

A Father 23

Chapter 23: The Bull Demon Has an Epiphany, The Spirit Baby's Divinity

Pfft, pfft, pfft!

Tiny as ox hair yet extremely sharp wooden needles rained down like a storm, covering the sky!

With his long knife stained in blood, Zhao Chuanxiong swung it fiercely at the sight, his hair standing on end and pupils shrinking, forced to whirl his blade to summon a wild gust, blocking the dense barrage of hidden weapons!

But there were too many. The Blood Lotus explosion sent the dense wooden needles piercing through like a torrential downpour, finally penetrating his body!

Blood mist billowed, and Zhao Chuanxiong, who had leapt up, now heavily crashed back into the snow-covered courtyard; his pores oozed tiny beads of blood, which quickly dyed a large patch of the white snow red.

"Ahh!"

Zhao Chuanxiong let out a low roar, his hair and beard bristling. He hurriedly circulated his Inner Strength to resist the blood flow in his meridians, his face reddening in rage!

"So sinister, so vicious! What a malicious Bull Demon!"

Zhao Chuanxiong's angry shouts persisted.

The Bagua Staff martial artist wearing a young girl's mask leapt onto the surrounding wall, but such a delay cost him—a glimpse revealed no trace of the Bull Demon.

Already vanished into the blurring wind and snow.

Glancing back at the finely-pricked holes left by the dense wooden needles in the snow, the Bagua Staff martial artist couldn't help shivering.

"Protect me for a moment. This Bull Demon is truly vicious. These needles are extremely fine; even the membrane of my Body Tempering Realm couldn't withstand them. They've penetrated my body, and are now following my blood and meridians, aiming to pierce my heart. I need to use my Inner Strength to protect myself and force these needles out!"

Gasping heavily, Zhao Chuanxiong immediately sat cross-legged on the snowy ground and said to the Bagua Staff martial artist before starting to seriously circulate his Inner Strength.

Searing heat emanated from every inch of his skin.

Almost the time it took for a cup of tea to brew, Zhao Chuanxiong's body shook violently, and he opened his mouth wide to spit out a large mouthful of coagulated blood.

The clotted blood was filled with the dyed wooden needles.

"How is it?"

The martial artist holding the Bagua Staff looked at Zhao Chuanxiong and asked in a deep voice.

"It's nothing serious, just some damage to the meridians. I need to recuperate for a while. This Bull Demon... truly malicious."

Zhao Chuanxiong's face was displeased; he had set a trap to capture and kill this Bull Demon.

But he had not expected to suffer such a loss.

"At least he didn't temper those needles with poison..." remarked the martial artist with the Bagua Staff, glancing over and smiling.

Zhao Chuanxiong's mouth twitched, too lazy to respond, but inwardly he felt somewhat relieved.

This Bull Demon, vicious yet not deadly enough...

"Wearing a Bull Demon mask, the body tall and burly, and possessing Bone Tempering Cultivation... such a conspicuous physique should be impossible to hide in the Outer City." **R**

Zhao Chuanxiong exhaled, "Could it be someone from the Inner City?"

"Most likely, the Noble Families and Clans from the Inner City have superior legacies, the Martial Arts they practice are extremely profound, and their diet is rich in nutrients, making them robust with vigorous blood and qi. Look at the Yang Family, every one of them is as robust as a bull. Nearly every grand Noble Family and Clan has such horizontally refined martial artists."

"Moreover, the strength of that Bull Demon is even stronger than a warrior with Bone Tempering Minor Accomplishment. It seems the Martial Arts he practices are exceedingly noteworthy, definitely originating from a Noble Family."

"And those wooden needles... probably have something to do with the Wood Carvers under Noble Families and Clans. With such skill, they might well be the work of some Woodcarving Master."

The martial artist holding the Bagua Staff nodded and commented.

"The Dharma Master has gone to the Inner City to deal with those Noble Families and Clans, taking over quite a bit of their interests... These Noble Families are not vegetarians; it's normal that they would fight back."

"The Yang Family? The Xu Family, the An Family... or the Si Family?" Zhao Chuanxiong slowly stood up, meticulously extracting wooden needles as fine as ox hair from the snow.

His rough fingers ground the needles, his eyes brimming with intense killing intent.

"Regardless, this Bull Demon... must be killed sooner or later!"

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Li Che, wearing a broad hat and a loose overcoat, returned to the small courtyard he rented.

His body deflated like a punctured balloon, returning to its normal size.

"Escaping from the hands of two Quenched-Bone Warriors... not bad, but I've used up all my trump cards."

"The Sleeve Crossbow, Thousand Spider Threads, and Guanyin Blood Lotus—all three mechanisms were fully deployed... Tsk, it's a pity that my Inner Strength isn't fully cultivated yet, otherwise, driven by a powerful Inner Strength, the eruption of the Guanyin Blood Lotus could be doubled, and Zhao Chuanxiong would have been heavily injured if not dead."

"Now, at best, I can only inflict minor and insignificant wounds on him."

"Hmm... if I were to temper the wooden needles with poison, the resulting Guanyin Blood Lotus, once it pricks into the meridians and the poison bursts forth, its lethality would double..."

Li Che exhaled a breath, his eyes lit up with a sense of enlightenment as his fists and palms met.

A tactical error indeed; otherwise, Zhao Chuanxiong would have died this time.

"Without considering that Bagua Staff martial artist, in a one-on-one fight, even if I activate 'Dragon Elephant Vajra', I am no match for Zhao Chuanxiong. His Inner Strength has reached the Three Heavens, which is higher than mine, and he possesses Martial Techniques..."

Li Che reviewed the brief exchange he had with Zhao Chuanxiong.

Without relying on Fairy Mechanisms, a prolonged battle would surely end in my defeat and disadvantage.

"Martial Technique... I need to acquire one. I possess the 'Dragon Elephant Vajra' Dao Fruit, which makes my martial arts training exceptionally fast. Cross-training in martial techniques will undoubtedly allow for quicker mastery, perhaps with additional enhancements." Li Che had a plan forming in his mind.

"Would Second Shopkeeper teach me Martial Techniques? Hmm, even if he does, it would likely be in the distinct style of Xu Ji... Looks like I'll have to find one on my own or maybe scour through Old Chen's collection."

Li Che stretched lazily, his bones making popping sounds. f

This battle gave him an assessment of Zhao Chuanxiong's strength and some confidence in killing him.

He shed his clothes and tidied his attire.

Li Che leisurely stepped out, headed to the Western City cured meat shop for a pound of cured beef and half a pound of pig's ears, topped off with a jug of aged yellow wine, and a box of osmanthus cakes before ambling back to Xu's Wood Carving Shop.

"Daddy!"

Just as he pushed open the courtyard door, Xi Xi, with her nose turned red from the cold, falteringly walked towards Li Che across the snow-covered ground.

Li Che felt a warm sensation hearing that, put down the cured meat and wine, and immediately picked up the chubby Xi Xi.

The little girl, looking adorable with her red lips, instinctively wrapped her small hands around his neck as Li Che lifted her.

"Daddy... hug."

The little girl was smart. Although just over a year old, she had already shown herself to be extraordinary.

She could now walk steadily without the aid of a baby walker.

Old Chen sat under the eaves, happily sipping wine from a gourd, and upon seeing Li Che and Xi Xi's affectionate interaction, he couldn't help but sourly curve the corners of his mouth, "That Little Stinky Xi is something else, sensing your return from afar..."

"Truly a Spirit Baby."

Zhang Ya walked out of the house and, seeing Li Che's dropped items, hurried over to pick them up and take them inside.

"My husband, you brought osmanthus cakes again today. Isn't this a little lavish?" Zhang Ya smiled sweetly, their lives having steadily improved since moving to Xu Ji, giving them much to look forward to.

Li Che smiled, "My wife, if you want to eat osmanthus cakes, you can have them every day."

Their family could indeed afford it now.

With Li Che's craftsmanship, the wood carvings he sculpted were highly profitable. Typically, each wood carving session could earn at least fifty taels or more, assuring them a carefree life.

Zhang Ya carried the items into the house.

Li Che, holding Xi Xi, took a seat beside Old Chen, holding the aged yellow wine.

"Old Chen, this Spirit Baby... what's it all about?"

Li Che asked.

The Spirit Infant Sect adjudged Xi Xi to be a Spirit Baby... but what exactly does a Spirit Baby entail, Li Che was still unclear.

Old Chen put away his gourd, gestured for Li Che to pour the wine, and only after Li Che filled the cup to the brim did Old Chen show a beaming smile.

He sipped the aged yellow wine.

Old Chen became serious as he looked at Xi Xi, a trace of pity flashing in his eyes.

"A Che, are you familiar with the Divine Method?"

"A so-called Spirit Baby... is someone born with Divinity, an excellent candidate for cultivating the Superior Divine Method!"

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