

Doctor 1001

Chapter 1001: Gigantopithecus Thunderape

Suddenly, a loud roar emanated from the ice peak ahead.

The roar was like a thunderclap, imbued with the power of True Essence Force, causing the mountains to echo and the ice and snow on the ice peak to tumble down, as if a snow avalanche had occurred.

No matter whether it was Huang Miao and his three companions, who were closest to the ice peak, Fang Bai, who was farther away, or Shi Gang, who was even farther, they all subconsciously looked up towards the source of the roar.

A figure about sixty feet tall leaped high from the middle of one of the ice peaks into the swirling clouds and lunged at several White-Headed Eagles flying through the air.

As the figure soared, it carried a faint sound of thunder, and its fur shimmered with a slight purple glow, moving as fast as lightning.

"It's a Gigantopithecus Thunderape!"

Having seen much in his life, Huang Miao recognized the origin of that towering figure at a glance and couldn't help but exclaim aloud.

In fact, Huang Miao had never seen a real Gigantopithecus Thunderape; he had only read about them in an ancient book at the Bitao Martial Academy.

The Gigantopithecus Thunderape was massive and ferocious, primarily carnivorous, known among spirit beasts as the "Hercules," and was one of the most powerful spirit beasts in the Bitao Mountain Range.

The territory of the Gigantopithecus Thunderape was said to be around this ice peak.

The Gigantopithecus Thunderape was a thunder and lightning attribute spirit beast, inherently possessing the power of thunder and lightning.

The thunder and lightning attribute was among the most destructive of all attributes in nature.

An adult Gigantopithecus Thunderape that had reached the age of over five hundred years possessed the strength of a mid-level spirit beast and was considered a king and overlord in the Bitao Mountain Range. Other spirit beasts could only choose to detour around it.

The Gigantopithecus Thunderape that had leaped from the ice peak and attacked the airborne White-Headed Eagles moved with a thunderous rumble and its body surrounded by web-like electric sparks, testifying to its exceptionally strong attack power, which was comparable to a human Desolate Level Martial Artist with Perfection.

The sudden appearance of the Gigantopithecus Thunderape stunned Huang Miao and the others, their first reaction being to quickly distance themselves from the ice peak, lest they be discovered by the Gigantopithecus Thunderape.

Spirit beasts of the same strength had a much stronger ability to sense auras compared to human Martial Artist and a mid-level spirit beast could detect the aura of a Martial Artist miles away.

Huang Miao and his group were only about three or four miles away from the ice peak where the Gigantopithecus Thunderape was located. Once discovered by the Gigantopithecus Thunderape, they would have no chance of escaping.

Keep in mind that a mid-level spirit beast's strength was equivalent to a human Desolate Level Martial Artist, and all of Huang Miao's group were Heaven Level Martial Artist, so the Gigantopithecus Thunderape with the strength comparable to a human Desolate Level Martial Artist could easily overpower them.

Fortunately, the suddenly appeared Gigantopithecus Thunderape's target was the White-Headed Eagles in the sky, not these Martial Artists.

The Gigantopithecus Thunderape leaped from the ice peak, soared to parallel the flock of White-Headed Eagles in the air, and stretched out its two wide palms to grab at the two nearest White-Headed Eagles.

The speed of the Gigantopithecus Thunderape was just too fast; the two White-Headed Eagles couldn't even react before they were already captured in its enormous palms.

Amidst the cries of the two White-Headed Eagles, the Gigantopithecus Thunderape drew a long arc through the air and landed on the middle of another ice peak. It slid down the thick ice and snow toward the base of the peak and disappeared in the blink of an eye.

The Gigantopithecus Thunderape was a ferocious carnivorous spirit beast; one could only imagine the fate of the two White-Headed Eagles in its grasp, certainly becoming a delightful meal.

"Let's get out of here quickly!"

Huang Miao turned around and urgently spoke.

During the mountain training period, encountering a mid-level Spirit Beast was akin to meeting the Grim Reaper. For any Cultivation Team, it was an absolute nightmare.

Huang Miao thought that after the Gigantopithecus Thunderape had grabbed two White-Headed Eagles and disappeared, it was probably going to enjoy its meal. This provided a perfect opportunity for their team of five to escape. If they didn't leave now, it might be too late.

However, Huang Miao did not notice that as the Gigantopithecus Thunderape disappeared, Fang Bai's lips slightly moved imperceptibly, uttering a strange, silent incantation. This incantation from the Beast Taming Scripture, delivered through the Thread Condensation Sound Transmission Technique, was transmitted towards the direction where the Gigantopithecus Thunderape in the Ice Peak was. Except for Fang Bai and the Gigantopithecus Thunderape, no one else could hear it.

Normally, with the distance so great and Fang Bai's cultivation level, he wouldn't be able to transmit the Beast Taming Scripture to the ears of the Gigantopithecus Thunderape. However, given the Thunderape's keen sensitivity to the aura of Martial Artists, Fang Bai believed that by releasing his Divine Sense and chanting the Beast Taming Scripture, it would quickly be detected by it, and then it would swiftly pursue him following his scent.

Once the Gigantopithecus Thunderape entered the 2000-meter range covered by his Divine Sense, Fang Bai was confident that he could control it and make it serve him.

However, a mid-level Spirit Beast was already the strongest type of Spirit Beast that Fang Bai could currently control. Moreover, he couldn't control it for an extended period, or the excessive consumption of his Divine Sense would affect his future cultivation.

Indeed, just as Huang Miao's words fell, the Gigantopithecus Thunderape nestled between the peaks of Ice Peak faintly sensed the aura of human Martial Artists.

For the first time in many years, a human Martial Artist dared to invade its territory.

The Gigantopithecus Thunderape was instantly enraged. It decisively abandoned the White-Headed Eagle it was devouring, clenched its giant palms into fists, and forcefully pounded its chest several times with a 'thud thud thud', emitting a low roar like distant thunder.

Its fists violently pounded the ground, and amid the spray of ice and snow, its huge body, using the rebound force from the ground, leaped high and lunged towards the direction from which the human Martial Artist's aura was emanating.

In its stealth attack on the White-Headed Eagle, the Gigantopithecus Thunderape had not paid attention to the surroundings of Ice Peak. Only when it soared into the air did it notice

Huang Miao and his group standing frozen several miles away.

Roar—

Seeing that there indeed was a group of human Martial Artists who had invaded its territory, the killing intent in the Gigantopithecus Thunderape's eyes flared, and a faint 'sizzling' sound emanated from its electrified body, as it surged towards them at an even faster speed.

Due to its high-speed movement, the 'buzzing' thunderous sound created by the figure of the Thunderape was quietly alarming.

In one leap, it covered a height of dozens of yards and a distance of hundreds of meters, a feat not achievable by Martial Artists of the same realm.

In just a few bounds, the Gigantopithecus Thunderape was already appearing above the heads of Huang Miao and the others.

Huang Miao had not expected that just after he had said "Let's leave quickly," the Gigantopithecus Thunderape had already appeared in the air in front of them, approaching at an incredibly fast speed and with a ferocious momentum.

Not just Huang Miao, but Hou Ziping, Liu Qingqing, and Liu Liehu as well, gazing up at the Thunderape descending from the sky, were also startled into petrification.

"We're done for, we're definitely dead!"

Huang Miao closed his eyes in despair, not even possessing a sliver of the intent to resist or evade.

Chapter 1002: The Power of a Middle-Rank Spirit Beast

The strength of the Gigantopithecus Thunderape was comparable to a human Desolate Level Perfection Martial Artist, and facing its attack, Huang Miao's team, consisting of only five Heaven Level Martial Artists, was completely powerless to resist; they only had death to expect.

Thus, Huang Miao simply chose to give up resisting because she knew that resistance might provoke the Gigantopithecus Thunderape, and then they would only die more miserably and painfully.

Instead, it might be quicker to just let the Gigantopithecus Thunderape kill them with a slap.

Hou Ziping and Huang Miao shared the same thought; he also closed his eyes, feeling utterly cold and hopeless in his heart.

Although Liu Qingqing and Liu Liehu did not know how formidable the Gigantopithecus Thunderape was, when they saw its massive body shrouded in lightning, plunging from the sky like a mountain bearing down with incredible momentum, they too were struck with terror.

However, unlike Huang Miao and Hou Ziping, who closed their eyes to await death, they turned and sped towards Fang Bai.

At that moment, in their hearts, only Fang Bai could ensure their safety.

Buzz—

A humming sound, carrying the noise of thunder, filled the air above the heads of Huang Miao and the others; the Gigantopithecus Thunderape was only about a hundred meters above their heads.

Huang Miao and Hou Ziping kept their eyes tightly shut, images of being torn apart and swallowed alive by the Gigantopithecus Thunderape filling their minds, causing them to shudder uncontrollably.

While rushing towards Fang Bai, Liu Qingqing and Liu Liehu were engulfed by the overwhelming aura emitted by the Gigantopithecus Thunderape; it felt as if they were carrying ten thousand kilograms on their backs, their legs gave way, and they fell sitting on the ground, their faces pale as paper, sweating profusely, their inner energy tumultuous, feeling almost suffocated.

"Big sister, are we going to die?"

Liu Liehu asked in a terrified voice.

At this moment, they were still hundreds of meters away from Fang Bai, while the Gigantopithecus Thunderape had already descended above their heads; even if Fang Bai were to come to save them, it would be too late.

Liu Qingqing's face went pale with fright. Although her heart was filled with fear of death, as the elder sister, she felt it was her responsibility to protect her brother.

"Don't be afraid, Liehu; your sister is here!"

Liu Qingqing summoned her courage, swiftly stood up, clenched the long sword in her hand, and looked up at the sky, ready to fight the Gigantopithecus Thunderape to the death.

The massive body of the Gigantopithecus Thunderape flashed past overhead of Huang Miao, Hou Ziping, and the Liu siblings and, with a thunderous crash, landed a hundred meters behind them.

Where the Gigantopithecus Thunderape landed, the ground within several meters radius trembled violently, cracking deeply in all directions and dust swirling up into the air.

Simultaneously, the oppressive aura from the Gigantopithecus Thunderape vanished.

"Sigh..."

What they thought was a certain death turned into a miraculous escape. Huang Miao and the others heaved a long sigh of relief, nearly losing control of their emotions in excitement; Huang Miao and Hou Ziping, feeling completely drained, simply collapsed on the ground.

But the next moment, Huang Miao, Liu Qingqing, and the others tensed up again.

They realized that where the Gigantopithecus Thunderape landed, it was only about ten meters away from Fang Bai, almost facing each other.

Moreover, the Gigantopithecus Thunderape's eyes were fixed intensely on Fang Bai, burning with raging fury; it seemed like the next moment, it would slap Fang Bai.

Being so close to a mid-tier Spirit Beast, one could foresee the dire situation Fang Bai was about to face.

Huang Miao and Hou Ziping's expressions darkened, and a wave of grief surged in their hearts.

They had established a deep friendship with Fang Bai and naturally did not want to see him fall under the palm of the Gigantopithecus Thunderape.

Moreover, Fang Bai was an unprecedented Dual Attribute Innate Spiritual Root in the Bitao Martial Academy for nearly ten thousand years. If he were to perish here, it would be an irreparable loss for the academy.

"Brother Fang, run!"

Liu Qingqing and Liu Liehu cried out in alarm and immediately lunged towards the Gigantopithecus Thunderape.

The siblings shared the same thought, to attack the Gigantopithecus Thunderape proactively, hold it back, and let Fang Bai escape to safety.

At this moment, the siblings were resolute, without a trace of fear, willing to sacrifice their own lives as long as Fang Bai could escape.

However, no sooner had they moved than the Gigantopithecus Thunderape, standing in front of Fang Bai, also moved.

What dumbfounded Huang Miao and the others was that the ape did not attack Fang Bai, but instead stomped hard on the ground with its feet, leapt up again, swooping over Fang Bai's head and pouncing towards a hillside hundreds of meters away.

At that moment, Shi Gang was standing atop that very hillside.

Originally, Shi Gang, controlling over a hundred Spirit Beasts, had planned to annihilate Fang Bai and his companions, but he hadn't expected those beasts to be routed by the White-Headed Eagle controlled by Fang Bai.

Frustrated and enraged, Shi Gang was about to personally take action and kill Fang Bai and the others when the sudden appearance of the Gigantopithecus Thunderape left him as stunned as Huang Miao and the others.

Seeing the Gigantopithecus Thunderape land in front of Fang Bai with an ominous and murderous aura, looking as if it was about to tear Fang Bai apart, Shi Gang felt a surge of joy, thinking that he wouldn't need to make a move himself for Fang Bai to be dead.

As Shi Gang was about to turn and leave the territory of the Gigantopithecus Thunderape, to avoid being seen as an invader, he was shocked to find that the ape had forsaken Fang Bai, leapt into the air, and was pouncing towards the hill where he stood.

"What's gotten into that Gigantopithecus Thunderape? Not attacking Fang Bai, not attacking Huang Miao and his group, why is it coming for me?"

Seeing the Gigantopithecus Thunderape coming closer from a distance, leaping through the air, Shi Gang was dumbstruck, his mind in complete disarray.

In just those few moments, the Gigantopithecus Thunderape had already traversed the hundreds of meters and loomed over Shi Gang like a mountain descending.

Although Shi Gang possessed a Cultivation Level of Heaven Level Perfection, he was no match for the Gigantopithecus Thunderape, whose strength was comparable to a human Desolate Level Perfection Martial Artist, an entire realm higher.

The oppressive aura released by the Gigantopithecus Thunderape was too much for Shi Gang, as it was for Huang Miao and the others.

And it seemed as though the Gigantopithecus Thunderape was targeting Shi Gang on purpose, focusing nearly all the oppressive aura on him.

Shi Gang struggled with all his might against the oppressive aura of the Gigantopithecus Thunderape, his internal energy roiling tumultuously, his bones making cracking sounds, and his body felt like it was about to burst.

"Spurt!"

In desperation, Shi Gang suddenly spewed a mouthful of vital blood, forcibly stimulating his body's potential, attempting to use his movement technique to escape from beneath the oppressive aura of the Gigantopithecus Thunderape.

Boom!

At that moment, the Gigantopithecus Thunderape landed, then stretched out its long, thick right arm, turning its palm over and smashing it down onto Shi Gang's head.

Shi Gang couldn't even scream before he was reduced to a pile of mush by the slap of the Gigantopithecus Thunderape.

Chapter 1003: Golden Scaled Rhinoceros

Witnessing Shi Gang being killed instantly by the Gigantopithecus Thunderape, Huang Miao and others felt not joy but shock and horror.

The Gigantopithecus Thunderape was irritable and ferocious by nature, and would attack any creature that invaded its territory, whether they were the same species or not.

Now that Shi Gang was dead, the next target for the Gigantopithecus Thunderape was probably them, right?

With death looming, how could Huang Miao and the others feel any joy?

Fang Bai watched the dazed and dull-eyed Gigantopithecus Thunderape, a smile playing at the corner of his mouth.

As soon as the Gigantopithecus Thunderape had entered within a range of two thousand meters, it had already been controlled by Fang Bai using the Beast Taming Scripture combined with his Divine Sense, manipulating its mind and will. Thus, all of the Gigantopithecus Thunderape's subsequent actions were based on the messages conveyed by Fang Bai, so although Huang Miao and the others were terrified just now, they were actually in no real danger.

After killing Shi Gang, the Gigantopithecus Thunderape's arms hung down, standing there, waiting for Fang Bai to give it an order.

Moo—

At that moment, from deep within the eighteen Ice Peaks, a thunderous roar suddenly echoed.

In the wake of this roar, ice and snow collapsed from the Ice Peaks, rumbling downwards in a loud disturbance that was even more intense than when the Gigantopithecus Thunderape had made its appearance.

The ground began to tremble rhythmically, as if a gigantic Spirit Beast was stampeding and trampling the earth.

Huang Miao and the others once again showed looks of astonishment, turning their heads to look in the direction of the Ice Peaks.

They saw a spot of golden light emerge from an outlet between the Ice Peaks, the gold light growing from small to large, swiftly approaching their position.

Only when that golden light was within a few hundred meters of Huang Miao and the others could they see clearly that it was a rhinoceros with a strange appearance, covered in a layer of golden scales.

"This seems to be... the Golden Scaled Rhinoceros! My God, another mid-tier Spirit Beast..."

Huang Miao murmured, eyes fixed on the Golden Scaled Rhinoceros that existed only in the ancient records of Bitao Martial Academy, his mouth edged with bitterness.

The appearance of the Gigantopithecus Thunderape had originally driven Huang Miao and the others to despair, believing they were certainly doomed, but fortunately, the Gigantopithecus Thunderape didn't seem to have any intention of harming them.

Thinking they had escaped one disaster, what Huang Miao and the others hadn't expected was the emergence of an equally powerful Golden Scaled Rhinoceros, which was practically denying them any form of escape!

The Golden Scaled Rhinoceros was usually mild-mannered and would not attack other people or Spirit Beasts on its own, but once its territory was invaded by a person or Spirit Beast, it was tantamount to touching its reverse scale, and it would attack furiously until the invader was driven out of its territory.

Among those of equal strength, even the ferocious Spirit Beast like the Gigantopithecus Thunderape would fear a rampaging Golden Scaled Rhinoceros, daring not to confront it directly.

The Golden Scaled Rhinoceros charged fiercely, its hooves pounding, eyes red, with an intimidating aura, evidently in a state of rage due to some provocation.

"Come here!"

Fang Bai quickly dodged behind a nearby towering tree, waving at Liu Qingqing, Liu Liehu, Huang Miao, and Hou Ziping, gesturing them to come over.

Huang Miao and his three companions had no time to think. They executed their movement techniques, darted behind the huge tree where Fang Bai was hiding, poked their heads out to watch the Golden Scaled Rhinoceros, and at the same time, gripped the weapons in their hands tightly, ready to fight to the death with the two mid-tier Spirit Beasts if absolutely necessary.

Facing the Gigantopithecus Thunderape, Fang Bai's lips quivered slightly, and a strand of Divine Sense mixed with sound waves formed by the Beast Taming Scripture traveled into the ears of the ape.

The body of the Gigantopithecus Thunderape shuddered, a fierce light erupted from its eyes, and its aura surged violently. Suddenly, it turned around and looked at the Golden Scaled Rhinoceros charging toward them.

The Gigantopithecus Thunderape and the Golden Scaled Rhinoceros both resided in the area around Ice Peak, and their territories were adjacent to each other. Normally, they did not interfere with one another and were at peace.

Just now, the Golden Scaled Rhinoceros had returned to its den after hunting for food. When it discovered that human Martial Artists had invaded its territory, it was instantly enraged and ran wildly toward the exterior of Ice Peak, prepared to pulverize the intruders into dust.

The most formidable "weapons" of the Golden Scaled Rhinoceros were the layer of gold scales covering its body and the Golden Horn growing from the top of its head.

Each piece of its gold scales, albeit seemingly light and thin, was about the size of a human palm. Yet, they were far more durable than Hundred Refined Fine Steel, capable of withstanding a full-power strike from a Desolate Level Perfection human Martial Artist.

As for the Golden Horn, it was extremely sharp. Even a shield made of Hundred Refined Essence Steel would be easily pierced by it, and even a Defense Qi Shield formed from True Yuan by Desolate Level Perfection human Martial Artists could not withstand its impact.

With the gold scales for defense and the Golden Horn for offense, the Golden Scaled Rhinoceros was able to dominate the Bitao Mountain Range precisely because it possessed these two "weapons," one for attacking and one for defending.

If the Gigantopithecus Thunderape was considered the king of the Bitao Mountain Range, then the Golden Scaled Rhinoceros was the tyrant. The territories of these two mighty Spirit Beasts were seen as forbidden zones by human Martial Artists, and even Desolate Level Martial Artists dared not venture into them lightly.

The Golden Scaled Rhinoceros was a naturally born Golden Attribute Spirit Beast with tremendous attacking and destructive power. It charged forth in its rage, its speed surpassing lightning. Although it was still a great distance from Huang Miao and the others, the unstoppable and invincible momentum that tore through everything was enough to terrify anyone to the core and instill fear in their hearts.

"Roar!"

Seeing the Golden Scaled Rhinoceros charging toward them, the Gigantopithecus Thunderape's eyes turned blood-red, its fur stood on end, and it pounded its chest with its fists. Amidst the roaring, it charged forward with its thick legs, heading straight for the Golden Scaled Rhinoceros.

Amidst the thunderous rumbling, the two mid-tier Spirit Beasts ran and charged furiously. The ground trembled incessantly, and where they passed, fierce winds swept through, kicking up dust and dirt.

Although the two tyrants of the Bitao Mountain Range, the Golden Scaled Rhinoceros and the Gigantopithecus Thunderape, usually kept the peace, both had violent tempers and were bloodthirsty. Indeed, they did not get along well, and the only reason there hadn't been conflict was due to the fear of both suffering great injuries from a fight. Thus, they had always been tolerating each other.

But now, controlled by Fang Bai, the Gigantopithecus Thunderape had lost its self-awareness. Its attack on the Golden Scaled Rhinoceros was under Fang Bai's "command," ready to fight a life-or-death battle.

And the Golden Scaled Rhinoceros, provoked by the actions of the Gigantopithecus Thunderape, was determined to harshly teach a lesson to its kin, ideally defeating it to reign supreme over the Bitao Mountain Range alone.

Boom!

An earth-shattering noise echoed as the two powerful Spirit Beasts finally clashed together.

One beast naturally absorbed Golden Attribute Essence Energy, while the other innately possessed the attribute of thunder and lightning. Whether it was the Golden Attribute or the attribute of thunder and lightning, both were terrifying in terms of attack power and destructive force. Their collision was like two high-speed cannonballs smashing together, creating a massive sound and a frightening shockwave that followed.

As the dust in the sky finally settled, the two Spirit Beasts, due to the rebounding force generated during the collision, staggered back several yards away. On the ground in front of them, a large pit several yards across appeared, from which wisps of white smoke emerged.

The Golden Scaled Rhinoceros was always known for its strong defensive power, but in this collision, several of its gold scales on its head were actually shattered by the fists of the Gigantopithecus Thunderape.

The area that lost the effective protection of the gold scales was hit by the force of thunder and lightning carried in the fist of the Gigantopithecus Thunderape. Instantly, a faint burnt smell of flesh spread, diffusing into the air.

Chapter 1004: Perish Together

As two equally powerful Spirit Beasts, the Golden Scaled Rhinoceros was wounded, and the Gigantopithecus Thunderape was naturally no better off.

While the Gigantopithecus Thunderape struck a punch at the head of the Golden Scaled Rhinoceros, its abdomen was also struck by the Golden Horn on top of the rhinoceros's head, resulting in a bowl-sized bloody wound, which looked terrifying.

However, whether it was the Golden Scaled Rhinoceros or the Gigantopithecus Thunderape, the injuries they sustained were minor and did not affect their formidable combat strength.

Nevertheless, the injuries of the two supreme Spirit Beasts of the Bitao Mountain Range thoroughly enraged them.

They let out earth-shattering roars, their aura surged violently, and then they collided with even more ferocity than before.

Spirit Beasts, relying on their robust bodies and dense True Yuan, usually choose to attack their own kind or human Martial Artists by body slamming, with a few using claws and sharp teeth, unlike the diverse techniques used in human combats.

This type of head-on attack was a true test of pure strength, with no room for cunning; although simple and direct, it was highly effective. Spirit Beasts or human Martial Artists with a lesser strength often determine the outcome with just one collision.

The two enraged mid-tier Spirit Beasts, carrying the might of thunder, clashed with each other repeatedly with an overwhelming force.

Each of their collisions caused deafening loud noises and clouds of dust; when the dust settled, the ground was left with one deep pit after another.

In the blink of an eye, the flowers, plants, and trees within a few miles radius were wiped clean by the impact force generated from the collisions of the two Spirit Beasts.

The protruding rocks and hills were also leveled by the subsequent waves of impact.

And the wounds on the bodies of the two Spirit Beasts also began to increase continuously, soon becoming mangled and bloody.

"What's happening? Why have those two Spirit Beasts suddenly started fighting?"

"Heaven knows, they must have gone mad!"

"It's good they are fighting; we might just escape this disaster, thank God!"

"If we don't leave now, once the two Spirit Beasts decide the victor, there'll be no escaping!"

...

Hiding behind a large tree in the distance, Huang Miao and others, watched the two mid-tier Spirit Beasts fighting intensely and were dumbstruck for a good while before coming back to their senses.

They couldn't understand why the two Spirit Beasts would engage in such a fierce battle, one that seemed like a fight to the death.

However, they didn't have time to ponder over this question.

What they wanted most at the moment was to seize this perfect opportunity and immediately escape this perilous place.

"Wait a moment!"

As Huang Miao and others prepared to leave, Fang Bai quickly interjected, pointing at the battling Spirit Beasts, "Don't you want those two Spirit Beasts to fight to a mutual defeat, and then we reap the benefits?"

The Spirit Cores, already formed inside mid-tier Spirit Beasts, were rare and precious. The "great benefit" Fang Bai referred to was precisely this.

If they could obtain a Spirit Core from a mid-tier Spirit Beast, it could be exchanged for a vast amount of Cultivation Resources, sufficient for their Cultivation Team of five people to cultivate for several years.

If it were as Fang Bai had said, and the two mid-tier Spirit Beasts injured each other, then they could harvest two Spirit Cores to exchange for more Cultivation Resources.

Desire for Cultivation Resources overcame their fear. Huang Miao and Hou Ziping glanced at the two Spirit Beasts fighting fiercely, then looked at each other and made up their minds.

"Let's wait a bit longer then."

Huang Miao spoke, "But we'd better move back a bit to avoid being affected by the shockwaves produced by the Spirit Beasts' battle."

Hou Ziping nodded in agreement.

Thus, the five of them used their movement techniques to quickly move several hundred meters back behind a small hill.

"Fight! Hit him hard! You dumb rhino, use your Golden Horn to stab that stupid ape in the belly... Oh no, it's off, why did you stab its arm? Such an idiot! You stupid ape, smash that dumb rhino's head with your fist... Ah, why are you hitting the rhino's shoulder?"

Liu Liehu ducked behind a rock, poking his head out to watch the Gigantopithecus Thunderape and the Golden Scaled Rhinoceros, his expression excited and his eyes gleaming, as he shouted out loud.

Liu Qingqing frowned slightly, tugged at his sleeve, and whispered sternly, "Liehu, keep it down! If those two Spirit Beasts hear us, we're in big trouble!"

Just then, during the fierce battle, the Golden Scaled Rhinoceros and the Gigantopithecus Thunderape let out terrible roars almost simultaneously.

The roars of the two mid-tier Spirit Beasts blended together, creating an unprecedented shockwave. Behind the small hill, except for Fang Bai, the other four stumbled and fell to the ground, their minds in disarray, their ears buzzing, and blood trickling from their noses and mouths.

The roars had directly injured the internal organs of the four, showing just how formidable the two Spirit Beasts were.

Fortunately, the four had taken precautions beforehand, so the injuries weren't severe. They hurriedly sat cross-legged on the ground, circulated their Cultivation Techniques, resisting the impact of the sound waves while tending to themselves.

As for what exactly had happened between the two Spirit Beasts that caused such terrible roars, the dust kicked up obscured their forms, making it impossible for the four to see clearly.

However, Fang Bai's Divine Sense had penetrated through the dust and discovered that in this collision, the Gigantopithecus Thunderape and the Golden Scaled Rhinoceros had delivered fatal blows to each other.

At the moment the Gigantopithecus Thunderape's fist, imbued with the power of thunder, crushed the skull of the Golden Scaled Rhinoceros, the indestructible Golden Horn on the head of the Golden Scaled Rhinoceros had also pierced the heart of the Gigantopithecus Thunderape.

Thus, the two dominant Spirit Beasts of the Bitao Mountain Range died on the spot, their massive bodies crashing to the ground and stirring up another cloud of dust.

Originally, there were quite a few Spirit Beasts active within a hundred li of the Ice Peak, but since the Gigantopithecus Thunderape and the Golden Scaled Rhinoceros appeared, those Spirit Beasts, frightened and wary of getting injured, had fled many hundreds of li away.

And the few lucky teams from Cultivation Teams that had been near the Ice Peak when they heard the roar of the Gigantopithecus Thunderape had already fled far away in terror, not daring to approach the Ice Peak anymore.

Therefore, within a hundred li of the eighteen Ice Peaks, aside from Fang Bai and his group as well as the two mid-tier Spirit Beasts, there was not a single living creature.

After the dust had settled, the bodies of the Gigantopithecus Thunderape and the Golden Scaled Rhinoceros appeared in Fang Bai's line of sight.

Fang Bai glanced at Huang Miao and the others, who were sitting cross-legged with their eyes closed, then stepped towards the bodies of the two mid-tier Spirit Beasts.

The Gigantopithecus Thunderape with its heart pierced and the Golden Scaled Rhinoceros with its head shattered were beyond dead.

Fang Bai walked up to the bodies of the two Spirit Beasts and examined them closely.

For Martial Artists of the True Martial Realm, the bodies of mid-tier Spirit Beasts were treasures. Consuming their flesh and blood could greatly aid in Cultivation, the effects akin to those of a low-grade Elixir.

Chapter 1005: This is the Spirit Core!

The furs of the Gigantopithecus Thunderape, the scales of the Golden Scaled Rhinoceros, as well as the Golden Horns, were all costly treasures that could be exchanged for a great amount of cultivation resources.

Of course, the most precious thing on the bodies of middle-tier spirit beasts was the Spirit Core they had formed inside them.

With Fang Bai's strength, he could have taken both middle-tier spirit beasts for himself, and Huang Miao and the rest wouldn't dare utter a word of dissent.

But Fang Bai was generous by nature, not the selfish type, and he didn't have the intention to monopolize the corpses of the two spirit beasts. Instead, he planned to wait until Huang Miao and the others had rested and recovered before discussing together how to distribute the spoils.

Moreover, Fang Bai faintly sensed that between the eighteen Ice Peaks ahead, Essence Energy was constantly emanating outward, and the air carried a faint scent of medicinal herbs.

Based on this, Fang Bai guessed that within those ice peaks, there must be long-aged Spiritual Medicine growing, and it was very likely that they were mid-grade Spiritual Medicine.

It seemed that the Gigantopithecus Thunderape and the Golden Scaled Rhinoceros had burst out from between the ice peaks. Perhaps they had built their nests there specifically to guard the mid-grade Spiritual Medicine.

Fang Bai walked a circle around the corpses of the two middle-tier spirit beasts, then his gaze settled on the Golden Horn.

"I'll take this Golden Horn; I'll refine it into a rod-shaped Spiritual Artifact later to give to Liu Liehu."

Muttering to himself, Fang Bai's left hand, adorned with a Spatial Ring, flashed slightly. Then, with a flash of crimson light, the Blood-Drinking Mad Blade, which had lain dormant in the Spatial Ring for some time, appeared in his right hand.

Swoosh!

In a swift motion of blade light, the Golden Horn on top of the Golden Scaled Rhinoceros's head was neatly severed, falling into Fang Bai's hand.

For ordinary martial artists or common weapons, the Golden Horn was hard, sharp, and indestructible.

However, the Blood-Drinking Mad Blade in Fang Bai's hand was a genuine Supreme Spirit Weapon and no matter how tough the Golden Scaled Rhinoceros' Golden Horn was, it couldn't escape being sliced through by the Blood-Drinking Mad Blade.

Fang Bai casually tossed the severed Golden Horn onto the ground, waving his right arm continuously. The Blood-Drinking Mad Blade turned into a series of blood-red illusions, raising waves of blood mist, the scent of blood permeating all around and staining the ground within tens of meters crimson red.

When the blood mist had dissipated, the two huge middle-tier spirit beasts had been dismembered into pieces.

Two fist-sized spherical Spirit Cores rolled out from the bodies of the two spirit beasts, which Fang Bai picked up and held in his palm.

The two Spirit Cores were as transparent as crystal, with a layer of faint halo emitting from their surfaces that looked dazzling and seductive.

The Spirit Core of the Gigantopithecus Thunderape was purple, and upon closer observation, one could see a clump of crisscrossing, thread-like electric sparks inside the Core, faintly feeling the immense destructive power contained within those sparks.

The Spirit Core of the Golden Scaled Rhinoceros was golden, and other than the color, whether in shape or size, it was almost identical to that of the Gigantopithecus Thunderape's, also containing a strong power within.

Holding the two middle-tier spirit beasts' Spirit Cores in hand, Fang Bai felt the wisps of Essence Energy being released from within them, and his lips carried a faint smile.

Fang Bai planned to keep the Spirit Core of the Golden Scaled Rhinoceros for himself and share that of the Gigantopithecus Thunderape with Huang Miao and the other four.

Furthermore, Fang Bai also intended to give the fur of the Gigantopithecus Thunderape to Huang Miao and the others, while keeping the enhancing Golden Horn of the Golden Scaled Rhinoceros for himself.

The flesh and bones of the two spirit beasts were rare treasures, but their blood was not easy to store, and most of it had already been lost, seeping into the ground. Therefore, Fang Bai threw their meat and bones into the Spatial Ring.

In a brief moment, the two massive corpses of the spirit beasts had vanished from their original spot, all collected by Fang Bai into his Spatial Ring, leaving only the crimson bloodstains on the ground.

After Fang Bai finished dealing with the corpses of the two spirit beasts, Huang Miao and the rest had also finished their recuperation and got up to walk toward him.

"Where are those two spirit beasts? Why aren't they here?"

Liu Liehu was the first to run up to Fang Bai, looking left and right, the Gigantopithecus Thunderape and the Golden Scaled Rhinoceros were nowhere to be seen, which baffled him greatly.

"Looking at the bloodstains on the ground, those two Spirit Beasts must have been seriously injured, could they have left separately?"

Huang Miao surveyed the scene and said with a relaxed face.

When the two fierce mid-tier Spirit Beasts had appeared before, Huang Miao thought that the members of their team were doomed, nerves tightly wound, hearts filled with tension and fear. Yet surprisingly, the Spirit Beasts were gone, which meant they had escaped disaster.

Surviving an encounter with mid-tier Spirit Beasts was a miracle in itself.

"Hopefully, they've already left!"

Hou Ziping clasped his hands together as if in prayer.

"Brother Fang, what is that in your hand?"

Liu Qingqing, focusing on the two Spirit Cores in Fang Bai's palm, asked with wide-open beautiful eyes.

From those two Spirit Cores, Liu Qingqing sensed two different and powerful types of True Yuan.

Women are lovers of beauty, and those Spirit Cores, being crystal clear and brightly colored, were extremely attractive, especially to a young girl like Liu Qingqing.

Upon hearing Liu Qingqing's question, Huang Miao and the others also had their gazes drawn towards Fang Bai, and were similarly captivated by the two Spirit Cores in his hand.

"Could they be Essence Stones?"

Liu Liehu, who came from a small mountain village and wasn't worldly-wise, thought Fang Bai was holding Essence Stones, but upon closer inspection, they seemed a bit different from Essence Stones.

Hou Ziping shook his head and said, "Essence Stones are just jade that has absorbed and stored Heaven and Earth Origin Energy, but what Junior Brother Fang is holding doesn't seem to be jade... Wait, could that be... the Spirit Core of a Spirit Beast?"

When he said the words "Spirit Core," Hou Ziping's expression turned excited, his voice involuntarily trembling, and his eyes shone like stars in the night sky.

"Yes, it's a Spirit Core! It is indeed a Spirit Core!"

Huang Miao murmured, his eyes reddening and the tip of his nose tingling with the sensation of emotions nearly spiraling out of control.

There were two main purposes for their mountain expedition.

The first was to improve their strength through real combat with Spirit Beasts or fellow disciples.

The second was to seek Cultivation Resources and various serendipitous opportunities.

For Cultivation Teams venturing into the mountains, the most feared encounter was with mid-tier Spirit Beasts, yet, paradoxically, their most desired prize was the Spirit Core of mid-tier Spirit Beasts.

The five members of Huang Miao's team could say the first objective had been fully achieved, with each of them experiencing an increase in strength.

As for the second objective, they had also achieved a part of it, and if they could secure a Spirit Core from a mid-tier Spirit Beast, then their expedition would indeed be a resounding success.

Recalling the pitiful howls of the two Spirit Beasts during the fierce battle and looking at the ground that was stained with blood, Huang Miao's heart pounded wildly. Looking into Fang Bai's palm, holding the two Spirit Cores, his gaze filled with intense anticipation.

"Indeed, these are Spirit Cores!"

Fang Bai looked at the four with a smile and said, "These two Spirit Cores were taken from the two mid-tier Spirit Beasts we just fought."

Fang Bai's statement was so shocking to the four that they stood still, taking a while to recover.

Chapter 1006: What to Do?

The Spirit Cores of middle-stage Spirit Beasts were treasures that every disciple of the Bitao Martial Academy dreamed of obtaining during their mountain training expeditions.

However, in the nearly ten thousand years since the establishment of the Bitao Martial Academy, although disciples had ventured into the mountains for training every year, not a single cultivation team had ever managed to kill a middle-stage Spirit Beast and obtain its Spirit Core.

But at this very moment, Fang Bai actually claimed that what he was holding in the palm of his hand were the Spirit Cores from those two middle-stage Spirit Beasts they encountered earlier. How could Huang Miao and the others not be astonished upon hearing such news?

"Junior Brother Fang, what you're saying... is it true?"

Huang Miao's gaze was glued to the two Spirit Cores in Fang Bai's palm, and she felt her heart nearly leap from her chest as she asked with a trembling voice.

Despite already having such a suspicion in her heart, she still wanted to confirm it with Fang Bai.

Fang Bai replied in all seriousness, "Senior Sister Huang, do I look like I'm lying?"

"No! I believe you, Junior Brother Fang, I really do!"

As Huang Miao spoke, the shock on her face was replaced by an indescribable joy.

Hou Ziping was also overwhelmed with joy, so excited he could hardly contain himself.

Although Liu Liehu and Liu Qingqing had not seen much of the world and understood little about the use and value of Spirit Cores, they could see from Huang Miao's and Hou Ziping's excited expressions that the two Spirit Cores in Fang Bai's hands were of great significance to them.

All four of them were seeing a middle-stage Spirit Beast's Spirit Core for the first time, and, driven by curiosity, they gathered around Fang Bai to take a closer look. They couldn't help but reach out to touch the cores, clicking their tongues in admiration.

"If we bring these two Spirit Cores back to the Bitao Martial Academy, it will certainly cause a sensation. Just imagine how many Academy disciples will envy us!"

In Hou Ziping's mind, he envisioned their cultivation team returning to the Bitao Martial Academy and being surrounded by thousands of disciples. The sense of glory under such attention made his eyes shine and his face turn red with excitement.

"Spirit Cores are incredibly precious and can be exchanged for substantial cultivation resources. They have a great allure for Martial Artists. If we bring these two Spirit Cores back to the Academy, it's very likely the higher-ups might take them,"

Huang Miao sighed, her initial excitement turning to disappointment.

Hou Ziping stared blankly for a moment before saying, "That shouldn't happen, right? Our Academy has a rule that when disciples obtain cultivation resources during mountain training, they turn in half and keep the other half for themselves. In the nearly ten thousand years since its establishment, I haven't heard of any high-level Academy officials violating the rules and confiscating all the cultivation resources a disciple gained."

Huang Miao's lips twitched slightly, pulling into a smile tinged with a hint of mockery, "That's because the cultivation resources gained by the disciples in the past were all ordinary, and the higher-ups didn't care much about them. But if we're talking about Spirit Cores, that's a completely different story. The higher-ups in the Academy are also Martial Artists, and they won't be able to resist the temptation of Spirit Cores."

After pausing and taking a deep breath, she added, "If I'm not mistaken, once the Academy's higher-ups learn that we've obtained two Spirit Cores, they'll surely take them by any means, soft or hard, and then compensate us with some cultivation resources as if that's that. Junior Brother Hou, if you don't believe me, shall we make a bet?"

Hou Ziping stood still for a moment, then scratched his head, his face filled with the color of distress, reluctantly saying, "No bet needed, Senior Sister Huang, I trust you. But... if the higher-ups really do this, how is it any different from robbery? Aren't they afraid of chilling the hearts of the disciples?"

Huang Miao replied with a bitter smile, "The higher-ups are all Desolate Level Experts, do you think they care about how Heaven Level Experts feel?"

The last bit of hope in Hou Ziping's heart was shattered by Huang Miao's words as he muttered, "Two Spirit Cores could be exchanged for enough cultivation resources for the five of us to use for several years. If they're taken by the higher-ups in the Academy, how many cultivation resources will they give us?"

Huang Miao answered, "Our Bitao Martial Academy is just a fourth-grade Sect, with numerous disciples and a severe lack of cultivation resources. It has always been a case of too many monks and not enough porridge. Anyhow, I'm sure that what the higher-ups will give us in cultivation resources will definitely fall far short of what we could get for the two Spirit Cores."

Hou Ziping had just been thinking that if those two Spirit Cores were exchanged for Cultivation Resources, he too would get a share. Perhaps, with those resources, his own strength might advance even further.

But hearing what Huang Miao said, he was increasingly worried that if he returned to Bitao Martial Academy with the Spirit Cores, they might very well be taken away by the higher-ups of the academy. By then, it would be a huge loss, and crying wouldn't even bring tears.

"What should we do? What can we do?"

Hou Ziping paced anxiously on the spot, looking towards Huang Miao, Fang Bai, and the others, hoping they would have a solution.

To hand over both Spirit Cores to the higher-ups of Bitao Martial Academy was something Hou Ziping was reluctant to do in a thousand ways, unwilling in ten thousand.

But if they didn't hand them over, they would certainly face pressure from the higher-ups of the academy. Just the five of them were absolutely no match for the academy's higher echelons.

"How about we hide the two Spirit Cores after we return to the academy, and don't let the higher-ups know about them? We can find time later to secretly exchange the Spirit Cores for Cultivation Resources. The resources we get from the exchange can be stored at a secret location, and we can take them out for use when we cultivate..."

Liu Liehu swayed his head as he came up with his suggestions.

Hou Ziping shook his head and said, "The higher-ups of the academy are all Desolate Level Martial Artists with keen senses. Spirit Cores naturally release Essence Energy, and it would be very difficult to hide them."

Liu Liehu suggested, "Then just hide the Spirit Cores outside our academy!"

Huang Miao rolled her eyes and said, "It's not safe outside the academy either. There are so many Martial Artists in this world. If we hide the Spirit Cores outside the academy, and some passerby Martial Artist discovers and then steals them, our loss would be even greater."

"If it's not feasible to hide them inside or outside the academy, then what should we do with these two Spirit Cores?"

Liu Qingqing's beautiful eyebrows furrowed slightly, her pretty face showing a touch of worry.

Huang Miao sighed and said, "At a time like this, if we had a Storage Spiritual Artifact, all our problems would be solved. Unfortunately, Storage Spiritual Artifacts are rare and expensive in the entire True Martial Realm. Not even our academy's higher-ups have one, let alone us disciples."

Speaking of Storage Spiritual Artifacts, I actually have one..."

It was then that Fang Bai finally spoke up.

As he spoke, Fang Bai secretly channeled a wisp of Essence Energy into the Space Ring on the finger of his left hand. With a flash of light, the Space Ring revealed itself in front of Huang Miao and the others.

"This Space Ring, I acquired it before I entered Bitao Martial Academy, during a fortunate encounter,"

Fang Bai said, lifting the Space Ring for Huang Miao and the others to see.

Huang Miao and the others were dumbfounded once again.

For Fang Bai to reveal the Space Ring was even more shocking to Huang Miao and the others than him obtaining the Spirit Cores of two mid-level Spirit Beasts.

It was known that in the True Martial Realm, Artifact Refiners were even rarer than Alchemists, and the difficulty of Artifact Refining was much greater than that of Elixir Refinement. Therefore, in the Martial Artists Trading Market, a Spiritual Artifact of the same tier was far more valuable than an Elixir.

Although Spirit Cores were precious, in the eyes of Huang Miao and the others, the Space Ring could store many items that were not easy to carry and was also hard to detect by others. It not only made life convenient and effectively protected privacy but also had greater practical utility for Martial Artists.

Chapter 1007: Entering Ice Peak

Seeing the Spatial Ring on Fang Bai's finger, Huang Miao and the others felt shocked and envied Fang Bai for his fortunate encounter.

Soon after, they thought about the advantages of Fang Bai having a Spatial Ring, and they all became excited.

"That's great, Junior Brother Fang has a treasure like the Spatial Ring, it's just right for putting the two Spirit Cores in it without worrying about being discovered by the higher-ups of the Martial Academy."

Huang Miao was in high spirits and said with a beaming smile.

"All the other Cultivation Resources we've collected on this trip can also be temporarily placed in Junior Brother Fang's Spatial Ring, that's the safest way. Ah! Junior Brother Fang, why didn't you tell us earlier about the Spatial Ring? You've kept us in such agony!"

Hou Ziping thought of some Cultivation Resources they had previously collected, which they had to abandon because they couldn't carry them. If they had known Fang Bai had a Spatial Ring back then, perhaps it wouldn't have been necessary, and he couldn't help stomping his feet with a sigh.

Before Fang Bai could speak, Huang Miao continued, "A treasure as valuable as the Spatial Ring, how can one show it off easily? It's only natural for Junior Brother Fang to be cautious. Just think about it, what would happen if others knew that Junior Brother Fang had a Spatial Ring? You should understand, right, Junior Brother Hou?"

Hou Ziping was stunned for a moment, then he forced a smile and said, "I understand. If others knew that Junior Brother Fang had a Spatial Ring, they would inevitably covet it and might even harbor murderous intentions towards Junior Brother Fang."

Huang Miao nodded and said, "Exactly. Therefore, we must keep the fact that Junior Brother Fang has a Spatial Ring confidential, and must not reveal it to others."

She looked at Fang Bai and said earnestly, "Junior Brother Fang, rest assured, we will keep the affair of the Spatial Ring a secret. If anyone leaks this information, I'll be the first to not forgive him!"

When she said the last sentence, her pretty face contained a hint of threat, and the aura of Killing Qi around her was nearly suffocating. Hou Ziping, Liu Qingqing, and Liu Liehu all felt an almost suffocating pressure.

Fang Bai smiled calmly and scanned his eyes over the faces of the four, saying, "We've shared hardships and exchanged our hearts with each other. I believe you would not do anything to harm me."

In fact, with Fang Bai's strength, he was not worried about the news of the Spatial Ring being leaked, even if someone as powerful as Ren Jingbo, a Desolate Level Perfection expert from Bitao Martial Academy, coveted his Spatial Ring and tried to seize it by force, it would be impossible to succeed.

For an expert like Ren Jingbo with Desolate Level Perfection, Fang Bai had a completely overwhelming advantage; if he wished, he could kill him with a slap.

However, Fang Bai, with his experience from two lifetimes spanning tens of thousands of years, had an accurate judgment of people and knew Ren Jingbo to be a straightforward and honest person. Even if Ren Jingbo knew about the Spatial Ring, he would probably only envy it, without harboring any malicious intentions.

However, the intentions of other higher-ups in the Martial Academy were less predictable.

From Fang Bai's observations, he knew that several high-ranking members of the Martial Academy were very tactful, ruthless, and if they knew that he owned a Spatial Ring, they would surely harbor murderous intentions.

Fang Bai was naturally unafraid of this, and he was prepared to meet force with force if anyone dared to make a move against him.

As Huang Miao and the others marvelled, Fang Bai collected the two Spirit Cores into the Spatial Ring, then smiled and said, "The Gigantopithecus Thunderape and Golden Scaled Rhinoceros killed each other in their attack, and I have collected all the useful things from their bodies into the Spatial Ring, to be shared among us in the future. You guys don't have any objections, right?"

"Of course not!"

"Junior Brother Fang has a Spatial Ring, and among the five of us, his strength is the strongest, so it's safest in your hands!"

"I'm at ease with Brother Fang in charge!"

"Mid-tier Spirit Beasts are treasures all over, if we could bring them all back, we'd make a fortune!"

...

Huang Miao and the others expressed their positions one after another.

They all had come to know Fang Bai well, aware that he was open-minded, generous, and righteous, and therefore a trustworthy person.

"Should we return now?"

After the excitement, Huang Miao calmed down and looked towards Ice Peak in the distance, asking Fang Bai.

Their gains from this mountain expedition had already far exceeded expectations, beyond what they had ever dreamed of, and returning now would be most appropriate.

While the Ice Peaks ahead might contain greater fortunes, the extreme cold between them was a Forbidden Zone of Life for humans, with various unknown risks, and Huang Miao and the others felt there was no need to take further risks.

Fang Bai, born loving adventure, sensed Essence Energy fluctuations between those eighteen Ice Peaks and knew there must be treasures there. He wouldn't be content without exploring them to understand them clearly.

As for the risks potentially existing between the Ice Peaks, Fang Bai had many life-saving methods and feared nothing.

Fang Bai decided to continue forward, entering Ice Peak to seek fortune, but he also knew that Huang Miao and the others were not strong enough to withstand the cold there, and he couldn't split his focus to take care of them, so they had to stay here.

"I'll go to Ice Peak alone, and you four wait here. Within one day, whether or not I find anything, I will definitely return."

Fang Bai told Huang Miao and the others.

"Brother Fang, I'll go with you!"

"Me too!"

Liu Qingqing and Liu Liehu, the two siblings, were Fang Bai's most loyal followers. Upon hearing this, they boldly stood up.

Fang Bai waved his hand and said, "You might not be able to endure the temperature between the Ice Peaks, and if you go, you might perish there. That's enough, you two behave yourselves and patiently wait here with Senior Sister Huang and Senior Brother Hou... if you don't listen, I'll be very angry."

Fang Bai said this with a stern face and a serious expression, his innate authority making Liu Qingqing and Liu Liehu feel even more reverence and dare not plead further with Fang Bai to take them along, instead staying obediently with Huang Miao and Hou Ziping.

"Actually, our gains this time are unprecedented in the nearly ten thousand year history of Bitao Martial Academy. To be able to bring back these Cultivation Resources, I'm already satisfied. But Junior Brother Fang... why does he do this to himself?" observed Hou Ziping, watching Fang Bai's retreating figure as he moved towards the Ice Peaks using his movement technique.

Huang Miao sighed, "We are overly cautious and tend to retreat when facing danger, thus missing many opportunities. Whereas Junior Brother Fang chooses to face the dangers... I think, this is probably the reason why Junior Brother Fang, despite being younger, surpasses us in strength."

She paused, a look of shame on her face, thinking that while Junior Brother Fang dared to venture into Ice Peak, she didn't dare to take risks. Compared to Fang Bai, what she lacked was the courage to disregard hardships and put life and death aside.

Hou Ziping also reflected similarly, like Huang Miao, facing any life-threatening danger, they would prefer to evade, rather than gamble with their lives.

Chapter 1008: Iceheart Fruit

As Fang Bai's figure disappeared among the Ice Peaks, Huang Miao and the four others found a suitable spot to conceal themselves, settled in to lie low, and patiently awaited Fang Bai's return.

Liu Qingqing pressed her hands together in prayer, silently wishing for Fang Bai's safe and uneventful journey.

Fang Bai moved swiftly like lightning, rapidly gliding through the air, and quickly arrived at the base of the Ice Peaks.

The closer he got to the Ice Peaks, the lower the temperature dropped, reaching a point at the base of the nearest Ice Peak that even Heaven Level Martial Artists could not withstand.

Looking up at the nearly vertical Ice Peak that stretched skyward, it appeared to pierce the heavens, seemingly insurmountable.

The sunlight shining on the thick ice and snow covering the surface of the Ice Peak reflected a blinding white light, making it difficult to keep one's eyes open.

Possibly due to the extremely low temperatures, no vegetation could be seen on the Ice Peaks at a glance, but when Fang Bai's Divine Sense spread out, it detected faint fluctuations of Spiritual Medicine's Essence Energy at heights unreachable by the naked eye.

"It seems that this region of the Ice Peaks must harbor quite a few Spiritual Medicines, otherwise the Gigantopithecus Thunderape and the Golden Scaled Rhinoceros wouldn't be guarding this place. Moreover, for mid-level Spirit Beasts to guard them, they must be at least mid-grade Spiritual Medicines."

In his previous life, Fang Bai would not have even glanced at mid-grade Spiritual Medicines of over five hundred years, but in the True Martial Realm, where Cultivation Resources were scarce, obtaining a few mid-grade Spiritual Medicines was already a rare opportunity.

Fang Bai understood this well, and since his strength was far from what it had been in his past life, he needed to start over step by step; mid-grade Spiritual Medicines were indeed very useful to him.

Fang Bai took a deep breath as Fire Primordial Qi began to circulate within his body, and the frigid temperatures far beyond the endurance limits of a Heaven Level Martial Artist were kept at bay by a layer of Fire Attribute Qi Shield formed around him.

With a light tap of his feet on the ground, Fang Bai's figure shot into the air, beginning to ascend toward the summit of the Ice Peak in front of him.

After leaping up several meters into the air, Fang Bai stimulated the Wind Essence Qi within the Qi Sea of his Dantian to circulate, and like a kite, he continued to rise, carried by the wind's current.

It wasn't until he had soared to a height of a hundred meters that Fang Bai stepped on a protrusion of the Ice Peak to use it as a leverage to climb even higher.

Continuing this cycle, after several breaths, Fang Bai's figure had already vanished into the clouds that lingered around the middle of the Ice Peak.

Passing through the thin layer of clouds, the mountain wind suddenly turned wild, and the temperature dropped significantly; the Ice Peak became steeper, and the ice and snow covering its surface were thicker and slicker.

The thin cloud layer seemed to separate the Ice Peak into two different worlds.

Below the thin mist, whether it was the temperature or the steepness of the Ice Peak, Desolate Level Martial Artists could conquer it using their own strength.

Above the thin mist, the harsh environment was unimaginably severe, and even Desolate Level Martial Artists could not cope or endure.

The strongest Martial Artist of Bitao Martial Academy was only at the Desolate Level Realm, so it was no wonder that the Ice Peak region had always been regarded as a Forbidden Zone of Life by the Martial Academy, daring not to intrude.

However, this extremely harsh environment couldn't stop Fang Bai's ascent.

Fang Bai possessed a Chaos True Body, with an extremely strong physical constitution, which alone was enough to withstand the bitterly cold temperatures, and he didn't even need to circulate True Yuan to fend off the cold.

At that moment, if one looked toward the Ice Peak from a distance, they would notice Fang Bai, clothed in blue, soaring upward like a bird aiming for the sky, his speed surpassing that of the White-Headed Eagles threading through the peaks.

Those White-Headed Eagles, which were highly aggressive Spirit Beasts, would likely launch a collective attack on any other Martial Artist attempting to climb the Ice Peak.

However, Fang Bai, wanting to avoid disturbance from the White-Headed Eagles while climbing, no longer concealed his power. He released his full Martial Artist Aura, which was comparable to that of a Vast Level Expert. This formidable pressure caused the eagles to scatter in alarm, not daring to approach.

Dozens of breaths later, with a long howl, Fang Bai finally landed on the summit of the nearly ten-thousand-meter-high Ice Peak.

At the summit, a vast and resonant celestial wind howled past, sweeping along snowflakes and hail. Martial Artists slightly weaker in strength could not possibly maintain their footing.

The summit spanned several dozen yards and the terrain was uneven, with various sizes and shapes of ice stones standing tall.

Common sense dictated that the climate at the peak should be harsh, unable to support even a blade of grass, yet the moment Fang Bai landed, he immediately spotted a Spiritual Medicine growing tenaciously within a crevice between the ice stones.

That plant was not the usual green of ordinary vegetation but seemed like it had been carved from ice and snow, its body immaculately white without any flaw. If one didn't look carefully, or if it hadn't released a wisp of Water Element Qi, its existence would be quite difficult to notice.

"Iceheart Fruit!"

Fang Bai's gaze fell upon the plant, and his eyes suddenly lit up with excitement.

The Iceheart Fruit was a type of Spiritual Medicine that grew in extremely cold places, a kind of Water System medicine. It was named for its fruit's shape, which resembled the human heart.

Fang Bai was excited because this particular Iceheart Fruit was not only a medium-grade Spiritual Medicine but had also reached an age of over eight hundred years, making it superior among its kind.

For Fang Bai, who was in urgent need of Cultivation Resources, the older the medicine, the better the effects, naturally.

"There truly are treasures on this Ice Peak! There are eighteen Ice Peaks in total. If each one has an Iceheart Fruit, then that would really be hitting the jackpot!"

Suppressing the excitement in his heart, Fang Bai walked over to the Iceheart Fruit, crouched down to examine it for a moment, then carefully reached out to pluck it from the crevice.

Upon touching the Iceheart Fruit, a bone-chilling stream of cold instantly spread from Fang Bai's palm to his entire body.

Having grown here for over eight hundred years, the Iceheart Fruit had absorbed the extreme coldness of Essence Energy for all those years. The accumulation of such intense cold, refined over centuries, was stored within the fruit, several times colder than the surrounding air temperature.

Fortunately, Fang Bai's physical constitution was exceptional, his flesh robust, combined with his formidable strength and abundant Essence Energy, he was not harmed by the chilling Qi invading from the Iceheart Fruit.

Otherwise, if it were a Martial Artist slightly weaker than Fang Bai or without Fang Bai's formidable physique, even if they weren't immediately frozen and their blood coagulated by the frosty Qi of the Iceheart Fruit—resulting in death on the spot—they would be frozen stiff, unable to recover for a good while.

Instead of using his True Yuan to combat or expel the invasive bone-penetrating chill, Fang Bai used his Cultivation Technique to guide this coldness through the meridians within his body, expanding and toughening his channels.

Having "digested" the chilling Qi that entered his body, Fang Bai temporarily stowed the Iceheart Fruit into his Spatial Ring and then leaped down from this Ice Peak, climbing toward the next...

Within half a day, Fang Bai successively reached the summits of all eighteen Ice Peaks, and to his delight, found that each peak indeed possessed an Iceheart Fruit plant, and every fruit was over five hundred years old.

Chapter 1009: It's Not a Dream!

With the eighteen Iceheart Fruits, Fang Bai leapt down from the last Ice Peak with satisfaction, then roamed between the Ice Peaks and, unexpectedly, harvested dozens of Tears of Crystal.

Tears of Crystal are the main ingredient for concocting Water Element Pills. Although the dozens of Tears of Crystal Fang Bai had gathered were only about five hundred years old—far less valuable than the eighteen Iceheart Fruits—their sheer quantity was enough to quite surprise him.

"With these cultivation resources to assist, it won't be long before my strength advances further!"

Fang Bai's Divine Sense seeped into his Spatial Ring, sweeping over the limbs of two middle-grade Spirit Beasts and dozens of mid-grade Spiritual Medicines, a hint of a smile playing on his lips.

For people like Huang Miao, obtaining a mid-grade Spiritual Medicine or a Spirit Core from a middle-grade Spirit Beast would make their mountain trek a very successful endeavor.

But for Fang Bai, it was the treasures within the Spatial Ring that made this journey worthwhile.

Unknowingly, half a day had slipped by, and Fang Bai, with his bountiful harvest, returned from the Ice Peak area to meet the patiently waiting Huang Miao and others.

Seeing Fang Bai return safe and sound, Huang Miao and the others who had been filled with worry all breathed sighs of relief.

The area around the Ice Peak was regarded as one of the Forbidden Zones of Life by disciples of the Bitao Martial Academy. For nearly ten thousand years, including past deans, no one had dared venture into it.

This time, not only had Fang Bai entered the Ice Peak, but he also returned unscathed, which both shocked and delighted Huang Miao and his companions, and they held him in even higher esteem.

Huang Miao and others knew that Fang Bai must have many hidden secrets unknown to others; otherwise, he couldn't possibly have safely navigated the Ice Peak, reputed to be a Forbidden Zone of Life.

In the True Martial Realm, almost every Martial Artist has some secrets, some of which are even crucial to preserving their lives.

Thus, Huang Miao and the others consciously refrained from asking Fang Bai how he had traveled in and out of the Ice Peak unscathed. Instead, they kept reminding themselves to befriend Fang Bai and not to antagonize him.

"The trip to the Ice Peak yielded some mid-grade Spiritual Medicines, not a wasted journey,"

Fang Bai said with a smile under the expectant gazes of Huang Miao and the others.

He pulled out dozens of Tears of Crystal from the Spatial Ring for Huang Miao and others to see, but he did not reveal the eighteen Iceheart Fruits.

Fang Bai concealed the matter of the Iceheart Fruits not out of selfish intent or unwillingness to share with Huang Miao and the others, but because the Iceheart Fruits were of a higher grade and contained rich Essence Energy. With the current realm of Huang Miao and the others, they could only absorb part of the Essence Energy, essentially wasting these precious resources.

Fang Bai's Cultivation Level was much higher than that of Huang Miao and the others, and his unique physique enabled him to fully absorb the Essence Energy contained in the Iceheart Fruits without wasting any.

Therefore, Fang Bai simply kept the matter of the Iceheart Fruits to himself without informing Huang Miao and the others.

In the True Martial Realm, some Martial Artists valued cultivation resources more than life itself, so by sharing the dozens of Tears of Crystal he had gathered, Fang Bai was already displaying tremendous generosity.

As Fang Bai had anticipated, when he displayed the dozens of Tears of Crystal before Huang Miao and the others, they were all stunned and showed faces of disbelief.

Before entering the mountains for their training, Huang Miao and the others dreamt of picking a single piece of mid-grade Spiritual Medicine. However, after entering the core area of Bitao Mountain Range under Fang Bai's guidance, they obtained two pieces of mid-grade Spiritual Medicine, which left them overjoyed and ecstatic.

Now, Fang Bai took out dozens of mid-grade Spiritual Medicines at once and laid them in front of them. The shock it brought them is easily imaginable; each person felt like they were in a dream.

"Ah..."

Liu Zhuhu pinched himself hard, unable to withhold a scream as tears almost burst forth. Then he shouted wildly with joy, "It's real! I'm not dreaming!"

Then, Liu Liehu squatted down and casually picked up a Tears of Crystal to examine closely.

However, what Liu Liehu did not expect was that as soon as his palm grasped the Tears of Crystal, a bone-chilling cold seeped into his palm, freezing his blood instantly and halting its flow.

Simultaneously, a thin layer of ice quickly formed on the surface of Liu Liehu's palm.

The layer of ice spread up from his fingers as the chill invaded Liu Liehu's body; by the time Liu Liehu realized what was happening, his entire right arm had been encased in ice, losing all sensation, and he couldn't even drop the Tears of Crystal.

"How... How could this happen?"

Liu Liehu was shocked and tried to stand up but found that the blood in his body seemed to have partially solidified, rendering him unable to move.

"This guy..."

Fang Bai knew that Liu Liehu would suffer as soon as he picked up the Tears of Crystal. It was too late to stop him, and seeing him in pain, he shook his head with a wry smile, stood beside him, placed his palm on Liu Liehu's frozen right shoulder, and transferred a strand of Fire Primordial Qi into the meridians and blood vessels of his arm.

This strand of Fire Primordial Qi from Fang Bai was much stronger than the cold from the Tears of Crystal that had seeped into Liu Liehu's body. It immediately expelled the cold from Liu Liehu's arm. The layer of ice covering Liu Liehu's arm also instantly melted away, evaporating into vapor.

Feeling his right arm regain mobility, Liu Liehu immediately threw the Tears of Crystal onto the ground and stood as far away from it as if it were a venomous snake, not daring to come close again.

The others, including Huang Miao, who had seen Tears of Crystal for the first time, initially wanted to touch it like Liu Liehu, but seeing his plight, they hurriedly withdrew their extending arms.

"These Tears of Crystal grow in the extremely low temperatures between Ice Peaks, absorbing hundreds of years of extremely cold Water Element Qi. Ordinary Martial Artists cannot withstand that kind of extreme cold Water Element Qi..."

Fang Bai said this and glared at Liu Liehu, saying irritably, "You, you're too impulsive! You didn't even bother to find out what kind of Spiritual Medicine it was before recklessly reaching for it. I'll tell you, if I weren't here, you would have been dead!"

Realizing that he had almost made a grave mistake, Liu Liehu scratched his head with some fear and, his face flushed, said, "Brother Fang, it was my mistake. I won't be reckless again."

Fang Bai nodded, "It's good to change if you know your mistakes."

He continued, addressing Huang Miao and the others, "These dozens of Tears of Crystal will also be temporarily stored in my Spatial Ring. When we exchange them for Cultivation Resources later on, we will still share them."

The dozens of Tears of Crystal, all mid-grade Spiritual Medicines, could be exchanged at the Martial Artists Trading Market for a hefty amount of Cultivation Resources in the future, enough to greatly enhance each of their powers.

Huang Miao and the others, upon hearing Fang Bai's words, looked at each other with uncontrollable joy on their faces.

Chapter 1010: Return to Martial Academy

Huang Miao and the others had been "enticed" by Fang Bai, risking dangers tantamount to nine deaths for one life, to follow Fang Bai into the core area of the Bitao Mountain Range. They had hoped to chance upon some fortuitous opportunities, but little did they dream of such enormous gains from this journey.

Although these gains were largely unrelated to them and were almost entirely due to Fang Bai's own efforts, Fang Bai had previously said that the cultivation resources obtained from this journey would be shared among their team members.

Had any other martial artist made such a statement, Huang Miao and his companions would not have believed it, but coming from Fang Bai, they had never doubted it.

Imagining how before long, each of them would possess a substantial amount of cultivation resources, no longer constrained by the embarrassment of scarce resources for cultivation, Huang Miao and the others were filled with excitement and anticipation.

At the same time, they felt an even deeper gratitude towards Fang Bai.

"It's time we made our way back to the Martial Academy."

Huang Miao counted the days, determining that their cultivation journey through the mountain range had lasted roughly half a month. According to the regulations of the Bitao Martial Academy, if a cultivation team failed to return to the Martial Academy within a month, their cultivation results would be nullified, thus forgoing any rewards.

The Martial Academy's rewards primarily consisted of Essence Stone Elixirs and other cultivation resources, while they would also receive guidance in the Martial Dao from the higher-ups of the academy.

Although Huang Miao and his companions had reaped considerable gains this time and did not need to care about the minor cultivation resources awarded by the academy, they still highly valued the guidance from the academy's higher-ups.

After all, the higher-ups were all Desolate Level Martial Artists with vast knowledge and rich combat experience. Receiving their guidance would bring numerous benefits.

"This time, Junior Brother Fang has acquired dozens of mid-grade Spiritual Medicines. Once we return to the Bitao Martial Academy, just offering one or two of them should be enough to secure first place in this cultivation journey."

Hou Ziping waved his fist with vigor, saying excitedly, "The rewards for this mountain cultivation journey have increased. The team with the most gains will not only receive the highest amount of cultivation resources in history, but Dean Ren will also personally provide guidance in Martial Dao Cultivation. This chance belongs to us!"

Huang Miao, Liu Qingqing, and Liu Liehu, the brother-sister duo, also had their eyes shining with excitement and high spirits.

For them, Dean Ren Jingbo of the Bitao Martial Academy was a mighty and esteemed figure. To receive personal guidance from the dean was an honor of the highest order, something every disciple of the Bitao Martial Academy aspired to.

In contrast to the jubilant excitement of the four, Fang Bai's demeanour was much more composed.

With Fang Bai's capabilities, naturally, he had no interest in receiving guidance from Ren Jingbo. It would be more accurate to say that Fang Bai could instruct Ren Jingbo.

However, Fang Bai understood the importance Ren Jingbo held in the hearts of Huang Miao and the others, so he had no intention of dampening their enthusiasm.

When the time came, even Fang Bai himself would have to assume the appearance of humbly seeking knowledge, listening to Ren Jingbo explain the Martial Dao to them.

After resting on the spot for a short while, the five of them started their journey back, heading in the direction of the Bitao Martial Academy.

When they had entered the mountain for their cultivation, they had been cautious and highly vigilant, wary of potential Spirit Beast attacks.

Yet, on their return, they felt their strength had improved and their courage had greatly increased. As they hastened back, they moved at high speeds, no longer fearing encounters with Spirit Beasts.

Fortunately, on their return journey, they only encountered some docile, herbivorous low-order Spirit Beasts and didn't run into any conflicts.

When they left the core area of the Bitao Mountain Range, Fang Bai took action to hunt a few low-order Spirit Beasts and harvested more than ten low-grade Spiritual Medicines, which he had Huang Miao and others either carry on their backs or hold, to deceive other Cultivation Teams.

By the time they reached the edge of the Bitao Mountain Range, they occasionally met other Cultivation Teams that were also returning from the mountains.

The members of those Cultivation Teams were almost all injured, looking quite disheveled, and some teams had even suffered combat losses, with members perishing in the mountains.

It was extremely rare for a team like Fang Bai's to have no casualties and for the members to appear in high spirits and good condition.

Therefore, when other Cultivation Teams encountered Huang Miao's team, they were all incredibly surprised. Some of the Martial Academy disciples who had good relationships with Huang Miao came forward to inquire about Huang Miao's experiences along the way.

Huang Miao naturally did not tell the whole truth, only mentioning that the team he led had not ventured deep into the core area of the Bitao Mountain Range, but had simply moved around the edge before returning.

Other team members, seeing the small number of Cultivation Resources they had and the lack of high-grade resources, believed Huang Miao's words to be true.

When they arrived at the plaza in front of the gate to the Bitao Martial Academy, numerous teams who had gone into the mountains for Cultivation were already gathered there, among them were the Tu Hu team, the Shen Yulin team, and the Ouyang Zhan team that Huang Miao and the others had encountered on their way.

All these teams had suffered heavy losses, with half of their members having fallen in the Bitao Mountain Range.

As for Ouyang Jian and Shi Gang, who were successively killed by Fang Bai, they could never appear again.

Although Shi Gang's true strength was formidable, on the surface, he was just an Inner Court disciple and wasn't even ranked on the Inner Court's strength chart, so his death wouldn't cause too much of a stir.

However, Ouyang Jian was the first-ranked individual on the Personal Transmission Disciple strength chart, and right after the dozen or so high-level figures of the Martial Academy, it was his strength and status that were the highest. It was foreseeable that Ouyang Jian's death would cause a sensation.

But as the deaths of Ouyang Jian and Shi Gang were carried out without anyone being the wiser, nobody would suspect Fang Bai.

The Tu Hu team and Shen Yulin team had a decent harvest, each obtaining Spirit Beasts and Spiritual Medicines. In particular, the mid-grade Spiritual Medicine they each acquired was very eye-catching.

Shen Yulin was the second-ranked individual among the Personal Transmission Disciple strength chart, so it wasn't too surprising for her team to have harvested a mid-grade Spiritual Medicine.

But the performance of the Tu Hu team during this foray into the mountains was eye-opening.

With Tu Hu being the strongest member but only an Inner Court disciple in the Tu Hu team, the fact that they even managed to obtain a mid-grade Spiritual Medicine was baffling, and many teams felt both surprised and envious, considering that the Tu Hu team had stumbled upon great luck.

According to experiences from previous years, for a team that participated in mountain training to have a mid-grade Spiritual Medicine in hand meant that they had a chance of placing in the top three, earning the generous Cultivation Resources awarded by the high-levels of the Martial Academy.

The members of the Tu Hu team had lost more than half of their team during this Cultivation experience. However, the few members who had survived the ordeal no longer showed signs of sadness on their faces. At this moment, gathered together, they were whispering something, their faces filled with joy and excitement.

Only Tu Hu, the team leader, seemed somewhat gloomy, as if he was in low spirits. It was unclear whether he was mourning the passing of his fellow disciples or dissatisfied with his team's achievements.

When he saw the appearance of Huang Miao's team in the plaza, Tu Hu suddenly thought of the several dozen Antlered Silver Lions' antlers, and the gloominess on his face seemed to deepen a few shades.