

Doctor 1651

Chapter 1651: Fourfold Defense

After all, Gui Jiuding is a Thunder Tribulation Second Tier expert with extraordinary vision. At first glance, he knew that the young man, Fang Bai, was not simple.

However, Gui Jiuding did not associate Fang Bai with the adversary Zhong Guiyi had mentioned.

After all, Fang Bai was far too young and was not the Thunder Tribulation first-tier expert Zhong Guiyi had described.

Gui Jiuding took a deep look at Fang Bai, planning to leave, but was drawn by the howl emanating from Fang Bai's mouth.

"Is it you?"

Gui Jiuding's gaze condensed, landing in front of Fang Bai, with a surprised expression, saying, "Was it you who used the howl to control the spirit beasts, causing a beast tide and resulting in chaos in my sect?"

Fang Bai seemed to foresee Gui Jiuding coming, stopped his howling, and nodded with a smile, saying, "That's right, it was me! You must be the Supreme Elder of the Wuya Sect, Gui Jiuding? Nice to meet you, I'm Fang Bai!"

Gui Jiuding scrutinized Fang Bai from head to toe, the surprise in his eyes becoming more apparent.

"You... have a dual attribute innate spiritual root?"

Gui Jiuding's eyes lit up as if a fierce wolf saw the most delicious prey.

Fang Bai said, "That's correct!"

Gui Jiuding asked again, “Your cultivation level is only at the initial Soul Severing stage, so why does the aura emanating from you rival even that of a Soul Severing perfection expert or even higher?”

Before Fang Bai could reply, he answered himself, “Understood... with your kind of dual attribute innate spiritual root, you naturally belong to the prodigies of Martial Dao. And Martial Dao prodigies mostly have the ability to challenge those above their level!”

Fang Bai laughed, “Smart!”

Gui Jiuding looked at Fang Bai with undisguised admiration in his eyes, asking, “Would you be willing to become my disciple, joining the Wuya Sect?”

Gui Jiuding thought to himself that as a dignified Thunder Tribulation Second Tier expert, countless martial artists in the world begged tearfully at his feet to take them as apprentices, and he might not even agree. Now, expressing the intention to recruit this young man in front of him, how could he not be grateful beyond words?

Fang Bai was slightly taken aback, not expecting Gui Jiuding to want to take him as a disciple, and asked with a teasing smile, “What benefits are there to taking you as my master?”

Gui Jiuding said, “There are many benefits! First, all my Martial Arts Techniques are yours to learn; second, I will meticulously guide you, helping you breakthrough bottlenecks in your cultivation; third, the cultivation resources of Wuya Sect are at your disposal; fourth, with me as your master, few in the world would dare provoke you...”

Gui Jiuding listed many benefits in one breath, feeling that if he were Fang Bai, he would definitely be tempted.

But Fang Bai wasn’t interested at all, shaking his head and saying, “Sorry, I’m not interested in any of your benefits! What I’m most interested in now is to trap you in this valley! Well, if I can trap you here for two or three hours, your Wuya Sect will probably be finished!”

Pausing as if to provoke Gui Jiuding further, Fang Bai also said, "Oh, I forgot to tell you something: Your sect's Elder Zhong Guiyi is actually one of our people!"

Gui Jiuding's brow furrowed slightly, yet he was not angry and said, "You mean... Zhong Guiyi is a traitor? Fine, I'll personally kill him when I return! You... truly don't want to become my disciple?"

Before Fang Bai could answer, he continued, "Understood... geniuses like you all have a proud spirit, and won't easily bow to others! Fine, it seems I need to show you some real skills, or else you won't be willing to acknowledge me as your master!"

Gui Jiuding believed in the supremacy of fists and strength, and anyone who disobeyed him would be subdued with force.

As he spoke, his right palm swiftly shot out, condensing Spiritual Energy into a formidable True Yuan palm, fingers spread wide, which was aiming to grasp Fang Bai.

Gui Jiuding had taken a liking to Fang Bai's aptitude, wanting to take him as a disciple so he could pass on his legacy. However, since Fang Bai showed no interest, Gui Jiuding decided to teach him a harsh lesson and subdue him with strength.

As a Thunder Tribulation Second Tier expert, his casual attack was unparalleled in power, and if Fang Bai's combat strength could only contend against a Soul Severing perfection expert, then this grasp would be inescapable for him.

"I won't keep you company!"

Fang Bai's purpose was to trap Gui Jiuding, preventing him from attending to the Wuya Sect for a short time, rather than engaging in a fierce battle with him.

Therefore, upon sensing Gui Jiuding's intent to attack, Fang Bai had already flown away from the valley and landed on the peak at the valley's edge.

"Haha, having set my eyes on you, you still wish to flee?"

Gui Jiuding laughed loudly, and the True Yuan palm chased after Fang Bai, rapidly closing the distance between them.

However, just as Fang Bai's figure exited the valley's mouth, he activated the pre-arranged fourfold grand formation.

This fourfold formation consisted of the Twin Dragons Slaying Immortals Array, Four Directions Limitless Array, Five Elements Immortal Extermination Formation, and the Nine Bends Soul Loss Formation. Each array, upon activation, formed a dazzling Spiritual Qi shield.

The four Spiritual Qi shields layered atop one another, sealing the entire valley like gigantic pot lids.

And Gui Jiuding, trapped at the bottom of the valley, found himself like a formidable beast trapped in a cage.

"What formation is this?"

Despite having experienced countless battles in his life and seen many formations, big and small, Gui Jiuding had never encountered the fourfold grand formation set by Fang Bai, unheard of by him.

The innate keen intuition of a Thunder Tribulation expert made him realize that these four formations were far from ordinary.

"Do you think you can trap me with this formation? No way! Break it for me!"

However, the arrogance inherent in a Thunder Tribulation expert made Gui Jiuding disdainful of the fourfold array. He shifted his grasp to a fist and punched upward, aiming to shatter the fourfold Spiritual Qi shields above and soar into the sky, intending to capture Fang Bai.

"Boom!"

His massive Spiritual Qi fist struck the Twin Dragons Slaying Immortals Array set up by Fang Bai, causing the first layer's defense Qi shield to tremble violently but showing no sign of breaking.

The Twin Dragons Slaying Immortals Array is a comprehensive offensive and defensive array. Gui Jiuding's initial attack failed and instead triggered the counter-force of the Twin Dragons Slaying Immortals Array.

"Whoosh!"

"Whoosh!"

A black and a red, two fire dragons several meters long formed from Water Element Qi and Fire Primordial Qi, swung their enormous bodies, spewing fireballs at Gui Jiuding in a fierce counterattack.

Those fire dragons, integrated with two types of spiritual fire subdued by Fang Bai, were intensely hot and extraordinarily destructive, instantly putting Gui Jiuding under tremendous pressure.

"Those fire dragons actually contain spiritual fire?"

In the past, Gui Jiuding had traveled through three thousand grand worlds and encountered a Thunder Tribulation expert with spiritual fire, knowing that once spiritual fire is unleashed, thousands of miles turn red, illustrating its formidable power. Even for an expert like himself, facing spiritual fire attacks required full defense.

Upon discovering that Fang Bai possessed spiritual fire, Gui Jiuding was both astonished by the might of the spiritual fire and internally heated with desire, thinking that if the spiritual fire could be his, leveraging its power, his strength would increase significantly.

Gui Jiuding abandoned the idea of taking Fang Bai as a disciple and decided to eliminate this young man to make his spiritual fire his own.

Chapter 1652: So It Was You

"Chirp!"

A long cry echoed across the night sky, transmitting far into the distant mountains.

The one who emitted the cry was Fang Bai.

Standing atop the mountain peak, he saw Gui Jiuding trapped in the valley below, and with a sigh of relief, he began to send messages to Lu Xiongfei and others through his cry.

"The Supreme Elder of Wuya Sect has been successfully trapped by Fang Bai! Brothers and friends, divide the Wuya Sect's thousands of years of cultivation resources, battle here! Follow me to kill!"

Hidden in the valleys, ravines, and dense forests ten miles away, tens of thousands of strong fighters, upon hearing Fang Bai's cry, under the leadership of Lu Xiongfei, soared into the air like birds and charged towards Wuya Sect a hundred miles away, wielding spiritual artifacts.

Thinking of destroying Wuya Sect and then being able to split their millennia-old foundation, every strong fighter's face was filled with excitement and exhilaration.

These fighters, mainly at Nascent Soul and Soul Severing cultivation, considered Wuya Sect a strong sect where even spiritual medicine grown in their herb gardens was invaluable.

There were rumors that Wuya Sect held a secret Spirit Stone vein, where countless Royal Grade Spirit Stones were stored. If they could seize several hundred or even thousands, the trip would not be in vain.

The cultivation resources of Wuya Sect provided Lu Xiongfei and other strong fighters with immense motivation; many fighters wielded spiritual artifacts and shouted loudly in flight to bolster their momentum.

Less than half an hour later, tens of thousands of strong fighters arrived at Wuya Sect, launching another attack following the previous beast tide.

This attack was even more fierce than the beast tide.

The disciples of Wuya Sect, who had just been ravaged by thousands of Spirit Beasts, had not even caught their breath when they faced an equal number of strong fighters' attacks and could only continue to pick up spiritual artifacts to counterattack.

However, having already exhausted so much spiritual energy in the previous battle with the Spirit Beasts, many Wuya Sect disciples were already at the end of their strength—facing tens of thousands of ferocious martial artists, they could not resist and were quickly overwhelmed.

Some clever disciples, seeing the unfavorable situation, turned and fled.

In the minds of these disciples, only Wuya Peak, where the Sect Master Hall of Wuya Sect was located, was still intact; as long as they could escape there, they would be safe with the protection of the sect's upper echelon.

"Lu Xiongfei, it turns out it's you!"

When Lu Xiongfei led several Soul Severing perfection strong fighters and charged to the sky above Wuya Peak, Gui Zhengrong, the Wuya Sect Master, upon seeing him, was unable to contain his fury, and with the two elders behind him and several stewards who had escaped from the outer area, flew into the air to confront Lu Xiongfei and the others.

This time, Wuya Sect encountered a chaos not seen in a thousand years, and Gui Zhengrong had been unable to guess who the hidden manipulator was. Upon seeing Lu Xiongfei, he finally understood.

Yet he couldn't understand why Lu Xiongfei, who had always shown great respect to Wuya Sect, and the strong fighters of the City Lord Mansion of Wushuang City, suddenly attacked Wuya Sect.

Who had given them such courage?

Even if they weren't afraid of him, the Wuya Sect Master, or the countless disciples of Wuya Sect, weren't they afraid of the only surviving Supreme Elder of Wuya Sect, Gui Jiuding?

It was known that just Gui Jiuding alone could sweep through the City Lord Mansion and obliterate Lu Xiongfei and the others.

Gui Zhengrong couldn't understand, nor did he have the time to ponder.

"Yes, it is I!"

Lu Xiongfei, seeing that his side had already gained an overwhelming advantage, felt exceedingly pleased. As long as Gui Zhengrong was taken down, the overall situation would be settled, and Wuya Sect would have no chance to rise again. He laughed aloud, full of pride.

"Sect Master Gui, long time no see!"

At the end of his laughter, Lu Xiongfei pointed his Fire Cloud Spear at Gui Zhengrong and said, "Here to take your head!"

Gui Zhengrong's eyes were bloodshot, and he shouted in fury, "Lu Xiongfei, why do you do this?"

Lu Xiongfei said, "No one likes to be under others, nor do I. As the City Lord of Wushuang City, yet being controlled by your Wuya Sect and having to follow your lead, I've had enough over the years! So, I want to overturn this, I want to break free from my shackles!"

Gui Zhengrong sternly said, "You are audacious! Don't think that just because you have the upper hand now, you believe the overall situation is set. When the Supreme Elder of Wuya Sect returns, a single palm strike will annihilate all of you!"

Lu Xiongfei chuckled, "Return? Not in a short while, Gui Jiuding is unlikely to return!"

Seeing Gui Zhengrong's expression change subtly, he continued, "Little Brother Fang said his formation can trap Gui Jiuding for about two or three hours. Hmm, that's plenty of time to wipe you out!"

Gui Zhengrong didn't know who the "Little Brother Bai" Lu Xiongfei spoke of was and sneered coldly, "What formation can trap our sect's Supreme Elder? Lu Xiongfei, don't be too smug!"

Lu Xiongfei said, "Whether or not I'm smug, we shall see! I have faith in Little Brother Fang!"

He currently shifted his attention beyond Gui Zhengrong to Zhong Guiyi, standing behind him, and said with a smile, "Elder Zhong, if not now, when?"

Upon hearing this, Gui Zhengrong and the other higher-ups of Wuya Sect were all taken aback, instinctively turning around to look at Zhong Guiyi.

At that moment, Zhong Guiyi made his move.

He roared, thrusting his palms forward. Two Spirit Qi Big Palms struck the two Wuya Sect elders in front of him.

The attention of the two Wuya Sect elders was entirely on Lu Xiongfei and the others in front, not expecting an attack from behind by Zhong Guiyi.

Zhong Guiyi's sudden action left them no time to even form a Defense Qi Shield; they were hit hard on the back by the Spirit Qi Big Palms, their bodies flying forward, spewing blood from their mouths, critically injured.

The direction in which the two Wuya Sect elders flew was precisely towards Lu Xiongfei.

Lu Xiongfei, as if anticipating this, thrust his Fire Cloud Spear forward like lightning; two spears formed of Fire Spirit Energy whistled forward, easily piercing the chests of the two Wuya Sect elders, leaving a blood hole as thick as an arm in their hearts.

The higher the cultivation level of the martial artist, the stronger the body becomes. However, there will always be vulnerable areas on the body, like the head, heart, and Qi Sea.

When martial artists reach a certain level of strength, losing limbs is considered just a minor injury, and Limb Regeneration is not impossible.

However, if the head, heart, or Qi Sea is destroyed, it becomes a fatal injury, leading to immediate death.

The two Wuya Sect elders, having their hearts pierced, first wore expressions of disbelief, followed by looks of pain and despair. After struggling a few times in the air, they fell to the ground, perishing.

"Elder Zhong, you..."

Gui Zhengrong looked at Zhong Guiyi, who had withdrawn his hands and stood there with a sinister face, filled with disbelief.

He previously couldn't understand why Lu Xiongfei dared to attack Wuya Sect; now he couldn't understand why Zhong Guiyi would suddenly turn against them and engage in fratricide.

Gui Zhengrong suddenly understood why only Zhong Guiyi returned after going with Elder Liu to find the one controlling the Spirit Beasts; it must be that Elder Liu fell victim to Zhong Guiyi's treachery too.

In this way, of the four great elders of Wuya Sect, only Zhong Guiyi was left.

But what made Gui Zhengrong want to vomit blood was that it was Zhong Guiyi who killed the other three great elders, causing Wuya Sect great loss.

Chapter 1653: Signs of Defeat

"Zhong Guiyi, I'll tear you limb from limb!"

Gui Zhengrong's eyes were bloodshot, his face flushed red with fury to the extreme.

Originally, if not for Zhong Guiyi's betrayal, the high-ranking members of the Wuya Sect, including himself, could have jointly fought against Lu Xiongfei and the others.

Even if the Supreme Elder Gui Jiuding was temporarily trapped, as long as he could break free in time and return to join forces with them, they could still easily reverse the tide of the battle. By then, Lu Xiongfei and the others might not even have the chance to escape.

But now, among the high-ranking members of Wuya Sect, aside from himself, three of the four Elders had fallen, the only one left, Zhong Guiyi, had betrayed, and only half of the eight Stewards remained.

This kind of power seemed somewhat thin against the likes of Lu Xiongfei and his group.

If people like them fall or flee, then even if the Supreme Elder returns, he would be powerless to save them alone.

Now, it's all about how long they can hold out.

If they can hold out until the Supreme Elder returns, not only will the Sect be saved, Lu Xiongfei and his people will have no burial place, and from then on, Wushuang City would be completely under the control of Wuya Sect.

If they are defeated before the Supreme Elder's return, then it's very likely that Wuya Sect will face destruction.

The once-mighty Wuya Sect falling into such a dire situation was something Gui Zhengrong had never imagined before. He was angry and unwilling, so he vented all his fury on Zhong Guiyi.

He roared fiercely, his right palm striking out, intending to smash Zhong Guiyi into a pulp.

Zhong Guiyi, knowing he was no match for Gui Zhengrong, would never meet him head-on. Before Gui Zhengrong could strike, he had already fled far away.

"Gui Zhengrong, your opponent is me!"

Lu Xiongfei shouted loudly, moving like lightning, positioning himself between Gui Zhengrong and Zhong Guiyi. Facing Gui Zhengrong, the Fire Cloud Spear pointed directly at Gui Zhengrong's chest, he loudly declared, "Your Wuya Sect's situation has already declined. If you don't want all your disciples to be slain, you better end your own life here!"

Gui Zhengrong's face twisted grotesquely as he laughed wickedly, "It's not decided yet, don't get cocky! Taste my stick first!"

In his hand was a Spiritual Artifact, an arm-thick iron rod named "Purple Gold Wishing Pole", when swung, its force far exceeded ten thousand pounds. With his words, the iron rod flew from his hand, spinning and smashing towards Lu Xiongfei.

Lu Xiongfei's Fire Cloud Spear flew out, slicing through the air, thrusting forward quickly, cutting through the air with a dazzling red glow.

As the two Spiritual Artifacts flew, they emitted a faint thunderous sound, carrying with them a majestic momentum, colliding fiercely, the buzzing sound was deafening, and sparks flew like fireworks.

Gui Zhengrong and Lu Xiongfei's cultivation levels were equal. The Purple Gold Wishing Pole in his hand was also a lower Royal Grade Spiritual Artifact, of equal power to Lu Xiongfei's. As soon as they engaged, they were locked in a fierce battle.

Lu Xiongfei and his group came with the mindset of a quick battle, naturally not intending to entangle with Gui Zhengrong for long, otherwise, if Gui Jiuding broke free of the array set by Fang Bai and returned, their efforts would be wasted, placing themselves in a perilous situation.

Thus, seeing Lu Xiongfei take action, Zhong Guiyi and the two Deputy City Lords of Wushuang City each summoned their Spiritual Artifacts to join the battle, teaming up with Lu Xiongfei to besiege Gui Zhengrong.

As for the other Nascent Soul Experts and Soul Severing Experts gathered by Wushuang City, they were already engaged in battle with the Wuya Sect disciples.

Lu Xiongfei himself was at the first level of Heavenly Tribulation, along with Zhong Guiyi and the three other Soul Severing Perfection experts, making it four against one, they quickly suppressed the enraged Gui Zhengrong, gaining the upper hand.

Gui Zhengrong, lacking assistance, felt immense pressure facing four opponents. Never mind killing Lu Xiongfei and his group, he even doubted whether he could hold out for two or three more hours.

Within the Wuya Sect territory, tens of thousands of Martial Artists fought with abandon, Spiritual Energy surged like a tide, its pressure felt like mountains collapsing, the bloody scent permeating the entire space.

Body after body lay in pools of blood or fell from the sky.

Wuya Sect disciples had a significant advantage in numbers, but Wushuang City had recruited more Soul Severing Experts than Wuya Sect.

Therefore, at the start of this chaotic battle, both sides were evenly matched.

But as time went on, Wushuang City's advantage of having more Soul Severing Experts than Wuya Sect began to show, starting to gain the upper hand.

As some Wuya Sect disciples either fell or fled, those remaining were still gritting their teeth, but their will to fight diminished, their morale low, unable to withstand the overwhelming onslaught of Wushuang City's forces.

After two hours, the strong fighters from Wushuang City were almost massacring the Wuya Sect disciples.

In the intense battle between Gui Zhengrong and Lu Xiongfei and the others, he dared not be distracted, but the continuous cries of agony from the Wuya Sect disciples in his ears made him restless and uneasy.

“Why isn’t the Supreme Elder returning by now? Could he really be trapped? Is it possible that my Wuya Sect truly cannot escape this catastrophe?”

Gui Zhengrong was anxious and inevitably started to have wild thoughts.

“Shh!”

A soft tearing sound was heard, as Gui Zhengrong forcefully counter-attacked Zhong Guiyi and the two Deputy City Lords of Wushuang City, but didn’t expect Lu Xiongfei’s Fire Cloud Spear to stab from behind, although he dodged in time, the spear tip’s sharp Spiritual Energy still tore his left sleeve, leaving a long thin blood mark on his arm’s skin.

Though the injury was not severe, Gui Zhengrong broke out in a cold sweat.

And this minor wound became the turning point in the battle between both sides.

In the next two hours, Lu Xiongfei and his group’s offensive became fiercer. Even though Gui Zhengrong went all out in defense, his body kept accumulating wounds, and blood continuously oozed from them, dyeing his garments red, making him look like a blood-soaked fiend, terrifying and grotesque.

Gui Zhengrong could not see the silhouette of the Supreme Elder Gui Jiuding, causing his heart to sink, his previous hope turning close to despair.

At this time, among the tens of thousands of Wuya Sect Martial Artists, nearly half had fallen, and nearly half had fled, leaving the battlefield filled with only Wushuang City forces.

Those strong fighters from Wushuang City knew that Gui Zhengrong must be eliminated, as he remained a severe threat, so they did not rush to seize the cultivation resources of Wuya Sect, but instead formed layers upon layers of human walls a thousand feet away from the battle, releasing their own pressure.

Though these fighters were far less powerful than Gui Zhengrong, the cumulative pressure from thousands of them directed towards him from all directions stressed Gui Zhengrong immensely.

"It's over! Everything is over! If this fight continues, I will also fall here!"

Seeing no rescue coming from the Supreme Elder Gui Jiuding, and nearing his limits, Gui Zhengrong thought of fleeing.

"As long as the green mountain remains, there's no fear of running out of wood to burn! Today's shame will be avenged another day!"

Gui Zhengrong used this reason to convince himself, then began seeking an opportunity to escape.

"Kill!"

Gui Zhengrong suddenly roared, flinging out the Purple Gold Wishing Pole, smashing it towards Zhong Guiyi, forcing him to retreat dozens of yards.

Gui Zhengrong's form turned into a stream of light, quickly following Zhong Guiyi's retreating figure, finally breaking free from the siege of Lu Xiongfei and the others.

He let out a long howl, charging towards the Wushuang City powerhouse blocking him a thousand feet away.

Chapter 1654: One Arrow Decides the Fate

Seeing Gui Zhengrong wielding the Purple Gold Wishing Pole and charging forward with a ferocious expression and a thunderous shout, the powerful members of Wushuang City preparing to block him all felt a sense of fear and dared not obstruct him, retreating one after another.

"Lu Xiongfei, you just wait for my revenge when I return!"

Gui Zhengrong successfully broke through the encirclement, laughed madly, and continued to flee without stopping.

"Damn it!"

Lu Xiongfei and the others saw they couldn't catch up, stomped their feet in frustration, exasperated.

Especially Zhong Guiyi, who had a deep blood feud with Gui Zhengrong, was so furious he nearly spit blood.

Gui Zhengrong's strength is formidable and cunning as a fox; now that he managed to escape, both Lu Xiongfei and Zhong Guiyi must remain constantly vigilant to prevent Gui Zhengrong's revenge in the future.

If the Supreme Elder of the Wuya Sect, Gui Jiuding, cannot return alive, it would be fine; otherwise, even Lu Xiongfei would have no choice but to flee far away to avoid peril.

Even though tens of thousands of disciples from the Wuya Sect have dispersed, Gui Jiuding, who is a second-level Heavenly Tribulation expert, and Gui Zhengrong, a first-level Heavenly Tribulation expert, could easily wipe out the powerful members of Wushuang City if they joined forces and rebuild the Wuya Sect.

This was also what Gui Zhengrong had in mind, so when he broke free from the encirclement and thought he had escaped, he let out a long sigh of relief in gratitude.

Just then, a flash of crimson light shot forth like it pierced through time and space, one moment a thousand feet away, the next right in front of Gui Zhengrong.

It was an arrow.

The entire arrow was enveloped in flames, radiating a terrifying heat, igniting the space it passed through, causing it to distort and ripple with a "sizzle" sound.

The arrow shot through the sky from the distance, carrying an unmatched, unyielding force seemingly unstoppable by anything.

The arrow appeared suddenly and without warning, leaving Gui Zhengrong defenseless, with no time to defend.

"Thud!"

Despite Gui Zhengrong's full effort to move his body and avoid vital areas, the arrow still pierced through his shoulder.

The arrow was condensed from Fire Spirit Energy, disappearing into the world after penetrating Gui Zhengrong's shoulder.

Blood splattered, flesh and skin flipped outward, Gui Zhengrong let out a muffled groan, his body shoved backward by the arrow's impact, tumbling for dozens of feet.

The high temperature from the arrow, upon piercing Gui Zhengrong's body, ignited his clothes and hair, rendering him bare from head to foot, looking utterly disheveled.

"It's Brother Fang!"

Seeing the astonishing arrow, the pursuing Lu Xiongfei was overjoyed to know that Fang Bai had arrived.

Though it puzzled Lu Xiongfei why Fang Bai, who was supposed to entrap the Wuya Sect's Supreme Elder Gui Jiuding, had come here.

But at this moment, Lu Xiongfei had no time for other thoughts, seeing Gui Zhengrong severely injured and knowing it's a great chance to kill him, decisively took action.

He raised the Fire Cloud Spear, launching it into the air, then from above, hurtling towards Gui Zhengrong.

"Thud!"

The spear tip pierced into flesh, the sharp and unmatched tip of the Fire Cloud Spear easily penetrated Gui Zhengrong's Qi Sea, its momentum undiminished, dragging his body from the air to crash into the ground, with the spear tip deeply embedded in the soil.

Gui Zhengrong bled from his seven orifices, suffering immensely, his body twisted in struggle, finally lay still.

A beam of white light shot from far above, appearing in front of Lu Xiongfei and others, clad in snow-white clothing, dashing and extraordinary, who else but Fang Bai?

"Brother Fang."

Lu Xiongfei and others, faces bright with joy, approached Fang Bai, each wearing an expression of respect.

Zhong Guiyi bowed deeply to Fang Bai, saying tearfully, "Brother Fang, today's kindness will never be forgotten by Zhong Guiyi. I thank you!"

The main credit for Gui Zhengrong's execution goes to Fang Bai, with Zhong Guiyi's deep-seated vengeance repaid, naturally feeling deeply grateful to Fang Bai, his bow sincere.

Fang Bai waved his hand, said, "Gui Zhengrong has fallen, Wuya Sect is as good as destroyed. Let us quickly handle the aftermath and conserve our strength, waiting for Gui Jiuding's arrival. Hmm, the formation I've set up might soon be breached by him!"

Lu Xiongfei and the others were startled by his words, but then thought that they have thousands on their side, including Lu Xiongfei, a first-level Heavenly Tribulation expert, and hundreds to thousands of Soul Severing experts; Gui Jiuding, even if coming alone, would hardly withstand their combined might.

Lu Xiongfei clenched his fist and loudly declared, "Our united front, let Gui Jiuding dare to come and he shall never return!"

"Indeed, never return!"

Tens of thousands of powerful voices roared together, shaking the heavens.

Afterward, Lu Xiongfei and the powerful members of Wushuang City, along with Zhong Guiyi and his close associates, rested inside and outside the Sect Master Hall of the Wuya Sect, preparing to give a fierce blow to Gui Jiuding.

Meanwhile, other strong individuals were responsible for cleaning up the Wuya Sect inside and out, handling the aftercare.

Originally, Wuya Peak from the Wuya Sect had a defense array set up, but the sudden beast tide and the following attack from tens of thousands of Wushuang City's powerful individuals left no chance for the array to activate.

To guard against Gui Jiuding, Fang Bai reset the defensive array on top of the original, enhancing its power so that even if several experts of Gui Jiuding's level arrived, they couldn't break through.

With all preparations completed, Fang Bai felt at ease to meditate, awaiting Gui Jiuding's arrival with everyone.

...

In the primeval forest a thousand miles outside of Wushuang City, six human figures quickly traversed between ancient towering trees, searching for traces of Spirit Beasts.

The six figures—five men and one woman—had various cultivation levels, with the strongest being Nascent Soul initial stage and the weakest Golden Core mid-stage.

The six were members of the Falcon Group, including Ghost Hand.

Together, they ventured into the primeval forest to hunt the Fire Cloud Leopard and obtain its inner core to heal injuries for Lin Rou, a critically injured team member.

"I feel uneasy, something might have happened to Xiao Rou."

During the swift traversal, Lin Jian suddenly voiced his heavy concerns.

Ghost Hand, positioned behind Lin Jian, said in a deep voice, "Don't worry, with Ms. Li taking care of Xiao Rou, she'll be fine."

Lin Jian glanced back at Ghost Hand and asked, "Third Brother, if the inner core of the Fire Cloud Leopard can heal Xiao Rou's injuries but cannot restore her damaged Qi Sea, what should we do? Xiao Rou has always been reserved and gentle, with a mild temperament; I'm worried... Third Brother, Xiao Rou trusts you the most; you must persuade her then!"

Ghost Hand ranked third in the Falcon Group, which is why Lin Jian calls him Third Brother.

Lin Jian also knew that his sister and Third Brother Ghost Hand liked each other, hence he asked Ghost Hand to comfort his sister to prevent her from despairing over her inability to pursue the Martial Dao.

Thinking of Lin Rou, lying on a sickbed in Wushuang City, pale-faced, frail, and pitiable, Ghost Hand felt a slight pang but then resolutely declared, "Xiao Rou will definitely recover!"

"Yes! She'll definitely recover!"

Seemingly influenced by Ghost Hand's conviction, Lin Jian vigorously nodded in agreement.

Chapter 1655: Side by Side

"If the Master were here, he would surely heal Xiao Rou... Master, oh Master, where are you?"

Ghost Hand suddenly thought of Master Fang Bai, and he thought about how he had searched for him in the three thousand great worlds for a long time, but had yet to find a trace of him. He didn't know where he was now and couldn't help but sigh inwardly.

Ghost Hand admired Master Fang Bai immensely, knowing that this Master was proficient in alchemy, artifact refining, beast taming, formations... almost perfect in every skill.

If the Master were present, healing Lin Rou's injuries would be an easy task; even restoring Lin Rou's Qi Sea to its original state wouldn't be difficult.

However, Lin Rou's injuries couldn't hold on for many more days, and the Master was nowhere to be found, making it impossible to search for him.

So, the only option now was to hunt the Fire Cloud Leopard and use its inner core to save Lin Rou's life.

Along the way, the six of them encountered plenty of spiritual beasts and engaged in several fierce battles. Fortunately, those spiritual beasts weren't very strong, so even though the six were injured, they recovered without any major issues after some rest.

The Fire Cloud Leopard at a high Nascent Soul level was not considered powerful in this primeval forest, but for the members of the Falcon Group, it required every one of them to give their all for any hope of a successful hunt.

Previously, based on the "Buddha's Fury Golden Staff Technique" he was cultivating, Ghost Hand had a golden Zen Staff specially crafted for himself as a spiritual artifact. Even though his cultivation was only at a high Golden Core level, he had the ability to challenge levels above his own, and he was truly the most powerful in the Falcon Group when it came to actual combat.

However, Ghost Hand had always been low-key, and since joining the Falcon Group, he had never shown his true strength, which is why he ranked third within the group.

"The Fire Cloud Leopard is ferocious, bloodthirsty, and combative, usually residing deep in the primeval forest. How about we venture a bit further?"

The interior of the primeval forest had many fierce spirit beasts, so the six members of the Falcon Group initially did not delve too deeply. But they hadn't seen any activity from the Fire Cloud Leopard, causing some impatience, so the Falcon Group leader Zhan Fei proposed this.

The seven members of the Falcon Group were sworn brothers and sisters, and hearing this, naturally, no one objected.

"Everyone, be cautious. If we encounter powerful spiritual beasts, do not confront them head-on!"

Zhan Fei added, then holding his spiritual artifact in hand and placing it across his chest, ready for battle at any moment.

The other five members of the Falcon Group also tightly gripped their spiritual artifacts, remaining fully alert.

"Here... seems to be a Fire Cloud Leopard's presence..."

A hundred miles ahead, Zhan Fei suddenly sensed a faint fire attribute aura permeating through this section of the forest, an aura that seemed to belong to the Fire Cloud Leopard.

Upon hearing "Fire Cloud Leopard," Lieying and the other Falcon Group members felt both tense and excited, their grips on their spiritual artifacts tightened, their breathing slowed, their auras concealed, and their steps became lighter.

Behind a towering ancient tree that required a dozen people to encircle, Zhan Fei and the others halted, peering ahead. They saw a clearing a hundred feet away where a Fire Cloud Leopard, over a yard long with fiery red fur, was confronting a Unihorn Tiger.

The Fire Cloud Leopard was comparable to a human Nascent Soul Perfection expert, and the Unihorn Tiger it confronted possessed equally strong combat power.

Both the Fire Cloud Leopard and the Unihorn Tiger were fierce, combative, and extremely brutal, often preying on their kind. Upon meeting, they refused to relent, sparking an intense battle.

Both spirit beasts bore numerous wounds, with blood incessantly oozing, indicating they had been fighting for a while already.

Nonetheless, these injuries for these physically robust spirit beasts were far from debilitating.

"Those might be two Nascent Soul Perfection level spirit beasts!"

Seeing that Fire Cloud Leopard, Zhan Fei's eyes lit up with extreme excitement.

Even though he was an early Nascent Soul martial artist and couldn't discern stronger spirit beast realms, he had encountered Nascent Soul Perfection beasts before and vividly remembered the powerful aura they emanated, leading him to speculate that those two spirit beasts were both at Nascent Soul Perfection.

"Everyone, hide your presence well. Don't get close. Wait until they are both severely wounded from their fight; then we'll act! If we can harvest two Nascent Soul Perfection spirit beast inner cores this time, not only will Lin Rou's injuries be healed, but we'll also gain quite a bit."

Zhan Fei swiftly transmitted to the other members of the Falcon Group, his voice slightly trembling.

And it was understandable; under normal circumstances, the six of them joining forces to hunt a high-level Nascent Soul Fire Cloud Leopard was challenging. Now, there was hope of obtaining two Nascent Soul Perfection spirit beast inner cores ostensibly for free, how could they not be excited?

"Roar!"

The two spirit beasts, now facing off, suddenly let out earth-shaking roars and clashed against each other with raw, powerful bodies.

Blood sprayed, and both spirit beasts sustained new injuries, yet they remained fierce and lively.

The observing Zhan Fei and others silently cheered for the spirit beasts to attack each other even more ferociously and savagely.

While Zhan Fei and others were intently focused on the battle ahead, unbeknownst to them, another Fire Cloud Leopard appeared silently a hundred feet behind them.

The Fire Cloud Leopard, also at Nascent Soul Perfection, slowly approached the six humans, its eyes carrying the characteristic cold indifference of a spirit beast.

Its tongue occasionally flicked out to lick its lips as if considering the six human martial artists a delicious meal.

Ghost Hand, with his innate spiritual root, was the first to sense the crisis from behind.

He abruptly turned his head and, upon seeing the Fire Cloud Leopard approaching leisurely, merely dozens of feet away from them, his pupils contracted instantly.

Zhan Fei, Lieying, and others soon noticed Ghost Hand's odd behavior, instinctively turning their heads and then, one by one, numbed with shock, their eyes brimming with fear.

"What do we... do?"

Among the six, Lin Jian was the weakest. Although he couldn't discern the Fire Cloud Leopard's realm, the overwhelming aura and pressure from it made it difficult for him to breathe. Seeing the expressions on Zhan Fei and others, he knew things were dire.

"Two Fire Cloud Leopards – they must be a pair! Who would've thought they'd appear at the same time... Everyone, prepare for battle!"

Knowing that as the leader, he couldn't panic or else all six might perish, Zhan Fei took a deep breath, forced himself to calm down, and stood at the front.

Ghost Hand suddenly stepped forward, standing side by side with Zhan Fei.

Zhan Fei looked at Ghost Hand in surprise, asking, "You..."

"The Fire Cloud Leopard is too strong; if all six of us stay, we're certainly doomed!"

Ghost Hand's gaze never left the Fire Cloud Leopard before them, and he appeared even calmer than Zhan Fei as he quickly said, "The two of us will hold back the Fire Cloud Leopard as long as possible. The others, run! Whoever can escape, do so!"

Lieying also stepped forward, standing shoulder to shoulder with the two, and said in a deep voice, "I'll stay too!"

Dazhuang, Yingniang, and Lin Jian also stepped forward, standing side by side with Zhan Fei and the other two, saying in unison, "Falcon Group members, if we leave, we leave together! If we stay, we stay together!"

Chapter 1656: Advancing and Retreating Together

"If we all fall, who will bring the news to Xiao Rou? Who will take care of her in the future?"

Ghost Hand suddenly became furious, his gaze swept across Lieying, Dazhuang, Yingniang, and Lin Jian, and he said harshly, "It's decided then! My elder brother and I will stay, everyone else leave immediately!"

Ghost Hand usually gave the impression of being gentle and kind, always wearing a warm smile for everyone, but at this moment, his anger even made Lieying feel scared.

"You... you can take care of Xiao Rou too! Xiao Rou would be heartbroken if she knew... you couldn't return..."

Lin Jian murmured softly.

Ghost Hand's heart softened at the mention of "Xiao Rou," but he gritted his teeth immediately and said coldly, "You go back and tell Xiao Rou to remember me as just a passerby in her life! But you're different; you're her biological brother, and no one can replace that!"

Lieying said, "Third brother, my brother and I will stay to block the Fire Cloud Leopard. You all leave! My strength is still superior to yours in some ways..."

Ghost Hand grinned and said, "Second brother, when it comes to strength, you're not really better than me... I apologize for hiding it from you all these years; actually... I can fight beyond my level and perhaps my true power is slightly stronger than my older brother's."

Hearing this, Zhan Fei, Lieying, and others looked at Ghost Hand with incredulity.

As far as they knew, martial artists capable of fighting beyond their level all possessed Innate Spiritual Roots, with exceptionally high talent, yet Ghost Hand had never demonstrated such power in front of them.

However, when Ghost Hand released his true Martial Artist Aura, Zhan Fei and others realized he spoke the truth.

At this moment, Ghost Hand exuded a murderous intent and surging battle intent, with the pressure he released obviously surpassing the Falcon Group leader Zhan Fei, reaching the level of a mid-stage Nascent Soul powerhouse.

Only then did Zhan Fei and Lieying realize Ghost Hand was a hidden master, and it was laughable they had been called "big brother" and "second brother" by him for quite some time; thinking about it, they couldn't help but feel a bit ashamed.

Ghost Hand noticed Zhan Fei and Lieying's slightly unnatural expressions, guessed their thoughts, and said earnestly, "I hid my power because my master taught me to be low-key, with no other intention. From now on, you both are still my big brother and second brother!"

Zhan Fei and Lieying weren't sentimental people, and thought to themselves, what does Ghost Hand hiding his power matter? As long as he sincerely treats them, they will still regard him as a good brother.

Suddenly, the wind howled, heat waves rushed in, and a red shadow pounced fiercely; the Fire Cloud Leopard already within a dozen yards ahead started attacking.

"Ghost Hand and I will stay; you all go!"

Zhan Fei yelled sternly, wielding a Spiritual Artifact, slashing towards the Fire Cloud Leopard.

"Rod of Buddha's Fury!"

Ghost Hand also struck at the Fire Cloud Leopard simultaneously and used his strongest skill right off the bat.

His golden Zen Staff smashed out, and amidst the scene, there seemed to be faint Buddhist chants echoing around, as if a towering Buddha, clad in Buddhist attire and several feet tall, angrily scowled and swung the Zen Staff with fury, with the force of ten thousand pounds, crashing down on the Fire Cloud Leopard like a small mountain.

The Fire Cloud Leopard was extremely powerful, and Ghost Hand dared not hold back at all; he used his full strength right from the start.

His strike exhibited the power only mid-stage Nascent Soul experts possessed, which secretly shocked Zhan Fei.

Lieying knew Zhan Fei and Fang Bai were using their lives to buy them time to escape, and every moment they delayed increased the danger, so he decisively said, "Let's go!"

They were just about to ride their Spiritual Artifacts and soar into the sky when suddenly a beast roar came from behind. Turning to look, the Fire Cloud Leopard had killed its rival, the Unihorn Tiger, and was closing in on them.

The Fire Cloud Leopard exuded powerful aura and murderous intent, instantly locking them in place; their movements were as difficult as if trapped in a quagmire, not to mention riding Spiritual Artifacts and flying away.

"It's over!"

Lieying stared blankly at the fast-approaching Fire Cloud Leopard with fierce eyes, his face turning pale, his body trembling uncontrollably.

Dazhuang, Yingniang, and Lin Jian also displayed terrified expressions, instinctively huddling together.

Zhan Fei and Ghost Hand heard the roar of the Fire Cloud Leopard behind them, feeling their hearts skip a beat, they realized all six of them were already surrounded by two cunning Fire Cloud Leopards.

Zhan Fei and Ghost Hand looked at each other and saw deep helplessness and despair in each other's eyes.

With the six of them facing the assault of two Nascent Soul Perfection realm Spirit Beasts, any resistance was futile, and it seemed destined they would not escape this disaster today.

"Roar!"

The two Fire Cloud Leopards seemed impatient to enjoy their feast, roaring fiercely, raising gusts of wind as one leaped forward and the other pounced from behind toward Zhan Fei and the six.

Under the immense pressure released by the two Fire Cloud Leopards, the six of them couldn't even muster the strength to resist, only able to watch as the two gaping mouths approached closer and closer.

Unlike everyone else whose hearts were filled with terror and fear at this moment, Ghost Hand's heart was only filled with regret and unwillingness.

With his death, he would never see his master or Xiao Rou again, nor continue following his master on the path of Martial Dao.

"Ah!"

Ghost Hand closed his eyes and let out a skyward roar, as if trying to vent his regret and unwillingness through this shout.

"Alright, Ghost Hand, stop shouting! You've been in the Three Thousand Worlds for quite a while now; how come your cultivation level is only Golden Core High Rank? Compared to Wu De and the others, you're trailing far too much!"

Ghost Hand's roar was interrupted by a young man's voice.

Although the voice wasn't loud, it suppressed all other sounds between heaven and earth.

"Master..."

Ghost Hand trembled all over upon hearing the extremely familiar voice, his heart filled with wild joy, tears bursting instantly.

He opened his eyes wide and looked, seeing a youth clothed in white, surpassing snow, standing a mere few feet away; who else could it be but his master Fang Bai?

Over the years, not only had his master shown no signs of aging, he had grown even more refined, even more handsome, appearing more youthful.

As for the two Fire Cloud Leopards, they seemed as if they'd met their nemesis, crouching low to the ground, trembling, daring not to move, filled with fear as they gazed at Fang Bai.

"Master!"

Ghost Hand took several steps forward, knelt before Fang Bai, and choked as he uttered "Master," tears falling like rain.

Zhan Fei, Lieying, and the other six members of the Falcon Group, who had closed their eyes awaiting death, opened them abruptly upon hearing Fang Bai's voice and were dumbstruck at the sight before them.

They were stunned by the scene of two mighty Fire Cloud Leopards seeming to encounter their nemesis, and even more shocked that Ghost Hand was kneeling before a martial artist who appeared younger than him, calling him "master."

"Third Brother had mentioned before that he has a very powerful master; could it be this person?"

"This person... looks far younger than me!"

In the Falcon Group, Dazhuang and Lin Jian exchanged glances of astonishment and muttered softly.

Chapter 1657: The Master Is Amiable and Approachable

Zhan Fei, Lieying, and Yingniang glanced at the two Fire Cloud Leopards lying flat on the ground, then at Fang Bai with his faint smile. They realized even more that this young man was wise beyond his years, hidden and unassuming, and couldn't help feeling some reverence in their gaze.

Though Fang Bai seemed no different from any ordinary person on the surface, without any sign of cultivation, Zhan Fei and the others understood that the more powerful a person appeared, the more frightening their strength truly was.

As soon as he appeared, he subdued two Fire Cloud Leopards with Nascent Soul Perfection. This suggested that Ghost Hand's master could indeed be a Soul Severing Expert.

In the eyes of these Golden Core or Nascent Soul Martial Artists, a Soul Severing Expert is an unattainable existence, someone to look up to as if they were a towering mountain.

Previously, Ghost Hand had mentioned having a very young master, but they never imagined that his master could be this young and powerful.

"Ghost Hand has been lax in his cultivation and shamed his master!"

Upon hearing Fang Bai's tone, which carried some blame toward himself, Ghost Hand felt deeply guilty and knelt on the ground, not daring to rise.

"Alright, get up."

Fang Bai raised his hand slightly, a surge of spiritual energy supporting Ghost Hand to stand upright.

"In truth, managing to cultivate to the high rank Golden Core realm on your own is quite good. It is me who has set such high standards for you. However... you are my first disciple, so you cannot fall too far behind others! Now, wipe away your tears. Why cry like that as a grown man?"

Fang Bai said seriously to Ghost Hand.

Ghost Hand, upon seeing Fang Bai, was overwhelmed with emotion and thus broke into tears. Hearing the words, he hastily wiped his cheeks dry and respectfully said, "It was thanks to master's arrival; otherwise, we all might have perished here today."

As Ghost Hand spoke to here, he glanced at Zhan Fei and the others, hurrying to introduce Fang Bai, "Master, since arriving in the Three Thousand Worlds, I traveled to Wushuang City and met them, forming a brotherly bond. Over the years, we have cultivated and trained together, and they have often taken good care of me."

He then proceeded to introduce Fang Bai to Zhan Fei and the others, "This is the master I often spoke of. Among master's disciples, although I was the first to apprentice, I am the least accomplished. How shameful!"

Earlier, when Fang Bai remarked, "Compared to Wu De and the others, you have fallen far behind," Ghost Hand understood that by "others," Fang Bai meant his fellow disciples like Niu Ben, whose cultivation levels surpassed his own, thus he felt ashamed.

Ghost Hand's display of strength against the Fire Cloud Leopard had already amazed Zhan Fei and the others, yet they had not imagined that Ghost Hand actually considered himself the least capable disciple of the white-clad young master's retinue. Thus speculating, how formidable must the other disciples under this young master be?

Noticing Zhan Fei and the others appearing somewhat constrained, Fang Bai smiled and nodded at them.

"Greetings, senior."

Zhan Fei and the others, convinced Fang Bai was a Soul Severing Expert, felt flustered and honored as he nodded and smiled at them, and hurriedly clasped fists and bowed in reverence.

Fang Bai laughed and said, "I am Fang Bai. I'm not one for arrogance or airs, so there's no need to be nervous or restrained in my presence. Since you are Ghost Hand's brothers and sisters, treat me as a friend."

Zhan Fei and the others turned their gaze to Ghost Hand, seeking to confirm whether what Fang Bai said was true.

Ghost Hand said earnestly, "Master is indeed... kind and approachable. You should listen to master."

Upon hearing Ghost Hand describe himself as "kind and approachable," Fang Bai couldn't help but burst out laughing.

"Master, have you found Niu Ben, Xiong Yingxiong, and the other junior disciples, as well as any other friends and family?"

Ghost Hand suddenly asked.

Fang Bai sighed and said, "Of those who came from the Minor Worlds, only a few have been found so far. This time, I ventured out to continue searching for them. However, do you have any good news?"

Ghost Hand shook his head and said, "After reaching the Three Thousand Worlds via the Teleportation Array, I lost contact with everyone. During these years, I've searched everywhere but haven't found any trace of familiar faces. Meeting master today was truly fortunate."

He paused, puzzled, and asked, "By the way, master, how did you know I was here?"

Fang Bai smiled and replied, "Your little lover told me!"

"Little lover?"

Ghost Hand was taken aback.

Nearby, Lin Jian's face changed slightly upon hearing "little lover," thinking his third brother constantly claimed fondness for his own sister, so when did he acquire another little lover?

Fang Bai said, "Why, isn't Lin Rou your little lover?"

Ghost Hand exclaimed "Ah," his face flushing red as he stammered, "Master, I..."

Lin Jian, who had been feeling a bit despondent just now, immediately beamed and interjected, "Senior Fang, that's right! Lin Rou is my sister, and she is indeed fondly involved with my third brother... Haha!"

Lin Jian thought if Ghost Hand eventually became his brother-in-law, then with the connection of him being Senior Fang's disciple, he and his sister would have a strong backing.

Fang Bai nodded and said, "I met Lin Rou in Wushuang City, she does pair well with Ghost Hand. I was able to find you because Miss Lin told me you were in this primitive forest."

Ghost Hand thought of Lin Rou's injuries, fell to his knees with a "thump," his forehead touching the ground, pleading fervently, "Master, please save Xiao Rou!"

Lin Jian witnessed this and also knelt before Fang Bai, saying, "Please, senior, save my sister."

Zhan Fei, Lieying, Dazhuang, Yingniang, who shared a sibling-like bond with Lin Rou, also gave a deep bow to Fang Bai, collectively saying, "Please, senior, save Lin Rou."

Fang Bai waved his hand, raising the six people before him, and spoke, "Before arriving, I already treated Miss Lin's injuries. Perhaps by the time we return, her condition will have healed."

Lin Jian and the others were overjoyed upon hearing this, each breathing a sigh of relief, but then recalled Lin Rou's damaged Qi Sea, and their expressions inevitably dimmed again.

Ghost Hand urgently asked, "Master, what about Xiao Rou's Qi Sea?"

"Her Qi Sea is severely damaged; ordinary Spirit Pills and Spiritual Medicine wouldn't be able to repair it. However, when I mentioned recovery, it includes her Qi Sea. Such an injury is challenging for other experts, but for master, it's trivial."

Fang Bai's words were sufficiently arrogant, but his strength indeed justified such arrogance.

Upon hearing Fang Bai's first sentence, Ghost Hand and the others couldn't help but feel their hearts sink, yet Fang Bai's latter sentence had them ecstatic with joy.

"Thank you, master."

Thinking of Lin Rou fully recovered, no longer burdened with sorrow throughout her life, Ghost Hand felt his eyes well up, tears flowing once more.

Only this time, his tears weren't of sadness, but of happiness.

"Let's go, back to Wushuang City!"

Fang Bai could understand Ghost Hand and the others' eager feelings, laughing heartily, he was the first to soar on his Spiritual Artifact.

Ghost Hand and the others, in high spirits, also summoned their Spiritual Artifacts, following Fang Bai, transforming into streams of light, flying in the direction of Wushuang City.

Chapter 1658: Gratitude

In Wushuang City, in the small courtyard where the Falcon Group resides, Lin Rou once again entered the courtyard, supported by Ms. Li.

Ms. Li appeared full of life, looking well; it's evident that the injuries she had suffered earlier were already healed.

Although Lin Rou still seemed a bit weary, her cheeks had gained a bit of color, and her complexion appeared much better, worlds apart from her previous state when she lay in bed barely breathing, her qi seeming as if it would dissipate at any moment.

However, when Lin Rou tried to circulate her Cultivation Technique or manage Spiritual Energy, she found her Qi Sea feeling empty and achy, clearly indicating that her Qi Sea had not yet recovered.

If such a situation were to persist, she wouldn't be able to continue her cultivation, rendering her akin to a cripple.

Lin Rou felt despair, yet clung to a sliver of hope.

That Senior Fang, who claimed to be Ghost Hand's friend, was immensely powerful and formidable. Perhaps, once he found Ghost Hand and returned, there might be a hope for him to heal the injuries to her Qi Sea?

"Had it not been for Senior Fang, I, this old woman, surely wouldn't have survived, and Miss Lin, you would have been captured by the Wuya Sect disciples... Our lives were saved by Senior Fang. Once he returns, we must thoroughly thank him."

Ms. Li took out a chair for Lin Rou to sit in the courtyard, then sat beside her, speaking sentimentally.

"Yes."

Lin Rou nodded vigorously, saying, "The lifesaving grace of Senior Fang must be thanked. But... why hasn't Senior Fang returned after two or three days?"

Ms. Li smiled, saying, "Miss Lin, you're anxious because you wish to see your Ghost Hand brother, right?"

All these days, Ms. Li had been taking care of Lin Rou attentively, learning from Lin Rou's words that she and Ghost Hand were mutually affectionate, occasionally teasing her about Ghost Hand, making her happy now and then.

Hearing this, Lin Rou's cheeks reddened slightly, her gaze turning to the courtyard gate, nodding shyly, then she clasped her hands in prayer, saying, "The primordial forest is teeming with Spirit Beasts that are immensely powerful; I hope my brother and Ghost Hand remain safe."

Ms. Li spoke joyfully, "Don't worry. Senior Fang can easily defeat even the core disciples of the Wuya Sect; ordinary Spirit Beasts cannot trouble him. He will surely bring your brother and Ghost Hand back safely."

"Hopefully so."

Lin Rou finally felt a bit relieved, a slight smile appearing on her lips.

The sunshine was warm and comfortable as it fell upon her body; Lin Rou leaned back against the chair, closing her eyes slightly to rest.

Half an hour passed, and just as Lin Rou was about to ask Ms. Li to help her back into the house, she suddenly saw several figures enter the courtyard through the gate.

The first, in white robes as bright as snow, with a handsome and graceful demeanor, wore a faint smile at the corner of his mouth; it was Senior Fang.

Following Senior Fang was her most beloved Ghost Hand.

Then came her brother Lin Jian, big brother Zhan Fei, second brother Lieying, fourth brother Dazhuang, and fifth sister Yingniang.

Seeing them all return safely, Lin Rou was filled with joy and tears.

Ms. Li beamed, saying, "Everyone's back... That's good... That's good..."

As soon as Ghost Hand entered the courtyard, his gaze fell on Lin Rou. Seeing that she was no longer seriously ill, her eyes brimming with tears, her lips quivering as she looked at him, filled with indescribable excitement and joy, his own eyes reddened.

He initially intended to stride forward and embrace Lin Rou for some comforting, but his master walked ahead, so he dared not overstep, instead standing behind Fang Bai, looking at Lin Rou with an attentive gaze.

"If you wish to speak, then go ahead; act as if I'm not here."

Fang Bai seemed to perceive Ghost Hand's thoughts, laughingly stating.

Ghost Hand blushed, no longer hesitating, quickly moving in front of Lin Rou.

Their gazes met, and although no words were spoken, the exchange of looks conveyed more than a thousand words.

"Miss Lin's body is still weak, support her carefully."

Seeing Ghost Hand approaching, Ms. Li tactfully stepped aside, handing Lin Rou over to Ghost Hand.

Supporting Lin Rou, Ghost Hand softly asked in her ear, "Your body seems much better now! Master really is amazing..."

Lin Rou replied with a nod, then sighed, "But... I can't circulate the Cultivation Technique or invoke Spiritual Energy; it appears the injury to my Qi Sea hasn't healed yet..."

Ghost Hand consoled, "Don't worry. Master said that within three to five days, your Qi Sea will fully recover, and your strength won't drop at all. Since Master says so, it's bound to be true!"

Lin Rou let out a breath of relief, saying, "That's good... If I can't continue on the Martial Dao path, it would truly be a fate worse than death for me!"

As the two whispered sweetly together, Ms. Li approached Fang Bai, knelt, and said, "Had it not been for the senior's rescue, I would have perished long ago. Thank you, senior, for saving my life."

Fang Bai cheerfully waved his hand, saying, "Ms. Li, no need for formalities. Please stand up."

Once Ms. Li stood up, Fang Bai pondered for a moment and then retrieved a common Spatial Ring from his Five Elements Space Ring, handing it to her, saying, "To meet is fate. Ms. Li, there are some King Grade cultivation resources in this Spatial Ring; please take it. You're at the initial Golden Core level now, and the cultivation resources in this ring should aid you in reaching the Nascent Soul realm."

In the previous battles against the Taixuan Sect and Wuya Sect, Fang Bai garnered plentiful rewards, his Five Elements Space Ring containing heaps of ordinary Spatial Rings, each filled with numerous cultivation resources all above the King Grade level.

Giving one ring to Ms. Li was just a small act from him.

Upon hearing the words "King Grade Cultivation Resources," Ms. Li trembled all over, delighted yet hesitant to take it.

King Grade cultivation resources are extravagant even for an ordinary Nascent Soul Expert, and for someone like Ms. Li, at the initial Golden Core level, are nothing short of a dream.

Ms. Li, with mediocre aptitude, thought her cultivation level would remain at the initial Golden Core stage, unable to break through, and had long lost hope. Upon hearing Fang Bai say she might reach the Nascent Soul realm, how could she not be overjoyed?

The Falcon Group members, witnessing Fang Bai's generosity in offering a Spatial Ring with King Grade cultivation resources, couldn't help but feel envious.

Yingniang, seeing Ms. Li in a daze, joked, saying, "Ms. Li, what's the matter? Do you find Senior Fang's gift too little?"

Ms. Li finally returned to her senses, exclaiming, "Ah," waving her hands to say, "No, no... I didn't mean that... Senior Fang, your gift is too generous, I... I dare not accept it... and I haven't done much..."

Fang Bai said, "You took care of Miss Lin and were injured for her, which is a great merit. Consider these cultivation resources as my thanks on Ghost Hand's behalf! Accept it!"

After much polite refusal, Ms. Li joyfully accepted the gift. Knowing she wouldn't be much help with Ghost Hand and the others at the moment, she took her leave.

After Ms. Li departed, Ghost Hand and the others invited Fang Bai into the guest room to take a seat. Fang Bai, not one to shirk, sat at the head, with Ghost Hand, Zhan Fei, and the others seated on either side.

Chapter 1659: A Happy Ending for All

After everyone took their seats, Fang Bai inquired about the circumstances of the Falcon Group members, and then joked a bit with Ghost Hand and Lin Rou.

Ghost Hand and Lin Rou were already fond of each other. Hearing Fang Bai's teasing, their faces turned red, but their hearts were filled with sweetness.

Ghost Hand was particularly delighted because his master's teasing indicated a formal approval of Lin Rou.

“Miss Lin, the injury to your Qi Sea should heal in three days. Besides, with me here, there’s no need to worry that your cultivation level will decline.”

Generally, if a Martial Artist’s Qi Sea is severely damaged, even if it recovers, their cultivation level would drop significantly. Fang Bai’s words were like a Heart Stabilizing Pill to Lin Rou.

Lin Rou had been most concerned about this. Upon hearing his words, she couldn’t help but feel joy and gracefully bowed.

Fang Bai supported her with his hands, and when Lin Rou stood up, he gave her a few glances, then smiled at Ghost Hand and said, “Ghost Hand, you have a good eye. Although Miss Lin doesn’t have an Innate Spiritual Root, her aptitude is superior. If she puts her heart into cultivation, she will achieve something on the Martial Dao path.”

Ghost Hand immediately stood up and bowed to the ground, pleading, “Although Xiao Rou’s aptitude is good, she suffers from a lack of a good teacher. Please, master, make it happen.”

Fang Bai pointed at Ghost Hand with his finger and laughed, “You! I fear you’ve long had this thought, haven’t you? If I don’t agree, wouldn’t you harbor grievances against me... Isn’t that right?”

Ghost Hand hastily said, “Disciple dares not! However, since Xiao Rou will be my martial partner in the future, she can be considered your student. You wouldn’t want her to be too weak and disgrace you, right?”

Hearing the words “martial partner,” Lin Rou became uncontrollably shy, but she didn’t voice any denial, just bit her lip gently and fiddled with her clothing.

Fang Bai glanced at Lin Rou, laughed with a “ha,” and nodded, “That’s true... How can the disciples of our Nine Heavens Immortal Emperor Palace be inferior to others?”

Ghost Hand’s eyebrows raised in excitement as he said, “Nine Heavens Immortal Emperor Palace? Master, have you established a sect?”

Fang Bai said, "Yes! Our friends and family from the Secular World, Minor World, and these current three thousand great worlds will eventually gather together. So, I formed a Sect... how's the name, impressive enough?"

Ghost Hand nodded emphatically, "The name given by the master is indeed impressive!"

Fang Bai sighed, "It's a pity that, even though the Sect is established, I have only found a handful of friends and family, including you."

Ghost Hand said, "The three thousand great worlds are vast, with many people. Finding someone is like searching for a needle in a haystack. But as long as we put our hearts into the search, we can one day reunite everyone."

Fang Bai said, "Let's hope so."

Fang Bai let Ghost Hand return to his seat, then looked at Lin Rou and said, "You are cultivating Water System techniques, so I'll teach you a set of Martial Arts Techniques for the Water System."

He passed on a simplified version of the Water Element Art and Stacking Waves Fist to Lin Rou using the most understandable language, through the Thread Condensation Sound Transmission Technique.

The Martial Artists in this world are all very intelligent, and those with outstanding aptitude like Lin Rou are truly exceptional.

For the Martial Arts Techniques Fang Bai taught, Lin Rou almost never forgot; after hearing them once, she could remember about seventy to eighty percent, and after hearing them twice, she completely memorized them.

As a Martial Artist, Lin Rou, after memorizing the Martial Arts Techniques taught by Fang Bai, couldn't help but ponder carefully, feeling that these techniques were vast and profound, far beyond her imagination. Every word and phrase contained the Great Dao Principles; understanding even a bit would allow her to make great progress on the Martial Dao.

Lin Rou knew she had encountered an extraordinarily rare opportunity. Despite her gentle and introverted nature, she couldn't help but feel joy, almost dancing with excitement.

Ghost Hand, in tune with Lin Rou's thoughts, saw her expression and knew that what the master taught her was extraordinary, sharing in her happiness.

"Thank you, Master!"

"Thank you, Senior Fang!"

Ghost Hand and Lin Rou knelt together, hand in hand, in front of Fang Bai.

Fang Bai said, "Having only Martial Arts Techniques without Cultivation Resources won't do... I will be generous to the end. In this Space Ring, there are many King Grade Cultivation Resources, and I will give them to you as well. Ghost Hand, you also have a share."

As he said this, Fang Bai handed a Space Ring to both Ghost Hand and Lin Rou.

Ghost Hand and Lin Rou, different from Ms. Li, received Space Rings filled with far more cultivation resources than she did.

After receiving the Space Rings, Ghost Hand and Lin Rou scanned inside with their Divine Sense, shocked by the pile of King Grade Cultivation Resources that looked like small mountains, taking a while to regain their composure.

They knew that with these cultivation resources, forming the Golden Core and achieving Nascent Soul Formation would be no difficult task.

Even Ms. Li received a Space Ring from Fang Bai, so he certainly wouldn't forget Zhan Fei and others, giving them each a set of Martial Arts Techniques suited to their situation, along with a Space Ring.

The cultivation resources themselves were nothing that Fang Bai cared about. He kept them because the Nine Heavens Immortal Emperor Palace would surely take in many disciples in the future, and they would be useful for their cultivation, to strengthen the Sect's overall power.

The recipients of Fang Bai's teachings and Space Rings, including Zhan Fei and others, were all overjoyed, each expressing their gratitude as juniors would.

During the month-long stay in Wushuang City, Fang Bai carefully guided Ghost Hand, Lin Rou, and other Falcon Group members. Occasionally, he visited the City Lord Mansion in Wushuang City as a guest, sharing drinks and martial insights with strong individuals like Lu Xiongfei.

In the earlier battle against Wuya Sect, after Gui Jiuding broke through the four-layer formation set by Fang Bai and returned to Wuya Sect, Fang Bai, Lu Xiongfei, and the City Lord Mansion forces engaged in a fierce battle with them.

Despite the cost of hundreds of powerful fighters falling and injuries to people like Lu Xiongfei, they finally succeeded in killing Gui Jiuding, eliminating the major threat.

The injuries of Lu Xiongfei and others were long healed with Fang Bai's help. They were amazed by the immense power Fang Bai displayed in the battle against Wuya Sect, viewing him as a legendary figure, which increased their respect for him.

Even Lu Xiongfei, a veteran at the early stage of the Thunder Tribulation Realm, treated Fang Bai with great respect, calling him brother and showing considerable warmth.

A month later, Fang Bai left Wushuang City, continuing his quest to find friends and family, while Ghost Hand and other members of the Falcon Group chose to go to the Nine Heavens Immortal Emperor Palace to join Lu Liyu and Linghu sisters.

Before parting, Fang Bai gave each of Ghost Hand and his companions a Jade Pendant infused with his killing intent, so they could escape from attackers below the Thunder Tribulation Realm.

Upon hearing of Fang Bai's mission to find friends and family, Lu Xiongfei also dispatched some subordinates across the three thousand worlds to assist Fang Bai in his search.

Following his previous practice, Fang Bai would issue a Bounty Order in each major city he visited, gathering Martial Artists to help locate his friends and family. Anyone who found them or provided valuable leads would be richly rewarded by him.

The generous rewards offered by Fang Bai were strongly enticing to those below the Thunder Tribulation Realm, prompting millions of powerful individuals in Wushuang City to take action. At least a hundred thousand of them, disregarding their own cultivation, began traveling across the three thousand worlds, searching for the people Fang Bai was looking for, no matter how slender the evidence.

Chapter 1660: Heaven Fiend Realm: Shi Xiaolian

There's a saying, "Great rewards await the brave."

The bounty order issued by Fang Bai equally drove countless powerful individuals to madness.

During that period, wherever Fang Bai went to a major city, he would make a high-profile appearance, followed by various news about his relatives and friends.

These messages gathered in Fang Bai's hands and, after being carefully screened and verified by him, proved to be almost unreliable, which left Fang Bai greatly disappointed.

One day, Fang Bai arrived at Danxia City, tens of thousands of miles away from Wushuang City, and temporarily stayed at an inn in the city.

Danxia City belongs to the Heaven Fiend Realm and is also a major city with a population of over ten million, gathering numerous powerful individuals.

The biggest feature of Danxia City is the presence of many high-grade alchemists, and it is said that the most powerful alchemist can even refine royal-grade spirit pills needed by Thunder Tribulation Experts.

Because of this, many Soul Severing Experts and Thunder Tribulation Experts reside all year round in Danxia City, seeking higher Martial Dao realms with the help of spirit pills refined by some alchemists in the city.

On this morning, Fang Bai, having withdrawn from his cultivation state, left the inn and strolled outside on the streets.

He leisurely walked toward a nearby Martial Artists Trading Market, wondering if he might chance upon some treasures.

When Fang Bai reached the entrance of the Martial Artists Trading Market, he was about to enter when he suddenly sensed a familiar Martial Artist aura.

With a thought, Fang Bai extended his divine sense to the surroundings and discovered that the aura came from a girl inside the market.

The girl seemed to be only fourteen or fifteen, at the age of budding youth. Although not yet fully matured, her clear and beautiful appearance and slim figure already marked her as a true beauty in the making.

The girl was dressed in a light yellow dress, her jet-black hair cascading down to her waist. Although young, a trace of wumei charm was already visible between her delicate eyebrows and bright eyes.

The girl was walking with several martial artists in the trading market, chatting and laughing, occasionally stopping at certain stalls to look around, seemingly also in search of treasures she fancied.

Among the martial artists, there were both men and women, young and old. The oldest, a granny, was a first-level Thunder Tribulation Expert, while the others, except for the girl in the yellow dress, were all Soul Severing Experts.

The girl in the yellow dress was the youngest and the weakest in terms of power, yet at fourteen or fifteen, she already possessed a Nascent Soul initial stage cultivation, which was stunning and enough to astound many.

On either side of the girl were two martial artists in their thirties, both with initial stage Soul Severing cultivation. They were almost obsessively watching over the girl in the yellow dress, a hint of flattery and admiration in their expressions.

"Junior Sister Xiao Lian, your birthday is coming soon. I just exchanged for a bottle of King Grade Rejuvenation Pill in the market. With this spirit pill, you can keep your youth and appearance unchanged. Let me give this Rejuvenation Pill to you as a gift!"

The martial artist on the left took out a bottle of spirit pills, holding it with both hands in front of the girl with a smiling face.

"Junior Sister Xiao Lian, this King Grade spirit weapon I just acquired should also be suitable for you. It's yours!"

The guy on the right was not to be outdone and presented a sword-type spirit weapon, also holding it with both hands in front of the girl.

The girl in the yellow dress glanced over the spirit pills and spirit weapon in front of her, her eyes sparkling, lightly biting her rosy lip with an impish demeanor, she laughed and said, "Thank you both, Brother Jiang and Senior Brother Yu, for your kindness! But I can't accept these spirit pills and spirit weapons!"

"Why?"

The two men asked urgently.

The girl in the yellow dress rolled her eyes and said to the granny walking ahead, "Because Master said that you mustn't accept rewards if you haven't earned them!"

The granny turned back and looked at her indulgently, smiling as she said, "You little girl, I meant you shouldn't randomly accept things from strangers, never said you couldn't accept what's given by your brothers."

The girl in the yellow dress playfully wrinkled her nose, reached out and took the spirit pills and spirit weapons from the two brothers, tossing them into her own space ring before giggling, "Since Master says so, I shall accept them. Thank you, Senior Brothers!"

The two men standing beside her each wore a pleased expression, but then exchanged a glance, snorted, and turned their heads away at the same time, as though they didn't care.

Seeing this, the granny softly sighed, thinking to herself, "Jiang Liang and Yu Wei, both are outstanding disciples within the Yunhai Sect's Inner Court, their future achievements in Martial Dao will surely be extraordinary, potentially becoming top figures in the Sect. But I didn't expect they'd both fall for Shi Xiaolian, this little girl, going to be quite a drama in the future."

A few years ago, Shi Xiaolian was accepted into the Yunhai Sect by the granny, because of her Innate Golden Spirit Root, exceptional intelligence, and high Wuxing. Within a few years, she astonishingly progressed from the Foundation Establishment realm to the Nascent Soul initial stage, thereby receiving recognition from the sect's high-ranking members.

The granny is one of the Elders of the Yunhai Sect, with a Thunder Tribulation first-level cultivation, personally responsible for guiding Shi Xiaolian, believing that with Shi Xiaolian's current progress, she is bound to advance to the Soul Severing realm within ten years and become the youngest Soul Severing Expert in the history of the Yunhai Sect.

When Shi Xiaolian first entered the Yunhai Sect, she was just an eleven or twelve-year-old innocent girl, but within a few years, she blossomed into a beautiful fifteen-year-old young lady with captivating charm, captivating thousands of disciples within the Yunhai Sect.

Jiang Liang and Yu Wei, both inner court disciples of the Yunhai Sect, are also exceptionally talented and stand out among the younger disciples.

After Shi Xiaolian's body matured, it became apparent that she was a stunning beauty in the making. Upon seeing her, Jiang Liang and Yu Wei were intoxicated, and joined the ranks of the thousands of admirers and suitors pursuing Shi Xiaolian within the sect.

This time, when the granny led the team out for training, upon learning that Shi Xiaolian would be accompanying them, Jiang Liang and Yu Wei spared no effort to join the party, eager to impress Shi Xiaolian all along the way, afraid of falling behind.

Unfortunately, while one has intentions, the other is indifferent. Whenever Jiang Liang and Yu Wei solemnly expressed their affections to Shi Xiaolian, she would just laugh it off and change the subject.

Little did they know that although Shi Xiaolian was young, a figure was already imprinted in her heart – a figure that never faded but instead grew with her years, becoming indelible.

In Shi Xiaolian's view, no one in this world could compare with the shadow in her heart.

"If I'm to seek a Martial Dao partner, they must be like Brother Fang Bai!"

Whenever Jiang Liang and Yu Wei tried to curry favor in front of her, Shi Xiaolian would think this over and over in her heart.

During these years in the Yunhai Sect, Shi Xiaolian often pleaded with her master to take her out for training, with the true aim of seizing the chance to search for traces of Fang Bai.

However, during these years, despite traveling through many regions of the Three Thousand Great Worlds with her master, there has been no news of Fang Bai.