

A Demoness 21

Chapter 21

In the Hundred Flowers Lake, the sun was warm, and the breeze was gentle. Petals fell on the still lake surface causing it to ripple a little.

Hong Yuye, dressed in red, sat upright in the pavilion. She reached out her hand and pulled at her hair, waiting for Baizhi's answer.

Baizhi was scared and dared not defy the Sect Master. "The Heavenly Fragrance Dao Flower has already taken root and sprouted. During this period, Jiang Hao of the Cliff of Broken Hearts didn't do anything unusual. Some people did approach him but only for ordinary reasons. No one has targeted the flower yet."

"So, there has been no harvest yet?" asked Hong Yuye calmly.

"Not yet. I didn't do my job well. The traitors haven't revealed themselves yet." Baizhi knelt down fearfully.

Hong Yuye looked at the calm lake. "Don't just focus on one place. Look at other places too. Sometimes, the ones affected are the farthest."

"Does the Sect Master mean that they are waiting for an inside person to cooperate to make their move? Or... are they waiting for reinforcements? Then this Jiang Hao is still under suspicion." Baizhi came to a realization.

She wanted to follow whatever the Sect Master ordered which clouded her own perspective. She was the only one who knew about the Sect Master coming out of her seclusion. It put too much pressure on her. Especially since the Sect Master had released the Heavenly Fragrance Dao Flower which meant something big must have happened or was waiting to happen. It made her even more anxious.

If she continued to make mistakes like this, she would be in great danger.

“That’s your job to find out. But he should be certainly rewarded for his contributions.” Hong Yuye stretched out her hand and a silvery-white transparent box with an armor floating in it appeared in front of Baizhi.

“Go.” Hong Yuye ordered her to leave.

Baizhi stood up and took her leave. She checked the armor. It was used mostly for Foundation Establishment.

Although she still wasn’t sure whether he was involved with the traitors, it was still a meritorious deed to cultivate the Heavenly Fragrance Dao Flower. She just worried whether she should mention the Sect Master or not.

...

That night, in the safety of his house, Jiang Hao looked at the soft, body-hugging armor he was wearing under his clothes. It felt light and comfortable. This was the reward he was given at the White Moon Lake today.

Elder Baizhi had said that it was a gift for his contribution in raising the Heavenly Fragrance Dao Flower well. Someone had given it to him personally.

‘Someone?’ thought Jiang Hao. ‘Elder Baizhi is the acting Sect Master. Which means there is someone else. The previous Sect Master who ruled all!’

If that was true, everything made sense. If the real Sect Master had given him the Heavenly Fragrance Dao Flower, everything fell into place.

‘But... if that woman takes it away, the Sect Master will be offended,’ thought Jiang Hao. He shook his head. Maybe Elder Baizhi just wanted him to think that. Maybe he was still being tested.

Anyhow, he couldn’t afford to offend anyone at all. All he could do was stall for time for now. He couldn’t slow down the growth of the Heavenly Fragrance Dao Flower as he pleased.

He had appraised the armor. The result surprised him! This was by far the best magic treasure he had encountered in his life. It couldn't be compared to any other magical treasure!

[One of the Nine Heavenly Battle Armors: it has a strong defensive power. It can independently defend against most attacks even from the Golden Core Realm.]

This was still a set armor. It definitely made him feel safe.

...

The next few days, Jiang Hao focused on making talismans. Everything was going well.

Killing Miao Qian had been a close call. Liu Xingchen had warned him not to have any contact with people from the Heavenly Joy Pavilion. If another one died, he would be an automatic suspect. They won't even look for evidence before convicting him.

Jiang Hao took the warning to heart and was very careful while selling his talismans in the market.

Seven days later, he headed to the Law Enforcement Hall and asked for Liu Xingchen. He wanted to pay the compensation as soon as possible and avoid any more problems. To make him feel at ease, Liu Xingchen did the registration in front of him and put his name and the amount in the record. He wanted to avoid any misunderstandings.

However, Liu Xingchen didn't hand over the spirit stones to the Heavenly Joy Pavilion immediately. Instead, he handed them over on the last day.

It was on the last day that he handed over the slip from Heavenly Joy Pavilion saying that they received the compensation and Jiang Hao was off the hook. After this, he didn't have to worry about the Heavenly Joy Pavilion making things difficult for him.

At least on the surface, it looked like that.

Jiang Hao heaved a sigh of relief. He could feel that Liu Xingchen was planning something that would definitely put Jiang Hao in trouble in the future. But he really needed Liu Xingchen's help. At least to make sure if he was still a suspect under their radar.

He activated his Daily Appraisal to appraise Liu Xingchen to see if he had any ulterior motives.

[Liu Xingchen: a True Disciple of the Heavenly Faction. Born with the aura of a dragon and a cultivation base at the Peak of the Golden Core Realm. Nothing better to do than to spy on the Heavenly Note Sect's Law Enforcement Hall. The reason he is on good terms with you is because he wants to get close to the Heavenly Fragrance Dao Flower to watch it carefully. Also wants to find out if you killed Miao Qian.]

'Peak of the Golden Core Realm?' This surprised Jiang Hao. When he had appraised Liu Xingchen last time, he was at the late stage of the Golden Core Realm. 'How did he advance so fast?'

However, considering the result, Liu Xingchen did not really seem very dangerous. He was alright. Even if he was a spy of the heavenly Jo, it was better to tread carefully.

"Oh right, just to remind you. The assignment of inner sect disciples is beginning soon. There might be a Junior Brother this time, so it's best to be careful. Also, your name is still on the suspect list, so you aren't allowed to leave the sect, as you already know. In other words, if the mission isn't assigned to you, then you will have to rely on yourself to pass. There are still a few months left, though. Junior Brother, you have a lot of time to prepare," said Liu Xingchen.

Jiang Hao thanked him and left. He sighed. The first thing he wanted to do was to have a look at his interface to see any changes.

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Jiang Hao understood Liu Xingchen's words. Most of the sect's missions were undertaken in teams. So, he couldn't refuse. In such a situation, someone will take advantage of him.

If he ran into someone from Heavenly Joy Pavilion... There was a high chance of that happening. If that happened, he would be in danger. He had to advance further if he wanted to protect himself.

He opened his interface:

[Name: Jiang Hao]

[Age: 19]

[Cultivation: Middle of Foundation Establishment Stage]

[Cultivation Method: Heavenly Sound Hundred Revolutions, Hong Meng Heart Sutra]

[Divine Ability: Nine Revolutions Death Substitution (Unique), Daily Appraisal, Clear and Pure Heart]

[Lifeblood: 49/100(can be cultivated)]

[Cultivation: 50/100(can be cultivated)]

[Divine Ability: 0/3(cannot be obtained)]

'I'm only halfway through. I still need a lot of time to level up,' thought Jiang Hao. 'I need to think of a way to cultivate more spirit herb seeds so that I can obtain more blue bubbles.'

After planting the Heavenly Fragrance Dao Flower, his speed of accumulating cultivation and lifeblood had increased drastically.

Although the level of danger had also increased, he had received so many good things. He felt that everything had been worth the trouble.

Hong Meng Heart Sutra, concealment technique, Nine Heavenly Battle Armor, blue bubbles every day...

It hadn't been half bad. It could be considered having cherry topping with the cake but if he was careless, it would also mean dying without a burial ground. Because he knew that he would have to offend either Elder Baizhi, or that woman. There was no escape.

"By the way, Senior Brother, do you know when the task will be assigned?" Jiang Hao asked cautiously.

"Ordinarily I am not supposed to tell you but since you have been through so much, I will make an exception," said Liu Xingchen. "It will be around three months, or at least two."

"There are two ways to get out of this predicament," he added. "One is to hide from the Heavenly Joy Pavilion until the master finds another body for his cultivation technique. After some time has passed, I am sure they will forget about you."

"Another way is to increase your value so that the Cliff Master will protect you at any cost. If that happens, the Heavenly Joy Pavilion will have to weigh the pros and cons and will have no choice but to brush this off as a small issue."

"However, the second option is a tad bit difficult. I heard that the Cliff of Broken Hearts has recently accepted an outstanding student. Do you know anything about that?"

Jiang Hao shook his head. He really didn't have any idea. But both those options weren't easy. He could only remotely entertain the first solution because he had no intention of revealing his value to anybody, not yet. Also, that kind of value usually needed time to manifest. If he suddenly revealed his level, it would seem even more suspicious.

What he lacked was time.

As for the Cliff of Broken Hearts accepting an outstanding disciple, he didn't really care about that. He just needed to do things like he always did.

He asked about the cultivation level of the team leader that would be assigned to them. Liu Xingchen told him that the team leader was at the late Foundation Establishment Stage. If something unexpected occurred, the team leader would have completed his Foundation Establishment Stage quickly.

Jiang Hao thought about this. Maybe he could achieve the late Foundation Establishment Stage if he tried harder. But it would be impossible to complete the Foundation Establishment Stage for him right now.

He had to think of a way.

After chatting for a bit more, Liu Xingchen left. Liu Xingchen told him that the day the Heavenly Joy Pavilion lets him completely off the hook would be the day when his name would be removed from the suspect list.

Watching Liu Xingchen leave, Jiang Hao sighed. Liu Xingchen was being too kind. The appearance of the Heavenly Fragrance Dao Flower had made his situation suddenly better.

Because of the Heavenly Joy Pavilion, he couldn't even keep in contact with friends from his past. And he still had to look out for the traitors. Everybody was just using each other in this world.

'Two months, sixty days. A little bit of cultivation every day is only enough to cultivate once. I have to earn more spirit stones to buy spirit herb seeds.'

That was the only thing he could think of at the moment. He didn't have many spirit stones after paying the compensation. He only had about 90 spirit stones for now. With that, he could buy better talisman materials. He didn't even know how many spirit herbs he could buy with the spirit stones he had.

...

The next day when Jiang Hao went to the Spirit Herb Garden, he saw a young person at the entrance. He seemed to be even a bit younger than him.

He was dressed neatly. There was still a trace of childishness on his face. A middle-aged man followed beside him. The two seemed to be deep in conversation. The young man nodded attentively.

Jiang Hao recognized the middle-aged man. It was the Cliff Master, Ku Wu Chang. Jiang Hao didn't want to interrupt but the young man saw him. So, Jiang Hao walked to them and bowed to the Cliff Master.

"Greetings, Master Ku Wu Chang," he said.

Ku Wu Chang turned to Jiang Hao and seemed to pause as though he was thinking of something. "You came just in time," he said. "Can you help this Junior Brother familiarize himself with the Spirit Herb Garden? He is new so he isn't very familiar with everything."

"Of course," said Jiang Hao respectfully. He was the one who practically managed everything in the Spirit Herb Garden, after all.

As for the Cliff Master, Jiang Hao didn't care if he was thinking about the 1000 spirit stones he had owed to the Heavenly Joy Pavilion. He just had to work hard to survive. He did not really have any expectations from anyone.

He was already lucky enough that he wasn't stabbed even once in the Devil Sect. He had to be practical.

"Hello," he greeted the Junior disciple as the Cliff Master left. "I am Jiang Hao. I am temporarily handling everything in the Spirit Herb Garden."

He realized that this was the genius disciple that Liu Xingchen had mentioned. Early Foundation Establishment Stage, eighteen or nineteen years old. If it was just based on his talent, he was indeed formidable.

Jiang Hao was curious, so he appraised the junior.

Ever since Jiang Hao had met Senior Sister Yun Ruo, he always wanted to appraise the people he met. He felt very paranoid, like there were spies in every corner.

The result of appraisal appeared in his mind:

[Han Ming: True Disciple of Heavenly Note Sect's the Cliff of Broken Hearts. His talent is top-notch. He's 18 years old and is in the Early Foundation Establishment Stage. He's favored by the spirits of mountains and rivers.]

'True Disciple? His status is higher than mine,' Jiang Hao sighed.

Fortunately, there weren't any rules about calling a True Disciple 'Senior Brother'. Otherwise, it would have made things very awkward. The sect seemed to have accepted a candidate for the Top Ten disciples. Most people would watch their words with them.

Although Han Ming's talent was top-notch and he was favored by the spirit of mountains and rivers, Jiang Hao didn't really care. As long as he wasn't a spy, that was good enough. Spies had a clear purpose and were hard to get rid of. Someone like Liu Xingchen. There would be some form of backlash in the end, he was sure of it. Jiang Hao needed to become stronger before that happened.

But no matter how powerful any of them were, no one was as powerful as that woman.

"Senior Brother Jiang, my name is Han Ming. I hope Senior Brother can guide me," Han Ming said politely.

He was also very curious. "I heard that Senior Brother is nineteen years old?"

"Yes." Jiang Hao nodded.

"I hope one day I can surpass Senior Brother," Han Ming said with a smile.

"I am sure you will," said Jiang Hao with a smile. Han Ming was a True Disciple. Jiang Hao, on the other hand, felt lucky he was where he was. "I will show you around. But you don't really need to tend to them all the time. I will take care of it. You better focus on your cultivation," he said kindly.

As a True Disciple, he didn't need to come here. It would be a waste of time. The Cliff Master most likely brought him here to get familiar with the surroundings.

"Thank you, Senior Brother." Han Ming smiled brightly.

Jiang Hao showed him around the Spirit Herb Garden and explained to him about the different spirit herbs.

"Senior Brother, have you been helping to manage this place all this time? Alone? Doesn't it consume a lot of your time?" asked Han Ming.

"It's alright," said Jiang Hao slowly. "I like managing the place."

Han Ming didn't seem to agree. "I feel that spending a lot of time here isn't very fruitful, especially for the cultivation level. I want to become one of the strongest people in the sect. I want to become one of the Top Ten disciples."

Jiang Hao smiled politely. "Then I wish for you to achieve it as soon as possible."

"Senior Brother, how long do you think it will take me to surpass you?" Han Ming asked.

"Maybe a few years?" said Jiang Hao.

Under normal circumstances, it would take him a few years. Unless he had a fortuitous encounter then he can advance rapidly.

After that, Han Ming left as if to say that he had more potential than that. Jiang Hao only smiled and bid him goodbye. Other people didn't really care much for the Spirit Herb Garden because they didn't

receive many bubbles from here. But it was different for Jiang Hao, he could get a lot of bubbles from the Spirit Herb Garden. Most people left the white bubbles because they thought it was worthless, but he knew better. If they accumulated enough, they could make a huge impact.

After learning the method of concealment and control, he felt that he could feel the improvement every day.

‘He probably thinks I’m in the Early Foundation Establishment Stage at just nineteen, so he wants to come and see for himself. There is no danger from him. In a few months, he will probably forget and won’t care anyway,’ said Jiang Hao to himself.

He went along with his routine and took care of the spirit herbs in the garden. At noon, he went to the market and set up his stall to sell some talismans. He then returned to his house and continued to make more talismans. He read the secret manual at night to learn and understand better.

The next day, he found two bubbles at his residence:

[cultivation + 1]

[cultivation + 1]

He then started his daily routine and visited the Spirit Herbs Garden to continue collecting more bubbles:

[spirit + 1]

[spirit + 1]

[strength + 1]

[lifeblood + 1]

...

At noon, Jiang Hao sold some talismans again. He now had a total of 135 spirit stones. He wanted to use them to buy a spirit seed. But he hadn't decided which seed he would buy, yet.

He could have gone yesterday since he had enough spirit stones, but he didn't because he had already used up his Daily Appraisal. He wanted to appraise the seed before he decided to buy it.

He knew where he could buy the seeds. Snow Lotus Pavilion. It was the sect's largest spirit medicine store. It sold all kinds of spirit medicine, elixirs, spirit seeds, etc.

A portion of the spirit herbs came from the Cliff of Broken Hearts. As Jiang Hao maintained the Spirit Herb Garden there, he had once received a list of orders.

"Buying seeds?" A Fairy guide in pigtails asked politely. "What kind of spirit herbs do you want to grow, Senior Brother?"

"I am not very sure. Sometimes it's very difficult to grow them," said Jiang Hao. "It's not the environment that is the problem, but the spirit herbs themselves."

The Fairy guide nodded. "What is your budget?"

"About a hundred spirit stones," Jiang Hao said.

"A hundred? Then you can buy a good seed. There's one that just happens to be suitable for Senior Brother. Please come in."

The Fairy guide led him to a room with many seeds with unique purposes. Buying a seed for 100 spirit stones wasn't very unusual. It was common for those in the Foundation Establishment Stage.

The Fairy guide showed him a snow-white seed lying quietly in a glass box at the counter.

“This is a Snow Lotus Seed. A high-grade spirit herb that can heal injuries and increase cultivation. The best place to grow it is in the snow or somewhere cold, but it can still grow in other places. It’s just that the speed of growth would be slower. The price is 99 spirit stones. Does this meet Senior Brother’s requirements?” asked The Fairy guide.

Jiang Hao silently activated his Daily Appraisal ability. He was more confident if he could see the seed’s potential for himself.

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[Snow Lotus Seed: it grows into a high-grade healing spirit herb after maturity. It’s hard to plant it if it has cracks on its body. There is no need to worry if planted in an extremely cold place. If not, it’s best to surround it with 16 spirit stones and water it every three days.]

“Can I take a look?” Jiang Hao asked the Fairy guide.

“Of course,” she said.

Taking the seed in his hand, Jiang Hao examined it very carefully. He saw a tiny crack at the base. He pointed it out to the Fairy guide.

The Fairy guide flashed him a strained smile. “Senior Brother definitely has a good eye for spirit herbs. Since there is a crack, we can give it to you for half a price. 50 spirit stones.”

‘How cunning,’ thought Jiang Hao. If he hadn’t discovered the crack, she would have ripped him off his spirit stones so easily. But this was normal here. Especially in the Devil Sect. No one cared about honesty and integrity.

“I’ll take this one, thank you,” said Jiang Hao. “Could you show me another seed of around 50 spirit stones?”

“Of course, this way.”

Jiang Hao bought a Blue Lotus Seed for the remaining price. It had no other function than to gather more spirit energy. It had only one disadvantage, if it wasn't well taken care of, it would wither easily. As for why it was so expensive, it probably was slaughtered.

'I wonder if it can give off blue bubbles,' thought Jiang Hao looking at the seed in his hands. White and green bubbles were easy to accumulate. The Spirit Herb Garden had a lot of those.

After returning to his house, Jiang Hao planted the Snow Lotus Seed and surrounded it with 16 spirit stones.

He only had 19 spirit stones left now. If he bought more talisman-making materials, he would be plain broke. He needed to earn more spirit stones.

The next day, Jiang Hai awoke from his cultivation. The first thing he wanted to do was to check his garden. Other than the two blue bubbles given off by the

When Jiang Hao woke up from his cultivation, the first thing he did was to come to the courtyard.

Other than the two blue bubbles provided by the Heavenly Fragrance Dao Flower, there was nothing! The Snow Lotus Seed obviously hadn't sprouted yet. It would take time for it to grow.

He took out the Blue Lotus Seed and appraised it.

[Blue Lotus Seed: after it takes root and sprouts, it can condense spiritual energy.]

"That's all?" muttered Jiang Hao. As expected, he was ripped off of his spirit stones for something so ordinary.

He planted the seed anyway and left for the Spirit Herb Garden.

...

A month later.

Jiang Hao put down his talisman pen and put away the Ten Thousand Sword Talisman he had just finished making. Senior Sister Leng Tian had placed that order. There were a total of ten talismans, and this was the last one.

Including the cost of failure, it had cost him 80 spirit stones. After selling them, they should fetch about 200 spirit stones. The net profit was 120 spirit stones.

He hadn't cultivated for the past few days. It was a great loss on his part. He shook his head and opened his interface:

[Name: Jiang Hao]

[Age: 20]

[Cultivation: Middle of Foundation Establishment Stage]

[Cultivation Method: Heavenly Sound Hundred Revolutions, Hong Meng Heart Sutra]

[Divine Ability: Nine Revolutions Death Substitution (Unique), Daily Appraisal, Clear and Pure Heart]

[Lifeblood: 88/100(can be cultivated)]

[Cultivation: 90/100(can be cultivated)]

[Divine Ability: 0/3(cannot be obtained)]

'90, I still need to wait for a week or so to advance.' Jiang Hao looked at his age and sighed.

"I'm already 20 years old," he muttered.

The past 20 years had not been very smooth for him. He was alone, but fortunately, he was not in danger.

"Congratulations on living past 20 years old," Jiang Hao joked with himself before walking out of the house.

When he arrived at the courtyard, he saw that there was finally a bubble at the Snow Lotus. It was purple in color.

The Blue Lotus hadn't grown yet. Since he didn't have any hope for that spirit herb, he wasn't in a hurry to see results.

When he walked, the bubbles around him started to fly to him.

[cultivation + 1]

[lifeblood + 1]

[divine ability fragment + 1]

'Divine ability fragment?' Jiang Hao wished there was something else in the purple bubble. Divine abilities were great, no doubt about them. But they lacked attack skills. He didn't have powerful spells and treasures. Soon, he would have to participate in a sect mission, he had to figure out a way to get stronger.

'If it really doesn't work out, then I'll go buy one. After I give out the ten thousand sword talisman, I should have around 400 spirit stones, close to 500 spirit stones. I can buy a decent magic treasure with that,' thought Jiang Hao.

Having made his decision, Jiang Hao left his house and headed to the Spirit Herb Garden to collect more bubbles.

He would buy the magic treasure after he advanced. There was still time.

When he reached the Spirit Herb Garden, he saw Han Ming at the entrance.

“Senior Brother!” Han Ming walked over to him with a smile. “Senior Brother, do you see anything different about me? Has my aura become stronger?”

Jiang Hao was surprised. Han Ming was at the early Foundation Establishment Stage, and it wouldn’t take him long to advance to the middle stage. However, this was too quick.

Out of curiosity, he appraised Han Ming once again.

[Han Ming: True Disciple of Heavenly Note Sect’s the Cliff of Broken Hearts. His talent is top-notch. He’s 18 years old and is in the Early Foundation Establishment Stage. He is favored by the spirits of mountains and rivers and has the inheritance of a mighty figure.]

‘The inheritance of a mighty figure?’ Jiang Hao was shocked. ‘Was it because he had the favor of the spirits of mountains and rivers?’

“In a few months, I will advance to the Middle Stage of Foundation Establishment. At that time, I will surpass Senior Brother,” said Han Ming, smiling brightly with a hint of arrogance.

Jiang Hao smiled. “Congratulations, Junior Brother.”

Han Ming smiled even more radiantly. “When the time comes, can I challenge Senior Brother? In the sect, I am the only one around Senior Brother’s age.”

“Okay.” Jiang Hao nodded his agreement.

When the time came, he would just need to put on a good show and lose willingly. Han Ming just wanted to show off. Jiang Hao didn't mind letting him be in the limelight.

"Okay, it's a deal! Senior Brother, please don't get angry if you lose. After all, there's a big gap between us." Han Ming was about to leave but he paused, thinking of something. "I heard the Cliff Master say that the sect's mission had been arranged. You are there too!"

Chapter 25

The sect mission was out.

Although Jiang Hao didn't show it, he was very concerned. So, after collecting the bubbles, he went to the foot of the mountain where the Law Enforcement Hall was located. He stood in front of the announcement board and saw his name.

Jiang Hao of the Cliff of Broken Hearts: clean up the Devil's Den.

'It's a team mission,' thought Jiang Hao, 'Who are the others?'

He saw the names of four people. Two were from the place he least wanted to see:

Qing Xue of the Heavenly Joy Pavilion.

Lou Feng of the Heavenly Joy Pavilion.

Xin Yuyue from the Thunder Fire Peak.

Zheng Shijiu from the Ice Moon Valley.

'Two from Heavenly Joy Pavilion. I wonder what their cultivation levels are,' wondered Jiang Hao.

He hadn't had much contact with the Thunder Fire Peak and the Ice Moon Valley, so he probably wouldn't make enemies with them after all. But the two from Heavenly Joy Pavilion were bad news.

He looked at the date when the mission would commence. It will be at the end of the next month. There was still a month and a half left.

Forty-five days.

'I should advance to a higher level first, then consolidate my cultivation, then save up a month's worth of Spirit Stones to buy a powerful magic treasure. I'll use the remaining half a month to practice. And then, spells... I don't have anything suitable for the Hong Meng Heart Sutra, so I'll ask the Cliff Master,' decided Jiang Hao.

Although the Cliff master didn't really think highly of him, he would still help him if he asked.

The Heavenly Joy Pavilion would definitely cook up something in this trip to the Devil's Den. Master would understand his situation.

The Devil's Den was a blessed land with many sect experts cultivating inside. It was said that the Devil's Den used to be the territory of the demon dwellers. Now, the demon dwellers were sealed in the deepest part of the cave. Even if they could escape, they would only be at the Foundation Establishment Stage.

The sect experts didn't care about these small flies, so they needed the inner sect disciples to enter the cave and clean them up. The cleaning time would roughly extend from one to three months. It depended on their progress.

When they return after finishing, they would be rewarded according to the battle results. It was also a good place to train. If only Jiang Hao hadn't offended the Heavenly Joy Pavilion, he would be very excited to join the team because the training didn't only offer actual combat experience but also allowed him to find dropped bubbles.

He left the announcement board and decided to find the team members and ask about their experience. He needed to make preparations.

“Junior Brother, we meet again,” said a young girl in green.

“Senior Sister Ming Yi,” greeted Jiang Hao politely.

This was the substitute Saintess of the Heavenly Saint Sect. She was in the early stage of the Golden Core Realm. She was also a spy. The level of danger was high with her.

Fortunately, they had cleaned up the traitors last time, so these people were, hopefully, well-behaved. Moreover, with the appearance of the Heavenly Fragrance Dao Flower, they didn’t dare to act rashly. They were even more worried. Everyone knew that the flower was there to fish them out.

Apart from that woman, there was no one who dared to bite the hook.

“Junior Brother is really polite. I just saw your name. Are you going to the Devil’s Den?” Fairy Ming Yi said with a smile.

Senior Sister Ming Yi looked sweet, and her smile was as warm as the sun. However, Jiang Hao knew that she was vicious and merciless, and there was a knife hidden in her smile. It was best not to offend her.

The early stage of the Golden Core Realm was like an insurmountable mountain pressing down on him. He was no match for her.

“Yes.” Jiang Hao nodded. There was no point hiding it anyway. “I’m going to the Devil’s Den to carry out a mission at the end of next month.”

“This is for you, then,” she said. “I just happened to get it, so take it as a thank you for Junior Brother’s help in the past. I will look for you if I have some difficulties. I hope you won’t refuse to help me. Bye. Good luck with your mission.”

Senior Sister Ming Yi placed a piece of paper on Jiang Hao's hand and left. Jiang Hao opened the letter. Perhaps having a friendly spy was worth it after all. The paper had the list of his team members' names along with their strengths:

[Heavenly Joy Pavilion's Qing Xue: Late Foundation Establishment Stage, close to a breakthrough. She mainly cultivates the Heavenly Joy Celestial Path. The more you see her cold and elegant outlook, the easier it is for you to fall into temptation.

Heavenly Joy Pavilion's Lou Feng: Middle Foundation Establishment Stage, close to breakthrough. She mainly cultivates the Heavenly Joy Fallen Immortal Path. She can cause one's mind to fall into chaos.

Thunder Fire Peak's Xin Yuyue: Early Foundation Establishment Stage. She mainly cultivates the Heavenly Fire Thunder Sword. She is best at summoning Heavenly Thunder to counter the Heavenly Joy Pavilion's Fallen Immortal Path.

Ice Moon Valley's Zheng Shijiu: Late Foundation Establishment Stage. She mainly cultivates the Thousand-Mile Ice Seal. She is decisive in killing and looks down on the Heavenly Joy Pavilion.]

Jiang Hao felt strange looking at their information in the paper. The first two definitely would dislike him from the beginning. However, the last two seemed like they were especially chosen to retrain those from Heavenly Joy Pavilion.

'Is someone helping me?' Jiang Hao immediately thought of the Cliff Master.

Although he wasn't the most gifted, surely, he was worth a little to the Cliff of Broken Hearts. Jiang Hao felt that the Cliff Master had done this to help him. He had selected other two team members who could balance out the malice of the Heavenly Joy Pavilion.

The Pavilion Master's hatred of him was because he had killed his vessel for his cultivation. If he found a new body, Jiang Hao will be fortunately forgotten. But if he couldn't find someone soon...

Jiang Hao would have to run for his life, because they would be after him forever. Even if he revealed his cultivation, his master might not be able to save him. It would be too dangerous for the master to get

involved. He would be spied on all the time and if it got out of hand the Devil Sect might not be able to accommodate him any longer.

However, he wasn't sure what would happen if he died. There was danger everywhere.

"Hey, isn't this Junior Brother Jiang Hao from the Cliff of Broken Hearts?" said a voice.

He raised his head and saw a man walking over to him. The man's hair was messy, and his eyes were bloodshot. There was an indescribable viciousness in his eyes. He was in the Middle Foundation Establishment Stage.

"Hello Senior Brother. Do I know you?" Jiang Hao asked politely.

"We'll go to the Devil's Den next month. We are on the same team. I hope Junior Brother is well-prepared." Lou Feng patted Jiang Hao's shoulder. "With your body this delicate, you will die if you go in the den carelessly. Don't blame me for not saving you," he said mockingly.

Lou Feng laughed menacingly and left.

Jiang Hao lowered his eyes. He knew who he was. Lou Feng of Heavenly Joy Pavilion.

Chapter 26

Back at the Cliff of Broken Hearts, Jiang Hao began thinking about Heavenly Joy Pavilion.

He had offended them by killing Senior Sister Yun Ruo, but he guessed that not everyone there wanted to kill him. If everyone hated him, then he would have been dead by now because the Heavenly Joy Pavilion would have intentionally or unintentionally tried to get rid of him.

There were only two groups of people who actually hated him enough to kill him: one, those who wanted to impress their Pavilion Master; and two, those who were infatuated by Senior Sister Yun Ruo.

Both groups were a danger to him. 'Going to the Devil's Den this time is bound to be highly dangerous for me. I need to advance to the Late Foundation Establishment Stage soon so I can at least defend myself,' thought Jiang Hao. 'In any case, I have a defensive magical treasure now. The only thing I need is an offensive magical treasure.'

The Hong Meng Heart Sutra could be used as a lone magic technique but so far, Jiang Hao didn't know how to unlock it. His cultivation wasn't enough.

After taking care of the Spirit Herb Garden for a while, he went to find the Cliff Master, Ku Wu Chang.

"A technique?" Cliff Master, Ku Wu Chang, got straight to the point. "What kind of technique do you want to learn?"

"Something powerful," said Jiang Hao.

"Do you use a knife or any other weapon for that matter?"

"I can use knives and swords." He was hardly an expert, but he had used them before. Besides, specializing in a particular magical treasure wasn't an option at the moment.

"Okay then. I'll teach you the Demonic Sound Slash," Ku Wu Chang pointed at the space between Jiang Hao's eyebrows as he spoke.

The shadow of the blade appeared in Jiang Hao's mind. It was like thunder and lightning. The shadow then disappeared from between his brows.

Ku Wu Chang gave him a book. "Take this back and study it. Your talent is good. You should be able to learn it in a month or so."

"Thank you, Master." Jiang Hao took the book and left.

When he was leaving, he saw Han Ming and other Senior Brothers arrive.

“You want to learn an attack method? Then I’ll teach you the Heavenly Thunder Sword. Learn it well from me here. Only after you learn it can you leave.”

Ku Wu Chang’s stern voice came from inside. He was talking to Han Ming and the others. Jiang Hao paid it no mind and left. The treatment of true Disciples was different from others for sure. More attention and more effort were given to them.

Jiang Hao didn’t care. He had to learn the Demonic Sound Slash first. Still, he couldn’t help but sigh at how good of a treatment the True Disciples received.

After returning to his house, Jiang Hao looked at the Heavenly Fragrance Dao Flower. ‘I have to go to the White Moon Lake. When I leave for the mission, I won’t be around to take care of the flower. It might not be good to just leave the flower unattended.’

He went to the cultivation room and activated the Clear and Pure Heart ability. In an instant, his mind became sharp and focused. He could understand many things at one glance. He opened the book to read about the Demonic Sound Slash. For seven days in a row, Jiang Hao focused his effort and energy to learn it.

On the eighth day, he understood it.

He walked to the edge of a stream and picked up a branch. He swung it. Boom!

The demonic sound rolled, revealing its sharpness. The shadow of the blade was ten meters long and slashed everything down.

Boom!

The stream exploded, sand and stones flew in every direction. The sound of an explosion rang out. A long blade mark was left on the ground.

Jiang Hao smiled. 'It's done! The technique is not bad. Seven Days was enough to learn it properly.' He was grateful for the Clear and Pure Heart ability, otherwise it would have taken him more than a month to master the Demonic Sound Slash technique.

'I still need a saber. I need to save up another month's worth of spirit stones to buy it,' Jiang Hao sighed. He had not sold any talismans in these seven days other than the Ten Thousand Sword Talisman Senior Sister Leng Tian had ordered. All his time was spent comprehending the Demonic Sound Slash.

He only had around 400 spirit stones in his savings. It was supposed to be a large sum but Jiang Hao felt that it wasn't enough to save his life.

To buy the Best Magic Treasure of the Foundation Establishment Stage, a few hundred spirit stones definitely wouldn't be enough.

Jiang Hao threw away the branch and returned to his courtyard. These few days, he had discovered something new. Every three days, a bubble would appear in the Snow Lotus. It was either lifeblood or cultivation. It could not be compared with the two bubbles that the Heavenly Fragrance Dao Flower gave off in a day, but it was certainly better than before.

As for the Blue Lotus, it had also bloomed. However, on the first day, it only gave off a green bubble followed by a white one. It was still better than nothing.

Jiang Hao glanced at his interface:

[lifeblood: 99/100(can be cultivated)]

[cultivation: 100/100(can be cultivated)]

He was still short of lifeblood. He could start to level up tomorrow maybe.

Jiang Hao headed to the Spirit Herb Garden. He looked around and found a blue bubble. He walked over to it.

[lifeblood + 1]

[spirit + 1]

[strength + 1]

[strength + 1]

[strength + 1]

Jiang Hao was happy feeling his strength rise. The most important thing for him now was for his lifeblood to reach a hundred. 'I can advance tonight.'

After he tended to the Spirit herb Garden, he headed out. He told some of the outer disciples to take care of the Spirit Herb Garden in his absence. Around a month later, he would leave for the Devil's Den. He needed someone to take care of the Spirit Herb Garden in his place.

He made some time to go to the White Moon Lake. He didn't see Elder Baizhi, but Senior Sister Zhou Chan had a message for him. There were only two words: Don't worry about it.

It seemed the flower would lure out the traitors whether he was there to take care of it or not. He didn't need to worry.

Jiang Hao returned to his house. And looked around. There were no problems so far. He went inside and decided to extract the lifeblood and cultivation base.

He wasn't sure if he could enter the Late Foundation Establishment Stage in one go. But he couldn't delay any longer. The majestic lifeblood and spiritual energy began to fill Jiang Hao's eight meridians. The Purple lifeblood mist guided them. It seemed much easier and more efficient than before.

Chapter 27

The lifeblood and spiritual energy poured in. Hong Meng's Heart Sutra operated in its own way. The spiritual energy passed through the gathering realm and poured down into the energy center.

The spiritual energy in his energy center gathered and compressed as though it was attacking some barrier.

Bang!

Under the strong compression, the spiritual energy became purer and massive. Jiang Hao heaved a sigh of relief and continued its circulation. The remaining 20 points of lifeblood and cultivation were fully absorbed. He needed to strengthen his cultivation in case of an emergency.

The next day, Jiang Hao opened his eyes and clenched his fists. The powerful force within his body made him happy and relieved. After being in the sect for many years, he knew that only strength could ensure his safety.

Here, in the sect, without strength, you were nothing. You were at the mercy of others. He couldn't even refuse something without becoming strong. There was always danger.

He was now in the Late Foundation Establishment Stage. Although that wasn't considered formidable, he was still a step closer to becoming stronger. The trip to the Devil's Den would now be a little less anxiety ridden. However, it wasn't enough. He had very few advantages.

Jiang Hao walked to the courtyard and collected bubbles:

[cultivation + 1]

[lifeblood + 1]

[strength + 1]

The bubbles were provided by the Blue Lotus. Jiang Hao made a fist and a huge rock shattered with a loud boom.

This was the strength of the body made possible by the lifeblood and the power it provided.

‘From the looks of it, even if I lose all my cultivation, I still have extraordinary battle strength,’ thought Jiang Hao. It had been a good idea to collect white bubbles day after day no matter how insignificant it had looked.

After practicing the Demonic Sound Slash for a while, Jiang Hao went to the Spirit Herb Garden and continued with his daily routine.

The next month, he spent most of his time at his house improving himself, thankfully, no one came to disturb him.

When he practiced the Demonic Sound Slash, he read the secret manual along with it. He found out that it was easier to control his strength if he followed the guidelines. The secret manual given to him by that dangerous woman was really a treasure no matter how hard he tried not to admit it.

At night, he made talismans. Spirit Concentration Talismans and Divine Sword Talismans were the most common, so he made them a lot.

He also made some Ten Thousand Sword Talismans, but he didn’t sell them. They might come in handy in the Devil’s Den. He had fifteen of them. He kept them for himself and sold the rest. Now, he had a total of 723 spirit stones

In fact, he hadn’t really earned much this month. Business wasn’t really good these days and most of his spirit stones were spent buying materials to make the Ten Thousand Sword Talismans.

Jiang Hao planned to buy some magic treasures after he finished tending to the Spirit Herb Garden. ‘There are only seven days left before I go to the Devil’s Den. I shouldn’t delay buying them any longer.’

He had to get used to their magic even after buying them otherwise he wouldn't be able to use them efficiently when the time came. There were only seven days left to practice with them.

However, there was one thing that he was hesitant about. He looked at his interface.

[Name: Jiang Hao]

[Age: 20]

[Cultivation: Late Foundation Establishment Stage]

[Cultivation Method: Heavenly Sound Hundred Revolutions, Hong Meng Heart Sutra]

[Divine Ability: Nine Revolutions Death Substitution (Unique), Daily Appraisal, Clear and Pure Heart]

[Lifeblood: 46/100(can be cultivated)]

[Cultivation: 51/100(can be cultivated)]

[Divine Ability: 1/3(cannot be obtained)]

'Lifeblood and cultivation are almost half full. Should I wait or just use them to break through?' questioned Jiang Hao. After a moment of hesitation, he decided to keep them as it were.

His cultivation had already been consolidated, so it wouldn't be of much help if he couldn't advance by extracting them.

'The probability of them attacking me directly when I enter the Devil's Den is very low. I'll have time to clear the demon dwellers and continue accumulating my cultivation.'

Jiang Hao, having made his decision, left for the sect market. He stood in front of the Stellar Tower and observed for a moment. He felt that this place was much grander than the Snow Lotus Pavilion.

“A Saber-type Foundation Establishment Artifact?” The Fairy guide, after hearing his request, led the way. “Senior Brother, follow me.”

After a while, the Fairy guide showed him three sabers:

The first one was completely red, about three fingers wide and three feet long.

The second one was glowing with light, about two fingers wide and one foot long. It was a short saber.

The third one was pitch black, about three fingers wide and two feet long.

“The first is the blazing Sun Knife. It contains a potent fire power, and its blade aura is of very high temperature. It has great destructive power. The price is 888 spirit stones,” explained the Fairy guide. “The second is the Seven-Colored Moon-Slaying Blade. It leaves no traces. It has the ability to kill without being seen. The price is 1,100 spirit stones. The third is the Shadow Blade. It is invisible at night. It is not as powerful as the first two, but because of the material, it is extremely strong. The price is 830 spirit stones.”

Jiang Hao picked up the Shadow Blade because that was the cheapest among the three. What he wanted the most was the Seven-Colored Moon-Slaying Blade. But that was so expensive. In the end, he negotiated the Shadow Blade for 720 spirit stones. No matter how precious the other weapon was, he couldn't afford it.

After purchasing his blade, he sold some talismans barely earning 30 spirit stones. He then headed to the Spirit Herb Garden for a little while and returned home. He wanted to get familiar with his new blade.

In the dark night, he swung his blade, creating a huge wave. The blade slashed in all directions displaying massive destructive power.

Jiang Hao felt that the blade matched perfectly with the Demonic Sound Slash technique. However, the two weren't compatible. The Shadow Blade was suitable for assassinations and the Demonic Sound Slash was too eye-catching. But combined, they did work powerfully.

'I can catch them off guard.' Jiang Hao looked at the sky. It was getting lighter.

Today was the day. Whether he came back from the Devil's Den or not was something he couldn't know for sure.

Chapter 28

After packing his things, he went out to the courtyard.

He couldn't ask anyone else to take care of his house and his small garden because of the Heavenly Fragrance Dao Flower. He was worried something might go wrong. People coveted it. They might kill others or get killed in the process. The courtyard was always watched.

He wondered if that woman would come here again. 'If she sees me gone, will she take the Heavenly Fragrance Dao Flower with her?'

Jiang Hao stopped worrying. That woman was certainly someone of importance and Elder Baizhi must be on the move anyway.

'I'd better pray for myself first.'

He looked at his interface:

[lifeblood: 56/100(can be cultivated)]

[cultivation: 61/100(can be cultivated)]

'More than half. I don't know if I can make it to a hundred soon. If I can, I will still need a quiet environment to advance further.' This was his last trump card.

Jiang Hao went to meet his Cliff Master before leaving the Cliff of Broken Hearts. Unfortunately, his master wasn't there. He had wanted to say goodbye.

He walked to the foot of the mountain where the Law Enforcement Hall was located.

"Junior Brother, are you leaving?" Liu Xingchen walked towards him.

"Good morning, Senior Brother," Jiang Hao said politely. Everything felt funny. All the spies were suddenly concerned about him. How was that possible? It appears they wanted him to come back alive though he didn't know why they would care.

"Junior Brother isn't in a good situation," Liu Xingchen said as he walked with Jiang Hao to the place where those going on missions would gather.

"I've seen the name list. The strongest person is in the Late Foundation Establishment Stage. There's another Late Foundation Establishment Stage cultivator who isn't on good terms with the Heavenly Joy Pavilion. That should be good for me at least," said Jiang Hao.

"Yeah. The people appointed by the Heavenly Joy Pavilion for this mission were in the Middle and Late Foundation Establishment Stage. However, something... unexpected happened." Liu Xingchen sighed.

"They changed people?" Jiang Hao asked in surprise.

"No, they didn't." Liu Xingchen shook his head. "But they advanced."

Jiang Hao was stunned. He felt he was in big trouble. He recalled the four words on the piece of paper that Senior Sister Ming Yi had given him: "close to a breakthrough."

At this moment, he remembered the four words on the note, "Close to a breakthrough." Both team members from the Heavenly Joy Pavilion had been close to a breakthrough.

So, the one in the middle stage had advanced to the Late Foundation Establishment Stage while the one in the late stage had successfully completed the Foundation Establishment Stage and advanced further.

This was dangerous.

"Thank you for your reminder, Senior Brother." Jiang Hao was grateful.

Liu Xingchen nodded. He then left Jiang Hao.

'I need to find a way to gather enough lifeblood and cultivation to break through to another stage,' thought Jiang Hao.

When he arrived at the gathering place, he saw four people. One was a cold and serious looking woman. The other was a man who looked fierce. Their eyes, as they watched Jiang Hao, were filled with savagery.

Across from them stood a man holding a white paper fan who looked friendly and a woman in blue. She held a long sword and glared at the two in front of her.

These were his teammates. Qing Xue and Lou Feng of the Heavenly Joy Pavilion, Zheng Shijiu of the Ice Moon Valley, and Xin Yuyue of the Thunder Fire Peak.

Although those four people didn't like each other, he didn't know if he could be on good terms with any of them. When he approached, everyone looked at him. Some sized him up, others looked on teasingly. Jiang Hao tried not to get flustered and walked over to them.

"Greetings, Senior Brothers and Sisters," he said politely. 'I apologize for being late.' In fact, the four of them had come too early.

“No, no. You are right on time,” smiled Lou Feng of the Heavenly Joy Pavilion. It seemed that they had been waiting for this day for a long time.

“Then let’s go,” said Zheng Shijiu of the Ice Moon Valley.

“That’s right. It’s disgusting to stand around with people from the Heavenly Joy Pavilion for too long,” said Thunder Fire Peak’s Xin Yuyue in disdain.

Jiang Hao didn’t say anything to that. He noticed that the two from the Heavenly Joy Pavilion had concealed their cultivation. Thanks to the secret manual, he was able to tell their cultivation level.

He still chose to appraise Heavenly Joy Pavilion’s Qing Xue just to be safe.

[Qing Xue: a disciple of the Heavenly Joy Pavilion of the Heavenly Note Sect. Peak of the Foundation Establishment Stage. She is devoted to her Pavilion Master and holds a deep hatred for you.]

Jiang Hao was speechless. This was insane! Jiang Hao sighed. It wouldn’t be Devil’s Sect without some dangerous people.

They arrived at the Devil’s Den by noon. It was located at the central Lake of the Heavenly Note Sect. It was a world of its own and was vast. The entrance fell within the boundary of the Heavenly Note Sect, so it was considered the sect’s territory.

“I heard that most of the people inside are early or middle Foundation Establishment Stage demon dwellers. If that’s the case, we should split up and deal with them,” said Qing Xue.

Lou Feng nodded. “I agree.”

“I don’t think so.” Zheng Shijiu shook his head. “There will be a lot of demons. I think we should stick together. That way we can not only attack efficiently but also look out for each other, if necessary. If we split up it might prove to be difficult to fight late or peak Foundation Establishment Stage demons, should we encounter them. At least we will have a chance of defeating it together. Splitting up as soon as we enter will be no less than courting death.”

"I agree with Senior Brother Zheng," Xin Yuyue of Thunder Fire Peak echoed.

"I agree with Senior Brother Zheng, too," said Jiang Hao.

He needed to stay with everyone. He was no match for someone at the Peak of Foundation Establishment Stage if they chose to attack him.

"Alright. After we clear most of the demons, it will be safer to split up later and deal with the lone demon dwellers," said Qing Xue. She stared icily at Zheng Shijiu.

Jiang Hao could feel her displeasure.

But now was not the time to dwell on it. He needed time and sticking with everyone would give him that.

Chapter 29

When they entered the Devil's Den, they had expected it to be a dark and gloomy cave. But they were surprised to see a bright sky inside the den.

In the sky, light moved like water waves. It was vast and boundless. The ground was no different from how it was outside. There were mountains, rivers, lands, flowers and trees. They walked at the edge of a forest. They could see a beam of light in front of them that rose to the sky.

It seemed like stars were falling from the light. It was a marvelous sight.

'The core of the Devil's Den,' thought Jiang Hao. He had done his reading of the records of the sect. The core was the place where the demon dwellers were sealed. No one was allowed near it.

"This is my first time coming to the Devil's Den. I didn't expect the environment to be so beautiful," Xin Yuyue of the Thunder Fire Peak said in surprise.

“Yeah, the place is quite beautiful, but the danger is high as well,” said Lou Feng, smirking at Jiang Hao. “I heard that if you die here, even the Law Enforcement Hall won’t come to investigate.”

Jiang Hao lowered his eyes. Lou Feng was threatening him. Jiang Hao calmed himself. The more they provoked him, the calmer he had to be. Otherwise, this would escalate into a disaster.

First, he had to find the demon dwellers and kill one of them. Planting spirit herbs and killing demonic beasts were similar. They both gave off bubbles.

“It’s a little too calm.” Zheng Shijiu looked around and frowned.

“It’s indeed a little too quiet. Usually, demon dwellers would already attack by now,” said Qing Xue.

The five of them walked deeper into the forest. Jiang Hao looked around vigilantly. His perception should only be slightly weaker than Qing Xue of the Heavenly Joy Pavilion. But he didn’t dare to show it.

Jiang Hao looked to the left. There was some movement there.

Qing Xue warned, “It’s coming!”

Whoosh!

Boom!

The huge rock smashed, and a huge pit formed on the ground. They scrambled to take cover from the falling rocks. A flame surged towards the rock.

Bang!

Xin Yuyue had made her move. Her power was formidable. Jiang Hao noticed that she was about to advance to the Middle Foundation establishment Stage.

Roar! An angry roar came from the explosion. Three burly figures rushed over.

When they got close, Jiang Hao saw them clearly. They were like orangutans, and their bodies were covered with hair. Their faces were ferocious.

Jiang Hao rushed forward. From his estimation, the creatures should only have the strength of someone in the early Foundation Establishment Stage. He swung his blade and leaped in front of the first demon, slashing at it.

The blade slashed past, and sparks appeared. But there was no damage.

Jiang Hao was shocked. He gave up on the blade and jumped behind the demon. He pulled out his dagger and stabbed it in the neck. It was very difficult to push the dagger into its neck. But finally, when he succeeded, blood gushed out.

Roar! The demon roared. Jiang Hao stabbed the dagger into the demon's neck again and pierced through it. The demon fell to the ground. Two bubbles emerged from its body and fused into Jiang Hao.

[lifeblood + 1]

[cultivation + 1]

This was the first time he had killed a beast and gotten bubbles out of it. He looked at the other two demons. There were no more bubbles.

"Looks like Junior Brother loves stabbing at someone's neck," said Lou Feng with a smile, who had cut another demon in half.

“Senior Brother, you’re joking! The Demon’s body is harder than expected, but its neck is slightly weaker,” Jiang Hao replied softly.

There had been some information in the records, but this creature had skin harder than recorded. After carefully reviewing the battle, Jiang Hao realized that if he wanted to break through the demon dwellers’ defense, he could use the Demonic Sound Slash.

It would be dangerous if there were too many of them. There was another requirement. He needed to kill at least fifty demons before he could safely walk out of the Devil’s Den. Otherwise, these people from heavenly Joy pavilion would not let him walk out of here alive.

“So, the neck is their weakness.” Xin Yuyue stabbed the demon’s neck with her sword. “It’s easy to kill them if their neck is severed.”

“We must be careful. The demon dwellers attacked us so suddenly. It means this place is their territory. There were three of them together. Maybe they attack in groups,” said Zheng Shijiu.

“It just so happens that we can clear them out together. Once we finish them off in groups, we can find the lone ones,” Qing Xue said coldly.

She walked forwards. The others followed. Jiang Hao followed, too. He was thinking about how to kill more demons.

Soon, they met the demon dwellers again. This time, there were four of them, and one of them was in the Middle Foundation Establishment Stage. Jiang Hao ignored that one and killed the other three.

He stabbed one with his dagger and went straight for the other two. Everyone seemed willing to let him fight.

Jiang Hao received three air bubbles.

[cultivation + 1]

[Lifeblood + 1]

[Lifeblood + 1]

'Looks like the harvest isn't too stable. The number of kills has to increase.' Jiang Hao's heart sank. He wasn't as optimistic now.

After that, he went all out to kill the demon dwellers. A month passed just like that. During this month, they all moved together. This also helped Jiang Hao be safe.. The Heavenly Joy Pavilion wouldn't try to kill him in front of the others.

[cultivation + 1]

Looking at the demon dwellers lying in front of him, Jiang Hao felt that things were getting worse. It had been a month, and he had met many demon dwellers every day. However, the number of bubbles became fewer and fewer.

It was not only because there were fewer demon dwellers now, but also because Lou Feng would not let him kill so many.

When Lou Feng saw that Jiang Hao was going all out to kill demons, he did the same too. He did not even hide his cultivation level anymore.

Jiang Hao knew why Lou Feng was doing this. If there were very few demon dwellers, then there would be no choice but for them to split up.

His lifeblood and cultivation were still short of a hundred:

[Lifeblood: 95/100(can be cultivated)]

[cultivation: 96/100(can be cultivated)]

Chapter 30

Roar!

Another devil appeared. Jiang Hao rushed to make his move, but Lou Feng beat him to it.

A slash and then boom! The Devil was killed on the spot. Jiang Hao could only watch.

“Junior Brother Jiang seems very keen on killing these demons. Me too! It’s just that I want to find out who can kill more,” said Lou Feng with a smile. His smile was full of malice.

Jiang Hao had appraised Lou Feng on the second day they were at the Devil’s Den. He wasn’t here for Heavenly Joy Pavilion. He was here for Senior Sister Yun Ruo. He had been madly in love with her. And now he sought revenge for her death.

“Why is Junior Brother so silent?” Lou Feng’s eyes were filled with ferocity and bloodlust.

‘His hatred is becoming stronger. At this rate, it would be very easy for him to lose control,’ worried Jiang Hao.

He wasn’t the only one worried. Zheng Shijiu was worried too. If Lou Feng lost his mind, he might kill everyone present.

Lou Feng was at the Late Foundation Establishment Stage. Xin YuYue was also wary. Even if she could try and restrain Lou Feng, it might not be enough because the difference in their strength was too great.

“It’s been long since the demon dwellers have reduced in numbers. Let’s split up and find them,” said Qing Xue suddenly.

Everyone heaved a sigh of relief, including Jiang Hao. He was very worried. If Lou Feng made a move, Qing Xue would join him without doubt.

His cultivation was about to be full. There shouldn't be any problem for him to advance. He just needed a little more time. Although splitting up was dangerous, Jiang Hao felt that it could give him time for a breakthrough.

Zheng Shijiu knew about the animosity between Jiang Hao and the Heavenly Joy Pavilion. He didn't want to be dragged into it. The risk was too high.

"Does anyone have any objections?" Qing Xue asked again.

"Junior Brother Jiang, what do you think?" Zheng Shijiu asked Jiang Hao.

"I think it's a good idea," said Jiang Hao calmly.

Zheng Shijiu was impressed by his calm demeanor despite the threat Lou Feng posed to him. On the other hand, Lou Feng smiled like a predator that could finally have its fill.

"Then which direction does Junior Brother want to go?" Zheng Shijiu let Jiang Hao choose first. "Let's not go in the same direction. We can clear the den much faster that way."

After agreeing on the final meeting place, Jiang Hao headed straight inside. The first choice had its pros and cons. It was a good thing that Zheng Shijiu was watching so no one could follow him in the same direction. But it also meant everyone knew which direction he went in. He had to walk fast. After making sure that no one could see him, he changed directions and sped away.

After Jiang Hao left, Zheng Shijiu looked at the two from Heavenly Joy pavilion. They didn't waste any time in choosing a direction.

"I heard that Senior Brother Zheng is dissatisfied with the people from the Heavenly Joy Pavilion. Why didn't you settle the matter?" Xin Yuyue asked with a smile.

Zheng Shijiu sighed. "It's not that I don't want to, but I am no match for them. One of them is at the peak of the Foundation Establishment Stage and the other is in the late stage."

“The Heavenly Joy Pavilion is really shameless,” Xin Yuyue said disdainfully.

“The Heavenly Joy Pavilion is angry, but the Cliff of Broken Hearts isn’t too weak either. But I think this time the Heavenly Joy Pavilion will be the winner. I heard Junior Brother Jiang relied on fortuitous encounter to advance and he is only an inner sect disciple,” said Zheng Shijiu regretfully.

“True,” said Xin Yuyue. “All five of us won’t be returning together, are we?”

“I have a feeling it’s only going to be four people who will be returning,” said Zheng Shijiu. “Junior brother Jiang might ... be staying here.”

“So, there really is no escape for him?” asked Xin Yuyue.

“I don’t think so,” said Zheng Shijiu sadly. “Those two from the heavenly Joy Pavilion seem very violent. I think they are already chasing Jiang Hao.” He paused for a while. “Junior Sister, are you coming with me or going by yourself?”

“Thank you for your consideration, Senior Brother. I want to train myself,” Xin Yuyue refused politely with a smile.

“Alright,” said Zheng Shijiu, choosing a direction for himself. “See you in a month.”

Xin Yuyue despised Heavenly Joy Pavilion. They weren’t good people. Ice Moon Valley was hard to figure out. She didn’t want to put herself in danger.

As for Jiang Hao, she could do nothing about it. His cultivation was weak, and he had offended a strong enemy. Perhaps it was better for him to die early. It would save him a lot of pain in the future.

...

Jiang Hao used his fastest speed to go all the way inside. When he encountered the demon dwellers, he did not make a move. He deliberately left them there so that he would not be easily discovered.

The next day, he stopped by the lake. After traveling nonstop for a day, he felt that he had bought some time. He needed to kill a few demons to obtain enough cultivation and lifeblood. Then he could try and advance to the peak of the Foundation Establishment Stage. Otherwise, he wouldn't be able to fight against those from the Heavenly Joy Pavilion.

Roar!

A demon rushed out of the lake. It had the strength of the Middle Foundation Establishment Stage. Jiang Hao killed it in one slash.

Then, he picked up the air bubble.

[cultivation + 1]

'Only one.'

He continued on his journey. Every time he saw the pillar of light with stars falling out of it, he was in awe. But he didn't dare go near it. The number of demons was increasing. It took him three days to gather enough air bubbles.

After killing the last demon dweller, Jiang Hao heaved a sigh of relief.

His lifeblood and cultivation were finally full.

[Lifeblood: 100/100(can be cultivated)]

[cultivation: 100/100(can be cultivated)]

'It's time to find a place to advance.'

...

Somewhere else, Lou Feng saw the demon dweller's corpse/ he looked up from the lakeside with a dark gleam in his eyes. "Found you."