

Young Noble Be Monster Slaying

Chapter 4: The Official's Residence

The progression of human cultivators in their practice was divided into three phases of cultivation in the form of gates, with each gate leading to three realms.

Among them, the Mortal Gate emphasized self-cultivation, encompassing the following realms: Body Refinement Realm, Qi-Concentration Realm, and Spiritual Awareness Realm. In the Earthly Gate, cultivators went beyond their physical body, and this phase included the following realms: Golden Core Realm, Realm of the Five Elements, and Transcendence Realm[1]. Lastly, the Heavenly Gate involved the cultivation of the Great Dao and included the realms: Dao Attainment Realm, Heavenly Origin Realm, and Profound Realm[2].

Despite the various cultivation systems practiced by the three major schools of thought[3], martial artists, demonic entities, and other minor sects, they all shared fundamental similarities.

In the Mount Shu Sect, there existed a system where members worked in exchange for resources. While it might seem cruel, it was established as a means to train disciples. In reality, the sect held a strong protective stance towards its disciples. For example, those in the first and second phases of cultivation were restricted from undertaking quests outside the mountain. They could only handle various chores within the sect, including tending to spirit plants, caring for spirit birds, assisting with tasks at the gateway, and handling other miscellaneous duties.

As for those in the Spiritual Awareness Realm, when they ventured into the world, they were regarded as highly skilled cultivators. However, within the Mount Shu Sect, they were only deemed worthy of meeting the requirement for descending the mountain to hunt demons.

While everyone was descending the mountain to exterminate demons, missions came in various forms with significant distinctions. Among them, the most favored missions were the enigmatic cases in wealthy households.

Firstly, there were generally fewer high-level demons lurking within the city walls, making it less dangerous. Secondly, cities were vibrant centers of life, offering opportunities for leisure and entertainment alongside demon hunting. Lastly, wealthy households were known for their generous rewards. In addition to the fees paid to the sect, the subsequent rewards were often substantial and went directly to the demon hunter, making it a highly profitable endeavor.

This was precisely the kind of mission that Elder Shen had selected for Chu Liang.

"Good day, Young Hero Chu!" greeted Official Ming.

"Greetings, Official Ming."

"Young Hero Chu, thank you for your hard work!"

"It's my duty to serve the people."

"..."

Chu Liang arrived at the gates of Xingzhou City on the flying sword. Upon his arrival, he made his way to Official Ming's residence in the city and introduced himself. His presence was met with a warm and enthusiastic welcome.

Official Ming, a slender middle-aged man with a refined demeanor, had a short beard under his chin, leaving a favorable impression. However, the dark circles under his eyes and his exhausted expression indicated that he had been through quite the torment.

Official Ming led Chu Liang over to the main hall[4] of the Ming residence, where they sat down. He then directed his servants to serve them tea.

With deep emotion, Official Ming voiced, "With your arrival, young hero from the Mount Shu Sect, peace will return to our home."

"Why don't you give me a brief overview of what happened first?" Chu Liang asked with a smile.

"Haaa..." Official Ming sighed. He responded, "The Ming Family has been a family of virtue for generations. I don't understand why these strange occurrences are happening..."

"Three days ago, mournful and bone-chilling cat cries began echoing outside the residence, filling the air with a mournful, haunting presence. By the second day, those unsettling cries had reached our front yard. Some servants even claimed to have seen a demonic creature within the residence, exuding a powerful and menacing aura. And just yesterday, those unsettling cries reached our backyard. My wife was greatly disturbed by the sound..."

"Young hero..." Official Ming stared at Chu Liang with utmost sincerity, "If you don't stop it, I fear it may enter my house and harm someone tonight."

Official Ming acted swiftly. On the second day, he sought help from a Daoist temple outside the city.

Flourishing Daoist temples, blessed with a thriving supply of incense and offerings from devoted worshippers, typically had a garrison of cultivators or were affiliated with an

immortal sect. Otherwise, they wouldn't have risen to such prominence. The Daoist temple outside Xingzhou City shared a close connection with the Mount Shu Sect, which was why the request for this mission was promptly forwarded to the Sword Exchange Pavilion of the Mount Shu Sect.

"*Hmm...*" Chu Liang responded, lost in thought for a moment.

The kind of entity that only appears at night, cautiously probing forward step by step, doesn't seem like a demon. It's more akin to a spirit, or what we commonly refer to as a ghost.

After all, if the demon had achieved a certain level of cultivation, their intelligence would be no different from humans, and they wouldn't behave in such an unpredictable manner. Ghosts with lower-level cultivation, who lose their rationality after death, are the only ones who may be driven by lingering grudges from their past lives to engage in some peculiar behaviors.

This cat demon would be an example of that ...

It might have been the spirit of a dead cat.

As Chu Liang thought about this, he asked, "Has anyone in the residence killed a cat during the past few days?"

"Of course not," Official Ming said, shaking his head. "My wife is very compassionate and has always been kind to animals. We even instructed people to care for and feed the stray cats and dogs in the vicinity."

...

It had already been afternoon when Chu Liang arrived at the Ming residence. By the time he was done inquiring about the situation and inspecting the residence, dusk was fast approaching.

The people at the residence promptly arranged a lavish banquet to extend their hospitality.

After all, if they held it any later, the cat demon might appear.

At the banquet table, the sumptuous feast of exquisite delicacies was given. Official Ming and Chu Liang sat there, each attended by a maid. This was a level of treatment Chu Liang had never experienced at Silver Sword Peak.

However, even after waiting for a while, not everyone was present at the banquet. Then, a maid came to report, "Master, Mistress says that she is feeling unwell and her

condition is deteriorating. She is unable to attend the banquet and hopes that Young Hero Chu and Master won't blame her."

"Oh, no..." Official Ming immediately appeared deeply worried. He stood up and turned to Chu Liang, apologizing, "Young Hero Chu, please excuse me. I need to check on my wife. I'll be back shortly."

With that, he scampered off to the backyard, leaving Chu Liang behind.

Chu Liang wasn't bothered by it at all.

He smiled and remarked, "Official Ming and his wife have such a strong bond."

"Yes," a nearby maid said with some envy, "Our master and mistress have been married for ten years and are still stuck together like glue. A few years ago, when Mistress couldn't have children due to illness, she even suggested to the master that he take a concubine and have a child, but Master has always refused to do so."

Another maid sighed and remarked, "Only a woman as beautiful and kind-hearted as our mistress deserves the deep affection and loyalty of our master."

After a while, Official Ming returned in a hurry.

"Is your wife alright?" Chu Liang asked.

"No worries, it's just that because of the evil entities wreaking havoc these past few days, my wife has been greatly disturbed and feeling unwell. As long as we can rid ourselves of this demonic creature, everything will be fine," Official Ming explained.

"I will try my best." Chu Liang said.

Before they could finish the banquet, they heard the wind howling outside.

A ghastly gust of wind, carrying a demonic aura, roared and surged forth, forcefully blowing open the doors to the hall and causing the bowls and chopsticks at the banquet to clatter.

"It's that cat demon! It's here again!" Official Ming gasped and shouted.

Chu Liang quickly darted to the door, carefully sensing the aura of the entity.

There was a strong aura of death. This indicated the presence of a ghost. However, the smell was mixed with a strong demonic wind. Perhaps...

"This is a little strange. You all should hide..." Chu Liang turned back and was about to advise the noncombatants of the Ming Household to hide.

As he looked back, he noticed the entire banquet hall empty, with not a person in sight.

Carried over from a distance by the wind, Official Ming's voice echoed, "We are counting on you..."

Cool.

They certainly made a swift escape.

At first, he had been worried about the safety of the Ming Household, but he now realized that his worries were completely unnecessary. Judging by how fast they had escaped, they would be safe even if the entire Xingzhou City were under attack by the monster.

"Meow—"

Before he had time to think, a shrill and piercing scream erupted. It was a truly eerie and chilling sound.

"Hey!" Chu Liang shouted loudly.

With a wave of his wrist, the flying sword bracelet transformed into a long sword, which he held in his hand as he walked out of the hall.

With a single glance, he noticed the towering air of bloodlust outside!

A monster with the face of a cat crouched on the walls of the courtyard. It had a pair of eerie, lifeless white pupils, and its entire face was covered in black fur stained with blood. It looked very small and young. The strangest thing about this creature was that, although it had the head of a cat, its body resembled that of a human infant. Its entire body was covered in blood but devoid of any fur.

It was grotesque and horrifying!

As Chu Liang laid eyes on the creature, an icy shiver raced down his spine, and an ominous foreboding gripped his heart.

This creature... was a vengeful spirit, born from overwhelming resentment—a spirit of an unborn child. Due to the circumstances of its death, its vengeance was ten times stronger than that of ordinary spirits. Moreover, this creature was also a demonic spirit, formed after the death of a demonic creature.

No wonder it was so eerie. Vengeful spirits, infant spirits, demonic spirits—these types of spirits were each considered a rather unique entity among ghosts.

However, the creature before Chu Liang was clearly... an amalgamation of them all!

1. Longer version: shaping of the Golden Core, mastery of the five elements, and transcendence of the physical form. ☞
2. Longer version: the pursuit of Dao, the attainment of heavenly origin, and the understanding of the profound and mysterious. ☞
3. The three schools of thoughts are Daoism, Confucianism, and Buddhism ☞
4. The Western equivalent would be a drawing room. ☞