

Doctor 1141

Chapter 1141: Resigned to Death

Qiu Heming exerted all his strength, moving horizontally through the air, trying to dodge the fatal threat coming from behind. However, it was already too late, and he only felt a burning object piercing through his body. When he looked down, a flame arrowhead, emitting high heat, was protruding from his chest.

"No!"

Qiu Heming distinctly felt his life force rapidly draining away. Filled with reluctance and shock, he screamed and reached out to pull out the flame arrow.

As soon as his hand reached out, the immense energy contained within the flame arrow suddenly exploded, blowing his body apart. In an instant, blood mist filled the sky, and Qiu Heming, a mid-ranking Cosmic Level Expert, was utterly destroyed.

The Xuannv Sect disciples were stunned once again.

The bow-type Spiritual Artifact in Fang Bai's hand could actually kill Qiu Heming from hundreds of meters away. This far exceeded their understanding, leaving them unable to fathom what kind of miraculous Spiritual Artifact it could be.

Yang Ruojun, who was gravely injured by Fang Bai and barely clinging to life, saw the power of Fang Bai's arrow, which was far greater than the previous strike. His already pale face showed a mix of terror, despair, and immense regret.

But there is no medicine for regret in this world. Yang Ruojun knew that his stubbornness and intractable behavior had brewed a bitter outcome, harming not only himself but also the Xuannv Sect.

He had his meridians shattered and his combat power considerably weakened and was utterly unqualified to continue as the Sect Leader.

With the death of Qiu Heming and the Wind brothers at the Xuannv Sect, Swiftwind Valley would certainly not rest until they had retaliated. The Xuannv Sect was fated not to escape destruction.

Even if Swiftwind Valley spared the Xuannv Sect, having offended a powerful figure like Fang Bai meant there would be no peace for them in the future. The Xuannv Sect was bound to decline.

With a single cut and an arrow shot, Fang Bai's Essence Energy was almost depleted; his vision darkened, and he nearly stumbled, struggling to keep his balance.

Fortunately, his actions of killing Qiu Heming and grievously injuring the senior ranks of the Xuannv Sect had intimidated all the Xuannv Sect disciples, each of them overawed and afraid to look him in the eye. None of them noticed that he was in an extremely weakened state at the moment.

Fang Bai stowed away the Houyi Bow and took out many Gathering Yuan Pills from his Spatial Ring, swallowing more than a dozen bottles of both low and mid-grade pills, and then he sat down cross-legged to enter a Cultivation State.

The surrounding Xuannv Sect disciples looked on, dumbfounded.

Even the Vast Level Experts of the Xuannv Sect swallowed Gathering Yuan Pills one by one during cultivation, waiting until each pill's power was completely assimilated before daring to continue. To consume over a dozen bottles of Gathering Yuan Pills in one go like Fang Bai did was unimaginable. They couldn't understand how his meridians could withstand the tremendous release of Essence Energy from the pills without bursting.

Originally, Fang Bai had consumed the Gathering Yuan Pills to replenish his nearly depleted Essence Energy. Yet unexpectedly, the signs of advancing that had been looming even before now reappeared, this time intensively purging through his meridians with the dense Essence Energy produced from metabolizing the pills, stronger than before.

Fang Bai was overjoyed inwardly, knowing that had he not just used all his force to make that strike and that shot, depleting his Essence Energy to the point of extreme exhaustion, such an effect would not have occurred.

The saying "What doesn't break you makes you stronger" seemed quite fitting here.

In this world, the majority of Martial Artists, when in a Cultivation State, are unguarded and most vulnerable. If other Martial Artists took the opportunity to attack then, they could very likely succeed.

Hence, Martial Artists typically seclude themselves in hidden places that others can't find during cultivation or have someone guard them. Otherwise, they might encounter danger.

However, Fang Bai, considering the thousands of Xuannv Sect disciples around him as nothing, sat down cross-legged to cultivate in what seemed like a state of forgetfulness, obviously at his most vulnerable. Yet, not a single Xuannv Sect disciple dared to disturb him.

Thankfully, no one dared to lay a hand on Fang Bai. Otherwise, the murderous intent emanating from the Jade Pendant he wore would have inflicted fatal wounds on those bold enough to attack him.

At that moment, the high-ranking members of the Xuannv Sect had struggled into sitting positions and had each swallowed Healing Pills to recuperate. Only Yang Ruojun still lay in a pool of blood, propping up her body with one arm and looking at Fang Bai with conflicted eyes.

"Hongyan, keep an eye on them!"

Steward Zhou hastily instructed Linghu Hongyan before leaping down and helping Yang Ruojun to sit up.

Steward Zhou took out some Healing Pills, intending to have Yang Ruojun take them, but she shook her head in refusal.

"Don't waste them..."

Yang Ruojun gave a bitter smile and spoke weakly, "I have committed grave errors, shamed our ancestors, and the only way to atone is through death! But before I die, there are things I must confess... Steward Zhou, bring Zhuge Lian, Linghu Qianjiao, and Linghu Baimei here..."

Seeing Yang Ruojun's resolve to die, Steward Zhou couldn't help but look desolate. He nodded, then dashed back to Linghu Qianjiao and Linghu Baimei, tapping them lightly to release their constraints.

"Qianjiao, Baimei, both of you come with me! The Sect Leader... she has something to say to you...", Steward Zhou said softly, his expression complex, as he stole a glance at the Linghu sisters.

The relationship between the Linghu sisters and Fang Bai ran deep, and Fang Bai had just displayed his terrifying power. This made Steward Zhou feel even more pressure when speaking to the sisters, slipping into a cautious tone.

The Linghu sisters exchanged a glance, silently communicating. They assumed that unless Yang Ruojun had lost her mind, she wouldn't think of harming them at such a juncture, so they finally nodded.

"Xiao Lian! You come too!"

Steward Zhou then gestured to Zhuge Lian, who was not far away.

Zhuge Lian paused, then hurriedly walked over to Steward Zhou and stood beside the Linghu sisters.

Steward Zhou led the three women to where Yang Ruojun was and said, "Sect Leader, Qianjiao, Baimei, and Xiao Lian are here. Please, look..."

Yang Ruojun nodded her head, her gaze settling on the faces of the Linghu sisters. She sighed, "As death approaches, one's words grow kind. Qianjiao, Baimei, I acknowledge that my past actions were excessive and caused you much heartache. Here, I want to apologize to you..."

Just a simple apology, and she expects our forgiveness?

The corners of the Linghu sisters' mouths curled up in scorn as they watched Yang Ruojun, bloodied and barely alive, without a trace of pity or sympathy in their hearts.

They believed that Yang Ruojun's current plight was entirely of her own making.

Had it not been for Yang Ruojun and Qiu Heming's attempt to kill Fang Bai, would such a result have occurred?

If Fang Bai had not been so powerful, having killed Qiu Heming and severely injured the Xuannv Sect's higher-ups, it might have been Fang Bai lying in a pool of blood instead of the Xuannv Sect members.

The Linghu sisters could even imagine that if the situation had been reversed, with Fang Bai severely injured, the Xuannv Sect members and Qiu Heming victorious, then Yang Ruojun's face would surely be filled with triumph.

Chapter 1142: Self-Destruction

"Qian Jiao, Baimei, I don't ask for your forgiveness; I only hope that, as disciples of the Xuannv Sect, you can persuade Senior Fang not to destroy the Xuannv Sect so that it can continue to exist... If the Xuannv Sect were to perish by my hands, how could I face our founder and the previous Sect Leaders after my death!"

When Yang Ruojun said this, her emotions suddenly surged. Ignoring her injuries, she struggled forward and tightly gripped the hems of Linghu Qianjiao and Linghu Baimei's dresses, choking up, "All the faults are mine alone! I am willing to bear all consequences! I only beg you... please persuade Senior Fang not to harm the Xuannv Sect's elders, stewards, and the many disciples..."

She coughed violently at this point, her wounds bleeding more profusely, her face contorted in pain, yet she stubbornly refused to let go of the sisters' dress hems.

Seeing this, Steward Zhou hurriedly came to assist Yang Ruojun, urgently saying, "Sect Leader, please take the elixir to heal your injuries!"

Yang Ruojun firmly shook her head and then looked at Linghu Qianjiao and Linghu Baimei with pleading eyes.

Linghu Qianjiao, cold on the outside but warm on the inside, saw that Yang Ruojun had no intention of healing herself and her life was slowly slipping away. It was clear she had resolved to die, and Linghu Qianjiao's eyes inadvertently showed a trace of reluctance.

Linghu Baimei said indifferently, "Sect Leader, you are asking the wrong people! The survival of the Xuannv Sect does not depend on us but on Brother Fang."

Yang Ruojun said, "No, I know, whatever you say, Senior Fang will surely listen..."

Suddenly remembering something, she released the Linghu sisters and, struggling, grasped onto Zhuge Lian's dress hem, pleading, "Xiao Lian, you're also a disciple of the Xuannv Sect, you can't bear to see the Xuannv Sect destroyed, right? Please, you must also ask Senior Fang... He just listened to your cry..."

Just earlier, when Fang Bai had executed the Silence-Ending Blade to eliminate the high-ranking members of the Xuannv Sect, it was Zhuge Lian's cry that had stayed his hand, giving Yang Ruojun a glimmer of hope.

Zhuge Lian, seeing Linghu Qianjiao and Linghu Baimei also watching her with strange looks, blushed slightly, misunderstanding, and said, "Sect Leader, Junior Sister Linghu is right, you should be asking Brother Fang!"

"Sect Leader" paused, then muttered with despair, "Senior Fang probably hates me to the bone. My plea would be useless... useless..."

Yang Ruojun slowly released Zhuge Lian's dress hem, reseated herself cross-legged, swept her gaze over Zhuge Lian, Linghu Qianjiao, and Linghu Baimei, then closed her eyes, weakly saying, "Qian Jiao, Baimei, Xiao Lian, the survival of the Xuannv Sect now depends on you..."

After saying these words, her body trembled slightly, and then she sat still as an old monk in meditation, motionless.

A few moments later, traces of blood slowly seeped from Yang Ruojun's mouth and nose.

"Sect Leader!"

Steward Zhou, alarmed by the situation, realized Yang Ruojun's life force had extinguished, and she had died by severing her own meridians.

"The Sect Leader has passed away!"

Steward Zhou knelt on the ground, crying out in grief. Around him, thousands of Xuannv Sect disciples reacted to his words, kneeling and crying out, their voices filling the area with an atmosphere of sorrow.

Linghu Qianjiao and Linghu Baimei looked at each other, astonished that Yang Ruojun had chosen such a method to end her own life for the sake of the Xuannv Sect's continuation.

However, unlike the other Xuannv Sect disciples who knelt down, the two women felt disillusioned and no longer considered themselves part of the Xuannv Sect after Yang Ruojun had previously branded them with accusations of "betraying the sect" and being "ominous."

However, no matter what, Yang Ruojun's death also dissolved some of the resentment in their hearts.

As for Zhuge Lian, although she was dissatisfied with Sect Leader Yang Ruojun, she had grown up in the Xuannv Sect and held deep feelings for it. Seeing thousands of Xuannv Sect disciples kneeling densely, she couldn't help but feel a sting in her nose and her eyes redden slightly, and she knelt down as well.

Fang Bai, who was in a cultivation state, slightly furrowed his brows, then calmed down.

Fang Bai's Essence Energy was depleting quickly, but it also recovered quickly. After swallowing more than ten bottles of medium-rank Gathering Yuan Pills, his Qi Sea quickly became replete with Essence Energy, restored as before.

Immediately following, Fang Bai tried to break through the barrier in his path to advancement, but found it still slightly lacking.

Thinking about the dozen or so Creation Pills he had previously refined stored in the Spatial Ring, although they were low-rank Elixirs, they could also increase the success rate of breaking through. Thus, Fang Bai took out all those Creation Pills from the Spatial Ring and swallowed them all.

More than ten bottles of Creation Pills amounted to over a hundred Elixirs. The power of the medicine was not trivial. After refining those Creation Pills, Fang Bai felt the Essence Energy in his Qi Sea explode in an instant. He immediately guided the Essence Energy with his consciousness to once again assault the barrier to advancement.

The human body has countless meridians, which before birth are all unobstructed. After birth, some meridians become blocked and need to be unblocked through cultivation.

In cultivation, a Martial Artist absorbs Heaven and Earth Origin Energy to unblock those obstructed meridians.

The more meridians a Martial Artist unblocks, the more areas of the body the Essence Energy can reach, and thus, both the physical strength and inherent power become increasingly formidable.

Similarly, once the meridians are unblocked, they need constant widening and strengthening to house more Essence Energy in an instant, ensuring they don't burst from the pressure of a massive surge of Essence Energy.

When a Martial Artist's Qi Sea accumulates enough powerful Essence Energy, it is possible to assault the blocked meridians. Once a whole meridian is unblocked and Essence Energy flows through it, the Martial Artist's strength multiplies, fulfilling the purpose of advancing in realm.

Fang Bai used his consciousness to guide his Essence Energy, continuously attacking the last barrier within a meridian in his body.

A hundred breaths later, there was a light explosive sound within his body, and his figure slightly shook. The final barrier was successfully broken, Essence Energy filled the pathway, connecting and intertwining with other meridians, starting to circulate.

A Martial Artist, by cultivating from Acquired to Innate, and then from Innate to the Foundation Establishment Realm, only then does true cultivation begin.

In this True Martial Realm, one of the three thousand Minor Worlds, influenced by the environmental forces of heaven and earth, reaching the Innate Realm is already the limit. To cultivate to a higher realm, one must seek opportunities in the vast expanse of the three thousand Major Worlds.

In the True Martial Realm, Cultivation Techniques enabling cultivation to the Innate Realm are few, but this was not an issue for Fang Bai.

Within Fang Bai's mind, there were thousands of Cultivation Techniques available for cultivation, while the Innate Techniques were just the most ordinary, most basic techniques for him.

After rebirth through seizing another's body, Fang Bai chose to cultivate the formidable Dragon-Tiger-Lion-Elephant Technique in the secular world. This technique was powerful and, when cultivated to its limits, could reach the Innate Realm.

The Dragon-Tiger-Lion-Elephant Technique has nine major realms. After this advancement, Fang Bai had reached the sixth realm, the High Rank of the Surging Essence Realm, equivalent to Vast Level High Rank in this world.

Given Fang Bai's monstrous ability to challenge those above his level, he now possessed the strength to contend with Cosmic Level High Rank powerhouses in this world.

Chapter 1143: Let's Go

After successfully advancing in rank, Fang Bai emerged from his cultivation state and slowly opened his eyes.

He couldn't help but curl his lips when he saw a large group of Xuannv Sect disciples kneeling around him.

In fact, when Zhuge Lian had let out that cry of alarm earlier, Fang Bai had already reined in his killing intent and had not planned to take the lives of the upper echelons of the Xuannv Sect.

However, although he could spare them from death, he could not spare them the punishment; Fang Bai severely injured them all as punishment for their combined attack on him with Qiu Heming.

Yet, the self-inflicted death of Yang Ruojun was somewhat unexpected to Fang Bai; he hadn't expected this woman to be as ruthless towards herself as she was towards others.

Regarding Yang Ruojun's death, Fang Bai was indifferent, believing that the woman deserved her fate and was not worthy of sympathy.

Fang Bai stood up and briskly walked towards Linghu Qianjiao and Linghu Baimei.

Sensing his approach, the Linghu sisters turned around and joyfully called out, "Brother Fang!"

When Fang Bai reached the two women, he asked with concern, "Are you two alright?"

"We're fine."

The Linghu sisters shook their heads in unison.

Seeing Fang Bai, Linghu Baimei was both excited and thrilled, asking, "Brother Fang, since we parted ways in the Secular World, my sister and I thought it would be difficult to see you again! We heard from Elder Han that someone named Fang Bai had destroyed the Purple Flame Sect, and we wondered if it could be you. It really was you. When did you enter the True Martial Realm?"

Fang Bai smiled and said, "That's a long story. When there's time, I'll explain everything slowly."

Linghu Baimei said "Oh," then added, "It's good that you arrived in time, Brother Fang. Otherwise, my sister and I might have been taken to Swiftwind Valley by Elder Qiu and the Feng brothers. Swiftwind Valley is a second-tier sect with over a dozen Cosmic Level experts. If we had been taken there, meeting again would have been harder than ascending to the heavens!"

Swiftwind Valley's overall strength far exceeded that of the Xuannv Sect; while Fang Bai could defeat the high-ranking officials of the Xuannv Sect, he could not likely defeat those of Swiftwind Valley. If the Linghu sisters had indeed been taken there, Fang Bai's rash rescue attempt would probably have resulted in not only failing to save them but also losing his own life.

The Feng brothers had long coveted the Innate Spiritual Root and Primordial Yin Physique of the Linghu sisters. If the sisters were taken to Swiftwind Valley, they would surely be forced to become martial spouses with the Feng brothers, which would truly be a fate worse than death for them.

Thinking of these things caused Linghu Qianjiao and Linghu Baimei to shudder with residual fear, grateful for Fang Bai's timely arrival.

Fang Bai said, "What of a second-tier sect? If Swiftwind Valley takes you away, then I'll storm Swiftwind Valley and turn it upside-down! No one is allowed to harm my friends!"

At these words, warmth spread through the hearts of the Linghu sisters.

Fang Bai's gaze shifted away from Yang Ruojun's body and moved towards Han Xingyu and other high-ranking officials of the Xuannv Sect, then he began walking towards them.

Zhuge Lian, thinking Fang Bai intended to kill Han Xingyu and other Xuannv Sect officials, hastily stood up, spread her arms in front of him, and pleaded, "Brother Fang, it was the Sect Master's fault for imprisoning the Junior Sister Linghu. Now that the Sect Master is dead, please spare Elder Han and the others..."

Although Zhuge Lian had many grievances against Yang Ruojun, she got along well with Han Xingyu and other high-ranking officials. Moreover, as Yang Ruojun repented before her death and begged Zhuge Lian and the Linghu sisters to persuade Fang Bai to spare the other Xuannv Sect disciples, Zhuge Lian would feel uneasy if she did nothing.

Seeing Zhuge Lian's nervous demeanor, Fang Bai chuckled and said, "If I wanted to kill them, I would have done so earlier. Why would I wait until now?"

"So you..."

Fang Bai pointed at Han Xingyu, who was looking at him, and said, "I need to speak with Elder Han for a moment."

"Really?"

"Really."

Zhuge Lian stepped aside after receiving Fang Bai's affirmative answer.

Fang Bai walked up to Han Xingyu and, looking at her pale face due to her severe injuries, said indifferently, "Elder Han, you didn't fulfill the promise you made to me in Purple Flame City! Had I not arrived in time, you know well what would have become of Qian Jiao and Baimei."

Han Xingyu gave a bitter smile and said, "I advised the Sect Master, but to no avail... Senior Fang, whether you believe me or not, I did my best."

Although Fang Bai had severely injured the upper echelon of the Xuannv Sect and the Sect Master had died because of him, Han Xingyu knew that ultimately the fault lay with the Xuannv Sect, so she truly couldn't harbor any resentment toward Fang Bai.

"Brother Fang, Elder Han did indeed try to persuade the Sect Master, it's just that the Sect Master..."

Zhuge Lian originally wanted to blame everything on the Sect Master, but considering that Yang Ruojun had already died, she felt it inappropriate to speak ill of her and thus remained silent.

Fang Bai nodded, turned to Han Xingyu, and said, "Elder Han, rest assured, I do not intend to trouble the disciples of the Xuannv Sect, but I am here to take Qian Jiao and Baimei with me. You have no objections, right?"

When Han Xingyu heard this, she was initially worried that the Sect Master's death was not enough to quell Fang Bai's wrath. Hearing his words, she couldn't help but breathe a sigh of relief and said, "If Qian Jiao and Baimei wish to go with Senior Fang, we naturally would not dare to detain them."

Indeed, Han Xingyu understood that ever since the Sect Master had intended to use Linghu Qian Jiao and Hu Baimei in marriage alliances with other martial sects, these sisters had become completely disillusioned with the Xuannv Sect and had no desire to stay. Now that Fang Bai intended to take them away, it was likely just what they wanted, and the Xuannv Sect could no longer retain them.

"Elder Han, I need to heal you. Please excuse me!"

Fang Bai said, gently tapped Han Xingyu's body with his palm, transferring a strand of Chaos Origin Energy to her, then withdrew his hand, took out several bottles of elixirs, and placed them in front of

Han Xingyu, saying, "Within a day, your injuries should mostly be healed, and your strength might even return to its peak. Additionally, these elixirs may benefit your advancement."

With the Xuannv Sect Master Yang Ruojun dead and the other high-ranking members severely injured, the leaderless disciples of the Xuannv Sect were like scattered sand, unsure of what to do. By healing Han Xingyu then leaving her to lead the Xuannv Sect, Fang Bai essentially gave thousands of disciples a chance for hope.

That strand of Chaos Essence Qi entered her body, and Han Xingyu immediately felt its unique powers as it began to autonomously heal her internal and external wounds, more miraculous than any healing pill she had ever used.

Han Xingyu glanced at Fang Bai, her lips moved slightly as if she wanted to say something.

"Elder Han, I healed you because of our acquaintance. As for others, I will not treat them!"

Fang Bai seemed to anticipate what Han Xingyu wanted to say and rejected it before she could speak.

Although disappointed, Han Xingyu understood that Fang Bai sparing the lives of Xuannv Sect's high ranks and healing her was already a great mercy, and her wanting him to heal other high-ranking members was an excessive plea.

"Qian Jiao, Baimei, let's go!"

With matters settled, Fang Bai had no desire to linger. He gestured to the Linghu sisters and strode towards the sect gate, with the Linghu sisters quickly following.

Chapter 1144: To Leave or to Stay

Zhuge Lian watched Fang Bai's departing figure, her face brimming with a sense of loss.

Ever since she met Fang Bai in Purple Flame City, Zhuge Lian had come to regard him as family. The fact that he was leaving now without even bidding her farewell truly saddened her.

In the midst of her sorrow, Fang Bai suddenly turned and walked back towards her.

Zhuge Lian's heart leaped with joy. As Fang Bai approached, she lightly bit her lip and softly said, "Brother Fang, you... you're leaving now?"

"Xiao Lian, would you like to come with me?"

Fang Bai stared intently at Zhuge Lian's fair and delicate face, asking her earnestly.

"Ah?"

Zhuge Lian hadn't expected Fang Bai to ask such a question and was momentarily stunned.

Fang Bai spoke seriously, "I made a promise to your father to find you and your mother in the True Martial Realm and to take care of you both. But I can't stay at the Xuannv Sect with you. It would be better for you to stay by my side from now on, so I can look after you more conveniently. As for your mother, we can search for her together. Of course, whether you leave or stay, I will respect your decision."

Fang Bai had heard Zhuge Lian mention some things about her mother. He knew that her mother wasn't a disciple of the Xuannv Sect but a person in distress who had been taken in by the sect. After Zhuge Lian was born, her mother entrusted her to the high-ranking members of the Xuannv Sect and then went out to search for her father, never to return and leaving no trace.

During this period, the Xuannv Sect also sent out disciples to search for Zhuge Lian's mother, but all efforts came to nothing, as if her mother had vanished from this world.

Zhuge Lian had also considered setting out alone to search for her mother, but the upper echelons of the Xuannv Sect disagreed, worried about her young age, insufficient strength, and also because she had an Innate Spiritual Root, which might lead to big trouble if she encountered unscrupulous Martial Artists outside.

Since Yang Ruojun took over as Sect Leader, Zhuge Lian, who had been neglected, yearned for her mother more than ever. She had thought about leaving the Xuannv Sect secretly to find her mother several times but worried that if she left, her mother might suddenly return. Thus, she was caught in a dilemma.

Now that Fang Bai was willing to take Zhuge Lian to find her mother, it tempted her.

Since Fang Bai could kill a Cosmic Level mid-tier fighter like Qiu Heming, it was clear he was powerful. Being with him, at least she wouldn't have to worry about safety.

However, after living for so many years considering the Xuannv Sect as her family, parting with it filled her heart with reluctance.

"Xiao Lian, I know you've always wanted to find your mother. In the past, we wouldn't let you go because we were worried for your safety. Now that Senior Fang is willing to take you, it's your chance. Now that the Sect Leader has passed away, I will make the decision and let you leave," said Han Xingyu suddenly.

At this moment, the high-ranking members of the Xuannv Sect were in dire straits, with Sect Leader Yang Ruojun having ended her own life, and the other Elders and Stewards recuperating from severe injuries with their eyes closed. Han Xingyu, having been revived with a thread of Chaos Origin Energy by Fang Bai, was the only one who could speak. Moreover, being one of the four Great Elders of the Xuannv Sect, Han Xingyu held a high position and great power, and was also closest to Zhuge Lian. In this matter, it was she who had the deciding power.

Zhuce Lian was already tempted, and upon hearing Elder Han's words, she hesitated no longer and said to Fang Bai, "Brother Fang, I will go with you."

"Good, let's go," Fang Bai replied.

Fang Bai smiled and nodded his head, then turned to walk towards Linghu Qianjiao and Linghu Baimei, who were waiting nearby.

In the tomb of Zhuge Dingtian, located in the Secular World, Fang Bai had made a promise in front of Zhuge Dingtian's remains: he would find Zhuge's wife and child in the True Martial Realm and take care of them. Now that he had found his daughter, Zhuge Lian, if he could also find his wife, Zhou Yuruo, it would mean fulfilling a heartfelt wish.

Zhuge Lian followed behind Fang Bai and, after taking a few steps, suddenly turned back to address Han Xingyu, "Elder Han, thank you for always taking care of me. If I can find my mother, she and I will come back to the Xuannv Sect to visit you... and the other fellow disciples. Goodbye."

With that, she waved to Han Xingyu and hurried to catch up with Fang Bai.

Han Xingyu watched the retreating figures of Fang Bai, Zhuge Lian, and the Linghu sisters, sighing softly with a somewhat somber expression.

Both Zhuge Lian and the Linghu sisters were rare Martial Dao geniuses in the history of the Xuannv Sect. If they were cultivated with care, they would undoubtedly become the pillars of the sect, leading the Xuannv Sect to rise in the True Martial Realm. However, the actions of the Sect Leader Yang Ruojun had led the three of them to become disheartened and progressively distant from the Xuannv Sect.

Han Xingyu knew that once the Linghu sisters left, it meant they were severing their ties with the Xuannv Sect and would not return. Zhuge Lian, on the other hand, still had some fondness for the Xuannv Sect, and perhaps, after finding her mother, the two of them would indeed come back.

As Fang Bai and the others walked further away, Han Xingyu closed his eyes, focusing on healing his wounds.

The Xuannv Sect had suffered heavy casualties from the ordinary disciples to the upper echelons in the recent battle. Han Xingyu wished to heal his injuries as soon as possible to deal with the aftermath.

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Upon leaving Cloud Mist Mountain, the sight of dead bodies was gone, and the stench of blood was absent. Instead, there was a tranquil and peaceful scene, making it hard to imagine that within Cloud Mist Mountain's Xuannv Sect, there was a Corpse Mountain Blood Sea Killing scene—like hell on Earth.

"Phew..."

The moment they were out of Cloud Mist Mountain and saw the flat land ahead, both Zhuge Lian and the Linghu sisters sighed in relief, as if venting the pent-up heaviness in their chests.

"Brother Fang, where are we headed next?" Linghu Baimei asked with a smile, the corners of her eyes and brows carrying an innate charm.

After arriving in the True Martial Realm, Linghu Baimei initially cultivated at the Xuannv Sect. She was later imprisoned in Reflection Valley, and the normally talkative and cheerful girl became silent and downhearted. But today, seeing Fang Bai and leaving the Xuannv Sect, she finally felt happy again and returned to her natural disposition.

Linghu Qianjiao and Zhuge Lian also looked at Fang Bai with questioning eyes.

Fang Bai said, "First, I'll accompany Xiao Lian to find her mother, and we'll also look for some friends and relatives who came from the Secular World with me."

Many friends and relatives had accompanied Fang Bai to the True Martial Realm. But during the use of the Teleportation Array, Fang Bai got separated from them. He was both concerned and worried about them. Now, leaving the Bitao Martial Academy, Fang Bai was prepared to travel throughout the True Martial Realm in search of those friends and relatives. Unexpectedly, the first ones he found were Linghu Qianjiao and Linghu Baimei, who had arrived in the True Martial Realm ahead of them.

Fang Bai continued, "However, I am not familiar with the True Martial Realm and don't know where to begin searching... Xiao Lian, you've been in the True Martial Realm longer; where do you think your mother might have gone to find your father after she left the Xuannv Sect?"

The Linghu sisters had heard some of Zhuge Lian's story. They knew that her mother had once stayed in the Xuannv Sect while she was pregnant, and not long after giving birth, she left to seek her husband, never to return.

The Linghu sisters were orphans adopted by Linghu Hongyan in the Secular World and had never seen their parents from a young age. Similar backgrounds made them sympathize with Zhuge Lian.

Chapter 1145: Searching for Ruoshui Palace

Within the Xuannv Sect, Zhuge Lian was a Direct Disciple, whereas the Linghu sisters were merely Disciples of the External Courtyard. Since they each busied themselves with Cultivation Technique practice, they had previously had few opportunities to interact and were not very familiar with one another.

However, the three women were, after all, from the same Sect, and they all shared a deep relationship with Fang Bai, so there were many common topics to discuss. After leaving the Xuannv Sect, the women followed behind Fang Bai, and after whispering among themselves for a while, they began to feel more acquainted.

"Brother Fang, you're asking me, but I really don't know!" Zhuge Lian shook her head helplessly when Fang Bai asked where her mother might have gone to look for her father and said, "The previous Sect Leader once mentioned that when my mother left the Xuannv Sect, she only said she was going to search for my father. Whether she could find him or not, she promised to return to the Xuannv Sect after three years... Besides that, she left no other clues. But who would have thought that once she left, nearly twenty years would pass without any news of her..."

As Zhuge Lian spoke, her eyes reddened slightly, and tears shimmered within. She choked up and said, "Many Disciples of the Xuannv Sect privately say that my mother may have encountered misfortune and perished outside. But I have always refused to believe that my mother is dead. I have a voice in my heart telling me: My mother must still be alive!"

She sniffed and spoke with firm resolve, "Anyway, whether my mother is alive or dead, I am determined to find her!"

She paused for a moment, then continued with a crestfallen expression, "But... But just like you asked just now, Brother Fang, where exactly could my mother have gone to find my father? The True Martial Realm is boundless and vast. If we search without any clue, when will we ever find her? Right, Brother Fang, you've seen my father's last words. Did that message mention anything about my parents from back then, like their identity and origin or anything like that..."

She finished speaking and looked at Fang Bai with her large, clear eyes.

Back in Purple Flame City, Fang Bai had recounted Zhuge Dingtian's last words to Zhuge Lian. However, due to her emotional state at the time, Zhuge Lian hadn't remembered much, except that her father entrusted Fang Bai to come to the True Martial Realm to find her and her mother and take care of them, and that he had gifted the Blood-Drinking Mad Blade to Fang Bai.

Fang Bai thought for a moment and said, "If I remember correctly, your parents were apparently pursued by Disciples of a Sect called the Ruoshui Palace. Eventually, your father led the assassin away, which allowed your mother to escape and hide within the Xuannv Sect. However, when I inquired before, it seemed that no one knew of the Sect called 'Ruoshui Palace.' Have you ever heard of it?"

Zhuge Lian, Linghu Qianjiao, and Linghu Baimei all shook their heads in unison.

Linghu Qianjiao and Linghu Baimei had not been in the True Martial Realm for long and had not ventured outside since joining the Xuannv Sect, so they only knew about some of the Sects surrounding the Xuannv Sect.

Although Zhuge Lian was a native Martial Artist of the True Martial Realm, it was only recently that she had accompanied Han Xingyu on a journey to Purple Flame City for her first experience outside.

The "Ruoshui Palace" was an unfamiliar Sect that the three women had never heard of.

Fang Bai mused, "Actually... it's not that we have no leads..."

The three women looked toward Fang Bai, their eyes filled with questions.

Fang Bai said to Zhuge Lian, "From what your father's last words indicate, he was an Innate Expert in his lifetime, and Innate Experts should belong to the top echelon of the True Martial Realm. From this, we can infer that those who pursued him must be from a powerful Sect that possesses Innate Experts. With this in mind, we can greatly narrow down our search range."

"Innate Experts?"

Zhuge Lian obviously didn't know what the Innate Realm was and furrowed her brows, "I've heard the former Sect Leader say that in this world, the highest realm for Martial Artists is the Universe Level, and the Sects that possess Universe Level Experts are first-rate Sects, the strongest in the True Martial Realm. I've never heard of Innate Experts before."

Fang Bai said, "Heaven and Earth are mysterious and yellow, the Primordial Chaos of the Universe is vast. These eight Martial Dao Realms are widely known by Martial Artists in the world. However, there are always higher skies beyond our skies, people beyond our people. There definitely exists Martial Dao Realms higher than these eight, it's just that very few Martial Artists can cultivate to such realms. True experts are usually elusive, like Divine Dragons who show their heads but not their tails, not easily accessible to ordinary Martial Artists; truly powerful Sects are usually established in hidden places, not easily found by the world."

Zhuge Lian found it hard to imagine just how powerful Innate Experts could be. In her previous understanding, the Universe Level Experts of the legendary first-rate Sects were invincible in this world. If, according to what Fang Bai said, the strength of Innate Experts was even more terrifying, wouldn't the Sects that possess Innate Experts be Super Sects?

Thinking of her fallen father as an Innate Expert filled Zhuge Lian with pride, but then she thought of her father being pursued and eventually perishing in the Secular World, and she couldn't help feeling sad and sorrowful.

When Linghu Baimi and Linghu Qianjiao were in the Secular World, they had followed Fang Bai for a while, practicing the Martial Arts Techniques he taught them, which Fang Bai said could help them cultivate to the Innate Realm. Therefore, they were not unfamiliar with the term "Innate Realm."

Now as they heard Fang Bai mention the "Innate Realm" again, and even a realm that has surpassed the most powerful Universe Level Experts of this world, the two sisters couldn't help but have their beautiful eyes light up, full of longing.

"Since the Ruoshui Palace is behind the pursuit of your parents, then let's start with this Sect to find information about your mother. As long as the Ruoshui Palace exists in the True Martial Realm, no matter how hidden it is, we always have a chance to find it. Well, let's just consider this search as a part of our cultivation experience,"

Fang Bai concluded.

After the four of them left Cloud Mist Mountain, they walked slowly along a winding path. After traveling over a dozen miles and passing through a dense forest, Fang Bai stopped in his tracks and let out a clear whistle towards the woods.

Moments later, the sound of hoofbeats approached, and Hu Ren, Miao Feng, and Hu Yi, a family of three, emerged from the forest leading four Swiftwind Horses.

"Senior Fang, you've returned?"

Seeing Fang Bai, Hu Ren's face brightened with joy as he approached him and respectfully asked.

Previously, Hu Ren's family had brought Fang Bai to the Xuannv Sect near Cloud Mist Mountain, marked its exact location for him, and then Fang Bai let them wait for him temporarily in this forest while he restored his true appearance and reclaimed his original name in front of Hu Ren and his wife.

Hu Ren and his wife never expected Fang Bai to be so young and were quite astonished at the time. Knowing that someone Fang Bai's age possessed such formidable strength hinted at him being a limitless Martial Dao Genius. They were even keener on letting their son, Hu Yi, follow and learn from him.

Fang Bai nodded with a smile and said, "Old Brother Hu, sorry to have kept you waiting. Oh, allow me to introduce my three friends: Zhuge Lian, Linghu Qianjiao, and Linghu Baimei. This is Hu Ren, Miao Feng, and Hu Yi..."

Chapter 1146: Go Rob the Dragon Tiger Palace

Fang Bai introduced Zhuge Lian and two other ladies, along with the entire Hu Ren family to each other. He then said to the Linghu sisters, "I met Brother Hu and his family on my way to Xuannv Sect. Without the guidance of Brother Hu and his wife, I might not have found Xuannv Sect so quickly and rescued you two in time. So you should thank Brother Hu and his wife!"

Hearing this, the Linghu sisters clasped their fists and bowed to Hu Ren and his wife.

Although the cultivation level of the Linghu sisters wasn't as high as that of the Hu Ren couple, they were wearing the disciple attire of Xuannv Sect, each of them incredibly beautiful with an extraordinary

air about them. It was evident they had a close relationship with Fang Bai, so naturally, Hu Ren and his wife dared not act arrogantly in front of them and hastily returned the gesture, continuously saying they didn't dare accept the thanks.

Zhuge Lian had already met Hu Ren and his wife during their fall into Nine Bends Gorge, and they smiled and nodded at each other as a form of greeting.

"Uncle Bai, I just saw many martial artists skimming past the edge of the woods, looking like they were fleeing. What exactly has happened?" asked Hu Yi, standing behind Hu Ren and his wife.

Fang Bai knew this was a phenomenon of a mass escape resulting from Xuannv Sect joined forces with Qiu Heming to defeat the combined attack of disciples from Dragon Tiger Palace and five other sects. He smiled and explained, "Dragon Tiger Palace gathered four nearby sects in hopes of taking out Xuannv Sect together. But Xuannv Sect had a powerful ally and ended up wiping out the top ranks of Dragon Tiger Palace and its allied sects. The remaining ordinary disciples from the five sects naturally could only flee."

Hu Ren was taken aback, thinking that if Fang Bai's news spread, it would cause a huge sensation in Qingping Country and completely change the power dynamic of the state.

"With the fall of Dragon Tiger Palace's upper echelons, it stands to reason that Xuannv Sect will now rightfully become the top sect in Qingping Country. The two sects have been openly and covertly fighting for years, and this has finally resulted in a decisive outcome. For the martial artists of Qingping Country, it's also a good thing," Miao Feng said with a sigh.

For a long time, Qingping Country had been a standstill between the two third-grade sects, Xuannv Sect and Dragon Tiger Palace. Conflicts broke out frequently between them as they vied for dominance, leaving the entire country unstable. This time, the assault of Dragon Tiger Palace and four other sects on Xuannv Sect ended in a crushing defeat, with all their high-ranking members gone, leaving Xuannv Sect undoubtedly the sole ruler of Qingping Country.

However, Fang Bai, Zhuge Lian, and the Linghu sisters all understood that although Xuannv Sect still held the title of the number one sect, they had suffered heavy losses. The sect leader had perished, high-ranking members were heavily injured, and there were not a few disciples dead or wounded, greatly diminishing their overall strength. Although they still claimed to be the strongest sect in Qingping Country, suppressing the other sects wouldn't be as effortless as before.

But all of this was no longer relevant to Fang Bai and his companions.

"Brother Hu, take us to Dragon Tiger Palace!" Fang Bai suddenly proposed, "With Dragon Tiger Palace's upper ranks nearly annihilated and thrown into disarray, it's a perfect chance for us. Dragon Tiger Palace is, after all, a third-grade sect with plentiful cultivation resources. If we don't take this opportunity to grab some, we'd truly be letting ourselves down!"

"Indeed!" replied Hu Ren, his eyes shining at the suggestion.

Dragon Tiger Palace had been established for nearly ten thousand years, and its accumulation of cultivation resources was considerable. Now with the fall of their sect's leadership and the strongest disciple being no more than a Desolate Level Martial Artist with Perfection, and here stood Senior Fang, who had slain even the Vast Level Experts and Elders of Dragon Tiger Palace, who could stand in his way if he descended upon Dragon Tiger Palace?

For Desolate Level Martial Artists like Hu Ren, who would dare provoke a third-grade major sect with over a dozen Vast Level Experts? But now, with Senior Fang accompanying them, Hu Ren was not only unafraid but also brimming with excitement.

Following Senior Fang to the Dragon Tiger Palace to plunder cultivation resources, if Senior Fang struck it rich, his family of three could also bask in the glory. Why would anyone decline such an offer?

When Fang Bai suggested robbing the Dragon Tiger Palace, no one objected; on the contrary, everyone seemed eager to try.

After all, the world is a place where the strong prey upon the weak, and as martial artists, not many could resist the temptation of cultivation resources.

Though Linghu Qianjiao appeared indifferent to worldly strife, she couldn't help but feel angry upon hearing that the Dragon Tiger Palace had put Fang Bai in a dangerous situation at Nine Bends Gorge.

Once everyone had agreed, they continued to follow the Hu family as they led the way towards the Dragon Tiger Palace.

Since there were only four Swiftwind Horses for the seven people, they decided to walk instead, leading the horses to a market town a hundred li away. There, they exchanged Essence Stones for three more horses and then continued their journey together.

With the Swiftwind Horses, the group of seven sped up a lot and also saved a great deal of True Yuan.

The Xuannv Sect was nearly ten thousand li away from the Dragon Tiger Palace. Despite riding the Swiftwind Horses, it took the group almost ten days to get there. Along the way, they encountered many martial artists discussing the recent shocking changes in major sects like the Dragon Tiger Palace and the Xuannv Sect. Clearly, the events at the Xuannv Sect had spread throughout Qingping Country, and everyone was aware.

Especially in the areas controlled by the Dragon Tiger Palace, due to the fall of the palace's upper echelons at the Xuannv Sect, the palace's disciples were in a state of panic. The various fourth-grade sects, usually suppressed by the Dragon Tiger Palace, began to stir. They wanted to take advantage of the situation to bite off a chunk from the palace, leading to conflicts between sects and numerous casualties among martial artists.

The closer they got to the Dragon Tiger Palace, the more they could sense the chaos. Many martial artists hurried on their Swiftwind Horses, wielding swords or Spiritual Artifacts, racing towards the direction of the Dragon Tiger Palace. Some were even loudly worrying that if they were too late, the cultivation resources of the palace would be completely plundered.

Fang Bai and the others looked at each other, thinking that although the upper echelons of the Dragon Tiger Palace had perished, there were still many Desolate Level martial artists whose strength should not be underestimated. It would not be easy for these martial artists to take advantage.

However, if someone else were to beat them to the Dragon Tiger Palace's cultivation resources and plunder the precious ones, this trip would be in vain. Thus, Fang Bai and his group couldn't help but increase their speed.

Dragon Tiger Mountain consisted of dozens of mountain peaks, named for two adjacent main peaks that resembled a coiling dragon and a crouching tiger.

The main structures of the Dragon Tiger Palace were located on these two main peaks, connected by an Iron Chain Bridge. The Dragon Hall only had one grand hall, where the Palace Master Ye Menglong of the Dragon Tiger Palace resided and practiced cultivation. Meanwhile, the adjacent Tiger Hall comprised over a dozen grand halls for the other high-ranking members of the palace to live and cultivate.

As for the other disciples, they were scattered across buildings on the dozens of mountain peaks.

The founding location of any sect was always a treasure land conducive to martial artists' cultivation. The Dragon Tiger Mountain, where the Dragon Tiger Palace was located, was in no way inferior to the Cloud Mist Mountain of the Xuannv Sect. In fact, the number and age of the Spiritual Medicines growing atop the surrounding mountains and within the valleys were even greater than those at the Xuannv Sect.

This filled Fang Bai with great joy upon reaching the base of Dragon Tiger Mountain.

At that moment, the area around Dragon Tiger Mountain was already teeming with tens of thousands of martial artists. Dressed in a variety of attire, they included both sect disciples and many loose cultivators, all gazing with excited eyes towards the grand halls on Dragon Peak and Tiger Peak, looking thrilled and ready to make their move.

These martial artists knew that the most valuable cultivation resources accumulated by the Dragon Tiger Palace over nearly ten thousand years were stored within those grand halls. If they could fight their way in, those cultivation resources would be theirs.

Chapter 1147: Faction

Fang Bai's Divine Sense diffused, enveloping all directions, and he ascertained that the tens of thousands of Martial Artists gathered around Dragon Tiger Mountain were predominantly Desolate Level Experts, among whom the strongest few dozen Martial Artists had only reached the Desolate Level Perfection realm.

Although no Vast Level Experts had appeared, the congregation of tens of thousands of Desolate Level Martial Artists there presented a densely packed mass, clamoring and bustling, creating a rather spectacular scene. Moreover, each Martial Artist was enveloped by a Martial Artist Aura and surging Killing Qi, the combined aura was incredibly formidable.

From the attire of those few dozen Desolate Level Perfection Martial Artists, it was evident that the majority were Sect Masters of fourth-grade sects from Qingping Country, and a small portion were Individual Cultivation Martial Artists.

Dragon Tiger Palace and the other four major sects had jointly attacked Xuannv Sect and failed, resulting in the fall of all their high-ranking leaders and heavy losses among their disciples...

The Xuannv Sect Master had perished, all high-ranking officials were injured, and numerous disciples had died or been injured...

In recent days, these pieces of news had spread rapidly throughout the entire Qingping Country through various channels, causing a tremendous upheaval.

Other forces in Qingping Country acted upon hearing the news, seizing the moment when the experts of Dragon Tiger Palace and the other four major sects were entirely lost and their Essence Energy heavily damaged. They gathered their forces and rushed to the locations of these five major sects, intending to plunder while they were vulnerable and divide up the Cultivation Resources of these sects.

As for Xuannv Sect, although it had also suffered heavy losses in the fierce battle with Dragon Tiger Palace and the other four major sects, aside from the death of the Sect Master, the rest of the high-ranking officials, despite being severely injured, still retained their influence, consequently deterring others from provoking them.

However, to the disappointment of those Martial Artists harboring intentions of plundering amid the chaos, when they arrived at locations like Snow Fox Mountain, which belonged to the other four major sects, they found that these sects had already disbanded following Xuannv Sect's defeat and their Cultivation Resources had been completely divided among their disciples.

The Martial Artists, having failed to plunder anything, were naturally unwilling to give up and thus turned their attention to Dragon Tiger Palace.

Having been established nearly ten thousand years ago, with disciples spread throughout the True Martial Realm, Dragon Tiger Palace was known for its profound background. Its extensive collection of Martial Arts Techniques and abundant Cultivation Resource reserves were fatally attractive to Disciples of other sects and Loose Cultivators alike; obtaining a share from them would be a considerable gain.

Fang Bai and seven others arrived outside Dragon Tiger Mountain, tied up their Swiftwind Horses, and walked toward the base of the mountain together.

Standing amid tens of thousands of Martial Artists, raging with Killing Qi and fervor, apart from Fang Bai who remained relatively composed, Zhuge Lian, the Linghu sisters, and the family of three from the Hu family were all somewhat nervous.

"These tens of thousands of Martial Artists are like hungry wolves sighting delicious prey, ready to pounce on the great halls guarded by Dragon Tiger Palace disciples at any moment. With the fall of the high-ranking officials of Dragon Tiger Palace, the morale of the remaining disciples has been greatly affected, and they likely won't withstand the fierce attacks of the tens of thousands of Martial Artists below. The fall of Dragon Tiger Palace has become inevitable!" Zhuge Lian raised her eyes to look toward the majestic palaces on the distant peaks and sighed.

For ten thousand years, Dragon Tiger Palace and Xuannv Sect had been constantly at odds, each viewing the other as their greatest rival. However, now, with the overall strength of Xuannv Sect greatly diminished, lacking the capability to recover their Essence Energy for several decades, and Dragon Tiger Palace even facing the threat of total ruin, it was indeed a situation to sigh over.

Among the tens of thousands of Martial Artists present, disciples from dozens of large and small sects from Qingping Country accounted for nearly half. Each sect, in order to gain an advantage in plundering the Cultivation Resources of Dragon Tiger Palace, sent a large number of elite disciples.

Compared to the disciples from various major sects, the Loose Cultivators were at a disadvantage.

In order to compete with the major sects and plunder more Cultivation Resources, some Loose Cultivators contacted each other and formed temporary alliances, agreeing to distribute the Cultivation Resources according to each individual's contribution after they were plundered.

Alliances formed by individual cultivation martial artists had reached dozens in numbers, each consisting of at least hundreds, some nearly thousands of members, in no way inferior to those from established sects.

Various major power teams gathered around Dragon Tiger Mountain, staying a distance apart from each other, forming clearly differentiated camps.

At the moment, these major power teams shared a common goal, which was to defeat the more than ten thousand Dragon Tiger Palace disciples and locate where the Dragon Tiger Palace stored its martial arts techniques and cultivation resources.

From this perspective, the major power teams were in a cooperative relationship.

However, once they found the location where the Dragon Tiger Palace stored its martial arts techniques and cultivation resources, these major forces would instantly become competitors, fighting each other to see who could have the last laugh.

This fact was well understood among the warriors of every power team, and they remained wary of each other.

Some power teams were discussing strategies, while others had already taken advantageous positions, sharpening their swords, ready to strike at several dozen mountain peaks where the Dragon Tiger Palace disciples resided.

Among them, Dragon Peak and Tiger Peak, where the Dragon Tiger Palace Master and top officials resided, were the primary targets of attack, for it was said that the best martial arts techniques and cultivation resources of Dragon Tiger Palace were concentrated in the great halls of these two peaks.

Fang Bai and his group of seven were threading their way through the gaps between these major power teams, step by step approaching Dragon Tiger Mountain.

The appearance of Fang Bai and his group attracted the attention of many martial artists present.

Among the seven, Hu Ren, Miao Feng, and Zhuge Lian were at the Desolate Level Perfection Realm; Linghu Qian Jiao and Linghu Baimei were at the initial stages of the Desolate Level; Hu Yi was at the High Rank of the Heaven Level, while no one could see through Fang Bai's cultivation realm.

This was what made the martial artists present most wary, wondering if this young man in white could possibly be a Vast Level Expert?

However, the ones who garnered even more attention were Zhuge Lian, Linghu Qian Jiao, and Linghu Baimei.

Each of the three women had fair, delicate features, an refined aura, and a beauty unique to each, coupled with the celestial air inherent to those with an Innate Spiritual Root, they seemed like celestial beings banished to the mortal world.

Several male martial artists who hadn't yet found martial dao companions were instantly captivated by the peerless beauty of the three women, staring at them with either admiration or covetousness, and were it not for their wariness of Fang Bai walking beside them, perhaps some would have already dared to approach and start a conversation.

As Fang Bai's group of seven approached Dragon Tiger Mountain, several loose cultivator alliances, seeing that they did not wear the disciple uniforms of any sect, thought they were also loose cultivators without any sect affiliation, and eagerly invited them to join their camp.

It was known that even a Sect Master of a Fourth Grade sect in the True Martial Realm was only at the Desolate Level Perfection, but among Fang Bai's group of seven, there were three Vast Level Experts: Zhuge Lian, Hu Ren, Miao Feng—a force not to be underestimated.

Not to mention, there was the unfathomably profound Fang Bai.

Those loose cultivator alliances understood that if they could enlist Fang Bai and his group into their camp, it would greatly enhance the alliance's strength, thereby seizing more cultivation resources in any subsequent battles that might erupt.

However, their invitations were all politely refused by Fang Bai with a smile.

Chapter 1148: The Back Mountain

Fang Bai's refusal left several loose cultivator alliances wanting to enlist his team greatly disappointed and also made them wary of his seven-member team, which, despite its small size, was notably strong.

The seven of them soon arrived at the foot of Dragon Tiger Mountain. At the mountain gate, several sect forces and loose cultivator alliances were standing off against the Dragon Tiger Palace disciples guarding the gate. Although neither side had come to blows yet, the atmosphere was highly tense, and a fight seemed imminent.

In fact, by now, the morale within Dragon Tiger Palace was waning, and most of the disciples who wanted to leave had already left. Those who remained were loyal to the Dragon Tiger Palace, sworn to share its fate.

The number of Dragon Tiger Palace disciples guarding the mountain gate was not large, suggesting they were aware they could not hold the gate. The majority of the palace disciples had gathered near Dragon Peak and Tiger Peak, the palace's two main peaks, ready to fight to the death.

This only further convinced the martial artists present that Dragon Tiger Palace's treasures must be within the great halls on Dragon Peak and Tiger Peak.

"Let's go to the back mountain," Fang Bai observed for a moment, then suddenly his eyes shifted as he spoke softly to Zhuge Lian and the others.

Zhuge Lian and the rest were startled, wondering why they would not head for Dragon Peak and Tiger Peak if they were here for cultivation resources. What would they do on the back mountain?

Many sects built into mountains typically referred to their back mountain as the most northerly and peripheral area, not only remote but the essence energy here was much thinner compared to the central area of the sect. Usually, only sect disciples who had committed significant errors were relegated to the back mountain for reflection.

Dragon Tiger Palace consisted of dozens of peaks; its back mountain was at the furthest end of these numerous peaks.

Although Zhuge Lian and others did not understand Fang Bai's purpose in heading for the back mountain, they followed him, trusting his judgment.

The seven of them filed out, leaving the mountain gate of Dragon Tiger Palace. This confused some martial artists who were watching them, but with the looming battle, they were too preoccupied with the tempting martial arts techniques and substantial cultivation resources within Dragon Tiger Palace to continue monitoring Fang Bai and his team.

"Brother Fang, could it be that Dragon Tiger Palace's treasures are all hidden in the back mountain?" Among them, Linghu Baimei knew Fang Bai best, aware that he never acted without a purpose. After they had gotten far from the mountain gate and ensured no outsiders were around, she couldn't help but ask.

Fang Bai gave Linghu Baimei a thumbs-up and chuckled, "You know me well, Baimei. Indeed, my intuition tells me there's something good in the back mountain."

Fang Bai was exceptionally sensitive to the Heaven and Earth Origin Energy. When he had diffused his divine sense in all directions earlier, he suddenly captured a strand of essence energy coming from the direction of the back mountain. The purity and richness of this strand were far superior to that near the mountain gate, but it was very faint, so no one other than Fang Bai could detect it.

For Fang Bai, cultivation resources in the world, such as Essence Stones, could hardly avoid leaking their Essence Energy even when deeply buried underground. As long as there was a leak, he had a chance of finding them.

Hearing Fang Bai's surety, Linghu Baimei and the others became excited. If the back mountain of Dragon Tiger Palace truly held an abundance of cultivation resources, they could avoid competing against thousands of martial artists for their share. That would be optimal.

Employing their movement techniques, the seven swiftly navigated past the myriad peaks forming Dragon Tiger Palace and reached the back mountain.

At this moment, the back mountain was deserted. The Dragon Tiger Palace disciples responsible for its defense had left days ago – some had deserted, and others scattered, while the remaining disciples of the palace had no time to attend to this area, leaving the back mountain neglected.

Following Fang Bai, the seven ascended a peak on the back mountain and looked down to see a tranquil and spacious valley before them. Green trees shaded the valley, and flowers and herbs were

everywhere, with some emitting a faint Essence Energy – clearly, they were spiritual medicines, though not old enough to pique the interest of Fang Bai and his team.

This valley in the back mountain of Dragon Tiger Palace was similar to Reflection Valley of the Xuannv Sect, also set with restrictive spells. Martial artists who did not know the method to break these would find it very difficult to enter and exit.

However, such restrictions were child's play for Fang Bai, hardly worth mentioning.

Fang Bai led Zhuge Lian and the others down the mountain peak, casually breaking the formations and restrictions set around the valley as they entered. It was only then that they discovered there were water pools, stone houses, and such within the valley; when they had overlooked it from the mountain peak earlier, the view had been obscured by the dense forest, and they hadn't seen these features.

"Brother Fang, are the good things you mentioned... right here?"

Linghu Baimei's gaze wandered, sizing up the valley's surroundings, feeling that this place was only slightly better than Xuannv Sect's Reflection Valley, and besides that, there was nothing special about it.

Fang Bai's Divine Sense had already spread out, searching for that trace of pure yet faint Essence Energy. Hearing Linghu Baimei's question, he pointed towards the largest stone house and said, "Let's take a look over there."

The seven of them filed into the large stone house and saw that inside there was only a bed, a table, and a chair, extremely sparse. Moreover, whether it was the bed, the table, the chair, or the ground itself, everything was coated in a thick layer of dust. There were spider webs of various sizes in the corners, clearly indicating that no one had cleaned this place for a long time, exuding an aura of decay and antiquity.

"This stone house is so dirty..."

Linghu Qian Jiao, a person who greatly cherished cleanliness, frowned deeply at the sight of the grubby stone house.

"The stone house is dirty, but there's one spot that's clean; have you all noticed it?"

Fang Bai's eyes sparkled as he swept a glance across the stone house, and a slight smile appeared on his lips.

Hearing this, Zhuge Lian and the other five knew that Fang Bai wouldn't say such a thing without reason, it must be related to the "good things" of Dragon Tiger Palace. They couldn't help but become energized, their eyes searching all around.

"That stone brick!"

Zhuge Lian suddenly exclaimed excitedly, pointing to a foot-long stone brick in the corner of the wall: "The entire floor of the stone house is covered in dust, only that stone brick is clean!"

At Linghu Baimei and the others' gaze, indeed, there was hardly any dust on that brick. However, this brick was located in the most corner of the house, and in the dim light, one would not notice it without looking closely.

"A clean brick suggests someone often moves it..."

Linghu Baimei, a very smart woman herself, muttered, her beautiful eyes suddenly lighting up: "A mechanism?"

Fang Bai nodded with a smile: "More or less! I'm thinking... if there's an Underground Palace beneath here, could it be that this brick is the key to opening it?"

Hu Ren said, "But... isn't that unlikely? Usually, a Sect's Cultivation Resources would be stored near the residences of the higher-ups of the Sect, to prevent any accidents. The upper echelons of Dragon Tiger Palace live on Dragon Peak and Tiger Peak, so the Cultivation Resources of Dragon Tiger Palace should be in that area."

Fang Bai smiled and said, "Hu Ren, there are exceptions to everything. Let's go have a look first!"

"Right, let's look first! Maybe there will be surprises?"

Zhuge Lian bent down as she spoke, reaching her hand towards the clean stone brick.

"Be careful!"

Fang Bai suddenly shouted out loud.

Chapter 1149: Underground Palace

In a loud shout, Fang Bai extended his right hand towards Zhuge Lian, grabbing and pulling with an invisible yet powerful force that forcefully brought Zhuge Lian from the corner back to Fang Bai's side.

"Brother Fang, what's wrong? You startled me with your abrupt actions!"

After steadying herself, Zhuge Lian looked at Fang Bai with a puzzled expression.

Fang Bai walked to the table in the stone hut, picked up a discarded Essence Stone that had once been used for illumination, and casually threw it towards the clean stone brick in the corner.

Clang!

The palm-sized Essence Stone hit the clean brick, emitting a crisp sound.

Just as Zhuge Lian and the others looked on in confusion, not understanding the purpose of Fang Bai's actions, a dazzling burst of light suddenly exploded from within that brick.

That light was a killing intent equal to the full strike of a Martial Artist at Vast Level Perfection.

Whoosh!

The killing intent, incomparably fierce, shot upwards, emitting a sharp, piercing noise, like cutting tofu, leaving a mark half a foot deep in the roof of the stone hut.

Apart from Fang Bai, the other six in the hut all gasped in shock.

Zhuge Lian's eyes widened in alarm, her pretty face turning pale, displaying a frightened look.

It was understood that the material used to build this stone hut was almost as hard as steel. The fact that half a foot deep was sliced into the roof spoke volumes of the destructive power of that killing intent.

Although Zhuge Lian was a Martial Artist at Desolate Level Perfection with an Innate Spiritual Root and her combat ability surpassed those of her level, she absolutely could not withstand the full blow of a Martial Artist at Vast Level Perfection.

Therefore, had Fang Bai not acted in time just now, Zhuge Lian might have already triggered that stone brick, thereby releasing the killing intent inside it, and she could have very well died suddenly and unexpectedly.

"This brick, though it appears to be stone on the surface, actually houses an Essence Stone inside, embedded with killing intent by a powerful being as a trap. Clearly, the purpose was to ensure no one would touch it, or if they did, they would not escape death,"

Fang Bai spoke while Zhuge Lian and the others watched. He slowly walked to the brick, crouched down, examined it for a moment, and then said, "Perhaps this extraordinary brick is indeed the key to activating some mechanism... Let me try!"

With that, his right palm swiftly struck the stone brick.

The surface of the brick appeared intact, but the multiple strands of fierce killing intent contained within the Essence Stone were dissipated into nothingness by Fang Bai in an instant.

Now possessing combat power comparable to a high rank Cosmic Level Martial Artist, dissolving the killing intents infused by a Martial Artist at Vast Level Perfection into the Essence Stone was effortlessly easy for Fang Bai.

"Could it be that this brick only contains a single strand of killing intent?"

Seeing Fang Bai slap the brick with his palm, and the brick showing no reaction, Zhuge Lian was greatly puzzled, but her hanging heart was finally put to rest.

Naturally, Zhuge Lian did not know that Fang Bai had wiped away the killing intents inside the brick, as each of them could have been lethal.

Fang Bai's palm pressed firmly against the brick, then he slowly exerted pressure downward.

Crack, crack, crack...

After a harsh grinding of rocks echoed, a two-meter-square hole suddenly appeared in another corner of the stone house. Looking down from the hole and using the natural light from outside, one could see a staircase, its destination unknown.

"Indeed, there is an underground palace!"

Zhuge Lian and the others gathered around the hole, their faces flushed with excitement and thrill, thinking that this underground palace was so cunningly hidden, it might just be the main storage site Dragon Tiger Palace used for Martial Arts Techniques and Cultivation Resources.

A school of the third rank that had been around for ten thousand years would undoubtedly have a considerable amount of Cultivation Resources. If obtained, it would surely be a massive fortune, even bringing a slight smile to Fang Bai's lips.

"Let's go, let's all head down and take a look!"

Fang Bai said and was the first to jump into the hole, walking down the staircase; Zhuge Lian and the Linghu sisters followed closely, with Hu Ren and his family of three tracking behind.

Below the hole where daylight could not reach, it became darker and darker. Although people like Fang Bai were powerful Martial Artists with extraordinary eyesight, Zhuge Lian and the others each took out a Fire Elemental Stone to use for lighting.

After descending nearly a hundred steps and passing through a several hundred meters long passage, two tightly shut stone doors appeared ahead.

Fang Bai swept his divine sense over them, discovering that the stone doors were three feet thick and made of much harder stone than the building itself. Forcing them open would likely be quite troublesome.

With stone doors, there must be some mechanism.

Fang Bai's gaze wandered, scanning the walls on both sides of the stone doors. He quickly noticed some strange symbols that ordinary Martial Artists could not comprehend.

"It's surprising that in these Three Thousand Minor Worlds, someone understands Array Runes... It's just a pity they are all very basic and unimpressive..."

Fang Bai looked at those strange symbols with interest, feeling both amazed and regretful.

Those strange symbols were the mechanism needed to open the stone doors. Since Fang Bai recognized them, opening the stone doors was naturally no trouble.

Placing several Essence Stones in the indentations on the door and pulling a protruding stone the size of an egg on the left side of the wall, the stone doors thunderously opened.

Following this, they encountered two more sets of stone doors, both of which were opened by Fang Bai.

Since entering this underground palace, Zhuge Lian and the others felt the originally sparse Heaven and Earth Origin Energy become more abundant. After each stone door, the energy became even more abundant and pure.

Clearly, this all indicated that the underground palace contained a considerable amount of Cultivation Resources. The increasingly abundant Heaven and Earth Origin Energy was seeping out from those extensive resources.

Furthermore, Fang Bai and the others also understood that the more stone doors set up in this underground palace, the more vital the contents stored inside were, making them even more delighted.

After opening the third set of stone doors, what appeared before them was a vast space, their nostrils filled with the scent of Spiritual Medicine and Elixirs, sensing the pure Essence Energy released by piles of Essence Stones, and even the Killing Qi emanating from various weapons and Spiritual Artifacts...

In short, this was a massive treasury of Cultivation Resources, far beyond what even Fang Bai had anticipated.

What thrilled Fang Bai even more was that more than half of the Cultivation Resources, whether Essence Stones, Spiritual Medicine, or Elixirs, were of medium quality, with several strains of Spiritual Medicine nearly a thousand years old, nearly High Rank.

Facing such a treasury of Cultivation Resources, Fang Bai could retain his composure, but Zhuge Lian and the other six couldn't at all. Each of them stood with their mouths agape and eyes wide-open, staring dumbfounded, their eyes emitting a strange glow as if they were possessed.

Fang Bai paid them no mind, going straight to some nearly thousand-year-old Spiritual Medicines and started examining them in his hands.

Chapter 1150: The Treasury

For Zhuge Lian and others, the cultivation resources in this huge underground palace were an astronomical sum, far beyond their imagination, and they were so excited they nearly danced with joy.

However, for Fang Bai, who once was an Immortal Emperor, these cultivation resources were nothing to fuss over, and his expression remained calm.

Among these cultivation resources, what slightly moved Fang Bai were those nearly thousand-year-old spiritual medicines.

A few stalks of Fusion Essence Grass, nearing nine hundred years in age, could be used to refine Gathering Yuan Pills of nearly high quality, which were exactly what Fang Bai would need for his future cultivation.

Moreover, a few nine-hundred-year-old Wansui Fruits could be used to refine Marrow Cleansing Pills of nearly high quality, but such elixirs were of no use to Fang Bai.

Fang Bai possessed a Chaos True Body, unrivaled throughout the ages, and he had no need for Marrow Cleansing to improve his physique, but for many martial artists with ordinary physiques and not born with an Innate Spiritual Root, it was a treasure.

Some ordinary martial artists were limited by their natural physiques, finding it difficult to achieve much in the Martial Dao, but after undergoing Marrow Cleansing, their physiques could be improved, and their cultivation progress could be greatly accelerated.

Therefore, in the Martial Artists Trading Market, Marrow Cleansing Pills were also one of the elixirs popular among many ordinary martial artists.

If Fang Bai were to use these nine-hundred-year-old Wansui Fruits to refine Marrow Cleansing Pills and sell them at the Martial Artists Trading Market, even Cosmos Level Martial Artists would likely be envious.

"I'll take these spiritual medicines first!"

Fang Bai didn't bother being polite with the others, casually spoke, and tossed the most precious spiritual medicines into his own Spatial Ring.

Zhuge Lian and the others all understood the principle of "the sin of possessing jade," and naturally, there were no objections to Fang Bai taking away those spiritual medicines.

It was known that currently, in the vicinity of the Dragon Tiger Palace, there were tens of thousands of martial artists, and if these precious spiritual medicines were handled by them and discovered, it could likely lead to a mass attack by the martial artists, with unimaginable consequences.

And Fang Bai, with his formidable strength, even if he openly took those spiritual medicines with him, who would dare to snatch them from his hands?

"The Xuannv Sect may stand shoulder to shoulder with the Dragon Tiger Palace as the top sect of Qingping Country, with hardly a difference in overall strength, but when it comes to heritage, I still feel it's not a match for the Dragon Tiger Palace," said Zhuge Lian as she looked at the mountains of cultivation resources before her, filled with emotion.

Zhuge Lian clearly remembered that in her childhood, when she had just begun to understand the world, the old Sect Leader once carried her through a secret passage behind the Sect Master Hall and into a vast hollowed space inside Xuannv Peak; much like what she saw before her now, it was also filled with many cultivation resources.

Now, thinking back, the huge space inside Xuannv Peak must have been the accumulation of the Xuannv Sect's cultivation resources over generations.

But whether it was the quantity or the grade of the cultivation resources, none of what was reserved by the Xuannv Sect could compare with those in the underground palace behind the Dragon Tiger Palace.

Initially, it would not have been difficult for Fang Bai to seize the Xuannv Sect's cultivation resources when he had severely damaged the sect's higher echelons; in the end, he gave up the idea out of consideration for Zhuge Lian's sake.

Otherwise, once the Xuannv Sect lost its reserved cultivation resources, even if the entire sect did not fall apart, it would still suffer from decline.

As for the cultivation resources of the Dragon Tiger Palace, Fang Bai naturally would not show mercy and hold back.

"With so many cultivation resources, how are we few supposed to carry them all?"

Linghu Baimei, coming out of her stupor, murmured to herself with a worried expression on her face.

Among the seven of them, aside from the youngest Hu Yi, the other six were all wearing Space Rings, but with such a tiny Space Ring, its capacity was so limited—how much cultivation resources could they possibly take with them?

There were now tens of thousands of martial artists outside coveting the cultivation resources of the Dragon Tiger Palace. Once they had defeated the disciples of the Dragon Tiger Palace, they would certainly begin a massive search. Although this underground palace was hidden, the several formations and restrictions had already been damaged by Fang Bai, and it would be exposed sooner or later. When tens of thousands of martial artists discovered this mountain of accumulated cultivation resources, wouldn't they go insane?

The stockpile of cultivation resources at the Dragon Tiger Palace, although substantial, would hardly be enough to satisfy the appetites of these tens of thousands of martial artists.

No matter how strong Fang Bai was, he would likely have difficulty stopping tens of thousands of martial artists from swarming in a mad scramble.

"Let's leave the underground palace for now," Fang Bai suddenly said.

Seeing Zhuge Lian and the others looking at him puzzled, Fang Bai smiled and added, "I have a way to keep this underground palace hidden from others. After we leave, once those martial artists outside have mostly dispersed and the situation has calmed down, we can come back."

"Brother Fang, we'll follow your lead!" Linghu Baimei and her sister had already met Fang Bai in the secular world and had followed him to learn martial arts techniques, knowing full well that Fang Bai had many tricks up his sleeve. Since he had said so, he must have a way to protect the secret of the underground palace.

Zhuge Lian was playing with a Sword-Type Spirit Weapon that emitted a cold, blue light. She reluctantly asked, "Then... can I take some cultivation resources with me first?"

Fang Bai said, "Whatever you want, take it quickly—don't delay! The battle between Dragon Peak and Tiger Peak has likely already begun by now, and martial artists may soon find this place, so we don't have much time!"

The group, including Zhuge Lian, were overjoyed and immediately dashed to the piles of cultivation resources, picking out what they wanted and stuffing their Space Rings until they were brimming full.

Seeing Hu Ren's son, Hu Yi, standing there dejected, Fang Bai felt a stir in his heart and flicked his finger, sending a Space Ring flying through the air to hover in front of Hu Yi.

"Hu Yi, this Space Ring is for you! Hurry up and put some cultivation resources into it," Fang Bai said as he flicked out the Space Ring.

A Space Ring is a type of Spatial Spirit Device, and due to its convenience, it's highly popular among martial artists. However, it requires Space Stones combined with Fine Gold to create, and it must be engraved with a spatial formation before it can be used, so its value is considerable.

Hu Ren and his wife's Space Rings had been exchanged for a large number of cultivation resources, but for the time being, they were unable to afford to craft or exchange one for their son.

Thus, the Space Ring offered by Fang Bai was both a surprise and a delight for Hu Yi, who repeatedly thanked "Uncle Fang," and then, at Fang Bai's urging, began picking out the cultivation resources he needed.

Fang Bai casually took some mid-grade Essence Stones and tossed them into his Space Ring, saving them for later when he would set up formations.

Moments later, the seven of them left the underground palace that stored cultivation resources and returned to the stone house.

At that time, bursts of shouting and killing could be heard in the distance from the direction of Dragon Peak and Tiger Peak, and the scent of blood was faintly detectable.

Zhuge Lian and the others exchanged looks, thinking that it was indeed as Fang Bai had predicted—the martial artists from various sects were already starting a major battle with the disciples defending the Dragon Tiger Palace.

After exiting the stone house, just as Fang Bai was preparing to set up a small Concealment Formation around the house, he furrowed his brow, revealing a strange expression, and murmured to himself, "I didn't expect to encounter him here... That guy must be born in the year of the dog, with such a keen sense of smell to be able to find this place..."