

Doctor 1271

Chapter 1271: Collapse

In the midst of He Rushan's shout, which was laced with True Yuan, it exploded like thunder in the ears of those hundreds of disoriented Martial Artists in the dense forest.

Hundreds of Martial Artists, suddenly attacked by two Spirit Beasts and thrown into a panic, had no idea what to do next. He Rushan's shout jolted them, and they quickly regained their senses, thinking that He Rushan had a point. Although the two Spirit Beasts were formidable, they were many, and with their combined strength being stronger, killing them was still a possibility.

Thus, the hundreds of Martial Artists steadied their minds, brandishing their Spiritual Artifacts, and under the guidance of their respective leaders, teamed up to fiercely battle the two rampaging, eight-clawed behemoths.

Hundreds of Universe Level Experts and Cosmic Level Experts joining forces were by no means an easy target, especially since every Martial Artist was imbued with a Spiritual Artifact. Fighting for their lives, they poured out all their efforts and within moments, the two eight-clawed behemoths began to sustain a variety of injuries, both light and severe.

Although the Martial Artists in the forest had turned the tide in their favor, it also fully ignited the ferocity of the two Spirit Beasts, which became even wilder in their rage. They lashed with tails, rammed with heads, and tore with sharp teeth, continuously claiming the lives of Martial Artists amid screams.

The Spirit Beasts, with their keen senses, quickly picked up on the spreading stench of blood permeating the surroundings, and soon attracted a variety of Spirit Beasts numbering in the hundreds from within Black Wind Gorge.

Although these Spirit Beasts were not as powerful as the two eight-clawed behemoths, they were still more formidable than the Martial Artists in the forest, prowling around the dense woods with greedy eyes.

To these Spirit Beasts, the Martial Artists in the forest were fresh and delicious prey, and they would launch surprise attacks on the Martial Artists if given the chance.

As a result, the hundreds of Martial Artists not only had to fend off the two intruding eight-clawed behemoths but also defend against the attacks from the several hundred Spirit Beasts outside. In their

distraction, casualties rose rapidly, and the fighting spirit that had just gathered began to collapse with the increasing losses.

"Run!"

Someone shouted loudly, followed by many Martial Artists frantically waving their Spiritual Artifacts, fleeing in all directions.

But no sooner had they burst out of the forest than they were attacked by Spirit Beasts lying in wait outside, suffering heavy casualties. In the end, very few were able to escape.

He Rushan looked around and saw that less than forty Martial Artists from the Justice Alliance remained beside him. The rest had died or were wounded, and a few had escaped without a trace. He couldn't help but feel a wave of frustration.

"Sigh..."

Realizing that if they did not leave this place soon, including himself, all members of the Justice Alliance might perish here, He Rushan let out a sigh, his expression complex as he glanced at Fang Bai standing by the distant swamp. Then he led the several dozen Martial Artists of the Justice Alliance to break out of the encirclement and flee back the way they came, escaping Black Wind Gorge.

He Rushan's purpose for this trip was to kill Fang Bai, but Fang Bai's two clear whistles had momentarily extinguished that thought.

After all, as a Universe Level Martial Artist who had traveled far and wide and seen much of the world, He Rushan could deduce from Fang Bai's two whistles—one that saved Sun Guangyi and the other that suddenly drove the two eight-clawed behemoths to attack them in this forest—that Fang Bai was not only skilled in the Beast Taming Art but also highly proficient. Otherwise, the two behemoths on par with high rank Universe Level Martial Artists wouldn't have been under his control.

A Martial Artist proficient in the Beast Taming Art is extremely fearsome. Now, with hundreds of Spirit Beasts gathered in this forest, if Fang Bai could control those powerful eight-clawed behemoths, he

could also control a portion of those Spirit Beasts. Even if He Rushan was powerful and daring, he did not dare to linger any longer.

"I'll let you go this time; I'll come back for your head when I get the chance!"

He Rushan, before he left, was extremely unwilling in his heart and silently swore an oath.

The brutal slaughter between the martial artists and spirit beasts inside and outside of the dense forest, made the dozen disciples from the Golden Crow Manor hiding behind a large rock near the swamp tremble in fear, their eyes wide and mouths agape.

He Rushan and the others had been tracking Fang Bai and company up to this point. Apart from Fang Bai, even Sun Guangyi and Li Jingren had initially not noticed them, let alone Huang Yuanhu and the rest of the disciples. It wasn't until He Rushan and his party fled from the dense forest in disarray that Huang Yuanhu and the others realized that the martial artists from Divine Fire Town still harbored an undying desire to kill Fang Bai.

Fortunately, Fang Bai knew the Beast Taming Art, and manipulated the spirit beasts to attack He Rushan and his men; otherwise, they would inevitably have faced a fierce battle today, and it was uncertain how many of them would have survived to leave Black Wind Gorge alive.

Fang Bai stood leisurely on the edge of the swamp, his gaze calm as he watched He Rushan and the others flee in a sorry state, without any intention of pursuing them.

Fang Bai knew that as long as He Rushan and the others hadn't taken his head and the dispute over the Essence Stone Vein in the Eternal Death Zone wasn't resolved, they would not willingly leave. There would be plenty of opportunities to deal with and teach them a lesson.

The intense battle that had just ended was both brief and grim. Over half of the several hundred martial artists who had followed them there perished, and many of the several hundred spirit beasts also sustained injuries or died.

The spirit beasts, though intelligent, were ultimately bloodthirsty and cruel by nature. Only after they had devoured the corpses of the human martial artists and their fallen companions did they leave satisfied.

From beginning to end, those spirit beasts did not dare to attack Fang Bai and his party, nor even dared to approach them, because the oppressive aura emanating from Fang Bai was simply too strong, causing them to keep their distance.

"Leave the two eight-clawed giant lizards for me; as for the rest, you all can divide them amongst yourselves," said Fang Bai, waving his hand towards Sun Guangyi and the others behind him. He then swiftly moved toward the two eight-clawed giant lizards that were breathing their last in the dense forest.

In the recent chaotic battle, although the two eight-clawed giant lizards had shown their might, causing nearly a hundred martial artists to fall under their attacks, those martial artists were not to be trifled with. In a desperate struggle before their deaths, they inflicted severe injuries upon the two eight-clawed giant lizards, rendering them powerless.

Once Fang Bai reached the dense forest, he effortlessly took the beast cores from the two eight-clawed giant lizards. As for the skin, flesh, sinews, and bones of the giant lizards, though valuable, Fang Bai did not pay them much attention. After all, the beast core was the most essence-filled part of a spirit beast's body.

Nearly two hundred spirit beasts died inside and outside of the dense forest, and about thirty percent of them were of a thousand years old, comparable to human Universe Level Experts.

The rest of the spirit beasts were also over five hundred years old, on par with human Cosmic Level Experts.

Not only did Fang Bai pay no regard to these corpses of spirit beasts, but even Sun Guangyi and Li Jingren did not hold them in high esteem, as they were of little benefit to their cultivation.

However, for Cosmic Level Realm martial artists like Huang Yuanhu and Ye Qingxuan, the bodies of these centuries or millennia old spirit beasts were of great use, especially the beast cores. Whether brought

back to their Sect or sold at the Martial Artists Trading Market, they could be exchanged for a considerable amount of cultivation resources.

Moreover, many martial artists had also died on the scene. Most of them carried Space Rings, and each of these Rings surely contained a share of cultivation resources, which also made Huang Yuanhu and the others exceedingly tempted.

Chapter 1272: Defense Runes on the City Wall

Originally, Huang Yuanhu and the others were keen on the Spirit Beast corpses and Spatial Rings from fallen Martial Artists, yet they dared not harbor any extravagant hopes.

After all, without Fang Bai, such a result would not have been possible, and naturally, everything should belong to Fang Bai.

However, to their surprise, Fang Bai made a sweeping gesture and ended up leaving almost everything to them.

Although the two most valuable Beast Cores were taken by Fang Bai, the remaining Cultivation Resources were still substantial enough to excite them immensely.

However, Huang Yuanhu and the others did not let excitement cloud their judgment; they all turned their heads toward Sun Guangyi and Li Jingren, with a hopeful look in their eyes.

Even though Fang Bai did not care about those Cultivation Resources, without the permission of these two Stewards, they dared not lay claim to them.

"What are you all looking at us for?"

"Since Senior Fang has agreed, go ahead and take what you want!"

Sun Guangyi and Li Jingren exchanged glances and smiled, waving their hands.

"Thank you, Steward Sun, Steward Li!"

A dozen disciples from the Golden Crow Manor cheerfully said.

Sun Guangyi rolled his eyes and said irritably, "Why thank us? This is Senior Fang's benevolence; you should be thanking him!"

"Thank you, Senior Fang!"

Then, a dozen disciples from the Golden Crow Manor, facing the direction of the dense forest, chorused together.

"Alright, enough chat! Come over here! Pick whatever you like, if you're too late, there won't be anything left! Steward Sun, Steward Li, would you two like to pick something?"

Fang Bai's voice immediately came from the dense forest.

Hearing Fang Bai's voice, the dozen disciples from the Golden Crow Manor no longer hesitated and joyously dashed toward the dense forest, fearing they'd miss out and the best items would be taken by others.

Sun Guangyi and Li Jingren weren't particularly interested in the Cultivation Resources and understood that Fang Bai was just being polite. They smiled and responded, "Let the younger ones divide the items among themselves; we'll not partake. We'll thank Senior Fang on behalf of the youngsters."

Seeing Xia Chenyu remaining still, and not joining in the division of the Cultivation Resources in the dense forest, Sun Guangyi and Li Jingren were not surprised, thinking that with her relationship with Fang Bai, she naturally wouldn't lack Cultivation Resources in the future, so there was no need for her to participate.

A hundred breaths later, Fang Bai and the others continued their journey, and the joyful expressions on the faces of the dozen disciples from the Golden Crow Manor indicated they had obtained quite a bounty.

Although the path through Black Wind Gorge was extremely difficult to navigate, it posed no obstruction to Fang Bai and his companions. They executed their movement techniques with fluid grace, crossing the thousand-li Black Wind Gorge in just half a day.

Walking another two to three hundred li forward, a vast manor nestled between mountains and rivers appeared before everyone.

"Senior Fang, that is our Golden Crow Manor," Sun Guangyi said as he pointed at the manor ahead, his tone tinged with emotion.

This outing had brought them through many perilous events, especially the encounters in the Forest of Myriad Medicines and Black Wind Gorge. Had it not been for Fang Bai, these dozen people might never have seen the Golden Crow Manor again.

Li Jingren and the others also harbored similar thoughts, their looks at Fang Bai filled with even deeper gratitude.

"Hmm, it's a good place."

Fang Bai looked towards Golden Crow Manor and nodded with a smile.

To the east, west, and north of Golden Crow Manor, artificially planted Fire-attribute Spiritual Medicines stretch as far as the eye can see, half of which are over a thousand years old, falling into the category of high-grade Spiritual Medicine.

This also shows the profound foundation of Golden Crow Manor as a top-tier Sect, far beyond the reach of ordinary ones.

Threads of scorching Fire Primordial Qi emanated from countless Fire-attribute Spiritual Medicines, swirling around the courtyard, making the temperature within dozens of miles of Golden Crow Manor much higher than other places.

If not a Fire System Martial Artist, those powerful enough might manage, but those weaker would truly struggle to stay for a long time in such high temperatures.

Golden Crow Manor resembled a small city, its high walls isolating the inside from the outside.

Most surprisingly, on the already exceedingly sturdy walls, one could see indecipherable runes spaced every few meters.

Fang Bai's gaze swept over those runes, knowing they were merely low-tier Defense Runes, making the walls even more solid and hard to breach.

Although the walls of Golden Crow Manor were grand and majestic, some areas of the wall's outer layer were mottled and peeling, clearly very ancient and in need of repair.

In the center of the wall facing south, two thick iron gates were firmly shut.

The iron gate, made from black iron mixed with many special materials and also featured Defense Runes, was so sturdy that even Innate Experts could not easily breach it.

"Those walls and the iron gate were cast by the predecessors of my Golden Crow Manor and have survived for thousands of years,"

Seeing Fang Bai examining the walls, gates, and the runes with interest, Sun Guangyi explained, "When casting the walls and gates back then, the ancestors of the manor had spent a considerable amount of money to invite an Array Master to carve Defense Runes on them to reinforce the walls and gates and strengthen the manor's defenses."

Li Jingren chimed in: "Thanks to the foresight of the manor's ancestors who created such sturdy walls and gates, otherwise during several crises afterward, the manor might have suffered great losses."

He then sighed, "It's just a pity that the effects of those Defense Runes cannot last forever. Every three to five hundred years, we have to spend a huge sum to invite an Array Master to check and re-carve the Array Runes."

During this conversation, they had already arrived at the gate.

The disciples of Golden Crow Manor on duty at the gate had already seen Sun Guangyi and the others from afar but, for safety's sake, without verifying the identities of Sun Guangyi and the others, they wouldn't easily let them in.

"Steward Liu, quickly open the gates, guests of honor have arrived."

As each of them took off the jade medallion representing the identity of Golden Crow Manor disciples from their waist and threw it towards the ramparts, only after an elder on the gate had checked did Sun Guangyi loudly say.

Upon hearing this, the steward named Liu, his gaze first landing on Fang Bai showing a trace of surprise, immediately ordered several disciples to open the gate and personally went out to welcome them.

"Steward Sun, Steward Li, you finally came back! Steward Li, your arm..."

Steward Liu walked up to Sun Guangyi and Li Jingren, and was just about to exchange pleasantries when he noticed that under Li Jingren's clothing, his left arm was missing, which took him by surprise.

Li Jingren gave a bitter smile: "My arm is gone. If not for Senior Fang, I might have lost my life too. Steward Liu, let me introduce, this is Senior Fang Bai..."

Fearing that Steward Liu, due to Fang Bai's youth, might show negligence, Li Jingren introduced him solemnly and briefly related how Fang Bai had helped them on their cultivation journey.

After hearing this, Steward Liu's face was full of amazement, and he looked at Fang Bai again.

Chapter 1273: Each With Their Own Ulterior Motives

In Tiansheng Continent, a Cosmic Level perfection expert like Fang Bai stood high above the rest, becoming the center of attention wherever he went. However, Fang Bai disliked showing off and had always deliberately concealed his true cultivation level.

But after arriving at Shenwu Continent, Fang Bai no longer had such concerns.

In Shenwu Continent, Vast Level experts were as common as dogs, and Cosmic Level experts were everywhere. Even Cosmic Level perfection experts were merely equivalent to a Direct Disciple of a first-tier Sect, not attracting too much attention. Therefore, there was no need for Fang Bai to continue hiding his powers.

Thus, in the eyes of Steward Liu, Fang Bai and Huang Yuanhu were at the same realm, both being Cosmic Level perfection experts.

It was just that the words "Senior Fang" from Li Jingren surprised Steward Liu greatly, leading him to wonder if he had misjudged Fang Bai's cultivation level, prompting him to scrutinize Fang Bai anew.

"Senior Fang has concealed his cultivation level, you wouldn't be able to see it."

Seeing Steward Liu staring unceasingly at Fang Bai, which was quite impolite, Li Jingren hurriedly spoke through the Thread Condensation Sound Transmission Technique.

"Senior Fang previously slew Tianji Sect's Steward Ying Guangping, which caused a sensation throughout Shenwu Continent. Steward Liu must have heard about it, right?"

Sun Guangyi also immediately transmitted his voice to Steward Liu.

Golden Crow Manor, a first-class great Sect with deep roots and numerous disciples, was always promptly informed about any movement within the True Martial Realm. Naturally, the matter of Tianji Sect offering ten million high-grade Essence Stones for Fang Bai's head couldn't be kept from Golden Crow Manor.

However, though ten million Essence Stones was not a small amount, it couldn't pique the interest of the higher-ups of Golden Crow Manor, so Steward Liu hadn't paid much attention to it.

When Li Jingren mentioned the name "Fang Bai" just now, Steward Liu thought it sounded somewhat familiar. After Sun Guangyi brought up Tianji Sect's Ying Guangping, Steward Liu suddenly realized that this young martial artist before him was the very same one that Tianji Sect loathed to the bone and desperately wanted to kill.

"Slayed Tianji Sect's Steward Ying Guangping, addressed as senior by both Stewards Sun Guangyi and Li Jingren, has concealed his cultivation, and so young..."

Piecing these clues together, Steward Liu suddenly thought of something, his eyes widening increasingly with shock and his heart surging with tumultuous waves.

"Senior Fang is just a Loose Cultivator."

Seeing the stunned expression on Steward Liu's face, Sun Guangyi realized there might have been a misunderstanding and quickly followed up with another voice transmission.

Steward Liu then breathed a sigh of relief, thinking to himself: "That gave me quite the scare; I thought Fang Bai was a Sect Disciple of an Innate Sect, turns out he's an unfettered Loose Cultivator... Nevertheless, for a Loose Cultivator barely in his twenties to possess Universe Level cultivation is truly remarkable! This Fang Bai must surely have encountered grand fortune!"

In Steward Liu's view, since Fang Bai was able to slay Tianji Sect's Steward Ying Guangping, his strength was certainly greater than theirs, these early-stage Universe Level experts. At the very least, he must be a mid-stage Universe Level Expert.

Steward Liu had originally thought Fang Bai was a Sect Disciple from an Innate Sect and was quite exhilarated by the thought.

You should know that over the matter of the underground Essence Stone Vein in the Eternal Death Zone, Golden Crow Manor is currently at a standoff with countless outside martial artists on the edge of the Eternal Death Zone, with both sides on the verge of conflict, ready to spring into action at any moment.

The more than ten thousand disciples of Golden Crow Manor understand that this incident is related to the manor's prosperity and disgrace. If they withstand the challenge, the overall strength of the manor will become stronger; if not, the manor may face a great disaster.

The current situation is such that Golden Crow Manor is in a standoff with the opposing Martial Artists, where both sides are evenly matched, and the disciples on both sides are still showing restraint, preventing any major conflicts from occurring.

However, as Martial Artists from all directions continue to arrive at the edge of the Eternal Death Zone, Golden Crow Manor is losing its advantage. This situation has caused the upper echelons of the manor to be deeply worried and anxious.

At this time, what Golden Crow Manor needs most are allies who can fight alongside it.

Originally, Manor Master Huang Canghai of Golden Crow Manor sent Envoys to some allied or friendly Sects requesting assistance, agreeing to pay a hefty sum of Cultivation Resources as compensation. However, to his surprise, all of those allies and friendly Sects rejected the request.

The high-level individuals in Golden Crow Manor understand the ulterior motives of those allies and friendly Sects. Firstly, they realize that Golden Crow Manor is at a disadvantage in the standoff, and this disadvantage is likely to grow. If they were to help, it could be more loss than gain; secondly, they also covet the Essence Stone Vein beneath the Eternal Death Zone, drooling over the prospect, and should Golden Crow Manor lose the battle for the Essence Stone Mine, they could take advantage of the chaos and claim their share.

Some Sects even harbor their own devious schemes, secretly targeting Golden Crow Manor. If Golden Crow Manor were to fall, its power would surely be heavily damaged, and with their full force, Golden Crow Manor could potentially be eradicated, turning thousands of years of accumulated wealth into their spoils.

Although the high-level members of Golden Crow Manor have considered this possibility, they are helpless and can only continue to encourage the morale of the Manor Disciples and prepare for war.

Steward Liu still hoped that if Fang Bai were the Disciple of an Innate Sect, Golden Crow Manor could use his identity to deter the various forces that have been itching to make a move. However, to his disappointment, Fang Bai turned out to be a Loose Cultivator.

Nevertheless, Steward Liu is a person adept at handling all kinds of situations; despite his disappointment, he did not neglect the proper etiquette. He cupped his fists towards Fang Bai, bowed slightly, and said, "I am Liu Yunling, and I have the honor of meeting Senior Fang."

After all, Fang Bai is a Universe Level Expert, and moreover, Steward Sun has just communicated to him via Voice Transmission Technique that Fang Bai has a deep connection with Xia Chenyu. During this time of crisis for the manor, if Fang Bai were to offer his help, it would be beneficial and harmless for the manor.

Fang Bai nodded to Liu Yunling with a smile and said, "Steward Liu is too courteous."

"Steward Liu, when we passed through Divine Fire Town, we heard that our manor's disciples and Martial Artists from various parties have confronted each other at the edge of the Eternal Death Zone. What's the current situation?"

After introducing Fang Bai, Sun Guangyi anxiously inquired about the current plight of Golden Crow Manor.

Li Jingren and others also turned their gaze to Liu Yunling.

As Disciples of Golden Crow Manor, the life and death of the manor were tied to their personal interests, and they naturally wanted to know how far things had progressed.

"The situation is not favorable for us!"

Sighing, Steward Liu glanced at Fang Bai, then said, "We can't let our honored guest stand, let's go to the manor house and sit down first."

So Steward Liu led the way, with Fang Bai, Li Jingren, Sun Guangyi, Xia Chenyu, and others following to the visitor's hall in front of the Manor Master Hall of Golden Crow Manor.

On the way to the visitor's hall, they could see many Disciples of Golden Crow Manor with serious expressions and hurried steps, as if facing a formidable enemy. The entire manor was shrouded in a tense and chilling atmosphere, indescribably stifling and oppressive.

The visitor's hall was very quiet, only four young women Disciples, with elegant figures and good looks, were on duty.

Seeing Liu Yunling and the others come in, the four women quickly served tea, then quietly retreated to the side, stealing glances at Fang Bai, wondering about the identity of this young, handsome, and unfamiliar Martial Artist, who had entered accompanied by three Stewards of the manor and was sitting at the head of the visitor's hall.

Chapter 1274: I Can Save Them, But I Have Conditions

After the guests and hosts were seated, Li Jingren and Xia Chenyu spoke with Fang Bai, while Sun Guangyi and Liu Yunling, the two stewards, went to the Manor Master Hall to meet the Manor Master.

As for Huang Yuanhu, Ye Qingxuan, and the other Golden Crow Villa disciples, they followed Steward Li's orders and returned to their respective residences to rest. After a short break, they were to rush to the edges of the Eternal Death Zone to join the army confronting various martial artists and defending the Essence Stone Vein.

"Senior Fang, our Manor Master is currently healing his beloved son and cannot come out to meet you right now. Please forgive us for any neglect!"

After Sun Guangyi and Liu Yunling left, Li Jingren said with a smile on his face.

Logically, although Fang Bai is young, his strength is unfathomable. He has saved the lives of Sun Guangyi, Li Jingren, and more than a dozen Golden Crow Villa disciples, so both sentimentally and logically, Huang Canghai, the Manor Master of Golden Crow Villa, should meet with Fang Bai.

However, the recent situation in the Golden Crow Villa is quite exceptional. One is that the Villa is experiencing the biggest crisis in its history: if it is not handled well, it will be a disaster. Huang Canghai is

so worried about this that he can hardly find peace for a moment; secondly, a few months ago, Huang Canghai's beloved son Huang Yuanqi was severely injured and has been in a coma, with his life and death uncertain. As a father, Huang Canghai has to spend several hours a day using True Yuan to prolong his son's life.

Given this, Huang Canghai is naturally busy.

Fang Bai arrived at the time when Huang Canghai was using True Yuan to save his son's life, and hence could not take the time to meet Fang Bai for a while, not out of intentional neglect.

What Li Jingren was most worried about was the fact that Fang Bai is still young. If he felt slighted at Golden Crow Villa and left in a huff, taking Xia Chenyu with him, the situation would become complicated.

Fortunately, Fang Bai did not show any displeasure about this, which greatly relieved Li Jingren.

Half an hour later, Sun Guangyi and Liu Yunling returned to the reception hall with solemn expressions on their faces.

Seeing the grim look on their faces, Li Jingren felt a pang in his heart, stood up to greet them, and asked, "Steward Sun, Steward Liu, the Manor Master...?"

"The Manor Master will be here shortly. It's just that... Yuan Qi's condition is getting worse..."

Liu Yunling sighed and said in a heavy voice, "Although Yuan Qi has been using True Yuan and Spiritual Medicine to sustain a glimmer of life these past few months, his condition has been deteriorating recently. Manor Master Huang said... even if we find Blood Bodhi and refine the Nine Revolutions Rebirth Pill now, I'm afraid it won't have much effect on Yuan Qi. At most, it would extend his life by a few more days..."

"We've returned too late..."

Li Jingren felt as if all the strength had been drained from his body, and he slumped back into his chair, his complexion pale, blaming himself deeply.

They had previously gone on a mission while also tasked with finding Blood Bodhi. It was only upon encountering Fang Bai that they obtained it. They had thought they would be greatly commended upon their return to the Golden Crow Manor Master, only to hear such news. Their joy turned into disappointment and sorrow.

"Even the Nine Revolutions Rebirth Pill is useless... then... is there really no other way?"

Li Jingren muttered to himself.

Liu Yunling slowly shook his head, his face filled with sorrow.

Sun Guangyi also sighed endlessly.

Xia Chenyu was also visibly moved, her beautiful brows tightly furrowed.

Huang Yuanqi is the Golden Crow Villa's current Manor Master Huang Canghai's only beloved son. Although Huang Canghai has many brothers and sisters, among all the younger generation of the Huang family, Huang Yuanqi possesses the highest aptitude. Having reached the Cosmic Level of perfection in his thirties, he is counted among the direct disciples of Golden Crow Villa. Even if he is not considered a favored child of the heavens, he is not far from it.

Among the young generation of disciples in Golden Crow Manor, Xia Chenyu had the highest aptitude, and it was likely that he would walk further on the path of Martial Dao. However, Xia Chenyu was ultimately not a member of the Huang Family, unable to inherit the Manor Master position. At most, he could only serve as an Elder.

Therefore, Huang Yuanqi was the most likely candidate to succeed the position of Golden Crow Manor's Manor Master in the future. His life and death naturally touched the hearts of many disciples of the Golden Crow Manor.

"Injuries to the Qi Sea and broken meridians are extremely grave for a Martial Artist. Yuan Qi's survival up to now is also thanks to the Manor Master, who spared no effort in expending a great amount of True Yuan to preserve his life... Not long ago, I went to Spirit Sea City to inquire with a high-grade Pill Master. That Pill Master said, to heal Yuan Qi's injuries, one would need Spiritual Medicines like Spirit Fox Grass, Tears of Crystal, and Blood Bodhi, all aged more than three thousand years..."

Liu Yunling sighed again as he spoke, and said with a bitter smile, "Not only do we need Spiritual Medicines aged over three thousand years, but we also need to gather Spirit Fox Grass, Tears of Crystal, and Blood Bodhi concurrently. How easy could that be? Even if we have these three kinds of Spiritual Medicines, it would still take time to find them! And Yuan Qi's life force can only last for three more days... alas..."

For a moment, the three Stewards of Golden Crow Manor looked at each other in the parlor, despondent, with sighs and sympathetic sounds unceasing.

Xia Chenyu glanced at Fang Bai, her lips slightly moving, as if she wanted to say something, but found it difficult to do so.

Fang Bai seemed to know what she wanted to say, shrugging his shoulders and saying, "I have Blood Bodhi with an age of three thousand years, but as for Spirit Fox Grass and Tears of Crystal of the same age, I really don't have any. I do have some of one or two thousand years, but sadly they are of little use..."

Upon hearing this, Xia Chenyu couldn't help but show a look of disappointment.

Xia Chenyu knew that since Fang Bai's arrival in Shenwu Continent, he had collected a lot of Cultivation Resources, including rare Spiritual Medicines over a thousand years old. She had hoped to ask him about Spirit Fox Grass and Tears of Crystal, apart from the three thousand-year Blood Bodhi. Seeing him shake his head, she knew he would not hide anything from her, and also sighed, thinking that perhaps it was Huang Yuanqi's fate to face this calamity.

"However..."

Fang Bai stroked his chin, seeing Xia Chenyu, Sun Guangyi, Li Jingren, and Liu Yunling all look at him intently, as if a drowning person had caught a lifeline. He couldn't help but smile and slowly said,

"Although the injuries to the Qi Sea and broken meridians are difficult to heal, apart from the method Steward Liu mentioned, there is also another way..."

"Please enlighten us, Senior Fang!"

"If you can heal Yuan Qi's injuries, we will be eternally grateful!"

"From then on, Senior Fang would be our entire Golden Crow Manor's benefactor!"

Stewards Sun Guangyi, Li Jingren, and Liu Yunling stood up together and gave Fang Bai a deep bow.

The life and death of Huang Yuanqi were connected to the future of Golden Crow Manor, and at this moment, even if there was just a glimmer of hope, Liu Yunling and the others wouldn't let it pass.

Moreover, Fang Bai had previously said he could refine high-grade Elixirs, and had the status of an Alchemist. So when he mentioned there was another way to heal Huang Yuanqi, Sun Guangyi and the others believed him somewhat, thinking that no matter whether he truly had the ability to heal Huang Yuanqi or not, trying was better than just watching Huang Yuanqi's life force slip away.

"I can save him, but I have my conditions," Fang Bai said with a smile.

"Senior Fang, please say them. As long as it's within Golden Crow Manor's capabilities, we will agree," Sun Guangyi promptly vowed, patting his chest, thinking that Senior Fang's so-called conditions were likely a request for a substantial amount of Cultivation Resources as a reward, a perfectly reasonable demand.

Sun Guangyi believed that as long as Fang Bai could heal Huang Yuanqi, no matter how great the cost, Manor Huang would certainly agree.

After all, Manor Huang had only this one son, and this son might also be the future successor of the Manor Master of the manor.

Chapter 1275: Want to take Chenyu away? No way!

"I will help you rescue them; Chenyu will follow me when we leave."

In the gaze full of anxious anticipation from the three Stewards Sun Guangyi, Fang Bai spoke indifferently.

"No way!"

"Senior Fang, this..."

"Sigh..."

As soon as Fang Bai uttered these words, Liu Yunling immediately objected, while Sun Guangyi and Li Jingren felt a bitter taste in their hearts.

In the Forest of Myriad Medicines, Fang Bai had already shown his intention to take Xia Chenyu away from Golden Crow Manor, and Xia Chenyu herself had the same thought. Sun Guangyi and Li Jingren had been worrying about this all along, concerned that Fang Bai and Xia Chenyu might thus come into conflict with Golden Crow Manor.

Now hearing Fang Bai bringing up this matter, all Li Guangyi and Li Jingren could do was sigh.

During the journey back to Golden Crow Manor, Li Guangyi and Li Jingren could clearly see the mutual affection between Fang Bai and Xia Chenyu, firm as iron. If Golden Crow Manor tried to forcibly keep Xia Chenyu, they might retain her person, but never her heart.

Although Liu Yunling could tell that Xia Chenyu and Fang Bai shared a special relationship, he thought they were merely good friends, so upon hearing that Fang Bai intended to take Xia Chenyu away, his face changed drastically, and he categorically refused.

Xia Chenyu was a key figure nurtured by Golden Crow Manor. The senior members of the manor had invested a great deal of effort in her, not only providing her with a continuous supply of cultivation resources but also giving her personal instruction on Martial Arts Techniques every once in a while.

Almost everyone believed that if nothing unexpected happened, Xia Chenyu would certainly become one of the Elders of the manor one day, assisting Yuan Qi, the successor to the Manor Master's position, in presiding over Golden Crow Manor.

And now, Fang Bai actually wanted to take her away—how could Liu Yunling agree to that?

"Heh heh..."

Fang Bai laughed as he looked toward Liu Yunling and asked, "What's the matter, Steward Liu, do you have an objection?"

Sun Guangyi and Li Jingren repeatedly signaled with their eyes to Liu Yunling, asking him not to act rashly.

Both of them had witnessed Fang Bai's mighty power on their way back to Golden Crow Manor; his strength was comparable to that of Manor Master Huang Canghai. They held Fang Bai in awe and treated him with respect and courtesy.

But Liu Yunling was meeting Fang Bai for the first time. Although like the other two Stewards, he addressed Fang Bai as "Senior Fang," it was merely superficial politeness. In reality, he held no awe for Fang Bai in his heart.

Moreover, Liu Yunling believed that even if Fang Bai was stronger than himself, he would at most be at the Universe Level high rank, comparable to the manor's several Elders. With such strength, he still could not do whatever he wanted within Golden Crow Palace Mountain.

Thus, upon hearing Fang Bai set taking Xia Chenyu away with him as a condition for rescuing Yuan Qi, he was immediately filled with dissatisfaction, his face indignant, and he disregarded the warning looks thrown by Sun Guangyi and Li Jingren.

"Do you know how much cultivation resources our Golden Crow Manor has spent on nurturing Chenyu? Do you know how much effort the senior members of our manor have put in to instruct Chenyu in Martial Arts Techniques? Who do you think you are, thinking you can just take Chenyu away casually? Let me tell you: No way!"

Liu Yunling raged in an exasperated and angry voice.

Liu Yunling's sudden outburst, shouting and yelling, scared Sun Guangyi and Li Jingren who were next to him.

Before returning to Golden Crow Manor, Sun Guangyi and Li Jingren were most worried about Fang Bai insisting on taking Xia Chenyu away. They knew mishandling this matter could lead to a conflict between Fang Bai and Golden Crow Manor. They had initially planned to discuss this issue after Manor Master Huang Canghai finished his seclusion, but they hadn't expected Fang Bai to bring it up at this time. Liu Yunling, ever impetuous, was instantly enraged.

Sun Guangyi and Li Jingren also had some understanding of Fang Bai's temperament, knowing that while Fang Bai was low-key and reticent, and easy to talk to, he was certainly not someone who would tolerate being slighted, and Xia Chenyu held an important place in his heart. Liu Yunling's disrespect towards him would inevitably bring trouble to Golden Crow Manor.

The two cast a glance at Fang Bai and saw his expression remained calm, showing no sign of an imminent outburst. Instead of feeling relieved, their hearts were even more anxious.

"Steward Liu, don't be impulsive, let's talk this out slowly..."

"Senior Fang has saved our lives, don't be like this..."

Sun Guangyi and Li Jingren were anxiously persuading Liu Yunling, then incessantly apologized to Fang Bai, fearing that he would lose his temper and make a scene at Golden Crow Manor.

In terms of strength, the only one in Golden Crow Manor who could contend with Fang Bai was Manor Master Huang Canghai. But Manor Master Huang was currently in seclusion, extending the life of his son Yuan Qi. If Fang Bai were indeed to get angry, there would be no one to stop him, and they could only watch as he took Xia Chenyu away.

While Sun Guangyi and Li Jingren were appeasing and apologizing, they couldn't help but blame Liu Yunling in their hearts, criticizing him for impulsively provoking Fang Bai.

Golden Crow Manor was presently facing tremendous external pressure, and if internal strife were to break out as well, beset by troubles both inside and out, the manor could face an imminent disaster.

If it came to that, Liu Yunling would surely become the eternal sinner of Golden Crow Manor.

Sun Guangyi and Li Jingren saw that Fang Bai maintained a smile, seemingly unconcerned by Liu Yunling's words. But the calmer he was, the more uneasy Sun Guangyi and Li Jingren felt, and they looked to Xia Chenyu as if seeking rescue.

They had once saved Xia Chenyu and brought her back to Golden Crow Manor for shelter. If Xia Chenyu remembered this kindness, she would not stand by idly.

"You don't have to look at Chenyu."

Fang Bai noticed the panic-stricken faces of Sun Guangyi and Li Jingren and chuckled: "Rest assured, I never intended to bother with such trifles with Steward Liu... However, Steward Liu, you really need to temper that fiery temper of yours, otherwise you're bound to suffer sooner or later!"

Although Liu Yunling was one of the stewards of Golden Crow Manor and possessed mid-Universe Level strength, in Fang Bai's eyes, he was no different from an ant. Therefore, Fang Bai couldn't be bothered to get angry with him. After all, Xia Chenyu is my woman, Fang Bai thought, and if I say I am taking her away, do you think you, a mere steward, can stop me?

"You..."

Liu Yunling saw Fang Bai's dismissive attitude and contempt, which only infuriated him further. His eyes widened with anger, and he wanted to say something more vicious, but he was sharply interrupted by Sun Guangyi and Li Jingren.

"Steward Liu, no more words!"

"Do you want Golden Crow Manor to fall into an abyss of no return?"

Liu Yunling was angry, but Sun Guangyi and Li Jingren were even more so. What they wanted most at the moment was to cover Liu Yunling's mouth with their hands and prevent him from speaking, to avoid creating irrevocable mistakes.

"You..."

Liu Yunling might be hot-headed, but he was no fool. He had been momentarily overwhelmed by Fang Bai's statement about taking Xia Chenyu away, and couldn't help but lash out. Now being shushed in unison by Sun Guangyi and Li Jingren and seeing their panic-stricken and urgent demeanor as if fearing Fang Bai greatly, he began to understand something.

Given the strength and status of Stewards Sun and Li, not even Golden Crow Manor's elders could incite such fear in them. Could it be that this Fang Bai was even more powerful than he had imagined?

The elders of Golden Crow Manor were high-ranking Universe Level experts, and those who surpassed that level were at the pinnacle of Universe Level.

That is to say, Fang Bai might possess strength on par with the Manor Master?

Realizing this, Liu Yunling involuntarily took a deep breath, feeling a chill running down his spine.

Chapter 1276: Don't Blame Me for Being Disrespectful!

Liu Yunling could imagine the outcome if Fang Bai truly was a Universe Level perfection powerhouse and decided to wreak havoc in the Golden Crow Manor.

If Fang Bai really was a Universe Level perfection expert, then the only one in the entire Golden Crow Manor who could contend with him would be Manor Master Huang Canghai. However, Manor Master Huang has been exhausting a great amount of True Yuan daily to prolong the life of his son, Huang Yuanqi, and his strength is no longer at its peak. It's uncertain if he could handle Fang Bai.

Although Golden Crow Manor has over ten thousand disciples, it would not be easy to collaborate and attempt to kill a Universe Level perfection powerhouse. Even if they could kill Fang Bai, the loss would be devastating, greatly weakening the manor.

Therefore, provoking Fang Bai, for the Golden Crow Manor, which is already troubled both internally and externally, would be akin to adding frost on top of snow—a very unwise move.

If his momentary impulsiveness led to a calamity for the Golden Crow Manor, Liu Yunling would truly have no excuse, even if he died a thousand times.

Liu Yunling's mouth was half open, his gaze fixed on Fang with a face turning increasingly pale, and cold sweat continuously seeping from his forehead.

At this moment, his raging fury had already dissipated into nothingness, not a word of defiance could he utter. He wanted to apologize to Fang Bai and admit his mistake, but his pride prevented him from doing so.

Xia Chenyu was sitting next to Fang Bai, silent as well, her face expressionless, showing neither joy nor grief.

Fang Bai and Golden Crow Manor: one was the person she met in the secular world and took to her heart, the other had saved and sheltered her. With the two in conflict, she too was in a difficult position and decided to stay silent, aiding neither side.

But the moment she saw Fang Bai, she had already decided to follow him and leave, and no one could stop her. Even if the Golden Crow Manor had shown her generosity, it should not confine her freedom.

"Senior Fang, regarding the matter between you and Chenyu, how about we wait until our Manor Master is out of seclusion before discussing further? Additionally, Steward Liu had absolutely no intention of offending Senior Fang, he is just..."

Just as Sun Guangyi was trying to make excuses for Liu Yunling, Fang Bai waved his hand to cut him off, saying, "Regardless, I must take Chenyu away this time, no negotiations on that!"

After a pause, upon seeing the bitter smile on Sun Guangyi's face, Fang Bai smiled and added, "Alright, I'm not an unreasonable man. We can talk about this matter when your Manor Master comes out. I

hope Manor Huang is a person who understands right and wrong, and knows reason. Don't let me down!"

Sun Guangyi, Li Jingren, and Liu Yunling exchanged glances, their faces showing wry smiles, thinking that Fang Bai's way of speaking had a commanding tone, seemingly placing himself above Manor Huang.

Having had an unpleasant exchange with Fang Bai, Liu Yunling felt uncomfortable staying in the guest hall and found an excuse to leave temporarily.

Sun Guangyi needed to keep an eye on when Manor Master Huang Canghai would come out of seclusion and also wanted to find out about some recent events in the manor, so he left hastily as well.

As for Li Jingren, who had lost his left arm, he needed to rest, so he stayed behind in the guest hall to accompany Fang Bai in conversation.

"Senior Fang, our Manor Master's temperament is... ahem... similar to Steward Liu's; both are straightforward and outspoken. So, if... when you and the Manor Master meet, he might unwittingly say something not too friendly. I hope Senior Fang could be forgiving... There's no need to rush the matter of taking Chenyu away. We could plan it out over time..."

After watching Liu Yunling and Sun Guangyi leave, Li Jingren thought for a moment before gingerly speaking to Fang Bai.

Li Jingren was genuinely worried that once the Manor Master emerged from seclusion, he would clash with Fang Bai on the spot upon learning about Fang Bai's intention to take Xia Chenyu away.

Huang Canghai was the master of the manor, with an unparalleled position and his words were law—far beyond comparison to Steward Liu. Huang Canghai's behavior could influence all the disciples of Golden Crow Manor, and if he lashed out at Fang Bai, it would be difficult to salvage the situation.

Therefore, the best course of action, as Li Jingren saw it, was for Fang Bai to yield a bit and not fall out with the Manor Master, or else it could result in a lose-lose situation for both parties.

Fang Bai grinned and said, "Steward Li, I truly apologize. I've always been one to return respect tenfold if shown an inch of courtesy. If your Manor Master treats me with due respect, all is well. But if you act like Steward Liu, all ready to lecture and accuse, don't blame me for any disrespect shown in return!"

Li Jingren replied with a pained expression, "Senior Fang, if this escalates, it won't be good for either party..."

Fang Bai said, "Whether this escalates or not is not up to me; it's up to you. I believe Steward Li understands this better than I do, right?"

In his heart, Li Jingren thought, 'Understand my ass. Do you have any idea how much manpower and resources Golden Crow Manor has spent on cultivating Xia Chenyu? And here you are, brazenly insisting on taking Xia Chenyu away from Golden Crow Manor, how absurd!'

Although Xia Chenyu is willing to go with you, as a disciple of the Manor, she naturally has to abide by the Manor's rules. If she leaves without permission, she would be scorned by all Sects and Prominent Clans in the True Martial Realm, and if she belonged to one of the stricter Sects, she might even be hunted down.

Sects and Prominent Clans have their own rules, and disciples who do not abide by them usually meet a grim fate.

Of course, in the True Martial Realm where the law of the jungle prevails and strength is revered, if Fang Bai's power could overwhelm Golden Crow Manor, they would have no grounds to object to him taking Xia Chenyu away.

But from Li Jingren's point of view, for Fang Bai to overwhelm Golden Crow Manor, his power would have to far surpass that of Manor Master Huang Canghai.

Yet Fang Bai is so young and just a Loose Cultivator; even if he has had great fortune, it's not likely that he could have reached beyond the Universe Level Realm.

Based on what Li Jingren knew, even the fabled darlings of the Innate Sects were at most at the perfection of Universe Level Realm. How could Fang Bai, however extraordinary, compare to those Innate Sect Disciples with astonishing heritages?

If Fang Bai truly possessed the strength to transcend the Universe Level Realm, when Steward Liu was enraged earlier, he could have easily taken Xia Chenyu and left; why would he stand here listening to me ramble?

Considering it's because Fang Bai gave face to Xia Chenyu's feelings that he refrained from reacting, Li Jingren didn't quite believe it.

Therefore, Li Jingren was convinced that Fang Bai did not have the confidence to take Xia Chenyu away by force; that's why he did not dare act rashly.

However, despite this, Li Jingren still didn't dare to offend Fang Bai in the slightest, for Golden Crow Manor was in a precarious state with multiple troubles brewing. If Fang Bai caused mutual destruction with Golden Crow Manor, it could not withstand it and might head towards ruin.

Li Jingren even thought that if Fang Bai was determined to take Xia Chenyu away, as long as he could offer sufficient benefits, there might still be room for negotiation.

"The situation at Eternal Death Zone is dire!"

"We must immediately get the Manor Master to make a decision!"

"What? The Manor Master hasn't left seclusion yet? What should we do now?"

"The situation is urgent; we must hurry and urge him!"

"It seems to be the only way..."

Just then, a flurry of hurried footsteps accompanied by several anxious voices rose from outside.

Following that, several Martial Artists dressed in Golden Crow Manor's uniform strode into the reception hall.

Chapter 1277: Fang Bai's Conditions

"Elder Shi, what happened?"

Seeing several fellow sect members entering the parlor with anxious expressions on their faces, Li Jingren couldn't afford to engage in pleasantries with Fang Bai any longer, and he stood up to inquire the foremost elder with white hair.

The white-haired elder was named Shi Cheng, one of the current four Great Elders of Golden Crow Manor, and he possessed high-rank Universe Level strength.

Among the current four elders of Golden Crow Manor, Shi Cheng was the eldest and the strongest. He was also known for his steadiness and held great prestige among the disciples of the manor. During the crisis of the Essence Stone Vein at the Eternal Death Zone, Huang Canghai sent Shi Cheng to take charge in hopes that he could resolve the crisis.

However, at this moment, the usually composed Shi Cheng appeared restless, with Essence Energy lingering around him, his clothes dotted with blood stains, and his hair and beard slightly disheveled, clearly indicating he had been involved in a fierce battle before.

The few people following behind Shi Cheng were several stewards of Golden Crow Manor, with strengths comparable to Li Jingren. They too were enveloped in an aura of urgent frustration and Killing Qi.

Inside the parlor, the few female disciples responsible for serving tea and water were so intimidated by the aura exuded by Shi Cheng and the others that they didn't dare to take a single breath.

"Steward Li, when did you return? Where are Steward Sun and the others?"

Upon seeing Li Jingren, Shi Cheng was slightly taken aback, then his brow furrowed slightly, and his gaze fell upon Li Jingren's severed arm as he spoke in a deep voice, "How did your arm get broken?"

Li Jingren said, "We have just returned not long ago. This arm... was lost during a fierce battle with a Spirit Beast while on a training expedition. Fortunately, it's not a big issue. Steward Sun and over a dozen disciples from the manor have gone to attend to their respective tasks."

Shi Cheng nodded and said, "Losing an arm may indeed impair your strength, but with diligent cultivation, it's not impossible to return to your peak condition!"

Li Jingren gave a wry smile; in his heart, he thought that the loss of his arm had reduced his strength by at least thirty percent, and the road back to the peak would not be easy.

"I'll take Elder Shi's auspicious words to heart and hope to have the opportunity to recover my strength."

In the presence of Shi Cheng and the others, Li Jingren naturally did not show a disheartened or defeated demeanor, and he spoke with a lifted spirit.

"We've returned because there was an incident at the Essence Stone Vein in the Eternal Death Zone..."

Shi Cheng, already aware that the Manor Master was still in seclusion treating his son's injuries, forced himself to suppress his impatient mood, sat down on a chair to the side, gestured for the two stewards behind him to sit as well, and then let out a sigh. "The sole entrance to the Essence Stone Mine in the Eternal Death Zone has always been guarded by the disciples of our Golden Crow Manor, but in recent days, several forces have tried to force entry, all repelled by me and my people. However..."

Shi Cheng heaved a sigh, his somber expression tinged with helplessness as he continued, "I thought that killing some martial artists coveting the Essence Stone Vein would deter others and prevent further rash actions, but these martial artists seem to have gone mad, recklessly fighting against us without fear of death."

"Now, there are nearly a hundred thousand martial artists gathered at the edge of the Eternal Death Zone, and the number of our disciples guarding the mine's entrance is less than ten thousand. Moreover, after several days of continuous battles, many disciples are physically and mentally exhausted, hardly able to hold on."

"According to the reports from a few disciples I sent to gather intelligence, among those hundred thousand martial artists, many are disciples from other sects, and under their instigation and encouragement, these martial artists gathered at the edge of the Eternal Death Zone may attempt a forced entry into the Essence Stone Vein very soon."

"I've come back this time to discuss countermeasures with the higher-ups of the manor and see how to deal with this. Although the majority of those hundred thousand martial artists are at Cosmos Level, and only a small portion at Universe Level, if they join forces, they are definitely beyond what our manor can contend with..."

Li Jingren listened, stunned, thinking that even if those hundred thousand Martial Artists were all Cosmos Level Experts, their collective assault would be a terrifying force. The disciples that Golden Crow Manor had sent to defend the Essence Stone Vein entrance numbered less than ten thousand, simply incapable of withstanding the onslaught of a hundred thousand Martial Artists. Should they fight to the death, it was possible that nearly ten thousand disciples would all perish.

"What should we do... What should we do..."

Li Jingren sat frozen in his chair, murmuring to himself.

Shi Cheng and the other Golden Crow Manor disciples were also weighed down with heavy hearts, shaking their heads in silence.

The meeting hall fell into a hush for a moment.

"Why don't we join forces, drive away the Martial Artists gathered at the edge of the Eternal Death Zone, and then split the Essence Stone Vein between us? What do you think?"

Fang Bai, stroking his chin, suddenly interjected.

At his voice, Shi Cheng and others who had been in the meeting hall for a while only then noticed his presence and simultaneously fixed their gazes on him.

"Steward Li, who is this...?"

Seeing that Fang Bai was young but already possessed the strength of a Cosmos Level Expert at perfection, and was not a disciple of Golden Crow Manor but sitting in the seat of honor above Li Jingren, Shi Cheng was greatly intrigued and raised his eyebrows to ask.

It was then that Li Jingren snapped back to his senses, hastily introducing: "Elder Shi, this is Senior Fang Bai. Senior Fang, this is our Golden Crow Manor's Elder Shi Cheng..."

Li Jingren gave a brief introduction of Fang Bai and Shi Cheng, as well as the few Golden Crow Manor stewards present, and then used the Thread Condensation Sound Transmission Technique to inform them of Fang Bai's concealed strength, to prevent them from underestimating Fang Bai and causing unnecessary trouble.

Upon learning the true strength of Fang Bai, which was comparable to Manor Master Huang Canghai, and that he was a Loose Cultivator, they were all greatly shocked.

When Fang Bai first proposed to ally with Golden Crow Manor and drive away the Martial Artists gathered at the edge of the Eternal Death Zone, Shi Cheng and the others thought this young Martial Artist was outrageously arrogant. But knowing Fang Bai's true strength, in addition to their shock, their hearts stirred with consideration.

Although the number of Martial Artists gathered at the edge of the Eternal Death Zone had reached a hundred thousand, as far as Shi Cheng knew, the strongest among them were only a few Universe Level High Rank Experts. With Manor Master Huang Canghai at Golden Crow Manor's side, if they added a similarly powerful Fang Bai, the alliance of two Universe Level Experts in perfection could deter many Martial Artists.

Shi Cheng eyed Fang Bai a few times, unable to discern Fang Bai's realm and Cultivation Level, realizing that Li Jingren was not exaggerating Fang Bai's capabilities but that Fang Bai truly possessed such strength, a look of joy appeared on his face.

At this crucial juncture for Golden Crow Manor, if they could secure Fang Bai's assistance, perhaps Golden Crow Manor could weather this catastrophe.

However, the condition that Fang Bai put forward, to split the Essence Stone Mine with Golden Crow Manor after driving away the hundred thousand Martial Artists gathered at the edge of the Eternal Death Zone, was difficult for Shi Cheng to accept.

The Essence Stone Vein located beneath the Eternal Death Zone spanned thousands of miles, with a staggering reserve. If it was a top-tier sect like Golden Crow Manor with over ten thousand disciples, they would naturally claim it for themselves.

Yet here was Fang Bai, a Loose Cultivator Martial Artist, wanting to split the Essence Stone Vein with Golden Crow Manor. To Shi Cheng and the others, this seemed rather ignorant of the ways of the world.

Chapter 1278: How about We Make a Bet?

"If Senior Fang is willing to lend us a hand to overcome the current predicament, we are prepared to offer a sum of Cultivation Resources to Senior Fang... As for the reward, we can discuss it together after Manor Master Huang comes out of seclusion. Manor Master Huang has always been generous and will certainly make Senior Fang satisfied,"

Shi Cheng cleared his throat, sat up straight, and spoke solemnly.

Shi Cheng dismissed Fang Bai's suggestion to divide the Essence Stone Vein equally as if it were wind beside his ear.

The Essence Stone Vein beneath the Eternal Death Zone has an astonishingly vast reserve. Its value far exceeds the wealth that Golden Crow Manor has accumulated over thousands of years.

If they could secure the entire Essence Stone Vein, Golden Crow Manor wouldn't have to worry about Cultivation Resources for a very long time into the future.

This is precisely what all sects and prominent clans in the True Martial Realm dream of.

Therefore, to vie for the Essence Stone Vein, Golden Crow Manor spared no effort, confronting a hundred thousand martial artists, and despite numerous conflicts and casualties, Golden Crow Manor did not retreat or compromise.

However, seeing the number of martial artists gathering at the edge of the Eternal Death Zone increase by the day, and the entrance to the Essence Stone Vein suffering more frequent assaults, the pressure on Shi Cheng grew ever larger. Out of necessity, he rushed back to Golden Crow Manor for reinforcements.

After learning of Fang Bai's true strength, Shi Cheng indeed hoped that Golden Crow Manor could join forces with him. There was hope to turn the tide and even gain the upper hand in the stand-off.

However, Fang Bai's condition to split the Essence Stone Vein equally, Shi Cheng could not accept, and he knew that including Manor Master Huang Canghai, the high-ranking members of Golden Crow Manor could not agree either.

After all, no matter how powerful Fang Bai is, he is but one person. Golden Crow Manor, on the other hand, has nearly ten thousand disciples involved in the stand-off. The sacrifices aren't the same, so the benefits surely can't be equal either. Otherwise, it would be totally unfair to Golden Crow Manor.

Shi Cheng thought that even if Fang Bai could help Golden Crow Manor overcome this difficulty, giving him one or two-tenths of the Essence Stone Mine would be more than enough. Fang Bai's demand to split it equally was simply unrealistic.

"Is splitting half the Essence Stone Vein a lot?"

Fang Bai smirked and said, "You should know, if we cooperate, I have to help your Golden Crow Manor against the hundred thousand martial artists at the edge of the Eternal Holy Land, and also need to treat Steward Li's severed arm, and heal your manor lord's son's damaged Qi Sea and broken meridians... All things considered, your Golden Crow Manor is actually getting the better deal!"

"Steward Li, is that true?"

Shi Cheng raised his eyebrows, his face showing surprise, and looked at Li Jingren beside him with an inquiring gaze.

Shi Cheng thought to himself that the injuries of Li Jingren and Huang Yuanqi, the manor lord's son, both required a high-grade Nine Revolutions Rebirth Pill for a chance at healing. If Fang Bai could make such an offer, did he have Blood Bodhi or a Nine Revolutions Rebirth Pill on his person?

Regrettably, the injuries to the manor lord's son Huang Yuanqi were so severe that they had missed the optimal window for treatment. Even possessing Nine Revolutions Rebirth Pills would no longer help.

As for Li Jingren's severed arm, if he could obtain a Nine Revolutions Rebirth Pill, there would still be hope for recovery.

However, the price of half of the Essence Stone Vein for Fang Bai's Nine Revolutions Rebirth Pill was too steep, something the high-ranking members of Golden Crow Manor wouldn't accept, and Li Jingren himself wouldn't agree for the sake of the manor's interests.

Li Jingren gave a wry smile and said, "Senior Fang didn't directly say he could heal my severed arm and Yuan Qi's injuries, but he mentioned having Blood Bodhi and the ability to concoct Nine Revolutions Rebirth Pills..."

As he said this, he glanced at Fang Bai and sighed, "Senior Fang, the Essence Stone Vein is crucial to our Golden Crow Manor's interests. I would rather my severed arm never regrow than accept Senior Fang's conditions. Also, you heard earlier that our manor lord's beloved son has missed the treatment window for his injuries..."

Fang Bai chuckled, "The manor lord said the treatment time has been missed, but I didn't say that."

Shi Cheng's eyebrows stirred, his eyes shining sharply, and he asked with some excitement, "Senior Fang means..."

Fang Bai curled his lip and said, "What I mean is that just because your manor lord can't cure him doesn't mean I can't cure him."

"The Nine Revolutions Rebirth Pill is of no use to Yuan Qi anymore. Is Senior Fang confident in curing him?"

Shi Cheng suppressed the excitement in his heart and asked in a deep voice.

He thought that Fang Bai's strength was comparable to the Manor Master and, being an Alchemist as well, it was really possible that he could heal Huang Yuanqi's injuries.

Fang Bai said: "How about we make a bet? If I can heal Huang Yuanqi's injuries, after we jointly obtain the Essence Stone Vein, we'll split it evenly; otherwise, I, Fang Bai, will stay in the Golden Crow Manor to concoct elixirs for the disciples. Elder Shi, what do you think? Sigh... no matter how you slice it, I'm at a disadvantage! But for Chenyu's sake, I'll accept this loss!"

"This..."

Shi Cheng was somewhat tempted, but he was not the Manor Master and did not represent the other senior members, so naturally, he did not dare to make any promises to Fang Bai.

"Haha... Bet! I, Huang Canghai, will take you up on that bet! Hahaha..."

Just then, a hearty and bold laughter came from outside the reception hall.

Following that, a tall and burly man with a full beard strode in.

Behind the bearded man followed Sun Guangyi and several other stewards of the Golden Crow Manor.

"Manor Master!"

Upon seeing the bearded man, Shi Cheng, Li Jingren, and the others all stood up, bowed respectfully, and even Xia Chenyu was no exception.

Only Fang Bai remained seated, smiling and silently watching the bearded man.

Huang Canghai was after all the head of a prestigious clan, a top-tier powerhouse in the True Martial Realm. It was somewhat disrespectful for Fang Bai to not even stand in his presence, which caused Shi Cheng and the others to feel slight displeasure.

Xia Chenyu also did not want Fang Bai to have a fallout with the Golden Crow Manor, so she blinked her beautiful eyes and kept making eye signals towards Fang Bai.

"This young brother must be the Fang Bai that Elder Sun mentioned? I am Huang Canghai, the current Manor Master of the Golden Crow Manor!"

Huang Canghai didn't seem bothered by Fang Bai's discourtesy, but laughed and approached, cupping his fists towards Fang Bai: "Brother Fang, I was entangled in some trivial matters just now and couldn't come over in time to keep you company, I hope you'll forgive me!"

Fang Bai then slowly stood up, lazily returned the gesture, and said: "Manor Master Huang is too polite. Regarding the bet that I just made with Elder Shi, does Manor Master Huang agree?"

"Agreed!"

Huang Canghai laughed heartily: "The wager proposed by Brother Fang is advantageous and harmless to my Golden Crow Manor, if I did not agree, wouldn't that make me a fool?"

Fang Bai also started laughing, saying: "Manor Master Huang is straightforward indeed! Your Elder Shi here is a bit too hesitant!"

Shi Cheng, having been in the True Martial Realm for over a century, was for the first time being called overly cautious, which made him somewhat caught between laughter and tears.

"As of now, there are nearly a hundred thousand Martial Artists confronting our Golden Crow Manor, right? Brother Fang, do you have any methods to help us defend the Essence Stone Mine?"

After both sides sat down again, Huang Canghai's smile faded and he asked solemnly.

Chapter 1279: Evil Genius

Son severely injured during his training, life and death uncertain; one hundred thousand martial artists gather at the Eternal Death Zone, intent on competing for the Essence Stone Vein.

These two matters have left Huang Canghai frustrated and mentally exhausted.

If Fang Bai has a way to resolve these issues, Huang Canghai wouldn't mind sharing half of the Essence Stone Vein with him.

Huang Canghai appears rough and bold on the surface, but in reality, he is meticulous and knows how to make choices.

Underneath the Eternal Death Zone, the Essence Stone Vein, although extraordinarily rich and valuable, is coveted by numerous Sect forces and Individual Cultivation Martial Artists. Golden Crow Manor must rely on its strength to fend off various attempts to seize it.

However, as it stands, the forces involved in the competition for the Essence Stone Vein are rapidly increasing, and the disadvantage of Golden Crow Manor is becoming more evident. Once nearly ten thousand disciples of Golden Crow Manor face defeat in the Eternal Death Zone against various forces, the Manor will not only lose the ability to compete for the Essence Stone Vein but might even face annihilation.

Huang Canghai is acutely aware of this and has been worrying about it in the past few days. Now that Fang Bai has proposed a partnership, it brings Huang Canghai a glimmer of hope.

Compared to the life and death of the Manor, Huang Canghai feels that sharing half of the Essence Stone Vein for Fang Bai's cooperation is an extremely profitable deal.

Moreover, Fang Bai has also agreed to heal his son Huang Yuanqi's injuries as well as Li Jingren's severed arm, making the deal even more beneficial.

As for whether Fang Bai possesses strength equal to his own, whether he can heal his son's injuries, or whether he can help Li Jingren regenerate his arm, Huang Canghai doesn't harbor much doubt.

Just before entering the guest hall, Huang Canghai had tried to gauge Fang Bai's cultivation level. Initially, he found that Fang Bai's cultivation was merely at Cosmic Level perfection. However, upon closer inspection, he realized that Fang Bai's strength was like a layer of thin ice, clear on the surface but unfathomably deep below.

As a top expert in the True Martial Realm, who has traveled across the entire realm and seen various types of martial artists, possessing more experience than the vast majority, he knew that Fang Bai either concealed his strength or had the ability to challenge those beyond his level.

Both concealing strength and challenging beyond one's level are not abilities that ordinary martial artists possess; they either require extremely high aptitude or tremendous fortune.

Therefore, at the moment Huang Canghai could not discern Fang Bai's exact cultivation level, he dared not underestimate him at all, placing him at a position equal to or even slightly higher than himself.

When Huang Canghai first met Fang Bai, he warmly called him "Brother Fang," which surprised people like Shi Cheng and Li Jingren, but they did not know it was Huang Canghai's way of fostering a closer relationship with Fang Bai.

In Huang Canghai's view, with both himself and Fang Bai, two Universe Level perfection experts, joining hands, they were enough to deter many adversaries, causing any opposing force considering provocation to second guess.

"Protecting the Essence Stone Vein is actually quite simple..."

To Huang Canghai's inquiry, Fang Bai smiled and said, "First, directly initiate battle, openly repelling the opponents; second, indirectly influence them, employ some less honorable methods to break their will, making them retreat knowing the difficulty."

Huang Canghai stroked his rough beard, frowning, "Directly initiating battle, I feel the odds of winning are not great, and our Golden Crow Manor disciples will suffer heavy casualties. You mentioned employing less honorable methods... that doesn't seem very good, does it?"

As a dignified Universe Level perfection expert and head of a prominent clan, Huang Canghai always acts honorably. He believes those underhanded methods are only used by low-ranking Sect disciples.

Therefore, when Fang Bai mentioned "less honorable methods," he naturally developed a sense of resistance.

Fang Bai let out a snort of laughter and said, "You just mentioned how straightforward you were, and now you've become as naggy as Elder Shi. Fine, you don't want to use shady methods, then let's simply initiate battle, after all, it's not my people who will die."

Huang Canghai gave a bitter smile, "Is there no other way?"

Fang Bai replied irritably, "No! Choose one of the two options yourself!"

Huang Canghai's gaze swept across the faces of Shi Cheng and others, asking, "What do you think?"

Several senior figures from Golden Crow Manor started to voice their opinions, yet they were not unanimous.

Some, like Huang Canghai, couldn't put aside their pride, unwilling to resort to underhanded tactics for fear of being criticized by martial artists worldwide.

Others supported the second method Fang Bai suggested, employing underhanded tactics, as the survival of the manor was at stake—how could they care about anything else?

Seeing the senior figures of the manor arguing endlessly, Huang Canghai felt a headache coming on. Glancing at Fang Bai, who was leisurely sipping tea brewed with spiritual medicine, he gave a wry smile and said, "Brother Fang, could you elaborate on the 'not so honorable methods' you mentioned?"

Upon hearing this, Shi Cheng and the others turned their heads toward Fang Bai.

Fang Bai set down his tea and said, "Those hundred thousand martial artists, haven't they formed alliances? You and I could strike at night, disabling a few alliance leaders every night. The rest will surely be scared and only concerned with their own safety. By then, they'll only be worried about not being crippled themselves, and won't bother with anything else."

Sun Guangyi clapped his hands loudly and exclaimed, "Senior Fang is right! Secretly killing a few alliance leaders would intimidate the other martial artists. Those who are more timid might just sneak away. After all, while the Essence Stone Vein is valuable, it's not worth their lives!"

Li Jingren chuckled, "Once one martial artist runs away, there will be a second, a third, a fourth... In time, they might just collapse without us having to attack."

Huang Canghai frowned and thought about it, feeling that it was indeed a possibility.

The hundred thousand martial artists opposing Golden Crow Manor relied solely on their large numbers, and having dispatched disciples to infiltrate and spy, Huang Canghai knew that the strongest among them was only a high rank Universe Level martial artist.

Previously, Huang Canghai dared not leave Golden Crow Manor to guard the entrance to the Essence Stone Mine, fearing that hostile forces would take advantage of the manor's weakened defenses to strike. However, with Fang Bai present, he no longer needed to worry about these issues.

Huang Canghai also wasn't concerned about being surrounded and attacked by the many martial artists; a Universe Level perfection expert facing a group of lower-rank martial artists would not find it difficult to escape unless the opponent managed to trap him with an exquisitely peculiar formation.

"For the sake of the manor, this is the only way!"

After a moment of contemplation, Huang Canghai seemed to have made up his mind and addressed Fang Bai, "Brother Fang, I'll trouble you to stay and guard Golden Crow Manor tonight while I disable some leaders of the Martial Artists Alliance."

Fang Bai said, "I will join you tonight in a trip to the Eternal Death Zone to see what exactly the Essence Stone Mine is like. Don't worry, I will set up a Defensive Array here at the manor. Even if Innate Experts attack, they won't be able to break through."

"Brother Fang, you... you also understand formations?"

Huang Canghai exclaimed in surprise.

Seeing Fang Bai nod, Huang Canghai couldn't help but click his tongue in admiration, thinking to himself that Fang Bai's strength was comparable to his own, and knowing both alchemy and formations, such a martial artist who combined multiple abilities was truly a monstrously talented individual!

Chapter 1280: Show a Little Skill

In the reception hall of Golden Crow Manor, Fang Bai and Huang Canghai, after negotiations, finalised their joint cooperation, and then went together to the Manor Master Hall to visit Huang Canghai's son, Huang Yuanqi.

Huang Yuanqi is Huang Canghai's only beloved son who, just over thirty, already possesses Cosmic Level Cultivation perfection, thus becoming the youngest direct disciple in the history of Golden Crow Manor, deeply cherished by Huang Canghai.

Almost all disciples of Golden Crow Manor believe that, if all goes well, one day in the future, Huang Yuanqi will definitely succeed Huang Canghai as the Manor Master of Golden Crow Manor.

Unexpectedly, several months ago during an outing for cultivation experience, Huang Yuanqi suffered a severe injury, falling into a coma.

Although Golden Crow Manor faces a significant crisis at the moment, Huang Canghai has still been relentlessly using his True Yuan to sustain Huang Yuanqi's life, demonstrating how much he values his son.

On the way to the Manor Master Hall, Huang Canghai felt both excited and anxious.

He was excited because Fang Bai seemed very confident about curing his son's injury, giving him a glimmer of hope.

Anxious because, if Fang Bai, upon seeing his son's injuries, finds himself powerless, all his hopes would turn to despair.

Earlier in the reception hall, although Fang Bai and Huang Canghai did not mention anything about Xia Chenyu, Huang Canghai had already made up his mind that if Fang Bai really could cure his son's injuries and help Golden Crow Manor drive away the ten thousand Martial Artists gathered at the border of the Eternal Death Zone, then taking Xia Chenyu away could be negotiable.

Fang Bai, capable of Alchemy, understanding Formation, skilled in Beast Taming, and able to conceal his true strength or challenge those above his level, associating with such a monstrously strong individual was much better than offending him.

The Manor Master Hall of Golden Crow Manor, located at the very center of the manor, is surrounded by a river and guarded on the outside by the halls of the four Great Elders and eight Stewards, making its defenses incredibly robust.

Anyone who wants to approach the Manor Master Hall of Golden Crow Manor must first pass through the twelve halls inhabited by the four Great Elders and the eight Stewards, which for most Martial Artists in the world is harder than reaching the heavens.

The injured and unconscious Huang Yuanqi has been residing in the Manor Master Hall, with Huang Canghai spending hours each day using his True Yuan to sustain his son's life force, not allowing it to fade away, while simultaneously seeking ways to treat him.

"Manor Huang, your son's aura is very weak!"

A few hundred meters away from the Manor Master Hall, Fang Bai captured an extremely faint Martial Artist Aura with his Divine Sense and frowned, saying: "If I had arrived two or three days later, your son's life force would probably have been extinguished."

"Brother Fang, you can sense my son's aura?"

Huang Canghai looked at Fang Bai in astonishment, and seeing him nod with a smile, a storm of emotion surged in his heart.

Huang Yuanqi was in a critical, life-threatening state, his Martial Artist Aura weak to the point of being almost imperceptible; even Huang Canghai himself could only sense Huang Yuanqi's Martial Artist Aura when he approached within a hundred meters of the Manor Master Hall. Fang Bai having sensed it from hundreds of meters away greatly shocked Huang Canghai, making him realize that he had previously underestimated Fang Bai's strength.

Huang Canghai's heart raced with excitement; the stronger Fang Bai was, the greater the hope that his son's injuries could be healed increased.

"Ao..."

"Ao..."

When they reached the Manor Master Hall by crossing a stone bridge, accompanied by two deep roars, two saber-toothed tigers that had been lying in front of the Manor Master Hall suddenly leaped up and dashed in front of Fang Bai like lightning, menacingly demonstrating their hostility towards this stranger.

Both saber-toothed tigers stood about two meters tall and were more than a measure long, their gigantic bodies radiating a fierce and violent aura. At this moment, they were baring their teeth and brandishing their claws, assuming a posture ready to attack at any moment, exuding an intimidating and murderous presence.

The combat power of each of these saber-toothed tigers was comparable to a human Universe Level middle-tier Martial Artist; even Sun Guangyi and Li Jingren, stewards of the Golden Crow Manor, felt a tingling in their scalps when facing them.

"These are Spirit Beasts tamed by Elder Lei to guard the Manor Master Hall..."

Huang Canghai casually explained and was about to call off the two saber-toothed tigers when he saw Fang Bai step forward slightly and emit a low, barely audible whistle.

The originally imposing and domineering saber-toothed tigers trembled upon hearing Fang Bai's low whistle, then bent their legs and unexpectedly lay down on the ground, showing signs of terror in their eyes and emitting a low whimpering sound.

"This..."

Seeing the two saber-toothed tigers submit to Fang Bai, everyone at the scene, including Sun Guangyi, Li Jingren, and Xia Chenyu, as well as several senior members of Golden Crow Manor including Huang Canghai, were utterly dumbfounded.

Especially Elder Lei Hu, one of the four Great Elders skilled in Beast Taming Arts, his face was filled with disbelief.

Earlier in the reception hall, Lei Hu had heard from Sun Guangyi that Fang Bai also knew the Art of Beast Taming and thought that Fang Bai had only a slight knowledge of it; therefore, he did not take it seriously.

Right now, seeing how the two saber-toothed tigers he had spent months taming were instantly subdued by Fang Bai, Lei Hu realized he was facing a true master of beast taming. His own skills in beast taming were nothing compared to Fang Bai's, like the difference between an apprentice and a grandmaster.

Lei Hu was both excited and thrilled, his gaze burning with eagerness as he looked at Fang Bai, intending to ask for some tips on Beast Taming Arts from him, yet knowing that this was not the right moment, he secretly decided to pester Fang Bai for advice after Fang Bai had treated Huang Yuan Qi's injuries.

In this world, for Martial Artists, learning knows no age bounds; the accomplished are revered regardless of age, and it is completely normal for elders to seek teaching from the younger ones. Lei Hu was not so obstinate as to not ask for guidance out of pride.

Fang Bai, with a simple display of skill, subdued the two saber-toothed tigers, leaving Huang Canghai and others dumbstruck. Meanwhile, Xia Chenyu, who was following Fang Bai, watched him with a gaze filled with love and admiration, thinking how this man, who already stood atop the Martial Dao in the Secular World, unmatched by anyone, continued to bring her unpredictable surprises in the True Martial Realm.

"That's a good boy!"

Fang Bai, with a smile, approached the saber-toothed tigers, patted their heads, and then proceeded towards the Manor Master Hall.

"Brother Fang truly is a prodigy of our times, his Beast Taming Art is even better than that of Elder Lei. Admirable! Admirable!"

Huang Canghai quickened his pace to walk alongside Fang Bai, repeatedly expressing his admiration.

Seizing the opportunity, Lei Hu said: "Manor Huang is right! I, Lei Hu, formerly considered myself the best in the Art of Beast Taming in the True Martial Realm, but now having witnessed Senior Fang's abilities, I realize there are always people better than oneself. If Senior Fang could find some time, might he be willing to share a few tips on Beast Taming Arts with his junior?"

The sycophantic tone was unmistakable to Fang Bai, who turned to look at Lei Hu and said with a smile: "Elder Lei is too courteous. We can certainly exchange insights whenever there's a chance."

This response, essentially affirming Lei Hu, made him overjoyed, and he continuously thanked Fang Bai.