

Doctor 1291

Chapter 1291: What to Do When You Suddenly Really Want to Hit Someone?

"My name is Fang Bai. Chenyu's Martial Dao partner shall be me!"

Without waiting for Xia Chenyu to introduce him, Fang Bai stepped forward, emerged from the crowd, and stood in front of Yu Huang.

Listening to his words from behind Fang Bai, Xia Chenyu's pretty face bloomed with a deeper smile, her delicate cheeks flushing a light pink, like white jade tinged with rouge.

This bashful look made her, who was already exceptionally beautiful, appear even more charming in a distinctive way.

Many of the disciples from Golden Crow Manor present were admirers pursuing Xia Chenyu. Generally, her every move and smile would send them into raptures, infatuated and beyond self-control.

Now seeing Xia Chenyu smiling radiantly and blushing, those disciples from Golden Crow Manor who had been paying attention to her were even more entranced, their eyes glazed, mouths dry, faces flushed red, drunk on her allure.

"Chenyu is born with seductive charm, a beauty unparalleled. If I were a few decades younger, I'm afraid I too would be infatuated with her like these disciples of the manor..."

Feeling the young disciples' breathing turning heavy and agitated due to Xia Chenyu's enchantment, Yu Huang was both amused and slightly annoyed.

However, Yu Huang understood that Xia Chenyu was naturally charming like a flame that attracts moths. It wasn't intentional seduction towards the manor's disciples, so Yu Huang neither blamed those who lost their composure nor reprimanded Xia Chenyu.

"Oh, so you are the Fang Bai that Chenyu often talks about... hmm, Chenyu has the most potential among our young generation of disciples. Becoming her Martial Dao partner will not be easy!"

When Fang Bai had just arrived at the foot of the fortress, Yu Huang had already sensed his cultivation level. Seeing that he was merely a Cosmic Level Martial Artist at perfection and not an Innate Spiritual Root, Yu Huang felt somewhat disdainful and didn't bother to pay him much attention.

A Cosmic Level Martial Artist at perfection in his early twenties is indeed remarkable, but compared to someone with an Innate Spiritual Root like Xia Chenyu, there's still a significant gap.

In Yu Huang's opinion, Fang Bai must have experienced some fortuitous encounters to have reached his current strength. Although Xia Chenyu is currently behind Fang Bai, with her talents and the strong support of Golden Crow Manor, she will surely surpass Fang Bai within five years and leave him far behind within a decade.

Moreover, since Fang Bai does not possess an Innate Spiritual Root, he will have difficulty making significant progress on the Martial Dao, whereas Xia Chenyu has limitless potential. In marrying as Martial Dao partners, Yu Huang feels Fang Bai is simply not worthy of Xia Chenyu.

The chubby Elder Yu Huang, taller than Fang Bai by more than a head and weighing at least twice as much, exuded an imposing aura natural to a Universe Level High Rank Martial Artist. Standing opposite Fang Bai, he seemed like a majestic lion facing a tame lamb.

"Elder Yu is correct; it's not easy to become Chenyu's Martial Dao partner! Therefore, those men who have designs on her should give up now! In this world, only I, Fang Bai, am the perfect match for Chenyu!"

Although Fang Bai could see the scorn in Yu Huang's eyes, he didn't get angry and responded with a smile.

His words did not sit well with the Golden Crow Manor's Elder Yu Huang, Stewards Zhang Zhijing, and Yang Yue; they found Fang Bai too arrogant.

The Golden Crow Manor's male disciples who admired and pursued Xia Chenyu clenched their teeth in anger, faces filled with rage.

A male Martial Artist standing behind Yu Huang scoffed, "Only you are worthy of Junior Sister Xia? Ha, what boastful nonsense! You are merely a Cosmic Level Martial Artist at perfection!"

The speaker was roughly forty years old, tall and straight, with a handsome appearance. He possessed the same cultivation level of Cosmic Level perfection as Fang Bai and was one of Golden Crow Manor's Direct Disciples, Huang Xuanwu.

Huang Xuanwu, along with Huang Yuanqi and Huang Yuanhu, are also cousins and are viewed as one of the future high-ranking successors of Golden Crow Manor.

Because he's been wholeheartedly devoted to Martial Dao Cultivation and has high standards, Huang Xuanwu has never had a martial partner. However, ever since Xia Chenyu entered Golden Crow Manor, his heart was stirred, but since the Manor Master intended to match Huang Yuanqi with Xia Chenyu, although Huang Xuanwu was unwilling, he had to step back.

Later, when Huang Yuanqi was critically injured and in a coma, with his life hanging by a thread, Huang Xuanwu finally saw another opportunity and felt that persistence would pay off. As long as he tried hard, there was still a great chance to capture Junior Sister Xia's heart.

Although Huang Xuanwu is nearly twenty years older than Xia Chenyu, for them Martial Artists who could easily live over a hundred years, a twenty-year age gap doesn't really mean anything.

Xia Chenyu has said more than once that she already has a martial partner, but Huang Xuanwu didn't quite believe it, and even now, seeing Fang Bai, he still found it unlikely.

Having an Innate Spiritual Root, Junior Sister Xia is the undisputed proud daughter of the heavens in the True Martial Realm, how could she take a liking to someone like Fang Bai, a Loose Cultivator Martial Artist with a not so bright future?

Although my talents aren't as good as cousin Huang Yuanqi, I'm still one of the better choices. Plus, with the manor's Cultivation Resources and various Martial Arts Techniques as support, there's much potential on the road of Martial Dao ahead of me. Pairing up with Junior Sister Xia as martial partners wouldn't be too much of a compromise for her.

"Chenyu, this guy actually says I'm not worthy of you... sigh, all of a sudden I really feel like hitting someone, what should I do?"

Fang Bai turned to face Xia Chenyu and sighed.

Xia Chenyu blinked her beautiful eyes and said with a giggle, "Then don't hide your true abilities anymore, quickly show some real skills and prove that you and I are the best match!"

"Forget it, overcoming the weak isn't a martial virtue. I'll endure this insult!"

Fang Bai waved his hand and stopped paying attention to Huang Xuanwu, who was about to fly into a rage, and seriously said to Yu Huang, "Elder Yu, I've already discussed the cooperation with Manor Huang of Golden Crow Manor, getting ready to join forces to drive away..."

Before he could finish, a dazzling red flame suddenly appeared in front of him, the temperature around him soared, and a wave of scorching heat surged over him, engulfing him in flames.

"You can endure it, but I cannot!"

Accompanying the surging flames was Huang Xuanwu's angry shout.

Considering Xia Chenyu's feelings, Huang Xuanwu didn't use his full strength. He only wanted to teach Fang Bai a lesson, to make this ignorant fool understand who the real strong one is, and who is truly worthy of Xia Chenyu.

Yu Huang, Zhang Zhijing, and Yang Yue, the three high-ranking members of Golden Crow Manor, knew that Huang Xuanwu was holding back and did not intervene. They wanted to see what Fang Bai could do to respond.

Xia Chenyu, still wearing a coquettish smile, quickly stepped back, mourning for Huang Xuanwu in her heart.

Also silently mourning for Huang Xuanwu was Huang He, a Core Disciple who had just tried to stop Fang Bai and Xia Chenyu, because he had just learned from Xia Chenyu that this Senior Fang was a powerful figure on par with Manor Huang of their own manor.

Although Huang Xuanwu's strength was above his, attacking Fang Bai was nothing but asking for trouble; he was surely going to get beaten so badly that not even his own parents would recognize him.

Chapter 1292: Show Mercy

"I detest those who overestimate themselves!"

Fang Bai narrowed his eyes, facing the intense surge of Fire Primordial Qi that appeared before him in an instant, he curled his lips in contempt and flicked his left hand casually, as if swatting away mosquitoes flying close to him.

Boom...

A stream of Fire Primordial Qi emerges between Fang Bai's waving hands, dazzling and scorching several times more than that released by Huang Xuanwu, rolling furiously forward like raging waves. It swallowed up the oncoming Fire Primordial Qi and curled back towards Huang Xuanwu.

"This is bad!"

The instant Fang Bai waved his hand in a counterattack, Yu Huang sensed from him a terrifying pressure that even made his own heart palpitate with fear. His pupils suddenly constricted, and his expression filled with horror, as he involuntarily cried out in alarm.

Yu Huang realized that he had gravely misjudged Fang Bai.

As a seasoned Universe Level Expert who had been through countless battles, Yu Huang knew that the gap in strength between Huang Xuanwu and Fang Bai was not even on the same level; even he himself might not be a match for Fang Bai.

"Elder Yu, save me!"

Engulfed by the Fire Primordial Qi released by Fang Bai, Huang Xuanwu felt the air around him being sucked away, plunging him into a near suffocating state, while the intense heat from the Fire Primordial Qi roasted his whole body with unbearable pain.

Only then did Huang Xuanwu realize how terribly wrong it was to provoke Fang Bai. Regret and fear intertwined in his heart, panic and despair coexisted; he screamed miserably, calling for Yu Huang's help.

Yu Huang very much wanted to save Huang Xuanwu, but he knew how terrifying the Fire Primordial Qi enveloping Huang Xuanwu was. If he were to barge in recklessly, not only would he be unable to rescue Huang Xuanwu, he himself might also get trapped and unable to escape.

"Fang... Senior Fang... Please show mercy!"

Having held an air of condescension and contempt towards Fang Bai, Yu Huang, after witnessing Fang Bai's power, had no choice but to bow his head and beg for mercy, while urgently looking to Xia Chenyu, standing behind Fang Bai, for assistance.

Yu Huang was smart; he knew that among all present, only Xia Chenyu, with close ties to Fang Bai, could potentially persuade Fang Bai to stop.

Xia Chenyu turned a blind eye to Yu Huang's pleading gaze, unmoved.

Based on Xia Chenyu's understanding of Fang Bai, although he cherished and valued her deeply, he wouldn't lose himself; once he decided on something, he wouldn't change his decision easily because of anyone else.

Furthermore, in Xia Chenyu's heart, Fang Bai's importance was far beyond what an Elder from Golden Crow Manor could match, and Yu Huang's earlier disrespect towards Fang Bai had made her uncomfortable as well.

Therefore, as Fang Bai was teaching Huang Xuanwu a lesson, Xia Chenyu wouldn't soften her heart to plead on Huang Xuanwu's behalf.

Xia Chenyu was also certain that Fang Bai, for her sake, would not take Huang Xuanwu's life but would just punish him to teach him a lesson about the immensity of the world.

On the other hand, this severe setback for Huang Xuanwu would be beneficial for him in the long run. At the very least, he would no longer be as arrogant and overbearing as he was before.

Xia Chenyu believed that after this incident, Huang Xuanwu would treat her with respect and keep his distance, no longer pestering her as before, thus removing a not-so-small annoyance from her life.

While engulfed in the Fire Primordial Qi, Huang Xuanwu loudly called for help from Yu Huang, while doing his utmost to circulate his own Fire Primordial Qi, forming a Defense Qi Shield around his body, attempting to fend off the assaulting Fire Primordial Qi from all directions.

However, the vast disparity in strength made all of Huang Xuanwu's efforts futile.

The Fire Primordial Qi released by Fang Bai easily overwhelmed Huang Xuanwu's Defense Qi Shield, the searing heat invading his body, and soon Huang Xuanwu smelled the charred scent of his own flesh and felt an agonizing, unforgettable pain.

Huang Xuanwu couldn't help but let out a pained groan, unable to wait for Yu Huang's support, he felt ice-cold and desperate in his heart.

Thinking of himself as a Fire System Martial Artist, about to perish amidst Fire Primordial Qi, Huang Xuanwu found it both ludicrous and sad.

When Huang Xuanwu tried to break free from the engulfing Fire Primordial Qi, his consciousness was already blurring, and he seemed to have lost all his strength, devoid of any ability to move.

"Senior Fang, this junior has been blind to your majesty and offended your power. I beg for your mercy! Junior Sister Xia, please plead with Senior Fang on my behalf! Please plead with him for me!"

Overwhelmed by intense pain and the fear of death, Huang Xuanwu somehow found the strength to suddenly drop to his knees with a "thump", kowtowing to Fang Bai as he begged hoarsely and earnestly.

No sooner had his voice faded than he felt the Fire Primordial Qi around him dissipate, the pain on his body lessened, and his breathing became smoother.

"For Chenyu's sake, I won't hold this against you this time!"

Fang Bai's voice reached Huang Xuanwu's ears, giving him the sensation of hearing a heavenly melody.

After the Fire Primordial Qi surrounding Huang Xuanwu had cleared, Yu Huang and others could see Huang Xuanwu's current state, and couldn't help but gasp in shock.

Huang Xuanwu's hair and beard were gone, his eyebrows scorched away, his clothes were barely clinging in tatters, just covering the most vital parts of a man's body, and his feet standing on the ground appeared charred, with the faint smell of roasted meat wafting through the air.

At this moment, Huang Xuanwu looked utterly disheveled and wretched. Where was the hint of his once handsome and elegant, poised manner?

Fang Bai merely waved his hand casually as if shooing away flies, without even executing a formal attack, yet he already caused Huang Xuanwu great loss. Fang Bai's strength was evident.

Yu Huang understood that if it weren't for Fang Bai considering the relationship he had with Xia Chenyu and Golden Crow Manor, showing mercy, Huang Xuanwu at this moment would be nothing but a charred corpse.

"Elder Yu, I stayed at Golden Crow Manor with Fang Bai for a while. Fang Bai has healed Brother Yuan Qi's injuries, and has also come to an agreement with Manor Huang to join forces to expel the Martial Artists Alliance. Our visit here is to check out the situation in the Eternal Death Zone."

Xia Chenyu, not wanting the conflict between Fang Bai and Golden Crow Manor to deepen, stepped forward a few paces, to Fang Bai's side and spoke indifferently to Yu Huang.

"What?"

Yu Huang thought he had heard wrong, his gaze turned to Xia Chenyu, and he asked with a frown: "Chenyu, you're saying that Fang Bai cured Yuan Qi's injuries? And what is this about joining forces to expel the Martial Artists Alliance?"

Xia Chenyu smiled slightly and nodded, saying: "When we left Golden Crow Palace Mountain, Brother Yuan Qi had already woken up and seemed to be in good spirits. Fang Bai said that in another ten days or half a month, Brother Yuan Qi could return to his peak condition."

She paused for a moment, then continued: "Manor Huang and Fang Bai have agreed that with their joint efforts, they will expel the Martial Artists Alliance from the edge of the Eternal Death Zone, preventing them from touching the Essence Stone Vein underground; when the time comes, the Essence Stone Vein will be split equally, with Fang Bai and Golden Crow Manor each owning half."

Upon hearing Xia Chenyu's words, all the disciples of Golden Crow Manor present were stunned.

The Martial Artists Alliance, with over a hundred thousand members and still increasing, had already surpassed the combined strength of Golden Crow Manor. If both sides were to fight to the death, Golden Crow Manor would undoubtedly be defeated, losing the rights to the Essence Stone Mine.

According to the analysis of the senior level of Golden Crow Manor, in the end, there would be a mutual compromise between Golden Crow Manor and the Martial Artists Alliance, and their side could probably secure sixty to seventy percent of the Essence Stone Mine. They had never dared to consider the possibility of entirely expelling and defeating the Martial Artists Alliance.

Could the addition of Fang Bai to the Golden Crow Manor's cause really reverse the current disadvantageous situation?

Chapter 1293: Prove with Facts

"If Elder Yu and the two Stewards do not believe my words, you may seek confirmation from Elder Shi and Elder Lei... Both elders should arrive here soon to explain this matter in person!"

Xia Chenyu's gaze swept across the faces of Yu Huang, Li Zhijing, and Yang Yue, the senior figures of the Golden Crow Manor, who all looked at Fang Bai with a mixture of shock and skepticism, obviously finding their own words hard to believe, and she said with a light chuckle.

"Chenyu, it's not that we don't trust you, but this matter is of great significance, and we must be cautious... Well, let's discuss this further when Elder Shi and Elder Lei arrive. However, before they do, you and Fang Bai should not hurry to visit the Essence Stone Vein," said Yu Huang after pondering for a moment, his expression solemn.

Xia Chenyu turned her head to glance at Fang Bai, and seeing him nod, she said, "Okay, then we shall wait here."

What she said was 'wait', but that didn't mean standing still; instead, she and Fang Bai walked hand in hand around the simple fortifications built by the Golden Crow Manor.

Due to their distrust of Fang Bai and wariness of his strength, Yu Huang, Li Zhijing, and Yang Yue were on high alert, standing shoulder to shoulder guarding the entrance to the Essence Stone Vein.

As for Huang Xuanwu, who had received a lesson from Fang Bai that was neither light nor heavy, after taking Healing Pills, he hid himself in a corner and quietly nursed his injuries, thoroughly retracting his previously arrogant attitude and looking at Fang Bai with a fearful gaze, worried about further trouble.

Fortunately, Fang Bai seemed to have forgotten about him, not sparing him another glance, which relieved Huang Xuanwu immensely, making him secretly breathe a sigh of relief.

Fang Bai, being an Array Master, saw the Defense Runes carved on the walls of the fortifications and looked unimpressed, occasionally commenting on those Defense Runes.

Without using the Thread Condensation Sound Transmission Technique, Fang Bai's voice was audible to Yu Huang and the others standing atop the fortifications.

In Fang Bai's commentary, the Defensive Array set up by Feng Donglai, one of the four elders of the Golden Crow Manor and someone with some understanding of Formations, was riddled with flaws and too simplistic. It would be of little defensive use against even a Universe Level Expert with a slight knowledge of Formations.

Fang Bai's demonstration of great strength when disciplining Huang Xuanwu had already deeply intimidated Yu Huang and the others; now hearing his disparaging remarks about the fort's Defensive Array, they were filled with trepidation, breaking out in cold sweats.

The Martial Artists Alliance was numerous, and despite their varied skill levels and differing plans, which significantly affected their collective combat power, it was certain that among them were experts knowledgeable in Formations at the Universe Level.

If what Fang Bai said was true, and the fortifications proved ineffective against Universe Level Experts, then once the day of the decisive battle arrived, the fort would be unable to effectively block the attacks of the Martial Artists Alliance's army, and they might completely lose control over the Essence Stone Mine.

"This Defensive Array was set by Feng Donglai, the Great Elder of our Golden Crow Manor. Elder Feng is also a mid-tier Array Master; the Array he has set up can't possibly have as many flaws as you've mentioned. It's precisely because of Elder Feng's Defensive Array that this hastily built simple fortification managed to withstand several attacks from the Martial Artists Alliance!"

Yu Huang couldn't help but defend Elder Feng after listening to Fang Bai devaluing the array set by Elder Feng as worthless.

Fang Bai's lips twisted into a disdainful smile, pointed at Xia Chenyu beside him, and said to Yu Huang, "I am somewhat skilled in arrays, a few casual pointers to Chenyu would allow her to break the Defensive Array set up by your Elder Feng. Do you believe it or not?"

Although Xia Chenyu had an Innate Spiritual Root and exceptional talent, she was still only a Cosmic Level beginner and knew nothing about formations, so naturally, Yu Huang didn't believe Fang Bai's claim.

"I knew you wouldn't believe me, so let facts be the proof!"

Fang Bai's lips moved slightly, whispering a few instructions to Xia Chenyu using the Thread Condensation Sound Transmission Technique.

Xia Chenyu's eyes sparkled with anticipation, and eagerly she called out to Yu Huang standing atop the fortress, "Elder Yu, please activate the formation, and let me test just how strong our fortress's defenses really are!"

Activating the defensive array consumes a significant amount of Essence Stones, and normally Yu Huang would not readily agree to do so. However, Fang Bai's recent remarks had shaken his confidence in the fortress's defensive capabilities, leading him to decide to let Xia Chenyu conduct the test.

Should the test result prove Fang Bai to have been speaking nonsense, then Yu Huang could regain his confidence and, incidentally, slap Fang Bai in the face.

If the test results validate what Fang Bai had said, then Golden Crow Manor would have to find a way to strengthen this last line of defense. Mending the fold after the sheep are lost is not too late.

With this in mind, Yu Huang, together with the two stewards, Zhang Zhijing and Yang Yue at his side, quickly discussed the matter before Yu Huang personally activated the fortress's defensive array.

The fortress's defensive array, made up of hundreds of thousands of array runes and over a hundred thousand high-quality Fire Elemental Stones, could neither be activated nor unravelled by martial artists who were ignorant of array formations.

After completing the deployment of the defensive array, Elder Feng Donglai of Golden Crow Manor informed Yu Huang, Li Zhijing, and Yang Yue, three of the manor's senior members, on how to activate the array.

Yu Huang sent strands of Fire Primordial Qi towards several of the Essence Stones that acted as switches for the defensive array. Touched by the Fire Primordial Qi, these stones trembled lightly and blazed brightly.

Subsequently, a hundred thousand Fire Elemental Stones emitted a hundred thousand rays of red light, with rich and pure Fire Primordial Qi being released from within the stones. A thin layer of fire shield formed over the walls of the fortress, as if outfitting the fortress with a layer of Flame Armor.

This thin layer of fire shield continuously radiated intense heat. Martial artists who did not know how to break the array formation and whose cultivation level was below the Universe Level Realm would fear to approach it.

Xia Chenyu, who possessed an Innate Fire Spirit Root and had been guided by Fang Bai, was full of confidence in her ability to break through the fortress's defensive array.

Upon seeing Yu Huang activating the array, Xia Chenyu shouted sharply, her waist twisting slightly, and her figure shot towards the fortress's high wall like a cannonball.

The thin fire shield, formed by the Fire Primordial Qi released from a hundred thousand high-quality Fire Elemental Stones, increased in temperature as one drew nearer. Even Fire System Martial Artists who had cultivated in fire-based techniques from a young age and were intimate with Fire Primordial Qi, could not easily approach without reaching a certain cultivation realm, or else they would end up suffering like Huang Xuanwu who had just challenged Fang Bai.

Witnessing Xia Chenyu charging at the fortress's Defense Qi Shield like a moth to a flame, Yu Huang couldn't help but worry for her.

Xia Chenyu was a talented martial artist who was highly regarded by the senior members of Golden Crow Manor. If she were to get hurt, how would he explain himself when the Manor Master and other seniors questioned him?

"I really shouldn't have let Chenyu test the defensive array... It's all Fang Bai's fault!"

In that moment, Yu Huang felt a trace of regret and simultaneously harbored some resentment towards Fang Bai.

While regrets rose in his heart and he wanted to call out to stop Xia Chenyu, it was already too late.

Xia Chenyu's body was like a red lightning bolt; in the blink of an eye, she was about to collide with the thin layer of the Defense Qi Shield outside the high walls of the fortress.

With a silent sigh, Yu Huang closed his eyes, unable to bear the sight.

Chapter 1294: You believe my words now, right?

Strike the snake at its vital spot.

The Array Eye of the Formation is equivalent to the vital spot of the snake.

Therefore, to break a Formation, you must first destroy its Array Eye.

No matter how formidable the Formation is, as long as you find the Array Eye and destroy it in one fell swoop, the entire Formation will collapse instantly.

Feng Donglai, the Elder who had set up this Defensive Array on the fortress, was merely a mid-rank Array Master, and such masters, in the eyes of Fang Bai who had once been an Immortal Rank Array Master, were as insignificant as ants.

Thus, the Formation painstakingly arranged by Feng Donglai, which he considered ingeniously infallible, was full of loopholes and not even worth a sneer to Fang Bai.

Xia Chenyu, under the guidance of Fang Bai, had a determined expression and a plan up her sleeve. Just before her delicate figure collided with the strong and robust Defense Qi Shield, her clenched fists shot out like lightning, unleashing five streams of Fire Primordial Qi at almost the same time.

Those five streams of Fire Primordial Qi condensed into five adult-sized fireballs in a plum blossom formation, fiercely striking the thin red Defense Qi Shield outside the fortress wall.

"Boom!"

The Defense Qi Shield, as if struck by electricity, shook violently and then collapsed under the stunned gazes of Yu Huang and other disciples from the Golden Crow Manor.

"How... how is this possible?"

Watching the Fire Primordial Qi Defense Qi Shield slowly dissipate, Yu Huang and the others were wearing faces of shock, muttering to themselves in disbelief.

Moments later, the words Fang Bai had just spoken echoed in their minds again, and they subconsciously turned their eyes towards him.

"The facts have spoken for themselves. Now, do you finally believe what I've said?"

Fang Bai shrugged his shoulders, sneering at Yu Huang and the others standing on the fortress, and then waved towards Xia Chenyu, who was hovering in the air.

Seeing the Defensive Array of the fortress effortlessly broken, Xia Chenyu's face couldn't hide her excitement. She twisted her body in midair and flew down next to Fang Bai.

"Previously, Manor Huang and the senior members of the manor mentioned that this fortress's Defensive Array was the last line of defense protecting the Essence Stone Vein, exceptionally robust and indestructible. Who would've thought it'd collapse with just a few gentle punches..."

As Xia Chenyu spoke, noticing the embarrassed expressions on the faces of Yu Huang and others, she said to them: "Elder Yu, Steward Zhang, Steward Yang, you have seen it yourselves. With just a few casual pointers from Fang Bai, I easily broke the Defensive Array. If the Martial Artists Alliance also has knowledgeable experts in Formations, this fortress wouldn't stand a chance against their attacks. We must strengthen the fortress defenses without delay."

Yu Huang sighed and said with a bitter smile, "Chenyu, we also want to enhance the defensive capability of the fortress! But... Elder Feng is the only Array Master in our manor, and he has already exhausted all his energy and effort in establishing the current Defensive Array. A more powerful Formation is beyond his abilities."

Xia Chenyu replied, "If Elder Feng is not up to the task, then why not invite a higher-ranked Array Master?"

Yu Huang shook his head and said, "Not to mention that high-rank Array Masters are difficult to enlist, even if we could, there isn't enough time. I estimate that as the number and overall strength of the

Martial Artists Alliance grow, they will likely lose patience, and a major battle will ensue within the next three to five days. There simply isn't enough time for any Array Master, no matter how skilled, to arrange a sophisticated Formation."

Xia Chenyu smiled and pointed at Fang Bai, saying, "Isn't there a ready-to-use Array Master right here? Actually, the main reason Fang Bai and I came here was to join hands with you to defend the entrance to the Essence Stone Vein. After all, half of this Essence Stone Vein here belongs to Fang Bai."

Yu Huang conveniently ignored the last remark from Xia Chenyu.

Yu Huang is a firm and stubborn man; he would not allow Fang Bai to enter the Essence Stone Vein underground before the arrival of Elder Shi and Elder Lei.

Nevertheless, Yu Huang was greatly interested in Fang Bai's identity as an Array Master, thinking that if Fang Bai could easily decipher the Defensive Array laid out by Elder Feng, it would prove that his level of array setting far surpasses that of Elder Feng. Perhaps he could indeed set up an even more powerful Defensive Array for this fortress before the Martial Artists Alliance launches a large-scale attack.

However, all of this must be premised on the basis that after the arrival of Elder Shi and Elder Lei, it is confirmed that Fang Bai has truly established a partnership with Golden Crow Manor.

In the anticipation of Yu Huang and the others, Shi Cheng and Lei Hu, two Elders from the Golden Crow Manor, soon arrived together.

Following them were three Stewards of the Manor, including Sun Guangyi.

"Elder Shi, Elder Lei, we've been waiting for your arrival! How is the situation on the Manor's side?"

Seeing the arrival of Shi Cheng, Lei Hu, and the other five high-ranking officials, who had been under tremendous pressure and worried about not being able to hold out at this last line of defense, Yu Huang finally breathed a sigh of relief.

Since the discovery of the Essence Stone Vein in the Eternal Death Zone, the Golden Crow Manor's leadership was divided in two: some remained to protect the Manor, while others guarded the entrance to the Essence Stone Vein. With the division of strength, the defenses on both sides weakened slightly.

Now that the three Great Elders and five Stewards of the Golden Crow Manor have gathered at the entrance to the Essence Stone Vein, the defensive strength has increased considerably, and the chances of holding this last line of defense at the fortress have greatly increased.

What Yu Huang did not expect was that Shi Cheng and Lei Hu just gave him a quick nod in greeting, disregarding small talk, and quickly walked up to Fang Bai, greeting him with an almost humble attitude and addressing him as "Senior Fang."

Hearing the title "Senior Fang," Yu Huang's mind buzzed, and he immediately understood that everything Xia Chenyu had said before was no lie.

For the Elders of Golden Crow Manor to address someone as "Senior," that person must possess strength and status on par with Huang Canghai. The demeanor of Shi Cheng and Lei Hu towards Fang Bai was enough to prove this point.

"Elder Yu, now may I enter the underground Essence Stone Vein to take a look?"

After chatting with Shi Cheng and Lei Hu for a few moments, Fang Bai said to Yu Huang with a smile.

"Of course! Previously stopping Senior Fang from entering was merely my duty as a junior; I hope Senior Fang will not hold it against me!"

As a martial artist who has lived past a hundred years like Yu Huang, and having been tempered throughout nearly a century, all rough edges had been smoothed out. In handling matters, he could be both firm and flexible, so upon confirming Fang Bai's strength, Yu Huang's face assumed a respectful smile, treating Fang Bai with even more courtesy than Shi Cheng and Lei Hu.

Furthermore, according to the agreement negotiated between Golden Manor and Fang Bai, after driving out the tens of thousands of martial artists from the Martial Artists Alliance, Fang Bai would own half of

the shares of the essence stone vein, essentially becoming half-owner of the mine, and naturally having the right to enter and inspect it.

"Chenyu, accompany Senior Fang down for a look. We'll wait here," Shi Cheng said with a smile.

From the moment the Essence Stone Vein was discovered, the high-ranking officials of the Golden Crow Manor had ventured down to inspect it countless times, having long passed the stage of excitement.

Furthermore, Fang Bai and Xia Chenyu were martial Dao partners; it was fitting for them to enter the Essence Stone Vein together to have some private conversation. It was inappropriate for others to accompany them.

Thus, Shi Cheng and the others prudently chose to wait above the fortress, also to help the other Golden Crow Manor disciples in preparing to defend against any invaders.

As Fang Bai and Xia Chenyu entered the entrance to the Essence Stone Vein, on the opposite side of the buffer zone, tens of thousands of martial artists, under the instigation of a few powerful individuals, began to assemble their respective alliances, preparing to launch a massive attack to overthrow the Golden Crow Manor's disciples guarding the entrance and seize control of the Essence Stone Vein.

Chapter 1295: Entering the Underground Essence Stone Vein

"Such dense Fire Primordial Qi! Such intense heat!"

Standing at the entrance of the Essence Stone Mine, Fang Bai and Xia Chenyu both felt as if they were in the middle of Huo Hai, sensing the continuous flow of Fire Primordial Qi emanating from the entrance.

If the average Fire System Martial Artist, with a cultivation below the Universe Level, couldn't bear such extreme heat and had to retreat from afar; otherwise, there was a possibility of being burned by the Fire Primordial Qi.

As for Fang Bai who possessed the Chaos True Body and Xia Chenyu with the Innate Fire Spirit Root, not only were they unafraid of this ordinary Fire Primordial Qi, but they were also overjoyed and extremely excited to be amidst it.

This underground Flame Elemental Stone Vein contained an astonishing reserve of high-grade stones, nurtured by a cluster of Spiritual Fire from the core of the Eternal Death Zone, buried beneath it for countless eons.

The Fire Primordial Qi stored within those Fire Elemental Stones, released through the mine's entrance, permeated the space within a hundred-zhang radius without dissipating, making the purity and density of the Fire Primordial Qi in this area far exceed that of other regions, with a temperature several times higher as well.

Therefore, unless one's strength reached above the Universe Level Realm, or one possessed the Innate Fire Spirit Root, it was impossible to draw near to the entrance of the Essence Stone Vein, let alone enter through the entrance into the mine.

For other Martial Artists, the enveloping Fire Primordial Qi around the mine's entrance would eventually devour them, snatching away their lives.

However, for Fang Bai and Xia Chenyu, this Fire Primordial Qi was an excellent resource for cultivation.

"Fang Bai, how about... we sit cross-legged here and cultivate for a few days?"

Xia Chenyu, feeling like she was bathing in a warm spring with the Fire Primordial Qi bringing her whole body comfort, was radiant and her beautiful eyes shone brightly with joy and excitement.

With Fang Bai possessing the Chaos True Body and Xia Chenyu the Innate Fire Spirit Root, the Fire Primordial Qi that makes other Martial Artists step back poses no threat to them at all, instead offering numerous benefits, making it an excellent cultivation ground.

Indeed, when they approached the mine's entrance, the ball of Chaos Origin Energy within Fang Bai's Qi Sea had already started to spin rapidly on its own, its powerful suction force turned his body like a giant whale drawing in water, madly absorbing the Fire Primordial Qi around him.

In comparison, Xia Chenyu, who had practiced the Martial Arts Techniques passed down by Fang Bai, had a ball of Fire Primordial Qi formed in her Qi Sea, and her body could also autonomously absorb the

Fire Primordial Qi between heaven and earth, but when compared to Fang Bai's whale-like intake, it was less significant.

If they were to sit cross-legged here, concentrating their minds and fully operating their Cultivation Technique, Xia Chenyu's speed of absorbing Fire Primordial Qi would increase a lot, which is why she suggested cultivating at the entrance of the Essence Stone Vein.

"If we cultivate here, Elder Shi and the senior members of the Golden Crow Manor would see us and explode with fury!"

Fang Bai turned his head and glanced at Shi Cheng and others who were gazing over from a kilometer away, uttering in a low voice with a laugh.

Although Shi Cheng and others were Universe Level Experts, possessing sharp senses, they were still a kilometer away, and with Fang Bai's voice being low alongside the layers of Fire Primordial Qi acting as a barrier, the two's conversation fell on deaf ears to them.

Xia Chenyu slightly furrowed her brows and sighed softly, "The Fire Primordial Qi here is so pure and dense, it's the best I have ever seen. I feel that... if I could focus on cultivation here for a few days, my Cultivation Level would surely achieve a breakthrough..."

"Alright, Chenyu, don't feel it's a pity. Cultivating here is actually a waste of time! Come with me..."

Fang Bai gave a "hehe" chuckle, took hold of Xia Chenyu's hand, and stepped into the entrance of the Essence Stone Mine.

This was a secluded passageway, over one person tall and a zhang wide. At the end of the passageway was a dazzling crimson light, as though the fires of hell were burning fiercely. Fang Bai and Xia Chenyu knew that it was the light emitted by the copious Fire Elemental Stones.

"It's... a bit hot in here!"

Within the corridor, the purity and richness of the Fire Primordial Qi exceeded that of the entrance by a considerable margin. Even Xia Chenyu, who possessed an Innate Fire Spirit Root, felt somewhat overheated and had to circulate the Fire-based Technique "Redflame True Fire Technique" imparted by Fang Bai to feel somewhat relieved.

"At the end of the passage should be a part of the Essence Stone Vein, and it will be much hotter there than here. But you have an Innate Fire Spirit Root, so such high temperatures won't bother you!"

Fang Bai's gaze was intense as he looked towards the end of the passage where flames glowed, holding hands with Xia Chenyu, they moved forward together.

At this moment, Fang Bai's heart was not fixated on the Essence Stone Vein ahead but had already flown to the core area of the Eternal Death Zone, as if he saw a cluster of Spiritual Fire burning tenaciously there, never extinguished for millions of years.

Spiritual Fire is one of the most renowned flames in the three thousand grand worlds of the Cultivation World, possessing terrifying destructive power. In the places where these flames exist, they could annihilate all living beings within a thousand miles. It is enough to change the color of the Martial Artist world in conversation, and it also attracts Fire System experts like moths to a flame.

Fang Bai's true purpose in coming to the Eternal Death Zone, apart from driving out the Martial Artists Alliance and splitting half of the Fire Elemental Stones with Golden Crow Manor, was to obtain that cluster of Spiritual Fire that nurtured the Flame Elemental Stone Vein within a thousand miles.

It could be said that Spiritual Fire is the mother of Fire Elemental Stones, with incredibly high value beyond estimation. Not to mention half of the Flame Elemental Stone Vein, even a whole vein cannot be compared with a single cluster of Spiritual Fire.

Just how terrifying the Spiritual Fire is, perhaps only Fang Bai knows in this world.

Fang Bai also had self-awareness, with his current Cultivation Level, getting close to the Spiritual Fire was not easy, and acquiring it was even more difficult.

The only plan for now is to use the obtained half of the Fire Elemental Stones to improve his realm and Cultivation Level. The higher the realm and Cultivation Level, the greater the hope of obtaining the Spiritual Fire.

Spiritual Fire is extremely beneficial for Fire System Martial Artists, but the slightest carelessness could result in self-immolation. Therefore, Fang Bai temporarily did not tell Xia Chenyu about the Spiritual Fire, so as not to worry her.

The passage leading to the underground Essence Stone Mine was nearly a kilometer long, and was not flat but a very steep slope. By the time they reached the end, they suddenly encountered a huge pit.

"My gosh! So many Fire Elemental Stones..."

Xia Chenyu stood on the edge of the pit and looked down, only to see hundreds of meters deep all around the pit, filled with Fire Elemental Stones exuding dense Fire Primordial Qi and red light. They were the size of eggs, stacked upon each other, dazzling to behold.

When Xia Chenyu was in Golden Crow Manor, she had seen mountains of Fire Elemental Stones but compared to what was in front of her, that was nothing. And what was in front of her was just the tip of the iceberg of this Flame Elemental Stone Vein.

"Let's go down!"

Fang Bai said, and taking hold of Xia Chenyu, who was still immersed in amazement, leapt into the hundreds of meters deep pit.

"Ah!"

Xia Chenyu was taken by surprise, feeling her body plummet suddenly, she got a big fright, and amidst her alarm, her hands gripped tightly around Fang Bai's arm.

(PS: I've created a reader Q group, group number: 720727108.

Or add my WeChat: ahwl1979, then I will pull you into the WeChat reader group.

Warmly welcome readers of the book to join the group to chat, urge me to write, and help me shake off the torment of laziness!)

Chapter 1296: Don't Make Me Make a Mistake!

Xia Chenyu's cultivation level is merely at the early stages of the Cosmic Level. Although she also has the ability to challenge those above her level, she is not like Fang Bai, who can surpass an entire realm to challenge an opponent, but can only contend against high-rank Cosmic Level powerhouses.

The deep pit before her eyes is several hundred meters in vertical depth. Xia Chenyu took the leap herself, but without the aid of the protruding Fire Elemental Stones around the edges of the surrounding cliffs, she would likely have been injured from the fall. Therefore, in the instant that Fang Bai pulled her to jump down, she couldn't help but feel a surge of fear.

Fortunately, soon after the two of them jumped down, their rapid descent gradually slowed, and finally, they landed on the ground as lightly as if stepping on clouds.

In the deep pit hundreds of meters underground, surrounded by countless high-quality Fire Elemental Stones, one could see scorching waves of heat rolling over, the astonishingly high temperature made Xia Chenyu, who had just landed, almost unable to breathe. Her clothes were instantly soaked with sweat, clinging to her curvaceous body, outlining alluring curves that were beyond words.

"Chenyu, your figure has gotten even better..."

Fang Bai released Xia Chenyu, took a few steps back, and his gaze lingered on her, clicking his tongue in admiration.

Among the women Fang Bai knew, Linghu Baimi was born naturally soft and alluring, and she also practiced seductive techniques. Every smile and every glance was full of charm, making her the one who could turn men upside down and bewitch them the most.

And Xia Chenyu, who had once been a beautiful CEO in the Secular World, exuding a myriad of styles and daring in both love and hate. In her interactions with Fang Bai, she was always the one to take the

initiative, repeatedly seducing Fang Bai without a hint of shyness, a boldness not even Linghu Baimi could match.

"For those who practice Martial Dao, it's natural to have a good figure. But this body is soft and supple; it must feel even better to the touch! Do you want to feel it?"

Seeing Fang Bai appraising her body, Xia Chenyu did not try to cover up. Instead, she giggled and took a step closer to Fang Bai, her chest prominently thrust forward, showing off to Fang Bai.

The temperature at the bottom of the deep pit had reached the limit of Xia Chenyu's endurance. She had to fully circulate the "Redflame True Fire Technique" to avoid being burned by the surrounding Fire Primordial Qi. While talking to Fang Bai, she couldn't help but lift her slender jade arms several times to wipe the sweat flowing down her cheeks.

Her clothes were already soaked through, clinging tightly to her skin. As she lifted her arms to wipe her sweat, the size and beautiful curves of her bosom were even more accentuated, unspeakably seductive.

Fang Bai's gaze struggled to move away from Xia Chenyu, he sighed, and said with a bitter smile, "Chenyu, don't make me make a mistake, or else it will harm you... You know how important a woman's Primordial Yin Physique is before breaking through to the Innate Realm. I don't want to make your path in Martial Dao even more difficult... Hmm, although I can't try the touch for now, it does look like it would be very nice..."

Xia Chenyu seemed to have anticipated Fang Bai's reaction, her mouth curled slightly, and then she said with a smile, "I know you wouldn't dare, that's why I deliberately teased you. Ah... it's so hot!"

She walked away from Fang Bai, enduring the relentless scorching heat that attacked her body, moving around in the deep pit with a hundred zhang in radius, examining the countless Fire Elemental Stones around her.

"Actually, there's nothing much to see here, it's just more high-quality Fire Elemental Stones... Fang Bai, let's go up? Let me catch my breath... I feel like I'm almost suffocating. I've decided, after leaving here, I will cultivate at the entrance of the Essence Stone Vein. I can withstand the heat of the Fire Primordial Qi there, otherwise it's really unbearable, I'm about to be roasted!"

After walking around the perimeter of the deep pit, Xia Chenyu's initial delight and excitement decreased significantly, and she began to urge Fang Bai.

"Cultivating here will give the best effect!"

Fang Bai leaped onto a protruding Essence Stone, sat down cross-legged, and beckoned to Xia Chenyu, pointing to a space in front of him, "Come, let's cultivate together. I will give you a helping hand and, if all goes well, you should be able to break through to the next level by dawn..."

Xia Chenyu's body was brimming with Fire Primordial Qi at this moment, surging and throbbing as she moved, a clear harbinger of advancement. What she lacked was a catalyst, and with Fang Bai and the dense Fire Primordial Qi surrounding her, she had two powerful boosts. Thus, it was very possible for Xia Chenyu to break through her current Cultivation Level constraints and ascend to a higher peak of the Martial Dao.

After leaping into the pit, Xia Chenyu knew that the Fire Primordial Qi around her was overwhelmingly potent and feared that absorbing it too quickly would harm her meridians and Qi Sea. Therefore, she dared not let her body absorb Fire Primordial Qi on its own, unaware that with Fang Bai by her side, such concerns were entirely unnecessary.

In contrast to Xia Chenyu, who worried about "playing with fire and getting burned," Fang Bai had no such reservations. Upon landing at the bottom of the pit, he began to greedily and wildly absorb Fire Primordial Qi to fill his meridians and Qi Sea, which were like a bottomless abyss.

Xia Chenyu possessed only one Innate Fire Spirit Root, while Fang Bai, as the possessor of a Chaos True Body with all seven Innate Spiritual Roots, faced a difficulty seven times greater than hers in advancing.

In other words, Fang Bai could absorb at least seven times more Fire Primordial Qi into his body than Xia Chenyu could, possibly using the robust and extensive Fire Primordial Qi as an opportunity to make a breakthrough and advance.

Fang Bai's current Cultivation Level was equivalent to perfection at the Cosmic Level. If he could advance again, he would step into the Universe Level Realm. With his extraordinary ability to challenge those beyond his level, there would be no rivals beneath the Innate state.

"Practicing here, how many realms could I breakthrough? Can I catch up with you?"

As Xia Chenyu spoke, her waist twisted, and her figure shifted, already sitting before Fang Bai.

"You first enter the Cultivation State. I'll handle everything else for you!"

Fang Bai extended his left palm flatly and lightly pressed it against Xia Chenyu's back.

Knowing that cultivation was no trivial matter and required utmost seriousness and caution, Xia Chenyu stopped talking, closed her eyes gently, placed her hands, one above the other, in front of her Qi Sea, and began to Circulate her Cultivation Technique, driving her True Yuan and swiftly entering a selfless state of cultivation.

A thread of Fire Primordial Qi, separated from the mass of Chaos Origin Energy within Fang Bai's Qi Sea, slowly transferred from Fang Bai's palm into Xia Chenyu's body, wandering on its own through her meridians.

The Fire Primordial Qi from Fang Bai's Qi Sea was pure and potent, containing immense energy. As it moved through Xia Chenyu's meridians, thousands upon thousands of strands of Fire Primordial Qi in her meridians, like countless streams flowing into the sea, followed and clustered around that thread of Fire Primordial Qi. They constantly bombarded, expanded, and solidified her meridians.

During this process, Xia Chenyu's body, like Fang Bai's, crazily absorbed the surrounding Fire Primordial Qi to empower the internal Fire Primordial Qi in bombarding her meridians.

Fang Bai and Xia Chenyu, unabashedly simultaneously absorbed the surrounding Fire Primordial Qi, akin to long-parched land soaking up rainwater.

Tens of thousands of high-quality Fire Elemental Stones within a ten-zhang radius around the pit had their Fire Primordial Qi unceasingly drained by Fang Bai and Xia Chenyu. The once vivid red essence stones gradually turned greyish-white, eventually crumbling into dust.

In the midst of this pile of dust on the north side of the pit, a mummified corpse in a seated position was revealed. When Fang Bai and Xia Chenyu almost simultaneously exited their Cultivation State at dawn, the first thing they saw was the corpse, and they were greatly surprised.

Chapter 1297: The Body of an Unidentified Innate Expert

Several hundreds of meters below the Eternal Death Zone, in the Essence Stone Mine, the sudden appearance of a mummified corpse before Fang Bai and Xia Chenyu felt utterly eerie.

Luckily, both were skilled and courageous Martial Artists, not frightened by the mummy, yet they couldn't imagine how this corpse was buried in the Essence Stone Mine below their feet or how it remained so remarkably preserved.

It should be noted, the Fire Elemental Stones of the underground Essence Stone Vein were countless, endlessly emitting scorching Fire Primordial Qi. Over the years, let alone the flesh of a fallen Martial Artist, even a body as hard as steel would have likely melted away; yet this mummy was intact, not a single piece of its clothing torn, making it incomprehensible and unbelievable.

With deep questions, Fang Bai and Xia Chenyu, disregarding their joy from their recent breakthrough, glanced at each other, stood up, and with a sweep of their palms, scattered the Essence Stone dust around the mummy, and cautiously stepped forward.

"Who knows why this Martial Artist died here, but he must have been a very handsome man in life."

Xia Chenyu encircled the mummy and closely examined it, thereafter drawing her conclusion.

Although the skin of the mummy was shriveled and dry, making it difficult to discern its true age, the features that remained fairly recognizable indicated that he must have been extraordinary in appearance during his lifetime.

"Being handsome is just one aspect. The strength he possessed in life was also exceedingly formidable... formidable enough to surpass the vast majority of Martial Artists in this world..."

Fang Bai also observed the mummy, murmuring.

Xia Chenyu, hearing the excitement in Fang Bai's voice, turned her head to look at him, seeing a strange gleam in his eyes, curiously said, "You seem quite interested in this mummy?"

Fang Bai, touching his chin, said, "An Innate Expert with a Fire Spirit Root, standing atop the Martial Artists of this world, and also a High Rank Array Master... Aren't you interested?"

"Ah?"

Xia Chenyu was momentarily stunned, then, regaining her senses, excitedly pointed at the mummy and said, "You... you mean this mummy had the same Innate Fire Spirit Root as me? And was an Innate Realm expert? Moreover, a High Rank Array Master?"

Fang Bai nodded and said, "Exactly."

Xia Chenyu took a deep breath, suppressing her excitement, furrowed her brow and said, "But he must have been dead for many years, how did you deduce all this?"

Fang Bai glanced at the mummy, said, "Innate Experts possess robust bodies, often referred to as the 'Vajra Indestructible Body', which pertains to Innate Experts. But just the Vajra Indestructible Body is not enough to withstand the long-term assault of Fire Primordial Qi underground; eventually, even his body would disintegrate. Only a sturdy body combined with the Fire Spirit Root closely aligned with Fire Primordial Qi, along with the protective Force of Defensive Arrays, enabled his body to remain intact even post-mortem."

Xia Chenyu listens to Fang Bai's analysis, nodding in agreement, sighed, "That makes sense! From your explanation, he indeed was an extraordinarily rare Martial Dao Genius, it's unexpected that he met his demise here."

Fang Bai continued, "The entrance to this Essence Stone Mine might have been excavated by him. He came here, presumably for personal cultivation. A mishap during cultivation resulted in severe injuries, with death looming. He used a large amount of Fire Elemental Stones to seal himself in a confined space, setting up Defensive Arrays around him to prevent external forces from destroying his body after death... Of course, this is just my conjecture, the specifics are unknown to anyone."

Xia Chenyu's eyes landed on the Spatial Ring worn on the mummy's finger, her eyes shining, she said, "As an Innate Expert, there must be many treasures inside his Spatial Ring, right?"

"Don't touch!"

Seeing her reaching to remove the Spatial Ring from the mummy's finger, Fang Bai quickly pulled her back, smiling wryly, "This was an Innate Expert, before his demise, he surely set up some essential measures for self-protection, to guard his body from being damaged. I bet, had you touched his Spatial Ring just now, you'd already be dead! I wouldn't have been able to protect you in time!"

Xia Chenyu, startled, said, "You mean... this fellow might have been carrying powerful Spiritual Artifacts for both offense and defense?"

Fang Bai replied, "How could an Innate Expert be without several powerful Spiritual Artifacts. Let's step back and find out."

He dragged Xia Chenyu back several zhangs away from the dried corpse, then swiftly set up a miniature defensive array around them to protect both himself and Xia Chenyu. Only then did he shake his hand and shoot out an Essence Stone towards the finger of the dried corpse that wore the Space Ring.

Xia Chenyu's eye widened in shock as she watched the Essence Stone whistling through the air toward the dried corpse, her expression revealing her nervousness.

Whoosh!

The Essence Stone cast by Fang Bai, with a piercing sharp whistling, crossed the space of several zhangs in an instant and crashed into the Space Ring on the finger of the dried corpse.

Just as the Essence Stone was about to touch the Space Ring, the ring suddenly flared up with bright scarlet light, and two fiery Qi blades crossed into a crucifix shape burst from within the ring, slashing ferociously towards the spot where Fang Bai and Xia Chenyu were standing.

Whoosh!

Whoosh!

The two incomparably sharp scarlet blades tore through the space in front of Fang Bai and Xia Chenyu, slashing onto the miniature defensive array set up by Fang Bai with a speed several times greater than that of the Essence Stone he had thrown.

Boom!

Amid a thunderous sound, the defensive array set up by Fang Bai vibrated violently, then unexpectedly collapsed.

The scattering fire Qi surged like roaring rapids, encompassing the entire crater space, and instantly the temperature within the space shot up significantly.

Fang Bai had not expected the murderous intent hidden within the Spatial Ring to be so powerful that it not only instantly shattered his defensive array but also continued, with undiminished force, slashing towards them, which greatly startled him.

Fortunately, having experienced numerous battles in his past and current life, Fang Bai, faced with the strongest attack since his rebirth, while shocked, didn't panic and hastily reached out his right hand where the Blood-Drinking Mad Blade appeared in a flash of dark light.

"Soul Severing! Silence Annihilation!"

Amid a fierce shout, Fang Bai's right arm swung fiercely, unleashing the two strongest moves from the Mad Blade's triple attacks.

"Woo..."

The Blood-Drinking Mad Blade let out a deep mournful sound as two blood-colored blades, filled with Fang Bai's full force, met the lightning-speed blades that slashed towards them.

Boom...

As the two blade lights collided with the two blade intents, they exploded in a huge roar, causing Xia Chenyu's ears to ring and her head to reel.

Crash...

The surrounding Fire Elemental Stones of the deep pit collapsed and fell in chunks due to the intense shockwaves produced by the collision of the blade lights and blade intents.

Fortunately, the structure of the Essence Stone at the bottom of the pit was dense and the space sufficiently sturdy; otherwise, had the deep pit collapsed, they could have been buried hundreds of meters under numerous Fire Elemental Stones, and that would have been a huge problem.

Chapter 1298: Space Ring, Black Jade Pendant

"Huff..."

With the help of the Defensive Array and the Blood-Drinking Mad Blade, Fang Bai and Xia Chenyu finally neutralized the murderous intent from the Spatial Ring and simultaneously sighed in relief.

"So you get scared too, huh!"

Xia Chenyu stood behind Fang Bai, noting his sweat-soaked back and couldn't help but giggle softly, stepping closer and wrapping her arms around him, her tender body pressing gently against his back.

"Almost lost my life there, how could I not be scared? Now you see how terrifying Innate Experts can be, don't you?"

Fang Bai wiped the sweat beads on his forehead, sighing inwardly.

In his past life, such attacks were mere tickles to him, but now they posed fatal threats, making him break out in a cold sweat.

"Mm, I understand. Fang Bai, you saved my life again, how about I repay you with my body?"

Xia Chenyu said seductively, tightening her embrace around Fang Bai, as if trying to meld herself into his body.

"Hey, Chenyu, can you please stop moving like that? I really don't want your repayment right now... Humph, just give up on that thought! My Dao heart is steadfast, and I won't be tempted by you!"

Feeling the tender and soft body behind him pressing closer and deliberately rubbing against him, Fang Bai knew that this woman was definitely trying to seduce him again.

If Fang Bai had cultivated the Heartless Dao in his past life, becoming cold-hearted and indifferent to women as if they were mere skeletons, then even if Xia Chenyu were beautiful, he would have ignored her.

However, it just so happened that Fang Bai had cultivated the Passionate Dao in his past life, known across the Immortal Realm as the Passionate Immortal Emperor, with many beloved ladies by his side, envied by others.

Xia Chenyu was a woman Fang Bai liked and connected with spiritually. If Fang Bai's Dao heart wasn't steadfast, he would have already broken her Primordial Yin Physique under her repeated seductions, benefiting immensely but possibly ruining Xia Chenyu's Martial Dao prospects.

Fang Bai was not a selfish person, and naturally would not do such a thing. At least until Xia Chenyu reached the Innate Realm, no matter how she tried to seduce him, he would maintain his Dao heart and resist forcefully.

Meanwhile, Xia Chenyu had long been deeply in love with Fang Bai, and being by his side made her content. As for matters of Martial Dao, she did not take them too seriously.

Furthermore, Xia Chenyu knew that Fang Bai was surrounded by beauties, each not inferior to her. If she could establish a closer relationship with him before others, she saw it as winning against them, hence she took a proactive approach towards Fang Bai.

However, Xia Chenyu also knew that Fang Bai would not easily accept her, yet she persisted happily because she enjoyed seeing Fang Bai clearly affected by her, yet having to forcibly resist.

"Alright, Chenyu, stop messing around for now. Let's think about how to get that Spatial Ring!"

Fang Bai finally managed to restrain the restlessness stirred by Xia Chenyu within his heart, redirecting his attention back to the finger of the corpse wearing the Spatial Ring.

Xia Chenyu then released her arms and stood by Fang Bai's side, recalling the fierce murderous intent burst from the Spatial Ring, she spoke with lingering fear: "Maybe... let's just forget it? Who knows how much terrifying murderous intent is hidden in that Spatial Ring, it's not worth losing our lives over."

Fang Bai said, "Forget about it? That's not acceptable! Any Martial Artist in this world would go crazy for an Innate Expert's relic. Since it has come into our path, we cannot miss it."

"But..."

Xia Chenyu hesitated.

"Don't worry, we'll stand even further back and continue probing with Essence Stones! I refuse to believe that the murderous intent stored in that Spatial Ring could outmatch the Essence Stones on me."

Fang Bai took Xia Chenyu's hand and retreated further away from the corpse, still clutching the Blood-Drinking Mad Blade, ready to counter any oncoming murderous intents.

Whoosh!

Whoosh!

Whoosh!

Three Essence Stones were consecutively thrown by Fang Bai, still targeting the Spatial Ring on the finger of the corpse.

As expected, the three Essence Stones triggered three strong killing intents again, causing considerable trouble for both of them.

Fortunately, this time Fang Bai was mentally prepared and had a foolproof strategy, narrowly avoiding the backlash from the three killing intents.

Fang Bai persisted and continued to throw Essence Stones. After the ninth Essence Stone, no new killing intents emerged from the Spatial Ring on the corpse.

"Now, you can go get that Spatial Ring."

Fang Bai put away the Blood-Drinking Mad Blade, took a deep breath, and smiled at Xia Chenyu.

Xia Chenyu grunted, approached the corpse with full alertness, carefully took off the Spatial Ring, and then returned to Fang Bai's side.

"Huh? Why can't it be opened? This Spatial Ring is strange!"

Xia Chenyu tried to infuse a strand of True Yuan into the Spatial Ring, but found that she couldn't open its space and see what was stored inside.

"Let me have a look."

Fang Bai took the Spatial Ring from Xia Chenyu, scanned it with his Divine Sense, and smiled, "This Innate Expert was an Array Master; naturally, his Spatial Ring is different from ordinary ones."

Xia Chenyu said, "Are you saying... there's a Formation engraved on this Spatial Ring?"

Fang Bai nodded, rubbing his finger over the Spatial Ring a few times, erasing the Formation engraved on it, then tossed it back to Xia Chenyu, saying, "Try opening it now; it should work."

"Hmm, I wonder what treasures lie inside the Spatial Ring of an Innate Expert... I'm really looking forward to it!"

Xia Chenyu happily took the Spatial Ring, infused a strand of True Yuan into it again, and finally saw the items piled up inside. She then stood there with her mouth agape as if she had swallowed an egg.

"My goodness... this Spatial Ring is so huge! There are so many cultivation resources inside! Fang Bai, we're rich!"

Regaining her composure, Xia Chenyu lost all restraint of a lady and cheered joyfully like a happy young girl.

Meanwhile, Fang Bai's attention had already shifted from the Spatial Ring to a jade pendant hanging around the corpse's neck.

The jade pendant, the size of a pigeon egg, looked like a falling black droplet strung with a black silk thread, its surface shrouded with a faint black halo.

The black droplet jade pendant appeared ordinary at a glance, but when Fang Bai tried to probe inside it with his Divine Sense, he felt a sharp pain in his head as if stabbed by a steel needle, taken aback, he immediately retracted his released Divine Sense.

"Fang Bai, what's wrong?"

Seeing Fang Bai suddenly showing a pained expression, Xia Chenyu asked with concern.

"I'm fine..."

Fang Bai shook his head, spread his right hand, and made a grabbing motion towards the jade pendant hanging from the corpse's neck.

Chapter 1299: Tears of a Lover

Fang Bai, with a grasp and draw of his palm, generated a strong suction that bound the black threads of the black jade pendant. With a "pop," the threads snapped, and along with the black jade pendant, it fell into Fang Bai's hand.

"This pendant is really pretty!"

Xia Chenyu approached Fang Bai and saw the black jade pendant in his hand, which was crystal clear and emitted a soft black glow, like a night elf, and she felt an indescribable fondness for it.

Fang Bai sat down cross-legged, lifted the black jade pendant with his left hand to the space between his eyebrows, closed his eyes slightly, and seemed like an old monk entering meditation, motionless.

Seeing his serious and solemn expression, Xia Chenyu did not understand what was happening and did not dare to disturb him with her voice.

After a long while, Fang Bai finally opened his eyes and looked at the black jade pendant before him. His expression changed unpredictably and was indescribably strange.

"Fang Bai, are you... are you okay?"

Xia Chenyu stretched out her hand and waved it in front of Fang Bai's eyes.

Fang Bai took a deep breath and said, "I'm fine."

He glanced at Xia Chenyu and asked with a smile, "Do you really like this pendant?"

Xia Chenyu nodded and said, "Mhm, I really do."

Fang Bai smiled bitterly and said, "If it were an ordinary pendant, I would have given it to you. But this 'Lover's Tear' is truly extraordinary. If you wear it, it might bring big trouble. Better if I keep it for now."

"Lover's Tear?"

Xia Chenyu was stunned and pointed at the black jade pendant in Fang Bai's hand, saying, "Are you talking about this pendant?"

Fang Bai nodded and said, "Yes. This pendant is indeed called 'Lover's Tear'!"

Xia Chenyu exclaimed in surprise, "How do you know that?"

Fang Bai gestured towards the mummified corpse and mysteriously said, "Not only do I know the name of this pendant, but I also know the identity of this person."

Xia Chenyu became more curious and clung to Fang Bai's arm, using a coquettish voice, "Fang Bai, stop teasing, tell me! Otherwise, I'll really start flirting with you!"

Fearing that she might start teasing him again and disturb his cultivation heart, Fang Bai hurriedly said, "Alright alright... I'll tell you... stop messing around... um, this mummified corpse is named Li Chenzhou. In life, he was an expert of the Innate Realm at the level of perfection..."

Xia Chenyu, upon hearing the words "expert at the perfection level of the Innate Realm," couldn't help but stare wide-eyed and speechless, her face full of shock.

If Universe Level Experts are considered the top echelon of the True Martial Realm, then Innate Experts surpass Universe Level Experts as even more powerful beings, with the perfection level of the Innate Realm representing the ultimate pinnacle of the billions of Martial Artists in the entire True Martial Realm.

To Xia Chenyu, ordinary Innate Experts existed only in rumors; she had never had the fortune to meet one. Experts at the perfection level of the Innate Realm were like the stars in the sky, distant and unattainable.

Hearing Fang Bai say that the mummy before them was an expert at the perfection level of the Innate Realm, Xia Chenyu felt a sense of unreality.

Fang Bai continued, "After a Martial Artist's Cultivation Level reaches the Innate Realm, they will give birth to Divine Sense. Divine Sense has many marvelous uses, one of which is the ability to store certain information from the brain of the Martial Artist within it, preserving it for a long time..."

Xia Chenyu, upon hearing this, vaguely understood something but did not interrupt Fang Bai, instead listening intently.

"This Li Chenzhou, aware that his life was coming to an end, condensed a strand of his Divine Sense into this 'Lover's Tear,' and also etched a miniature sealing Formation on it to prevent the Divine Sense from dissipating. Just now I used my Divine Sense to penetrate this 'Lover's Tear' and learned of some of Li Chenzhou's matters from the sealed Divine Sense..."

At this point, Fang Bai seemed to think of something and let out a long sigh, "Speaking of which... Li Chenzhou, though he was unrivaled in strength and without match in his lifetime, was harmed by love, a man of deep affection and a tragic fate. If you think about it, there is actually a roundabout connection between him and me!"

Xia Chenyu, upon hearing this, suddenly widened her eyes in surprise, looking back and forth between Fang Bai and the mummy, unable to connect the two.

"This matter is a bit long to tell..."

Fang Bai organized his thoughts, closed his eyes to recall for a moment, and then slowly began to speak, "When I was in the Secular World, I mentioned Zhuge Dingtian to you, do you remember?"

Xia Chenyu said: "Mhm, I remember. Zhuge Dingtian was a Loose Cultivator Innate Expert from the True Martial Realm who unfortunately perished in the Secular World. His grave was discovered jointly by you and the Fat Taoist Wu De! Oh, right, your Blood-Drinking Mad Blade also came from Zhuge Dingtian's grave, didn't it? And the Xuannv Sect disciple Zhuge Lian that you befriended in this True Martial Realm is Zhuge Dingtian's daughter..."

The matter of Zhuge Lian was brought up during a casual conversation between Fang Bai and Xia Chenyu while they were en route to the Eternal Death Zone. Xia Chenyu knew that Fang Bai had once promised in front of Zhuge Dingtian's remains to find his wife and daughter and take good care of them. Now his daughter Zhuge Lian has been found, but there was still no news of his wife Zhou Yuruo.

Fang Bai said: "Zhuge Dingtian's wife, Zhou Yuruo, is the daughter of Zhou Qingyan, the Palace Master of the Innate Sect Ruoshui Palace, and this Li Chenzhou is Zhou Qingyan's man, which means he's also Zhou Yuruo's biological father..."

Xia Chenyu frowned and said: "Wait a second, this relationship is a bit confusing... Let me think... Hmm, Zhuge Lian is the daughter of Zhuge Dingtian and Zhou Yuruo, Zhou Yuruo is the daughter of the Ruoshui Palace Master Zhou Qingyan, and Li Chenzhou was Zhou Qingyan's man... Doesn't this mean Zhuge Lian is the granddaughter of Zhou Qingyan and this Li Chenzhou? But what's strange is, if Zhou Yuruo is Li Chenzhou's daughter, why doesn't she carry the Li surname, but took her mother's surname instead? Fang Bai, does the Divine Sense left by Li Chenzhou contain any information about this?"

Fang Bai nodded and said: "According to the information within the Divine Sense, Li Chenzhou and Zhou Qingyan became Martial Dao partners, and their love was strong. This 'Lover's Tear' jade pendant was a token of affection that Zhou Qingyan gave to Li Chenzhou. In pursuit of a longer lifespan for both of them to remain together, Li Chenzhou later set out alone to search for the Teleportation Array into the Cultivation World, known as the 'Three Thousand Great Worlds'... that is, the Teleportation Array I mentioned to you, intending to continue the path of Martial Dao Cultivation."

"At that time, Zhou Qingyan was still a direct disciple of the Ruoshui Palace. After Li Chenzhou left, she stayed and waited bitterly within the Ruoshui Palace. Soon after, she discovered she was pregnant and later gave birth to Zhou Yuruo. Zhou Qingyan waited for decades; her status rose from direct disciple step by step, eventually inheriting the position of Palace Master. However, the Li Chenzhou she waited for so bitterly never returned, without any news."

"When Li Chenzhou left that year, he infused a strand of his Divine Sense into a jade token and handed it to Zhou Qingyan, telling her that as long as the jade token remained intact, it would mean that he was still alive. During the decades Zhou Qingyan waited for Li Chenzhou, seeing that the jade token never shattered, she assumed that Li Chenzhou was alive but unwilling to see her, probably heartless and had abandoned her. Love turned into hate, and she allowed her daughter to carry her own surname..."

Chapter 1300: Can You Save Him?

Xia Chenyu mused, "Based on what you've said, during the decades Zhou Qingyan patiently waited for Li Chenzhou, he must have returned to Ruoshui Palace. Otherwise, how could he have learned about his wife and daughter's circumstances?"

As she spoke, she glanced at Li Chenzhou's corpse with a look of disgust, and snorted, "If Li Chenzhou was alive and even returned to Ruoshui Palace, why then did he not see his wife and daughter for decades? Fang Bai, you just said that Li Chenzhou is a man of enduring love and bitter fate... If he was so affectionate, how could he do such a thing?"

Fang Bai sighed, "Actually... he had his difficulties..."

"What difficulties?"

"When Li Chenzhou left his wife and daughter to gain experience, it was to enhance his strength, then to assist his wife and daughter to also cultivate to the Innate realm of perfection, so that their whole family could aspire to enter the three thousand great worlds, possessing stronger strength and longer lifespans."

"Unfortunately, during his training, Li Chenzhou encountered a great calamity, stricken by a strange fire poison, and his strength was greatly damaged. When he returned quietly to Ruoshui Palace, he discovered that his wife, Zhou Qingyan, had become the Ruoshui Palace Master, and her cultivation level had already reached the Innate realm of perfection. The differences in their identities, status, and strength were enormous, no longer on the same level."

"This disparity made Li Chenzhou feel utterly ashamed. Moreover, Li Chenzhou knew that once one becomes the Ruoshui Palace Master, they must sever all emotional ties and cannot have any male companions in the Martial Dao for life. Furthermore, from the discussions among the disciples of Ruoshui Palace, Li Chenzhou learned that Zhou Qingyan, because of his perceived betrayal and heartlessness, had greatly changed her temperament to be ruthless and cold, indifferent and unfeeling, even brutally interfering in their daughter Zhou Yuruo's matters of the heart, leading to the daughter eloping with her lover, her whereabouts unknown..."

"Li Chenzhou thought that since his wife had thoroughly hated him, if he revealed himself suddenly, he would likely not survive. Therefore, he left Ruoshui Palace quietly again, deciding to travel across the True Martial Realm, seeking a way to restore his strength, while also looking for news of his daughter Zhou Yuruo... He felt that if he could find his daughter, by taking her to see his wife Zhou Qingyan,

explaining the reason and moving her with emotion, the family might still have the possibility of reuniting and reconciling. Just that he never expected..."

As Xia Chenyu listened up to this point, her face showed a sudden realization as she took over Fang Bai's words, "He never expected that after finding this Essence Stone Vein, while cultivating here, he accidentally suffered from Deviation and ultimately perished here... It seems I wronged Li Chenzhou earlier!"

Fang Bai smiled and said, "I said that Li Chenzhou had a bitter fate because, having finally returned to the Innate realm of perfection with the help of this Essence Stone Vein, he became complacent, attempted to break through to a higher realm, resulting in Deviation, and finally his demise."

Xia Chenyu said with emotion, "So, this is essentially a case of extreme joy turning to sorrow, isn't it? In this way, his wife Zhou Qingyan will never see him again, and her misunderstandings about him will only deepen! It's a pity that Zhou Yuruo doesn't know that she has lost her father, and Zhuge Lian doesn't know about her grandfather's passing..."

As she said this, with a smile that was not quite a smile, she looked at Fang Bai and added, "You're acquainted with Zhuge Lian, and now her grandfather has perished here, what do you plan to do?"

Fang Bai gave a wry smile, "Considering the tense standoff between Golden Crow Manor and the tens of thousands of strong members of the Martial Artists Alliance, with a great battle imminent, it is definitely not acceptable to leave the body here. Hmm, I plan to take Li Chenzhou's remains, find Zhuge Lian, and hand them over to her. After all, it's her grandfather, so it's up to her how to handle it!"

Taking a mummy to someone was something Xia Chenyu found extremely awkward, but since Fang Bai had made his decision, she wouldn't argue or object, silently nodding her head instead.

Although Fang Bai had a Spatial Spirit Device, it was only an ordinary Spiritual Artifact, with a space that could only store objects with the Five Elements Attribute of metal, wood, water, fire, and earth. As for all living beings in the world, whether alive or dead, they could not be stored within it, unless it was an Immortal Ring or Divine Ring whose space had already evolved the Yin Yang Five Elements, with natural phenomena such as wind, thunder, rain, and snow, and able to sustain all things.

Li Chenzhou's deceased physical body could not be placed inside the Space Ring, so it had to be taken away directly.

Fang Bai reached out with his right hand, grasping the left arm of Li Chenzhou's body, ready to first take him out of this deep pit beneath the ground, find a proper place to store him, and then, after things were settled here, take him to find Zhuge Lian.

Fang Bai had no idea where Zhuge Lian currently was, so he decided to first visit the Huaxia Sect to see if Zhuge Lian was there. If not, he would meet with friends and family from the secular world before continuing the search for Zhuge Lian.

As Fang Bai reached out with his right hand to grab the left arm of Li Chenzhou's corpse, he was about to lift it when his body suddenly trembled lightly and his eyes widened, revealing an expression of disbelief.

"Fang Bai, what's wrong?"

Xia Chenyu saw Fang Bai's shocked and astonished expression and couldn't help but become nervous as well.

Fang Bai's gaze was fixed intently on Li Chenzhou's face, which looked like withered tree bark, and his Divine Sense penetrated Li Chenzhou's body, thoroughly investigating. After a long while, with a solemn face, he said word by word: "His heart meridian... is still beating..."

"Ah?"

Xia Chenyu was startled and instinctively retreated several steps.

To hear that someone "dead" for many years still held a sliver of life was almost like seeing a ghost in broad daylight. After all, Xia Chenyu was a woman and couldn't avoid feeling a trace of fear.

"How... how is it possible... why can't I sense his heart meridian beating... and look at his skin... look at his appearance... he is clearly dead for many years! Are you... could you be mistaken?"

"I am not mistaken!"

Fang Bai nodded emphatically and said: "Though the beating of his heart meridian is faint to the point of being undetectable, it is indeed still beating... If I hadn't examined him carefully, I too would have thought he was just a corpse that had been dead for years..."

Xia Chenyu said: "But... whether he is dead or not, there isn't much difference, right? His Qi Sea is destroyed, his meridians completely severed, and his flesh and bones are all withered... unless it was someone of divine being, who could possibly save him..."

"As long as the lifeforce is not extinguished, there is always hope... there is always hope..."

Fang Bai's eyes shone with a hint of excitement as he slowly walked around Li Chenzhou's "corpse" where he sat cross-legged, saying as he walked: "Before his death, he condensed his final True Yuan, protecting this small region of his heart meridian, managing to maintain its beating to this day, which shows how extraordinary the lifeforce of an Innate perfection warrior can be. The heart meridian is like the roots of a great tree; even if the branches are dead, as long as there is lifeforce in the roots, there is a possibility of resurrection..."

Xia Chenyu's beautiful eyes widened, pointing at Fang Bai with her slender, green-white fingers, she said: "You mean... you can save him?"

Fang Bai said: "I can't guarantee that I can save him. But since there is hope, we must try... hope that a miracle will occur! After all, in his life, Li Chenzhou was an Innate perfection warrior who stood at the summit of this world's Martial Dao. By saving him, I could learn many things that I wish to know..."