

M. Slaying 76

Chapter 76: The Dual Talismanic Sword of Ice and Fire

During his free time at the Li Family Estate, Lin Bei was engrossed in watching the auditions. Chu Liang, on the other hand, chose to cultivate on his own.

Their accommodation was in an elegant and serene courtyard separate from the main part of the Li Family Estate. They were being treated pretty well there.

Chu Liang was currently studying and practicing the Talismanic Sword Seal in this secluded courtyard.

After cultivating for a period on Mount Shu, he had reached a high level of proficiency with the Talismanic Sword Seal and was now quite good at using the Dual Talismanic Sword of Wind and Fire.

Chu Liang wanted to increase the number of talismanic characters that he could use simultaneously to three. However, it would be significantly more challenging to do that, as it was related to the strength of his divine sense. Nevertheless, his cultivation level was currently at the later stage of the Spiritual Awareness Realm, so he should be able to surpass the Dual Talismanic Sword soon.

In this situation, Chu Liang was not content with leaving things as they were, so he proceeded to study and practice more talismanic characters and combinations. He already had the basics down, so if he continued mastering more characters, he would be able to use more character combinations with the sword seal as his cultivation advanced.

The talismanic character he was currently practicing was the character for ice.

Of the five elements, the character for fire was the most fundamental talismanic character, and many combinations could be formed with it as the base. The Dual Talismanic Sword of Wind and Fire, which Chu Liang had already mastered, was an example of this. The wind would borrow the momentum of fire, enhancing the power of the wind. He could achieve a significant increase in power this way.

Similarly, if he learned the character for thunder[2], he would be able to form the combination for a Dual Talismanic Sword of Thunder and Fire or the Dual Talismanic Sword of Wind and Thunder.

Making Dual Talismanic Sword combinations with a mix of wind, fire, and thunder would drastically increase the power of the sword seal.

If he learned the character for wood as well, then he could form the Dual Talismanic Sword of Wood and Fire. He'd be able to use the wood character to expedite the activation of the fire character and unleash an extremely powerful fire from the sword seal.

These combinations had their own distinguishing features, but in Chu Liang's view, these talismanic sword seals that purely enhanced the power of the elements were quite similar to the Dual Talismanic Sword of Wind and Fire in that aspect. They would not contribute any substantial changes to his development.

However, the talismanic character for ice was different.

Among the Dual Talismanic Swords, there was a special existence—the Dual Talismanic Sword of Ice and Fire. It was different from the sword seal combinations that produced amplified power through a synergy of the elements.

What made the Dual Talismanic Sword of Ice and Fire special was its combination of two completely different elements. The joint powers of ice and fire produced an incredible force capable of breaking the opponent's defenses as easily as crushing dry weeds and smashing rotten wood. Such a power was very special.

Chu Liang had only known that the characters of ice and fire could form such a wonderful combination after learning about it from The True Dao of Talisman-Making. That's why the character for ice was the third character he'd chosen to learn.

The process of mastering the character for ice wasn't difficult for Chu Liang, as he had experience with learning the previous characters. The character was slightly more complex, but it was just a matter of practicing it a few more times.

He tried out the Ice Talismanic Sword once. The sword qi left a chilling gust of cold air wherever it passed by. If someone were to be hit by this sword, the wound would be filled and sealed off with ice, causing even greater damage than an ordinary sword would.

However, the Dual Talismanic Sword of Ice and Fire was ten times more challenging to use than the Dual Talismanic Sword of Wind and Fire. The elements of ice and fire were in opposition to each other, so they couldn't simply be combined. The moment the talismanic characters activated, they

would collide and explode overhead before the elements could even emerge. The collision of ice and fire would produce quite the explosion.

After pondering over it some more, Chu Liang realized the key was that he could not let the two talismanic characters collide. He had to control them simultaneously with his sword qi. This involved the concept of exercising fine control, which was unsurprisingly connected to various aspects of cultivation.

Chu Liang had deliberately trained to improve the dexterity of his divine sense, so it might already be better than that of many cultivators who were also in the later stage of the Spiritual Awareness Realm. Yet, he still felt that it wasn't good enough. That was because he was aiming to do much more than was the norm for his cultivation level; his peers wouldn't have attempted as many complicated sword seal combinations.

After a morning of practice, Chu Liang finally managed to successfully use and see his Dual Talismanic Sword of Ice and Fire take effect. The power it brought forth was not at all weaker than that of the Dual Talismanic Sword of Wind and Fire, but it had a stronger ability to break through things. The destructive power of the alternating bombardment of ice and fire was incredible.

However, Chu Liang's rate of success with this combination was rather low. He had attempted it ten times and only succeeded thrice.

Chu Liang pondered for a while and felt that he'd done all he could to perfect the execution of this combination. Nonetheless, achieving success still depended partly on luck, so there really wasn't anything he could do about that.

"Oh!"

While Chu Liang was thinking about luck, the image of a person suddenly appeared in his mind.

He immediately went to the upper floor of the pavilion and knocked on the door of a room.

"What's the matter?" Liu Xiaoyu'er asked groggily as she opened the door.

This little girl had been asleep since yesterday evening. It was quite possible that she wouldn't have wanted to get up at all if it hadn't been for Chu Liang's knock at the door.

"Miss Xiaoyu'er, could you please help me?" Chu Liang requested with a smile.

He pushed the little girl all the way to the center of the courtyard.

With the dazzling sunlight shining down on her head, Liu Xiaoyu'er finally opened her eyes fully and said, "What do you want me to do?"

"All you have to do is stand there," Chu Liang replied. "Um... you could also silently wish me success."

The little girl was puzzled. "'Wish me success'?"

"Wish Chu Liang success," Chu Liang said, emphasizing the object of the wish.

By doing so, he saved himself the trouble of having to discuss with her about the way humans addressed themselves and each other.[1]

So, Liu Xiaoyu'er just stood there, utterly confused.

After that, Chu Liang activated his flying sword and continued his training.

"Ice... and fire... go!"

Swoosh, swoosh, swoosh, swoosh, swoosh—

The flying sword drew a ghostly streak of silver light through the air, accompanied by the sound of a blade piercing through the wind. Much like a shooting star, the flying sword led the way for two surging and intertwining streams of red and white and then landed in the distance with a loud rumble.

Boom—

After the dust settled, it revealed a charred pit that was covered in frost.

"It really..." Chu Liang muttered while blinking, "seems to be somewhat effective?"

He continued to use the Dual Talismanic Sword of Ice and Fire nine more times in a row, making for a total of ten times. The tenth attempt failed due to his depleted foundational qi, but the other nine times had succeeded!

Chu Liang's success rate had improved drastically from thirty percent to ninety percent.

Was this the magic of the Koi fish?

He looked at Liu Xiaoyu'er and wondered whether his future rewards would have outstanding effects if he had her around.

Feeling bored, the little girl let out a yawn and asked with narrowed eyes, "Is there anything to eat? I'm hungry."

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Chu Liang quickly called one of the Li Family Estate's maids to cook some food for Liu Xiaoyu'er.

Coincidentally, Manager Cui came looking for Chu Liang at this moment to tell him about something.

"I've got some information on that girl you asked me to inquire about yesterday," Manager Cui said in a hushed voice.

"Oh?" Chu Liang uttered.

Manager Cui continued explaining, "A young lady with a resemblance to Miss Liu was indeed spotted in the estate two days ago. At that time, the son of the Mountain-Subjugating Marquess was hosting a banquet in the estate. Some people saw her chatting with the Lord of the Marquessate for a while, but her whereabouts afterward is unknown. If you're thinking of searching for her, we've already done so and could not find her anywhere in the estate. However, the Lord of the Marquessate may know about her whereabouts."

"The Mountain-Subjugating Marquess?"

It was Chu Liang's first time hearing this title.

Manager Cui then gave Chu Liang a quick explanation as to who the Mountain-Subjugating Marquess was.

After Emperor Yu's takeover of the throne, he awarded titles to many imperial families, ministers, and influential officials for their meritorious services. Most of them had been from the poor and barren Western and Southern Regions.

After many years of hereditary succession of the titles, those families had long lost any semblance of real authority. Nevertheless, they remained as highly respected families.

The Mountain-Subjugating Marquess in South Gate City was a genuine kin of the imperial family, and his surname was Xia.

"I see..." Chu Liang said. "Then let's go find that Lord of the Marquessate and ask him."

"I've already sent a letter to inquire about the young lady in question, but considering the esteemed status of the marquess' family, it might take them quite a long time to respond to such an inquiry. Miss Xue will be arriving in South Gate City tomorrow, and we'll be holding a banquet here then. Distinguished figures of the city will be attending, and the Lord of the Marquessate is one of them. Perhaps you and the other young hero could attend the banquet as representatives of the Mount Shu Sect and ask him then?" Manager Cui suggested.

"That sounds good." Chu Liang nodded. "Many thanks, Manager Cui."

"Oh, it's no matter," Manager Cui replied with a smile.

Chu Liang was about to say a few more words out of politeness, but he felt a subtle change in the White Pagoda.

It was the Crimson Executioner. This righteous sword had emitted its signal.

Chu Liang's eyebrows twitched.

Is there a bad guy around?