

Doctor 1151

Chapter 1151: Good job, Wu De!

"Someone's coming, let's hide first, and everyone keep quiet!"

Seeing Zhuge Lian and the others looking towards him in surprise, Fang Bai hurriedly waved at them, and the seven of them hid together in a clump of weeds not far away.

Fang Bai released his True Yuan, enveloping all seven of them including himself, and completely concealed their auras.

Although Zhuge Lian and the others couldn't sense any Martial Artist Aura, they had no doubts about Fang Bai's words, so each held their breath and peeked out through the gaps in the weeds.

Dozens of breaths later, a figure approached from afar, shooting over rapidly, stopping in front of the stone house that led to the Underground Palace Treasure of the Dragon Tiger Palace.

This person appeared to be in his forties or fifties, not very tall, with a plump figure, wearing a worn Taoist robe, and presenting quite a slovenly appearance—it was Wu De, the Fat Taoist whom Fang Bai had met in the Secular World.

Back in the day, Fang Bai and Wu De had teamed up to enter the tomb chamber of Zhuge Dingtian, dividing the relics of Zhuge Dingtian between them. They had been in contact ever since, and when Fang Bai had inquired through the Teleportation Realm about entering the True Martial Realm, he had specifically asked Wu De if he wanted to come along.

Wu De was an adventure-loving guy with a deep obsession for the Martial Dao, and he had also hit a bottleneck in his cultivation. Upon hearing that there was a place even more suited to Martial Artist cultivation than the Secular World, how could he miss it?

Fang Bai had encountered a severe disturbance while passing through the Teleportation Array and got separated from everyone else. The Linghu sisters were the first friends from the Secular World he had found, and now Wu De's appearance also made him quite happy.

What surprised Fang Bai, however, was that before entering the True Martial Realm, Wu De had only just reached the Heaven Level Realm, but now he was already a Vast Level Expert, leaping over the Heaven and Desolate Levels—such a rate of strength improvement was truly astonishing.

However, this Wu De fellow possessed both the Earth Spirit Root and the Metal Spirit Root, two Innate Spiritual Roots. In the current three thousand Minor Worlds atop the three thousand Major Worlds, he was known as the "Extraordinary Holy Body." Although he fell short of Fang Bai's Chaos True Body, he was nonetheless a level above those with a single Spiritual Root, known as the "Innate Spirit Body," making him an absolute Martial Dao Genius.

Wu De had a keen sense for Essence Energy, and Fang Bai guessed that he might have been drawn by the faint whiff of Essence Energy emanating from the back mountain, thus hurrying over.

Wu De was skilled at burrowing and stealing from Martial Artist tombs, obtaining Cultivation Resources, and Fang Bai thought that with his abilities, he might just be able to locate the Underground Palace in the valley.

Fang Bai stayed hidden with Zhuge Lian and the others, ready to see what Wu De was up to.

"What a bunch of fools making noise upfront, they have no idea that this back mountain is a hidden paradise! Hehe... If my guess isn't wrong, the accumulated Cultivation Resources of the Dragon Tiger Palace through the generations should be buried under this valley!"

Wu De chuckled smugly to himself and then started to pace around the stone house, seemingly observing.

"That faint whiff of Essence Energy is emanating from this stone house; it seems the entrance to the Dragon Tiger Palace's storage of Cultivation Resources is right inside here."

Wu De scratched his head, looked around, and then flashed into the stone house.

"This Wu De does have some skills!"

Fang Bai praised silently and signaled with his eyes to Zhuge Lian and the others to stay put. He himself leapt out from the weeds, like a gentle breeze, silently entering the stone house.

"Well done, Wu De, to have found the entrance mechanism to the Underground Palace so quickly!"

Fang Bai flashed into the stone hut, while Wu De had his full focus on a stone tile in the corner of the wall, completely unaware that Fang Bai had already stood behind him.

"The entire stone hut is dusty, except this one tile is clean. It seems there is a mystery to this tile..."

Wu De murmured to himself, gently caressing the stone tile with his palm.

He tried to lift the tile without success. Then he prepared to press down, but suddenly someone gently patted his shoulder.

Wu De was taken aback, a very different kind of shock, and instinctively struck back with a palm behind him.

After arriving in the True Martial Realm, Wu De blossomed like a fish in water. Relying on his own abilities, he acquired countless cultivation resources. Moreover, he encountered opportunities time after time, and his strength increased at an astonishing pace, reaching the Vast Level Realm.

A Vast Level Martial Artist was not considered a true expert in the True Martial Realm, but their status was comparable to a Steward of a third-rank sect, even slightly higher than the Sect Master of a fourth-rank sect. Therefore, Wu De received quite a bit of admiration from other martial artists.

What made Wu De most proud was becoming an Elder of Tribute in a second-rank sect known for producing Cosmic Level Experts, after it learned of his superhumanly sharp instincts for finding Essence Stone Veins buried deep in mountains. It was an exceptional offer.

A second-rank sect, with more than a dozen Cosmic Level Experts, possessed formidable strength that could easily crush a third-rank sect like the Dragon Tiger Palace. For Wu De, a Vast Level Martial Artist,

to become an Elder of Tribute in such a sect was quite a stroke of good fortune. With a second-rank sect as his backing, no martial artist in the entire True Martial Realm dared to underestimate him.

Of course, Wu De didn't disappoint that second-rank sect either. He quickly found two Essence Stone Veins within the territory controlled by the sect, alleviating their tight circumstances regarding cultivation resources. As a result, the criticism directed at Wu De completely vanished, and his position as the Elder of Tribute solidified.

Although an Elder of Tribute of a second-rank sect could obtain abundant cultivation resources enough for his needs, Wu De didn't give up his old expertise in tomb raiding. He frequently trained throughout the True Martial Realm, searching for the tombs of powerful entities and the hidden treasures of various sects, using all sorts of means to pilfer them for himself.

It wasn't an exaggeration to say that the cultivation resources Wu De now possessed could be described with the term "wealthy enough to rival a sect."

The upheaval at the Dragon Tiger Palace reached Wu De's ears, and he rushed over immediately but arrived later than Fang Bai and the others, which is why Fang Bai had not detected him earlier.

Wu De came after sensing a faint Essence Energy emanating from the underground palace behind the mountain, but Fang Bai had sensed his Martial Artist Aura from afar and hid away with Zhuge Lian and others.

Fang Bai's palm pat on Wu De's shoulder had given him quite the scare, and without thinking, he struck back with full force.

A full blow from a Vast Level Martial Artist was nothing to scoff at, but it was insignificant compared to Fang Bai.

Fang Bai's left hand shot out and firmly caught Wu De's incoming palm, effortlessly neutralizing his fierce attack.

"Wu De, it's me! Stop fighting!"

Seeing Wu De's right leg ready to kick, Fang Bai immediately let out a deep shout.

His voice, laced with True Essence Force, caused Wu De's ears to buzz, his body to suddenly tremble, and he stood there stunned.

"Wow! Fang Bai? Is that you? I... am I dreaming?"

Wu De blinked his small eyes, clearly seeing Fang Bai's face, his eyes suddenly bulged, and he started shouting like he had seen a ghost.

Chapter 1152: Shouldn't the Strong Also Be Reasonable?

"You're not dreaming!"

Fang Bai released Wu De's palm, smiled, and patted his shoulder, "It's been over a year since we last saw each other in the Secular World. I didn't expect to meet you here. You've advanced from the Heaven Level Realm to the Vast Level Realm, it seems you've been living quite comfortably!"

"Indeed, Taoist Master me has deep fortune, and I can get by anywhere!"

Wu De, hearing Fang Bai mention his Cultivation Level, couldn't help feeling proud; he had just referred to himself as "old Tao" but now had progressed to "Taoist Master."

However, upon recalling how his all-out strike had been easily neutralized by Fang Bai, Wu De felt surprised. He scrutinized Fang Bai carefully, only to discover that he couldn't discern Fang Bai's Cultivation Level. He then realized that Fang Bai's strength still far surpassed his own, which felt quite disheartening.

"Back in the Secular World, you were already stronger than me, and it's still the case now. Brother Fang, it looks like you're doing even better than I am! What realm are you in now?"

Wu De asked, looking quite dejected.

Fang Bai smiled cheerfully, "The same as you, Vast Level Realm."

"Vast Level mid-rank?"

"High rank."

"What? You've advanced two minor realms higher than me? Isn't it said that 'heaven rewards the diligent'? I've been working so hard, why is heaven still treating me this way? Is there no justice left?"

Wu De said, his face full of sorrow, as he looked up to the sky and sighed deeply.

Wu De didn't think his talent was inferior to Fang Bai's, nor were his opportunities, but he couldn't understand why the gap between their strengths was widening.

Fang Bai said, "It's true that 'heaven rewards the diligent,' but while you are diligent, I am even more so! Therefore, it's only natural that I am stronger than you."

Wu De rolled his eyes, unamused, "Right, like I would believe you! Those Martial Dao companions you keep, each with an Innate Spiritual Root and stunning beauty, are probably just for having fun. You likely have no intention of cultivating. Meanwhile, I, a lone Taoist, with a clear mind and few desires, immerse myself in Cultivation Resources and states almost all the time. Talking about diligence, could you really surpass me?"

He paused for a moment, then suddenly looked enlightened and sighed, "I understand now. Those companions of yours must have had the Primordial Yin Physique before, and cultivating together with them naturally produces great results. Alas, does this mean I have no choice but to renounce asceticism and find Martial Dao companions if I hope to catch up to you?"

Fang Bai pointed at Wu De, laughing scoldingly, "You sly Taoist, your mind is filled with dirty thoughts, where are you going with this?"

"Isn't that so? A young man in his prime, surrounded by beauties, it would be strange if you could control yourself!"

Wu De argued confidently.

"Enough, enough, let's not talk about this anymore!"

Fang Bai knew this guy loved to argue, and if he started, they could go on for days and nights without end. Waving his hand, he said, "Come outside with me for a moment, I have something to ask you!"

Wu De glanced at the clean brick in the corner and shifted his eyes slyly, then grinned, "Well... Taoist Master needs to take care of some business inside, you go out and wait for a moment!"

Fang Bai knew Wu De wanted to distract him to continue investigating the secret of the brick. He also knew that the treasure in the Underground Palace beneath the stone hut would be hard to hide from him, so he said, "Press that brick down, then another corner of this stone hut will reveal a passage leading to an immense Underground Palace. Stored in the palace are precious Cultivation Resources accumulated by Dragon Tiger Palace over the generations."

Wu De was taken aback, but then his joy overwhelmed him, and he danced and laughed aloud, "I just knew there was something odd about this back mountain! Ha ha... I guessed it right! The cultivation resources of Dragon Tiger Palace are not in Dragon Peak or Tiger Peak, but underground here! Ha ha... I'm going to be rich... I'm going to be very rich!"

Suddenly, he thought of something, his expression changed dramatically, and his laughter stopped abruptly. His squinty eyes stared at Fang Bai as he nervously asked, "How... how did you know?"

Before Fang Bai could answer, Wu De had already begun jumping up and down, shouting, "I know! You must have already been to the underground palace! Speak up, have the treasures inside already been plundered by you?"

Although Wu De was extremely proud of his skills in tomb raiding and searching for cultivation resources, he knew that Fang Bai was no weaker than himself; he could discover this place too. Listening to Fang Bai's tone, it was clear he had gotten there first.

Wu De, although now an Elder of Tribute for a second-ranked great sect with highly refined tastes, recognized that Dragon Tiger Palace was a third-ranked sect with considerable accumulated cultivation

resources from generation to generation. Now, Fang Bai must have already taken possession of the precious items inside before him, causing Wu De a heartache.

"I just randomly took a few items; they're merely a drop in the bucket compared to the whole treasure of the underground palace."

Fang Bai did not conceal this, nodding as he spoke.

Wu De's mouth twitched, thinking that what you've taken, although small in quantity, must be of considerable value.

"I'm one step too late; I've lost big this time!"

Wu De smacked his forehead, exclaiming, "No, no! I have to go down to the underground palace and see!"

Saying so, he crouched and was about to press on the stone tile.

"Get up!"

With a swift motion, Fang Bai's right hand shot out, grabbed Wu De's collar, and hoisted him up, saying nothing further as he dragged him out of the stone house.

"Fang Bai, what are you doing?"

Wu De struggled out of Fang Bai's grasp and glared at him furiously.

Fang Bai said, "Once those martial artists at the front mountain have caused enough ruckus and cleared out, then we can enter the underground palace together and peacefully ration the cultivation resources."

Seeing Wu De pout with reluctance, Fang Bai's expression turned icy as he said sternly, "If you're unwilling, I could just knock you unconscious with a slap, leave you lying here for three days and nights, and then take all the cultivation resources without leaving you any. Do you believe me?"

Wu De knew Fang Bai was a man of his word; if he really made a move, he himself would be powerless to resist. So, he had to submit, muttering to vent his dissatisfaction briefly before adding, "Then it's agreed! When the time comes, the cultivation resources in the underground palace must be equally split between us two! I know you're stronger than me, but even the strong must be reasonable, right?"

Fang Bai said, "An equal division is fine, but it won't be just between the two of us."

Wu De was puzzled. "What do you mean?"

Fang Bai gestured towards the thicket where Zhuge Lian and others were hiding, and called, "Come on out, all of you!"

Zhuge Lian, Linghu Qian Jiao, Linghu Baimei, Hu Ren, Miao Feng, and Hu Yi saw Fang Bai's gesture, exchanged glances, and one by one stepped out of the thistles and walked towards the stone house.

Having known Linghu Qian Jiao and Linghu Baimei briefly in the Secular World, Wu De was aware they were Fang Bai's close associates. Seeing their presence, his face lit up with joy as he waved and cheerfully said, "Hey, two young ladies, good to see you! Ha ha, what a delight to meet old acquaintances in foreign lands!"

Chapter 1153: Don't Be Too Greedy!

In fact, when the teleportation array malfunctioned years ago, it not only inflicted serious injuries on Fang Bai but also profoundly affected his friends and relatives. When they emerged in the True Martial Realm, they found themselves scattered across different regions, each in different corners of the sky.

Fang Bai remains unaware of this to this day and believes that his friends and relatives all arrived safely in the True Martial Realm, living in the same place.

Fang Bai led Wu De out of the stone house for two reasons. Firstly, he didn't want Wu De to linger in the underground palace below and delay their plans, risking detection by other martial artists which could spell trouble. Secondly, he wanted to inquire about the current situation of those friends and relatives.

"Elder Wu, greetings!"

The Linghu sisters also recognized Wu De, knowing that the Fat Taoist had a good relationship with Fang Bai, and were heartened to meet someone from the Secular World. They approached Wu De and both bowed respectfully.

Although the cultivation level of the Linghu sisters was only at the initial Desolate Level, Wu De regarded them as Fang Bai's women and didn't dare to put on airs in front of them. He smiled and appraised them for a moment, clicking his tongue in admiration, "Did you two young ladies consume Immortal Pills or Divine Medicine? How come you have become even more beautiful?"

Linghu Qian Jiao, the more bashful of the sisters, knew Wu De was joking but couldn't help blushing.

Linghu Baimei, however, giggled and said to Wu De, "Elder Wu, did you eat plenty of meat, for how come you have grown even fatter?"

"..."

Wu De blinked his small eyes, unsure of how to respond, thinking mournfully to himself: Taoist Master is fat, sure, but why must you say it in public? It's quite damaging to one's self-esteem.

Standing behind the Linghu sisters, Zhuge Lian saw Wu De's embarrassed expression and couldn't help but burst into a giggle.

"Brother Fang, who is this young girl?"

Had it been someone else who laughed like that, Wu De might have lost his temper immediately, but he did not dare to act rashly towards the women associated with Fang Bai. He pointed at Zhuge Lian with a look of dejection and asked.

"I am Zhuge Lian, a personal transmission disciple of the Xuannv Sect."

Zhuge Lian introduced herself crisply.

Wu De frowned and said, "Xuannv Sect? Oh, I see. The Dragon Tiger Palace ended up like this because of your Xuannv Sect. However, I heard that though you destroyed the Dragon Tiger Palace, your own sect suffered greatly, losing a lot of Essence Energy. Doesn't sound like a profitable deal to me!"

Initially, Wu De planned to steal some precious cultivation resources from Dragon Tiger Palace and then from Xuannv Sect. Now, knowing that Zhuge Lian was a disciple of Xuannv Sect and closely related to Fang Bai, he dismissed the idea of offending the Xuannv Sect.

Fortunately, Wu De abandoned this thought; otherwise, if he had indeed visited the Xuannv Sect, which was severely weakened, they wouldn't have been able to protect the resources accumulated over generations. Should those precious resources have been stolen, thousands of disciples from top to bottom in the Xuannv Sect would have nowhere even to cry.

As Fang Bai introduced Hu Ren and his family, Wu De learned they were merely acquaintances who had met by chance, and his attitude cooled substantially, assuming a more superior demeanor.

Strong individuals in the True Martial Realm are often very arrogant. Hu Ren and his family were accustomed to this and didn't feel any dissatisfaction with Wu De's coldness, seeing it as nothing out of the ordinary.

"We are eight people in total, so the resources in the underground palace have to be divided equally into eight parts. Wu De, you don't have any objections, do you?"

Although Fang Bai was asking for Wu De's opinion, his tone was firm, almost leaving no room for objection.

"No..."

Wu De, although heartbroken, realized that opposing Fang Bai's decision was futile, so he could only nod his head reluctantly, feeling as though his heart was bleeding.

At that moment, the faint shouts of killing that had been barely discernible seemed to become much clearer, clearly indicating that martial artists were engaged in a fight, unknowingly moving toward the back mountain.

Perhaps, it wouldn't be long before the tranquil back mountain would witness the figures of martial artists from both sides clashing fiercely, and the secrets of the underground palace might also be discovered.

A sharp glint flashed in Fang Bai's eyes, no longer speaking to Wu De, he began to circle around the stone house.

A moment later, strange and profound runes appeared on the ground surrounding the stone house. These runes were connected to form a concealment formation.

Then Fang Bai kept throwing essence stones, embedding them into the critical positions of the formation.

Wu De and the others, watching the runes on the ground that seemed like random scribbles, were utterly confused about what Fang Bai was doing and could only stare intently.

After throwing out several hundred essence stones, Fang Bai finally clapped his hands, returned to the side of Wu De and the others, and declared, "Accomplished! Conceal!"

The runes containing several hundred essence stones sparkled with dazzling brilliance, emitting hundreds of essence energies that intertwined around the stone house, causing the space there to twist.

Suddenly, the large stone house vanished into thin air.

"Wow, the stone house is gone!"

"Am I seeing things?"

"Is this a magic trick?"

"This is truly amazing!"

...

Wu De and the others stared in awe as the stone house disappeared, unable to recover their senses for a long while.

"The stone house hasn't disappeared; it's still in the same place. It's just that I've set up a concealment formation around the stone house which affects your vision, so you can't see it."

Fang Bai explained with a smile.

"Concealment formation... this is interesting!"

With a face full of envy, Wu De rubbed his palms together and said to Fang Bai, "Brother Fang, when you have time, could you enlighten Taoist Master me? Also... if you're willing to teach me the formation, Taoist Master here will share a tenth of my cultivation resources with you... Too little? How about a fifth... or a third? Damn, why are you still shaking your head? A third is quite a lot, don't be too greedy!"

Fang Bai shook his head and said, "It's not that I'm unwilling to teach you, but to become an array master requires extremely high talent, which might be said to be more challenging than becoming both an alchemist and an artifact refiner!"

Wu De blinked his small eyes and said, "Taoist Master here is highly talented! I've been around for decades, and I've never seen anyone more talented than I am... except you! Brother Fang, for the sake of our friendship, I'm begging you, alright?"

Seeing Fang Bai still shaking his head, Wu De became anxious and shouted loudly, "If you teach me the formation, I will tell you the whereabouts of Su Linglong!"

Fang Bai said, "Speaking of which, I was just about to ask you: after you guys used the teleportation array to arrive at the True Martial Realm, where did you settle? I came here this time to search for you!"

Wu De exclaimed, "Us?"

"What 'us'? Originally, hundreds of martial artists from the Secular World grandly entered the teleportation array. The array seemed a bit unstable at the time, and when we arrived at the True Martial Realm, I found that the people around me had disappeared. I was transported to a nation called Weixiang Nation, and I have no idea where the others are! I've searched for over a year and only found that girl Su Linglong!"

Chapter 1154: News of Su Linglong

Fang Bai had always thought that his relatives and friends from the Secular World had safely reached the True Martial Realm through the Teleportation Array and were all living together somewhere. He just had to find one of them, and it would be equivalent to finding everyone.

But now, Wu De's words had filled Fang Bai with some regret.

If what Wu De said were true, then the hundreds of relatives and friends from the Secular World might have been scattered across various places in the True Martial Realm.

The True Martial Realm was vast, with mountains and seas separating the continents. How difficult would it be to find all of them?

Those relatives and friends had entered the True Martial Realm through the Teleportation Array more than a year ago, and Fang Bai had no idea whether they were still safe and sound.

"Where is Linglong?"

Although it was deeply regrettable that he could not find all his relatives and friends in a short time, learning of Su Linglong's whereabouts from Wu De's mouth was a surprise amidst the regret.

Su Linglong was the first close female friend Fang Bai had made after taking rebirth through possession in the Secular World. Their friendship was profound. Before Fang Bai left the Secular World, he asked Su Linglong if she wished to go with him to the True Martial Realm and informed her that once they left, she might never see her family again. Without any hesitation, Su Linglong bid farewell to her family and followed Fang Bai.

This, of course, was partly because Su Linglong wanted to pursue the higher peaks of Martial Dao, but more so because of her deep-rooted affection for Fang Bai, which she found hard to sever.

Like Su Linglong, there were several other close female friends of Fang Bai who similarly left their families behind to follow him to the True Martial Realm, aiming to pursue the peaks of Martial Dao and seek the methods for immortality.

What they did not expect was that, due to abnormal fluctuations in the Transmission Array during their passage, they were sent to different regions of the True Martial Realm, separated from Fang Bai by heaven and earth.

The Linghu sisters, when they were in the Secular World, listened together with Su Linglong and other women as Fang Bai expounded the Martial Dao Arcane. They had spent some time together, calling each other sisters. Hearing that there was news of Su Linglong, the sisters were also thrilled, their beautiful eyes watching Wu De, waiting for him to reveal Su Linglong's whereabouts.

"That girl Linglong... She... This..."

Hearing Fang Bai inquire about Su Linglong, Wu De hemmed and hawed, unable to articulate a clear answer.

"What's wrong with her?"

Seeing Wu De's expression, Fang Bai sensed that something was amiss. He suddenly grabbed Wu De's shoulders, his voice sinking as he demanded, "Tell me, has something happened to Linglong?"

Wu De felt Fang Bai's hands like iron clamps, causing intense pain in his shoulders, and he cried out miserably, "Ouch... It hurts..."

Fang Bai was concerned about Su Linglong and didn't control his strength, causing him to exert too much force. Hearing Wu De's wail, he then withdrew his strength. His aura brimming with killing intent, he urged impatiently, "Speak quickly!"

Enveloped in the killing Qi released by Fang Bai, Wu De couldn't help but shiver and dared not delay any longer. Enduring the pain in his shoulder, he sighed, "A few days ago, Linglong and several disciples from the Green Bamboo Stronghold went out to gather Spiritual Medicine and encountered a conflict with disciples from Swiftwind Valley. To protect her comrades, Linglong was severely injured and is still in a coma..."

Having said that, he looked at Fang Bai with a face full of shame and added, "It's also my fault. If I had gone with Linglong and others to gather the Spiritual Medicine, this wouldn't have happened! Ah, Brother Fang, I have let you down!"

Upon hearing that Su Linglong was injured and in a coma, the Linghu sisters couldn't help but frown, their faces filled with worry.

Wu De had thought Fang Bai would fly into a rage, but to his surprise, Fang Bai just furrowed his brows and then asked with a poker face, "The 'Swiftwind Valley' you mentioned, is it a second-grade sect? Does it have an elder named Qiu Heming?"

Wu De nodded and said, "Yes! Yes! Swiftwind Valley is indeed a second-grade sect, ranked alongside my current Green Bamboo Stronghold and another second-grade sect called Falcon Mountain, as the top three sects of Weixiang Nation. That Qiu Heming is one of the four Great Elders of Swiftwind Valley... Eh? Brother Fang, how do you know of Qiu Heming?"

Fang Bai said indifferently, "Qiu Heming has been killed by me!"

"What did you say?"

Wu De was extremely startled, almost thinking he had heard incorrectly.

"I said Qiu Heming has been killed by me!"

Fang Bai repeated solemnly.

Wu De, in disbelief, said, "You're not joking, are you? That Qiu Heming is a mid-level Cosmic Level powerhouse, how could you possibly have killed him..."

Fang Bai said, "If I say I killed him, it means he's been killed, believe it or not! Now, take me to Linglong!"

Su Linglong had been injured and was unconscious, clearly severely hurt, but as long as she wasn't dead, Fang Bai wasn't too worried and was confident he could cure her. However, he was now eager to see Su Linglong.

As for Swiftwind Valley, by slaying Qiu Heming, He Yushu, and He Linfeng at Xuannv Sect, Fang Bai had already forged a deadly feud with Swiftwind Valley. Now, with Su Linglong's situation, Fang Bai had already marked Swiftwind Valley as a target for extermination.

"Go to find Linglong now? But..."

Wu De looked troubled.

Fang Bai glared and said, "Speak up, don't beat around the bush!"

Wu De reluctantly chuckled, "The Green Bamboo Stronghold is tens of thousands of miles away from here, even if we could fly with wings, it wouldn't be possible to rush back overnight..."

Fang Bai cut off Wu De's words, saying sternly, "Then let's set off now, the sooner the better!"

Wu De said, "Don't be hasty! Once we get the cultivation resources from Dragon Tiger Palace, we can leave! After all, it's been over a year since you last saw Linglong, a day or two more won't make a difference! Oh, by the way, let me remind you that I am currently the Elder of Tribute for Green Bamboo Stronghold, one of the second-grade great sects of the era! I met Linglong by chance while I was out on an adventure half a year ago, and I took her back to Green Bamboo Stronghold, where I arranged for her to be a menial servant disciple..."

Before Wu De could finish, Fang Bai sneered and said, "Well, you old trickster, you made yourself an Elder of Tribute, yet made Linglong the lowest status menial servant disciple, don't you know that Linglong is my, Fang Bai's, woman?"

As he said this, his killing Qi intensified, enveloping Wu De who was nearly paralyzed with fright.

Wu De waved his hands, crying out his innocence, and urgently explained, "Brother Fang, you don't understand, Green Bamboo Stronghold is a second-grade sect, and even the weakest menial servant disciples are at Desolate Level Perfection, while that girl Linglong has just advanced to the Desolate Level. Although I am an Elder of Tribute, the sect has strict rules, and being able to arrange for Linglong to enter Green Bamboo Stronghold as a menial servant disciple was already doing my best!"

Fang Bai knew that Wu De wasn't lying and no longer made it difficult for him, waving his hand, he said, "Let's go, to the front mountain!"

Wu De said, "To the front mountain? There should be a fierce fight going on there right now, what excitement are we going to stir up? Why not wait until both sides are wounded, then we'll go over and take a look."

Chapter 1155: Snatching the Ring

Wu De worried that his group's appearance at the front mountain might attract hostility and attacks from both fighting sides. Although he wasn't afraid, he didn't want to waste his energy dealing with those martial artists and just wanted to profit from the situation afterward.

Fang Bai said, "Originally, I also wanted to wait for those martial artists to finish fighting and disperse before coming to the underground palace to collect cultivation resources, but now I can't wait! Wu De, once we get to the front mountain, see which martial artists have spatial spirit devices. We will rob them all to store the cultivation resources. We'll take as much as we can for now. Whatever we can't bring, we'll deal with later!"

Wu De slapped his forehead and exclaimed, "Right! How did I not think of this method before? Among the tens of thousands of martial artists in the front mountain, at least those dozens of fourth-grade sect masters will each have a space ring. If we can rob them, we could take a considerable amount of cultivation resources!"

Fang Bai's words enlightened Wu De, who became very excited. His figure flickered, and he shot out like a wisp of light smoke, quickly disappearing hundreds of meters away. His voice carried from afar, "Brother Fang, Taoist Master Wu De will go ahead to the front mountain and wait for you there!"

Wu De knew he was far less powerful than Fang Bai. If he traveled with Fang Bai together and they encountered martial artists with space rings, he definitely wouldn't be able to outcompete Fang Bai. Therefore, he decided to strike first, aiming to snatch a few more space rings before Fang Bai, which would allow him to carry more cultivation resources away.

"That thieving Taoist, running fast at a time like this!"

Fang Bai watched the direction Wu De had dashed off to and shook his head with a wry smile. He was already used to Wu De's self-serving nature.

"Qian Jiao, Baimei, Xiao Lian, the front mountain is too dangerous for you. You should hide in that stone house first... Or you can go to the underground palace if you want to see which cultivation resources you like. Pick and stack them together. When I return with some space rings, I'll give them to you to carry them away."

Fang Bai turned and said to Zhuge Lian and the others.

Zhuge Lian and the others knew their strength was weak. If they went to the front mountain with Fang Bai amid tens of thousands of crazed martial artists, not only would they be unable to help, but they might also distract Fang Bai. Besides, the cultivation resources in the underground palace were too tempting for them, so they all nodded in agreement.

The stone house had been hidden by Fang Bai using a formation, rendering it completely invisible to others. Under Fang Bai's guidance, Zhuge Lian and the others re-entered it.

After Fang Bai left, Zhuge Lian and the others pressed on a stone tile in the corner of the stone house, re-entering the entrance into the underground palace to pick and gather the cultivation resources they were interested in.

In the front mountain of the Dragon Tiger Palace, whether it was Dragon Peak, Tiger Peak, or any of the other dozens of peaks inhabited by Dragon Tiger Palace disciples, intense battles erupted.

The disciples of various sects aimed to seize the cultivation resources of the Dragon Tiger Palace, while the Dragon Tiger Palace disciples aimed to protect their sect's dignity and interests. Both sides were caught in a state of madness, fighting fiercely and risking their lives.

On every peak, one could see the bodies of fallen martial artists, some wounded lying in pools of blood, screaming in agony but left unattended.

The scent of blood permeating the air attracted groups of spirit beasts from nearby mountains. These spirit beasts circled from afar, eyes gleaming with covetous light as they watched the bodies of the fallen martial artists. Given the chance, they would surge forward and consume the bodies of the martial artists.

Dragon Peak and Tiger Peak, where the higher-ups of the Dragon Tiger Palace resided, contained the most likely spots for important cultivation resources. Therefore, they were the main targets of attacks by sect disciples and individual cultivation martial artists.

On two mountain peaks, thousands of martial artists gathered. The battle here was the most intense, and the casualties on both sides were particularly heavy. From the base to the waist of the mountain, fallen martial artists' bodies and their fresh red blood almost completely stained the two mountains red.

The dozen or so grand halls on Dragon Peak and Tiger Peak could be considered symbols of the Dragon Tiger Palace. If they were occupied or destroyed, it would be a heavy blow to the disciples of the Dragon Tiger Palace. Therefore, the Personal Transmission Disciples, Core Disciples, and other elite disciples were almost all gathered here, attempting to prevent the invading martial artists from reaching the summit.

However, the martial artists attacking Dragon Peak and Tiger Peak included dozens of Sect Masters from fourth-grade sects and their elite disciples, along with many strong Loose Cultivators. In terms of numbers, they far exceeded the elite disciples of the Dragon Tiger Palace defending the two main peaks.

Although the disciples of the Dragon Tiger Palace were united and ready to sacrifice their lives in fierce resistance, they were ultimately overwhelmed by the superior numbers and were pushed from the base of the mountain step by step to the summit.

The dozen or so grand halls were standing on the tops of the two closely arranged main peaks; within them were the Elixir Hall and the Classics Hall.

The Elixir Hall was a place for storing elixirs, and the Classics Hall was for storing Martial Arts Techniques. These two halls were crucial for any sect, often protected by the strictest security measures; ordinary people could hardly enter them.

The disciples of various sects and Loose Cultivators, soon to reach the summit of the two mountains, sensed the Essence Energy fluctuations from the Elixir Hall and Classics Hall at the peaks. Their eyes turned red with excitement, wishing they could immediately rush to the summit and divide up the Cultivation Resources within the two halls.

When the Dragon Tiger Palace was first established, they had spent a fortune to invite an Array Master who laid out Defensive Arrays on the tops of Dragon Peak and Tiger Peak. These were activated during life-and-death crises to protect the two main peaks from enemy attacks for three days.

At this moment, the Dragon Tiger Palace was facing the most severe crisis in its history. Two Personal Transmission Disciples who knew how to activate the Defensive Arrays had retreated to the tops of Dragon Peak and Tiger Peak respectively and activated the arrays simultaneously.

Instantly, tens of thousands of Essence Stones used in the array's setup released a vast amount of Essence Energy, condensing into a True Essence Barrier that enveloped the tops of the two main peaks.

Though the True Essence Barrier seemed thin as a cicada's wing, it was extraordinarily tough. Despite repeated joint attacks by thousands of martial artists from various paths, they could not break it.

Some anxious martial artists, seeing that they were close to the summit and the halls with Cultivation Resources were within reach, yet unable to enter and plunder, became enraged. Some stomped and cursed angrily, while others made threats, hoping to force the remaining disciples of the Dragon Tiger Palace to disable the array.

After causing a commotion for a while and seeing that the disciples of the Dragon Tiger Palace were unmoved, they had no choice but to guard the summit's perimeter, waiting for the Essence Energy of the Essence Stones sustaining the array to run out and disappear on their own.

At that very moment, Fang Bai in white attire and Wu De in a Taoist robe appeared separately on Dragon Peak and Tiger Peak.

Their targets were the martial artists wearing Space Rings.

Wu De, being an impatient man, arrived at Tiger Peak and caught sight of a Sect Master from a fourth-grade sect wearing a Space Ring on his finger. His eyes lit up, and he strode over to the Sect Master, grinning and saying, "That Space Ring of yours isn't bad, Taoist Master needs to borrow it!"

His movements were like lightning, and as he spoke, he had already grabbed the Sect Master's arm and removed the Space Ring from his finger.

Chapter 1156: Feels good to scold, doesn't it?

Wu De moved extremely fast, before the Sect Master of the fourth-grade Sect could react, the Spatial Ring on his finger had already fallen into Wu De's hands.

"You're seeking death!"

The Sect Master's Spatial Ring, which he had exchanged for a large sum of money, was filled with Cultivation Resources accumulated over many years. Seeing it getting robbed by Wu De, how could he not rage? Without a second thought, he swung his fist toward Wu De.

"Overestimating yourself!"

Wu De sneered coldly and casually threw a punch to meet the attack.

The Sect Master was merely a Desolate Level Perfection Martial Artist, how could he be a match for Wu De, who possessed an initial stage Vast Level Cultivation?

When the fists collided, Essence Energy burst forth, and with a loud boom, the Sect Master's figure flew backward, plunging below Tiger Peak.

Tiger Peak soared thousands of meters high, and since the Sect Master was not a Wind System Martial Artist, falling from the peak would surely crush him to pieces.

The Sect Disciples and Individual Cultivation Martial Artists standing by near Tiger Peak were shocked to see Wu De effortlessly punch and kill a fourth-grade Sect Master. Among them, some Desolate Level Perfection Martial Artists stared intensively at Wu De, realizing they couldn't discern his level of Cultivation and knew he was at least a Vast Level Expert, which filled their hearts with apprehension.

Originally, they planned to wait for the Defensive Array at the peak to dissipate on its own before fighting over the Cultivation Resources based on their abilities. But now, with the sudden appearance of a formidable person who might be a Vast Level Expert, if he also lusted after those Cultivation Resources and snatched them away, what chance would they stand?

"This thieving Taoist has killed our Sect Master, truly detestable! Fellow senior and junior brothers and sisters, let's fight him! For revenge for our Sect Master!"

"Revenge!"

A Martial Artist cried out in sorrow and anger, immediately eliciting a response from around a hundred Martial Artists around them. These Martial Artists, weapons in hand, roared and advanced menacingly toward Wu De, their eyes filled with hatred.

The hundred or so Martial Artists, dressed in the same uniform, were the Disciples brought by the Sect Master who had been killed by Wu De. Although they were stunned by Wu De's formidable strength, they thought to themselves that with over a hundred of them swarming in a group attack, they might be able to kill Wu De and avenge their Sect Master.

Seeing this, the other Martial Artists from various places secretly rejoiced, hoping that the confrontation between the hundred Martial Artists and Wu De would result in both sides sustaining great losses, thereby reducing the competition for the Cultivation Resources.

Wu De was there to snatch Spatial Rings, not to fight. Seeing that a hundred Martial Artists were encircling him and not wanting to entangle himself with them, his figure blurred as he made his way toward a Loose Cultivator who was just watching the action.

This Loose Cultivator also wore a Spatial Ring on his hand.

"Hand it over to Taoist Master!"

The Loose Cultivator heard Wu De's voice by his ear and saw a blur before his eyes. His finger relaxed and the Spatial Ring was gone without a trace.

"Thieving Taoist, return my ring!"

The Loose Cultivator's years of accumulated Cultivation Resources were all contained within that Spatial Ring, which he valued more than his own life. Seeing the ring snatched, he was a mix of shock and rage, bellowing as he frantically attacked Wu De.

"Ha-ha, if you can catch up to Taoist Master, I'll return your ring to you!"

With no effort at all, Wu De snatched another Spatial Ring, feeling greatly pleased with himself. He laughed heartily and dashed toward the next target.

Above Tiger Peak, there were at least twenty Martial Artists who owned Spatial Rings. Seeing that Wu De had come only for the Spatial Rings, they each panicked deep down and scattered to hide, but who could outpace Wu De?

Dozens of breaths later, the Spatial Rings of more than twenty Martial Artists had all ended up in Wu De's hands; some who tried to fight back either ended up dead or injured.

Those twenty plus Martial Artists who had their Spatial Rings stolen each had a group of Disciples or companions by their side. They were infuriated by Wu De's overbearing actions and attempted to join forces to encircle and attack him. Who would have known that Wu De would be as slippery as an eel,

darting to and fro among hundreds of Martial Artists without anyone being able to even touch a corner of his clothes?

Between Tiger Peak and Dragon Peak, there was a suspended ladder for passage. After grabbing more than twenty Spatial Rings, Wu De shook off the pursuit of hundreds of angry Martial Artists and swept up onto Dragon Peak, wanting to see how Fang Bai was doing.

At the summit of Dragon Peak, too, there were more than a thousand Martial Artists gathered; among them, more than twenty Desolate Level Perfection Martial Artists bore especially ugly expressions, looking utterly frustrated.

"Has anyone who likes snatching Spatial Rings come by just now?"

Wu De looked around but didn't see Fang Bai, he couldn't help but ask.

"What's your relation to that kid?"

A Sect Master from a fourth-grade Sect looked at Wu De with a disagreeable expression, his eyes filled with hostility.

"Well..."

Wu De's eyes shifted around suddenly he feigned a look of outrage and bellowed, "Just now, a young scoundrel in his twenties, without asking questions, snatched Taoist Master's Spatial Ring and ran off, infuriating me to the core! Once Taoist Master finds that scoundrel, I won't rest until I mince him into ten thousand pieces!"

As he spat out the words "young scoundrel," Wu De's gaze stealthily swept the surroundings, fearing that Fang Bai would suddenly appear and cause him trouble.

Upon hearing this, the Sect Master's expression eased up slightly and he sighed, "We're in the same boat, then! My Spatial Ring was taken by that kid as well! Sadly, you're a step too late. That little thief

who stole our Spatial Rings has already fled! Hmph, if only he hadn't run so fast, I would have certainly killed him with my palm!"

While making these bold claims, he also seemed a bit sheepish, glancing nervously around. Remembering that ghost-like figure who just a moment ago had swiped Spatial Rings from over twenty Desolate Level Perfection experts, and none of them had even seen the thief's face, he couldn't help but shudder.

The other twenty plus Martial Artists who had their Spatial Rings stolen felt both anger and relief.

In their eyes, whoever had taken their Spatial Rings was solidly powerful, elusive, and left them in despair. If the thief had wanted their lives, even ten of them wouldn't have been enough to avoid being killed multiple times over.

"What, he's gone?"

Wu De, knowing the youngster who stole the Martial Artists' Spatial Rings must be Fang Bai, was momentarily stunned upon hearing Fang Bai had already left. He then stomped his foot and exclaimed, "That guy... must have gone to the Underground Palace ahead of me, wanting to claim all the good stuff for himself. Ahhh, he's driving me mad!"

Wu De's mouth twitched, and his eyelids fluttered anxiously as he received astonished looks from the surrounding Martial Artists. Like a Dapeng spreading its wings, he swiftly leaped down from Dragon Peak and darted toward the mountain's rear.

When he arrived at the valley behind the mountain, Wu De found Fang Bai standing in front of the hidden stone house, looking at him with a smile that wasn't quite a smile, as if he had specifically waited for him to come over.

"You thieving Taoist, you enjoyed cursing me out just now, didn't you?"

Fang Bai said with a smile to Wu De, who had walked up close.

"Nonsense! Such disrespect, cursing someone behind their back, is beneath Taoist Master!"

Wu De stood dumbfounded for a moment, then his head began shaking like a rattle-drums, firmly denying it, yet thinking to himself, "Back when I was cursing this kid, was he really nearby? That can't be, I looked around then and didn't spot him... Ah well, no matter what, I'll have to be a lot more careful when cursing him in the future!"

Chapter 1157: Surprising Discovery

"Give me ten Spatial Rings that you've looted, and I won't quarrel with you about the insults. Otherwise, you won't be able to keep a single one. Do you believe me?"

Fang Bai ignored Wu De's words as if he had heard nothing and leisurely looked up at the few clouds drifting across the sky.

Wu De knew that this was Fang Bai's punishment for cursing at him. He laughed awkwardly, "I really didn't curse you. Believe it or not! Alright, alright, considering our friendship, I'll give you two Spatial Rings!"

Fang Bai remained silent, just looking at him.

Wu De felt uneasy under his gaze and said, "Five rings?"

Fang Bai chuckled but remained silent.

Wu De sighed and cursed his bad luck inwardly; gritting his teeth, he said, "Alright, ten rings then!"

He obediently took out ten Spatial Rings, handed them over to Fang Bai with a pained expression, and then rolled his eyes, saying, "Are you satisfied now? Can you take me to the Underground Palace to see those Cultivation Resources?"

Seeing the frustrated look on Wu De's face, Fang Bai felt secretly delighted. He patted Wu De on the shoulder, smiling, "Let's go! Into the Underground Palace!"

Inside the Underground Palace, Zhuge Lian and others moved like busy bees around piles of Cultivation Resources, carefully picking out their favorites, and stacking them together, ready to take them when they left the palace.

The loot from this trip to Dragon Tiger Palace had far exceeded the imaginations of Zhuge Lian and the others. The Spatial Rings on their fingers were already filled with various Cultivation Resources, enough for their cultivation needs for a long time.

Hu Ren and his family hadn't expected such an enormous return from just taking Fang Bai to the Xuannv Sect. Seeing the countless Cultivation Resources around them, they felt as if they were in a dream, extremely excited.

While they were busy collecting Cultivation Resources, two figures flew swiftly and appeared before them—Fang Bai and Wu De.

Although Wu De was an Elder of Tribute of a second-level Sect and had vast experience, he was still astonished by the abundant number of Cultivation Resources in the Underground Palace of Dragon Tiger Palace. He looked around, his eyes sparkling, muttering, "Good heavens, a mere third-level Sect has such a profound foundation, incredible... simply incredible!"

He then saw the high-rank Cultivation Resources that Zhuge Lian and others were selecting. Anxious not to miss out, he mumbled, "If Taoist Master had come any later, all the good things would have been picked clean by you!"

After saying this, like a Hungry Wolf spying a succulent prey, he howled, "Argh," and dove into the piles of Cultivation Resources.

Wu De's sensitivity to Essence Energy was extremely strong. Even though the Cultivation Resources in the Underground Palace had been carefully picked through by Zhuge Lian and others, in the blink of an eye, he found several valuable items and then triumphantly boasted to Zhuge Lian and the others.

Seeing this, Zhuge Lian and the others stomped their feet in frustration, regretting that they hadn't discovered those valuable items while searching.

Fang Bai distributed the Spatial Rings he had claimed from Wu De to Zhuge and others, one ring each, and then began searching for the Cultivation Resources that caught his eye in the Underground Palace.

With Fang Bai's current cultivation level and realm, those lower-rank Cultivation Resources no longer interested him; it was only high-rank resources, like the Spiritual Medicines he had just gathered, that were almost a thousand years old, that could capture his attention.

In the present True Martial Realm, no one could match Fang Bai's keen sensitivity to the Heaven and Earth Origin Energy; even Wu De was inferior.

As a result, if Wu De could find some treasures missed by Zhuge Lian and the others, Fang Bai could as well.

Soon, Fang Bai's eyes lit up with joy, and he strode to a pile of low-grade Golden Essence Stones, then suddenly slammed his palm down, collapsing the pile of Golden Essence Stones, releasing a wave of Golden Essence Energy that was several times denser.

"Is this... high-grade Golden Essence Stones?"

Wu De sensed the Golden Essence Energy that was significantly richer than the lower-grade, and immediately rushed to Fang Bai, staring at the hundreds of golden, transparent Golden Essence Stones revealed in front of him, his eyes almost popping out with covetousness.

These hundreds of Golden Essence Stones, possessing a golden hue, were extremely rare high-rank Essence Stones in the True Martial Realm.

According to the values on the Martial Artists Trading Market, where a high-rank Essence Stone could be exchanged for ten thousand low-rank Essence Stones, the value of these few hundred high-rank Golden Essence Stones was equivalent to several million low-rank Golden Essence Stones, no wonder Wu De was highly covetous.

"Yes, they are high-rank Golden Essence Stones! I almost missed them last time. Haha..."

Fang Bai laughed loudly, swept his hand, and collected the hundreds of high-rank Golden Essence Stones into his Spatial Ring.

After much effort, Wu De had nearly filled up several Spatial Rings, but the Cultivation Resources he found were not as valuable as the few hundred high-rank Golden Essence Stones that Fang Bai had acquired, causing him to be greatly depressed. He muttered, "Taoist Master doesn't believe he can't find even better treasures!"

Perseverance paid off, and a few dozen breaths later, Tian Wu De discovered an Earth Immortal Ginseng nearly hidden beneath a pile of Spiritual Medicines.

Earth Immortal Ginseng was the primary ingredient for Earth Element Pills, which were quite valuable. For Wu De, who possessed both Gold and Earth Innate Spiritual Roots, it was greatly beneficial. Holding the Earth Immortal Ginseng, he laughed triumphantly and specifically ran in front of Fang Bai to show off.

However, his happiness didn't last long.

Because shortly afterward, Fang Bai found a high-rank Fire Essence Iron encased within a giant Fire Elemental Stone.

The high-rank Fire Essence Iron, as large as an adult human's head, was enough to forge several high-rank Fire System Spiritual Artifacts. High-rank Spiritual Artifacts were extremely powerful, and even Universe Level Experts in the True Martial Realm rarely possessed them; its value was far greater than Wu De's Earth Immortal Ginseng.

Since the giant Fire Elemental Stone encasing the Fire Essence Iron looked unremarkable, it had been stored in this Underground Palace, and even the disciples of Dragon Tiger Palace weren't aware that such treasure was hidden inside.

Being able to discover some high-rank treasures among the numerous Cultivation Resources in the Underground Palace was indeed a rarity, but other than this, including Fang Bai himself, no one else made any more surprising discoveries.

After being busy in the Underground Palace for most of the day, everyone's Spatial Rings were filled with Cultivation Resources, and they finally regrouped.

After carefully calculating, the dozens of Spatial Rings filled by everyone could only take away about one-tenth or one-twelfth of the total Cultivation Resources from the entire Underground Palace. Fortunately, the resources they took were mostly of medium grade, while the remaining majority were lower-grade resources which, though numerous, were not very valuable.

"The remaining Cultivation Resources would be a pity to discard. Brother Hu, if your family doesn't have any urgent matters to attend to, I suggest you stay here to cultivate in seclusion for some time before leaving—it might allow your cultivation level to advance further!"

Fang Bai said to Hu Ren.

Chapter 1158: Believe It or Not, It's Up to You!

Hu Ren sighed silently, knowing that Fang Bai's words meant they were about to part ways with him and his family of three. Since he had met Fang Bai, his family's fortunes had continually improved to levels they had never dared to dream of before. Now, such opportunities would be hard to come by.

Nevertheless, Hu Ren also understood that no banquet in the world lasted forever. Having benefited so much already, it would be rather greedy to ask for more.

Additionally, Hu Ren truly regretted not being able to take the cultivation resources from the Underground Palace with him. So he nodded and said, "Okay. We'll follow Senior Fang's advice."

Hu Yi suddenly knelt to the ground and respectfully kowtowed several times to Fang Bai, saying solemnly, "Senior Fang has given me a second chance at life, and I have no way to repay this debt. I kowtow to you now, as a token of my gratitude!"

After Hu Yi had finished kowtowing, Fang Bai helped him up, chuckled, and patted his shoulder. He said, "I'll not simply accept your kowtows for nothing. I will now pass on to you a set of martial arts techniques. If you diligently cultivate them, within ten years, you will achieve a major breakthrough in the Martial Dao and stand at the pinnacle of this world!"

Hu Yi viewed Fang Bai as his idol and was incredibly excited upon hearing that Fang Bai would impart martial arts techniques to him.

Hu Ren and Miao Feng, husband and wife, exchanged a glance and saw a glint of surprise in each other's eyes.

They had personally witnessed Fang Bai defeat Lin Xiaotian, an Elder of Dragon Tiger Palace with mid-Vast Level strength, and knew Fang Bai's cultivation level was at least at the high Vast Level. It was a rare and hard-to-come-by opportunity for their son, Hu Yi, to be taught by him.

As for Fang Bai's comment about "standing at the pinnacle of this world's powerful," Mr. and Mrs. Hu Ren took it as encouragement for their son to cultivate diligently, without taking it literally.

Little did they know that, years later, by leveraging the cultivation resources obtained from the Dragon Tiger Palace and through diligent cultivation, Hu Yi truly became a top-ranked powerhouse revered by everyone in the True Martial Realm.

Fang Bai imparted a foundational set of martial arts techniques that he had cultivated in the Three Thousand Great Worlds to Hu Yi using the Thread Condensation Sound Transmission Technique. He then patiently explained it again before asking, "Have you memorized it all?"

Hu Yi, a talented youth, nodded and said, "Yes, I've memorized it. However, the techniques that the senior passed on are quite profound, and there are some parts I still cannot fully comprehend."

Fang Bai smiled and said, "Don't worry. Once your realm and cultivation level reach a certain point, those obscure and difficult-to-understand parts will become clear and you'll have an epiphany."

After giving Hu Yi an encouraging look, Fang Bai turned to Zhuge Lian and the others, saying, "Our expedition to the Dragon Tiger Palace this time has brought us all gains. Congratulations are in order. However, it's time for us to leave now."

He walked a dozen steps with Zhuge Lian, Linghu Qianjiao, and Linghu Baimei, and then saw Wu De not following, standing still with his eyes darting around, clearly struggling to leave. Fang Bai felt a mix of

amusement and annoyance, gestured to Wu De and said, "Wu De, take me to Green Bamboo Stronghold. I need to rescue Linglong."

Wu De shook his head vigorously and said, "If you want to go, then go, but why involve me? I left Green Bamboo Stronghold not long ago, planning to experience the world. I'm not thinking of going back just yet!"

Fang Bai looked at him with an amused expression and asked, "You're truly not going back?"

Wu De, with a look of resolve, said, "No, I'm not! When I say I won't go, I won't!"

"That's such a pity!"

Fang Bai showed a look of regret and sighed, "I was all set to rescue Linglong and then take the chance to destroy Swiftwind Valley, sharing some of their cultivation resources with you... Oh, I've heard Swiftwind Valley is a second-tier sect with a history of ten thousand years, so their sect's foundation must be much more substantial than that of the Dragon Tiger Palace, a third-tier sect, right?"

Wu De was stunned for a moment, then frowned and said, "You want to destroy Swiftwind Valley? Do you have any idea how strong Swiftwind Valley is?"

"I know."

Fang Bai nodded and said, "As a second-tier sect, Swiftwind Valley's top ranks are all Cosmic Level experts; their personal transmission disciples, Inner Court disciples, and External Courtyard disciples are all Vast Level Martial Artists; even the strongest menial servant disciple has reached Desolate Level Perfection! When it comes to overall strength, Swiftwind Valley is more than ten times stronger than Dragon Tiger Palace."

Wu De said, "That's why, even though you're strong enough to destroy the Dragon Tiger Palace, you can't possibly destroy Swiftwind Valley! Ah, confidence is a good thing, but too much of it is not!"

"What do you, fat Taoist, know!"

Zhuge Lian, standing by and seeing Wu De belittling Fang Bai, was somewhat dissatisfied and snorted, "What's so great about Swiftwind Valley? Let me tell you, when Brother Fang was at Xuannv Sect, he alone took down an elder from Swiftwind Valley and two of its personal transmission disciples!"

"Ha ha... Little girl, you can boast about your little lover all you want, but don't exaggerate too much, or the cow will fly to the sky! Ha ha..."

Wu De had always thought Zhuge Lian was just another martial dao companion Fang Bai had picked up in the True Martial Realm. Hearing her speak for Fang Bai, he found it amusing that she would make such unrealistic boasts just to protect her lover's face.

Swiftwind Valley is a second-tier sect, and its elders are powerful beings with mid-stage Cosmic Level cultivation. Add to that two personal transmission disciples with Vast Level Perfection strength, and you can imagine how formidable their combat power is. Fang Bai, with just high-rank Vast Level cultivation, if he really encountered an elder and two personal transmission disciples from Swiftwind Valley, not to mention killing them, it would be good if he could save his own life.

Zhuge Lian, hearing Wu De referring to Fang Bai as her little lover, blushed and spat out in protest, "Pah, pah, pah! You fat Taoist are talking nonsense!"

"Taoist Priest Wu, before Brother Fang came to the Dragon Tiger Palace, he really did kill an elder and two personal transmission disciples from Swiftwind Valley. We were there at the time and can testify! That elder from Swiftwind Valley was named Qiu Heming, and the two personal transmission disciples were the brothers Feng Shijun and Feng Shijie!"

Hu Baimei said loudly.

Hu Qian Jiao also said, "If Taoist Priest Wu doesn't believe us, you can personally check with Xuannv Sect!"

Wu De had known the Linghu sisters back in the Secular World and had some understanding of their characters. He knew that what they said was quite credible.

However, Wu De also knew that the Linghu sisters had a good relationship with Fang Bai, so he couldn't fully trust their words. He could only turn his head and ask Fang Bai, "Brother Fang, is it true or false that you've killed people from Swiftwind Valley? You have many faults, but you always speak the truth; you never lie! So, I believe you."

"Believe it or not, it's up to you!"

Fang Bai glanced at Wu De with a barely discernible smile on his lips, not bothering to explain any further, and said, "I'll say it again, if you want more cultivation resources, then take us to Green Bamboo Stronghold. Once we rescue Linglong, we'll go together and destroy Swiftwind Valley. If you don't want to lead the way, I won't force you, but then you'll have no share in Swiftwind Valley's cultivation resources!"

Chapter 1159: Green Bamboo Stronghold

Wu De glanced at Zhuge Lian, Linghu Qian Jiao, Linghu Baimei, and then at Fang Bai, hesitating for a moment.

Swiftwind Valley and Green Bamboo Stronghold were both second-tier sects, and Wu De, as an Elder of Tribute for Green Bamboo Stronghold, naturally knew their profound depth. If Fang Bai truly managed to annihilate Swiftwind Valley and he, Wu De, wasn't present, he would truly regret it beyond all reach.

But, could Fang Bai, with his high rank in the Vast Level realm, really kill the Elders and Direct Disciples of Swiftwind Valley?

What if Fang Bai and the others were just fooling him into taking them to Green Bamboo Stronghold? Wouldn't that be a complete waste of his precious time?

But what if this were true?

This guy, Fang Bai, had always been very good at performing miracles when he was in the Secular World!

"Forget it, forget it, although this doesn't seem very reliable, I'll take you to Green Bamboo Stronghold for the sake of our friendship!"

Wu De pondered for a moment and ultimately decided to accompany Fang Bai and the others back.

Wu De was always an early riser when it came to profit, willing to try anything that might be profitable. He thought that if Fang Bai could really eradicate Swiftwind Valley, he could bask in the glory. If Fang Bai was merely boasting, it would just be a wasted trip, and he could also fulfill the "duty of friendship."

"Congratulations!"

Fang Bai said to Wu De with a smile, "The decision you've made will earn you a handsome reward!"

"Let's hope so!"

Thereupon, Fang Bai, Wu De, Zhuge Lian, Linghu Qian Jiao, Linghu Baimei, and Hu Ren's family of three said their farewells and set off for Green Bamboo Stronghold, while Hu Ren's family of three stayed behind in the Underground Palace to cultivate in seclusion.

Since the entrance to the Underground Palace in the stone house had been hidden by Fang Bai with a Formation, Hu Ren's family could cultivate peacefully without fear of disturbance.

With the abundance of cultivation resources in the Underground Palace, Hu Ren's family could cultivate in seclusion with peace of mind for a while. With the Martial Arts Techniques personally transmitted by Fang Bai, Hu Yi's abilities would certainly soar. It was also hopeful that Hu Ren and Miao Feng's cultivation levels would reach the Vast Level realm.

By the time they emerged from seclusion, their ability to defend themselves would be greatly enhanced. Even if the tens of thousands of Martial Artists in the front mountain hadn't dispersed yet, they wouldn't need to worry about being attacked.

After leaving the Dragon Tiger Palace, Fang Bai and the others abandoned their previous Swiftwind Horses and exchanged for five of the strongest ones in a nearby market town to set out on their journey to Green Bamboo Stronghold.

Green Bamboo Stronghold, located within Weixiang Nation, was tens of thousands of miles away from Dragon Tiger Palace. Several small countries with sparse populations lay in between. Fang Bai and his four companions rode swiftly on Swiftwind Horses through cities and towns, practically without rest, and it took them nearly a month to enter the territory of Weixiang Nation.

The True Martial Realm consisted of seven continents of varying sizes, divided by vast oceans. Of these continents, only five were inhabited by humans, while the two at the extreme southern and northern ends—one bitterly cold and the other scorchingly hot—were harsh climates considered the Forbidden Zones of Life, which even Martial Artists dared not enter lightly.

The seven continents were also known as the seven great continents. Both Thousand Lakes Country, where Fang Bai was from, and Weixiang Nation, where they currently were, resided on the continent of Tiansheng.

However, Thousand Lakes Country was located inland on Tiansheng Continent, while Weixiang Nation was situated at the easternmost edge of Tiansheng, surrounded on three sides by sea, with a pleasant climate. The continuous rich Wind Essence Qi and Water Element Qi from the sea provided the Martial Artists of Weixiang Nation with an excellent cultivation environment; hence, Martial Dao was extremely flourishing here. The number of Sects and the strength of Martial Artists were both unparalleled in Tiansheng Continent.

The three most powerful Sects in Weixiang Nation were second-grade Sects: Swiftwind Valley, Green Bamboo Stronghold, and Falcon Mountain. These three Sects had stood for ten thousand years, each capable of looking down upon Tiansheng Continent with pride.

Like the Sects in other countries, the three second-grade Sects in Weixiang Nation were allies only in appearance; they engaged in both open competition and secret strife, each aiming to crush the other two and reign supreme. However, the three Sects were evenly matched, maintaining a mutual check and balance. In ten thousand years, none had been able to best the others.

In recent years, however, Swiftwind Valley discovered a vast Essence Stone Vein within its territory and produced a batch of genius disciples. Its overall strength greatly improved, and it leaped ahead to become the strongest of the three, gaining an advantage in its struggles against Green Bamboo Stronghold and Falcon Mountain.

Consequently, Green Bamboo Stronghold and Falcon Mountain, with their relatively weaker overall strengths, had no choice but to form a temporary alliance against Swiftwind Valley, preserving the tripartite balance.

The immense pressure from Swiftwind Valley made Green Bamboo Stronghold eager to strengthen itself.

For nearly a century, Green Bamboo Stronghold faced a generational gap where the old generation of talented Martial Artists gradually aged, while few outstanding disciples emerged among the young. To maintain their formidable combat power, they had no option but to offer generous terms to attract talented Individual Cultivation Martial Artists to join the Sect.

Wu De, a Loose Cultivator who had traveled here, received significant attention from Green Bamboo Stronghold due to his keen perception of Heaven and Earth Origin Energy. Although only a Vast Level Martial Artist, the Stronghold still assigned him the role of Elder of Tribute, exchanging this position for his membership. They hoped Wu De would use his special talent to seek Cultivation Resources for Green Bamboo, laying the groundwork for the Stronghold's resurgence.

After becoming an Elder of Tribute at Green Bamboo Stronghold, Wu De happened upon Su Linglong during one of his journeys and brought her back to Green Bamboo Stronghold, recommending her to join the Sect.

Su Linglong had an Innate Spiritual Root with a Wood Attribute, which was excellent news for Green Bamboo Stronghold, lacking in talented Martial Artists. The ecstatic Stronghold Chief, Gu Li, personally taught her and provided the Sect's best Cultivation Resources to nurture Su Linglong.

By day, Su Linglong diligently followed Gu Li's teachings, and by night, she cultivated the Martial Arts Techniques imparted by Fang Bai. Coupled with the steady supply of resources, her progression was meteoric. In just six months, she advanced from an intermediate Heaven Level Realm, which she was upon entering Green Bamboo Stronghold, to a mid-Desolate Level Realm, leaping an entire major realm in strength.

Although a mid-Desolate Level Realm was considered modest even among menial disciple ranks in a second-grade Sect like Green Bamboo Stronghold, Gu Li soon discovered that Su Linglong possessed the capacity to challenge beyond her level. With her mid-Desolate Level Cultivation Level, she could exchange a hundred moves without defeat against early Vast Level disciples in the Stronghold.

This discovery filled Gu Li with a mixture of surprise and joy; he saw in Su Linglong the hope for Green Bamboo Stronghold's rise. He spared no effort in her cultivation.

When the news of a genius Martial Artist in Green Bamboo Stronghold reached Swiftwind Valley, they saw an opportunity during a "chance encounter" while disciples from both sides were gathering Spiritual Medicine. They struck fiercely, inflicting serious injuries on Su Linglong, damaging her Qi Sea, severing her meridians, leaving her in a coma that she could not awaken from, though alive, she was as good as dead.

Chapter 1160: The Other Shore of Shenwu Continent

Su Linglong encountered a great disaster, which not only made the Green Bamboo Stronghold Chief, Gu Li, deeply distressed, but Wu De was also filled with indignant fury. However, although they knew it was a conspiracy by Swiftwind Valley, aimed at eradicating the hope of Green Bamboo Stronghold's rise, they were helpless to do anything.

With Swiftwind Valley's formidable strength and Falcon Mountain's reluctance to lend a hand, Green Bamboo Stronghold had no choice but to swallow this bitter pill.

After Su Linglong was injured, Gu Li and Wu De spent a large amount of cultivation resources to exchange for many healing pills from some renowned alchemists in Weixiang Nation, trying to wake Su Linglong from her coma and heal her wounds, but all efforts ended in vain.

Wu De knew that when Fang Bai was in the Secular World, he often treated people's injuries and illnesses and was hailed as a Divine Doctor. But, the common ailments of ordinary people were incomparable to the severity of Su Linglong's injuries, so Wu De had little hope that Fang Bai could cure Su Linglong.

However, Su Linglong and Fang Bai had a deep relationship, one could say she was Fang Bai's confidante and Martial Dao companion. Wu De felt that, both emotionally and rationally, they should meet once more, which was one of the reasons he was willing to bring Fang Bai to Green Bamboo Stronghold.

Green Bamboo Stronghold was located at the easternmost edge of Weixiang Nation, less than a hundred miles away from the vast ocean. The whole stronghold was surrounded by tens of thousands of acres of green bamboo forests, creating an environment of tranquility and outstanding beauty.

According to the ancient records of Green Bamboo Stronghold, these tens of thousands of acres of green bamboo forests had existed since the founding of the stronghold, their age unknown, as if they had been there since time immemorial. Each bamboo stalk was thick and tall, verdant as jade, and threads of pure Wood Element Qi wafted out from between the bamboos, permeating the entire Green Bamboo Stronghold, providing an excellent cultivation site for the tens of thousands of disciples of the stronghold, and also making it one of the well-known Cultivation Holy Lands in Weixiang Nation.

Green Bamboo Stronghold was composed of thousands of bamboo buildings and houses, scattered among the vast bamboo forests. All the structures were constructed from the sturdy and robust green bamboo, housing over ten thousand Green Bamboo Stronghold disciples, resembling a small town hidden from the outside world.

At the very center of Green Bamboo Stronghold was a circular hillock with a circumference of a hundred feet. Atop the hillock stood a majestic and exquisite three-story bamboo building, the residence of Green Bamboo Stronghold Chief, Gu Li.

Around the hillock stood a dozen smaller two-story bamboo buildings, encircling and guarding the three-story building where Gu Li resided, serving as the living quarters for the higher-ups of Green Bamboo Stronghold.

On this particular morning, as the sun began to rise, its warm rays filtered through the gaps in the green bamboo leaves, illuminating the hillock and the three-story bamboo building, leaving countless dreamlike mottled spots of light.

At that moment, in the open space in front of the bamboo building, there was a large circular bamboo bed. Led by Gu Li, more than a dozen high-ranking members of Green Bamboo Stronghold sat cross-legged around the bed, their gazes fixated on a young girl lying on the bamboo bed, sighing deeply with worried expressions.

"Linglong has been in a coma for more than a month now. If it weren't for her possessing an Innate Wood Spirit Root and her body's ability to absorb the Wood Element Qi from our bamboo forest to nourish itself, her vitality might have been long extinguished. But this cannot continue, it's not a solution!"

Shortly after, Gu Li let out a soft sigh, his gaze sweeping over the faces of the several Green Bamboo Stronghold Elders and Stewards. He slowly spoke up, "Linglong is a Martial Dao Genius that Green Bamboo Stronghold encounters but once in a thousand years. Her loss would be a colossal blow to us

and would only further embolden Swiftwind Valley. Elders and Stewards, let's pool our thoughts and figure out how we can heal Linglong."

"On my last trip to the Martial Artists Trading Market in Weixiang City, I heard from a mid-tier alchemist that Linglong's injuries might only be cured by a high-tier Nine Revolutions Rebirth Pill. However... Although we have many alchemists in Tiansheng Continent, we lack high-tier alchemists. Unless we make a distant voyage across the Myriad Miles Ocean to the other shore, to Shenwu Continent, and try our luck."

The one speaking was Zou Qing, the Elder of Green Bamboo Stronghold's Elixir Hall.

To heal Su Linglong's wounds, Zou Qing had made several trips to the capital of Weixiang Nation, Weixiang City, within the past month and exchanged for elixirs from several mid-tier alchemists there. However, those pills had proved ineffective for Su Linglong's condition, leaving Zou Qing close to despair.

The higher-ups of Green Bamboo Stronghold exchanged glances, shaking their heads with sighs.

High-grade elixirs could naturally only be refined by high-grade alchemists, and yet, no such alchemist was known to exist in Tiansheng Continent.

Moreover, high-grade Nine Revolutions Rebirth Pill, although possessing the miraculous effects of reshaping meridians and regenerating limbs, was one of the most difficult elixirs to refine, with its main ingredient, the Thousand-Year Blood Bodhi, being incredibly valuable and rare.

Thus, for the martial artists of Tiansheng Continent, the high-grade Nine Revolutions Rebirth Pill was nothing but a legend, something they had never even seen.

It was said that beyond the myriad-mile ocean that separated Tiansheng Continent lay the mighty Shenwu Continent, a place teeming with strong individuals. There, the Heaven and Earth Origin Energy was even more abundant than in Tiansheng Continent, and cultivation resources were also richer, making martial artists' powers generally greater than those in Tiansheng Continent.

Sects of great repute were established in Shenwu Continent. A second-grade sect like Green Bamboo Stronghold, which was considered top-tier in Tiansheng Continent, would have to act according to the dictates of first-grade sects in Shenwu Continent.

The plentiful Heaven and Earth Origin Energy and rich cultivation resources of Shenwu Continent made it a coveted cultivation holy land for martial artists of the True Martial Realm. Each year, many Vast Level and Cosmic Level experts from Tiansheng Continent set out on sea voyages, crossing the Myriad Miles Ocean in pursuit of higher realms in martial dao.

The ocean between Tiansheng Continent and Shenwu Continent was not only stormy and had severe weather, but it was also plagued with fierce spirit beasts. The journey was laden with dangers, but that did not deter the determination of Tiansheng Continent martial artists from heading to Shenwu Continent.

The ships sailing to Shenwu Continent were built from Black Gold Wood, tougher than steel, massive and robust, able to accommodate at least a thousand people. Furthermore, once a ship was constructed, an Array Master was invited to set up a Defensive Array to contend with the harsh marine conditions and attacks from vicious sea spirit beasts.

Constructing a sailing ship was an immense expenditure of manpower, material, and financial resources; therefore, only a few powerful second-grade sects in Tiansheng Continent had the capacity to build and operate these ships.

Swiftwind Valley, Green Bamboo Stronghold, and Falcon Mountain – these three second-grade major sects with access to a mountain and sea – were able to construct ships. However, limited by financial and material resources, both Green Bamboo Stronghold and Falcon Mountain had only one ship each, and even the mighty Swiftwind Valley only had two.

Due to the distant voyage, the ships of Green Bamboo Stronghold and Falcon Mountain could only set sail twice a year, and Swiftwind Valley a mere three to five times at best.

The martial artists boarding the ships, if staying in the ordinary cabins, had to pay an expensive fare of a hundred thousand Essence Stones, and those who wished to reside in the luxurious, comfortable cabins would have to pay double the price.

Nevertheless, a hundred thousand or two hundred thousand Essence Stones were still affordable for the Vast Level experts and Cosmic Level experts.

Sects owning ships never had to worry about a lack of passengers. Every time a ship set sail, the cabins capable of accommodating thousands would be filled with martial artists from all over Tiansheng Continent. These martial artists would step on the journey to Shenwu Continent with infinite aspirations for the martial dao.