

Doctor 1321

Chapter 1321: Huo Hai

Just as Fang Bai and Li Chenzhou sensed the presences of the Innate Experts on the mountain ridge, those experts also perceived their arrival, turning their heads in surprise and astonishment.

In this mountain ridge area, the Fire Primordial Qi is rich, and the air feels as if it's burning, unbearably hot. Only Martial Artists with at least a High Rank Innate Cultivation Level can linger here, indicating that Fang Bai and Li Chenzhou must possess at least such a level of cultivation.

"I actually can't discern that middle-aged man's Cultivation Level... Could he be another expert at the Perfection level of the Innate realm?"

"The Innate Experts at the Perfection level I've seen before were all over a hundred years old, while that middle-aged man appears to be only around fifty. A youthful master of Perfection level in the Innate realm is indeed rare in this world!"

"Looking at the middle-aged man's dress, he seems to be a Loose Cultivator!"

"For a Loose Cultivator to reach Perfection level in the Innate realm, this person is truly extraordinary!"

"Strange, the young man next to the middle-aged man is clearly just an expert at the Perfection level of the Universe Level, but why does he exude an aura and pressure fitting of an Innate Expert?"

"To venture this deep, his combat strength must be at least on par with a High Rank Innate Expert. Could it be... that young man is a gifted Martial Artist capable of challenging beyond his level?"

"If that's true, that young man is even more impressive!"

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The dozen or so Innate Experts standing on the mountain ridge watched intently as Fang Bai and Li Chenzhou approached, whispering among themselves with various expressions.

"There seem to be a dozen Innate Experts, and they don't look like they're all together."

As they were nearly reaching the mountain ridge, Li Chenzhou suddenly communicated to Fang Bai via a message.

Fang Bai replied: "That's for the best. If there's a conflict, we can break through them one by one!"

The dozen or so Innate Experts standing on the mountain ridge stood apart from each other at distances of either several meters or tens of meters, forming small groups of three or four, clearly segregated. Although there was no outright hostility between them, everyone wore a look of cautious vigilance on their faces.

Among these Innate Experts, the two strongest with Perfect cultivation stood proudly alone, not allying with others, obviously as Lone Cultivators.

This discovery reassured Fang Bai and Li Chenzhou quite a bit.

With their combined strength, as long as the dozen or so Innate Experts didn't band together in battle, they had a good chance of seizing treasures if they were discovered.

"Sss... What a vast sea of fire!"

Upon reaching the ridge and seeing the scene on the other side, Li Chenzhou couldn't help but inhale sharply and exclaimed in amazement.

Fang Bai, on the other hand, had a look of "as expected" on his face, looking with great interest at the area below the mountain ridge.

Tens of meters below the mountain ridge lay a chasm that stretched for dozen miles, encircling the core region of the Eternal Death Zone in a ring. Clusters of blazing flames rose from the bottom of the abyss to form a spectacular Fire Sea.

The crimson hue in the sky came from the light of this Fire Sea, and the dense Fire Primordial Qi filling the surrounding space also emanated from this sea of flames.

Any Martial Artist who wishes to explore the core region of the Eternal Death Zone must cross this Fire Sea."Good heavens... How can we possibly get across this?"

Li Chenzhou stared at the Huo Hai in front of him, his face blank as he murmured to himself.

Although Li Chenzhou was capable of conjuring fire wings to fly, he could only fly a dozen miles at most. Crossing this several-dozen-miles-wide Huo Hai through the air was nothing but wishful thinking.

"I beg the honor of speaking to this senior."

Just then, a thin old man in red robes stepped out from a group of four, approached Li Chenzhou, clasped his fists, and respectfully said, "This junior is Gu Yan, from the Divine Fire Sect in the Land of Extreme South. May I ask for the distinguished name of the senior?"

The thin old man in red robes, Gu Yan, was a high-rank Innate Expert, and although he was over a hundred years old, he was extremely deferential and modest in the presence of Li Chenzhou, an Innate Expert of perfection.

There was no choice; the difference in strength between a high-rank Innate Expert and an Innate Expert of perfection might only be a minor realm, but the actual gap in power was several times larger. Furthermore, since Gu Yan had a favor to ask of Li Chenzhou, he had to present himself with utmost respect and humility to gain Li Chenzhou's favor.

As for Fang Bai, Gu Yan simply regarded him as another high-rank Innate Expert of similar strength to himself. He nodded with a smile at Fang Bai and then ignored him.

"Divine Fire Sect? I have some connections with your Sect Master Lie Zhengyang... Oh, my name is Li Chenzhou. Just a Loose Cultivator."

There's a saying that you don't strike a person who comes to you with a smile. Since Gu Yan showed no hostility and took the initiative to greet him, Li Chenzhou just nodded in response. However, unaware of the other's purpose, he couldn't be bothered to say much more.

In his past years of experience throughout the True Martial Realm, Li Chenzhou had also been to the Land of Extreme South. The Divine Fire Sect is a reclusive Innate Sect of the Land of Extreme South, and Li Chenzhou had had exchanges and sparring with its Sect Master. Despite the many years that had passed, he still remembered clearly.

"So it turns out, Senior Li is a friend of our Sect Master. That's wonderful."

Upon hearing this, Gu Yan was overjoyed and his demeanor grew even more deferential. He asked quietly, "Senior Li has come in search of the Red-Horned Golden Sunny Lion in the Eternal Death Zone, too?"

"Red-Horned Golden Sunny Lion?"

Li Chenzhou's interest piqued, he asked, "Are you saying... that there is a Red-Horned Golden Sunny Lion in the core area of this Eternal Death Zone?"

The Red-Horned Golden Sunny Lion is one of the fire-based Spiritual Beasts in the True Martial Realm, recognizable by a single red horn on its forehead, golden irises, a massive body, and an imposing demeanor that marks it as one of the ferocious Spirit Beasts feared by Martial Artists.

Naturally drawn to Fire Primordial Qi and highly heat-resistant, Red-Horned Golden Sunny Lions mainly thrive in searing hot regions, especially abundant in the Land of Extreme South.

A Red-Horned Golden Sunny Lion that manages to survive for a long time in the core area of the Eternal Death Zone would certainly have combat capabilities surpassing those of a human high-rank Innate Expert.

Gu Yan nodded and said, "Previously, an Innate Expert encountered an attack by a Red-Horned Golden Sunny Lion near this Huo Hai. Fortunately, with companions' aid, they managed to drive away the Red-

Horned Golden Sunny Lion, thus saving a life. However, that Innate Expert was gravely injured and his combat power greatly reduced, necessitating an early withdrawal."

As he said this, he observed Li Chenzhou's reaction, noting his apparent interest, Gu Yan perked up and continued, "Some Martial Artists speculate that the Red-Horned Golden Sunny Lion wouldn't appear here without reason. It must be guarding some Spiritual Medicine or other treasures..."

"Are you all here for the Spiritual Medicine or treasures guarded by the Red-Horned Golden Sunny Lion?"

Li Chenzhou motioned towards the dozen or so Innate Experts standing on the ridge and asked.

Gu Yan did not conceal his intentions and nodded, "Indeed. It is said that the combat prowess of this Red-Horned Golden Sunny Lion could be comparable to that of an Innate Expert of perfection. It is imaginable that whatever Spiritual Medicine or treasure it is guarding must be something that us Martial Artists deeply yearn for. If we could obtain it, it would bring infinite benefits!"

Li Chenzhou said: "Then what do you mean by seeking me out?"

Chapter 1322: Black and White Demons

"We wish to join forces with Senior Li, and if we can slay the Red-Horned Golden Sunny Lion and obtain the Spiritual Medicine or other treasures it guards, we are willing to share them with Senior Li," said Gu Yan earnestly to Li Chenzhou.

Standing on the mountain ridges were more than a dozen Innate Experts, divided into five groups, led by Gu Yan and three other high rank Innate Experts from the Divine Fire Sect, which was one of the five groups.

As for the other four groups, having traveled across the True Martial Realm in his earlier years, Li Chenzhou was somewhat familiar with those hidden Innate Sects. He carefully observed their attire and the Martial Artist Aura emanating from them, and he managed to guess their identities.

"The Martial Artists here, besides the Divine Fire Sect, are there disciples from the Red Dawn Palace and Phoenix Mountain as well?" Li Chenzhou asked as he pointed towards the other dozen Innate Experts.

"Does Senior Li also have connections with the Red Dawn Palace and Phoenix Mountain?" Gu Yan asked instead of answering, with a clearly nervous expression on his face.

His counter-question confirmed Li Chenzhou's guess.

Li Chenzhou smiled faintly and shook his head, "No significant connections. When I was tempering myself in the True Martial Realm, I seem to have encountered disciples from these two Sects. Now, I've somewhat forgotten. I was just guessing their identities earlier, and it turns out I guessed right."

Gu Yan breathed a sigh of relief internally, thinking it was good that way. Otherwise, if this Innate Expert of perfection was drawn over by the Red Dawn Palace or Phoenix Mountain, it would be extremely disadvantageous for the Divine Fire Sect.

"As for those two... I do not recognize them..."

Li Chenzhou's gaze then shifted to a man and a woman standing several tens of feet away.

The man and woman, both appearing to be over sixty, were also experts at the perfection realm of Innate, and although they were alone and had their own group, their strength was even greater than the teams from the Divine Fire Sect, Red Dawn Palace, and Phoenix Mountain, which consisted of four to five high rank Innate experts.

Innate Experts of perfection stand at the pinnacle of the Martial Dao in this world, and thus, most are quite proud. Therefore, when the man and woman saw Fang Bai and Li Chenzhou, they were only surprised for a moment before withdrawing their gazes, continuing to look at the Huo Hai spreading in front of them.

For them, although Fang Bai and Li Chenzhou were talented Martial Artists worth noting, at this moment, the Red-Horned Golden Sunny Lion in the core area of the Eternal Death Zone and the treasures it guarded were their main concern.

"Senior Li, those two are the 'Black and White Demons' who have risen in recent years in the Eastern Extreme Continent, dominating the True Martial Realm! The man in a black robe is named Yin Tianyu

and the woman in white is named Jing Chaoyu. They were once martial companions and later, for unknown reasons, parted ways and became strangers to each other..."

With a wary look, Gu Yan glanced at the man and woman, then transmitted his voice to Li Chenzhou, seeing that Li Chenzhou was listening intently, he perked up and continued transmitting, "The Black and White Demons are odd and ruthless in nature, both being Innate perfection experts, thus even the Innate Sects would not lightly antagonize them. Their appearance here together likely aims at the Red-Horned Golden Sunny Lion and the treasures it guards."

Having said that, he secretly observed Li Chenzhou's expression and brought up the matter of alliance again, "I think if we discover the treasures guarded by the Red-Horned Golden Sunny Lion, the Black and White Demons might very well join forces to contest for them. Even though Senior Li is powerful, facing two Great Innate perfection experts might still be overwhelming, right? If Senior Li would agree to ally with our Divine Fire Sect, our chances of obtaining the treasures would increase significantly. Please consider it..."

Hearing Gu Yan up to this point, Li Chenzhou laughed heartily towards Fang Bai and said, "Brother Fang, Gu Yan only discusses the matter of alliance with me, completely disregarding you. It seems you are being ignored!"

Fang Bai pursed his lips and spread his hands, "There's nothing I can do, being just a small Martial Artist at the Universe Level perfection realm, naturally I'm not regarded by you Innate Experts."

Gu Yan was startled upon hearing Li Chenzhou actually address Fang Bai as "Brother Fang," suddenly realizing he had made a mistake and hurriedly turned to Fang Bai with an awkward smile, asking, "How should I address this...this individual?"

In Gu Yan's eyes, Fang Bai was indeed just a Universe Level perfection Martial Artist, but Li Chenzhou addressed him as "Brother", making Gu Yan unsure of the proper way to address Fang Bai for a moment.

Logically speaking, Gu Yan was an Innate High Rank Expert, while Fang Bai was merely a Universe Level perfection Martial Artist. In front of Fang Bai, Gu Yan naturally held the status of "Senior".

But Li Chenzhou peculiarly addressed Fang Bai as "Brother," which put Gu Yan in an awkward position.

If Gu Yan were to address Fang Bai as "Senior," it would mean demeaning his own status, which he was reluctant to do.

If Gu Yan addressed Fang Bai as "Brother Fang," wouldn't that put him on an equal footing with Li Chenzhou?

"Brother Fang's combat strength is not at all inferior to mine. If you wish to join forces with me, you must first get Brother Fang's consent. As long as Brother Fang agrees, there will be no problem on my end."

Before Fang Bai could speak, Li Chenzhou had already interjected and spoke to Gu Yan.

"Ah?"

Hearing this, Gu Yan was stunned, speechless, and stood there dumbfounded.

Although he also thought of the term "challenging beyond one's level," in the True Martial Realm, even the most outstanding Martial Dao Genius could only challenge one or two small realms above them, but listening to Li Chenzhou's tone, it seemed like Fang Bai could challenge Innate Experts a whole major realm higher than himself, which was unbelievable to Gu Yan.

If that were the case, Fang Bai would be the most extraordinary and monstrous genius in the entire history of the True Martial Realm!

After leaving that comment with Gu Yan, Li Chenzhou no longer paid him any attention and stood side by side with Fang Bai, looking towards the Huo Hai and sighed, "This Huo Hai spans dozens of miles. If there isn't a place to land within it, we cannot traverse it."

"Let's go around the Huo Hai and see, maybe there will be some discoveries?"

Facing the Huo Hai, even Fang Bai found it a bit tricky, and said to Li Chenzhou: "That Gu Yan mentioned that previously, a Red-Horned Golden Sunny Lion attacked human Innate Experts, and it was on the periphery of the Huo Hai... Moreover, the Red-Horned Golden Sunny Lion might be guarding Spiritual

Medicine or other treasures at the core of the Eternal Death Zone. Based on this, we can infer that there must be a pathway in this Huo Hai that allows that Red-Horned Golden Sunny Lion to come and go."

Li Chenzhou nodded in agreement and said: "It makes sense. Then let us search together."

Thus, the two hurried along the edge of the Huo Hai towards the west, simultaneously releasing their Divine Sense to see if there was a pathway to cross the Huo Hai.

Seeing this, Gu Yan and four other Divine Fire Sect Disciples also kept a distance of several meters and followed.

The other dozen Innate Experts were also not idle; they each released their Divine Sense, searching for a possible path through the Huo Hai.

Fang Bai and Li Chenzhou rushed along the mountainside by the Huo Hai, traveling quickly over a hundred miles, but despite covering only a small part of the circular Huo Hai, they found nothing.

Chapter 1323: Stone Pillar

"If there is no passage through this sea of fire, how do we enter the core area of the Eternal Death Zone?"

Li Chenzhou stopped in his tracks, facing the vast sea of fire that stretched for dozens of miles, and sighed.

The core area of the Eternal Death Zone likely houses a Red-Horned Golden-Eyed Lion, whose strength could compare to an Innate Expert at the peak of perfection, and it is highly probable that this beast guards treasures that all Martial Artists in the world would covet.

Both the Red-Horned Golden-Eyed Lion and the treasures it guards are invaluable to the several Innate Experts present, greatly beneficial for cultivation. Securing either would be satisfying enough.

Although Li Chenzhou is an Innate Expert at the realm of perfection, standing at the pinnacle of Martial Dao in this world, he is not content with just that and aspires to push further, reaching higher realms in Martial Dao.

Upon reaching the Innate Realm, Martial Artists gain access to secret truths unknown to ordinary practitioners. In his past travels in the True Martial Realm, Li Chenzhou had interactions with other Innate Experts. From them, he learned that the True Martial Realm is just one of the three thousand Minor Worlds, and beyond these, there exist three thousand Major Worlds.

It is said that in the Major Worlds, a more remarkable form of Spiritual Energy fills the realms, enabling all beings there, whether flora, fauna, or even inanimate objects like rocks, to cultivate through nourishment from nature's spiritual energy over hundreds of years, eventually developing spiritual sentience, discovering the Dao of cultivation, and ascending to the Immortal Realm, gaining immensely long lives.

In the Major Worlds, countless Cultivators toil for ascension to the Immortal Realm and the quest for eternal life, and warriors like Li Chenzhou, who enter the Dao through martial prowess, represent just one amongst myriad Cultivators.

Li Chenzhou also heard that while an Innate Expert at the realm of perfection qualifies to enter the Major Worlds, they find themselves at the lowest and weakest level there, totally lacking the supreme glory they had in the True Martial Realm.

However, as of now, the specific location of the Teleportation Array leading to the Major Worlds remains unknown, and Li Chenzhou continues his arduous search.

Li Chenzhou hopes to enhance his strength to a higher realm before entering the Major Worlds, to ensure he has sufficient self-protection in the future.

Currently, Li Chenzhou's Cultivation Level has reached the pinnacle that a Martial Artist in this world can achieve. To ascend to a higher realm, he needs to utilize much higher-rank Cultivation Resources, making the treasures within the Eternal Death Zone incredibly attractive to him.

However, being unable to cross this vast sea of fire spanning dozens of miles means he cannot obtain the treasures he desires, resulting in his disappointment.

Fang Bai, on the other hand, remains optimistic and, after standing with Li Chenzhou for a while, continues to walk along the edge of the sea of fire.

Suddenly, Fang Bai and Li Chenzhou almost simultaneously halt, as they faintly hear the excited cheers of Martial Artists nearby.

"Could it be that other Innate Experts have made some discoveries?"

"Let's go check it out!"

Fang Bai and Li Chenzhou exchange glances and swiftly rush towards the source of the sounds.

Although using True Essence Wings to fly would be faster, it consumes a great deal of True Yuan. Considering the upcoming possible challenges of crossing the sea of fire, battling the Red-Horned Golden-Eyed Lion, and competing with other Innate Experts for treasures, Fang Bai and Li Chenzhou prefer to economize their True Yuan by travelling with movement techniques for later use.

The four members from the Divine Fire Sect who have been following Fang Bai and Li Chenzhou, maintaining a distance of several tens of feet, also quickly catch up when they see this.

Moments later, about a dozen Innate Experts gather at a location on the eastern end of the sea of fire. Through layers of fierce flames, they can vaguely see stone pillars erected within the sea of fire, stretching across to the opposite shore, their faces showing a hint of joy.

"Using those stone pillars, we should be able to reach the opposite shore of the sea of fire, right?"

"We'll use True Essence Wings to fly; these stone pillars can serve as resting spots in between."

"Although surrounded by intense flames and extremely high temperatures, with the True Essence Barrier protecting our bodies, we should be unharmed."

"That Red-Horned Golden-Eyed Lion must have reached the opposite shore through those stone pillars, right?"

"I wonder what treasure is guarded by the Red-Horned Golden-Eyed Lion!"

"Let's go now, slay the Red-Horned Golden-Eyed Lion, and seize the treasure first!"

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A few Innate Experts observed beside Huo Hai for a moment, unable to contain their excitement and fearful of falling behind others, promptly converged True Yuan into wings and soared into the sky, flying towards the opposite side of Huo Hai.

Other more cautious Innate Experts did not rush to follow but waited until those who had dashed ahead disappeared without encountering any danger. Only then did they successively take flight, sweeping through the sky towards the other shore of Huo Hai like swallows.

Soon, all but Fang Bai, Li Chenzhou, the Black and White Demons, and four members of the Divine Fire Sect from the dozen or so Innate Experts had moved.

"Senior Li, Brother Fang, what are your thoughts on forming an alliance?"

Seeing that Fang Bai and Li Chenzhou had not moved, Gu Yan of the Divine Fire Sect, also not hurrying to join his companions in flying towards the other shore of Huo Hai, asked again respectfully.

Gu Yan was not worried about the treasure potentially on the other side of Huo Hai falling into others' hands. As long as he could persuade Fang Bai and Li Chenzhou to join forces with him, combining strengths, their combat power would significantly increase, and they could later snatch the treasure back from others if necessary.

Li Chenzhou said, "Forming an alliance is fine. But if we get the treasure, Brother Fang and I have the priority in choosing!"

"This..."

Gu Yan looked troubled, thinking that if they formed an alliance, shouldn't the treasures be equally divided? If you have first choice privileges, taking all the valuable items and leaving us with less valuable ones, wouldn't that be unfair to us?

However, if he didn't ally with Li Chenzhou, he and his people might end up competing against them for the treasure, becoming adversaries, which was not what Gu Yan wanted to see.

"To ally or not, you guys can stay here and think slowly about it! Haha... Brother Fang, let's go!"

Without waiting for Gu Yan to speak again, Li Chenzhou converged True Yuan into a pair of fire wings, flapped them vigorously causing gusts of wind, and leveraging the momentum like a soaring swallow, he reached a height of several dozens of meters and then turned towards the other side of Huo Hai, speeding across.

Fang Bai opened his mouth, wanting to persuade Li Chenzhou to wait a moment before crossing, but seeing him already far away, he could only smile helplessly and then also conjured wings to follow quickly after Li Chenzhou.

"Elder Gu, what should we do?"

A Divine Fire Sect Elder standing beside Gu Yan looked up at the swiftly flying Fang Bai and Li Chenzhou, frowning as he asked.

Gu Yan shook his head and said, "I'm not sure... Let's cross Huo Hai first..."

Consequently, the four members of the Divine Fire Sect also formed True Essence Wings and took flight.

With the departure of the four Innate Experts of the Divine Fire Sect, only the Black and White Demons, two experts at the Innate perfection level, remained at the scene.

"Hidden beneath this seemingly tranquil surface of Huo Hai are numerous Spirit Beasts, undetectable by other high-rank Innate Experts. That Li person is at the Innate perfection realm, couldn't he sense them too?"

The woman in white from the Black and White Demons, Chaoyu, suddenly muttered to herself, her demeanor radiating an icy aloofness.

Chapter 1324: Lurking Crisis

"Whether Li by surname has sensed a spirit beast lurking within Huo Hai, I'm not sure, but the young man surnamed Fang that came with him likely has,"

The man in the black robe, Yin Tianyu, standing about a dozen yards away from Jing Chaoyu, had an equally cold expression. He frowned and said, "Just now, when Li by surname took off flying, Fang seemed to want to stop him, but for some reason gave up..."

"Oh?"

Jing Chaoyu raised his eyebrows and said, "I didn't notice that. Hmm, you're quite observant!"

Yin Tianyu's eyes flickered with a peculiar light and he said, "Although the martial artist surnamed Fang is young, I feel his true combat power might not be inferior to ours."

Jing Chaoyu looked surprised and said, "That being the case, Fang and Li joining forces could very likely obtain the corpse of the Red-Horned Golden-Eyed Lion and the treasures it guards?"

Yin Tianyu nodded firmly and said, "That's why the two of us must also join forces if we want to stand a chance against them!"

Jing Chaoyu shook her head coldly and said, "Between you and me, there are no longer any grudges or entanglements. So, joining forces is out of the question!"

Yin Tianyu bitterly smiled and said, "Chaoyu, after so many years, can't you forgive me?"

Jing Chaoyu said, "I've said before, I can forgive you, but you must personally take action and kill both of the close female friends you've made!"

Yin Tianyu sighed and said, "You know that's impossible... I care for them just as I care for you..."

"Then there's no further point discussing us joining forces!"

"But..."

"Enough! From this moment on, we'll each rely on our own abilities to fight for the treasures within the Eternal Death Zone! And if you and I have to confront each other over them in the end, I will not show mercy!"

Having said that, Jing Chaoyu no longer glanced at Yin Tianyu, formed the True Essence Wings, her white dress flowing, and soared into the sky.

"Chaoyu, wait for me!"

Yin Tianyu stomped fiercely on the ground, using the momentum to propel himself into the air, and without waiting to fall back down, True Essence Wings sprouted from his back, earnestly pursuing Jing Chaoyu.

At this point, over a dozen innate experts who entered the heart of the Eternal Death Zone all formed True Essence Wings, flying through the air like birds, heading across Huo Hai.

"To have to form True Essence Wings for flying and a Defense Qi Shield to resist the high heat from the flames below... the consumption of True Yuan is just too great! Crossing this tens of miles wide Huo Hai is truly no easy feat!"

"Indeed, after flying for just a few miles, my True Yuan has already been consumed by more than half!"

"There are stone pillars below, how about we go down to rest for a moment before moving on?"

"Good!"

The two leading high-rank innate experts from Red Dawn Palace folded their True Essence Wings and descended toward the stone pillars amidst Huo Hai below.

The following innate experts, similarly with tremendous True Yuan depletion, upon seeing this, also descended towards that very stone pillar.

The four members from Divine Fire Sect, including Gu Yan, really wanted to continue flying forward with Fang Bai and Li Chenzhou, but they were willing yet unable to do so and had to temporarily land on a stone pillar as well.

That stone pillar was situated amid the raging Huo Hai, with an area several dozen meters across, capable of accommodating more than ten Innate Experts to rest and catch their breath.

In just a short moment, aside from the four Innate perfection Experts Fang Bai, Li Chenzhou, Yin Tianyu, and Jing Chaoyu, a dozen other High Rank Innate Experts had landed on the stone pillar one after another, each sitting cross-legged, swallowing Elixirs in an attempt to quickly replenish their expended True Yuan before continuing their flight.

"There are quite a few Spirit Beasts lurking underneath the Huo Hai, some of those guys might be in for bad luck!"

As he flew, Li Chenzhou looked down at the stone pillar below and said to Fang Bai who was flying beside him.

Fang Bai's gaze swept across the Huo Hai surrounding the stone pillar and said, "This Huo Hai can block a Martial Artist's divine sense. Those High Rank Innate Experts can't detect the presence of Spirit Beasts beneath the Huo Hai. If the Spirit Beasts launch an attack, few of them will be able to escape... haha, the treasures of the Eternal Death Zone are indeed great, but one must be alive to compete for them!"

Li Chenzhou, an Innate Expert of perfection, and Fang Bai, armed with the combat strength of Innate perfection, both had profound True Yuan, capable of flying forward another ten miles without needing to rest on the stone pillars. However, when flying over the stone pillars where the High Rank Innate Experts were resting, both sensed the surging crisis beneath the Huo Hai and their forms subconsciously paused for a moment.

The two Innate perfection Experts from the Black and White Demons, Yin Tianyu and Jing Chaoyu, also suspended themselves in mid-air, while Fang Bai and Li Chenzhou were watching the dozen or so Innate Experts on the stone pillar below, they were observing Fang Bai and Li Chenzhou.

Yin Tianyu and Jing Chaoyu, both with high pride, could not help but compare themselves upon meeting experts of similar strength. Seeing that Fang Bai and Li Chenzhou did not need to land on the stone pillar to rest, they also dismissed this thought, wanting to see who could fly even farther.

Yin Tianyu and Jing Chaoyu were also aware of the Spirit Beasts hidden in the Huo Hai, but they were not at all concerned. With their great strength and many self-preservation techniques, those Spirit Beasts were not a threat to their safety.

As for the life and death of those Innate Experts on the stone pillar, they harbored a sense of schadenfreude. To them, those Innate Experts were all their competitors, and it would be best if they were completely eliminated.

The only ones they felt were somewhat troublesome were Fang Bai and Li Chenzhou.

Especially Fang Bai, they both felt that this young Martial Artist, who had only reached Universe Level perfection yet possessed the demeanor of an Innate Expert, had unfathomable true strength.

Because of this inscrutability, they felt a tinge of wariness in their hearts.

"The Divine Fire Sect has some connections with me; I should warn them!"

Li Chenzhou's gaze fell upon the four disciples from Divine Fire Sect like Gu Yan. He felt somewhat unwilling to let them come to harm, as for the fate of the other Innate Experts on the stone pillar, he indeed had no intention of getting involved.

No sooner had he spoken than a sudden intense sense of foreboding rose in his heart.

"Disciples of Divine Fire Sect, retreat quickly!"

Li Chenzhou internally cried out that something was wrong, immediately employing the Thread Condensation Sound Transmission Technique, and simultaneously transmitted his voice to the four Divine Fire Sect disciples like Gu Yan.

Gu Yan and the others were jolted by the abrupt shout near their ears, and almost instinctively responded by leaping up into the sky when they recognized that it was Li Chenzhou's voice.

The other Innate Experts on the stone pillar saw Gu Yan and the four others flying up and were all startled, but before they could react, a "swish swish" sound came from the Huo Hai around the stone pillar. Several enormous Fire Pythons and hundreds of Fire Bats surged out from below the Huo Hai without warning, bringing with them unbearably scorching waves of heat as they pounced toward the dozen or so stunned Innate Experts on the stone pillar.

Each of the Fire Pythons was dozens of meters long, with bodies like iron barrels and eyes like lanterns, continuously spewing flames from their mouths.

The Fire Bats, with their wings unfurled, were each as large as a millstone, and with each flap of their wings, heavy waves of fire surged out, engulfing the dozen or so Innate Experts on the stone pillar.

Chapter 1325: Siege

"Those few Fire Pythons are comparable to human Innate Mid-Level Experts, while the hundreds of Fire Bats are equivalent to human Initial-Level Experts... The number and strength of Spirit Beasts are about what I had speculated!"

"The attack power of Spirit Beasts has always been more formidable than that of Martial Artists of the same level. With so many Spirit Beasts attacking at once, those dozen or so Innate Experts are in grave danger!"

"Whoever can escape, owes it to sheer luck!"

"No wonder the Eternal Death Zone is known as the Forbidden Zones of Life for Martial Artists. Those Fire Pythons and Fire Bats are simply nightmares for any Martial Artist they encounter!"

"Even if I were on that stone pillar, facing attacks from so many Spirit Beasts, I wouldn't dare claim I could escape unscathed!"

...

Fang Bai and Li Chenzhou looked down at the sea of fire, watching the flames churn and roll as hundreds of Fire Pythons and Fire Bats stirred up the fiery waves for dozens of miles, causing a wave of heat that secretly alarmed them.

Not to mention the extremely sharp attacks of the Fire Pythons and Fire Bats themselves, just the blazing waves they whipped up were enough to overwhelm the dozen or so Innate Experts trapped on the stone pillars. It might not be long before someone failed to endure and fell.

The four from the Divine Fire Sect, led by Gu Yan, had now formed True Essence Wings and soared dozens of yards into the sky.

"All thanks to Senior Li's warning, otherwise the four of us might've perished here!"

Suspended in mid-air, Gu Yan and his companions watched as the Innate Experts trapped on the stone pillars engaged in fierce battle with hundreds of Fire-based Spiritual Beasts, plunging into peril in an instant. They all felt a shiver in their hearts, filled with gratitude toward Li Chenzhou.

The dozen or so high-ranked Innate Experts trapped on the stone pillars had already exhausted more than half of their True Yuan after flying several miles in the air. Suddenly, hundreds of fire-based Spiritual Beasts emerged unexpectedly from the sea of fire around the pillars, catching them off guard and leaving them struggling to cope.

Facing wave after wave of concentrated attacks from hundreds of Spirit Beasts, the dozen or so high-ranked Innate Experts were unable to counterattack and could only form True Essence Protective Barriers to defend themselves. However, the rapid depletion of their True Yuan left them feeling desperate.

After dozens of breaths, the True Yuan of the dozen or so high-ranked Innate Experts was nearly depleted, causing their True Essence Barriers to disappear. Hundreds of Fire Pythons and Fire Bats took advantage of their vulnerability and launched a frenzied attack.

Amidst the piercing screams, the powerless high-ranked Innate Experts, either wrapped and dragged into the sea of fire by the thick bodies of Fire Pythons or knocked off the pillars into the sea of fire by the dense assault of Fire Bats, were all engulfed by the flames, their bodies incinerated to ashes.

"The ferocity of those fire-based Spiritual Beasts exceeds even my expectations! It seems our journey is destined to be fraught with difficulties!"

Li Chenzhou watched as more than a dozen high-ranked Innate Experts fell within a few dozen breaths, sighing with lamentation.

"The other side of the sea of fire is certainly more dangerous than here. For us, that is the real test!"

Fang Bai gazed ahead, his eyes brimming with an excited gleam, clenching both fists tightly.

For Fang Bai, the more treacherous a place was, the greater the treasures that lay within. If the journey was smooth sailing, Fang Bai would have been profoundly disappointed.

Meanwhile, Gu Yan and the three other Elders from the Divine Fire Sect felt as if they were mourning the misfortunes of others, even feeling regret for rashly attempting to fly across the sea of fire.

Although their strength was nearly on par with that of the Martial Artists who had just perished, if it weren't for Li Chenzhou's timely warning, they too might have already fallen victim to the attack of the fire-based Spiritual Beasts.

While they had been lucky to escape this calamity, the sea of fire which was dozens of miles wide had only been crossed by a fraction of the total distance. The journey ahead was still lengthy, and with their strength, they would have to rest on the stone pillars in the sea of fire several times in order to possibly reach the other side.

But having witnessed the fate of those before them, how could they dare to land on those stone pillars again?

"The four of you, either continue moving forward with us or immediately return the way you came!"

Seeing that Gu Yan and his companions showed signs of fear, Li Chenzhou spoke sternly.

"We...we will return the way we came!"

Gu Yan and the three fellow disciples quickly exchanged glances and said with shame, "The four of us juniors will pray for blessings for the two seniors from atop the mountain range opposite us, wishing that the two seniors can successfully slay the Red-Horned Golden-Eyed Lion and obtain the cultivation treasures!"

Li Chenzhou waved his hand and said, "You have no need to feel ashamed. If one knows that going forward will lead to certain death yet still stubbornly rushes ahead, that's what a foolhardy person would do! Alright, go on then!"

"Seniors, we shall take our leave!"

Gu Yan and the four of them bowed with fists clasped, and then activated their True Essence Wings, returning towards the direction of the mountain range.

"Honestly, Brother Fang, I am now filled with anticipation for what might lie across the Huo Hai!" Li Chenzhou said excitably to Fang Bai.

Fang Bai smiled and replied, "Brother Li, I feel the same way!"

Li Chenzhou said, "Let's not get too far from each other, the two of us. In case of an emergency, we can provide timely support!"

"Okay."

Fang Bai and Li Chenzhou continued to fly towards the opposite shore of the Huo Hai, and during the flight, they completely disregarded the Black and White Demons following them, conversing loudly with each other.

Both Fang Bai and Li Chenzhou had strong confidence in their own abilities. Although the Black and White Demons were of equal realm to them, they weren't afraid and had the confidence to defeat them in battle.

The Black and White Demons also harbored the same thoughts, following Fang Bai and Li Chenzhou at a leisurely pace, with twinkling eyes and stern expressions, their thoughts a mystery.

In the Huo Hai, the stone pillars—whether man-made or naturally formed—were placed at intervals of a few miles. When Fang Bai and Li Chenzhou flew a third of the distance, they felt their True Essence was nearly half depleted, so they retracted their True Essence Wings and landed on a stone pillar below.

Despite their great strength and confidence that they could escape from the encirclement of the spiritual beasts in the Huo Hai, they dared not be even the slightest careless. They each formed a True Essence Protective Barrier for defense, spiritual artifacts in hand, fully vigilant and prepared, to avoid being flustered and overwhelmed by a surprise attack from the spirit beasts.

Seeing this, the Black and White Demons also landed.

As if by unspoken agreement, after landing on the pillars, neither group encroached on the other's territory. They each took a position on the stone pillars, sitting cross-legged and starting to meditate.

As anticipated, no more than a dozen breaths after they landed on the stone pillars, the Huo Hai around them erupted, and a great number of Fire Pythons and Fire Bats surged out once again.

Dozens of Fire Pythons, tens of feet long, revealed more than half of their bodies surrounding the stone pillars. They either spewed flames for attack or opened their wide jaws as if to swallow the four individuals.

Meanwhile, hundreds of Fire Bats circled overhead, blotting out the sky, swooping down with an impressive momentum.

The Fire Pythons around them and the Fire Bats above turned the stone pillar where Fang Bai and his group were standing into an impenetrable fortress of flames, the hot Fire Primordial Qi forming a fiery enclosure around the four of them.

These hundreds of spiritual beasts were equivalent to hundreds of human Innate early and middle stage experts. Although Fang Bai, Li Chenzhou, and the Black and White Demons were all Innate Experts at the peak of perfection, they still did not dare to be the slightest bit negligent when facing such a vast number of Innate Level Spirit Beasts and were fully committed to resisting them.

Chapter 1326: The Power of the Blood-Drinking Mad Blade

Fang Bai and his three companions were all Innate experts at the peak of perfection, their strength far surpassing those fallen Innate high-rank experts from before. Although the previous flying had depleted much of their True Yuan, it was by no means easy for those Fire Pythons and Fire Bats to put them to death.

However, the Spirit Beasts had an absolute advantage in numbers, and it was momentarily impossible for Fang Bai and his group to break through the encirclement.

Therefore, after the two sides clashed, they fell into a standoff where neither could gain the upper hand.

Fang Bai and his companions understood that if they wanted to break out quickly, they had to kill as many Spirit Beasts as possible to deter the others and make them retreat in the face of difficulty.

Only by driving away the Spirit Beasts could they then sit cross-legged atop the stone pillars to rest and recover their True Yuan, and then continue their journey.

Faced with a large number of fierce Spirit Beasts besieging them, the four well-prepared individuals remained calm and composed, each wielding their Spiritual Artifacts to engage in fierce combat with the overwhelming waves of Spirit Beasts.

Although the four did not look at each other, they were acutely aware of each other's movements, admiring each other's strengths while secretly competing to see who could slay more Spirit Beasts.

Puff...

Accompanied by the light sound of a sharp blade slicing through flesh, the stench filled the air, and a mist of blood enveloped the sky. Fang Bai's Blood-Drinking Mad Blade chopped off the triangular head of a Fire Python, and its enormous body thunderously fell into the sea of fire.

"Haha, Brother Fang, your blade-type Spiritual Artifact may look ugly with its pitch-black appearance, but who would have thought it would be so powerful? It's not any weaker than my Lotus Flame Spear!"

Since Li Chenzhou got to know Fang Bai, this was the first time he saw him using his Spiritual Artifact against the enemy. Initially, Li Chenzhou did not pay much attention to the Blood-Drinking Mad Blade, thinking it was just a common Spiritual Artifact. But after witnessing Fang Bai killing a Fire Bat with almost every slash, and another Fire Python with just a few more strikes, he began to regard the blade in Fang Bai's hand with admiration, clicking his tongue in wonder.

The weapon Li Chenzhou wielded was a spear-type high-rank Spiritual Artifact called the Lotus Flame Spear. When he thrust the spear, the Fire Primordial Qi condensed at the tip would bloom like lotuses, dazzling and magnificent, entrancing to behold.

However, Li Chenzhou's opponents would often lose their lives to the blooming lotuses in their entranced state.

But although Li Chenzhou's Lotus Flame Spear was sharp, it was effective against Fire Bats, but not so much against the hard-skinned, steel-boned Fire Pythons. Often, a thrust would only leave a foot-deep wound on the Fire Pythons.

Such wounds were insignificant for Fire Pythons with bodies tens of meters long.

As a result, Fang Bai could slay a Fire Python with at most three slashes of his Mad Blade, while Li Chenzhou needed a dozen or more stabs with his spear to kill a Fire Python, meaning he used several times more True Yuan than Fang Bai.

The situation was similar for the Black and White Demons, Yin Tianyu and Jing Chaoyu.

Both were skilled in using blades. Seeing the unparalleled power and overflowing Evil Qi from Fang Bai's Blood-Drinking Mad Blade, and unable to discern its rank with their keen eyesight, it was evidently a

treasure among Spiritual Artifacts. A burning desire shone in their eyes, thinking such a Spiritual Artifact would greatly enhance their combat abilities if it were theirs.

However, both knew that now was the time for the four to join forces side by side, to work together to slay the Spirit Beasts. They should not covet Fang Bai's Spiritual Artifact, lest it cause conflict between the parties and provide an opportunity for the surrounding Spirit Beasts to strike, potentially leading to the downfall of all four.

The surrounding Fire-based Spiritual Beasts were not only ferocious but also cunning. Once they recognized that Fang Bai was not to be trifled with, they turned their attacks towards Li Chenzhou and the Black and White Demons.

As a result, the pressure on Li Chenzhou and the Black and White Demons surged, while the space in front of Fang Bai was emptied of Spirit Beasts.

Seizing this opportunity, Fang Bai swallowed an Elixir, sat in meditation to regulate his breath, and within dozens of breaths, his True Yuan was restored to its original state.

"Brother Fang, come quickly to help, I've nearly exhausted my True Yuan!"

Li Chenzhou suddenly cried out, while mustering the last of his strength and thrusting his spear-shaped Spiritual Artifact, forming a lotus of Fire Primordial Qi that exploded upon collision with a Fire Bat, bringing it to the ground.

This strike nearly depleted all of Li Chenzhou's True Yuan. After he killed the Fire Bat with his spear, the shield of Fire Primordial Qi around him weakened drastically and then shattered under the assault of several dozen other Fire Bats.

Dozens of Fire Bats, like flaming fireballs, surged crazily towards Li Chenzhou from every direction, looking to encircle him.

Just then, several crimson blade lights slashed through the air, sealing off the space around Li Chenzhou, cutting down a dozen or so Fire Bats at the forefront that failed to evade in time.

"Brother Li, take a seat to recover; I'll defend for a while!"

Fang Bai's figure appeared in front of Li Chenzhou, following the slashing crimson blade lights of the Blood-Drinking Mad Blade.

The Blood-Drinking Mad Blade in Fang Bai's hand, having slain dozens of Innate-level Spirit Beasts and having drunk their blood, now emanated an unprecedented blood-red color, vivid and dripping.

A thick and intense Evil Qi spread out from the blade in all directions. The powerful aura of slaughter contained within the Evil Qi caused the hundreds of Fire-based Spiritual Beasts hovering around the pillars to retreat, no longer daring to attack.

The fierce battle between four Innate-level perfection warriors and hundreds of Innate-level Spirit Beasts suddenly erupted and just as suddenly quieted down.

The pressure the Black and White Demons had just encountered was hardly any easier than that of Li Chenzhou, but with Fang Bai forcing the retreat of the hundreds of Spirit Beasts, not only was Li Chenzhou's encirclement broken, it also allowed them to breathe a sigh of relief.

"Brother Fang, your Spiritual Artifact is simply too formidable! Other people's Spiritual Artifacts might increase their combat power by twenty or thirty percent, while yours seems to multiply it manifold, right?"

The mere Evil Qi of the Spiritual Artifact caused hundreds of Innate-level Spirit Beasts to retreat, leaving Li Chenzhou tremendously shocked, feeling that he had still greatly underestimated the power of Fang Bai's Spiritual Artifact.

The Black and White Demons were not well-acquainted with Fang Bai. Initially, they were somewhat disdainful due to Fang Bai's youth, but as his demonstrated strength grew increasingly formidable, they finally put away their contemptuous attitudes.

Although Fang Bai repelled the hundreds of Spirit Beasts with his Blood-Drinking Mad Blade, relying largely on the power of the Spiritual Artifact, without formidable strength and unwavering resolve, one

could not control such a weapon, brimming with intense Evil Qi, and could even have their own mind influenced by it.

The Black and White Demons had harbored some covetousness for Fang Bai's Blood-Drinking Mad Blade, but at this moment, they had completely given up on that thought.

The Black and White Demons understood that many things in the world rely on fate. Some treasures, if fallen into the hands of those who are fated, can be a blessing, while for those not fated, possessing them might bring about disaster.

The way Fang Bai wielded his Spiritual Artifact was seamless and powerful, clearly showing a high level of compatibility between the warrior and the weapon. Even if other martial artists could obtain his Spiritual Artifact, it would be difficult to erase the imprint he has left upon it.

Chapter 1327: Red-Horned Golden-Eyed Lion

The four Innate experts, who had recovered to their peak states, displayed astounding battle prowess, slaying the Spirit Beasts around the stone pillars as easily as one would kill chickens or slaughter dogs.

A hundred breaths later, over half of the several hundred Spirit Beasts had been slain, and the remaining beasts plunged into the Fire Sea, no longer daring to show their faces.

Li Chenzhou, Yin Tianyu, and Jing Chaoyu successively let out long, high-pitched, and exhilarating howls that reached the clouds, filled with boundless joy.

The three of them knew that after repelling the Spirit Beasts, the path leading to the other side of the Fire Sea would be unobstructed, with no Spirit Beasts daring to attack again.

"Brother Li, let's move on!"

Unlike the other three, Fang Bai did not show much excitement, put away his Blood-Drinking Mad Blade, and with a faint smile, formed his Wind Wings, violently flapped them, and soared straight up into the sky.

"Brother Fang, I'm coming!"

Li Chenzhou stomped fiercely on the ground, his wings generating a whirlwind as he swiftly pursued Fang Bai.

Although the four had repelled the Spirit Beasts, the Fire Sea was still fraught with dangers. Seeing Fang Bai and Li Chenzhou leave, the Black and White Demons did not dare to slack and, after exchanging a glance, spread their wings and flew towards the other side.

As the four had predicted, although they rested several times on stone pillars during their journey, no Spirit Beasts harassed them again, and they arrived unimpeded on the land across the Fire Sea.

"My heavens... so many Fire-attribute Spirit Medicines..."

"Most of them are at least three thousand years old... and there are even some around four thousand years!"

"Spirit Medicines of such long medicinal ages are rarely seen in normal times, yet here they are as far as the eye can see, their value even exceeding that of the Essence Stone Veins at the edge of the Eternal Death Zone!"

...

Even Li Chenzhou and the Black and White Demons, who were top experts in the True Martial Realm and had weathered countless storms, couldn't help but gasp in astonishment upon landing and seeing the innumerable high-grade Fire-attribute Spirit Medicines that covered the ground, an endless and magnificent spectacle.

Although Fang Bai was an Immortal Venerable in his previous life and had seen plenty of celestial Spirit Medicines with medicinal ages of over a hundred thousand years, his current cultivation was not yet at the Innate level, and these several thousand-year-old high-grade Spirit Medicines were precisely what he needed for cultivation; therefore, he too showed a slight upward curve of his lips, displaying a look of joy upon seeing them.

Even though the Essence Stone Veins at the edge of the Eternal Death Zone were astonishingly vast, the Fire-attribute Spirit Medicines here held greater value and utility for the four of them.

"If the treasures in the core area of the Eternal Death Zone are simply these Spirit Medicines, there's no need for us to engage in a grand conflict over them."

As Li Chenzhou spoke, he glanced over at the Black and White Demons.

The Black and White Demons expressed no clear agreement, but inwardly they had accepted Li Chenzhou's words.

Originally, the Black and White Demons were determined to fight fiercely for any discovered treasures, but if said treasures were these Fire-attribute Spirit Medicines, then there was no need to fight tooth and nail against Fang Bai and Li Chenzhou.

Rarity is the essence of value.

The same holds true for Spirit Medicines.

If there were only a few of these Fire-attribute Spirit Medicines, it's likely that the Black and White Demons and Fang Bai and Li Chenzhou would have battled fiercely, with the victor claiming the Spirit Medicines. However, there were so many here that it was beyond estimation, and even if all four of them were to freely harvest, each could only take a portion home.

Thus, all of them lost any desire for competition, to avoid wasting True Essence.

While Li Chenzhou and the Black and White Demons were astonished by the Spirit Medicines before them, Fang Bai's Divine Sense had already extended towards the area ahead.

"We haven't reached the core of the Eternal Death Zone yet, there may be even more surprises waiting for us up front!"

A moment later, Fang Bai's eyes sparkled with excitement as he spoke.

"That's true!"

Li Chenzhou nodded upon hearing this, rubbing his hands together eagerly, "So what are we waiting for? Let's keep moving!"

The Black and White Demons were also quite interested, their eyes turning to Fang Bai.

As Fang Bai had said, this place was not the very core of the Eternal Death Zone, nor had they seen any trace of the Red-Horned Golden-Eyed Lion; the treasure it guarded must still lie ahead.

"There may be surprises ahead, but with them, possibly even greater risks. Brother Li, we need to be extra careful!"

Fang Bai spoke while stepping on the Fire-attribute Spirit Medicine that covered the ground, leading the way forward.

Li Chenzhou and the Black and White Demons followed closely behind.

All four of them were no longer expending their True Essence to condense wings for flight, but instead, they were using a method of rapid ground traversal. Their speed was hardly slower than flying, and they didn't need to use too much True Essence. By conserving their strength, they would be capable of fighting should they encounter danger along the way.

As they drew near the central heart of the Eternal Death Zone, the heat had almost reached the limits that Li Chenzhou and the Black and White Demons could bear. Their clothes were soaked with sweat, and they had to form a True Essence Barrier to defend themselves against the onslaught of Fire Primordial Qi, preventing their bodies from being scorched by the excessive heat.

Only Fang Bai, without a True Essence Barrier protecting him, his clothes still neat and clean, his expression unchanged, as if the high surrounding temperatures had no effect on him at all.

"If that kid isn't equipped with a treasure that wards off fire, then he must possess an extremely formidable constitution capable of contending with the Fire Primordial Qi!"

The complex gaze of the Black and White Demons followed Fang Bai, as they silently speculated in their hearts.

In the blink of an eye, the four traversed several miles. The increasingly dense Fire Primordial Qi turned the scarlet view even denser around them, greatly obstructing their vision, and their Divine Sense could only probe a few hundred meters ahead, less than half of its capacity under normal circumstances.

Howl...

Suddenly, from a place ahead where their sight could not reach, came a thunderous roar. The sound was like rolling thunder, making Li Chenzhou's and the others' ears ring. Even the surrounding dense fog-like Fire Primordial Qi seemed to have been dispersed somewhat by the roar.

Fang Bai's eyebrows furrowed slightly, while the faces of Li Chenzhou and the others all changed at once.

"The Red-Horned Golden-Eyed Lion!"

Yin Tianyu cried out in alarm.

Li Chenzhou and Jing Chaoyu immediately tensed up, gripping their Spiritual Artifacts in hand, their will to fight soaring to its peak, their entire beings taut as a tightly drawn bowstring.

The strength of the Red-Horned Golden-Eyed Lion, which could live for a long time in this extreme heat, was formidable, to say the least. Moreover, it was fighting on its home turf, able to wield the local Fire Primordial Qi at will, doubling its combat power.

Although Fang Bai and the others were Innate perfectionists or possessed equivalent combat strength, trying to slay a Red-Horned Golden Sunny Lion of the same rank was by no means an easy task.

However, since the Red-Horned Golden-Eyed Lion was present, it indicated that the treasure it guarded was certainly something extraordinary.

With excitement mingled with their tension, the four quickened their pace.

A dozen breaths later, a huge red shadow appeared before their eyes. The shadow, like a mass of moving flames, was slowly approaching them.

As the distance between them closed to about five hundred meters, the four finally saw clearly that the huge red shadow was indeed a majestic and large Red-Horned Golden-Eyed Lion, towering like a massive elephant.

As the Red-Horned Golden-Eyed Lion moved, its fur flowed and danced as if flames were leaping from its body.

Chapter 1328: Four Great Innates Join Forces

"A Red-Horned Golden-Eyed Lion that's comparable to a human at the Innate perfection realm!"

"A Red-Horned Golden-Eyed Lion over four thousand years old, every part of its body is a treasure!"

"I want the Beast Core of this Red-Horned Golden-Eyed Lion!"

"You want it just because you say so? Humph, let each rely on their ability, whoever manages to snatch it owns it!"

"Chaoyu, why... why do you target me in every matter?"

"Yin Tianyu, don't flatter yourself! I've said before, whether it's anyone competing with me for treasures, I won't show mercy! You're no exception!"

"Alright, you want the Beast Core, then I'll take the treasure guarded by the Red-Horned Golden-Eyed Lion! Does that work for you?"

"What if I want both?"

"Chaoyu, don't be greedy!"

"Humph, which Martial Artist isn't greedy?"

"Chaoyu, calm down! You know the situation we're in. Our opponents are not just that Red-Horned Golden-Eyed Lion, but also two Innate perfection powerhouses... How about this, choose either the Beast Core or the treasure it guards, and the other will be mine. What do you say?"

"Not good enough!"

...

Facing the slowly approaching Red-Horned Golden-Eyed Lion, Fang Bai, Li Chenzhou, Yin Tianyu, and Jing Chaoyu all gleamed with ambition, while the Black and White Demons even started arguing over the possession of its Beast Core.

In the end, Yin Tianyu successfully persuaded Jing Chaoyu, and the two agreed to set aside their differences and discuss the distribution of the treasure after defeating the Red-Horned Golden-Eyed Lion.

Fang Bai and Li Chenzhou stood a few steps away from the Black and White Demons, listening to them discussing as if nobody else was present, almost treating them as if they were air, and they couldn't help but laugh at each other.

"They are completely ignoring us!"

Li Chenzhou chuckled to Fang Bai.

Fang Bai smiled lightly and said, "Then let's see who has the last laugh!"

His words had barely faded, when he seemed to sense something, his expression slightly changed, and he looked beyond the approaching Red-Horned Golden-Eyed Lion.

Immediately, Li Chenzhou, Yin Tianyu, and Jing Chaoyu also felt something, all turned their heads, looked in the same direction as Fang Bai, and their expressions changed simultaneously.

Behind the Red-Horned Golden-Eyed Lion that appeared first, about several meters away, emerged another Red-Horned Golden Sunny Lion of the same size and combat strength, with a palm-sized black patch on its forehead; Fang Bai and others recognized at once that it was a female lion.

And a few meters behind the female lion, followed eight slightly smaller Red-Horned Golden-Eyed Lions, comparable to human Innate High Rank warriors.

"This... this is clearly a family of Spirit Beasts!"

"Two comparable to human Innate perfection warriors, eight comparable to human Innate High Rank warriors... the combat power of this Spirit Beast family is frightening!"

"If both sides fight individually, we might end up being devoured by these Red-Horned Golden-Eyed Lions!"

"Only by joining forces can we have a chance to win!"

"As for the distribution of treasures, let's discuss it after defeating these Red-Horned Golden-Eyed Lions, shall we?"

"Agreed!"

Faced with ten top-tier Fire-based Spiritual Beasts approaching menacingly, even Fang Bai felt a hint of oppression, let alone Li Chenzhou and the other two.

Thus, the four quickly made a deal and decided to temporarily ally themselves to confront the ten Red-Horned Golden-Eyed Lions together.

In other regions of the True Martial Realm, there are also Red-Horned Golden-Eyed Lions. Li Chenzhou and the others had encountered them before, but this particular family of Red-Horned Golden-Eyed Lions could certainly be regarded as the supreme rulers of this type of Spirit Beast, a situation even a high-rank Innate Sect would find extremely troublesome.

Facing such a formidable presence, Fang Bai and his team had to concentrate all their attention on the threat.

The ten Red-Horned Golden-Eyed Lions, comprising two large and eight smaller ones, advanced towards Fang Bai and his team not too slowly, their eyes full of ferocity and murderous intent, and flames rising and swirling around them.

With every step closer to Fang Bai and his companions, they felt the temperature around them increase by degrees.

Li Chenzhou, Yin Tianyu, and Jing Chaoyu felt as if they were in a steamer, sweating profusely, unable to conjure a True Essence Protective Barrier to counteract the heat.

Roar—

Enraged by the intrusion into their territory, the ten Red-Horned Golden-Eyed Lions, when they were several dozen feet away from Fang Bai's group, suddenly let out a low roar like thunder, leaped high into the air, and pounced towards Fang Bai's group with ten dazzling trails of fire.

The blazing flames filled the sky as they attacked.

Fang Bai and his companions turned pale, feeling a terrifying destructive power within those surging flames that seemed capable of melting hardened steel, realizing that being engulfed by those flames would result in severe injuries.

Only Fang Bai understood that the truly formidable thing in this Eternal Death Zone was not these ten Red-Horned Golden-Eyed Lions, but the unseen Spiritual Fire they were guarding.

The ten Red-Horned Golden-Eyed Lions were already powerful, and with the help of the pure Fire Primordial Qi released by the Spiritual Fire, their combat power had doubled. Among the four, except for Fang Bai, the other three—also Fire System Martial Artists—had never seen the Spiritual Fire and did not know how to utilize it for their benefit.

Just how terrifying these ten doubly powerful Red-Horned Golden-Eyed Lions were, perhaps Li Chenzhou and the others didn't fully understand, but Fang Bai knew, and thought that if handled improperly, today, unless he alone could escape, the rest were likely to perish here.

"Strike together, contain the fire!"

In urgency, Fang Bai shouted, and at the same time, thrust both fists forward, creating a fiery barrier several meters across in front of him.

Without much thought, Li Chenzhou and the others instinctively pushed their palms forward alongside Fang Bai.

The Fire Primordial Qi unleashed by the four Innate perfection strong practitioners formed a ten-meter-wide fiery barrier attempting to block the ten pouncing Red-Horned Golden-Eyed Lions.

The four knew that if they did not cooperate wholeheartedly, the consequences would be unimaginable, so they acted in perfect harmony and exerted all their strength.

Boom!

The ten Red-Horned Golden-Eyed Lions, carrying towering flames, brutally crashed into the fiery barrier formed by the gathered Fire Primordial Qi of Fang Bai and his team. The barrier shook violently but did not collapse and successfully held off the ten ferocious Red-Horned Golden-Eyed Lions.

"Phew..."

All four, including Fang Bai, breathed a sigh of relief.

"These Red-Horned Golden-Eyed Lions are stronger than we imagined. Everyone should be extremely cautious!

Fang Bai said loudly, noticing the ten Red-Horned Golden-Eyed Lions charging again even more fiercely, and hastily exclaimed, "The Spirit Beasts are fierce; if we continue to defend like this, we will eventually run out of True Yuan. We'll face great peril! Here I have a set of formations for the four of us to use together against the Red-Horned Golden-Eyed Lions. Listen carefully now!"

He spoke rapidly, conveying the secrets of the combined formations to Li Chenzhou and the Black and White Demons.

Li Chenzhou and the others, all Innate perfection strong practitioners, were exceedingly intelligent and grasped about seventy to eighty percent of it after just one explanation.

Chapter 1329: Red Silkworm Spirit Fire

"Form the Formation!"

As the Red-Horned Golden-Eyed Lions broke through the layer of fire that Fang Bai and his three companions had jointly unleashed, Fang Bai shouted again, swiftly moving to the eastern position.

Li Chenzhou, Yin Tianyu, and Jing Chaoyu simultaneously shifted their stances, occupying the west, south, and north respectively, with Spiritual Artifacts in hand, True Yuan condensing, ready to directly confront the attack of the ten Red-Horned Golden Sunny Lions.

Fang Bai knew tens of thousands of Formations in his previous life, covering everything from Holy Rank to Immortal Rank, and from offensive to defensive tactics.

After his rebirth through possession, all the Formations from his past life were still in his mind, and even the weakest Holy Rank Formation from his previous existence was extremely powerful in the True Martial Realm.

The Formation that the four of them had now formed was the "Four Directions Boundless Formation," which in Fang Bai's past life was one of the most common Holy Rank Formations used by Foundation Establishment cultivators in the three thousand great worlds.

However, now the "Four Directions Boundless Formation" was deployed by Fang Bai, Li Chenzhou, Yin Tianyu, and Jing Chaoyu, four Innate Perfection powerhouses, and could at best only unleash one-tenth to one-fifth of the Formation's greatest potential.

Even so, Fang Bai felt this Formation should be just about enough to deal with the ten Red-Horned Golden-Eyed Lions.

While the "Four Directions Boundless Formation" seemed simple, it actually contained the Great Dao Principles, extremely profound, capable of increasing the combined strength of Fang Bai and his allies by more than double.

Meaning, by employing the "Four Directions Boundless Formation" against their foes, the four could exert the battle strength of at least eight Innate Perfection powerhouses. With this, even a direct confrontation with the ten Red-Horned Golden-Eyed Lions would not be feared.

However, compared to Fang Bai's composed demeanor, Li Chenzhou, Yin Tianyu, and Jing Chaoyu were internally unsure, doubting whether the Offensive and Defensive Great Formation hastily taught by Fang Bai could really withstand the ten Red-Horned Golden-Eyed Lions.

If what Fang Bai had said was just empty talk, then their lives might very well be lost here today.

"Swoosh..."

Amidst the sound of flames swishing at high speed, the ten Red-Horned Golden-Eyed Lions encircled by rich Fire Primordial Qi charged like lightning, not launching a direct attack but surrounding Fang Bai's group, waiting for an opportunity to strike.

"There are ten Red-Horned Golden-Eyed Lions here; after we slay them all, the ten Beast Cores will be evenly divided among the three of you, so there's no need to fight desperately for them anymore!"

Facing the menacing Red-Horned Golden-Eyed Lions, Fang Bai's expression remained unchanged, smiling and saying to Li Chenzhou and the Black and White Demons.

A Beast Core from an Innate Perfection level Spirit Beast was highly valuable, but the total value of eight High Rank Innate level Spirit Beast Cores was not inferior. If Fang Bai and his comrades could really slay the ten Red-Horned Golden-Eyed Lions and then distribute the Beast Cores this way, Li Chenzhou and the Black and White Demons naturally wouldn't object.

But what about Fang Bai? Had he no interest in the cores of these ten beasts? Didn't he want to partake in the sharing?

Li Chenzhou and the Black and White Demons guessed correctly; Fang Bai truly wasn't interested in the Beast Cores of the ten Red-Horned Golden-Eyed Lions.

Fang Bai had just faintly sensed a strand of familiar and comforting aura.

That strand of aura was clearly from a Spiritual Fire, and although there could be thousands of kilometers between it and Fang Bai, the aura it exuded contained a terrifyingly powerful force of fire.

In his past life, Fang Bai had subdued and assimilated countless types of Spiritual Fire; in a sense, he and those fires had merged into one, indistinguishable from each other.

Latterly, when Fang Bai's physical body was no more, his soul took over a new body to be reborn, and the whereabouts of those subdued and assimilated Spiritual Fires became unknown.

If it were some unfamiliar Spiritual Fire and too far away, Fang Bai might not be able to sense its presence, but the Spiritual Fire that gave birth to the Eternal Death Zone was one Fang Bai possessed in his past life, thus he had a unique ability to sense it.

Fang Bai knew that the flame was named "Red Silkworm", one of the Spiritual Fires he had subdued in the three thousand great worlds.

The so-called "Red Silkworm" refers to the Spiritual Fire that is the size and shape of a silkworm larva, with flames that are red.

Among the Spiritual Fires of his past life, "Red Silkworm" was one of the weakest. However, having come to the True Martial Realm, it caused various anomalies within a thousand miles, showing its formidable power is not to be underestimated.

Fang Bai thought to himself that if he could once again subdue and devour the "Red Silkworm" Spiritual Fire, his strength would surely take a great leap.

Fang Bai clenched his fists, excitement boiling in his heart, struggling to suppress it so as not to reveal his emotions to Li Chenzhou and the others.

"Brother Fang, we three will share the Beast Cores, but what about you? You're not setting your sights on the treasure guarded by the Red-Horned Golden-Eyed Lion, are you?"

Li Chenzhou asked with a smile.

The Black and White Demons silently glanced at Fang Bai, deciding in their hearts that if the treasure guarded by the Red-Horned Golden-Eyed Lion was much more valuable than the Beast Cores they obtained, they would definitely negotiate with Fang Bai, even if they couldn't get the treasure guarded by the Red-Horned Golden-Eyed Lion, they would fight for more benefits, otherwise how could they be content?

Fang Bai waved his hand and said, "The Red-Horned Golden Sunny Lion isn't guarding any treasure, just a spark of flame! If you have the ability, feel free to take it! But I advise you, that spark of flame is a Heaven and Earth Strange Fire, its power far beyond imagination, you won't be able to handle it!"

As he spoke, Fang Bai's gaze turned towards the direction of the "Red Silkworm" Spiritual Fire, only to see the sky there immersed in deep red, and the Essence Energy also reached an extreme concentration. He could hardly wait to fly over and see for himself.

Although Li Chenzhou had not known Fang Bai for long, he knew him well and was aware that he didn't make baseless remarks. Since he said so, that so-called spark of flame must be extraordinary.

Li Chenzhou trusted Fang Bai, but his curiosity was piqued, wanting to see what the flame Fang Bai spoke of looked like to warrant the protection of a Red-Horned Golden-Eyed Lion family.

As for the Black and White Demons, unaware of the existence of Spiritual Fire in the world, they scoffed at Fang Bai's words, firmly disbelieving that ten Red-Horned Golden-Eyed Lions would guard just a spark.

Fang Bai didn't expect the Black and White Demons to believe him. He just chuckled and fell silent, his gaze fixed on the Red-Horned Golden-Eyed Lion opposite him.

Spirit Beasts are inherently intelligent creatures. The ten Red-Horned Golden-Eyed Lions seemed to have sensed the danger posed by the formation made by the four human powerhouses they were surrounding, refraining from attacking hastily, and instead circling the four, seemingly looking for weaknesses in the formation.

"Kill!"

The ten Red-Horned Golden-Eyed Lions were patient in besieging Fang Bai and his group, but Fang Bai had no time to stand off with them here. Seeing that they were wary of the "Four Corners Boundless Formation" crafted by Fang Bai's group and dared not attack, he took the initiative.

The "Four Corners Boundless Formation" is like a trigger that once pulled sets everything in motion.

Fang Bai stood at the Array Eye of the formation, the key point of the entire formation. Once he moved, the entire formation started to operate, and Li Chenzhou and the Black and White Demons were compelled to make their moves as well.

Facing two High-Rank Red-Horned Golden Sunny Lions, Fang Bai wanted to assert his prowess in one strike. With a loud shout, he swung the Blood-Drinking Mad Blade in his hand with all his might.

Two crimson blade lights, emanating from the Blood-Drinking Mad Blade, separated and simultaneously slashed towards the two Red-Horned Golden Sunny Lions.

Chapter 1330: The World of Fire

"Kill!"

"Kill!"

"Kill!"

As Fang Bai swung his blade to strike, Li Chenzhou, Yin Tianyu, and Jing Chaoyu also shouted in unison, each pouring their full strength into attacking the Red-Horned Golden-Eyed Lions with the Spiritual Artifacts in their hands.

After launching their attacks, it was only then that Li Chenzhou and the others realized how wondrous the formation Fang Bai had taught them was, and they couldn't help feeling ecstatic.

Once the "Four Directions Limitless Array" was initiated, it acted like a powerful Gathering Essence Array, continuously drawing in the Fire Primordial Qi from the surrounding space and enhancing Fang Bai and his comrades.

As such, the power of Fang Bai and his companions' attacks and defenses were more than doubled compared to when they fought alone.

The ten Red-Horned Golden-Eyed Lions they were facing had an overall combat strength equivalent to that of five Innate perfection Martial Artists.

Therefore, with the power of the "Four Directions Limitless Array," Fang Bai and his team were akin to eight Innate perfection Martial Artists fighting against five, gaining an overwhelming advantage.

However, this advantage was clear to Fang Bai from the beginning, while Li Chenzhou, Yin Tianyu, and Jing Chaoyu only came to understand it once they took action.

They never expected that the formation hastily taught by Fang Bai, seemingly simple, would wield such unimaginable power once activated, powerful to an incredible extent.

"Puff!"

"Puff!"

The blades flashed, blood sprayed.

The two blade lights Fang Bai unleashed with the Blood-Drinking Mad Blade, unstoppable like a bamboo splitter, cut the massive bodies of two high-rank Red-Horned Golden-Eyed Lions from the forehead down, splitting them in half from meters away.

An immense amount of beast blood surged out in an instant, the blood mist spread in all directions, and the smell was nauseating.

Two fist-sized Beast Cores, rolling amidst a pool of fresh blood on the ground, radiated brilliance, dazzling and eye-catching, with streams of pure, rich Fire Primordial Qi seeping out from within the cores.

"The Blood-Drinking Mad Blade is even sharper than before!"

Fang Bai held the blade in his right hand and gently stroked the blade body with his left, soothing the increasingly intense Evil Qi of the Blood-Drinking Mad Blade after it had tasted blood again.

Having so easily slain two high-rank Innate Spirit Beasts, Fang Bai knew this was not only due to the boost from the "Four Directions Limitless Array" but also because of the growing ferocity of the Blood-Drinking Mad Blade.

Since acquiring the Blood-Drinking Mad Blade, Fang Bai had found that the blade, like himself, was also undergoing constant upgrades.

However, his own upgrades were through absorbing Heaven and Earth Origin Energy or with the aid of Cultivation Resources, while the Blood-Drinking Mad Blade upgraded by consuming the blood of Martial Artists or Spirit Beasts.

Earlier, when crossing the Fire Sea, Fang Bai used the Blood-Drinking Mad Blade to slay many Innate Spirit Beasts. After the Blood-Drinking Mad Blade had its fill of the blood of Innate Spirit Beasts, it underwent a stunning transformation, and its power received an increase beyond Fang Bai's imagination.

While Fang Bai had slain two high-rank Innate Red-Horned Golden-Eyed Lions, the attacks from Li Chenzhou, Yin Tianyu, and Jing Chaoyu also yielded good results. Although they didn't slay their respective Red-Horned Golden-Eyed Lions, they inflicted severe injuries on three of them.

Thus, in this wave of attacks, out of the ten Red-Horned Golden Sunny Lions, two were slain and three were severely injured with no more combat power, leaving only five that could still fight. The tide had turned in an instant.

At this moment, Li Chenzhou and the others held the utmost admiration for Fang Bai, and their confidence in the "Four Directions Limitless Array" they formed together rose tremendously.

With such an exquisite array, it wasn't just ten Innate Red-Horned Golden-Eyed Lions; even if a few more came at them, they could slay them and gain more Beast Cores.

"They're running away!"

"We haven't slain those two Innate perfection-level Red-Horned Golden-Eyed Lions yet!"

"Chase after them! Don't let a single one escape!"

Just as Fang Bai and his group of four were about to continue their attack, unexpectedly, the remaining five Red-Horned Golden-Eyed Lions, sensing the situation was adverse, turned around and fled into the dense and pure fire primordial qi ahead, disappearing from view.

Fang Bai and his companions were momentarily stunned. It was against the nature of these violent, aggressive, and desperate fire-based spiritual beasts to run away in such a panic.

"Brother Li, take those two beast cores for yourself. They are not my goal... The path ahead is even more perilous. I will go ahead first, you take care of yourself!"

After leaving these words for Li Chenzhou, Fang Bai chased in the direction of the fleeing Red-Horned Golden-Eyed Lions.

Fang Bai moved with astonishing speed, and in the blink of an eye, he had vanished from the sight of Li Chenzhou and the others.

Li Chenzhou, Jing Chaoyu, and Yin Tianyu looked in the direction where Fang Bai disappeared, internally struggling with the question of "to chase or not to chase," before finally moving forward in unison without a word.

Before they left, Li Chenzhou spread his right hand and made a grasping motion in the air above the two beast cores from the Red-Horned Golden-Eyed Lions on the ground, and the cores flew into his hand before he casually tossed them into his spatial ring.

The truth was, Li Chenzhou and his group also felt the extreme heat of the region ahead; given their own strength, they probably couldn't travel much further and would have to stop.

However, they were somewhat reluctant to turn back, thinking about the treasures guarded by the Red-Horned Golden-Eyed Lions, and wanted to see if the treasure was indeed just a flame, as Fang Bai had mentioned.

If it was indeed a flame, they also wanted to know what was so special about it, what caused the anomaly within thousands of miles, turning it into what most martial artists called a forbidden zone of life.

After traveling several miles, the scenery before them changed again. The ground, sky, and everything around them were a crimson red, as if they had entered a world of fire.

The fire primordial qi was so thick it seemed tangible, coiling around them and easily breaking through their true essence protective barriers, seeping into their bodies. The searing pain that penetrated deep into their bones almost seemed to melt their flesh.

"The fire primordial qi here is too fierce; I'm struggling to hold on!"

"If we continue forward, we might lose our lives!"

"I wonder where Brother Fang has reached... I hope he's all right!"

"Since he dared to venture forward, he must have a way to preserve his life!"

"Let's hope so!"

"Shall we retreat first?"

"Okay."

After exchanging a few words, Li Chenzhou and his group, with true essence protecting their bodies, quickly retreated to a safe area. They sat down cross-legged to recover and meditate, patiently waiting for any news from Fang Bai.

Li Chenzhou knew that although Fang Bai was passionate, he was not impetuous. If he encountered an insurmountable difficulty, he would surely retreat.

Unbeknownst to Li Chenzhou and his companions, as they retreated to a safe place, Fang Bai had already reached the core region of the Eternal Death Zone, clenching his teeth, inching step by step towards a small cluster of flames that appeared in his line of sight.

Each step he took was extremely arduous. His clothes had already disintegrated into dust and vanished in the intense heat emitted by the cluster of flames, leaving his skin - even whiter and more delicate than a woman's - red and fiery as if he himself was about to ignite.

"Red Silkworm... it really is the Red Silkworm... haha, who would have thought it would end up in a place like this!"

Muttering to himself, Fang Bai looked at the cluster of flames with a trace of joy in his eyes.