

Young Noble Be Monster Slaying

Chapter 3: Sword Exchange Pavilion

Chu Liang gazed at his teacher confusedly, almost as if he had a question mark on his forehead.

He couldn't help but express, "Esteemed Teacher, Jade Sword Peak is the most powerful among all the peaks in our sect. They have nearly a hundred disciples, and they have a few members who are well-known for having reached the Golden Core Realm. They do indeed have the highest chances of becoming the head disciple. As for me... I only just broke through the Spiritual Awareness Realm a few days ago."

The head disciple represented the face of every new generation of disciples in the Mount Shu Sect. The competition for such a position was undoubtedly intense.

Meanwhile, having the position of grand peak master meant being the most prestigious, respected, and powerful figure among the thirty-six peak master. If the situation were to arise that the Four Guardian Elders were unable to become the sect leader, the grand peak master would be the next in line to be the new sect leader.

As for Di Nufeng... she was infamous as the scourge of the Mount Shu Sect—a heavy drinker who was skilled in combat and had an extremely fiery temper, so much so that she was well-known all over the martial community for it.

Despite that, Di Nufeng had stubbornly fought for and won the position of a peak master with the powerful abilities she had cultivated. However, Mount Shu's Sect Leader had been reluctant to assign her any disciples, fearing that she might be a bad influence on them.

Later on, she descended the mountain to perform heroic deeds, and that was when she personally selected and took in Chu Liang, who had the aptitude for cultivation, to be her disciple. No one could say anything about it since she'd brought him back to the sect herself. Then once she discovered that there wasn't much fun in having a disciple, she never took in another disciple.

Now, Di Nufeng suddenly wanted her sole disciple to compete for the position of head disciple, and she even wanted to take the position of grand peak master...

Chu Liang was somewhat astonished.

How could she even dare think of attempting such a thing?

Di Nufeng walked over and patted Chu Liang's shoulder. "You don't need to feel so pressured. You should have at least half a year before the summit. Just make sure to prepare for it thoroughly. If you manage to become the head disciple, your teacher, I, will be sure to compensate you fairly. You can ask for anything you want."

Upon hearing that, Chu Liang glanced at Di Nufeng's chest.

"Hey..." Di Nufeng's gaze suddenly sharpened menacingly as she pointed her finger at him. "What are you thinking about?"

"Esteemed Teacher, please don't misunderstand," Chu Liang said. "I was just thinking about how you've staked such a precious treasure, the Phoenix Spirit Blood Jade, for the bet. So, I will definitely prepare for the summit to the best of my abilities. That's for sure. It's just that... it will be quite difficult to win the position of Head Disciple. I hope Master won't blame me if I were to fail."

"Oh, you're just looking at the jade."

Di Nufeng touched the jade pendant hanging from her neck down to her chest and chuckled mischievously.

She continued, "Anyway, just do your part. If you were to become the head disciple and I become the grand peak master, we would have access to a great quantity of resources... Then we could divide those resources between us 30-70. Wouldn't that be wonderful?"

While fantasizing about her bright future, she couldn't help but let out a greedy laugh.

"Heheheheh..."

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Chu Liang walked out of the pavilion and calmed his emotions, preparing to head to his next destination.

It was Mount Shu's main peak, Heaven-Reaching Peak.

Heaven-Reaching Peak was where the sect leader resided in the Boundless Palace. It was a place of great importance for the Mount Shu Sect, much like what a capital city was to a country. It was where the major matters of the sect were handled.

With a flick of his fingers, Chu Liang's bracelet transformed into a flying sword and hovered in a horizontal position in front of him. He stepped onto it, and the sword swiftly departed from Silver Sword Peak.

He rode the sword through the air!

The wind roared in his ears, and beneath the sword was an endless sea of white clouds. The thirty-six peaks emerged from the sea of clouds with a mix of majestic and rugged peaks, resembling hotpot ingredients bubbling to the surface of the boiling hot soup.

There were many trails of light streaking through the mountains; they were all disciples of the Mount Shu Sect, who were rushing to and fro. Those who couldn't fly would have an extremely difficult time moving around the peaks. Occasionally, there were disciples zipping by on the backs of spirit birds and immortal beasts, and the disciples riding flying swords had to make way for them. Those who could raise such creatures as their mounts were generally either a peak master or an Elder of the sect or individuals with an impressive background. It wasn't worth taking the risk of offending any of them.

In the Mount Shu Sect, disciples needed to complete missions on behalf of the sect so that they could make trades for daily necessities and cultivation resources. Sword Exchange Pavilion was where they went to receive their missions.

In the cultivation world, gold, silver, and jewels held no significance for most cultivators. The common currency in the martial world consisted of spirit stones, which were used for smelting and forging, pills that aided with cultivation, talismans for a wide range of uses, and other similar items.

Among them, spirit stones were the most widely accepted.

It was for the same reason that the Mount Shu Sect smelted and forged spirit stones into coins that could be used as a currency within the sect.

In the early days, the manufacturing process of the coins was rather crude. They just ground the spirit stones until they were round and then split them in half. Due to their shape, the coins were then named steamed bun coins.

However, the steamed bun coins were too easy to make, so it wasn't long before some disciples made low-quality counterfeits, which created issues within the sect's economy. Therefore, the sect improved the design and carved the spirit stones into an intricate and exquisite butterfly form. These were named butterfly coins.

Despite being an improved version, butterfly coins were problematic too. The design was too intricate, making it difficult to mass produce. This meant the sect couldn't meet the growing demand.

Ultimately, it was the Sect Leader at the time who came up with the solution. It was to carve the spirit stones into the simple shape of a small sword and then infuse them with a special sword qi, making them easy to manufacture but impossible to replicate.

The Mount Shu Sect had been using these sword coins for thousands of years since then. This was the origin of the name of the exchange center, Sword Exchange Pavilion.

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On the second floor of the Sword Exchange Pavilion...

Despite its grand appearance, the imposing Sword Exchange Pavilion only had three floors. However, it did have a large square footage and a high domed roof, giving it a rather impressive appearance. Most of the affairs were handled by the attendants[1], but there were a few supervising elders who supervised them from upstairs. Additionally, these elders were occasionally needed to resolve the more problematic matters.

Chu Liang arrived at the quiet office of one of the supervising elders.

"Elder Shen, I've come to be a bother to you again," Chu Liang greeted with a smile as he entered the room.

"*Ha!* Oh, young Chu!" said Elder Shen, the supervising elder inside the room who was dressed in loose robes with wide sleeves.

He was a portly and balding elderly man. Nevertheless, he seemed to present himself with a remarkably noble and refined demeanor as he smiled wholeheartedly at Chu Liang.

Elder Shen expressed, "It's no bother at all! You've returned so quickly... I guess you must have completed your mission without a hitch."

"It went relatively smoothly thanks to you, Elder. So, I'm here today to report the completion of the task," Chu Liang replied.

"Sure. Well, there's no hurry for that. Let's have a match first."

Elder Shen waved his sleeves, and a Go [2] board appeared on the table before him. Accompanying the board were two small bowls of playing pieces, one black and the other white.

"I managed to win against you by chance in our last match. It seems you're dissatisfied about that," Chu Liang said with a smile.

He sat down right away, without the slightest intention of rejecting Elder Shen's proposal.

"Of course! I went home and mulled over it for a long time, but I found a way to break your strategy."

Elder Shen made the first move.

"In that case, just like we've always done... If you lose, you'll have to share some inside information with me," Chu Liang replied with a hint of playfulness.

An hour later...

The angle of the sunlight shining in through the window had shifted slightly.

The young man withdrew his hands into his sleeves. He watched the old man opposite him stare fixedly at the Go board, racking his brains to come up with a move that could turn the tables in his favor.

"Elder Shen, it is indeed a deadlock," Chu Liang stated with a smile.

"*Hmm...*" Elder Shen scratched his glossy balding head and glanced at the board a few more times before finally tearing his gaze away.

He shook his head and said, "You little rascal... You're always smiling, looking so innocent as if you wouldn't hurt a fly. Yet, on the Go board, you're unwaveringly ruthless, each move made with the intention to kill."

"Well, it's just luck, really. There were a few times mid-match when my game plan almost fell apart," Chu Liang responded modestly.

"Oh, come on... I can't compete with the keen minds of young folks like you," Elder Shen said. He leaned back, patted his belly, and continued, "In addition to reporting about your completed mission, I assume you're here to pick up a new mission, right?"

"That's right. However, there are too many missions for disciples of the Spiritual Awareness Realm; it's the category with the highest number of listings. There are hundreds of them, and I'm not sure which one I should choose," Chu Liang remarked.

"Let me think for a moment... You prefer demon-slaying missions. Hmm, one of the better ones..." Elder Shen muttered to himself.

Then he raised his hand, and an inscribed bamboo stick flew out from amid the row of bamboo tubes behind him. It landed on his palm, and he handed it to Chu Liang.

"Have a look at this one," Elder Shen said.

Chu Liang took the bamboo stick and saw a line of words written on it in a small font.

Hunt the demons at Official Ming's residence in Xingzhou City.

1. They are disciples who work as attendants in the Sword Exchange Pavilion 劍閣
2. It's an abstract strategy board game that originated in China as 圍棋 weiqi, but it's more famous in the English-speaking world under the name Go, the Japanese name for the game. 碁