

Cultivating 131

Chapter 131: The Secret of Blood King Gu, Ruthless Slaughter (Two-in-One)

The Fatty Elder gazed fervently at the Blood Pool and suddenly said:

"Lei, are you also curious about the Blood King Gu?"

Ning Qi was shaken mentally, and his face immediately showed a look of panic and unease before he fell to his knees:

"Fatty Elder, I dare not spy on such a sacred object, I beg Elder to discern the truth!"

The Fatty Elder chuckled and waved his hand:

"Don't be so nervous. Once this Blood King Gu is successfully cultivated, it will be time for me to leave. A new elder will come by then. You've all done well over the years, pleasing me greatly. Before I leave, it's not a big deal to tell you about the Blood King Gu."

Ning Qi cautiously said:

"Then please, Elder, clear up my confusion?"

Although he had some guesses, they were just guesses. Nothing could compare to the direct knowledge the Fatty Elder could provide.

The Fatty Elder's eyes turned somewhat profound:

"Did you see the three pairs of wings on the Blood King Gu? The Blood King Gu is born without wings. As it grows step by step, it will eventually sprout wings. Three pairs signify its completeness, its maturity."

"It's been ten years, a full ten years of nurturing with the Blood Pool, to grow such a Blood King Gu. It's really not easy."

Perhaps because he was about to succeed and leave, the Fatty Elder talked more than usual.

"With just one more infusion of this scale of the Blood Pool, this Blood King Gu will fully mature, and once it does, it can... allow a Primordial Core Realm expert to step into the Celestial Human Realm unhindered!"

His voice was filled with temptation.

Ning Qi had long suspected this, and now he cooperated by displaying a dumbfounded and astonished expression:

"It... it actually has such miraculous effects?!"

The Fatty Elder chuckled:

"Naturally, otherwise why would I have stayed in Qing State for ten years? Lei, perform well, and perhaps you'll have the chance to be granted a Blood King Gu in the future."

Ning Qi, full of gratitude, said:

"Thank you, Elder, for your guidance!"

He roughly understood that the Fatty Elder's rare discussion of the Blood King Gu's effects today was likely an attempt to cultivate Lei as a trusted confidant, which was, in a way, planting a nail.

The Fatty Elder chuckled again:

"But... this is not even the greatest use of the Blood King Gu."

His words trailed off lengthily, and Ning Qi timely played along:

"The greatest use is...?"

But then the Fatty Elder turned, his face carrying a teasing smile:

"Do you really want to know?"

Ning Qi felt 'struck by lightning', breaking into a 'cold sweat', and hurriedly bowed his head in fear, saying:

"It was presumptuous of me, please forgive me, Elder!"

The Fatty Elder looked at the docile Lei before him and smiled contentedly. This mix of reward and punishment, with a balance of grace and power, seemed to him well executed.

He gently helped Ning Qi up and said with a smile:

"No need to be like this. Follow me in the future, and when you advance to the Celestial Human Realm, you will naturally know."

He patted Ning Qi's shoulder and then focused on observing the atmosphere change within the Blood Pool and the Blood King Gu.

"I am willing to be loyal unto death for the Elder!"

Having shown his allegiance, Ning Qi stepped back two paces, calmly watching the Fatty Elder's back.

The information gained from this conversation with the Fatty Elder was an unexpected delight; he hadn't forgotten his original plan.

But now was not the best time to take action.

The Fatty Elder seemed to have his back to Ning Qi, but in truth, his attention was not dispersed.

Ning Qi was patient.

At this moment, the Blood Pool was bubbling.

Both of them were watching the Blood King Gu in the Blood Pool, or rather perceiving its atmospheric change.

Time slowly passed.

The Qi of the Blood King Gu approached a certain limit, while the evil energy within the Blood Pool was thinning to an extreme, requiring supplementation from the life-filled human blood.

The Fatty Elder couldn't help but laugh joyfully, taking out the Purple Jade Bamboo Tube again, preparing to recall the Blood King Gu.

Ning Qi's gaze flickered.

Moved.

Now was the best moment to strike.

A mere two steps away, Ning Qi erupted without a trace of sound. Inside, the Jade Liquid Sea trembled, and the majestic Gang Qi erupted from Ning Qi's palm in an instant, his palm pressing outward with an earth-shattering momentum.

At his current state, merely relying on his own Gang Qi's power was enough to rival those at the bottom of the Celestial Being List, and using various Secret Techniques would be even more astonishing.

This Fatty Elder was merely an ordinary Celestial Human Realm cultivator.

Under such an assault, there was simply no time to react.

The joy on his face froze instantly, turning into intense astonishment. He sensed the attack from behind him but it was already too late.

The distance between the two was too close.

Bang.

Just a slight muffled sound, like the playful teasing between lovers, as Ning Qi's palm gently rested on the Fatty Elder's back.

But the outcome was particularly horrifying.

The terrifying Gang Qi exploded rampantly, suppressing the Fatty Elder's body.

In an instant.

It shattered all the bones within, blood spilled from his Five Organs and Six Conduits.

Ning Qi had seized the opportunity too perfectly. He was already vastly superior in strength, and coupled with the element of surprise, the result was not unexpected, even preventing the Fatty Elder from utilizing his Lifebound Gu Insect.

If he wished, the Fatty Elder would already be a corpse.

The Fatty Elder's body was blasted away, about to fall into the Blood Pool.

But a large Gang Essence hand grasped him.

The boundless Gang Qi suppressed, leaving him unable to channel even a trace of the Power of Heaven and Earth, and even his voice was minuscule.

"Who... who are you?"

The Fatty Elder's face was full of horror. Even if he had been foolish, he immediately realized that the person before him was definitely not Lei!

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He was struck by a storm of emotions in his heart.

Both for the flawless Disguise and Transformation technique of the person before him,

and also for this person's unfathomable strength. He had not sensed even the slightest use of the Power of Heaven and Earth before being suppressed, otherwise he would not be in such a sorry state.

Ning Qi chuckled softly:

"It's me, Lei, Elder."

The Gang Essence's large hand tightened step by step, Fatty Elder's body burst into a mist of blood, and these strands of blood mist fell into the Blood Pool. The Blood King Gu, which had already eaten its fill, immediately became excited, greedily absorbing the blood of the Celestial Human Realm body, and its aura continued to grow.

Fatty Elder's expression changed:

"You are not Lei, with your kind of power, you are definitely not an unknown person. Our Southern Border eagerly seeks talent. If you join us, you will surely receive endless cultivation resources."

Ning Qi said indifferently:

"Threaten me? If you tell me which tribe you belong to in the Southern Border, I might consider it."

Fatty Elder struggled and said:

"It's not a threat, as I said before, the main purpose of the Blood King Gu is to nurture the Blood Emperor Gu! By raising them together for Gu survival battles, the last one standing is the Blood Emperor Gu!"

"A Celestial Being Realm Perfection expert, if paired with Secret Technique and consumes the Blood Emperor Gu, has a hope of achieving Martial Saint!"

His words carried extreme temptation.

The Martial Saint Realm.

It was the greatest desire for every Celestial Human Realm individual.

He pressed on, taking advantage of the momentum, and continued:

"If you are willing to join, with your cultivation, you will definitely have the opportunity to use the Blood Emperor Gu in the future!"

Ning Qi's eyes showed some surprise.

He hadn't expected the Blood King Gu to have such terrifying uses.

Nurturing a Martial Saint?

It sounded terrifying.

He realized that the previous speculations he and Taoist Longshan made seemed wrong; the power behind the Blood King Gu was likely not a small tribe, as no small tribe could accomplish such a feat.

With great interest, Ning Qi asked:

"So, you already have the Blood Emperor Gu?"

Fatty Elder replied:

"Of course, and not just one!"

Ning Qi laughed.

"Do you really think I'm a fool?"

Anyone with a bit of brain would know that something like the Blood Emperor Gu couldn't be cultivated so simply. This Fatty Elder was only trying to persuade him not to deal a lethal blow.

Fortunately.

Ning Qi was merely manipulating his emotions.

Gang Qi surged.

Fatty Elder's body continued to burst into blood mist.

His hands and feet all severed, entering the Blood Pool and dissolving at an astonishing speed, while Fatty Elder turned into a human swine, watching helplessly as the Blood King Gu he personally cultivated started to feed on his flesh essence, letting out excited low hums from time to time.

Ning Qi's eerie voice sounded:

"Rather than the Blood Emperor Gu, I am curious whether the flesh of a Celestial Human Realm could fully mature this Blood King Gu before me."

Fatty Elder was scared out of his wits.

Ning Qi had already silently started using the Soul Capturing Eye Technique.

Although after the Divine Union Yuan Pill of the Celestial Human Realm, the resistance to such pupil techniques is greatly increased, but with some preparation, some information could be extracted.

Fatty Elder only felt that Ning Qi had suddenly turned into an abyss impossible to gaze at.

An eerie voice rang out:

"Tell me everything you know about the Blood Emperor Gu."

Unexpectedly.

There was nothing different from what Fatty Elder had previously said.

Except for one thing.

The Blood Emperor Gu had not yet succeeded, but it was close.

With just one question, Fatty Elder started to struggle, seemingly about to wake up.

Ning Qi utilized the Power of Heaven and Earth, not caring whether Fatty Elder lived or died afterward, he continued asking:

"Whom do you take orders from?"

"Southern Border Tribes Alliance..."

Forcibly finished speaking.

Fatty Elder came to his senses from the soul-capturing state, looking at Ning Qi in horror, like he was looking at a monster. Such means were too terrifying, capable of capturing one's soul and extracting inner thoughts.

Ning Qi, however, felt a bit regretful.

After all, the Celestial Human Realm was the Celestial Human Realm, and the effectiveness of the pupil technique was greatly reduced. Had he not focused on improving it beforehand, during the bewitching woman's night attack, this Fatty Elder might have woken up even before the first question was fully asked.

Fatty Elder had a splitting headache.

The aftereffects of the pupil technique erupted.

Ning Qi decided not to waste any more time.

He gave Fatty Elder no chance to speak again, with a flick of his hand, his neck snapped.

Gang Qi brought back Fatty Elder's belongings with him, while his remaining body fell into the Blood Pool and then dissolved at a speed visible to the naked eye. The Blood King Gu feeding on the essence let out tremors of excitement.

Ning Qi watched as the third pair of wings behind the Blood King Gu gradually grew, and smiled contentedly.

Based on this trend.

The Blood King Gu should be able to fully mature.

He toyed with the Purple Jade Bamboo Tube in his hand, recalling the unique sound pattern Fatty Elder used to command the Blood King Gu earlier. It wasn't difficult for him to master.

As for other items, there was nothing useful.

Ning Qi pondered the second question he had asked Fatty Elder earlier.

"Southern Border Tribe Alliance?"

His eyes showed some astonishment.

"Previously, Master said that the tribes of the Southern Border were all scattered, with mutual conflicts. Could it be that under the Great Yan's unawareness, an alliance has been formed? This must be an enormous entity."

"Nurturing the Blood Emperor Gu is to cultivate new Martial Saints. Could it be that people from the Southern Border also harbor ambitions toward Great Yan?"

"I cannot get involved in such a vortex. After settling this matter, I must immediately sever ties, and preferably divert the trouble eastward."

Ning Qi already had a plan in mind.

This time, he must leave no conspicuous traces; techniques like Heavenly Sword Technique, which are hallmark Secret Techniques, must not be used. It's best... to utilize someone else's Martial Arts.

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For Ning Qi, this was not difficult.

Earlier, he had learned some of the essence of the Town North King's fist technique.

But there was still a better target.

That was the Celestial Being from the Demon Sect whom he had killed before. Ning Qi interacted with him the longest, needing just a bit of recall to easily use Myriad Phenomena True Gang.

"Hmm... If I can get the Demon Sect and the Southern Border Alliance to fight like dogs, that would be quite excellent."

Ning Qi smiled.

He watched the blood pool.

The Blood King Gu had already completed its transformation, filled with an extremely rich and vibrant life energy, its three pairs of wings fluttering, strong and powerful, without any hint of sinister aura. Were it not for the eerie blood pool, others might think the Blood King Gu was some naturally nurtured treasure insect.

Ning Qi opened the Purple Jade Bamboo Tube, emitting special syllables like the Fatty Elder.

The satiated Blood King Gu immediately obediently flew back, diving into the bamboo tube.

Ning Qi carefully stored it away.

Feeling a bit satisfied.

He naturally would not use the Blood King Gu for ascending to the Celestial Human Realm, as thinking about it already made it clear that such a shortcut would cut off his own path. Even if he could remedy it later, it would likely require much more effort.

He only valued the abundant life energy of the Blood King Gu.

Ning Qi exhaled lightly.

The Gang Qi in his body surged as he operated the Body Shifting and Bone Changing technique, instantly transforming into the appearance of the Fatty Elder.

He stood with hands behind his back.

Pushed open the Underground Palace gates.

All subordinates bowed respectfully:

"Greetings, Fatty Elder!"

Ning Qi did not speak, his eyes carrying a gloomy fierceness, emanating a vast pressure that made everyone kneel on the ground, unable to breathe.

Everyone was anxious, not knowing what had happened.

Someone noticed that Lei was not behind Ning Qi, causing a jump in their hearts:

"Where is Lord Lei?"

Ning Qi's voice, suppressed with anger, was already heard:

"Very good! You are all excellent!"

"One of the four top killers in the Blood Rain Tower turned out to be a spy, hidden so deeply. Lei had ulterior motives, intending to sneak attack this elder, but was already killed by me, becoming nourishment for the blood pool! Just unsure how many among you are spies?"

Ning Qi's Thunderous Fury erupted.

A cold snort unleashed an overwhelming momentum, causing figures to spit blood in horror, then desperately plead for mercy:

"Elder, please see clearly! We are all loyal to you, truly unaware that Lei was a spy!"

The scene was silent.

Everyone's hearts raced, not knowing why such a sudden change occurred.

Ning Qi scanned with cold eyes.

Moments later, he snorted heavily:

"It seems that in these years, Skinny Elder and I have been somewhat lax. It's time for a thorough investigation."

"Transmit my secret order, have Skinny Elder and everyone else come here immediately. Whoever doesn't come is the spy!"

"As for you, do not leave until the truth is uncovered! Keep watch on each other. If one is missing, this elder will take all your lives!"

Everyone first breathed a sigh of relief, then felt a chill in their hearts, realizing that this storm might be quite significant.

"Yes, Fatty Elder!"

Everyone departed.

Ning Qi's original Thunderous Fury instantly dissipated.

He felt a bit of anticipation in his heart; next would be waiting for them to come to him.

Thinking of that 'Lord Feng' from years ago, Ning Qi's killing intent surged. The closer he got to vengeance, the more he realized he was not as peaceful as he had previously imagined; this grudge needed settling.

Ning Qi initially considered possibly not notifying the Skinny Elder.

But with such a big commotion, failing to notify the Skinny Elder might arouse suspicion instead.

"Although Skinny Elder's strength is slightly stronger than Fatty Elder, it's not too much stronger, at most close to the strength of those on the Celestial Being List."

Absolute strength gave Ning Qi absolute confidence.

If he deployed all his methods, he could contend with the unparalleled experts ranked in the teens on the Celestial Being List. If he utilized the Fake Pill Dissolution, he even felt he could fight the Town North King.

He sat deep within the Underground Palace, his perception spread around.

Each subordinate had already used tamed flying exotic beasts to send the secret orders, then supervised each other, afraid that if any were truly spies and escaped, it would implicate them; under such circumstances, no one could leave.

Ning Qi slightly set his mind at ease and then carefully recalled and pondered the Ultimate Skill of Demon Sect's Elder Wang, silently comprehending.

Gathering everyone here would take a day or two, and this time suffices for him to deduce many of Elder Wang's Ultimate Skills.

...

Time slowly passed.

For two days, the base was in a state of high tension.

From time to time, members from nearby organizations came by.

Upon seeing Ning Qi, they immediately proved their innocence. Ning Qi kept a stern face, saying they'd wait until everyone arrived before settling accounts.

But those Ning Qi anticipated had not arrived.

Though there were Gang Essence Realm individuals among the arrivals, none were Primordial Core Realm.

"Given the time, they should be here by now."

As this thought surfaced in Ning Qi's mind, movement came from the distant sky.

A large group of figures approached from afar, led by an elder as thin as a bamboo pole, with hands behind his back, his voice carried from a great distance:

"Fatty, what kind of nonsense are you up to?"

His voice had a slight anger.

Evidently, using Lei's betrayal as a reason to gather everyone was somewhat far-fetched.

Looking at the group of Primordial Core Realm experts behind Skinny Elder, Ning Qi knew they had likely sought Skinny Elder upon hearing the summons. Perhaps afraid Fatty Elder was frenzied with anger, mistakenly labeling them as spies, killing them with nowhere to cry for the helpless dead.

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Ning Qi was also aware of this, but as long as his goal was achieved, it was enough.

Even if there was some doubt, these people would still come.

That was sufficient.

He didn't need them to completely believe him.

Ning Qi snorted coldly:

"What? That dog Lei attacked me, and I can't kill him in return?"

Skinny Elder looked somewhat skeptical:

"He, a mere Primordial Core Realm, dared to attack you? Fatty, explain in detail what happened that day?"

He stared intently at Ning Qi.

As if trying to discern something from his expression.

At this moment.

The crowd behind him respectfully saluted:

"We greet Fatty Elder!"

Ning Qi nodded slightly, but the killing intent in his heart gradually intensified.

He casually swept his gaze, but in fact, he was focusing on a one-eyed man among them. Even after nine years, he could still recognize that voice.

This was the 'Lord Feng' who destroyed Snow Plum Manor in the past, and now one of the four top assassins of Blood Rain Tower, 'Feng'. Over nine years, he had evidently made significant achievements and had now reached the Primordial Core Realm.

Ning Qi suppressed the killing intent in his heart, knowing that since the person was already before him, he definitely couldn't escape.

A mere Primordial Core Realm was no different than an ant before him.

Everyone entered the main hall.

He responded to Skinny Elder's doubts:

"Who knows what madness possessed him? I was only kindly explaining the uses of the Blood King Gu to him, and he suddenly attacked when I wasn't expecting it."

This explanation clearly didn't satisfy Skinny Elder.

He suspected that this Fatty had privately killed Lei to expedite the final maturation of the Blood King Gu, just to return to the Southern Border sooner, and so had deliberately staged such a scene.

He said in a deep voice:

"Is that so? How is your Blood King Gu now, let me see?"

Skinny Elder's tone was somewhat forceful.

He couldn't see anything suspicious in front of him with Fatty Elder, but the secret technique for controlling the Blood King Gu was a secret of the Southern Border. Other than them, no one else could possibly know. If Fatty Elder couldn't produce the Blood King Gu, it would be a major problem.

Ning Qi frowned slightly, somewhat displeased as he took out the Purple Jade Bamboo Tube.

He had previously observed Fatty Elder's demeanor and gestures and wouldn't make any mistakes in this regard.

He slowly opened the bamboo tube, recited the special incantation, and then, a Blood King Gu, as if made of Blood Jade, appeared before everyone.

Skinny Elder secretly breathed a sigh of relief, his vigilance diminished, at least the person before him was still that Fatty.

Then, his gaze was drawn to the three pairs of solid wings on the back of the Blood King Gu, indicating its full maturation.

He felt somewhat dissatisfied, as the Blood King Gu in his possession still needed more time. Although he was slightly stronger, they weren't in a superior-subordinate relationship. His frequent seclusion had allowed Fatty to cultivate the Blood King Gu ahead of him.

Skinny Elder pondered how to leverage this incident to gain some benefits for himself, his attention mostly on the Blood King Gu.

The rest of the people were similarly focused.

Ning Qi's heart flickered with a cold smile.

Suddenly, without warning.

He struck!

To avoid alerting the opposing side with any fluctuations from the Power of Heaven and Earth, Ning Qi only used Gang Qi. The Jade Liquid Sea within him churned violently, gathering formidable force, and since he was not far from Skinny Elder, a Great Hand Seal emanating a toxic dark green aura was already unleashed.

This was identical to Elder Wang's attack on True Martial Mountain; were Elder Wang to witness this scene, he would likely scream in alarm.

The attack came so abruptly.

Just as Skinny Elder noticed, the dark green Great Hand Seal had already struck, its terrifying aura sending a chill to his heart, as if the void itself might be corroded. It was too late to evade, and he was forced to brace himself.

The sudden change brought a fierce clash between the two Elders.

Everyone was left dumbfounded.

Chapter 135: Revenge and Resolution, Graceful Departure (Two-in-One)

Everything happened in the blink of an eye.

From the moment Ning Qi took out the Blood King Gu to the moment he struck with force, it was all a matter of seconds, rendering others unable to react in time.

Skinny Elder could only gather the Power of Heaven and Earth by his side before the Great Hand Seal dispersed it.

Fortunately, Skinny Elder's face flushed red, and a faint hiss echoed from within his body. In that instant, a series of mysterious black Iron Armor manifested on his skin, covering his entire body.

"Boom!"

The sound of tremors from the fierce impact reverberated.

Skinny Elder's body was violently flung, crashing through one stone pillar after another and even piercing through a wall.

Ning Qi narrowed his eyes.

He could sense that his palm strike didn't result in the expected outcome. Though it struck well, Skinny Elder's aura hadn't diminished much and still retained some combat capability, unlike Fatty Elder, who was nearly half-dead with one blow.

"What is that Iron Armor?" Ning Qi felt a sense of caution rising.

In an instant.

He entered the Realm of Celestial Being Unity, and the Fake Pill at his heart also continuously vibrated, gathering abundant Power of Heaven and Earth.

Previously, he hadn't used the Power of Heaven and Earth for the sake of a sneak attack. Now that the battle had begun, he naturally had to employ all his means, holding nothing back.

Dark green aura surged around Ning Qi, enveloping his burly figure, appearing somewhat sinister.

With a slight wave of his hand, streams of toxic Gang Qi dispersed.

The many Primordial Core Realm experts, who were initially gaping in shock, all trembled violently in their bodies, revealing expressions of horror. Their inner Primordial Cores quaked, and they attempted to resist by releasing their own Gang Qi. However, the gap was too vast; Ning Qi's Gang Qi was far more overwhelming than theirs combined, not to mention augmented by the Power of Heaven and Earth.

Screams rang out.

These Primordial Core Realm warriors were already severely injured, their bones completely shattered. They lay on the ground, barely clinging to life, each one looking at Ning Qi in terror.

Ning Qi unleashed several consecutive Poisonous Great Hand Seals, hurling them toward where Skinny Elder had fallen.

"Who exactly are you?!"

A sullen, angry shout emanated from the crumbling structure.

Skinny Elder emerged with disheveled hair, looking extremely disheveled.

His eyes were filled with sinister rage; if not for his Lifebound Gu Insect, which specialized in defense and was the Iron Armor Gu, the sudden strike just now might have critically injured him.

But even so, he was not in good condition.

He forcefully withstood the blow.

The Iron Armor Gu within him was in a withered state, needing time to recover.

By now, it was clear to him.

The person in front of him was not the Fatty Elder he knew. The real Fatty Elder had likely met with misfortune, for he knew that Fatty Elder's Lifebound Gu was not adept at defense. If he faced an attack like his own, he wouldn't have stood a chance.

Skinny Elder was both furious and startled; the opponent's mysterious Transform ability instilled fear in him.

Ning Qi looked at Skinny Elder with indifferent eyes and simply gave a sinister laugh:

"You desire to know this lord's name? You are unworthy!"

With a wave of his hand, a series of poisonous seals were unleashed in rapid succession, with green poison mist spreading around, filling the air with a foul stench. Even if Wang Elder of the Demon Sect were resurrected, it wouldn't be more remarkable than this.

Skinny Elder raged:

"Fine, fine, today I shall unveil your true identity and see what manner of demon or monster you are!"

The two engaged in intense combat.

Waves of Power of Heaven and Earth erupted and clashed within the grand hall.

The ground quaked and mountains shook.

The terrifying commotion shocked everyone outside.

They watched the grand hall nervously, entirely ignorant of the events transpiring within.

Then.

They saw two figures soaring into the sky, locked in combat.

"Is that Fatty Elder and Skinny Elder?!"

No one could believe their eyes, not understanding why the two Elders suddenly turned against each other.

Waves of Power of Heaven and Earth reverberated in the sky, the mere aftermath riddling the stronghold with countless wounds, affecting many. Some died on the spot.

Ning Qi felt no psychological burden; these people deserved to die.

Skinny Elder's eyes were cold as he shouted angrily:

"Everyone heed my command, Fatty Elder has been harmed, this one is an impostor, all of you assist me in capturing him!"

As the fight dragged on, he grew increasingly alarmed.

At first, sensing the force of the sneak attack was within his coping range, and he suffered only because it was a surprise. But in the actual exchange, he realized he underestimated the man before him.

Even at his peak, he feared he was no match for this person.

Currently disadvantaged, his condition had significantly declined. Without fully activating his Lifebound Gu, he would have been crushed.

But now, he was in a dire state, spitting blood repeatedly from the beatings.

He already harbored the intention to retreat.

His call for assistance wasn't to defeat Ning Qi but merely to delay him a bit longer.

Everyone at the stronghold looked at Ning Qi in awe; initially, some doubted Skinny Elder's words. However, as the two exchanged blows and Ning Qi revealed Martial Arts not of Fatty Elder, some recognized it.

That was not Fatty Elder's Ultimate Skill.

"Fatty Elder is an impostor; quickly assist Skinny Elder!" someone shouted in fury.

Yet, a Poisonous Finger Seal instantly struck down this Jade Liquid Realm expert, killing him on the spot, silencing the others into submission. A few recklessly launched attacks, but they were as futile as ants shaking a tree.

Ning Qi's eyes were indifferent.

He had roughly gauged the strength of this Skinny Elder, slightly inferior to that of Elder Wang back then.

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If I could unleash the Ape King's true form and the Heavenly Sword Technique along with various Secret Techniques, I would have already killed this person, but even now, it's a one-sided situation. Feeling the Virtual Sword Pill inside him, he decided not to waste any more time.

Skinny Elder seized the moment that everyone fought with their lives to gain, as a faint shriek resonated from within his body, and his entire being erupted with astonishing black light.

The overwhelming aura raised hope in everyone's eyes.

This strike was undoubtedly extraordinary!

But little did they expect.

Skinny Elder's aura instantly retracted, with the intense black light condensing to his body's surface. In an instant, he burst out at extreme speed, heading towards the distant sky.

"The enmity of today will never be forgotten by the Southern Border. You'll see, your end will be tragic!" Skinny Elder's sinister voice echoed from afar.

He was actually escaping!

Everyone at the base plummeted from hope to despair.

Some even started cursing under the shadow of death, realizing they were all discarded like pawns.

Ning Qi was taken aback; he didn't expect this person before him to be so decisive.

If his strength was limited to what he had just shown, he might have really let him escape, but unfortunately, Ning Qi had many cards up his sleeve.

Above the Jade Liquid Sea.

The Virtual Sword Pill, like a great sun, exploded instantly.

The surging Gang Qi roared powerfully enough to shake the heavens, his aura skyrocketed as a dense green poison fog exploded around Ning Qi, making him look like a Demon King.

Ning Qi's mind stirred.

The toxic green fog condensed into a massive dark green giant toad, as immense as a mountain.

That day, Elder Wang had used this move, but it had been smashed by the Town North King with a punch.

Ning Qi replicated this move, with even more terrifying power.

The giant toad swallowing the heavens frightened everyone.

In the distance, Skinny Elder, who had just turned into black light to escape, sensed the terrifying movement behind him, his gaze filled with horror as he saw the enormous dark green giant toad silently roaring, a dark green beam shooting at him with even more terrifying speed.

Like the tongue of a giant toad, its speed was unbelievable.

Skinny Elder let out a weird scream.

He couldn't care about damaging the Iron Armor Gu's origin anymore and desperately activated the Iron Armor Gu, layers of iron armor covering his body once again.

But the sense of security never arrived, and he shivered slightly.

The Power of Heaven and Earth gathered before him, making him give up fleeing, realizing he couldn't escape such speed, he could only block.

"Block it, block it for me!!"

Skinny Elder's hair and beard flared.

But the dark green beam mercilessly pierced through layers of Power of Heaven and Earth, shattering the iron armor, as his life Gu howled, then continued to penetrate Skinny Elder's body, paralyzing him completely, while layers of Power of Heaven and Earth suppressed him, causing him to cough blood uncontrollably.

Like the tongue of a giant toad, the dark green beam wrapped around Skinny Elder, throwing him back heavily into the valley.

Just like discarding a piece of trash.

Everyone watched this scene, terror sweeping through their hearts, Skinny Elder had been captured back, but that didn't mean this person in front of them would spare them!

Escape!

Almost everyone had this thought flash in their mind.

But could they escape?

Ning Qi's gaze remained calm, as a gentle point caused the giant toad in the sky to drop beams of green light, which looked strangely beautiful, but for the others at the base, it was not beautiful at all, it was the scythe of death, and no one could resist.

Screams echoed endlessly.

With Ning Qi's abnormally strong Perception supporting him, no one was left alive.

Throughout, Ning Qi's expression remained incredibly calm.

These people deserved no pity in death.

He only felt a bit of turbulence within, a slight numbness to the flesh, as the Virtual Sword Pill Dissolving Technique had minor side effects, but not none at all, making Ning Qi realize he needed a few days of rest to recover to his peak condition.

Moments later.

The base had completely fallen into silence, only the wind occasionally swept past, bringing a scent of blood.

Skinny Elder was somewhat terrified, knowing there was no escape, he cried out hoarsely:

"Who...who are you really? The Southern Border has no enmity with you!"

He desperately combed through his mind for this person's fighting style, but the world was vast, with many hidden experts, he couldn't match every one, but suddenly, he seemed to recall something.

Last year, a master from the Demon Sect emerged suddenly, leading four Celestial Beings to annihilate True Martial Mountain, it's rumored their leader's style was just like this, a report he had once glanced at, now straining his memory to recall.

That person was able to escape from the Town North King's grasp, his strength matched up.

"You are one of the Demon Sect!" Skinny Elder's eyes widened.

Ning Qi let out a cold laugh:

"I am not part of any Demon Sect or Ghost Sect, your Blood Refining King Gu wiped out the family of an old friend's great-granddaughter-in-law of mine, so naturally, I came to seek vengeance."

Skinny Elder was so taken aback by such an absurd reason that he coughed up blood again, cursing angrily:

"You're talking nonsense! The Southern Border and the Demon Sect normally keep to themselves, yet you've destroyed our branch in Qing State, aren't you afraid the Southern Border will settle scores in autumn? Two tigers fighting would only benefit Great Yan."

Ning Qi chuckled grotesquely, with utter disregard:

"Bring it on if you dare."

A Gang Qi hand reached out and seized Skinny Elder, similarly taking advantage of his emotional upheaval to use the Soul Capturing Eye Technique.

Moments later.

Skinny Elder awoke struggling, looking in horror at the man before him, feeling as if his mind had been stirred by a sword.

"You...you..."

He wanted to say something, but Ning Qi had already given him no chance, the Gang Essence hand clenched, and Skinny Elder's body was torn apart.

Ning Qi let out a long breath.

Recalling the information learned from Skinny Elder using the Pupil Technique.

Chapter 137: Revenge and Resolution, Graceful Departure (Two-in-One)_3

"Apart from Qing State, the Southern Border Alliance has spread its influence to several other states within the Great Yan, though not every state has their presence, and the Skinny Elder and Fatty Elder are only responsible for matters within Qing State, having no contact with the other states."

"As for the Southern Border Alliance... information remains scarce. It's only known that it was led by several large tribes, seemingly formed for some collective ambition?"

Ning Qi shook his head.

It wasn't that he didn't want to keep asking, but even though the Soul Capturing Eye Technique had been optimized, it still had limitations. The more it involved matters of high importance to the opponent, the more it instinctively provoked resistance, not to mention that the Skinny Elder was a genuine Celestial Human Realm powerhouse with strong resistance abilities.

In truth.

Ning Qi's Soul Capturing Eye Technique was already quite extraordinary, as he had never heard of such a Martial Arts Secret Technique existing in the Martial Realm. Even if there were, it would definitely be a closely guarded secret.

Ning Qi temporarily decided not to delve further into the Southern Border Alliance.

Although it was the root of his parents' demise, there was no need to confront such a behemoth now, one that could rival the Demon Sect.

Given a little time, he could easily suppress them in the future.

He understood the priorities.

Revenge has to be exacted, but there's no rush.

Just like now, he had the absolute ability to suppress 'Master Feng' before deciding to settle accounts with the Blood Rain Tower. He's always been patient in these matters.

Ning Qi began to inventory the spoils from the Skinny Elder's body.

The nearly identical Purple Jade Bamboo Tube, clearly custom-made for the Blood King Gu.

Murmuring special syllables, Ning Qi summoned out a Blood King Gu.

It also had three pairs of wings on its back, but the third pair was somewhat weak and feeble, much like when the Fatty Elder first took them out.

But Ning Qi wasn't worried.

After massacring this stronghold today, with so many powerful martial artist corpses and a Celestial Human Realm expert present, there were ample nutrients to allow this Blood King Gu to mature completely.

Besides the Purple Jade Bamboo Tube, there were some miscellaneous items, a few jade bottles containing pills and gu insects.

Ning Qi was a bit curious.

However, after pondering, he ultimately decided to discard all of it. During the earlier interrogation with the eye technique, he had learned that there were no marking resonances or similar on the Blood King Gu, but since he didn't know the use and origin of these items, he didn't know if they bore any tracking marks.

To be safe, it was better not to take them.

Ning Qi didn't hesitate, using Gang Qi to drag Skinny Elder's corpse toward the ruins of the grand hall, which was in two pieces.

The remaining Primordial Core Realm experts shivered.

They had lost the ability to move, having witnessed Ning Qi brutally kill the Skinny Elder, their courage had long fled, and as Ning Qi walked over, each one suddenly wanted to beg for mercy.

But they couldn't speak.

Because Ning Qi didn't want to hear useless nonsense.

He opened the Underground Palace with one hand, exposing the Blood Pool to everyone, after which he manipulated the Power of Heaven and Earth, causing bodies scattered throughout the stronghold to fly into the pool, dissolving rapidly upon entry.

This used to be a familiar task to everyone, but at this moment, it made their scalps tingle.

Especially when the Skinny Elder's corpse was thrown in as well.

The peak of fear was reached.

Ning Qi clapped his hands, smiling as he looked at the severely wounded few.

"You'll be first, then," Ning Qi casually pointed at one.

The rest were pinned to the ground by Gang Qi, unable to move, while this one was lifted into the air.

Ning Qi activated the Soul Capturing Eye Technique.

While these people most likely didn't know more about the Southern Border Alliance, they at least knew about the branches they were responsible for, and possibly could provide some useful information.

Like the traitor Dong He from the Divine Sword Sect, Ning Qi hadn't seen him come over this time. He had promised Taoist Longshan to slay the killer of the Divine Sword Sect and, if possible, capture Dong He.

The question-and-answer session was plain and simple.

But to the others, the scene was terrifying.

In their perspective, once a colleague was grabbed by this fiend, they fell into a state that made their scalps tingle, like puppets, mouths moving with incomprehensible words.

The unknown is frightening.

Moments later.

Ning Qi casually threw the person into the Blood Pool.

And caught another.

Repeating the previous process.

This process was extremely torturous.

Everyone knew they were doomed, but witnessing each colleague helplessly die in this manner was indescribably horrifying. Even though they were all ruthless killers, facing this fate upon themselves was unsettling; their hearts trembling with fear.

In fact.

Some had already started hoping it would be their turn next.

The longer they waited, the more they'd suffer mental torture again.

And undoubtedly.

'Feng' endured the most mental torment.

He repeatedly screamed in his heart, but Ning Qi ignored him, instead making him watch as his colleagues died one by one in agony.

Finally.

After Ning Qi finished questioning Zhao Dong, learning the details of the Divine Sword Sect's destruction, and about the seductive woman who attacked the True Martial Sect at night being sent by him,

Only 'Feng' was left.

"Kill me! Kill me!"

Feng screamed in his heart.

But then, a look of surprise spread across his face because the voice wasn't just ringing in his mind, it was spoken aloud; suddenly he could talk again.

His gaze trembled as it fell on Ning Qi, and he heard Ning Qi speak calmly:

Chapter 138: Revenge and Resolution, Graceful Departure (Two-in-One)_4

"So eager to seek death?"

Feng shuddered all over.

"My lord, spare me!"

But Ning Qi had already activated the Pupil Technique.

He wanted to know the causes and consequences of the destruction of Snow Plum Manor back then.

A moment later.

Ning Qi sighed lightly in his heart.

Just as he had speculated before, it was indeed because his father unintentionally learned about a small blood pool that led to the massacre, just like the Divine Sword Sect.

At this moment.

Feng convulsed violently, his body and spirit tormented to the point of being unrecognizable. From the previous questioning, he vaguely understood something, pointing tremulously at Ning Qi, but unable to speak.

Ning Qi's gaze was calm.

He reached out with a finger, and clusters of plum flower Sword Qi bloomed, shredding him to pieces in Feng's widened eyes.

Strands of regret were cut into pieces, drifting into the air.

This was the family ultimate skill, Night Plum Swordsmanship, left by Ning Qi's mother, Jiang Xuemei, in his swaddling clothes.

For so many years, Ning Qi had long mastered it but never thought of optimizing it, choosing instead to keep it in its original form.

Using the Night Plum Swordsmanship today to kill the culprit who exterminated Snow Plum Manor back then was also barely a consolation to the spirits of his parents in heaven.

Ning Qi felt an unprecedented peace inside.

The stronghold was silent.

Only the sound of the blood pool bubbling.

Ning Qi did not let himself linger long in that peculiar emotion.

Killing Feng was just a temporary conclusion to the matter.

The rest, he would deal with once he became stronger.

After all.

Feng and the numerous black-clad men were merely executors.

The Southern Border Alliance's cultivation of the Blood King Gu was the root of all disasters, otherwise perhaps now he would still be enjoying his parents' love and have a happy family.

He took a deep breath.

Took out the Purple Jade Bamboo Tube that previously held the Skinny Elder's Blood King Gu.

Then he chanted special syllables to summon it forth.

At this moment, the blood pool, having devoured so much human blood essence, had long reached an extreme in its sinister aura. Upon seeing this, the Blood King Gu immediately became active, eagerly burrowing into it.

Ning Qi waited quietly.

Having slaughtered so many people at once, he needed to adjust his mindset. Fortunately, his dao heart was firm, as these were all individuals who deserved death, so it wouldn't affect him.

The sinister vitality within the blood pool began to weaken visibly to the naked eye.

While the aura of the Blood King Gu continued to grow stronger.

After a while.

The Blood King Gu voluntarily surfaced from the blood pool, its three pairs of wings at the back had become full and glossy, and Ning Qi could not help but smile; this Blood King Gu had matured.

He had a sudden thought and released the previous Blood King Gu as well.

In an instant.

The two Blood King Gu met, exuding an incomparably fierce aura, their wings flapping, about to fight each other instantly.

Ning Qi's Gang Qi moved, swiftly subduing the two Blood King Gu, then respectively putting them back.

He pondered.

"Blood King Gu cannot coexist; perhaps this is the secret to cultivating Blood Emperor Gu? Is this what nurturing Gu is?"

Of course, he also understood that cultivating a Blood Emperor Gu certainly wouldn't be so straightforward; it must involve even more profound Secret Techniques.

But Ning Qi had little interest.

Whether it was Blood King Gu or Blood Emperor Gu, it was obvious that breaking through realms by relying on external forces would inherently have flaws, perhaps even fatal ones.

This was something Ning Qi could not tolerate.

Moreover, just looking at the birthing method of the Blood King Gu, it was evidently sinister and would not suit leaving it for his senior brothers in the future. If it led to being controlled at the Celestial Human Realm upon breaking through, it would be counterproductive.

The greatest use of the Blood King Gu for him was to refine it into a Pill to help him ascend to the Primordial Core Realm faster.

Ning Qi estimated.

If he could set foot into the Primordial Core Realm, his strength would see a significant leap, and by then, few in the Celestial Human Realm would be qualified to face him in combat.

He was somewhat expectant.

Ning Qi flew into the air, spreading his perception to ensure no one escaped.

Then.

He began to erase the traces of the previous battle.

A while later.

Ning Qi looked at the now unrecognizable stronghold, casually set a great fire, and satisfactorily nodded.

If there were no capable individuals in the Southern Border, then it would be impossible to restore the battle traces at that time, leaving everyone happy.

If there were capable people, even if they pursued the investigation, they would only find it to be the work of members of the Demon Sect, and that wouldn't be a loss.

After all, Ning Qi had not used any other methods from start to finish.

"However, the people of the Southern Border will not discover it so quickly. It will probably take some time before they notice something is wrong when they can't contact the Fatty Elder and the Skinny Elder."

From the information obtained through the previous Pupil Technique inquiry, it was known.

Only the Fatty Elder and the Skinny Elder could contact the Southern Border Alliance, as for the others, they had no knowledge.

There were still some minor officials left in Qing State, and when they couldn't reach Feng, Rain, Thunder, and Zhao Dong, even if they realized there was a major problem, they had no way to report it proactively.

Ning Qi watched the roaring flames rising.

Quietly left.

One day later.

Ning Qi appeared where Dong He was hiding and quietly kidnapped him.

Faced with Dong He's horrified and fearful gaze, he coldly crippled him, then handed him over to disciples of the True Martial Sect, letting them secretly send him to True Martial Mountain, where Dong He's fate would ultimately be decided by Taoist Longshan and Zhuang Chen.

After doing all this.

This matter was finally fully resolved.

Ning Qi looked at the scenery outside the window, feeling a bit emotional, as it was the first time he had descended from the mountain in nine years, and it was for revenge.

With this rare opportunity, he planned to visit the location of the True Martial Underground Palace mentioned by Taoist Longshan earlier.

It was here that Taoist Longshan acquired the True Martial inheritance, but after searching several times later, he found the underground palace missing, so he wanted to see for himself what was going on.

Besides.

He also intended to visit the small town with Martial Saint rumors mentioned by Ye Qinghe earlier, to see if he could obtain more useful information.

This was also why he did not personally take Dong He back.

Chapter 139: The Martial Saint's Unfortunate Later Years, Blood Jade Pill Completed

In a small town.

Ning Qi strolled through it, appearing as an unremarkable young man. After everything was settled, he found rare time to savor the mundane life, which touched him in some ways.

Having avenged the annihilation of his sect, his mind was much more at peace, and his heart was tranquil.

He wasn't in a rush to go to the Underground Palace of the True Martial Sect, discovered by Taoist Longshan back then. Previously, he used the Virtual Sword Pill Dissolution Technique to swiftly deal with the Skinny Elder, which did have some impact on his physical body. Though the side effects of such a technique are small, they are not nonexistent.

Ning Qi planned to spend two to three days adjusting his state and re-forming a Virtual Sword Pill.

This way, he'd have the confidence to handle any unforeseen circumstances.

The cries of street vendors occasionally pierced his ears, and Ning Qi also overheard many secret conversations or anecdotes of martial artists, which even included terms like 'treasure' and 'secret realm'.

But he had no interest in delving too deeply.

To him, focusing on these matters would be a wastage of time.

However, it was his first time traveling this far alone, allowing him to gain a deeper understanding of the Great Yan Dynasty.

Reading ten thousand books is not as good as traveling ten thousand miles.

Previously, Ning Qi's understanding of Great Yan came from books or others' descriptions, which was ultimately not as good as seeing it with his own eyes.

"In this world, the Great Yan Dynasty is the sole ruler of the Central Domain, occupying fertile land, beneath which lie the Thirteen States, with Yan State at the center. Beneath the Thirteen States are the prefectures, counties, and cities, governed hierarchically. Controlling such vast land is not easy."

"Upon seeing it now, although the people of Great Yan are not as civilized as in my previous life, they do live in peace and work contentedly. The chaotic situation in recent years has affected them, but it's still within a controllable range."

Ning Qi could see.

When martial artists fought, they also tried to minimize the impact on ordinary people, thanks to Great Yan's formidable deterrence against martial artists. No one dared to provoke recklessly.

In some sense, Great Yan has maintained a prosperous era for quite some time.

"Unfortunately, this situation might not last too long."

"Great Yan occupies the Central Domain, with the boundless sea to the east, the sandy desert to the west, the Hundred Thousand Mountains to the south, and the Northern Barbarian tribes on the northern grasslands. Currently, the Demon Sect is stirring restlessly within, and the Southern Border has formed an alliance, watching closely. The Northern Barbarians on the grassland have been suppressed by the Town North King, but the exact situation is uncertain."

"If conflict erupts, Great Yan might find itself beset on all sides."

Ning Qi listened to an exaggerated storyteller's tales, lost in thought.

As his cultivation deepened, especially after experiencing several Celestial Human Realm battles, he gradually came to understand the operating rules of this world.

"A Martial Saint is an existence that suppresses heaven and earth. Aside from Great Yan, which openly possesses a Martial Saint, the other factions are unknown, but surely have means to contend with a Martial Saint."

"Apart from the Martial Saints, there's the Celestial Human Realm. But the destructive power of Celestial Beings is already quite strong, so they rarely act unless during fierce conflicts like before."

"Below the Celestial Human Realm are the main forces during ordinary times. Focusing on the prefecture, county, and city areas, these people are the true main forces."

"I wonder when... it will truly become chaotic."

Ning Qi pondered.

After learning about the Blood Emperor Gu, he increasingly felt that undercurrents were surging.

Ning Qi quietly left the storytelling alley, unnoticed by anyone.

Three days later.

Ning Qi re-formed a Virtual Sword Pill. Seeing that the Sword Pill was slightly stronger than before, a slight smile appeared on his lips. Having used it once, he corrected a small flaw, making the method more perfected.

Ning Qi left the small town, heading towards the place of the True Martial Underground Palace first, as it was closer.

...

In the precipitous and steep mountains.

This was a relatively remote mountain range in Qing State.

Ning Qi arrived through the air.

He slowly descended, continually extending his perception, arriving at a mountain stream where Taoist Longshan had left traces that only a True Martial disciple could recognize.

"Is this the place where Master discovered the True Martial Underground Palace?"

Back then, when Taoist Longshan was young, he accidentally entered the True Martial Underground Palace and obtained part of the True Martial inheritance, which led to the establishment of the True Martial Sect.

If it were a complete inheritance, there would probably be records concerning the Martial Saint realm.

Despite still being far from the Martial Saint realm, Ning Qi's strength was gradually approaching it, and he was slowly preparing for his future path.

"Master mentioned several times that after investigating thoroughly, he couldn't find the trace of the True Martial Underground Palace, and even had a friend proficient in Qimen Array take a look. There's no array concealing this place."

Ning Qi's mind was racing with thoughts as his perception spread around.

He was also proficient in various miscellaneous skills. Before he could practice martial arts, he often delved into them, and he hadn't given them up over the years. He believed there should be no one in the world surpassing him in these fields.

But soon.

Ning Qi furrowed his brows slightly.

There was indeed no array concealing this place before him.

He was confident in his Qimen Technique; it's impossible that an array existed without leaving any trace discernible to him.

Yet he also didn't sense any trace of the Underground Palace, which would mean the palace had 'left' decades ago?

"Let's go down and see!"

Ning Qi's interest piqued further, as he had at least ruled out one possibility, which wasn't a total loss.

As to how the True Martial Underground Palace left, there were many possibilities.

His Jade Liquid Sea within trembled, and he operated the Secret Technique of the Innate Sword Body. In an instant, strands of Sword Gang appeared and flickered around Ning Qi as he revived Zhuang Chen's Sword Bone, making this secret technique more refined.

Chapter 140: The Martial Saint's Unfortunate Later Years, Blood Jade Pill Completed _2

The Sword Gang was light and sharp, piercing through in the blink of an eye to form a passage.

Ning Qi stepped inside.

Entering underground.

The underground world had nothing special, everywhere was soil, which made Ning Qi feel even more astonished. Earlier, he thought there would at least be a spacious area, considering the True Martial Underground Palace truly existed here before, but there wasn't.

Ning Qi carefully perceived, feeling no anomaly.

But suddenly.

His eyes brightened.

He finally noticed something amiss.

The more he walked outward, the more he could feel the soil outside becoming increasingly harder. The difference was minute, and within a kilometer underground, almost no one but Ning Qi could notice.

Ning Qi pursued this change in soil hardness, but it was completely cut off a hundred miles away.

This meant that the True Martial Underground Palace left from here, vanished a hundred miles away before traveling underground, by some unknown method.

"Could it be that the True Martial Underground Palace is a walking creature? After Master received part of the inheritance, he left."

He couldn't help but let his imagination run wild.

"Is it some giant Exotic Beast, or some kind of mechanism?"

Ning Qi exited the underground.

Having confirmed the departure of the True Martial Underground Palace, staying beneath served no purpose.

He realized that this venture had reached its end.

However, there were gains.

"Whether the True Martial Underground Palace is a mechanism, a beast, or something else, since it appeared decades ago, it will certainly appear again in the future, perhaps following a certain pattern."

"Master only received part of the True Martial inheritance back then, maybe due to insufficient talent. If the underground palace reappears, I should be able to obtain the whole inheritance."

Ning Qi planned to ask more about the past situation once back on the mountain, to see if he could find the pattern of the palace's appearances.

Perhaps Taoist Longshan wasn't the first to receive the True Martial inheritance, maybe others had already perished.

Ning Qi erased numerous traces.

Then walked away on air.

He did not dwell further; if it couldn't be found here, he would go elsewhere; it was a gamble either way.

Before Ye Qinghe went down the mountain for training, he mentioned to him.

That in a small town, he heard a blind old man tell stories about a Martial Saint.

...

Next morning.

Ning Qi slowly entered the small town.

Back then, he asked Ye Qinghe in detail; the blind old man in this town was a storyteller.

Ning Qi asked for directions and received an enthusiastic response right away:

"You must mean Old Mr. Sun? He's over by the east side of town, you'll see him when you get there."

Ning Qi nodded with a smile and thanked, then walked leisurely to the east. This town had nothing special, except its residents were quite friendly, more so than people elsewhere.

"Martial Saint's hometown? Who knows if that's true."

With these thoughts, Ning Qi stopped outside a wooden shed.

The wooden shed was packed inside and out.

It was lively.

A loud voice called from inside:

"Old Li, do another segment, will you? I haven't heard enough today!"

"Old Mr., we beg you, another segment please, or I fear I won't sleep well tonight."

"How about telling the story of Heaven-Slaying Martial Saint?"

Ning Qi's spirit stirred; outside he listened, Heaven-Slaying Martial Saint was indeed the name of the Martial Saint Ye Qinghe mentioned earlier.

An elderly voice came from inside.

Everyone held their breath.

Listening enthralled, now and then cries of surprise and commotion echoed.

But Ning Qi's gaze grew odd.

"Severing nine Heavenly Veins to save all beings? Chasing the great sun, ultimately struck by divine punishment?"

Even though Ning Qi hadn't yet reached Martial Saint Realm, he knew these were impossibilities; clearly, this old Mr. exaggerated the tales, but the townsfolk loved these stories.

No wonder Ye Qinghe didn't mention this.

But Ning Qi listened attentively, hoping to obtain some valuable information.

Soon.

With the sound of a wooden block striking, people left their tips and departed reluctantly.

Ning Qi looked at the blind old man packing his things with lowered head.

His eyes astonished.

This old man was no ordinary person, possessing remarkable cultivation.

The old man raised his head and smiled:

"Young man, you're not from around here, the storytelling is over for today, come back tomorrow."

Ning Qi smiled and said:

"Old Mr., with your eyes unable to see, how did you know I am young, and moreover, that I am an outsider?"

Indeed, the way he presented himself was as a young man.

"Though my old eyes are blind, after being so for long, I can sense things ordinary people can't see. You're not a decay like me, an old man, as for how I know you're not local?"

The blind old man chuckled.

"Local folks wouldn't stand here watching this blind old man pack up."

Ning Qi smiled and left a handful of copper coins, saying:

"The story you told of Heaven-Slaying Martial Saint, I quite enjoy it."

The old man waved his hand and said:

"You're not alone in enjoying it, many do. If you'd like, come back tomorrow."

Ning Qi cupped his hands and took his leave.

The old man looked up at the direction Ning Qi left, slightly shaking his head.

Next day.

Ning Qi returned.

During this time, the blind old man told another tale about Heaven-Slaying Martial Saint, still absurd and exaggerated, but the crowd listened eagerly.

At the end.

Ning Qi exchanged smiles and greetings with the blind old man, then departed.

He planned to stay here for a while.

Perfect timing to study the Blood King Gu.

Having the prior experience of creating the Golden Jade Pill Formula, this time would save considerable time, mainly by comparing the differences in medicinal properties between the Relic and Blood King Gu, then using the Luminous Pearl as a guide, could create a pill with stronger effects than the Golden Jade Pill.