one of Mount Shu Sect's six demon-eliminating treasures, a famous item that once shocked everyone. Now all six of these treasured items are scattered all over the continent, which is really sad," someone sighed.

"..."

Mount Shu once possessed six demon-eliminating treasures: the Demon-Suppressing Pagoda, the Demon-Slaying Sword, the Demon-Cutting Saber, the Demon-Binding Rope, the Demon-Subduing Pestle, and the Demon-Smashing Hammer...

Apart from the Demon-Suppressing Pagoda, which ranked first, the other five were also among the top hundred in the Catalog of the Mortal World's Ten Thousand Treasures. While the Demon-Suppressing Pagoda achieved glory in subduing the demon god, the other five treasures also played crucial roles in supporting this achievement.

Over the years, one by one, the six demon-eliminating treasures disappeared. Eventually, even the most crucial Demon-Suppressing Pagoda went missing.

And now, only the Demon-Smashing Hammer remained in possession of the Mount Shu Sect.

In recent years, the Mount Shu Sect had been diligently searching for information about the six treasures, hoping to once again gather them and restore their former glory.

Who would have thought that they would see the name of the Demon-Subduing Pestle displayed outside the Pavilion of Celestial Fate today!

Chapter 320: Fanghu

Mount Shu, Heaven-Reaching Peak.

At this moment, Venerable Wen Yuan and the four Guardian Elders, along with Wang Xuanling, the grand peak master, Old Man Sikong, the peak master of Solitude Peak, and Tantai Jing, the peak master of Rain Cedar Peak, were in the Boundless Palace. There were no more than ten people, all with serious expressions, discussing important matters.

Apart from the ones at the highest positions of Mount Shu, which included the sect leader and the Guardian Elders, the other three—Wang Xuanling, being the grand peak master; Old Man Sikong, being known for his virtue; and Tantai Jing, being known for his wisdom—were often called upon for important matters.

These individuals constituted Mount Shu's current decision-making team. Only for major public matters would all thirty-five peak masters be called to a meeting.

As for Di Nufeng, she usually disliked attending such gatherings because they interfered with her sleep. If she did attend, it meant that others preferred not to come...

So she was only called for particularly significant matters.

"Pavilion of Celestial Fate is unwilling to sell the Demon-Subduing Pestle to Mount Shu in advance but said they would give us a 10 percent discount on the final auction price," Wang Xuanling said in a deep voice.

"10 percent off?" The Alchemy Master responded, "That's quite a discount."

"As expected, it's not possible for us to get it before the others," the Conservation Master said with a sigh.

With the Pavilion of Celestial Fate establishing such a significant presence in Taotie City, they had to ensure their credibility remained intact. If the immortal sects in the Divine Nine and Terrestrial Ten could purchase the displayed items in advance, it would undermine the purpose of holding an auction.

However, they still had to show some respect to Mount Shu, hence offering a 10% discount as a gesture of goodwill. This decision was understandable.

"The Mount Shu Sect must get the Demon-Subduing Pestle back," the Discipline Master said firmly. "The Mount Shu Sect has made great achievements through the six demon-eliminating treasures. Since it has resurfaced, we must bring it back!"

"That's true, but the people from the Penglai Supreme Sect might also compete with us..." Old Man Sikong said, "After all, they have the Demon-Cutting Saber. They probably want to gather all six demon-eliminating treasures too."

A few years ago, the Mount Shu Sect had some minor conflicts with the Penglai Supreme Sect precisely because of the six demon-eliminating treasures.

A long time ago, a senior of the Mount Shu Sect entered the Profound Darkness Hidden Realm with the Demon-Cutting Saber and died there, which resulted in the Mount Shu Sect losing the Demon-Cutting Saber.

A few decades ago, Daoist Chi Niu[1] from the Penglai Supreme Sect found this legendary weapon in the Profound Darkness Hidden Realm.

According to the customary rules of the immortal realm, if a sect's members lost a valuable item in a hidden realm for many years, it would become an ownerless treasure. Whoever finds it during their exploration of the hidden realm would get to keep it.

However, given the extraordinary significance of the six demon-eliminating treasures, the Mount Shu Sect went to negotiate, hoping to exchange other valuable items for the Demon-Cutting Saber. This was quite reasonable.

But Daoist Chi Niu was deeply fond of the Demon-Cutting Saber and directly rejected Mount Shu's offer for a trade.

Even without considering the synergy between the six demon-eliminating treasures, the Demon-Cutting Saber alone could rank among the top hundred in the Catalog of the Mortal World's Ten Thousand Treasures. Treasures of this level were indeed not something people would easily exchange.

After some disputes, the matter was eventually left unresolved.

With the appearance of the Demon-Subduing Pestle this time, there was an eighty percent chance that the Penglai Supreme Sect would compete for it. After all, the six demon-eliminating treasures complemented each other, and possessing two together would significantly enhance their power.

"Yes, such a legendary weapon at an auction will undoubtedly fetch a sky-high price," mused the Supervising Elder. "How can Mount Shu compete with Penglai when it comes to wealth?"

The emergence of a legendary weapon would inevitably spark a bidding frenzy, and it was no surprise if the final price soared to extraordinary heights.

The Penglai Supreme Sect, renowned for its three resource-rich islands teeming with countless spirit plants, was considered the most blessed land of an immortal sect in the nine provinces. In comparison, Mount Shu's financial and martial strength seemed somewhat inadequate.

With sufficient materials, the Mount Shu Sect could make as many sword coins as they desired. However, the downside was that if those sword coins ended up in the hands of others, they could use them to exchange for Mount Shu's resources.

If the Mount Shu Sect make a large number of sword coins to purchase the item and intentionally raised the prices of their own resources, they might gain a temporary advantage. However, the consequences would be severe: they would become isolated, and their reputation would be ruined.

This consequence was more severe than missing out on the legendary weapon.

The Discipline Master pondered for a moment before suddenly saying, "Why not just take it by force?"

"Pfft—" Tantai Jing nearly spit out his tea and quickly said, "Discipline Master, think carefully. Seizing a legendary weapon by force in Taotie City would ruin Mount Shu's reputation instantly... it's not worth it!"

After a pause, he continued, "We will compete with Penglai in this auction. With the right strategy, we might not necessarily lose. We are able to rally the full strength of our entire sect, while Penglai is deeply divided due to its factions. At most, we'll be up against the Fanghu faction."

The Penglai Immortal Realm was a collective term for the three immortals' islands—Penglai, Fanghu, and Yingzhou

Initially, the Penglai Supreme Sect resided on Mirage Mountain, while the members of the Penglai Secondary Sect were distributed across the three islands.

However, after a competition of growth with the Heavenly Star Divine Cult, the number of disciples in the Penglai Supreme Sect surged, making Mirage Mountain too small to accommodate everyone. Consequently, the sect ordered all its members to relocate to the three islands.

Now, only those who reached the seventh realm were qualified to establish a cave dwelling on the cloud-covered Mirage Mountain above the three islands, where they could live with their families and disciples.

This move had an unforeseen consequence at the time: Mirage Mountain was no longer a unified entity. Due to the Eminent Ones who moved to Mirage Mountain coming from different locations, the members were naturally split into three factions.

Each Eminent One wanted to direct resources to their own island, promoting their young talents to eventually become their right-hand person.

Over time, the divisions among the three factions deepened further.

Since the current sect leader originated from the Penglai Island, the Penglai faction was currently the strongest. For instance, Yang Yuhu's teacher, Daoist Huang Long, whom Chu Liang had met, as well as Daoist Bai Lin, the one who visited Mount Shu previously were part of the Penglai faction.

However, the Fanghu and Yingzhou factions were powerful as well. After all, Penglai was a huge sect with very deep roots, which meant that Fanghu and Yingzhou also had a strong foundation. Daoist Chi Niu, who possessed the Demon-Cutting Saber, was from the Fanghu faction.

Naturally, the members of the other two factions wouldn't assist him in competing for the legendary weapon at the auction.

Venerable Wen Yuan listened to their discussion for a while, then slightly raised his hand and ordered, "Weapons Master and Tantai Jing, take out 80% of the sword coins from the treasury and head to Taotie City to participate in the auction. The Demon-Subduing Pestle has been a legendary weapon of Mount Shu for thousands of years; please ensure that you bring it back."

Tantai Jing and the Weapons Master solemnly accepted the order, responding, "Yes!"

...

"I've never seen this much money in my life..." Wen Yulong exclaimed, staring at the several storage enchanted tools on the table.

These storage enchanted tools were filled to the brim with Vermillion-Bird coins.

After the commotion at the restaurant, rumors about the shortage of Spirit-Concentration Pills spread like wildfire. Many cultivators, who had been holding off in hopes of a price drop, scrambled to make urgent purchases to secure their supply.

Seeing this, the pill shops immediately and eagerly sought out Chu Liang.

With so many people surrounding him, Chu Liang naturally couldn't "in good conscience" sell all the pills to the Precious Pill Pavilion. Instead, he divided his Spirit-Concentration Pills into five portions and sold them to five large pill shops at a rate of three pills for two Vermillion-Bird coins.

However, the portion for the Precious Pill Pavilion was sold at a slightly reduced price.

The special treatment that the Precious Pill Pavilion received led Elder Sun to personally thank Chu Liang. In his eyes, Chu Liang was a young hero who was both faithful and loyal.

The other pill shops knew that Chu Liang had sourced his Spirit-Concentration Pills from the Precious Pill Pavilion, so they had no objections. Even at this price, they could still make a considerable profit.

Eager to make a profit, the pill shops rushed to sell their stock quickly. They knew that the sudden influx of Spirit-Concentration Pills would drive prices down, and anyone who was slow to sell would end up taking a loss.

Wen Yulong watched Chu Liang's entire operation in amazement.

Through this series of maneuvers, Chu Liang turned 60,000 sword coins into 100,000 Vermillion-Bird coins, which were nearly equivalent in value, netting a profit of 40,000. Additionally, he secured the friendship of several major pill shops in Taotie City, ensuring smoother dealings in the future. Chu Liang gained both respect and wealth.

He made money off them, and they still had to thank him.

This was quite magical.

"It was thanks to your help this time. Is there anything you want to buy?" Chu Liang asked with a smile. "I'll pay for it."

Wen Yulong's eyes lit up immediately. "Really?"

"Well..." Chu Liang thought for a moment and handed over an enchanted storage tool. "Never mind, I'll just give you a bonus."

The storage tool contained 1,000 sword coins, which was no small amount for Wen Yulong.

However, the bonus was merely a drop in the bucket, not enough for the materials that would make his whimsical ideas come true.

If Wen Yulong was allowed to indulge in any purchases, Chu Liang might end up crying on his way back to Mount Shu.

"Thank you, Senior Brother Chu." Wen Yulong accepted the bonus without complaint and then asked, "Now that the Spirit-Concentration Pills are sold, what are we going to do? Are we heading back?"

"No rush. Since we made money, we have to spend it," Chu Liang replied. "There's something I want to buy. I'm not sure if Taotie City has it."

"What is it?" Wen Yulong asked.

"Human-Faced Xiao," Chu Liang replied.

This ghastly entity enabled the unboxing of Large-Headed Dolls, which, while not as powerful as other enchanted tools, were crucial for Chu Liang's cultivation growth.

It was all thanks to the Large-Headed Dolls bearing the burden that he could live such a peaceful life.

For these hardworking Large-Headed Dolls that worked everyday without taking a break, Chu Liang has only four words: the more, the better.

However, the Human-Faced Xiao was extremely rare. Despite his long search, Chu Liang had yet to encounter a third one. Now that he was in Taotie City, renowned for gathering treasures from across the nine provinces, he realized it was an opportune moment to resume his quest of searching for this entity.

"Isn't that a very rare ghost? What do you need it for, Senior Brother Chu?" Wen Yulong asked with curiosity.

Chu Liang paused for a moment, then replied mysteriously, "I have a connection with this entity."

Wen Yulong glanced at the figure before him, who spoke in riddles, and decided not to inquire further. Instead, he suggested, "Let's explore around the area tomorrow. If we can't find it, we can submit a request at the Pavilion of Celestial Fate. They specialize in finding treasures and will notify us as soon as they have any news."

Chu Liang smiled as he said, "That sounds perfect."