

Slaughter 81

Chapter 81 – Obsession

In the silence of the night, the two carriages slowly left Xuelai City one after another.

Xuelai City was last city on the way to the Dead Swamp. Between the Dead Swamp and Xuelai City was a forest of medium sized trees, through which a narrow path had been cleared for use by mercenaries and traders.

On the carriage in front, Chu Ping was waving his whip in a relaxed manner.

Zhu Shi and Wu Yunlian's soft giggles could be heard from the carriage every now and then. They seemed to be happily chatting all the way.

In the carriage behind them, Han Feng and Ku Long were sitting outside, occasionally uttering some words.

Most of the time, they were both on alert and kept an eye on the surroundings.

Shi Yan was completely silent in his carriage.

For the past dozens of days, apart from meals, Shi Yan hardly got out of the carriage.

Every time he got out of the carriage, he wore a tired face with furrowed brows, seeming to be bothered about something.

Late at night.

The two carriages had stopped beside a brook in the forest. Zuo Shi and Wu Yunlian got off the carriage and walked to the brook, using the water to rinse their faces.

Before long, the two came back with some water to find that it was completely silent inside the other carriage.

"What is that guy doing?"

Wu Yunlian looked at the carriage in confusion, her expression clearly showing bewilderment, "I have hardly seen him get of the carriage. Apart from those times when he got down and wolfed down his food, he has been staying in the carriage all day. And every time he comes out, he is always deep in thought, showing such a miserable face. What a weird kid."

"He has always been a weirdo." Zuo Shi nodded in acknowledgment, "He has such strange hobbies like studying historic relics and ancient languages. No one knows what happens in his brain."

Wu Yunlian laughed alluringly, "Xiao Shi, this guy is really different. Usually such boys would chase you around all day long, and wouldn't go away even when you tried to drive them off. But this one has never looked at you in these ten days! He seems unwilling to come out of the carriage. Really strange."

"Leave him alone. He is a weirdo." Zuo Shi was really surprised by Wu Yunlian's opinion, and realized she was right. Shi Yan had never looked at her while they were on the road.

Though not a self-centered girl, Zuo Shi knew that she was pretty, and the attitude Shi Yan showed towards her was very different from other boys' attitudes.

Shi Yan was at his romantic age, but why was he so indifferent towards women?

Every woman cared about such things, including Zuo Shi. Apart from some confusion, she was also a little angry.

"Get me some water." Shi Yan's indifferent voice came from the carriage.

Ku Long was stunned as he looked to Han Feng and replied, "Feng, do you still have some water?"

Han Feng shook his head, and pointed at Wu Yunlian and Zuo Shi, who were slowly approaching them, "They get the water these days."

Ku Long stuck out his head and looked at Wu Yunlian with a big smile, "Sister, please give me some water, my Young Master is thirsty."

"Tell him to come get it by himself." Zuo Shi pouted and grunted, "Staying in the carriage all day. He must stink! Weirdo!"

Ku Long smiled in embarrassment and leaned to the carriage, "Young Master Yan, Miss Zuo requests you to come out for water."

"Hmm."

Shi Yan replied briefly, drew the curtain and walked out with a withered face.

He looked dumb, his eyes puzzled, seemingly baffled by a certain problem.

Without too much thought, he walked towards Zuo Shi slowly, grabbed the water bag from her hand, and then drank up.

After that, he casually handed the bag back to Zuo Shi, who was rather angry, and turned back for his own carriage while mumbling, "That water was fragrant, so strange..."

"Shi Yan!"

Zuo Shi blushed in anger, "That water bag is mine! Not your Shi family's!"

Shi Yan was shocked by her scream, and finally woke up from his deep thought on the [Seal of Life and Death]. He asked, "So what?"

"Xiao Shi just now drank from this water bag. Hehe. Of course it would be fragrant." Wu Yunlian smiled and joked, "Haha, maybe there's still some of Xiao Shi's saliva in it!"

"Aunt Lian!" Zuo Shi blushed and stamped on the ground, "What the hell are you talking about!"

Ku Long and Chu Ping were stunned, with their faces turning strange. Even Han Feng raised his head secretly to look in their direction.

But soon, the three went on for their own business like nothing had happened, as if no one had heard Wu Yunlian's words or saw Zuo Shi's blushing face.

Shi Yan realized it immediately, but he still pretended to know nothing and smiled, "It's ok. I'm easy-going. I don't hate your saliva at all."

Immediately, he turned back joyfully and got back into the carriage at once, not showing up again.

"Haha! Hahahaha!"

Wu Yunlian laughed too hard to stand steady as her breasts trembled. She suddenly felt that Shi Yan was not boring at all. His casual words were really hilarious.

Zuo Shi was dumbstruck for a while, then her eyes widened and she cursed, "Shi Yan! You bastard!"

"Uncle Han, let's go." Shi Yan's calm voice came from the carriage.

"Okay." Han Feng's mouth formed a strange smile and he urged Ku Long, "Let's go."

Their carriage slowly started moving, and for the first time passed by the other carriage.

Standing there with a red face, Zuo Shi first glanced over at Wu Yunlian, then at the silent Chu Ping, and said angrily, "What are you laughing at? What's so funny? It's not amusing at all! You all are so lame!"

Then she swiftly slipped into the carriage and yelled, "Uncle Ping, be quick! Kick their carriage! Give that bastard a lesson!"

Chu Ping was stunned, and looked to Wu Yunlian miserably.

Wu Yunlian shook her head and jumped onto the carriage. She comforted Zuo Shi, "Come on, Xiao Shi. Don't be angry. He didn't mean it."

"Too rude! He said... he said..." Zuo Shi grunted with indignation, but was too shy to continue.

Shi Yan never took it seriously at all.

In the carriage, Shi Yan was leaning back and frowning, while odd texts flashed across his mind.

The ancient method of the [Seal of Life and Death] quickly flashed through his mind.

Recently, he had wholeheartedly put all of his energy into learning the method.

Even when he was having meals, his brain had never stopped thinking. He was trying so hard to understand the practice process of the seal that he was nearly going insane.

He was that type of person.

Once he was determined to do something, he would focus on it and use everything to realize it, never changing his mind.

After so many years of practicing extreme sports, he came to the conclusion that only with obsession, could one do things perfectly!

[The Seal of Life and Death]! [The Seal of Life and Death]!

At that time, there was only one thought in his mind; to understand the process of the [Seal of Life and Death] as soon as possible.

It was best if he could master the seal before he went into the Dead Swamp.

Only by mastering the seal could he be able to protect himself in the Dead Swamp, and have more opportunities to gain beneficial things.

Closing his eyes, Shi Yan tried to relax, and began to sort out his recent understandings of the method.

After a long while, he willed his Profound Qi to slowly move from his belly to his right arm.

The Profound Qi didn't move fast, but it was concentrated and was refined within his right arm.

As the Profound Qi gathered in his right arm, the latter became transparent, and even the bone and veins in his hand could be seen clearly.

Shi Yan didn't realize the strange changes in his arm.

Eyes closed, he tried to execute the different ideas that he came up with recently, and refined the Profound Qi in his arm many times.

As his arm began to expand, Shi Yan made up his mind and pushed his Profound Qi toward his palm.

"Chee chee chee!"

Wisps of crystal Profound Qi flew out from his fingers like lightning.

Those five streams of Profound Qi looked alive, as they lingered around his fingers but never flew out far.

"Still not correct."

Shi Yan opened his eyes, and gazed at the Profound Qi on his fingertips. His face showed disappointment as he frowned and mumbled to himself, "There must be something wrong. It's not a sign of success. What on earth should I do?"

His mumbles became softer, as he withdrew the Profound Qi from his fingers little by little.

Shi Yan sank deep into his thoughts again, obsessively trying to find the truth of the seal.

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Chapter 82: A Step Further

In the following days, Shi Yan continued to remain in the carriage and no one knew what he was doing.

Altogether, the two carriages travelled in the forest for nine days.

In these nine days, both Zuo Shi and Wu Yunlian would come out time and time again to groom themselves on the riverside and collect water for everyone.

Every time Shi Yan came out, he would bury himself in his food, and when he was done, he would hurry back into the carriage, without acknowledging the others.

It was night again.

The two carriages were parked under the dense foliage of the trees. The horses were released from their reins to graze nearby.

After taking bath, both Zuo Shi and Wu Yunlian were leisurely lying in their carriage, teasing each other in whispers.

Chu Ping, Han Feng, and Ku Long were guarding the carriages and horses, exchanging their cultivation experiences at the same time.

In the carriage of the Shi family.

Shi Yan's face was full of seriousness, his expression never being so dignified. After nine days of relentless study, he was finally able to gain some insights.

His right arm was gleaming in light, and one could see some strange little white spots flowing through the veins in his arm.

Strands of pure concentrated Profound Qi were repeatedly refined in his meridians. He kept using a special method to temper it.

After the seventh time.

Shi Yan's right arm, which was continuously expanding, soon grew a whole lot thicker! His muscles looked ferocious with veins popping out of them, looking very frightening.

"Ha!"

Shi Yan lightly shouted, his eyes grim. He kept his gaze on his right arm, and a thought suddenly struck his mind.

His right arm abruptly let out a strange "popping" sound.

After the Profound Qi was refined seven times, it actually separated into seven different flows. The seven flows of power were dispersed into his meridians, with a clear distinction between them.

When he put his concentration into his Profound Qi, the seven flows of Profound Qi suddenly converged onto his wrist. In an instant, those seven flows turned into one, and a lively aura suddenly gushed out from his right palm!

Shi Yan's eyes suddenly became as bright as the galaxy, he immediately tried to stimulate that light formed by the seven flows of Profound Qi.

"Boom!"

The seven flows of Profound Qi fiercely rushed into his palm. The center of Shi Yan's palm suddenly burst into bright rays. The mass of strange Profound Qi coagulation all of a sudden exploded in his palm!

Countless light specks of Profound Qi instantly filled his palm. They flowed into the lines on his palm, making his hand shine with a strange light.

Suddenly, the countless light specks fiercely shot out from the lines on his palm. The light specks were gleaming and unbelievably, formed into a strange handprint.

A glistening handprint took off and flew out!

Shi Yan's palm continuously exploded six more times, and six identical handprints formed into shape.

The seven handprints were like unleashed horses, and randomly struck the carriage that Shi Yan was in.

"Boom boom boom boom boom boom boom!"

The carriage broke into pieces. The solid wood planks became like sawdust, and flew into the air.

Shi Yan just sat there on the ground with a serious expression. He looked at the smashed carriage and the flying sawdust around him in surprise.

He could clearly feel that one-third of his Profound Qi had been consumed from this single move.

Seven [Life Seals] burst out, and all the Profound Qi that had been gathered in his right arm was instantly sucked dry!

When those seven [Life Seals] shot out, his right arm returned to normal, leaving only a slight tingling feeling.

Zuo Shi and Wu Yunlian jumped out of the Zuo family's carriage in alarm. They gazed at this scene in shock.

On the grass, Chu Ping, Han Feng, and Ku Long were also astonished, their faces full of confusion. They had no idea what happened.

Shi Yan sat on the ground in a daze, he looked for a second, then coughed and said heartlessly, "Uncle Han, I think we have to ride the horses now."

Han Feng's expression was very strange, he slightly nodded, and looked towards him perplexed.

"Young Master Yan, what the hell are you doing?"

Wu Yunlian's flirty little face was full of bewilderment, she stepped up along with Zuo Shi, and looked at Shi Yan weirdly, "Why did you suddenly destroy the carriage? Can you give us an explanation?"

"I got carried away while practicing." Shi Yan shrugged, and said casually, "This is normal. Don't worry about it, the carriage is gone, but the horses are still here, it won't slow you guys down."

"All this time you were in the carriage and refused to come out... was just for practice?" Zuo Shi's pretty face was full of surprise.

"Mmm hmm."

"Silly." Zuo Shi shook her head, and said in disdain, "Training is the most boring thing, your grandpa isn't forcing you or anything, why do you have to put in so much effort?"

"Hobby."

"Psh, I don't believe you."

"Young Master Yan, what is the skill that you're practicing?"

Wu Yunlian hesitated for a second, then her expression also slowly turned normal again, "The power that was unleashed back in that moment, was extremely violent and fierce. That instant explosive force, shouldn't be something that an ordinary Human Realm warrior should have..." Wu Yunlian said thoughtfully.

"It's nothing." Shi Yan smiled, he didn't want to explain further. He stretched and said to Han Feng, "Uncle Han, my stomach is hungry, get me something to eat."

"Okay."

Seeing that Shi Yan didn't want to say anything more, Wu Yunlian didn't ask for more details. She smiled and took Zuo Shi away with her.

After gorging down a bunch of food.

Shi Yan said to Han Feng, "Uncle Han, I'm going to go wash myself. I'll come back in a bit, you don't need to come along."

"Young Master..." Han Feng hesitated.

"It's alright." Waving his hand, Shi Yan reassured him, "I won't walk very far, if there's anything I'll holler. Don't worry."

"Be careful, Young Master."

Shi Yan quickly arrived at the riverbank. He jumped into the river and joyfully took a bath and changed into a fresh set of clothes.

After coming ashore, instead of rushing to return to the gathering point where Han Feng and the rest were, he moved further away from them.

Under an old tree.

Shi Yan's expression was solemn, he suddenly invoked the negative energies in his body!

In the meridians all over his body, there hid the different negative energies of bloodlust, fear, slaughter, and desperation. They all emerged, and under his will, the negative powers all flowed towards his left arm.

The shrivelled left arm was covered with white mist. The mist shifted unpredictably, like the faint shadows of ghosts.

His mind flicked.

Following to the circulation method of the right arm, Shi Yan started invoking the negative energies in his left arm.

Under his control, the already shrivelled left arm became even more shrivelled and shrunken.

Looking at that, it was like as if there was only a layer of skin pressing on his bones, which appeared very strange.

However, as his left arm shriveled up, a mass of extremely evil power started slowly growing.

The thick white mist on his left arm shortly turned pitch black. The arm was also frighteningly black, as if it was heavily toxic.

A mass of maniacal, evil, destructive power quickly condensed in his left arm.

After seven full cycles, the power in his left arm flowed down into his left palm using the same technique as his right arm, and together they burst from his left palm!

“Boom boom boom boom boom boom boom!”

Following the explosion, seven pitch black handprints flew out from his palms.

The destructive power, along with the thick essence of death, all struck the old tree in front of him.

The old tree was as thick as two people’s waists and around a dozen meters tall. It suddenly collapsed onto the ground. The life force of the lush old tree was instantly cut off!

Under the watchful eyes of Shi Yan, the old tree was surrounded by a swirling black energy. The leaves withered with visible speed.

The lively old tree looked like it had instantly reached the end of its lifespan and turned into a withered husk of a tree that could not be deader. The leaves that fell from it promptly lost all traces of life.

The leaves fell onto the ground and the surrounding leaves looked as if they were also affected, and instantly died. The scene was extremely strange.

The [Death Seal]!

Shi Yan’s eyes glinted with an odd light, and his mind was slightly startled.

He knew that the [Death Seal] would be very extraordinary, but what he did not know was that it would have such an astonishing destructive force!

This kind of destructive power was not only astounding in strength, but more importantly, this [Death Seal] additionally came with the power of Death!

It could actually cut off the life force in plants!

The [Death Seal] is already this frightening. If the [Life Seal] and [Death Seal] merged together, forming the true [Seal of Life and Death], what would happen?

Shi Yan took a deep breath in, but he knew that this was not the time to continue experimenting.

He heard the sound of footsteps.

Shi Yan immediately knew that Han Feng and the rest had definitely rushed here. His expression shifted for a moment, then he hurriedly left, and quickly took the same route back.

As expected, Han Feng and Ku Long hastily arrived, they exclaimed from afar, “Young Master, are you alright?”

Wu Yunlian and Zuo Shi also poked their heads out from behind Han Feng, they looked at him surprisingly, like they came to figure out what happened.

They all clearly heard that violent thundering sound back there. And in that sound, there seemed to be a mass of evil power.

This made Han Feng and the rest secretly frightened, their minds filled with confusion.

"It's alright, let's go back." Shi Yan calmly walked towards them, seemingly unconcerned, "I got carried away again while I was practicing, I think it generated some bad phenomenons. But it's nothing, it won't happen next time."

"Shi Yan, what Martial Skill are you practicing? Why do I think what you're practicing is not some ordinary Martial Skill?" Zuo Shi couldn't hold back anymore, her face was full of curiosity.

"Who cares if it's ordinary or not. Any Martial Skill that can kill is a good one!" Shi Yan said indifferently.

"You little guy! Always acting so mysterious! God knows what you're really doing." Zuo Shi curled her lips, feeling a little discontent. She snorted and finally said, "Come on, hurry up. It's been almost a month. If we're late, that Xia girl won't necessarily wait for us."

"Xia Xin Yan..."

Shi Yan murmured, and suddenly remembered the wonderful taste of that woman's lips. His heart could not help but skip a beat. A shady look appeared on his face, and after a long while he finally nodded and said, "Yeah, we should move faster. Don't worry, I won't slow you guys down any more."

"Shi Yan, you can't possibly be thinking of hitting on that woman?" Wu Yunlian's eyes were sharp. From his micro expressions she saw some clues, and then made a fuss, "I'd recommend you to back down! That woman is trouble. From what I see, no man in the Merchant Union would be qualified to make a move on her, not even Beiming Shang!"

"Well I had already tasted her." Shi Yan retorted in his mind.

Shi Yan snorted, then said in disdain, "No matter how noble or how beautiful a woman is, in the end she's going to lay on a man's bed anyway. Xia Xin Yan is no exception!"

"You! You are so vulgar!" Zuo Shi's face flushed, and she shot a glare at him, "How did I not realize this before? So this is your true nature! You are a perverted man too!"

"Bullshit!" Wu Yunlian was also upset, "I've never laid on anyone's bed! You little punk, truly nothing decent can come out of that filthy mouth!"

"Huh, then poor you." Shi Yan was surprised.

"Brat! Why are you getting on my nerves now?" Wu Yunlian clenched her teeth, and said bitterly. She now missed the quiet days back when Shi Yan always hid in the carriage and never came out.

Three li away from Shi Yan and the group.

(One 里 li is a little more than a third of a mile.)

The two towering, giant men looked murderous, and then said angrily, "Mistress, there is a bastard that's talking bad about you!"

Shi Yan's voice was quite loud. And although they were three li apart, the three people from the Misty Pavilion still clearly heard what he said.

"No matter how noble or how beautiful a woman is, in the end she's going to lay on a man's bed anyway. Xia Xin Yan is no exception!"

Xia Xin Yan frowned, as she silently repeated Shi Yan's words in her mind. Her bright eyes flashed with a cold look, and she said indifferently, "Those people are from the Zuo and the Shi families. We don't need to care about them now, soon we will meet with them. Then, at that time, I will see how arrogant that bastard is. He dares to gossip about me behind my back!"

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Chapter 83: Meeting Face to Face

The journey continued.

Shi Yan lost his carriage, so he had to make do with a horse to mediate. But he still found a way to continue practising the [Seal of Life and Death].

Every night, whenever he had free time, he would make an excuse to leave and put into action the knowledge gained throughout the morning.

However, every time he tried to join the [Life Seal] with the [Death Seal], the result was always a failure.

The merging of the [Seal of Life and Death] was very difficult. Every time he formed the [Life Seal] and [Death Seal], he was unable to project them simultaneously.

Either that the [Life Seal] was executed first, or the [Death Seal] suddenly lashed out.

If one wanted to merge them to form the true [Seal of Life and Death], the very first step would be to execute both types of Seals simultaneously.

Only if this was achieved, could the [Seal of Life and Death] be formed.

This required extreme control. It has to be mentioned that the condensing of his Profound Qi and the negative energies must be synergetic; existence of any flaw was out of question!

Shi Yan was aware of this. However, every time he tried to put his thoughts into action, he found the process to be very difficult, and all his attempts ended in total failure.

Noting that they were getting nearer to the Dead Swamp day by day, Shi Yan stopped his practice. After all, the simultaneous consumption of Profound Qi and negative energy was huge.

Every time he practiced, his body would weaken for a while.

Especially when forming the [Death Seal].

It required using [Rampage] first, however there would always be some backlash. In order to be in top condition while in the Dead Swamp, Shi Yan reluctantly stopped his attempts.

Determined that he wasn't going to stress out anymore, Shi Yan was more relaxed. As he no longer spent his time in meditation for the upcoming journey, he had plenty of time to interact with the two girls, Wu Yunlian and Zuo Shi.

While travelling together for some time, Shi Yan gained some understanding of Wu Yunlian and Zuo Shi. They didn't especially get along very well, but they didn't have any conflicts either.

On this day.

Shi Yan was riding his horse alongside the carriage of Zuo family. His expression was serene, and he was still deep in thought about the [Seal of Life and Death].

"Young Master, we're here." At this moment, Han Feng pointed forward, and said quietly, "The people from Misty Pavilion are already waiting."

Shi Yan stared and gazed into the distance, spotting three black dots.

Wu Yunlian also stuck her head out, looking into the distance. She then whispered, "Everyone be careful. Misty Pavilion is an outsider to us. That woman can reach the Sky Realm, so let's just watch out."

Hearing that, everyone nodded.

Shi Yan, however, furrowed his brows slightly. He didn't know how Xia Xin Yan would react after seeing him.

On that day, before Xia Xin Yan fainted, she had clearly seen him. Xia Xin Yan definitely knew now why she was at the Misty Rain House.

During this meeting, who knows if Xia Xin Yan would interrogate him or not.

But Shi Yan wasn't particularly worried. At the Misty Rain House, the only time he really violated Xia Xin Yan was when she was unconscious.

Xia Xin Yan should not know what he had done.

Xia Xin Yan never separated far from Shi Yan and the rest. Although she had nonchalantly tossed out the half-part of the map, inwardly she was still cautious of them. She was constantly on guard towards the Shi and Zuo families in order to prevent them from taking any covert action without her knowledge.

That day, when Shi Yan had commented on her, she had heard it clearly. She was naturally agitated from inside.

But when she saw Shi Yan, she recognised him as the one who had brought her to the brothel. This made her even angrier.

What happened that day was deeply imprinted into her memory.

Many times in the past several nights, whenever Xia Xin Yan woke, she would still feel herself lying in the Misty Rain House...

And whenever she thought about it, she would imagine herself lying unconscious on the ground while that guy enjoyed himself with the two prostitutes right in front of her.

She felt unreasonably angry.

Finally, Shi Yan was right in front of her.

Xia Xin Yan only glanced at Shi Yan once, then she pointed at him and said coldly, "You follow me, I have some things to ask you."

Wu Yunlian, Zuo Shi, and Han Feng were all shocked. They looked at Xia Xin Yan weirdly, not understanding why she would want to talk with Shi Yan alone, instead of asking for Chi Xiao's whereabouts.

Shi Yan had already expected her to do that, so he nodded and said calmly, "Okay."

Shi Yan's attitude made Wu Yunlian and the rest even more confused.

Han Feng was stupefied for a second, slightly worried, "Young Master..."

"It's alright." Shi Yan waved his hand, and left along with Xia Xin Yan.

Shortly, the two arrived under an old tree.

"That day, it was you, right?" Xia Xin Yan's bright eyes looked straight at him, and asked indifferently.

"Mmm hmm."

"That day at the brothel, while I was unconscious, you did... that with the two prostitutes?" Xia Xin Yan secretly clenched her teeth.

"Mmm hmm."

"You are the most perverted bastard!"

Shi Yan couldn't help but laugh. He nodded and said calmly, "I'm a man, this is my nature, there's nothing to be ashamed of. But, I don't suppose I did anything to you? In fact, I saved your life! That night, if you weren't at the brothel, the Beiming family might have found you. On that note, you should thank me."

Xia Xin Yan was a bit stunned. It seemed she didn't expect Shi Yan to honestly admit his lechery in front of her.

Xia Xin Yan was in a fix and her expression was changing continuously. It was as if she very much wanted to scold Shi Yan, but didn't know where to start.

To scold him that he's perverted? Well, he's already admitted that. He's already so shameless, what's the use in scolding him further?

Xia Xin Yan felt agitated for no apparent reason. After a long while she frustratingly shook her head and said, "You did save me, but I'm not grateful to you! What happened that night, I don't want anyone to know, do you understand?"

Xia Xin Yan's beautiful eyes were cold, her intention of a threat was clear.

"Don't worry, I'm not that stupid." Shi Yan's expression was indifferent.

"That, that night, did you... did you do anything else to me?" Xia Xin Yan's eyes suddenly showed a little panic.

"Anything else?" Shi Yan was stunned, his face full of confusion, "Like what?"

Listening to this, Xia Xin Yan was raged from inside, and she was continuously repeating the word 'Calm' inside her mind. She took some deep breaths and finally said in a cold tone, "I'm saying did you have any ill intentions of me?"

"Of course yeah!" Shi Yan whispered in his mind, but on the surface he looked serious and shook his head, "No, I'm not a reckless person."

"You are not a reckless person?!"

Xia Xin Yan was staring at Shi Yan. She suddenly realised that she was very easily getting angry when near this person. Clenching her teeth, she sneered and said again, "A perverted bastard who thought of seeking pleasure in a brothel while his family was in a death battle with their enemies. And you say you are not a reckless person? Isn't this really the funniest thing!"

"It's just a normal physiological need." Shi Yan said indifferently.

Xia Xin Yan started at him blankly, her eyes repeatedly showing feelings of disgust and anger.

Xia Xin Yan slightly waved her hand as if she wanted to say no more. Finally she said, "I wish you forget everything that happened that night! You saved my life once, and I will remember that. During this exploration of the Gate of Heaven, I will make sure to do whatever I can to keep you safe. After that, we're even!"

Xia Xin Yan could not bear to stay any longer. She turned around and left straight back along the path she came. She was still filled with anger, but there was nowhere for her to release it.

"Then I will thank you in advance." Shi Yan shouted loudly towards her retreating figure. A smile still lingered on his lips, as if he had no idea how annoyed Xia Xin Yan was.

In the mass of dark clouds on the sky.

A ten-meter long, Level 5 demon beast; a Wind Eagle, floated in the clouds. Beiming Shang, Beiming Ce, Yin Kui, Jiu Shan, Mu Yu Die and Di Yalan sat together on the Wind Eagle.

Beiming Shang sat on the head of the Wind Eagle; he reached his head out to look down at Shi Yan and the rest, who looked as small as ants. Then with a deep voice he said, "They should be going to the Dead Swamp."

"Grandpa, when should we show up?"

"Wait until they arrive at their destination." Beiming Shang furrowed his brows, and said, "Chi Xiao should be appearing soon. Chi Xiao is a true Sky Realm warrior and he might discover us. Let's go, we should leave in advance."

Mu Yu Die clenched her fist, her bright eyes filled with hope.

The Wind Eagle suddenly flew off, and quickly became a black dot as it swiftly flew towards the Dead Swamp, not leaving any trace of its passing.

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Chapter 84: The Dead Swamp

Chi Xiao arrived two days later, and thus the team to explore the Gate of Heaven was complete.

The Dead Swamp was comprised of thousands of swamps of all different sizes.

These had existed for centuries. Whoever stepped into these would most likely be unable to escape and eventually drown.

It was hard to travel in the swamps, so the carriage and horses were left at the entrance, and the team started walking into the Dead Swamp.

Once they stepped into it, Shi Yan was on alert so as to avoid any dangers.

There were endless green swamps in the Dead Swamp. Of which, many of them were emitting a green colored air.

In some places, the air was so poisonous that people would rot to death as soon as they inhaled it.

Apart from the swamps and poisonous air, there were also demon beasts.

The demon beasts had adapted to the environment. They would usually hide in the swamps and jump out to attack whenever people passed by.

Chi Xiao and Xia Xin Yan were taking the lead and avoiding all the small sized swamps.

Chi Xiao was a Sky Realm warrior, so he could avoid the swamp by flying in the air.

Though he didn't feel fear, the others did. Even Xia Xin Yan could only reach Sky Realm when she operated her Incarnation Martial Spirit. Only then could she fly.

However, every time Xia Xin Yan used her Incarnation Martial Spirit, her vitality would be damaged.

Therefore, Xia Xin Yan rarely used it unless it was an emergency. She was quite cautious along the way, following Chi Xiao's lead.

Shi Yan's realm was the lowest among them, and so was his knowledge about this world.

Thus, after they entered the Dead Swamp, he kept mute, carefully observing the dangers in the swamp as well as Chi Xiao and other people's reactions.

"There is a three-mile long swamp in front of us which we can't avoid." Chi Xiao paused, standing on a wet area and frowned, "This swamp should be the safest one around this area. Be careful, we need to take the risk this time."

Wearing a rigid face, Shi Yan observed the swamp in front of him with furrowed brows.

The swamp was three miles long and filled with green mud. At the center of which there were pieces of dry land, enough for two or three people to stand on.

Some of those dry lands were dozens of meters away while some were only two or three meters apart. It would only be safe to pass this swamp by walking on the dry areas.

However, Chi Xiao's next statement crashed his plans.

"Don't even hope that the dry areas could hold people. It will sink even faster once you step on some of them. Many of those dry patches just float on the swamp and can't sustain any weight. Once you step on it, it will quickly sink."

Shi Yan turned serious in surprise, not saying anything.

"Don't worry, I will test every dry area so that you can walk on the solid ones." Chi Xiao saw through their worries and smiled, "You guys just need to follow me. It will be fine. But some of the dry areas are quite small, they may support my weight, but not three or four people. So we still need to be careful."

Everybody nodded with a rigid face. Even Zuo Shi, who was quite relaxed before, got a little nervous and observed the dry lands before her cautiously.

"Miss Xia, there may be a lot of danger. Could you help me with your Sky Realm energy?" Chi Xiao hesitated, and looked to Xia Xin Yan.

Xia Xin Yan's crystal eyes showed hesitation behind her veil. After a thought, she said, "Mr. Chi Xiao, if you can handle it by yourself, please do so. I will be quite weak for a while after using my Sky Realm energy. I want to save my energy for the Nine-headed Sky Snake, but not these swamps."

Hearing that, Zuo Shi and Wu Yun Lian secretly frowned.

They assumed she didn't want to help and regard them as her friends. Therefore, they were a little disappointed, though they didn't show it.

Chi Xiao didn't mind though, as he nodded, "Well then, let me do it. But you have to be more careful since Miss Xia isn't able to help. Don't step anywhere randomly without my confirmation. It will be tough even for me to save you once you sink into the mud."

The group nodded together seriously.

"Hmm, follow me." Chi Xiao took a light breath and flew over and landed on a dry patch.

He placed one foot on it and it sank immediately into the mud.

Shi Yan's expression changed slightly with solemnness crossing his eyes. He suddenly realized that this journey may not be as smooth as he had imagined, thus he had to be more focused.

Chi Xiao was calm. Seeing the earth sink, he remarked, "You see, this piece can't even hold one person. If you jump onto it, you will sink with it."

While talking, he flew up again and landed on another piece of dry land. That piece was quite solid, not sinking at all.

“This is ok. But still be careful. It may be dangerous if more people land on it.” Chi Xiao stamped as he reminded others.

The land under him shook and slowly sank again.

“This can support three persons. No more than three people can stand on it when you pass through.” Chi Xiao explained and flew out again. Using the same method, he tested more dry patches.

Waiting until Chi Xiao flew a hundred meters away, Xia Xin Yan said calmly, “Let’s go.”

Then, she moved her well-shaped body and lightly dropped on that dry area.

After a second, she moved again to the next safe area and advanced after Chi Xiao swiftly.

The two huge men who were following her didn’t hesitate either, as they stepped one after another onto the dry areas to keep up with her.

Zuo Shi, Wu Yun Lian and Chu Ping followed up, lining along the road where Xia Xian Yan had passed.

“Young Master, after you.” Han Feng bowed to Shi Yan, “Be careful.”

“Mmm.” Shi Yan nodded, skipped forward, and slowly moved after Zuo Shi.

There was a light acidic smell upon the swamp.

After they advanced in the swamp for a mile, Shi Yan found some green bubbles rising out from it, and green gas appeared as the bubbles exploded.

“Be careful, that green gas is poisonous. Don’t breathe in.” Chi Xiao’s voice came from ahead, “We are all at high realm so it wouldn’t be a problem for us to hold our breath for a while. I will find the way as soon as possible, please follow up.”

Chi Xiao didn’t stop advancing as he was talking. Hopping on and off the dry areas, he kept reporting, “This is ok. But be careful, it can only contain two people...”

Shi Yan focused his eyes on Chi Xiao and remembered his steps by heart.

At that time, he quite admired the warriors at Sky Realm, for they could fly over this swamp without suffering so much trouble.

His desire for more strength and to reach a higher realm became much stronger.

With Chi Xiao ahead of them, the group found it much easier to advance. Everybody, except Chi Xiao, was rather relaxed.

They were all safe in this dangerous swamp where numerous warriors had lost their lives.

However, just as they were about to exit this swamp, Chi Xiao’s expression changed as he screamed, “Watch out! Something’s in the mud!”

“Pop! Pop! Pop!”

Three demon beasts wrapped in mud suddenly rose up from the swamp, and jumped toward Shi Yan and Xia Xin Yan.

This type of demon beasts looked like loaches, with needle-like teeth and sharp bones on their back.

Three demon beasts jumped out of the mud, as two of them dashed toward Xiao Xin Yan and the other one towards Shi Yan.

Shi Yan looked calm. Just as the demon beast was about to touch him, he stretched out his right hand which petrified immediately and operated his [Finger Spear] toward that beast!

(TL note: [Finger Spear] was previously named [Finger Gun].)

“Chee!”

The demon beast bit Shi Yan’s right arm but couldn’t crush it. On the contrary, its head was pierced by Shi Yan’s fingers, green blood oozed out of its head before collapsing into the swamp.

“Boom boom!”

Two huge booms came from Xia Xin Yan’s side.

Shi Yan turned back to find that the two demon beasts had exploded before they could approached Xia Xin Yan and fell into the swamp.

A numb feeling came from his right palm which was covered by green blood. Shi Yan frowned and took out a soft rag from his bag to wipe the blood away.

One after another, odd demon beasts showed up from the green, bubble-covered swamp; their numbers reaching about one hundred by a rough count.

Those demon beasts gazed at them with hatred as if they were about to pick someone to eat.

“Shi Yan, did you get any green blood from the Green Loach on your skin?” Chi Xiao suddenly screamed from the front of the troop.

Shi Yan wiped the green blood away casually and turned his eyes to Chi Xiao, “What’s wrong with it?”

“The Green Loach has too much poisonous gas in its body, so their blood is poisonous too and will rot your skin!” Chi Xiao was rather regretful, “I had meant to tell you after we passed this swamp, for the Green Loach rarely appears in this area.”

“Chi Xiao, what are you doing here again?”

A hairless ugly man covered in mud slowly stood up from the swamp. As half of his body appeared, he stared at Chi Xiao and scolded, “Last time you stole my Green Herb, now what do you want again!”

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Chapter 85 – A Co-Master

This hideous looking strange man could easily navigate through the mud and the dark green scales on his body made him more frightening.

As he shouted in anger, the poisonous miasma in the surroundings all began to gather at their location. The dense miasma concentrated around the group and continued to condense into a dense fog.

“Hualala!”

Drops of green poisonous water clattered down all of a sudden.

A poisonous rain fell upon this swamp.

Chi Xiao’s expression changed as he yelled, “Zhua Qi! Don’t you dare make a fuss!”

At the same time, Chi Xiao took out a small curtain and expanded it at once, covering the whole group.

The poisonous rain fell on the silver curtain and trailed through the edges, immediately emitting poisonous fumes when falling in the swamp.

“Silver Curtain!”

Face twisted, the ugly man shouted, “You took out your Silver Curtain! Chi Xiao, you must want to have a good fight with me this time!”

“Stop it!” Seeing the ugly man, Zhua Qi, about to act, Chi Xiao hurried to stop him, “Zhua Qi, you are mistaken about me this time! I haven’t come here to fight with you but the Nine-headed Sky Snake! And I only took out my Silver Curtain to block the snake’s poison, not to trap you!”

“I don’t buy it!” Zhua Qi laughed coldly, “You want to fight the Nine-headed Sky Snake alone? Who would even believe that? Humph! You have no grudge against the Nine-headed Sky Snake. You must have come for me!”

After a grunt, Zhua Qi immersed one hand into the swamp and soon, streams of odd green light shot into the mud.

One after another, mud dragons jumped out of the swamp. They were as thick as a human waist and were about ten meters tall, trying to bite their group.

Zhua Qi could not only control the miasma in the Dead Swamp, but could also control the mud.

Shi Yan’s expression changed slightly, as he didn’t expect themselves facing such a tough enemy right at the beginning of their journey. He was immediately vigilant, circulating his Profound Qi and prepared to attack those mud dragons.

Those mud dragons flew out from the swamps swiftly and moved towards the group from all directions. It was quite magnificent.

The dry land on which the group was currently standing on was continuously sinking into the swamp under Zhua Qi’s control.

Xia Xin Yan’s eyes turned icy as she decided to use her Incarnation Martial Spirit.

“Zhua Qi! Believe me! I haven’t come for you!” Chi Xiao yelled anxiously.

Chi Xiao was fully assured that he could beat Zhua Qi, but the consequence to their group would be dreadful. He firmly believed that once they entered into battle, only he and Xia Xin Yan could withstand Zhua Qi's attacks.

"Shi Yan, come here. I will protect you." Xia Xin Yan glanced over him and said without any emotion.

Han Feng and Ku Long were surprised, and looked at Xia Xin Yan in confusion.

So were Wu Yun Lian and Zuo Shi. It was unreasonable that Xia Xin Yan would try to protect Shi Yan.

Shi Yan dared not take the risk, so he hopped through the dry lands to Xia Xin Yan's side.

"Zhua Qi!"

Chi Xiao was astounded, "The Gate of Heaven is in the Yin Valley! I came for the Nine-headed Sky Snake! Stop now!"

"What?" Zhua Qi was quite surprised as he screamed, "The Gate of Heaven?"

"Yes. We got a treasure map. And the Gate of Heaven turned out to be located in the Yin Valley!" Chi Xiao had to tell him the truth.

Zhua Qi was stunned, and then giggled cunningly.

As he was giggling, the green miasma in the air began to float away from the group.

As the green miasma dispersed, the poisonous rain stopped as well.

The flying mud dragons turned back to mud and fell into the center of the swamp.

Hundreds of green loaches which were rushing up also stopped as they saw the mud dragons disappear. Under Zhua Qi's order, they went back under the mud as well.

Zhua Qi then stopped.

Chi Xiao was relieved and stretched his hand up into the air and shrunk the curtain, finally falling into his palm.

The swamp went back to serenity. Even the green bubbles gradually disappeared. The dangerous swamp suddenly became quiet.

"I know you want to beat the Nine-headed Sky Snake too." Chi Xiao grunted and reproached in a rage, "I bet you would have regretted it if you had stopped too late!"

As he was speaking, he looked at Xia Xin Yan.

Chi Xiao could compete with Zhua Qi alone, and with Xia Xin Yan at the Sky Realm, Zhua Qi would have been in great trouble.

Zhua Qi looked towards Xia Xin Yan as he noticed Chi Xiao's gaze, and frowned.

He could feel a stream of forceful power subsiding in her body.

Just from a glance, Zhua Qi noticed that this woman was unmanageable, and she was operating some tricks secretly.

Shi Yan stood by Xia Xin Yan with a gloomy face, still gazing at Zhua Qi vigilantly.

Without taking a look at Shi Yan, Xia Xin Yan said calmly, "Mr. Chi Xiao, can you introduce this swamp master to us?"

"He is just a co-master."

Chi Xiao shook his head with disdain, glancing at Zhua Qi who was rather unhappy with him and said, "Zhua Qi is active in the outer area of the Dead Swamp, where there are small swamps and miasma. However, at the center of the Dead Swamp, that is to say, the Yin Field, the Nine-headed Sky Snake takes control. There is no way he could take charge there."

"Chi Xiao! The Yin Field is mine!" Zhua Qi suddenly cried out, "My father practiced there! I will get it back sooner or later!"

"Till you get it back." Chi Xiao smirked, and nodded to Xia Xin Yan, "Miss Xia, walk to the bank now."

"Hmm." Xia Xin Yan nodded, glanced at Shi Yan with her brows furrowed, and said indifferently, "Leave now."

"Okay."

Shi Yan responded casually and hopped through the dry lands where Chi Xiao had tested, to a muddy area ahead, and soon he was ashore.

Zhua Qi grunted, moved his muddy body swiftly in the swamp, and also reached the shore. But half of his body was still in the swamp, for he was still a little suspicious of Chi Xiao.

"Shi Yan, how are you now? The blood of the green loach didn't hurt you? Do you need Zhua Qi's help you remove it?" Chi Xiao asked as he suddenly recalled the incident.

Standing there, Shi Yan looked down to his palm and shook his head, "I'm fine."

His Immortal Martial Spirit had cleaned the poison before he knew it.

Hearing that, Chi Xiao and Zhua Qi looked at him in surprise.

Only these two knew that a Human Realm warrior would suffer fatigue for at least one day after touching the green loach's blood.

Others didn't know about the blood, so they didn't care much and walked ahead.

Soon, Zuo Shi, Han Feng and others also got out of the swamp and landed ashore.

"Chi Xiao, you really came for the Snake?" Zhua Qi raised his head and asked, while half of his body was still in the mud.

"Behave yourself for the rest of our journey. Take the lead if you want to fight the Snake." Chi Xiao nodded.

“Sure! Of course I will help if your goal is the Snake.” Zhua Qi was cooperative this time, “I will send you to the Yin Field nice and safe. But I will go there too, as my father once practiced there and I’m familiar with it. I can help.”

“Apart from the Snake, you also want to enter the Gate of Heaven.” Chi Xiao grunted.

Zhua Qi didn’t deny it, but giggled, “You know the Snake’s power well. You can hardly beat it. Let me help you and in turn you let me into the Gate of Heaven; it’s a win-win situation.”

“Miss Xia, what do you think?”

Chi Xiao didn’t reply Zhua Qi, but looked to Xia Xin Yan, “Zhua Qi and the Nine-headed Sky Snake are old enemies. The outer area of the Dead Swamp is his sphere of influence. We won’t come across any trouble if he takes the lead for us, and we are more likely to beat the Snake with his help.”

“Okay.” Xia Xin Yan thought for a moment and nodded.

“Well then, you are in.” Chi Xiao then replied to him.

“Hehe, you won’t regret.” Zhua Qi smiled cunningly, then he was a little stunned, “Chi Xiao, is there anyone else?”

“Nope.” Chi Xiao was stunned, “Only us.”

“Then why did a Sky Realm warrior enter the Dead Swamp with several experts seven days ago?” Zhua Qi asked, “I killed some of his people, and fought with him so I know that he is at Sky Realm. I never left my Dead Swamp, so I don’t know who he was. But he was really something. He must have reached the Yin Field by now.”

“A Sky Realm Expert!” Chi Xiao’s expression changed and he thought for a moment, “The Fire Empire, the God-blessed Empire, and the Merchant Union all rarely see a Sky Realm warrior. Who could that man be? What did he look like?”

“Thin, tall, pale-faced, narrow eyes. He seemed to rarely expose himself to the sun, and trained in a gruesome Martial Skill.” Zhua Qi thought for a while and depicted.

“I don’t know who that is either.” Chi Xian pondered for a while only to realise that he didn’t know that man, so he shook his head, “Never mind, maybe he just happened to pass the Dead Swamp and has already left by now. Anyway, we have to be on alert.”

“Let’s go. Let me show you to the Yin Field.”

Zhua Qi finally landed ashore. His legs were covered with green scales. He seemed not used to walking, for he swayed like a duck.

However, they all had witnessed his ability, they didn’t dare make fun of his hilarious walking posture.

As the master of this area, wherever he went, the poisonous miasma dissipated quickly.

There were many pieces of dry land ahead for them to advance smoothly.

They found it much easier to walk after Zhua Qi took the lead. They finished the one-month journey in only eight days.

Eight days later, the group finally entered the Yin Field.

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Chapter 86: The Yin Field

The Yin Field was a place in the center of the Dead Swamp.

The Dead Swamp was surrounded by countless swamps; the muddy sludge could be seen everywhere. There was almost not a single dry spot.

However, the Yin Field at the middle of the Dead Swamp was an exception.

Here, there were no swamps, and no ooze. The ground was mostly flat, and although not especially dry, it was still not as humid as the outer area of the Dead Swamp.

The Yin field was an extraordinary place. The air above the field was covered with thick dark clouds all year around, such that not even the sun, moon, and the stars could be seen.

Perhaps that was the reason why the Yin Qi in the Yin Field was especially heavy. Anyone who enters would feel very uncomfortable.

The place didn't appear to be frigid, but the Yin energy all around made people chilled to their bones. One would feel as if they had entered a supernatural space, surrounded by evil spirits; it felt very creepy.

When Shi Yan just entered into the Yin field, he frowned slightly. He took a deep breath and felt discomfort seep into his bones. Although it wasn't very chilly here, it still made people uncomfortable all over.

Standing on the frigid earth, Shi Yan gazed around and found some strange exotic plants growing.

These plants were not very tall, the tallest being only five to six meters, but they all grew in the weirdest pattern. There were various plants with very pale flowers, absolutely lacking any variance in color.

Especially with some plants, their flowers looked like ghastly faces, giving off an extremely terrifying feeling.

Just standing in the middle of those bizarre plants made Shi Yan feel uncomfortable. When he looked at those plants, he always felt like they were going to leap towards him and bite him.

"The Yin Qi here is heavy, the plants that grew from it are very strange. Some plants could even suck in the Yin Qi and the corpse energies. While some others would attack as soon as they smell the breath of a human, and entangle onto that human until they die."

Zhua Qi scowled as he looked at the different plants in the Yin Field and then continued, "Other than plants, you should also be careful of demon beasts. The demon beasts here especially hate strangers. If

they see anyone coming, they will attack until you are dead. Usually when warriors go through the Dead Swamp, they would rather explore the outer perimeter than in here.”

“Slither, slither, slither!”

Silvery-white long snakes suddenly appeared from within the plants.

These snakes were about three meters in length. Their heads were cone shaped, and their tails kept making circular marks on the ground. Their soybean-sized eyes gave out a cold glare.

Several dozens of snakes slithered out from the plants. They actually understood how to split up, and came from all directions to surround Shi Yan and the rest.

“Level 2 demon beast, Corpse Worm Snake.” Zhua Qi sneered, and suddenly stomped on the ground.

Strange ripples spread from his foot! With him as the center, the ripples formed in ring shapes, and attacked towards all directions.

“Pop pop pop pop! Pop pop pop!”

Wherever the ripples went, those dozens of Level 2 Corpse Worm Snakes exploded, sprinkling brown blood everywhere.

“I hate snakes the most!” Zhua Qi sneered, his face full of disgust. He turned back to Chi Xiao and said, “Before we come across the Nine-headed Sky Snake, I’ll take care of the obstacles on the way. I’ll let this be the bargain in return for participating in the Gate of Heaven.”

Chi Xiao nodded, and replied, “You know this place well, so you can take the lead.”

Zhua Qi didn’t refuse and walked straight to the front of the group. Traces of strange green poisonous fog quietly spread out into the air.

When the plants in the Yin Field sensed the poisonous fog from him, they all contracted, as if they were actually afraid.

Many of the plants were originally three meters tall, but after Zhua Qi walked past, they shrunk to only one meter, clearly a whole lot smaller.

Shi Yan was amazed; he watched with glinting eyes. Whenever he walked past those plants he would carefully observe them. He realized that wherever Zhua Qi went, the plants were very docile and submissive.

However, if he didn’t follow behind Zhua Qi and chose to walk a few meters in another direction, those same species of plants would actually open themselves up and try to entangle him, looking as if they wouldn’t give up till he was strangled to death.

“Kid, if you don’t want to die, you better follow me.” Zhua Qi suddenly turned his head and glared at Shi Yan. In his mouth he was quietly muttering, “I don’t understand all of you. You knew that you were gonna enter the Yin Field, but still brought two burdens along. Do they wanna sacrifice them later at a key moment...?”

The burdens Zhua Qi was muttering about were obviously Shi Yan and Zuo Shi. They both were only at the Human Realm, the ones with the lowest strength.

Shi Yan looked indifferent, he was unmoved by Zhua Qi's whispers.

But Zuo Shi was not happy, she pouted and said, "What are you muttering about, big earthworm? Who are you calling burdens? Hmph! If you don't wanna come along with us, then you can leave right now. It's not like we can't live without you."

"Girl, who are you calling earthworm?" Zhua Qi's dark green scale-covered face slightly shook for a second, he murderously glared at Zuo Shi, "Say that again!"

"Alright." Chi Xiao furrowed his brows, and scolded Zuo Shi, "Zhua Qi is an elder, don't be so disrespectful. We wouldn't have been travelling so smoothly this whole way if it weren't for Zhua Qi."

Chi Xiao then looked at Zhua Qi and said, "Why can't you stop being so foul-mouthed? If it weren't for your stupid foul mouth back in the day, I wouldn't have tried to fight to the death with you. Why are you doing it again?"

Zhua Qi snorted and fiercely glared at Zuo Shi, the scales on his face shaking again, but he stopped mumbling.

Zuo Shi however, wanted to keep throwing a few more insults at him, but was stopped by Chi Xiao's glare. She pouted her lips and stopped talking.

Xia Xin Yan and the two giant men were on the left side of Chi Xiao and the rest of the group. She didn't talk, her expression was indifferent; she ignored Zhua Qi, but didn't have the intention to talk to Chi Xiao either.

However, occasionally her eyes would drift towards Shi Yan. The expression in her eyes was quite complicated, and no one could figure out what she was really thinking.

Since the day they came out from the swamp, she didn't speak a word to Shi Yan.

Shi Yan was also sensible, he didn't make a move to get close to her either.

This atmosphere between her and Shi Yan made Chi Xiao, Zuo Shi, and the rest dumbfounded. But everyone pretended they didn't realise, and nobody went to annoy and ask the two about it.

"Just come on and follow me. If you wanna live, you all better know your place!" Zhua Qi snorted, and purposely looked towards Shi Yan.

Shi Yan looked calm, he didn't bother with Zhua Qi.

Just at this moment, Chi Xiao suddenly furrowed his brows, and a hint of confusion flashed in his eyes.

"What happened?" Xia Xin Yan's expression moved, she keenly sensed Chi Xiao's abnormality.

"Nothing." Chi Xiao shook his head, and said calmly, "I just suddenly sensed something strange, but it was gone in a flash. I wonder if I'm just being delusional."

After saying that, everyone got a little nervous. Zhua Qi said, "Could it be that Sky Realm master?"

“I don’t know.” Chi Xiao shook his head again.”

Chi Xiao’s reaction cast a dark shadow over everyone’s minds, and made everyone more cautious.

In the Yin Field, where there was dense foliage filled with plants.

A pale and tall middle-aged scholar silently stood there.

By his side were thirty five warriors with the same pale face and blank expression. One of the young men was only in his early twenties. With long hair to his waist, he appeared very handsome, but had a kind of evil temperament.

“Master, what have you found?” The young man asked curiously.

“The objectives should have entered into the Yin Field, and I just used my soul power to probe a little. Another soul power immediately sensed me.” That pale middle-aged scholar said.

“Is it someone from the Beiming family?”

“No, Beiming Shang got here a long time ago.”

“Why hasn’t he come to find us yet?”

“The objective is already here, Beiming Shang would come very soon.”

One day later.

In the area where that group of people had gathered, Beiming Shang arrived there alone; cold energy writhing around his body.

“Lord of the Dark World?” After Beiming Shang arrived, he put together his fists for that middle-aged scholar, and said, “How may I address you?”

“Zou Zi He.” The Lord of the Dark World looked calm, “I’ve long heard the name of the Head of the Beiming family. Now that I’ve met you today, you seem to deserve your reputation.”

Beiming Shang stretched his lips, and said emotionlessly, “Brother Zou, you should be one with the most wide-spread reputation. The Dark World has been dominant in the Fire Empire, and from that we can see that Brother Zou is truly a great talent in the world. Working with Brother Zou this time, hopefully everyone will be satisfied in the end.”

“Where’s that girl from the Mu family?” The Lord of the Dark World furrowed his brows.

“After exploring the Gate of Heaven, I will bring her to you myself.” Beiming Shang glanced at everyone from the Dark World and said, “Brother Zou, why have you brought so many? Aren’t you scared of being discovered?”

“We, the people from the Dark World, are good at hiding our trails, this you don’t have to worry about, Brother Beiming.”

“Alright then.” Beiming Shang nodded, then continued, “The other side has appeared, their target should be the Yin Valley in the Yin Field. If any mishaps really happen at that time, I wish Brother Zou

would come out. But, I don't want you to identify yourself too soon, or else Mu Yu Die's resentment will grow."

"She is merely a bereaved little girl, do you really need to care, Brother Beiming?"

"I don't really care about Mu Yu Die, but there's another girl by her side. The Martial Spirit that girl possesses could be of use to my Beiming family. I don't want that girl to know that we gave Mu Yu Die to you, or else it would affect my plans in the future."

"Sure, the reason I didn't bring my mask this time, is to cooperate with you. I stand as the Lord of the Dark World, and I hardly show my true self to others. That Mu girl has never seen me, she will never know who I am. You can be reassured on this matter, Brother Beiming."

"Good, then we will meet again at the Yin Valley. By that time I will use my soul power to send messages to you, I hope you won't disappoint me, Brother Zou."

Then Beiming Shang slowly retreated. His body faded into a wisp of cold energy, and dissipated into the air.

"Master, Beiming Shang is cunning in his schemes. This exploration of the Gate of Heaven, we should be careful of him, he's definitely not the good kind."

"Don't worry, your mistress is here in the dark. If any great treasures really appear, they will surely belong to the Dark World!"

"Mistress is here too?" The demonic handsome young man exclaimed.

"Yes, she arrived at the Yin Valley a long time ago. With her attainments in concealment, no one in the Yin Field can ever detect her unless she shows herself!"

"Ha, then this exploration of the Gate of Heaven is in the bag."

"Mmm hmm."

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Chapter 87: Black Formula

Following Zhua Qi and the others, Shi Yan headed for the Yin Valley without stopping.

Zhua Qi proved his value along the way by removing those odd plants and brutal demon beasts.

Zhua Qi turned out to be the co-master of the Dead Swamp, for he even knew this area, the Yin Field, far better than Chi Xiao.

All along the way, Zhua Qi removed all the obstacles easily. In doing so, Chi Xiao and Xia Xin Yan could save their energy for the fight with the Nine-headed Sky Snake.

The nearer they got to the Yin Valley, the more they could feel the Yin Qi.

Gradually, Shi Yan could feel his Profound Qi flowing slower and slower; his ribs and bones were experiencing immense pressure from the Yin Qi.

So did Zuo Shi.

The nearer they came to the Yin Valley, the more pale her face became. Apparently, she wasn't able to adapt to the atmosphere there either.

"Let's have a rest here, Zhua Qi, Miss Xia, we need to study the treasure map as well." Chi Xiao was being considerate of his students, so he stopped at one clean and flat area and took out the treasure map to study with Zhua Qi and Xia Xin Yan.

Zhua Qi didn't want to stop, but since Chi Xiao took out the map, he agreed with him instantly.

He walked up to Chi Xiao quickly and giggled, "I'm very familiar with the Yin Valley. Let me see the map and I can find the position of the Gate of Heaven."

Xia Xin Yan hesitated and she too walked up.

Chi Xiao had learnt the map by heart, so he handed the map to Xia Xin Yan and let her watch Zhua Qi, while he himself walked towards Zuo Shi and Shi Yan.

"How do you two feel? Can you endure it?" Chi Xiao looked to Zuo Shi.

Zuo Shi's pretty face had turned pale, "Yes I can endure it, but it's too uncomfortable. The Yin Qi has slowed my Profound Qi and seems to be consuming it as well. The nearer we get to the Yin valley, the faster it is consumed."

"That's natural." Chi Xiao nodded and explained, "The heavy Yin Qi would affect your body, so your Profound Qi would try to adapt to it, thus it gets consumed. You two pay attention to it. It's just the beginning. The Yin Qi will be denser in the valley, so if you two can't bear it you will have to stop before you enter it."

"Teacher, the [Basalt Scripture] seems to be able to remove some Yin Qi" Zuo Shi suddenly said.

Chi Xiao was surprised, finding it funny and annoying, "Then why didn't you train it long ago?"

"I just realized it." Zuo Shi protruded her tongue and grinned naughtily, "Fine fine, I will train with it diligently from now on. I found that once I operate the [Basalt Scripture], the Yin Qi can't enter my body."

"If you were hardworking long time ago, you might have finished training the [Basalt Scripture] already." Chi Xiao shook his head with regret and resignation.

"Stop it! It's not too late to start now." Zuo Shi pouted with a grunt.

Chi Xiao sighed in his mind and turned to Shi Yan, "How do you feel?"

"I'm fine. I'm ok with it." Shi Yan replied calmly.

"Well, do your best." Chi Xiao nodded, "You should stop when you can't bear it, then Han Feng will stay and protect you, while Ku Long will enter the Yin Valley with us. We only need to find out what's inside the Gate of heaven this time, then your Shi family will send more experts here. So don't worry too much if you can't enter the Gate."

Shi Yan nodded, not saying anything more.

Chi Xiao comforted him and requested Zuo Shi to work hard, then walked back to Zhua Qi and Xia Xin Yan.

“Young Master, the family head told us that it’s most important that you are safe. Don’t push yourself if you can’t bear it. The family head said that we just need to find out the exact position of the Gate and what’s inside it.” Ku Long said in a low voice beside him.

“I got it.” Shi Yan looked indifferent, but his brows were furrowed.

A short distance away, Zhua Qi, Xia Xin Yan and Chi Xiao were still studying the treasure map.

Although Zhua Qi regarded himself as a know-it-all when it came to the Yin Valley, he couldn’t figure out anything when he saw the map, as seen from his confused expression when whispering with Chi Xiao.

Shi Yan glanced over them and sat down where he was, when a thought came across in his mind.

He was curious about the Gate of Heaven, and he wanted to go inside of it too.

However, the Yin Qi here was really tough, as it was omnipresent. At the same time, it was becoming more dense, which was affecting his body a lot.

Before they got to the Yin Valley, he had to consume his Profound Qi to defend from its influence. He couldn’t imagine how powerful the Yin Qi would be in the valley. By then, his Profound Qi would be totally consumed, and it would be very dangerous if anything came up.

“I must find a way to defend against the Yin Qi!”

After a short deliberation, Shi Yan’s expression was determined. He sat cross-legged and tried to search in his memories.

An idea flashed across his mind!

The [Black Formula]!

His face lit up. He picked up his bag and took out a book on the Mortal Level Martial Skill, [Black Formula].

It was only an elementary level Martial Skill, which needed to collect Yin Qi while training. It was best to train with it where there was dense Yin Qi.

Since he took the [Black Formula] from Karu he had given up training it as it was only a Mortal Level Martial Skill and required a Yin Qi-filled environment.

After he got to the Shi family and witnessed so many Martial Skills, he had forgotten about the [Black Formula].

Therefore, that book was buried in oblivion in that bag.

The Yin Field here was heavy with Yin Qi, it was the best place to train in the [Black Formula]!

Although the [Black Formula] was only a Mortal Level Martial Skill, since it required Yin Qi, once one was adapted to the environment, he could gather the Yin Qi and use it as a weapon.

Shi Yan didn't care much about its power for as far as he was concerned, it was just a Mortal Level Martial Skill, which had limited power.

Nonetheless, the [Black Formula] could absorb Yin Qi and help him adapt to it, which solved his problem for now!

Therefore, he picked up that formula right away!

While Chi Xiao, Zhua Qi and Xia Xin Yan were busy figuring out the position of the Gate of Heaven, Shi Yan devoted himself to the [Black Formula] and its practice process.

Sitting on the ground, Shi Yan flipped open the book of the [Black Formula] with a solemn face.

Before long, he had read through the first volume, and secretly put the book into his bag with his brows furrowed.

Although the [Black Formula] was merely a Mortal Level Martial Skill, it appeared to be strange. To train with it, one must trigger the Yin Qi between the heaven and earth and form three Yin Swirls around the three meridians in one's chest: Tian Que, Shen Que and Yin Du.

As long as the swirls are formed, one can trigger the [Black Formula] and absorb the Yin Qi around them easily.

Once the three swirls absorbed enough Yin Qi, they would produce three Yin Pearls, which would go down the three meridians.

And after that, the Yin Swirls could continue absorbing Yin Qi endlessly.

As long as there was enough Yin Qi, the Yin Swirls would produce more Yin Pearls and submerge into the meridians.

The more Yin pearls in the meridians, the more powerful the [Black Formula] would be.

The one who trained with the [Black Formula] could collect Yin Qi by merely triggering the [Black Formula] and absorbing it into the three Yin Swirls.

Although the [Black Formula] was merely a Mortal Level Martial Skill, no one knew how much Yin Qi it could absorb.

It seemed that the three Yin Swirls would devour Yin Qi ceaselessly once there was enough Yin Qi.

Shi Yan had seen many Martial Skills in the Martial Spirit Palace of the Shi family, but he had never seen anything as strange as this one.

There was an end goal to train to with every Martial Skill, but the [Black Formula] could be trained endlessly.

Sitting on the ground with a rigid face, Shi Yan sorted through the practice process he understood in order to train with the [Black Formula] and he found it literally extraordinary.

However, he didn't hesitate at all. To enter the center of the Yin Valley, he memorised the practice process several times and began to train with it, while Chi Xiao and Zhua Qi were still whispering.

Shi Yan connected his eyes, nose and heart, operated his will to Tian Que, Shen Que and Yin Du meridians and concentrated Yin Qi into them.

During that process, his body was still under pressure, as his hadn't adapted to the Yin Qi yet.

Gradually, the Yin Qi began to circle around the three meridians according to Shi Yan's will.

He found that his body was having a strange attraction to Yin Qi as he began to operate the [Black Formula].

While he was refining his Yin Swirls, the Yin Qi around him began to gather and poured into his pores. At last, it arrived at the three meridians and started to spin slowly.

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Chapter 88: Strange Scene

Eight days later, outside the Yin Valley.

"We won't enter the Yin Valley today. Everybody have a good rest. We will enter the Valley tomorrow morning." Zhua Qi stopped at the entrance of the Yin Valley and said with a gloomy expression, "The Nine-headed Sky Snake will notice us once we enter the Yin Valley; a fierce battle is unavoidable."

"Hmm."

Chi Xiao took out the map again, and waved at Zhua Qi and Xia Xin Yan, "Let's take this last night to study it again. It's best if we could find out the accurate position of the Gate of Heaven."

Zhua Qi and Xia Xin Yan walked up frowning, and looked down at the map.

As usual, Shi Yan found a quiet place far away from those three people, sat down, and began to train with the [Black Formula].

Every night during the past eight days, Chi Xiao would ask the group to stop and have a good rest, in order to provide Zuo Shi plenty of time to train with the [Basalt Scriptures].

Shi Yan wasn't idle either. As soon as the group stopped, he would find a quiet place and train with the [Black Formula], under the protection of Han Feng and Ku Long.

After eight days' practice, he had accumulated lots of Yin Qi in the three meridians in his chest. He operated the Yin Qi every day according to his will and divided it into several wisps to spin around the meridians.

As the Yin Qi accumulated, it spun faster and faster, and was about to form into real Yin Swirls.

After taking a deep breath and holding it, Shi Yan began to concentrate on controlling the Yin Qi.

Wisps of Yin Qi began to intertwine at the three meridians in his chest, and under his control, was quickly forming into circles.

Every time he reached this state, he would reach out to sense the Yin Qi in his surroundings; it was as if the Yin Qi was gathering around him under some magical force.

After eight days' training in the [Black Formula], Shi Yan started getting hang of controlling the Yin Qi. At the same time, after several days' of revolution in the front of his chest, the Yin Qi in his body seemed to have changed slightly.

The Yin Qi had become denser since they arrived at the entrance of the Yin Valley. However, Shi Yan found it quite comfortable thanks to the eight days' of training.

Moreover, the nearer he approached the Yin Valley, the easier he was able to train the [Black Formula]. It was even rather refreshing to breathe the Yin Qi.

Han Feng and Ku Long didn't exactly knew what Martial Skill Shi Yan was training in, but they were still protecting him diligently.

Time flew by.

All of a sudden, Zuo Shi, who was guarded by Wu Yun Lian and Chu Ping, jumped up joyfully with an odd light sparkling around her body. She shouted, "Ha! It's the Third Sky of the Human Realm!"

Chi Xiao, who was focusing on the treasure map, rushed over in ecstasy, and as he grabbed Zuo Shi's hand and began to test her, his old face showing satisfaction, "You little girl, you are..."

From the joyful reaction of Zuo Shi's Profound Qi, Chi Xiao could tell that she had reached the Third Sky of the Human Realm.

Zuo Shi hadn't fully understood the [Basalt Scriptures] after eight days' of training, but she turned out to have reached the Third Sky of the Human Realm. For such talent there were not enough words for Chi Xiao to say anything.

The only word he could come up with was: Genius.

During their journey from the Cloud Mountain to Tianyun City, apart from fooling around, Zuo Shi hadn't trained hard for even a single day. It was out of his expectation that she entered that level so fast.

"Mr. Chi Xiao, you've got a really great student!" Surprise also crossed Xia Xin Yan's eyes, as she too was shocked by Zuo Shi's talent.

"Hehe, this girl is really talented, though she is too lazy." Chi Xiao was delightful as he patted Zuo Shi's shoulder, "Work harder! Digest the [Basalt Scriptures] as soon as possible! You little girl, you could have reached a much higher realm had you focused on practice!"

Then he walked to Xia Xin Yan and Zhua Qi's side, and said with a smile, "Leave that girl alone. Let's study the map."

Another two hours passed.

As Shi Yan was sitting there silently, suddenly his body shook heavily and then kept quivering slightly.

More and more Yin Qi concentrated and combined in front of his chest as it spun faster and faster.

Looking inside, he found the Profound Qi around his three meridians becoming stronger and spinning faster.

The Profound Qi that he had absorbed rushed into the three meridians and then was refined and resolved into more gray strings.

More and more gray strings gathered in the swirls inside the meridians, making the swirls spin faster and faster...

Not knowing how much time had passed, a gloomy air was suddenly forced out from the swirls, which shocked Shi Yan.

More and more Yin Qi gathered from all directions and gushed into his pores heading for the centers of the three swirls, while they were spinning faster and faster.

Looking inside, Shi Yan was shocked to find that the three swirls had formed a shadow and that shadow was emitting a strong attraction force.

He had succeeded!

The strong attraction force meant that a Yin Swirl had officially formed!

Thus, the power of the Yin Swirl to devour Yin Qi was triggered!

All of a sudden, the Yin Qi inside the Yin Field seemed to find an exit and flooded towards Shi Yan.

Ten meters above Shi Yan's head, three odd swirls, as big as a human head, gradually appeared.

Those swirls were similar to the Yin Swirls inside Shi Yan, and were apparently influenced by the Yin Swirls in his chest. They spun in line with his Yin Swirls and were attracting more Yin Qi to his location.

Huge amounts of Yin Qi gushed into the three head-sized swirls above him which were expanding quickly!

In merely ten minutes, those swirls had swollen to the size of a wash basin, and kept devouring Yin Qi from all directions.

Chi Xiao, Zhua Qi, and Xia Xin Yan all stopped their discussion about the map and stood up, shocked by what they saw.

The three swirls were still expanding!

One hour later, the three swirls were like a tornado, extremely frightening.

The swirls kept spinning crazily as they tried to devour all the Yin Qi in the Yin Valley!

With a rigid face, Shi Yan sat there without moving, continuously operating the swirls inside him, seemingly not knowing about the phenomenon above his head.

He could clearly feel that the three swirls in his chest had accelerated several times; even his mind found it hard to catch up with the spinning!

Han Feng and Ku Long were taken aback as they watched this strange scene without any idea as to what was occurring.

The dense gray Yin Qi had hovered in the Yin Field for thousands of years, isolating it from the sky, blocking both sunlight and moonlight.

However today, the Yin Qi between the sky and the Yin Field all went crazy as it endlessly gushed into the swirls above Shi Yan.

Not knowing when, the three swirls above his head had turned as huge as three mountains, filled with odd light. They looked like three huge mouths, ready to swallow all the Yin Qin between heaven and earth.

“This, this is...” One huge man beside Xia Xin Yan cried suddenly, remembering something.

“What?” Xia Xin Yan’s eyes sparkled, and she turned to watch that huge man.

Under Xia Xin Yan’s gaze, that huge man hesitated, and then walked away quietly.

Zhua Qi and Chi Xiao’s expression changed as they watched the strange scene with incredible eyes. Noticing that the huge man had some new findings, they walked towards them.

Xia Xin Yan frowned, walked away with the huge man and let him explain, keeping a distance from Zhua Qi and Chi Xiao.

“You sure?” Xia Xin Yan’s voice was filled with uncertainty.

That huge man kept nodding his head, showing lots of anxiety, then he looked at Shi Yan in fear, “I’m very sure, it must be...”

Xia Xin Yan’s face turned pale. She nodded and shouted to Chi Xiao and Zhua Qi, “Get ready for the fight! The Nine-headed Sky Snake will come out soon. It needs Yin Qi to train with, so it will chase us at all expense! We don’t need to enter the Yin Valley now.”

“Miss Xia, our Young Master...What the hell happened to him?” Ku Long was rather anxious.

“Ask him when he wakes up.” Xia Xin Yan frowned with bright light in her eyes, “But don’t worry. That strange phenomenon will not affect him. On the contrary, it is an opportunity. He will suck the Yin Qi in the Yin Field clean if not disturbed.”

“What!”

Chi Xiao, Zhua Qi, Wu Yun Lian and Zuo Shi all screamed in astonishment, with unbelievable faces.

“Yeah, this Martial Skill is this powerful. I don’t know how he gained it.” Xia Xin Yan’s expression was complex, “The Nine-headed Sky Snake will come soon, as it won’t allow anyone to devour the Yin Qi. Maybe we don’t even need to wait till tomorrow to fight it!”

“Howl! Howl! Howl!”

From the Yin Valley, crazy hollows came with extraordinary rage.

“Bang bang bang! Bang bang bang!”

Massive booms suddenly came from within the Yin Valley.

Everybody shook with the earth, and they could feel that a huge monster was approaching them quickly.

“There it is!” Zhua Qi screamed.

Translated by: Qian

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Chapter 89: Forming the Yin Pearls

The three swirls were floating above Shi Yan’s head like giant clouds.

Sparks flew inside the swirls and wisps of cold Yin Qi were repeatedly refined in the swirls, forming strange grey light spots.

The air above the Yin Field was filled with natural Yin Qi and had remained as such for a long time. But the huge attraction from the three swirls was showing a pattern of rapid consumption, swallowing it to the last.

Shi Yan’s expression was serious, as if he had entered some enigmatic realm.

The swirls above his head suddenly emitted some grey light spots, all of which entered Shi Yan’s body.

Because of that, Shi Yan’s body started forming a vacuum which was felt by everyone present!

His body was now like a black hole, sucking in all the grey light spots that came down from above!

The grey light spots flickered and jumped and entered into Shi Yan’s body.

Shi Yan was now covered in a grey glow and a chilling atmosphere spread out from him in all directions.

Whoever got near Shi Yan couldn’t help but feel stiff. The circulation of their Profound Qi would slow down and they would have to use their Qi for defense or else they would be affected by the dense Yin Qi.

It was like Shi Yan had transformed into a giant Yin Qi-swallowing monster!

Shi Yan was sitting as still as a stone while the three swirls floating above his head were wildly swallowing and transforming the Yin Qi in the Yin Valley. He was continuously refining the Yin Qi, transforming it into purest form of Yin energy, which was in turn nurturing his cultivation.

In Shi Yan’s chest, the three meridians of Tian Que, Shen Que, and Yin Du started rapidly gathering the grey light spots that had rushed into his body.

These grey light spots all represented the purest form of Profound Yin Qi. Huge amounts of light spots all entered the Yin Swirls and were refined to the purest degree. This refined energy then started gathering at the center of the Yin Swirls.

Unknowingly, in the center of the three Yin Swirls, there were three rice grain sized pearls slowly starting to form.

Once he detected the formation of the Yin Pearls, Shi Yan’s expression shook.

He discreetly started to detect his surroundings. When he realized there was nothing abnormal, he went back and continued circulating the Yin Swirls, ready to keep absorbing more of the natural Yin Qi.

“You don’t need to stop.” Xia Xin Yan stood by Shi Yan’s side, her beautiful eyes glinted, “I know what you’re doing, and I know you can hear me too. The Nine-headed Sky Snake will get here really soon, but we’ll take care of that. You can keep swallowing the natural Yin Qi here.”

Indeed Shi Yan could hear Xia Xin Yan’s voice, but he couldn’t reply to her.

“Miss Xia, if Shi Yan doesn’t stop here, the Nine-headed Sky Snake will attack him first.” Ku Long said hurriedly.

Zhua Qi and Chi Xiao also looked at Xia Xin Yan with a bit of surprise, not knowing what she meant by her proposal.

“The Nine-headed Sky Snake has nine heads, three of which can breathe fire, three can spit poison, and the remaining three can control the Yin Qi in the Yin Field to attack differently.”

Xia Xin Yan’s pretty eyes glinted, and she explained in seriousness, “The three heads that can control the natural Yin Qi are very troublesome and they will be hard for us to take care of. But now we have an advantage. If Shi Yan keeps sucking in the natural Yin Qi like this, that means once the Nine-headed Sky Snake gets here, the Yin Qi attack will be swallowed by the swirls above Shi Yan’s head! This way, three of the nine heads will be greatly weakened!”

Upon hearing that, Zhua Qi and Chi Xiao’s eyes both glinted. Together they nodded and approved, “Not bad!”

“Once those three heads become powerless, the Nine-headed Sky Snake will be a lot easier to deal with. Zhua Qi is not scared of the venom, and you also brought the Silver Curtain. So now we only need to put our efforts into the three fire-breathing heads. Because of Shi Yan, this fight is going to be a lot easier for us.” Xia Xin Yan said calmly.

Zhua Qi and Chi Xiao nodded quietly, they both agreed upon Xia Xin Yan’s suggestion.

“Would my young master be okay?” Han Feng suddenly opened his eyes and coldly stared at Xia Xin Yan, “Although we are very interested in the Gate of Heaven, the young master’s life is more important!”

“He’s only bait, he can just keep up what he’s doing now.” Xia Xin Yan frowned and continued, “If he wants to wake up he could do so anytime. But he will need a whole lot more time to try to gather the Yin Qi like this another time.”

“Boom boom boom!”

The thundering roar was getting closer.

The earth was shaking and in the distance, a faint but frightening figure slowly started to appear.

“Get ready to fight!” Chi Xiao shouted.

At another entrance of the Yin Field.

Beiming Shang's expression shook slightly. He looked far away into the distance at the smoke-like swirls that rose into the air. His cold eyes flashed with a trace of confusion.

"Grandpa, have they started fighting?" Beiming Ce asked.

Shaking his head, Beiming Shang said, "No, it's just that the natural Yin Qi has become abnormal. It is all gathering towards where Chi Xiao and his group are at. The Nine-headed Sky Snake is out of the Yin Valley and is rushing towards them. I wonder what is going on over there."

"When should we get there?"

"Let's wait! Wait until the fighting is almost over."

On another side, the people from the Dark World were gazing at the three floating swirls where Shi Yan was. They were also full of surprise, and didn't know what was going on.

"Master? It's like... like the natural Yin Qi has changed and is all gathering towards that one spot? Could it be that the Nine-headed Sky Snake has already started to attack?" The demonic young man guessed.

"The Nine-headed Sky Snake is able to use the natural Yin Qi to cultivate, but it shouldn't be this overbearing. To make all of that natural Yin Qi flow towards one spot I think even the Nine-headed Sky Snake would be unable to make such a grand gesture. Besides, the change is from outside the Yin Valley, it's obviously done By Chi Xiao's group." The Lord of the Dark World said with a deep tone.

"Should we go and see it?"

"No, we will wait for Beiming Shang's news. If Beiming Shang doesn't give out the signal, we will stay put for now. Your mistress should already be there, so if the Gate of Heaven really appears, your mistress will send out a signal, we don't need to be in such a hurry."

"Understood."

The three Yin Pearls were slowly forming. With more natural Yin Qi flowing in, the three Yin pearls grew brighter and brighter.

The Yin pearls were in the middle of the Yin Swirls outside of Shi Yan's meridians. They were rolling in the air and whenever a wisp of grey Yin Qi came in, the Yin Pearls would immediately absorb the grey light spots.

Only when the Yin Pearls were truly formed would they finally sink into the three meridians by themselves.

Shi Yan knew this deep in his heart. So when he clearly heard Xia Xin Yan's words, and knew that Han Feng and Ku Long were very worried about him, he still didn't stop the movement of the Yin Swirls.

He had a hunch that the Yin Pearls were at their crucial moment, and perhaps they will soon be truly formed successfully and then enter into his meridians.

When the three swirls showed up above his head, he was shocked too.

When the three swirls started insanely swallowing the natural Yin Qi, Shi Yan was finally sure that the [Black Formula] that was only ranked as a Mortal Level Martial Skill, was not something ordinary!

What kind of Mortal Level Martial Skill could cause such a big disturbance?

He really couldn't think of any.

“Roar! Roar! Roar!”

Terrifying roaring sounds thundered from the distance and filled the whole Yin Field.

The Nine-headed Sky Snake was a demon beast which was at the pinnacle of Level 7. Legend has it that it was an ancient mutant, a hybrid born from a dragon and a python. It has the ability to keep evolving, so when the Nine-headed Sky Snake has swallowed enough Yin Qi, poisonous air, and fire, it could evolve again and become a Level 8 or Level 9 demon beast.

The reason why this Nine-headed Sky Snake decided to take over the Yin Field was because it had seen that this place was rich in Yin Qi, and the outer perimeter of the Dead Swamp was covered by poisonous fog. It wanted to occupy this place so that it could use the poisonous air and the Yin Qi present for cultivation.

Soon a mountain-like figure, the Sky Snake with nine giant heads, finally came out of the Yin Valley.

The Nine-headed Sky Snake had a body like a mountain, covered with silver scales and sharp spines. All nine of its heads were about twenty-something meters long. Each head was like a giant python and had creepy white fangs, each head was breathing out either poisonous fog, Yin Qi, or flames.

“Attack!”

Once Zhua Qi saw it, his face hardened and he charged ahead of others.

Earth Dragons abruptly broke out of the ground. Zhua Qi's body flickered and he possessed one of the Earth Dragon's bodies.

When Zhua Qi possessed the Earth Dragon, its body covered itself in hard earth armor. The dragon head faintly looked like Zhua Qi's face and its body grew twice the size.

“Zhua Qi was born from a Level 8 Mud Dragon and a human female warrior. The Mud Dragon was originally the true master of the Dead Swamp and was able to transform into human shape. It was also once the strongest demon beast in this area. Legend has it that back then, the Mud Dragon was the king of the demon beasts here and not a single warrior could offend his prestige! The Mud Dragon was a Level 8 demon beast, comparable to a Spirit Realm warrior. But a thousand years ago it suddenly died in the Dead Swamp, it was a baffling death. Many years after its death, the Nine-headed Snake finally appeared in the Dead Swamp, and drove Zhua Qi to the outer perimeter of the Dead Swamp. It forcibly occupied the Yin Valley to cultivate, which is why Zhua Qi has so much hatred for it.”

When Zhua Qi possessed the Earth Dragon and charged at the Nine-headed Sky Snake, Chi Xiao quietly told about the grudge between Zhua Qi and the Nine-headed Sky Snake.

“Level 8 demon beast!” Xia Xin Yan's expression also shifted slightly, “No wonder Zhua Qi can control the poisonous mist and also freely travel through the mud. So he's a hybrid between a Mud Dragon and a human.”

“If he didn’t know how to control the poisonous mist and the mud, he would’ve been killed by the Nine-headed Snake a long time ago. At the outer perimeter of the Dead Swamp, as long as Zhua Qi could hide in the swamps, nobody can do anything to him. That’s the reason why it’s so tough to handle Zhua Qi.”

“You two! Can you start fighting now?!”

On the other side, Zhua Qi was in the form of an Earth Dragon, and he yelled from inside the flames that were breathed out by the Nine-headed Snake, he sounded a little urgent.

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Chapter 90: The Sky Changes

Outside the Yin Valley, thunderous roars rang out endlessly and huge amounts of power was surging and propagating across the sky like lightning.

Chi Xiao, Xia Xin Yan and Zhua Qi all leapt into the air; they were all facing the Nine-headed Sky Snake with all their strength.

Chi Xiao had turned into a giant and was wielding the Silver Curtain to guard against the venom while he held a giant sword in one hand. He was single-handedly facing the three fire-breathing heads of the Nine-headed Sky Snake.

Zhua Qi had possessed an Earth Dragon and was veering around the three venomous heads of the Nine-headed Sky Snake. The Sky Snake seemed to know that its venom was ineffective against Zhua Qi, so it opened its enormous mouth and bit down on Zhua Qi’s possessed Earth Dragon.

Xia Xin Yan was faring the best of the three. She floated in the air like a goddess, forming strange seals with her hands. Huge claws would momentarily appear in the air, which would ruthlessly attack the rest of the heads of the Nine-headed Sky Snake.

These three heads of the Sky Snake could control the natural Yin Qi, but whenever it breathed out the Yin Qi, they would be immediately absorbed by the three hovering swirls above Shi Yan’s head.

After a few futile attempts, the Sky Snake became furious. It moved toward Shi Yan and repeatedly tried to clash with him. It was determined to kill Shi Yan first.

Han Feng and Ku Long were observing everything gravely. Though being uneasy, they stood beside Shi Yan and were constantly on guard.

Zuo Shi, Wu Yun Lian and Chu Ping soon arrived at that stop. Now all the members from the Shi family and Zuo family had gathered together, and other than Shi Yan, all were watching the fight between the Nine-headed Sky Snake and the three masters.

Shi Yan was sitting still as a stone, his eyes closed and expression indifferent. However, he could clearly feel the striking waves of devastating power.

The fight among the Sky Realm masters destroyed all the vegetation around the Yin Valley. In one place, a deep crack had formed on the ground during the battle. Even Shi Yan, who was sitting with eyes closed, could feel the terrifying impacts.

However, he still didn't stop the Yin Swirls from taking in the natural Yin Qi.

In his chest, the Yin Swirls finally turned into Yin Pearls. They emitted a dark glow and contained overwhelming Yin Qi. These pearls slowly sunk into the three meridians of Shen Que, Tian Que, and Yin Du.

Once the three Yin Pearls sunk into his meridians, Shi Yan's body trembled.

Checking inside his body, Shi Yan realized that when the Yin Pearls entered in the meridians, the negative energies already present in the meridians all rushed towards the Yin Pearls, as if it was assimilating into the Yin Pearls.

Shi Yan was startled. He hurriedly concentrated his all in observing his three meridians.

He suddenly remembered that all his meridians had some amount of negative energy. He really didn't expect that these negative energies would conflict with the emerging Yin Pearls.

Inside the three meridians.

Wisps of negative energy formed into ribbon-like shapes and slowly gathered together.

Once the three Yin Pearls entered his meridians, the negative energies immediately intertwined with them, as if they were actually trying to break down the Yin Pearls.

However, the Yin Pearls had condensed massive amounts of natural Yin Qi and had formed after continuous and repeated refinement! Although the negative energies in his meridians were domineeringly wicked, they still lacked in quantity.

Over the course of these days, Shi Yan had indeed absorbed a lot of negative energy, but the negative energies were spread throughout the meridians in his body.

There were seven hundred and twenty meridians in total in his body, and of course the negative energy distributed to these three meridians was limited.

However, it was as if the Yin Pearls knew the lethality of the negative energy, and were determined to defend against it. It was like the Yin Pearls were going all out till the end.

Soon the negative energy and the Yin Pearls in his body stopped blindly battling each other.

With more and more Yin Qi pouring into the Yin Swirls, three more new Yin Pearls started forming in the center of the Yin Swirls...

This way, the previous three Yin Pearls that had already sunk into his meridians gained strong support. The Yin Pearls slowly gained dominance within Shi Yan's meridians.

On the contrary, it was those domineering negative energies that had to shrink back into the corner of his meridians and stop causing trouble; they couldn't gain support.

Over Shi Yan's head, the three mountainous Yin Swirls continued to rapidly absorb the natural Yin Qi.

The Yin Field that never sees the light all year round, was suddenly struck with its first beam of sunlight!

Under the crazy suction of the three mountainous swirls above Shi Yan's head, the Yin Qi that had gathered for thousands of years and covered the air in the Yin Field, was on the verge of being totally dried up!

The cold and gloomy Yin Field slowly became warmer because of the influx of sunlight.

More sunlight shone from above, and the beams of sunlight shot onto the plants and demon beasts in the Yin Field.

The strange bizarre plants soon became limp and shrivelled up under the blazing sun.

Many demon beasts were roaring in madness. They sprinted out of the Yin Field, and unwittingly rushed towards the outer perimeter of the Dead Swamp.

"Hey!" Zuo Shi exclaimed, "These plants and demon beasts are scared of sunlight?"

"The plants in the Yin Field grow from the natural Yin Qi, they've already adapted to the environment here. But now that the natural Yin Qi is gone, these plants that have never been in contact with sunlight can't tolerate it. They are all going to wither and die." Wu Yun Lian explained.

"What about the demon beasts?"

"They're the same. The demon beasts that live here cultivate by absorbing the Yin Qi. There is a heavy amount of Yin Qi in their bodies, they naturally like the cool shade. So once they realized that sunlight has appeared, they could only sprint away to escape into the swamps in the outer areas. At least there are poisonous fogs and the shade of old trees to cover them. It's better than being completely exposed to the sun like this."

"Does that mean the Nine-headed Sky Snake is affected too?"

"Indeed." Wu Yun Lian was dazed for a second, and she gazed at the Nine-headed Sky Snake.

Sure enough.

Under the blazing sun, the three heads of the Nine-headed Sky Snake that breathed Yin Qi seemed to be getting weaker.

Under Xia Xin Yan's attacks with the giant hands, those three heads could only dodge, possessing no power to fight back.

The two tall buff men who were worriedly watching Xia Xin Yan, at this moment, finally breathed out in relief.

One of them looked back and gazed afar at Shi Yan, he frowned and quietly said, "Thanks to that guy, if it weren't for him absorbing all that natural Yin Qi like this and exposing sunlight in the Yin Field, the Nine-headed Sky Snake would really be hard to handle."

"Mmmhmm, it surprised me that the [Black Formula] would spread to here, I wonder where he got such a thing..."

"Boom boom boom! Boom boom boom!" The Nine-headed Snake stumbled along the way, and suddenly sprinted towards the Yin Valley.

The sun had appeared and the Nine-headed Sky Snake's body was heavily damaged. It actually started thinking about running for its life.

"Chase it!"

Zhua Qi cried out, he ran ahead first, staring at the Nine-headed Sky Snake, and pursued it vigorously.

Chi Xiao and Xia Xin Yan exchanged eye contact, they both knew that the Gate of Heaven was in the Yin Valley. If they gave the Nine-headed Sky Snake enough time to rest it would become more troublesome later on.

Instead, they might as well destroy it as soon as possible!

So, Chi Xiao and Xia Xin Yan also followed.

Thundering roars kept coming from inside the Yin Valley. Chi Xiao and the rest should still be battling the Nine-headed Sky Snake in the Valley.

Outside the Valley, the three giant swirls above Shi Yan's head slowly disappeared.

All the natural Yin Qi that filled the enormous Yin Field had been emptied.

In Shi Yan's chest, three new Yin Pears were successfully formed, and together they sank into his meridians.

Feeling that the Yin Swirls had stopped whirling, and not a single trace of Yin Qi was flowing into his body, he finally woke up.

Shi Yan opened his eyes and stood up. He looked around at the surprised Han Feng, Wu Yun Lian, and the rest, then said, "Let's go look in the Yin Valley, it sounds like the Nine-headed Sky Snake is almost finished."

As expected, when everyone listened, they realized that the stirring in the Yin Valley had started to die out.

"Young Master, how are you doing?" Ku Long couldn't help but ask.

"I'm alright, I was cultivating a new skill. I just didn't expect this skill to be so strange." Shi Yan furrowed his brows, he suddenly thought of something, and tried to circulate the three Yin Swirls at his chest.

Wisps of strange Yin power suddenly flowed out from the three meridians of Shen Que, Tian Que, and Yin Du. The Yin power poured into the Yin Swirls, and the Yin Swirls began to quickly whirl, releasing traces of pure Yin power.

Yin power was different than Profound Qi, but it went along his arm and flowed out...

In his palm, a chilling glow shone, and a dark green light ball slowly covered his whole hand.

As his Yin power stirred, the light ball became bigger and bigger, and eventually it became a head-sized green light ball.

Lightly taking a breath in, Shi Yan's reversed the action. That green light ball started shrinking again, and all the Yin power returned through its original course and returned to the Yin Swirls and was again absorbed by the six Yin Pearls in his meridians.

The Yin Pearls were the source of power of the [Black Formula]. They released power through the Yin Swirls and then flew out of his meridians to attack.

Secretly feeling around for a moment, Shi Yan soon realized the way to use the [Black Formula]. It's not the same as swallowing in Yin Qi, but the other way around.

"Beiming Shang! What are you doing here?!"

Right at this moment, from the Yin Valley there suddenly came Chi Xiao's surprised shout.

Everyone outside the valley suddenly felt something amiss.

"Quickly let's go and see!" Wu Yun Lian notified the rest, and hurriedly rushed towards the direction of the Yin Valley.

Shi Yan, Han Feng, and Ku Long couldn't treat this lightly either, so together they quickly sprinted out and ran towards the Yin Valley with great speed.