

The Quest 135

Chapter 135: Unexpected Encounter

Old Zhao was severely injured, his breath weak.

The group rescued him, fed him some pills to protect his heart meridians, and then sent him down the mountain, knocking on the door of Xinglin Medical Hall late at night.

Mr. Feng stepped in and saved his life.

Though his life was saved, he had yet to wake up.

According to Mr. Feng, he had been given a fatal blow, chased over a long distance, exhausted his spiritual power, and lost too much blood, which led to his coma.

He needed to be carefully nursed back to health; once his blood and qi were restored, he would wake up.

Fortunately, they discovered him in time; any later and it would have been too late.

When it was mentioned that Mo Hua was the one who found and rescued him, Mr. Feng was momentarily stunned, then smiled appreciatively, patting Mo Hua on the head:

"You child, you're truly blessed."

Mo Hua felt a bit embarrassed.

Old Zhao's wife, who had fainted several times from excessive worry, relaxed only after hearing that her husband, though comatose, was still alive.

She took a moment to thank Mo Hua, gifting him several hand-sewn dao robes with two lines of small characters embroidered on the collars:

"Safe and Sound, Long and Lasting."

It was the most sincere blessing.

Liu Ruhua pulled her into the house for a chat, softly comforting her. When she left, her expression was much improved.

However, there was still one thing that Mo Hua was very concerned about.

Mr. Feng had said that Uncle Zhao was given a fatal blow by someone, not chased by a demonic beast.

Who in Tongxian City would go to such lengths to kill a late-stage Qi cultivator demon hunter?

Mo Hua couldn't figure it out.

Elder Yu had already sent people to investigate, and there should be some clues. Even if they couldn't find anything, once Uncle Zhao woke up, the truth would probably come out.

But these matters were for Elder Yu and the others to worry about, not Mo Hua.

He had done everything he could.

He just hoped Uncle Zhao would wake up soon, and their family could be reunited.

In the following days, Mo Hua focused more on his cultivation.

He spent an extra hour each day meditating and refining spirit stones.

Cultivators emphasized persistence in their practice; daily cultivation, accumulating over time, naturally led to breakthroughs.

One didn't need to practice for long each day; just an hour of consistency was enough.

The extra hour Mo Hua spent wasn't very efficient, and the amount of spiritual power he could refine wasn't much. But being so close to the sixth level of Qi Refinement, Mo Hua wanted to make a bit more effort to break through sooner.

A few days later, he indeed felt the threshold of the sixth level of Qi Refinement.

Mo Hua solemnly burned incense, bathed, prepared spirit stones, and concentrated his mind, waiting for the breakthrough.

And then he failed.

He didn't cross that threshold...

Mo Hua's face darkened, and he slung his storage bag over his shoulder, heading into Dahei Mountain again.

Breaking through in cultivation was something that required fate; he couldn't be bothered to stress about it.

He decided to stock up on more demonic blood to practice his arrays.

Upon entering Dahei Mountain, Mo Hua noticed that there were fewer demon hunters around.

Previously, when he entered the mountain, he would encounter several acquaintances in half a day. Now, after wandering for a whole day, he only saw one or two.

Mo Hua met a not-so-familiar demon hunting team, shared their demonic blood, treated them to beef, and inquired about the reason.

Old Zhao had been chased by someone, and Elder Yu, concerned, had sent people to investigate and advised everyone to stay out of Dahei Mountain for a few days. Thus, there were fewer demon hunters in the mountain.

Mo Hua frowned. With fewer people, there would be relatively more demonic beasts.

Staying in the mountain would be dangerous.

If he were chased by a demonic beast, there wouldn't be anyone around to help.

"Should I go down the mountain now?"

Mo Hua thought about it and shook his head. His spiritual sense was already very strong, not weaker than that of an average late-stage Qi cultivator. If he encountered a demonic beast, he could detect it early and wouldn't be chased.

But he still needed to be cautious.

Mo Hua smeared some grass juice on his clothes, stuck a few branches in his hair, and dirtied his face.

This way, demonic beasts wouldn't catch his scent, and from a distance, with the grass and branches, they wouldn't be able to make out his figure.

As for dirty clothes, his mother would wash them when he got back.

Mo Hua, reassured, continued his "patrol" according to his plan.

Mo Hua held his compass and wandered until noon. When he got hungry, he lay in the grass, eating the beef his mother had made.

As he ate, he suddenly noticed movement. Raising his head to look through the grass, he saw several cultivators approaching from afar.

Judging by their attire, they didn't look like demon hunters.

Mo Hua's expression tightened, and he lay down, quietly extending his spiritual sense.

He sensed three people approaching, two men and one woman, all at the late stage of Qi Refinement. Their spiritual power was concealed, making it hard to detect, and they seemed to be arguing.

Mo Hua pricked up his ears, curious.

"...We've been searching for days and found nothing..." one man said intermittently.

"Be patient... That person is extremely cunning..."

"...Despicable... If I find him, I'll tear him to pieces..." said a woman.

Who are they talking about? Could it be Uncle Zhao?

Mo Hua held his breath, listening carefully.

The three drew closer, and their voices became clearer. One of the voices sounded vaguely familiar to Mo Hua.

"...If we still can't find him, you should go back first," said the man leading them.

"I'm not going back!" the woman replied.

"Is this the capability of your Tongxian City Dao Court, unable to find a single person?" the other man said, his tone sarcastic.

"That thief is very familiar with Dahei Mountain. Hiding here makes it like searching for a needle in a haystack."

"Even if it's like searching for a needle in a haystack, we must find it..."

"You aren't local cultivators, so you don't understand. Dahei Mountain is full of demonic beasts and extremely dangerous..."

"It's just a second-tier state's demonic mountain; how dangerous can it be?"

"Ignorance is bliss..."

"Hmph, I'm not like you, timid and fearful! Whether it's a demonic beast or that thief, I'll kill anything I see..."

The leading man suddenly stopped, sneering:

"Stop boasting, haven't you noticed we're being watched?"

"What did you say?"

"Being watched?"

The man was silent for a moment, then suddenly drew his sword, pointing it towards the grass where Mo Hua was hiding, coldly saying:

"Stop hiding, come out!"

The other two were startled, then their eyes flashed with shock as they stepped back half a step, drawing their weapons, their expressions grave, looking towards where the man's sword pointed.

The rocky terrain and thick grass showed no signs of abnormality.

The more they saw nothing, the more alarmed they became.

The sword-wielding man's face turned cold with caution.

If he hadn't accidentally used his spiritual sense and detected a barely noticeable figure in the grass, they wouldn't have known they were being watched!

Three late-stage Qi cultivators, and they had been watched without noticing!

Strong spiritual sense, high cultivation, skilled in concealment, and cunning...

The sword-wielding man felt a chill down his spine.

Knowing he was discovered, Mo Hua slowly stood up from the grass.

The three saw the grass move and then a small figure emerged.

With strange branches on his head, wearing what looked like a cultivator's dao robe but stained with grass juice, his face was smeared with dirt, making it hard to see his features.

His spiritual power was weak, or rather, deliberately concealed.

"Is it a person? Or a demonic beast?"

The sword-wielding man grew more nervous, unsure whether to strike.

Then, the figure, whether person or beast, waved at him cheerfully, saying:

"Uncle Zhang, long time no see!"

The sword-wielding man was dumbfounded.

He recognized the voice and the figure...

"Mo... Mo Hua?!"

"Yes, yes." Mo Hua nodded happily.

Zhang Lan was stunned, dropping his sword with a clatter.