

The Quest 541

Chapter 541: Escape (3)

Several corpse cultivators commanded an iron corpse and about ten walking corpses, besieging them from all directions.

Bai Zisheng guarded the rear, swinging his long spear, fending off the zombies.

Mo Hua and Bai Zixi, each using spells and sword qi to restrain, the three of them did not fancy the fight, retreating while battling.

Later, other cultivators came to aid them, and after fighting a chaotic battle for two hours, they finally escaped from the corpse mine and withdrew to a cave where they had set up camp.

Inside the cave, Yang Jiashan, Young Master Yun, a withered old man, a middle-aged cultivator, and the other cultivators were all inside, discussing the eradication of the corpse mine.

On the way there, Mo Hua had already asked and understood the situation.

He learned that it was the Taoist Court that had ordered the suppression of the corpse mine and the eradication of the Corpse King, which was why so many cultivators had gathered.

Therefore, seeing so many people didn't surprise him.

A Taoist Soldier took Mo Hua and the other two to Yang Jiashan.

Yang Jiashan, upon seeing Mo Hua and learning of his identity, was clearly surprised.

He had heard from Bai Zisheng that it was his "Junior Disciple" who had obtained the information on the corpse mine and relayed it out.

Since he was a Junior Disciple, he was naturally expected to be young.

But he never could have imagined he would be this young.

Mo Hua's tender face still held traces of childishness.

He looked not much older than those newly initiated disciples in his Clan's cultivation enlightenment.

Could such a child have been used by Lu Chengyun? Could he have been confined to the corpse mine?

And was he able to gather intelligence while inside and then send it out from the heavily guarded corpse mine?

How did he achieve this?

Yang Jiashan's eyebrows knitted into the character "川".

The other cultivators, upon seeing Mo Hua, also had complex expressions, unsure of what to say.

The cave became momentarily silent...

However, Mo Hua was looking at Yang Jiashan, looking here and there, finding him somewhat familiar, and couldn't help but ask:

"Commander, do you know an uncle named Yang Jiyong?"

Yang Jiashan was taken aback, "You know my fifth brother?"

Mo Hua nodded, "A little acquainted. Uncle Yang even told me to visit the Yang Family when I have time..." Discover more stories at [empire](#)

Yang Jiashan frowned, muttering "Mo Hua" twice, then suddenly his eyes brightened as he said:

"Mo Hua! I knew this name sounded familiar. Before the year's end, my fifth brother mentioned meeting a very talented Junior Formation Master..."

Very talented...

Yang Jiashan thought again.

Back then, his fifth brother had said something different.

With a serious face and taking the matter seriously, he said that he had met a Junior Formation Master with "terrifying talent"...

When he asked how the talent was terrifying, he didn't elaborate, only saying that he had to keep it confidential.

Yang Jiashan didn't take it to heart then.

Yang Jiyong and he were equally matched in Formation knowledge; what distinction could he make about whose talents were superior? So at the time, he only listened casually to Yang Jiyong's words and didn't pay much attention.

Upon arriving in South Yue City, hearing the name Mo Hua struck him as familiar.

Now that Mo Hua mentioned Yang Jiyong, he suddenly remembered.

Yang Jiashan's attitude immediately warmed.

Although he couldn't discern the degree of talent in Formation, he remembered his fifth brother also saying that upon meeting this Junior Formation Master, he should say thanks on his behalf and treat him well, and it would be best if he could persuade him to join the Yang Family.

His fifth brother had a somewhat foul temper and a bit of pride, but he was generous in spirit and valued loyalty. It wasn't often he praised someone so highly.

If this young cultivator was held in high esteem by his fifth brother, regardless of anything else, at least his character must be excellent.

Moreover, being so young and already a Formation Master.

Even if his talent wasn't considered "terrifying", it was certainly quite remarkable.

On top of that, he risked his life to gather information about the corpse mine, which was a great help.

Yang Jiashan immediately said amicably:

"I'm sorry for the fright you've experienced, young friend. I will have someone prepare some drinks and Spiritual Meat. Eat your fill and have a good rest."

Mo Hua smiled, "Thank you, Commander!"

Yang Jiashan waved his hand, "No need for such formalities. You're familiar with my fifth brother, just call me Uncle Yang."

Following his cues, Mo Hua cheerfully called out:

"Uncle Yang!"

Yang Jiashan nodded with a smile.

The others looked on, somewhat stupefied.

How had they established a relationship so quickly without many words spoken...?

He entered as "Leader Yang," and in less than the time it takes to finish a cup of tea, he became "Uncle Yang"...

The normally right-angled and stern-faced Yang Jiashan was now all smiles, as if basking in the spring breeze.

The incongruence was as stark as could be.

Just who was this young cultivator?

The others whispered to each other.

Then Yang Jiashan said to Mo Hua: "You go rest with your older brother and sister first; we still have matters to discuss here..."

Mo Hua nodded, "All right, then I won't disturb you any further, Uncle Yang."

Yang Jiashan gave a slight nod.

Mo Hua bowed and took his leave.

Yang Jiashan watched Mo Hua leave with a kind expression, then turned back, his face becoming serious again as he said to the people:

"Let's continue..."

A deputy commander-like Taoist Soldier continued the earlier discussion:

"...The zombies are being refined in greater numbers, and we are understaffed. We can't sustain this attrition, we need to find a way to break the Formation of Ten Thousand Corpses..."

"Formation of Ten Thousand Corpses?"

Just as he reached the doorway, Mo Hua's ears perked up, hearing these words and momentarily froze.

The deputy commander had lowered his voice, but due to Mo Hua's peak Thirteen Stripes Divine Sense, even though the voice wasn't loud, he still overheard it.

Mo Hua hesitated for a moment, then turned back and asked:

"Uncle Yang, are you discussing the Formation of Ten Thousand Corpses?"

Yang Jiashan's expression was one of astonishment as he asked:

"Young friend, do you know about the 'Formation of Ten Thousand Corpses'?"

Mo Hua nodded his head.

Yang Jiashan was taken aback, then he remembered that Mo Hua was the one who sent out the intelligence, so it wasn't odd that he knew about the Formation of Ten Thousand Corpses.

"So, are you familiar with this Formation of Ten Thousand Corpses?"

Yang Jiashan asked with a glint of hope in his eyes, anticipating an affirmative answer.

Mo Hua hesitated slightly, then slowly said:

"I'm fairly... familiar with it."

How could he say that the central Formation eye of the Formation of Ten Thousand Corpses was crafted by him...

Chapter 542: Breaking the Formation (1)

"Am I familiar with it?"

Yang Jishan couldn't understand what level of 'familiar' was being implied. He probed further, asking:

"Then, young brother, do you know how to break the Formation of Ten Thousand Corpses?"

All the cultivators present turned their gaze towards Mo Hua.

After pondering for a moment and sizing up everyone, especially the strengths of the cultivators from the Taoist Court, Mo Hua nodded:

"There is one way."

Yang Jishan was overjoyed, "What method?"

Mo Hua asked, "Do you still have the map of the Stone Palace?"

"Yes!"

Yang Jishan immediately ordered someone to spread the map on the stone table in the hall.

Mo Hua marked several spots on the map. These spots were located deep within the Stone Palace in areas that were slightly secluded and unremarkable, and the stone walls were solid with no special features.

A puzzled look crossed Yang Jishan's face.

Mo Hua then explained:

"These places are sealed vaults, which contain many Spirit Stones..."

"Spirit Stones?" Yang Jishan frowned.

"Yes." Mo Hua nodded.

"The Spirit Stones that Lu Chengyun made the zombies mine as slaves, a large portion of them, are hidden in these sealed vaults within the Corpse Mine."

He had found this out the previous night after sneaking around invisibly and eavesdropping here and there.

"What then?" Yang Jishan asked once more.

"Destroy these Spirit Stones, and you can break the Formation of Ten Thousand Corpses," Mo Hua replied.

Yang Jishan fell silent.

The expressions of the others were also somewhat complicated.

Some even showed disappointment.

Mo Hua didn't understand why.

On the contrary, a senior Formation Master, intending to be helpful, reminded:

"Young brother, you're young and probably aren't aware that Evil Formations differ from normal formations..."

"Normal formations refine Spirit Stones to convert Spiritual Power and drive the formation..."

"But Evil Formations, they're powered by Blood Qi, flesh and bones, Divine Souls and lifeforce, resentment from living beings, and Filthy Qi from nature and other types of Evil Power."

"That makes the formation strange and its power greatly enhanced. It also pollutes the flesh and Spiritual Power of cultivators to an even greater degree..."

"Lu Chengyun's Formation of Ten Thousand Corpses is the same."

"This formation isn't driven by Spiritual Power, so even if you destroy the vault and the Spirit Stones, it won't help. At most, it will only result in Lu Chengyun losing some of his Spirit Stone assets..."

Mo Hua shook his head, "It's not like that."

The senior Formation Master was momentarily taken aback.

The other Formation Masters were also a bit astonished.

Mo Hua explained further:

"Lu Chengyun's Formation of Ten Thousand Corpses evolved from the Large Formation of Corpses. It has the structure of a Large Formation but not its scale; thus it is a Compound Formation..."

"Even so, the required Evil Power is vast."

"He couldn't carry out a massacre in the city, and without being able to refine Evil Power from blood, resentment, and hatred, he resorted to a compromise."

"He constructed the Compound Formation eye to refine Spirit Stones, using Spiritual Power to drive the formation, then polluted the Spiritual Power with Blood Qi, creating Evil Power to drive the entire Formation of Ten Thousand Corpses."

The senior Formation Master's expression was shaken, and the other Formation Masters looked at each other with surprise and uncertainty.

"So..."

Mo Hua continued:

"By destroying the vault and the Spirit Stones, you're essentially cutting off the supply for the Formation of Ten Thousand Corpses, rendering its Formation eye useless, and naturally breaking the formation."

"And since the Formation eye has already been constructed, it cannot be modified in a short time."

"Once the Spirit Stones are gone, even if Lu Chengyun wanted to resort to killing and plundering a city to use the blood and flesh for Evil Power to drive the formation, it would be impossible."

After Mo Hua finished, everyone's expressions changed, but they remained silent.

Ordinary cultivators, either not understanding formations or only having a rudimentary grasp, couldn't fully comprehend.

The few Formation Masters who did understand, after Mo Hua's explanation, felt that he made a lot of sense. Still, they were somewhat uncertain...

This matter concerned the orders of the Taoist Court, the suppressing of the Corpse Mine, the extermination of the Corpse King, and the eradication of the Taoist Demon.

Such matters were no trifling affair.

They dared not be careless.

The senior Formation Master carefully asked:

"Young brother... Gentleman, how do you know this?"

Because I drew the Formation eye...

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Of course, Mo Hua couldn't say that out loud.

Instead, he vaguely responded, "I was detained by Lu Chengyun in the Corpse Mine. By chance, I happened to see the Formation Diagram for the Formation of Ten Thousand Corpses..."

Formation Diagram for the Formation of Ten Thousand Corpses?

The senior Formation Master trembled inwardly, "Really?"

Knowing the Formation Diagram would change everything.

Mo Hua considered briefly, then nodded, "How about I draw it for you to see..."

The senior Formation Master was startled, "Draw..."

You mean, after seeing it, you can replicate it?

Yang Jishan immediately commanded, "Bring paper and ink."

The senior Formation Master promptly said:

"I have it, I have it!"

After saying that, he personally took out paper and ink. Other Formation Masters helped, laying out the Formation Paper and mixing the Spiritual Ink on the table.

Everything was ready, and all eyes were eagerly on Mo Hua.

Mo Hua felt somewhat uncomfortable but still took the brush, dipped it in ink, and began to draw Formation Patterns on the paper.

His brushwork was refined and measured, each stroke and pattern drawn freely yet with an inherent order.

The Formation Masters seated there were taken aback, exchanging looks and whispering praises among themselves:

"Despite his young age, he already exudes the demeanor of a great master!"

"Without years of meticulous practice, one couldn't possess such expert brush skills..."

"Most impressive, most impressive..."

Even Young Master Yun, observing Mo Hua, had a continuous glimmer of admiration in his clear eyes.

Of course, Mo Hua didn't draw the entire Formation Diagram of Ten Thousand Corpses.

He merely outlined the movements of the Formation Pivot to make it easier for everyone to understand the flow of Spiritual Power.

He also sketched the core of the Formation eye so that everyone could see how Spiritual Power passed through the Formation eye, connected with the Formation of Ten Thousand Corpses, and then mixed with Blood Qi and Filthy Qi to form Evil Power...

Before he finished, Mo Hua stopped drawing.

The group of Formation Masters, left wanting more, saw Mo Hua put down his brush and urged:

"Continue drawing, why have you stopped?"

Chapter 543: Break the Array (2)

Mo Hua scratched his head, feeling guilty:

"That's all I remember..."

He couldn't keep painting, for if he went on, he would reveal the entire formation eye...

Everyone looked left and right, scrutinizing Mo Hua's sketch of the Formation of Ten Thousand Corpses, and they all frowned.

A Formation Master sighed:

"Lu Chengyun, indeed, is quite talented..."

Someone snorted coldly, "So what if he has talent? Isn't he still a heartless scoundrel?"

"I wasn't saying he wasn't..."

"Without talent and virtue, one is merely mediocre, but with talent and no virtue, that's often the greater disaster."

"As long as one's character is corrupt, no matter how talented, they should be condemned!"

"It's a pity that Lu Chengyun, with all his talent, hasn't used it on the right path, this formation eye is extremely exquisite..."

The old Formation Master shook his head, "This formation eye might not have been constructed by Lu Chengyun..."

"Not by Lu Chengyun?" The crowd was astonished.

The old Formation Master nodded and said:

"Although this is a First Grade formation eye, it uses the framework of a Large Formation, and its underlying pattern employs the Five Elements in an orderly fashion; this is indeed a method deeply rooted in the authentic and righteous Dao of formations..."

"With such an understanding of formations, one would disdain to learn Evil Formations and sully themselves with the likes of Lu Chengyun."

"Therefore, this Formation of Ten Thousand Corpses might have been built by Lu Chengyun, but this formation eye may have been made by someone else..."

Mo Hua listened with a hint of surprise in his heart.

This old gentleman with a beard, though also just a First Grade Formation Master, had such a sharp eye.

He could actually discern this...

Hearing this, the other Formation Masters also nodded their heads.

Then someone asked, "Who, then, drew this formation eye? Could it be that Lu Chengyun has a high-level formation expert behind him?"

"Is this formation expert also a First Grade Formation Master?"

"No, this formation eye is Large Formation craftsmanship, probably Second Grade..."

With this statement, everyone's expressions turned somber.

The Ultimate Formation and the Formation of Ten Thousand Corpses were already problematic enough.

If there was also a high-level formation expert standing behind Lu Chengyun, the situation would become even more severe.

Suddenly, the old Formation Master asked Mo Hua:

"Young gentleman, do you know who created this formation eye? Or perhaps, do you know who this expert is?"

Mo Hua kept a serious face and shook his head, "I don't know."

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I couldn't possibly admit it was me...

You probably wouldn't believe me if I did.

Seeing that everyone was still mired in this issue, with gloomy and troubled expressions, Mo Hua had no choice but to say:

"I didn't see any other Formation Masters in the Corpse Mine..."

"Perhaps this Formation Master was threatened by Lu Chengyun, forced to complete the formation, and then 'disposed of after use'."

Bai Zisheng and Bai Zixi both silently glanced at Mo Hua.

The old Formation Master was taken aback, then nodded in agreement.

Lu Chengyun was highly suspicious; such a thing wasn't beyond possibility.

He sighed, "If that's true, it would be such a pity..."

Seeing that they had been discussing for so long and still seemed confused, Yang Jishan decisively asked,

"Gentlemen, can this Formation of Ten Thousand Corpses be broken?"

The old Formation Master hesitated for a moment, then slowly said,

"If the formation eye is indeed as such, then this strategy might indeed be viable."

"Is this formation eye genuine?" Yang Jishan asked further.

The old Formation Master remained silent and hesitant.

The other Formation Masters also frowned, saying nothing.

They believed it to be genuine, but the formation knowledge involved exceeded their mastery; they dared not make a definitive judgment.

If the reality proved different, they could not bear the responsibility.

Yang Jishan then turned to look at Young Master Yun.

Young Master Yun was hesitant; after pondering for a while, he slowly nodded:

"It should be correct."

He thought for a moment, then added:

"This formation corresponds with what we currently know about the Corpse Mine, and the level of formation knowledge is very high; beyond what Lu Chengyun could fabricate."

Yang Jishan breathed a slight sigh of relief.

He patted Mo Hua on the shoulder and smiled, "Young brother, you've been a great help again!"

Mo Hua also smiled happily.

"Since the formation is real, then that's good. Let's discuss how to destroy these Spirit Stones and cut off the Formation of Ten Thousand Corpses' supply..."

Afterwards, Yang Jishan and the others discussed the specific methods.

How to deploy Cultivators, when and where, who would lead the assault, who would provide cover, how to destroy these Spirit Stone storerooms...

These Spirit Stones couldn't be moved.

They had to find a way to destroy them.

To allow them to turn into Spiritual Energy, to scatter back into the heavens and earth, so they would not be used for evil by Lu Chengyun.

After the discussion was over, Mo Hua left.

Young Master Yun stared at the departing figure of Mo Hua for a long time, lost in thought. After a while, his eyes brightened slightly.

...

Mo Hua was placed in a quiet stone room.

The room had simple furnishings: only a stone table, stone chairs, stone bed, clearly a makeshift setup without much consideration for comfort.

Mo Hua didn't mind; what he cared about was the table full of food.

There were Spirit Fruits, and chicken and duck Spiritual Meat.

He had been locked in a coffin, starved for many days, and now, ravenous, it was a feast fit for a king, a fruit in one hand, a chicken leg in the other, eating with delight.

Cultivators can go without food for a long time, but they still feel hungry and deplete their Blood Qi.

Going without food for too long can still lead to starvation and death.

Bai Zisheng sat aside, legs crossed, shaking his head and tapping his foot, seemingly pondering something.

Bai Zixi was quietly reading a book, occasionally lifting her eyes. Seeing Mo Hua eating with gusto, her long lashes fluttered, her gaze becoming serene.

Mo Hua looked up and asked, "Aren't you going to eat?"

"You go ahead."

"Okay."

Mo Hua made no fuss and, after eating his fill, lay comfortably on the bed, patting his full belly contentedly.

Chapter 544: Break the Array (3)

Bai Zisheng said, "You should take a walk after eating to aid digestion, don't just lie down."

"Oh."

Mo Hua responded with a somewhat lazy tone, but still remained lying down without moving.

Bai Zisheng shook his head. After a moment, he seemed to remember something and asked,

"Are you going to see your master again?"

Mo Hua blinked and replied, "After sorting out the matters here, then I'll go back to see Master!"

Bai Zisheng's eyes brightened, "Are you going to take out Lu Chengyun?"

He couldn't stand those who were sanctimonious, bullied with their power, practiced Demon Skills, murdered, and bullied his sister and little junior brother.

And Lu Chengyun had nearly all these traits.

"Hmm." Mo Hua nodded.

Bai Zisheng thought for a while, then frowned slightly, "It's not easy to make a move, is it? There are so many Walking Corpses, Iron Corpses, and the Corpse King..."

Mo Hua sat up and said in a low voice,

"Step by step. First, we will weaken Lu Chengyun's power, push him into a tight spot, and then get close to that Corpse King... and he will be doomed!"

"Corpse King?" Bai Zisheng was taken aback, "Did you do something to his Corpse King?"

Mo Hua shook her finger, corrected him, "It's not 'his' Corpse King..."

"What do you mean?" Bai Zisheng didn't understand.

Mo Hua played coy, whispering,

"It's top secret. You'll find out when the time comes."

Bai Zisheng was not very happy.

After contemplating for a moment, Mo Hua relented slightly and said, "When the time comes, I guarantee you'll get the chance to take down Lu Chengyun."

"Really?"

Bai Zisheng was skeptical.

"Hmm," Mo Hua nodded, "You are my senior brother, I wouldn't lie to you!"

Bai Zisheng immediately became happy again.

Bai Zixi glanced at her older brother, shaking her head slightly with a hint of helplessness.

...

The next day at 6 A.M., the Taoist Soldiers began their assault on the Stone Palace.

Yang Jishan led the charge from the front, tying up most of the Iron Corpses, but this was merely a feint.

The other two elite teams of cultivators, following Mo Hua's guidance, took a detour to sneak in and broke through the defensive formation of the storeroom, penetrating the stone walls. As expected, they found a storeroom filled with blindingly brilliant Spirit Stones.

Under military orders, they did not hesitate. Using Spiritual Artifacts, Runes, and Taoist Skills, they destroyed the large store of Spirit Stones within the storeroom.

The destroyed Spirit Stones turned into a vast surge of Spiritual Energy that spilled out from the Corpse Mine, pervading the surroundings before returning to nature.

Even outside the Corpse Mine, Mo Hua could sense this thick presence of spiritual power.

"So this is Spiritual Energy..."

Mo Hua murmured pensively, her mind slightly stirred.

It's said that over twenty thousand years ago, nature was teeming with dense Spiritual Energy.

However, once the Taoist Court united the Cultivation World, the rapid development led to the reckless extraction of Spiritual Energy, which gradually depleted its presence in nature.

Only Spirit Stones mined from the spiritual mines below ground remained.

Cultivators relied on Spirit Stones to practice cultivation.

Places with remnants of nature's spiritual energy, like secret mountain sanctuaries, were rare, the stuff of legends. They were occupied by the Cultivation World's powerful forces.

It was the same situation with Spirit Stones.

Over the twenty thousand plus years of the Taoist Calendar, nearly all of the Cultivation World's spiritual mines had been carved up and seized by the Taoist Court, the Noble Clans, and the Great Sects.

The vast majority of Spirit Stones also ended up in their hands.

The majority of the lower-class cultivators actually had access to very few Spirit Stones.

Let alone breathing in the real nature's spiritual energy...

Now the Spiritual Energy that overflowed from the Corpse Mine, although dense, was ephemeral, dissipating in mere moments.

Although it was Spiritual Energy, it was not quite the real thing.

After it dissipated, the world was still left dry and barren of Spiritual Energy.

Mo Hua felt somewhat moved.

She looked up at the sky, silently pondering,

"I wonder if there will ever be a day when this world sees the revival of Spiritual Energy..."

...

As the storeroom was blasted open, the Spirit Stones destroyed, and the Spiritual Energy diffused into the world, Lu Chengyun felt it too.

His heart ached sharply as if pricked by needles.

These were Spirit Stones! Collected through hard labor, enslaving Mining Cultivators, controlling zombies, mining, and his accumulated wealth!

With these Spirit Stones, he could bribe officials of the Taoist Court, buy support from various powers, strengthen the Lu Family, obtain various Cultivation World resources, and elevate his own cultivation level!

Yet now, they were all destroyed!

What was even harder for him to accept was the situation with the Formation of Ten Thousand Corpses!

With the Spirit Stones destroyed, the Formation eye of the Formation of Ten Thousand Corpses would be cut off from its supply.

Although it could still barely operate on the remaining Evil Power, within ten days, as the Evil Power was exhausted, the Formation of Ten Thousand Corpses would halt.

Without the Formation of Ten Thousand Corpses running to continuously refine zombies, how could he contend with the Taoist Soldiers?

Lu Chengyun's gaze turned icy. "It looks like I need to find another solution..."

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But then he was puzzled.

How did the Taoist Court figure out that he powered his Evil Formation with Spiritual Power?

And how did they learn that his Spirit Stones were hidden in the secret storeroom?

Was there a traitor within the Corpse Mine who leaked all its secrets?

"Impossible..."

Lu Chengyun shook his head.

Those in the know had either been killed by him or sacrificed by him.

The rest were just Corpse Cultivators.

These Corpse Cultivators had been with him for a long time, killing and refining corpses, with blood-stained hands.

As long as they practiced Corpse Path cultivation techniques, they would have fallen into the Demon Path, and it was impossible for them to switch allegiance to the Taoist Court.

Even if they did switch sides, it would be a death sentence.

They couldn't have leaked secrets...

"So, someone at the Taoist Court saw through the bluff of the Corpse Mine and also through the Formation I laid out?"

A cultivator with such capabilities and Formation attainments must be a remarkable person.

But who could this person be?

When did they set their sights on him?

Lu Chengyun furrowed his brow.

A sudden premonition came over him.

It was as if someone had long ago spun a web around him, tightly ensnaring him, and was now watching him eagerly, closing in step by step...

Who was this person?

And what exactly was this web?

Lu Chengyun was confused.

Behind him, the fierce and majestic Corpse King remained silently loyal.

Chapter 545: Pursuit (1)

Lu Chengyun's Spirit Stone warehouse was destroyed, severing the supply of Spirit Stones, causing the Formation of Ten Thousand Corpses to operate sluggishly, and the speed of Corpse Refinement also became slower and slower.

Yang Jishan was overjoyed.

The other Cultivators all breathed a sigh of relief.

In the battle, what Lu Chengyun was losing were Zombies.

What they were losing, however, were living human lives.

Now that the Formation of Ten Thousand Corpses had been reduced and gradually stopped, getting rid of this endless loss was good news for their side.

Taoist Soldiers and Cultivators from all sides couldn't help but feel grateful to Mo Hua.

Next, it would be a head-on battle.

The leaders of the Taoist Soldiers, along with the various squads and Cultivators, engaged in a fight to the death with Iron Corpses and Walking Corpses.

Yang Jishan issued orders and coordinated the strategy, while Mo Hua followed by his side, watching the battle.

Inside the Corpse Mine, the battle was fierce.

The Cultivators' swords clashed with the Zombies' claws, and Spiritual Power intertwined with Corpse Qi. Corpse Poison spread, Spells flew across, one after another Cultivators fell, and corps after corps of Zombies were slaughtered.

It was both tragic and magnificent.

Mo Hua watched, shocked.

Although he had previously seen Cultivators fighting Zombies sporadically, and had fought Zombies himself when escaping, standing at the peak and overseeing the entire battlefield, he still found the scene of the fight to the death before him extremely brutal and shocking.

Soon after, Mo Hua also felt a pang of pity.

These Taoist Soldiers were also people.

Even though their Cultivation was low and they could only serve as insignificant soldiers in this war,

They had parents and possibly wives and children.

Dying here, there would be those who grieved deeply for them.

And these Zombies, who were humans in life, were likely suffering Miners in their past.

Oppressed by the Lu Family during their lives, they were conscripted as cannon fodder even after death, helping the tyrant.

Mo Hua sighed.

This could not go on.

If the battle continued like this, who knew how many more Cultivators would be injured or even lose their lives...

South Yue City might also face a catastrophe.

Mo Hua observed the situation and frowned in contemplation, using Divine Sense Calculation to determine the main and secondary Sequence controlled by the Spirit Pivots among the horde, and then said to Yang Jishan:

"Uncle Yang, that tall Iron Corpse, that one-armed Iron Corpse, and that fat Iron Corpse, we need to kill them first."

Yang Jishan was momentarily stunned, "Why?"

He didn't quite understand why, amidst the dozens of Iron Corpses on the battlefield, Mo Hua insisted on killing those particular few first.

These Iron Corpses didn't appear to be the strongest either.

Mo Hua explained:

"The Zombies on the field can be divided into two types."

"One type is controlled by the Corpse Cultivators, using the Corpse Controlling Bells."

"The other type is controlled through Formation, by Iron Corpses."

"Zombies controlled by Corpse Cultivators are few and fight individually, posing little threat; but those controlled by Formation are different..."

"These three Iron Corpses, the Formations on their bodies, control the most Walking Corpses. Kill them, and nearly half of the Walking Corpses will become a disorderly mob, driven only by instinct, without coordination, not forming Corpse Soldiers, making them easy to deal with."

Yang Jishan was taken aback, "How do you know this?"

Young Master Yun was also somewhat surprised.

They knew that these Zombies were controlled through Formations.

But as for how the control was managed, and what the principles behind it were, they were unclear.

Mo Hua vaguely replied, "I have seen the Formations Lu Chengyun designed, so I was able to calculate it."

Yang Jishan nodded with an understanding that was not quite understanding.

However, Young Master Yun was stunned.

Calculate?

"Could it be..."

He had some guesses, but he found it hard to believe for the moment.

Yang Jishan then called someone over and instructed:

"Pass down the command, gather three squads of Taoist Soldiers, ignore the other Zombies, and only kill those three Iron Corpses!"

"Yes!"

The Taoist Soldier took the command and passed the order.

In a moment, three Foundation Establishment leaders, each leading a squad of Taoist Soldiers, suddenly charged out and headed straight for the three Iron Corpses on the battlefield.

It was the prepared against the unprepared.

In less than half an hour, the three Iron Corpses were slayed, and their heart meridians shattered.

With the death of the three Iron Corpses, the majority of Corpse Soldiers on the field suddenly rioted, buzzing around like headless flies, dashing left and right, seeking to devour people.

This was a sign of them acting on instinct after losing control, drawn by Corpse Qi.

To ordinary Cultivators, out-of-control Zombies were quite tricky.

But in such a battle among Cultivators, Zombies losing control was like loose sand. Even if they were violent and bloodthirsty, their threat was greatly diminished in the face of well-coordinated Taoist Soldiers.

Yang Jishan's spirit was lifted.

"It's really effective!"

He immediately waved the command banner and ordered the Taoist Soldiers to form an array, grinding away as they slaughtered the disordered horde of Zombies.

Once the Walking Corpses were slain, the remaining Iron Corpses posed no threat in the face of the team of Taoist Soldiers.

A general without his soldiers was no longer a general.

And an Iron Corpse without Corpse Soldiers was just a common Iron Corpse.

The Taoist Soldiers were like mowing scythes, charging through the battlefield, reaping Walking Corpses one after another.

The situation soon became clear.

The Taoist Court's advantage became increasingly apparent, while the loss of Corpse Soldiers grew heavier.

It didn't take long for Lu Chengyun to order the mass of Zombies to retreat.

The siege on the Corpse Mine was protracted.

This was merely one of many battles over the days, and also one clear victory among the many outcomes.

But this victory was the most definitive of them all.

Yang Jishan heaved a long sigh of relief.

In the subsequent battles, Yang Jishan always took Mo Hua with him.

Mo Hua released his Divine Sense, scanned the battlefield, and after a moment's Calculation, told Yang Jishan which Walking Corpses were controlled by which Iron Corpses, and killing which Iron Corpse would cause which Zombies to disperse. Continue your saga on empire

Not just that.

Some troublesome Corpse Cultivators, what techniques they were using.

Some intense Corpse Poisons, how to counteract them.

Some nefarious Formations, how to break them.

...

Mo Hua recited them as if they were common knowledge, explaining them one by one.

Chapter 546: Pursuit (2)

Anything related to Formation, he could see through at a glance;

As for the Corpse Mine, it was during his concealment, eavesdropped secretly;

And regarding Corpse Refinement, some knowledge was gained from books on corpse refinement, while others, were summarized through combat with the Ancestral Master of the Zhang Family, along with the successive Elders...

The more Yang Jishan listened, the more shocked he became.

He almost suspected that Mo Hua had built the Corpse Mine himself, that the Formations were drawn by him, that he had recruited these corpse cultivators, and that these zombies were refined by him and under his control...

Even Mo Hua himself was like a little Demon Head of Corpse Path...

Otherwise how could he be so familiar?

Of course, Yang Jishan was just pondering, he knew it was impossible.

"Probably figured it out while in the Corpse Mine..."

Yang Jishan marveled inwardly.

Now he finally understood why his fifth brother Yang Jiyong held this little brother in such high esteem.

Proficient in Formations, brave and resourceful, with a pure Taoist Heart.

And he could gather such detailed intelligence without anyone knowing...

Wasn't that precisely the talent that the Taoist Soldiers Court needed most?

Yang Jishan looked at Mo Hua with eyes full of vitality, wishing he could snatch Mo Hua back to the Yang Family...

...

On the other hand, Lu Chengyun's face was overcast with clouds.

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He had never imagined that the situation would take such a sharp downturn in just a few days.

It seemed as if all his secrets had been laid bare.

The layout of the Stone Palace, the arrangement of Corpse Soldiers, the operation of the Formations...

The enemy was also seizing flaws, nibbling away at him bit by bit.

Lu Chengyun felt the pressure, even a trace of suffocation.

It was as if the net he had woven early on was gradually tightening, becoming tighter and tighter. Once it closed completely and trapped him, he would end up on the chopping block, left to be slaughtered at will.

"The Corpse Mine can't last much longer..."

To persist would be pointless.

He who hesitates is lost.

Lu Chengyun harbored thoughts of retreat:

"Need to find a way to slip away unnoticed and look for another way out."

"As long as I escape, there's still a chance."

"To flee, change my name, and then find a new Clan or Sect to rely on..."

"Although I'm not young, this face shows no signs of aging, still looks gentle and refined..."

"With my abilities, if I can marry into one family, I can do it a second time."

"Worst comes to worst, I'll marry someone older..."

"With so many foolish women in this world who judge by appearances, I can surely deceive another."

"If the Corpse soldiers are reduced, I can refine more."

"If the Formation of Ten Thousand Corpses is gone, I can rebuild it."

"As long as the Corpse King is still under my command, I can always make a comeback with a new identity!"

Lu Chengyun's expression darkened, his eyes gleamed with a cold light.

After that, the offensive by the Corpse troops intensified.

They pushed back desperately, seemingly determined to go down together.

Yang Jishan furrowed his brows and said, "Lu Chengyun, is he fighting to the death?"

Mo Hua, however, shook his head, "No, he's trying to escape."

He understood Lu Chengyun well.

Such a self-serving person would definitely prioritize his own life; how could he choose to die with the Corpse Mine?

The Minor Hidden Spirit Sect of the past, the Lu Family now, he never took them to heart.

Even if the Lu Family were annihilated and the Corpse Mine destroyed, Lu Chengyun would still slip away unnoticed and find another power to leech onto.

And sure enough, a few days later during a chaotic battle,

Mo Hua suddenly sensed a familiar presence among the corpse cultivators.

The presence was very subtle, but it didn't escape the peak Divine Sense of Mo Hua's Thirteen Stripes.

There were Mid Foundation Establishment Cultivators present whose Divine Sense was stronger than Mo Hua's, but they were not familiar with Lu Chengyun, so they did not notice.

Mo Hua followed this presence and saw,

Indeed, a corpse cultivator with a covered face, looking familiar yet acting sneakily.

With one glance, Mo Hua knew it was Lu Chengyun.

Mo Hua pointed his little hand and quickly shouted:

"Uncle Yang, that person is Lu Chengyun, he's trying to run!"

Yang Jishan was stunned, then his expression changed. With a wave of the command flag, pointing at Lu Chengyun, he shouted harshly:

"Catch him!"

Several squads of Taoist Soldiers formed a line and charged towards Lu Chengyun.

Lu Chengyun was startled, cursing under his breath.

But he was also secretly shocked. Having concealed his cultivation, he appeared to only be at the Qi Refining Ninth Level on the surface. How had he been recognized?

Lu Chengyun didn't understand, but now that he had been discovered, he couldn't escape, so he had to withdraw back into the Stone Palace.

The battle subsided, and Lu Chengyun did not escape.

"Fleeing at this time?"

Mo Hua found the timing curious and his Divine Sense swept over the Stone Palace, noticing a change in the formation's aura within.

Mo Hua calculated in his mind and realized what was going on.

In the Stone Palace, Lu Chengyun had set many Earth Splitting Formations.

If he were to escape, he would activate the Earth Splitting Formations, destroy the Stone Palace, collapse the Corpse Mine, and bury all the corpse cultivators and Cultivators from the Taoist Court together.

Even if the Foundation Building Cultivators could escape,

The multitude of Qi Refining Cultivators would die within the Corpse Mine.

And all these Cultivators who died in the Corpse Mine, including the Taoist Soldiers, corpse cultivators, and the Clan and Sect Cultivators, would become his material for Corpse Refinement.

In the future, he would turn these deceased cultivators into Corpse Soldiers.

Yang Jishan's gaze grew cold.

"Lu Chengyun, this person, is truly vicious!"

Mo Hua also felt a chill.

Afterward, wary of the Earth Splitting Formations, they dared not press too hard.

Mo Hua also spent some time deducing the position of the Earth Crack Formations, marking them one by one and passing the information to Yang Jishan.

Whenever the Taoist Soldiers gained the upper hand and repelled the Corpse Soldiers, someone was sent to destroy part of the Earth Splitting Formations.

The Earth Splitting Formations were slowly reduced in number.

Frustrated, Lu Chengyun launched the remaining Earth Splitting Formations one night when the Taoist Soldiers had withdrawn, causing the Corpse Mine to tremble.

Chapter 547: Pursuit (3)

The Earth Crack Formation had its limitations; it wasn't very powerful but it did trigger chaos.

Then, with the Corpse King and the Iron Corpse as his escorts, Lu Chengyun fought his way out of the Corpse Mine.

Groups of Walking Corpses, recklessly fearless of death, formed a Corpse Tide to cover the retreat of Lu Chengyun.

Yang Jishan, leading his Taoist Soldiers and cultivators from various factions, pursued them relentlessly.

The battle moved from below the Corpse Mine to above the Corpse Mountain.

Across the mountains and fields, cultivators and zombies engaged in a fight to the death.

Many zombies, having lost control, became Walking Corpses, wandering throughout the mountains...

The battle continued for an entire day, until at last Lu Chengyun fled to a desolate and gloomy mountaintop a hundred miles away from South Yue City.

The mountaintop was desolate and vast, devoid of human life.

All that could be seen were rugged rocks and withered black grasses.

Yang Jishan flipped through the Map and found the name of this place marked upon it:

Graveyard Mountain.

His expression instantly turned grave.

Other cultivators also had a sense of foreboding.

This place was obviously not a good omen.

Yang Jishan's gaze became sharp.

Whether they could capture Lu Chengyun, slaughter the Corpse King, and exterminate the hordes of corpses all depended on this single battle.

He ordered, "Proceed with caution, into the mountain!"

The Taoist Soldiers divided into teams and marched toward Graveyard Mountain.

But as soon as they entered the mountainous area, the ground pulsed, rocks shook, and zombies began crawling out from the earth.

These zombies, more ancient, bore stronger Corpse Poison.

Among them were several Iron Corpses as well.

Yang Jishan's face was as still as water.

More?

Just how many years had this Lu Chengyun been refining corpses, and how many had he made?

Could it be that Graveyard Mountain, like the Corpse Mine, was another of his Corpse Refinement facilities?

Yang Jishan frowned deeply.

The Taoist Soldiers had been chasing for a long time and were growing weary. Just as they were about to catch up with Lu Chengyun, new zombies emerged.

It seemed never-ending...

Lu Chengyun's scheming was indeed profound.

Yang Jishan had no choice but to station the group outside Graveyard Mountain to keep a constant watch on the movements inside, to prevent his escape.

The group discussed what to do next.

"The problem now is, how many zombies are there exactly inside Graveyard Mountain?"

One middle-aged cultivator sighed.

"If there are too many, we will undoubtedly be no match for them."

"Not knowing their number, we will surely fall into an ambush..."

"We don't have enough hands..."

Yang Jishan furrowed his brow, his expression stern.

They had already lost many soldiers in battle.

Most of the remaining cultivators were injured, and some had to use Serum Pills to suppress the Corpse Poison, rendering them incapable of fighting.

The strength that remained was now less than one-third of its original.

And it was still unknown how many zombies Lu Chengyun had at his disposal.

If Lu Chengyun was only feigning defeat to lure them into a deep chase for an ambush, they would surely suffer a significant loss.

But Graveyard Mountain was lonely and eerie, with a toxic miasma permeating the air.

How could they find out exactly how many zombies were inside?

After some thought, Mo Hua said, "Capture a Walking Corpse, then capture an Iron Corpse."

Yang Jishan looked slightly startled.

Mo Hua continued, "Let me take a look at the Formation Patterns on their bodies, and I can estimate roughly how many Zombies Lu Chengyun still controls."

Yang Jishan was somewhat stunned.

The other Formation Masters were also exchanging glances.

Yet Young Master Yun's gaze became focused, as if deep in thought.

"You can estimate that?" Yang Jishan asked uncertainly.

"Mhm," Mo Hua nodded.

Yang Jishan didn't quite understand, but considering there were no better options, he pondered for a moment and nodded, saying,

"Alright."

He took action personally, along with a few leaders of the Taoist Soldiers, capturing three Walking Corpses and one Iron Corpse and restraining them with iron chains.

The Zombies were howling and struggling.

Corpse Poison, like blood, flowed from the Zombies, soaking into the iron chains and emitting a pungent, rotten smell.

These Zombies were noticeably more violent and toxic.

Bai Zisheng stood in front of Mo Hua to prevent the Zombies from getting out of control and hurting Mo Hua.

Bai Zixi, on the other hand, was behind Mo Hua, her fair fingertips condensing Sword Qi, quietly on alert.

Mo Hua said, "Uncle Yang, cut open the chest."

Yang Jishan nodded.

This was something he had done once before, so he went about it quite efficiently.

Shortly after, the outer layer of the Zombie's cardiac vessels was cut open, revealing the Formation patterns connected to the flesh and blood within.

Mo Hua took out paper and pen, traced the Formation, and after briefly differentiating, identified a few special Sequential Formation Patterns.

The Spiritual Pivot Formation uses Sequential Formation Patterns to "code" the Zombies.

By deducing the Sequential Formation Patterns, one can reverse-engineer the "coding" to find the total number of sequences in the entire Spiritual Pivot Formation system, in other words, the total number of Zombies.

Mo Hua had not been able to do this before.

Because such a Calculation was rather complex, it not only consumed Divine Sense but also tested one's understanding of Formation technique.

But ever since assimilating the Contemplation Map and reaching the peak of Thirteen Stripes with his Divine Sense, and after drawing the Spiritual Pivot Formation hundreds of times, Mo Hua's Divine Sense had grown powerful, and his understanding of the Spiritual Pivot Formation was crystal clear. Thus, he could attempt such a Calculation.

Mo Hua looked at the Sequential Formation Patterns with furrowed brows, deeply engrossed in the Calculation.

Yang Jishan and the others, watching Mo Hua fully concentrated, couldn't help feeling anxious, not even daring to let out a breath.

After an indeterminate amount of time, Mo Hua finally came back to his senses, taking a long breath and looking slightly pale.

Yang Jishan asked anxiously, "How is it?"

Mo Hua pondered before saying,

"I can only roughly estimate, it's not particularly precise..."

"It's fine, it's fine," Yang Jishan said.

Mo Hua then continued, "...Based on the Sequential Formation Patterns, there are roughly over forty Iron Corpses and five thousand Walking Corpses inside this graveyard, under the control of the Corpse King."

Yang Jishan nodded and furrowed his brows.

The situation was quite severe.

The Walking Corpses were manageable, but the over forty Iron Corpses were indeed beyond his expectation and not easy to handle.

However, Yang Jishan was more curious about another matter:

"How... exactly did you calculate this?"

Mo Hua scratched his head and, pointing to a Pattern, said,

"These Patterns are interconnected and have an intrinsic sequence. With a bit of Divine Sense, you can calculate it out..."

Yang Jishan didn't understand.

He turned his head to look at the other Formation Masters and realized they were just as confused.

Only Young Master Yun stood there in a daze, murmuring to himself,

"Calculation..."

Was this... a Divine Sense Calculation technique that only the ancient forebear of the Yun Family's Formation Masters knew?

So young, and he's already capable of Calculation?

Was this something a person of his age should be able to learn?

Watching Mo Hua, with his childlike face, Young Master Yun's thoughts were turbulent.

Chapter 548: Signs of What's to Come (1)

Yang Jishan pondered for a moment, sighed, and said, "If there really are more than forty Iron Corpses and five thousand Walking Corpses, this must be Lu Chengyun's final reserve..."

Yang Jishan's gaze swept across those present as he said in a deep voice:

"This is the final battle. Whether we can kill Lu Chengyun and eradicate the Corpse King depends on this battle. I plead with all of you, don't hold back any longer."

Hold back?

Mo Hua was startled upon hearing this.

The expressions of the others also varied.

Someone discontentedly said, "Leader Yang, why make such a statement? We have put our full effort into this battle and suffered many casualties. How can you say we are holding back?"

"Indeed!"

"Leader Yang's words chill our hearts..."

Yet Yang Jishan's expression remained resolute as he said:

"Among us here, many are from big families or major Sects of the Taoist State, Qian State, Kun State, etc., or they are affiliated with the Taoist Court's Seven Stars Pavilion. With deep ancestral heritage and traditions, naturally, everyone has some trump cards at the bottom of the box..."

"These methods, derived from either family heritage or personal opportunities, are not to be used unless absolutely necessary."

With those words, nobody spoke.

It's undeniable that every Cultivator has their opportunities and trump cards.

Yang Jishan continued:

"Now, killing the Corpse King has reached a critical juncture."

"If we win this battle, we will all rejoice."

"But if we lose, letting Lu Chengyun escape and the Corpse King survive, and the Taoist Court holds us accountable, I, Yang, will naturally be the first to bear the brunt and face the Taoist Court Officials' punishment. But everyone present here..."

Yang Jishan looked around, "I'm afraid will not escape responsibility either!"

Yang Jishan's gaze darkened, "...if the Taoist Court assigns blame, the Noble Clans and Sects, their advancement in ranks for the next century, will be significantly delayed."

"And among you, some who hail from the Taoist State and have connections to the Heaven Shu Pavilion should know what it truly means if the Corpse King survives."

"If the situation fails, the responsibility will be great. The families of all present will be pursued by the Taoist Court!"

"Would your clan vent their anger on you, remove you as Elders, reduce your treatment, and strip your rights?"

Yang Jishan's gaze turned solemn, his tone icy, "And that's not even the worst-case scenario..."

"The worst-case scenario is that Lu Chengyun, driven mad, lets the Corpse King run wild, triggering a real, large-scale Corpse Tide that wipes out South Yue City and even the entire state boundary."

"By that time, should the state boundary become a domain of corpses, all living creatures would perish..."

"And within the Corpse Tide, if several Iron Corpses coincidentally transform into Copper Corpses, I'm afraid not many among us could leave the Minor Wilderness State Boundary alive!"

Yang Jishan said coldly, "At that time, your trump cards will only serve to press down the bottom of your coffins..."

"And you might not even have coffins, either devoured alive, leaving no bones behind, or reduced to Walking Corpses, which would be worse than having no remains..."

Yang Jishan's speech turned everyone's faces pale.

Although his words were somewhat alarmist.

Yet looking at the current situation, these things were not impossible...

"Leader Yang, what do you intend to do?" an old Cultivator among them asked.

He was very old, with white hair, but he was not concerned for himself, but for the younger generations of his clan.

If they won this battle, his merits would pave the way for the clan's advancement within a century.
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This group of Disciples would certainly be valued.

But if they lost and the Taoist Court sought accountability, causing a decline in their ranking, the efforts of three generations of Cultivators over several hundred years would have been in vain.

And the future prospects of the younger Disciples of this group would no longer be valued by the clan.

So even if he died, this battle had to be won!

Yang Jishan said with firm conviction:

"Relying on the resources of Noble Clans, no longer hiding our cards, bringing out all our trumps, we will directly kill Lu Chengyun, eradicate the Corpse King, and quell the corpse menace!"

As he finished speaking, he took out a long spear from his storage bag.

This spear was golden and shimmering, with gold-patterned grooves; Spiritual Power condensed around it, faintly emitting an imposing aura.

As soon as the spear appeared, Cultivators in the know changed their expressions.

Yang Jishan said, "This is my Yang Family's Second Grade superior Spiritual Artifact, the Sunset Spear!"

"This spear is precious, made through a special forging process, and extremely powerful. Used in conjunction with Yang Family Spear Technique, a single strike holds the power of the peak of Foundation Establishment, but it is easily worn out and can only be used three times."

Yang Jishan looked at the golden spear, seemingly reluctant, but still said solemnly:

"This Sunset Spear was bestowed by my grandfather for the purpose of saving my life, not to be used unless in a life-and-death situation."

"But in this battle where victory and defeat decide life and death, I will use this spear to execute Lu Chengyun and kill the Corpse King!"

The crowd was somewhat moved.

Mo Hua was also surprised; though he didn't know the backstory of the Sunset Spear, seeing the expressions of the others, he understood the spear was no small matter.

It was very likely that even if they won this battle, the merits gained might not be worth as much as the spear.

Yang Jishan set an example, and other Cultivators also fell into thought.

Yang Jishan, coming from the Yang Family and leading the Taoist Soldiers, was proficient in warfare and knew well how Cultivators fought.

If he had to use his trump card, it meant that unless they took swift and decisive action, they would face tremendous peril!

When it was not the time to economize, one must not skimp at all.

Otherwise, one might even economize one's life away...

After some Cultivators reflected, one spoke up:

"Since Leader Yang has put it this way, I will not hide my cards either..."

With a flip of his hand, he took out a black jade box, proudly saying:

"I come from the Tang Family, possessing a set of Second Grade Spiritual Artifacts known as the Rainstorm Pear Blossom Needles. The box hides the needles, which, once released, rain down with Spiritual Power like showers, piercing like pear blossoms. It may be somewhat lacking against strong enemies, but thrown into a horde of corpses, its lethal force is immense..."

Chapter 549: Omen (2)

Once someone started, the rest of the cultivators all went with the flow.

Even those who initially claimed they had no secrets revealed their trump cards.

"I hail from the Han Family and possess a Spirit Enhancement Pill. After consumption, my cultivation will increase to the Middle Phase of Foundation Establishment within the time it takes to drink a cup of tea..."

"Zhang Family, Zhang Zifan, my ancestor gave me a Fiery Flame Burning Sky Formation..."

"Dou Family, Dou Changbao, I have a Second-Grade Spirit Binding Net that can hold four Iron Corpses at the same time..."

"I come from a humble clan, merely chanced upon a High-Grade Second Rank Spirit Explosion Jade Rune by coincidence, which possesses the power of a Foundation Establishment Late Stage cultivator's spell..."

...

"I have a Clear Wind Screen that can purge... the Corpse Poison of Iron Corpses of Second Grade and above..."

Someone finally couldn't help cursing, "Why the hell didn't you bring it out sooner?"

"This is for saving my own life, how could I bear to part with it?"

"You're really damn stingy!"

"I'm not giving it to you now..."

"No... brother, big brother, I was wrong, just pretend I was farting..."

...

Amidst the noisy quarreling...

Essentially all the cultivators present, from different state boundaries, noble clans, and sects, displayed one or two trump cards.

Yang Jishan silently took notes and nodded his head.

He knew everyone must still be holding back, but that's only human nature. In managing a coordinated effort, it's inevitable that each person harbors their own intentions.

The trump cards currently revealed were already sufficient.

Mo Hua likewise widened his eyes in amazement.

During the previous battles led by the Taoist Soldiers, these clan and sect cultivators performed modestly while providing cover.

He had thought these clan cultivators, if not totally inept, were at least somewhat mediocre.

Only now did he understand why:

First, battles involving groups of cultivators are indeed different from solo combat, and many techniques are hard to utilize.

Second, they all had their own little calculations, and they didn't plan on using their good items for the extermination of the Corpse Mine.

Mo Hua's eyes sparkled.

This was like reaping wool, as long as you were willing to reap, there would always be rewards.

These matters, if not mentioned by Leader Yang, he himself would have no knowledge of them.

Mo Hua felt as if his knowledge had grown...

...

The cultivators present had various trump cards.

There were Spiritual Artifacts, Pills, Runes, Formations, Spells, and more.

Yang Jishan categorized them and coordinated arrangements.

He was determined to employ these methods precisely, to swiftly eradicate the horde of the undead and suppress the Corpse King!

Once everything was settled, Yang Jishan's next task was to understand the topography of the Graveyard Mountain.

Several cultivators from the Taoist Court with powerful Divine Senses began to scan the mountain with their Divine Senses.

However, after scanning for a long time, they still couldn't uncover much.

Just like the mines, the Graveyard Mountain was heavy with Filthy Qi, which hindered the Divine Sense.

Furthermore, there were Formations everywhere.

The auras of these Formations were obscure and intertwined with the Filthy Qi of the mountains, making them difficult to distinguish.

Thus, the map that was drawn was quite rudimentary.

It could only roughly outline the topography, indicate where the Corpse Qi was dense, where there might be Formations, and the likely type of Formation, etc...

These vague details weren't very helpful.

Yang Jishan furrowed his brows and suddenly thought of Mo Hua. He approached Mo Hua with the map and asked:

"Little brother, can you discern what kinds of Formations are present within this Graveyard Mountain?"

"Let me see..."

Mo Hua took the map, then looked towards the distant, gloomy and dark Graveyard Mountain, his Divine Sense stirring slightly as he began to calculate.

As he calculated, he muttered to himself and then commenced drawing on a piece of paper, altering and correcting his work.

He drew things that Yang Jishan couldn't understand.

Yang Jishan didn't dare interrupt Mo Hua, so he silently watched from the side.

After an unknown amount of time, Mo Hua's gaze brightened as he started to make marks on the map.

His markings noted the names of Formations, as well as the Formation Method Classification, Formation Patterns, and the important details about the Formation eye, Formation Pivot, and Formation media used.

He even roughly indicated the numbers of Iron Corpses and Walking Corpses in areas with dense Corpse Qi.

The entire Graveyard Mountain was clear at a glance.

Yang Jishan was stunned.

He really wanted to ask Mo Hua how he managed to figure it out, but on second thought, asking such questions made him, the leader, seem rather inept.

And even if Mo Hua explained, would he understand it?

At least he hadn't understood a thing Mo Hua said before...

Let it be, distrust those you do not employ, and trust those you do.

Yang Jishan sighed, feeling a sense of relief.

It was fortunate that on this journey, they had this young cultivator; otherwise, the eradication of the Corpse Mine might not have gone so smoothly.

After Yang Jishan left, Mo Hua furrowed his brows.

There was something that puzzled him.

With the Graveyard Mountain full of Zombies, setting aside the Walking Corpses, how did those Iron Corpses come to be?

Several neighboring state boundaries were all Second Grade. Stay tuned for updates on empire

In a Second-Grade Prefecture, cultivators at the Foundation Establishment stage were the limit.

From where did Lu Chengyun obtain these dozens of Foundation Building bodies to refine into Iron Corpses?

Furthermore, these Iron Corpses were clearly refined a long time ago.

The older the year, the more potent the Corpse Poison.

Mo Hua frowned and pondered, suddenly a thought struck him.

Minor Hidden Spirit Sect!

He remembered Instructor Yan mentioning that the Minor Hidden Spirit Sect was once a quite powerful Formation Sect in the region, having produced many Foundation Building Cultivators, but gradually fell into decline.

Until later, when Lu Chengyun betrayed the Sect, murdered his master, and stole the Formation, causing the Sect to disband.

But even after disbanding, the Sect's graveyard remained.

Within it lay the bodies of generations of Foundation Building Cultivators from the Sect.

Thinking this, Mo Hua felt a chill.

During his observations of the past few days, he noticed that besides the intense Corpse Qi, the physical bodies of the Iron Corpses in the Graveyard Mountain were not particularly strong. Moreover, their arms were symmetrical, and their fingers slender.

Apparently, most of them had been Formation Masters in life...

It could be that Lu Chengyun's act of killing his master was not an impulsive one but had been premeditated for a long time.

Chapter 550: Omen (3)

This scheme included not only the Spiritual Pivot Formation but also involved the fall of the Sect and the dispersion of its disciples. It even called for the use of the Sect Leader's and Elders' corpses, left un-worshipped in their graves, from the Minor Hidden Spirit Sect.

To slay the master and extinguish the ancestors, to bring the Sect to ruin, and to refine corpses from the Sect's predecessors...

In Mo Hua's deep gaze, a cold light slowly began to gather:

"Lu Chengyun... courting death!"

...

Yang Jishan had acquired the detailed Cemetery Map and the Formation Diagram, so he began to make comprehensive plans, hoping to accomplish his task in one fell swoop by eradicating the Corpse King and putting an end to the zombie menace.

Everything was ready, and suddenly Mo Hua sought out Yang Jishan and said:

"Uncle Yang, let me come along too."

Yang Jishan was somewhat astonished, "What would you do there?"

"I want to help out," said Mo Hua.

Yang Jishan was slightly taken aback, then felt warmth in his heart.

Such a good child, with great capabilities and a kind heart, no wonder my fifth brother speaks so highly of him.

But Yang Jishan still shook his head:

"I would like you to come, but this battle is a matter of life and death. We'll be facing the Corpse King, and there are so many Iron Corpses, it's too dangerous. Even I might be more likely to face misfortune than luck, I can't guarantee your safety..."

Mo Hua said, "Uncle Yang, don't worry, my Junior Brother and Junior Sister will protect me."

Yang Jishan hesitated, "Your Junior Brother, Junior Sister, they are only Qi Refiners, aren't they...?"

"Although they are Qi Refiners, their cultivation is very strong," Mo Hua declared proudly.

Still, Yang Jishan disagreed, "This is a fight to the death, a messy battle against zombies, it's different..."

Mo Hua replied, "If it really doesn't work out, I'll use my Concealment Technique to escape..."

Concealment...

Yang Jishan was startled by these words.

No wonder!

No wonder he was able to fish in troubled waters within the Corpse Mine, gathering intelligence. So he had a method of concealment.

This was something Mo Hua had not mentioned before, so Yang Jishan was unaware.

Yang Jishan looked at Mo Hua with shining eyes.

Concealment... what a skill... truly wonderful...

Then he was struck by a question, "You're only at the level of Qi Refinement, how did you manage to conceal yourself from Lu Chengyun?"

Mo Hua smiled with narrowed eyes but did not respond.

Yang Jishan then realized his impropriety.

Such sensitive details about a cultivator's abilities should not be discussed carelessly.

Yang Jishan promptly said, "Sorry, it was impertinent of me to ask."

And so Mo Hua asked, "So, can I go?"

"This..." Yang Jishan was still reluctant; he suddenly paused, then asked with suspicion:

"Your visit to the cemetery, does it have another purpose?"

Mo Hua did not hide it and nodded, asserting directly:

"I have a personal grudge with Lu Chengyun, I want to see him die!"

Yang Jishan was stunned.

A personal grudge?

Was it a grudge formed when he was locked up in the Corpse Mine, or was there another reason?

Yang Jishan's gaze became somber.

Regardless of the reason, he was reluctant to let Mo Hua, a young cultivator of such an age, risk his life.

In fact, he was considering whether to have someone take Mo Hua out of South Yue City first, so that if the battle failed and South Yue City fell, Mo Hua would not be in danger.

Eradicating Corpse Sin was a decree from the Taoist Court and the duty of Taoist Soldiers, and it had nothing to do with Mo Hua.

Mo Hua was knowledgeable in formations and had a good nature; he was a promising young cultivator who should not be exposed to such risks!

Yang Jishan nodded to himself.

But just as Yang Jishan was resolute in his decision and about to voice his refusal, a sudden premonition shook his heart.

In his Sea of Consciousness, an image emerged out of nowhere:

The sky in the image was dyed red with blood.

Lu Chengyun was dead.

But all the cultivators present were also dead.

And he himself had lost an arm, pinned beneath the foot of a zombie with eyes full of despair.

This zombie was huge, with blood-colored pupils that faintly glimmered dark gold, and its aura was terrifying.

It raised its arm and let out a roaring howl.

All around the mountains and fields, countless zombies bowed in submission...

...

In an instant, everything disappeared.

Yang Jishan's back was soaked with cold sweat, and he was filled with immense terror:

"Just now... what was that?"

Was it the intuition honed from many years on the battlefield?

A sign from the unseen world?

Or had someone allowed me to see this scene...

Yang Jishan's face was pale, his eyes full of fear and uncertainty.

"Uncle Yang?"

A young voice brought Yang Jishan back to his senses.

Yang Jishan looked up to find Mo Hua's concerned face.

"Uncle Yang, what's wrong?" Mo Hua asked with worry.

After a moment of contemplation, Yang Jishan forced a smile, "Nothing, I'm just a bit tired..."

Feeling apologetic, Mo Hua then said:

"Then you should rest well, Uncle Yang, I won't bother you any longer."

Yang Jishan nodded slightly, and just as Mo Hua was about to leave, he suddenly called Mo Hua back.

"Mo Hua."

Mo Hua turned back with a puzzled look.

Yang Jishan's gaze was firm as he said, "You can go."

Mo Hua was taken aback, then overjoyed, "Really?"

Yang Jishan nodded, "But be careful, stay close to me, don't wander off, and don't be impulsive even if you see Lu Chengyun."

"Yes, yes," Mo Hua nodded repeatedly and said with a smile, "Thank you, Uncle Yang!"

Mo Hua left happily.

And ever since Yang Jishan had agreed and allowed Mo Hua to accompany them,

The bloody, terrifying, and desperate image in his Sea of Consciousness had disappeared...

The terror in Yang Jishan's heart gradually subsided, and he no longer felt the icy chill in his limbs.

It was as if some terrifying cause and effect had been severed.

Still, Yang Jishan was unsettled for a long time.

Watching Mo Hua's retreating figure, his eyes flickered with astonishment as he wondered to himself:

"Mo Hua... What exactly is the identity of this young cultivator?"