

Doctor 1691

Chapter 1691: Passing Down Knowledge

“Brother Fang is back!”

“I knew you would be okay!”

“Haha, Little Mink said you might have become a meal for the sea beasts! But the Taoist Master said you are a man of great fortune and destiny, and surely wouldn’t die! Looks like I was right!”

“That day, I heard a sea beast with at least a Thunder Tribulation Triple Realm roaring. I thought Fang Bai went to fight that sea beast! Plus, he had been missing for so many days... You can’t blame me for jumping to conclusions!”

...

When Fang Bai landed in the Wei Family’s courtyard, appearing before Xia Chenyu and the others, they were all overjoyed.

“Is this Brother Fang Bai?”

After Fang Bai finished conversing with Xia Chenyu and the others, Wei Zhengtian, along with his wife Shi Hongye, approached with a smile, cupping his hands as he asked Fang Bai.

“Brother Fang, this is my father, Wei Zhengtian; and this is my mother, Shi Hongye.”

Wei Qingluan stepped forward to introduce Fang Bai.

Fang Bai made an “oh” sound, casually cupped his hands in return, and said, “I am indeed Fang Bai. Greetings to both of you.”

Typically, the Wei Zhengtian family before him would be considered descendants several generations down from Fang Bai, yet Wei Tianyi referred to Fang Bai as “brother,” which Fang Bai found amusing.

However, Fang Bai was broad-minded and open-hearted, so he didn’t care about such matters.

“I have already heard from Qingluan and Qinglong about the sea beasts attacking Immortal Stone City. Thanks to your intervention, Brother Fang. Wei here represents the Wei Family and the hundreds of thousands of residents of the city, and I thank you sincerely.”

As Wei Zhengtian spoke, he bowed solemnly to Fang Bai.

Fang Bai was not shy and accepted the bow with grace, then said, “It was a trivial matter, not worth mentioning. Besides, there is some connection between your Wei Family and me.”

Upon hearing this, Wei Zhengtian was immediately excited and said, “Qingluan told me that Brother Fang once met a descendant of the Fang Family and learned the Chaos Heavenly River Finger from them... Is this true?”

Fang Bai smiled slightly and, without speaking, demonstrated the Chaos Heavenly River Finger on the spot.

“This...”

Wei Zhengtian, seeing Fang Bai’s demonstration, was shocked as the power seemed even greater than when he used it himself, clearly understanding the essence of this technique more profoundly.

The Wei Family, since the era of their ancestor Wei Feng, had been passed down for tens of thousands of years, yet due to the qualifications of later generations, each was weaker than the previous.

When it came to Wei Zhengtian, although he had cultivated to the Thunder Tribulation Triple Realm relying on the martial arts passed down by the ancestors, the power of the Chaos Heavenly River Finger was less than that of the previous Family Head.

Wei Zhengtian felt it was his own dullness that prevented him from grasping the essence of the technique, thus feeling both fearful and self-reproachful, thinking that if things continued this way, the next generation would be even worse.

Seeing Fang Bai exhibit the Chaos Heavenly River Finger, Wei Tianyi was greatly impressed, feeling that Fang Bai's practice of the River Finger was the correct path, and during the Wei Family's transmission through the ages, something must have been overlooked, causing the technique's power to wane.

"Since we have met, it must be fate. I will stay for a while and impart the essence of this technique to you and your wife. Qingluan, Qinglong, and other Wei Family disciples may also listen in."

Wei Zhengtian was pondering how to ask Fang Bai for guidance, only for Fang Bai to offer it proactively.

Wei Zhengtian was immensely grateful, intending to kneel with his family to thank Fang Bai for his great kindness, but Fang Bai stopped them.

"If you are to give thanks, it should be to Senior Fang. After all, my martial arts techniques were passed down by his descendants."

Fang Bai said with a smile.

The Wei Zhengtian couple agreed, and so they took their children to the statue of Fang Qian, bowing deeply with utmost respect and sincerity.

"If only we could meet the descendants of the Fang Family."

Wei Zhengtian sighed upon returning.

Fang Bai's return with an advancement in cultivation, clearly noticed by Xia Chenyu and the others, was not questioned in detail.

To them, Fang Bai's unparalleled talent and wide-ranging knowledge made his advancement unsurprising.

However, Wei Qingluan and Wei Qinglong, the sibling duo, were astonished, wondering how Fang Bai, who was at the initial stage of Soul Severing during the Immortal Stone City battle ten days ago, suddenly appeared at Soul Severing Perfection, equal to them in cultivation level?

In that battle, Fang Bai exhibited the power of a Thunder Tribulation expert from an initial Soul Severing realm. Now, after advancing three small realms, his combat power must have reached an astonishing level?

The Wei Family siblings, possessing innate spiritual roots and seen as the hope of the family, were self-confident and ambitious, but in front of Fang Bai, they felt insignificant, deeply impacted.

In the following days, Fang Bai temporarily stayed with the Wei Family, and the Wei descendants dispersed everywhere were summoned by the Wei Zhengtian couple to gather in Immortal Stone City.

After the Wei descendants gathered, Fang Bai began to elucidate the Chaos Heavenly River Finger's essence, while also providing guidance on the Water Element Art of the Water System techniques.

Most Wei descendants were extraordinarily gifted, but due to the neglect and missing elements in martial art technique inheritance, they had weakened over the years.

Under Fang Bai's guidance, many Wei descendants experienced a sudden enlightenment, as if seeing a new world of Martial Dao, leaving them addicted and unable to extricate themselves.

In the days that followed, over half of the Wei descendants advanced to higher realms due to Fang Bai's teachings, significantly elevating the overall strength of the Wei Family.

Wei Zhengtian, Shi Hongye, as well as Wei Qingluan and Wei Qinglong, also greatly benefited. Though they had not yet advanced in realms, their insights were profound, confident that their advancements were only a matter of time.

“Brother Fang is planning to go to the Xuanyang Realm?”

Upon learning that Fang Bai intended to leave Immortal Stone City soon, cross the Black Sea, and head to the opposite Eastern Desolate continent, Wei Zhengtian couldn't help but worry for him.

“The Black Sea is fraught with peril, and crossing it is no easy task. The Eastern Desolate continent is said to be full of Thunder Tribulation experts, all vying for cultivation resources, with frequent occurrences of conflict and bloodshed, making it one of the most dangerous territories in the Three Thousand Great Worlds...”

Wei Zhengtian had ventured to the Eastern Desolate continent once during his early Thunder Tribulation stage training, narrowly surviving countless life-and-death situations, and it was a struggle to return to Immortal Stone City, leaving him fearful even to this day.

As his cultivation reached higher realms, although he desired to visit the Eastern Desolate continent again, his role as the Family Head, coupled with the responsibility to guard the statue, prevented him from journeying afar.

In Wei Zhengtian's view, while Fang Bai was powerful, he wasn't a Thunder Tribulation expert and was too young and inexperienced to navigate danger effectively, prompting Wei Zhengtian to advise Fang Bai to delay his plans and only visit after he reaches the true Thunder Tribulation Realm.

However, Fang Bai said, “I have friends currently in distress in the Eastern Desolate continent. Precisely because it is dangerous there, I must find and protect them. Brother Wei, I appreciate your concern, but I must go to the Eastern Desolate continent!”

Chapter 1692: Fang Bai and Xia Chenyu's Private Conversation

In the Three Thousand Major Worlds, the Eastern Desolate Continent boasts the densest spiritual energy and the greatest number of strong practitioners, while also being the most dangerous land.

Fang Bai is naturally aware of this, and in terms of understanding the Eastern Desolate Continent, probably no one in this world knows more than Fang Bai.

In fact, even if the Eastern Desolate Continent didn't have the relatives and friends Fang Bai wanted to find, he would still go there sooner or later.

Because Fang Bai knows that the Eastern Desolate Continent has many strong practitioner relics and cultivation secret realms. Even Fang Bai himself, before ascending to the Immortal Realm in the past, left some cultivation treasures there for those destined to find them.

In this life, to elevate his cultivation to a higher realm, Fang Bai plans to revisit old places and renew the glory of his past life.

Seeing Fang Bai's firm decision, Wei Zhengtian sighed inwardly and refrained from persuasion.

"Brother Wei, there's something I'd like to trouble you with..."

Fang Bai glanced at Xia Chenyu and the others, then said to Wei Zhengtian, "I'm preparing to travel alone to the Eastern Desolate Continent, which will make for an easier, unencumbered journey. I've established a Nine Heavens Immortal Emperor Palace in Heaven's Net Realm and would like Brother Wei to escort them there."

Wei Zhengtian furrowed his brow slightly and hesitated, saying, "This... I'm worried that if I leave, what if the Sea Beasts attack the city again..."

Fang Bai knew what he was thinking, interrupted him with a smile, and said, "You don't need to worry about that. Before I leave, I'll set up several layers of formations around Immortal Stone City and the surrounding stone statues. Once the formations are complete, even Sea Beasts of the third or fourth level of thunder tribulation won't pose a threat."

Wei Zhengtian, aware of Fang Bai's previous use of formations to protect the stone statues, was delighted upon hearing this and said, "If that's the case, then I can leave without worry."

"Fang Bai, I'm going with you to the Eastern Desolate Continent!"

Though Xia Chenyu already knew about Fang Bai establishing the Nine Heavens Immortal Emperor Palace and wanted to see it, she had just reunited with Fang Bai and couldn't bear to part.

Even though Wei Zhengtian described the Eastern Desolate Continent as extremely dangerous, Xia Chenyu was fearless as long as she had Fang Bai by her side.

Shi Xiaolian felt similarly.

"The more dangerous a place is, the more opportunities it offers. The Taoist Master likes that! Haha, Fang Bai, if you don't take me, I'll go there myself!"

Wu De, restless by nature whether in the mundane world or the Minor World, couldn't stay put. Fang Bai wanted him to stay in the Nine Heavens Immortal Emperor Palace, but how could he be willing?

As for Lightning Mink, it was innately unruly and wouldn't listen to Fang Bai at all. With a glare, it seemed to say, "You won't get rid of me."

Fang Bai couldn't be bothered with Wu De and Lightning Mink, and couldn't manage them. But Xia Chenyu and Shi Xiaolian were too weak in cultivation and lacked experience. Upon arriving at the Eastern Desolate Continent, even Fang Bai couldn't predict what dangers he'd face, making it difficult to keep them safe. Therefore, he didn't want them to accompany him.

At the Nine Heavens Immortal Emperor Palace, Fang Bai had set several layers of Concealment and Offensive and Defensive Great Formations, making it difficult even for a Thunder Tribulation Expert to detect. For now, it was the safest and most secure place.

No matter how Xia Chenyu and Shi Xiaolian pleaded, Fang Bai remained stern and uncompromising, not agreeing to take them with him.

Xia Chenyu had known Fang Bai for a long time and understood his character, knowing that once he made a decision, no one could sway him. In resignation, she whispered a few quick words in Fang Bai's ear.

Shi Xiaolian watched Xia Chenyu speak in Fang Bai's ear and saw Fang Bai's expression turn to one of amused helplessness, while Xia Chenyu's eyes sparkled with autumn waves, and her cheeks flushed slightly with a hint of coyness, saying teasingly irresistible, making Shi Xiaolian wonder.

"Sister Chenyu, what... what did you say to Brother Fang? Can you tell me?"

Shi Xiaolian, still with a youthful heart, couldn't help but ask.

Xia Chenyu glanced at her and giggled, "You're... too young. What I said isn't suitable for children, so I can't tell you. Alright, I need to leave with Fang Bai for a bit, we have some private matters to discuss..."

With that, she pulled Fang Bai with her, and they rode a spiritual artifact to fly away from Immortal Stone City, heading toward the deep forests in the west of the city.

"Ah?"

Shi Xiaolian's little mouth hung open, staring dumbfounded at the disappearing direction of Fang Bai and Xia Chenyu, and after a while finally came to realize what "not suitable for children" meant, blushes appearing on her cheeks.

"I wonder what secret things Brother Fang and Sister Chenyu are saying together... I really want to know..."

Shi Xiaolian pondered over the meaning behind Xia Chenyu's words, feeling that their expressions when leaving were odd, suggesting that this departure might involve more than just a simple private conversation.

That night, Fang Bai and Xia Chenyu did not return, leaving Shi Xiaolian somewhat anxious, sitting cross-legged in her room with no mind for cultivation, intending to wait for their return.

In the early hours, deep in the mountains west of Immortal Stone City, the faint sound of thunder rang out, disturbing some Thunder Tribulation Experts in the city, who suspected someone might be crossing the Thunder Tribulation.

However, Wei Zhengtian personally went to investigate and found no signs of tribulation clouds or lightning, nor did he see any strong practitioners, so he returned.

Early next day, Wei Zhengtian and his family, along with Shi Xiaolian, Wu De, and Lightning Mink, waited in the courtyard for Fang Bai and Xia Chenyu, wondering where the two had gone the night before.

At sunrise, two streams of light flew in, and Fang Bai and Xia Chenyu returned hand in hand.

“Brother Fang, Miss Xia, it seems that both of you have advanced in your power...”

When Fang Bai and Xia Chenyu landed, Wei Zhengtian’s gaze fell on them, noticing that within a single night, their momentum had changed significantly. He wondered if they had gone somewhere to cultivate.

Although Fang Bai hadn’t advanced in rank, he had reached Soul Severing Perfection only yesterday, but now held a trace of a Thunder Tribulation Expert’s aura, perhaps reaching the Half-Step Thunder Tribulation realm.

Meanwhile, Xia Chenyu transitioned from Nascent Soul Perfection to the initial stage of Soul Severing, achieving a leap that countless strong practitioners can’t accomplish in a lifetime.

To the side, Shi Xiaolian was focused not on the change in Fang Bai and Xia Chenyu’s power but on the transformation in Xia Chenyu’s appearance and demeanor.

Her eyes widened as she looked at Xia Chenyu, noticing her skin was more delicate and rosy than before she left, as if she were a mingzhu-like beauty, her demeanor more ethereal, like a Heavenly Immortal descending to the mortal realm, yet mingled with elegance and wumei.

In short, in Shi Xiaolian’s eyes, Xia Chenyu had become even more beautiful overnight.

Not only Shi Xiaolian noticed, but also Wei Zhengtian and his wife, being experienced themselves, exchanged looks, realizing something, and smiled knowingly.

Xia Chenyu, aware that Wei Zhengtian and his wife must have sensed something, couldn't help but show a slight blush.

But Fang Bai laughed openly and said, "Last night, Chenyu and I found a place to cultivate and gained some insights, hence the advancement in our power..."

Wei Zhengtian laughed heartily, adopting an "I understand" demeanor, and with clasped fists, said to Fang Bai and Xia Chenyu, "Congratulations, Brother Fang, congratulations, Miss Xia."

Chapter 1693: Fan Hai Sect

Wei Zhengtian's "congratulations" left the Wei siblings, Shi Xiaolian, Wu De, and Lightning Mink somewhat bewildered.

Yet, Fang Bai and Xia Chenyu understood; Xia Chenyu rarely showed a hint of shyness, while Fang Bai cheerfully replied, "Thank you! Thank you!"

Shi Xiaolian, blinking her beautiful eyes, looked at Fang Bai and Xia Chenyu, then at Wei Zhengtian and Shi Hongye, not understanding what one was congratulating for and what the other was thanking for.

Fang Bai and the others rested for two more days in Immortal Stone City. During these two days, Fang Bai engraved complex array patterns on the city's sturdy walls, reinforcing them to make the city impregnable to sea beasts.

Even around the stone statue from Fang Bai's previous life, several formations were laid out anew, capable of withstanding an assault from a sea beast like the Unihorn Dragon Whale for a significant period.

Once everything was completed, Fang Bai rested for another day, and early the next morning, he left Immortal Stone City to seek a ship for crossing the sea to the Eastern Desolate Continent.

That night, Fang Bai spoke with Xia Chenyu; she surprisingly no longer insisted on accompanying Fang Bai to the Eastern Desolate Continent but still couldn't avoid giving a few reminders, asking Fang Bai to

be careful on his journey and not forget they were waiting for him to return safely at the Nine Heavens Immortal Emperor Palace.

Before Fang Bai's departure, Shi Xiaolian, her eyes red, said, "Brother Fang, take care, you must come back!"

"Don't worry, I'll be fine. Once I've found the Dongfang Sisters, I'll return to reunite with you all."

Fang Bai and Xia Chenyu gently embraced for a moment, and he patted Shi Xiaolian's head.

"Right, these two Jade Pendants, keep them on you for a safe journey."

Fang Bai took out two Self-Protecting Jade Tiles he forged the previous night, personally putting them on Xia Chenyu and Shi Xiaolian.

Each pendant contained Fang Bai's infused killing intent, able to withstand attacks from two levels of Heavenly Tribulation. Coupled with Wei Zhengtian's escort, the two women should safely reach the Nine Heavens Immortal Emperor Palace.

After bidding farewell to Xia Chenyu, Shi Xiaolian, and the others, Fang Bai, along with the relentless Wu De and Lightning Mink, followed Wei Zhengtian's directions, flying along the edge of the Black Sea towards the south.

Heading south for ten thousand miles, there's a huge harbor, reportedly built by the most powerful sect on the Western Desolate Continent, the Fan Hai Sect.

Located by the Black Sea, Fan Hai Sect was founded over a thousand years ago with astounding depth; it's said to have Thunder Tribulation experts within the sect, and its senior members are mostly Thunder Tribulation experts.

Fan Hai Sect constructed this harbor specifically to transport Western Desolate Continent's experts to the Eastern Desolate Continent, thus earning vast cultivation resources.

Fan Hai Sect possesses several huge ships that travel between the Western and Eastern Desolate continents every two years.

To board Fan Hai Sect's sea ship, one must meet two conditions: cultivation level must be at least Soul Severing Perfection, and one must pay twenty thousand Royal Grade Spirit Stones as fare.

Twenty thousand Royal Grade Spirit Stones don't sound much, but for Soul Severing Perfection experts, accumulating such a number of Royal Grade Spirit Stones is rather difficult. Hence, on each voyage, the Soul Severing Perfection experts are only a minority, with the majority being Thunder Tribulation experts.

Each sea ship of Fan Hai Sect is over three hundred zhang long and can accommodate more than two thousand people.

Charging twenty thousand Royal Grade Spirit Stones per expert, Fan Hai Sect can earn forty million Royal Grade Spirit Stones from one sea ship.

And each time, Fan Hai Sect sends two sea ships together to support each other, thus transporting four thousand experts and earning eighty million Royal Grade Spirit Stones.

Even deducting half for travel expenses, Fan Hai Sect can still make a net profit of forty million Royal Grade Spirit Stones.

Such immense profit justifies Fan Hai Sect's willingness to brave the sea's dangers and invest significant manpower and materials to build ships.

Fang Bai himself already meets both conditions for boarding, but Wu De and Lightning Mink don't, so they can only stay inside Fang Bai's Five Elements Space Ring once more.

Coincidentally, when Fang Bai arrived at the harbor built by Fan Hai Sect, the docked ship there was set to depart in three days. Missing this would mean waiting for another two years.

Despite the perilous Black Sea crossing, the Eastern Desolate Continent's abundant nature's spiritual energy and numerous opportunities keep martial artists passionate about the journey. Arriving late might mean missing a cabin.

Fang Bai paid twenty thousand Royal Grade Spirit Stones, boarded the sea ship, and was told that as a Soul Severing Perfection expert, he could only stay in the small guest room on the ship's lower deck.

The small guest room not only had limited space but also poor lighting, worse soundproofing, no secrets to be had within, and no sea view to enjoy.

Many Soul Severing Perfection experts already residing there complained constantly, aware they couldn't compete over positions with Thunder Tribulation experts in the upper deck's large guest rooms, so they had to stay obediently.

Fang Bai originally thought of going to the upper deck's large guest rooms to find a Thunder Tribulation expert, offering more Royal Grade Spirit Stones for a room swap, but eventually dismissed the idea.

On this sea ship, there were too many strong characters, with over a thousand Thunder Tribulation experts. Although Fang Bai feared no one, it was wise to refrain from showing off without necessity, keeping a low profile.

Fang Bai took his room number, went to his guest room, sat cross-legged, and released his Divine Sense to examine the personnel situation on the sea ship.

On this ship, apart from over a hundred Fan Hai Sect disciples serving as crew, the rest were experts preparing to cross the sea for trials. Among them, Soul Severing Perfection experts like himself counted to about five hundred.

"Hm? Why is she on this ship too? Could she be heading to the Eastern Desolate Continent for trials?"

In one of the large guest rooms on the ship's upper deck, Fang Bai spotted a familiar person, none other than Shi Xiaolian's former mentor, Yunhai Sect Elder Huo Zhenying.

Fang Bai had a bad impression of Yunhai Sect, where Huo Zhenying belonged, but he had some fondness for Huo Zhenying because Huo Zhenying was affectionate and protective towards Shi Xiaolian, willing to trade her own life for Shi Xiaolian's safety during the crisis, fulfilling her duties as a mentor.

Fortunately, Yunhai Sect's Supreme Elder suddenly needed to cross the Thunder Tribulation, leading away Lan Peiyu and other high-rank members of Yunhai Sect; otherwise, Fang Bai knew rescuing Shi Xiaolian would have inevitably led to a fierce confrontation.

Yet, the relations had been utterly severed at that point; the next meeting would certainly be as foes, not friends.

Due to Shi Xiaolian's connection, Fang Bai didn't wish to become enemies with Huo Zhenying, thinking he would avoid encountering her to prevent awkwardness.

"Among those two Thunder Tribulation Level Three experts, one is from Fan Hai Sect. I'm not sure who the other one is..."

In the topmost guest rooms, Fang Bai sensed the aura of two Thunder Tribulation Level Three experts, identifying them as the strongest existence on this ship.

Though Fang Bai was a Half-Step Thunder Tribulation, capable of standing against Thunder Tribulation Level Three experts when fully unleashed, on this ship, he didn't wish to provoke conflict with such strong characters, so he quickly withdrew his Divine Sense to avoid detection.

Chapter 1694: An Old Acquaintance on the Sea Ship

Three days later, two ships of the Fan Hai Sect carrying four thousand powerful cultivators left the dock, sailing into the vast ocean, heading towards the Eastern Desolate Continent.

Although the Black Sea was turbulent with high winds and waves, the ships were massive and etched with array patterns to stabilize the hull, so the voyage was not bumpy.

Having recently advanced his cultivation level, Fang Bai's realm was not yet stable, so once the ships set sail, he stayed in his cabin to meditate and cultivate.

Over the Black Sea, the Water Spirit Qi was doubly rich, and while cultivating, Fang Bai absorbed a significant amount of Water Spirit Qi from the sea's surface.

Fang Bai knew his rate of absorbing Spiritual Energy was astonishingly fast, and it could even cause the phenomenon of a waterspout, so he restrained himself while cultivating. Yet he still caught the attention of some powerful cultivators on the ship.

However, with nearly two thousand powerful cultivators on the ship, there were bound to be some geniuses. These geniuses, when cultivating, often exhibited unique phenomena similar to those when Fang Bai cultivated, so other cultivators were not surprised.

Over a dozen days later, with his realm stabilized, Fang Bai stepped out of his cabin for the first time, onto the ship's broad deck, facing the fierce sea wind, admiring the seascape along the way.

The so-called seascape was nothing more than some deserted islands and some sea birds flying over the sea.

The sea birds over the Black Sea were mostly white. When flocks of them flew over the dark, abyss-like sea, they were like streaks of brightness cutting through the night, making them extremely eye-catching.

In the eyes of many powerful cultivators traveling between the Western and Eastern Desolate Continents, preparing those flying sea birds as food not only greatly benefited the cultivation of Martial Artists but was also quite delicious.

Therefore, seeing the sea birds flying close, many cultivators used mystical arts to hunt them. Once in hand, they would build a fire on the deck, add some seasonings, and grill them, making for a delicious meal.

However, the sea birds were cunning and agile, making them hard to catch. Only those with exceptional movement techniques and fast wind element cultivators had a higher success rate in hunting them.

And those cultivators unable to catch the sea birds, wishing to taste something delicious, would have to exchange Spirit Stones with other cultivators.

In this way, some wind element cultivators managed to earn a small fortune by hunting sea birds.

On the ship, only a small portion consisted of Soul Severing Perfection cultivators, who, due to their insufficient strength and reluctance to compete with Thunder Tribulation Experts for the sea birds near the ship, could only watch as others enjoyed the tasty sea birds.

As for Fang Bai, who in his previous life already knew these sea birds over the Black Sea could aid Martial Artists' cultivation, casually hunted a few, kept two for himself, and threw the others into the Five Elements Space Ring for Wu De and the Lightning Mink to handle.

"Fang Bai? Why are you here too?"

Huo Zhenying, residing in the upper tier of the ship, came to the deck for some fresh air and, spotting Fang Bai in the crowd, couldn't help but exclaim in surprise.

Fang Bai gave a calm smile, nodded at Huo Zhenying, and said, "Elder Huo, long time no see!"

Huo Zhenying looked around Fang Bai and urgently asked, "How about Xiao Lian? How is she now?"

Huo Zhenying viewed Shi Xiaolian almost as her own child. Since Shi Xiaolian was expelled from the sect, she missed her greatly. Seeing Shi Xiaolian not accompanying Fang Bai, she couldn't help but ask.

Fang Bai, knowing Huo Zhenying genuinely cared for Shi Xiaolian, replied earnestly, "Xiao Lian is doing very well. She's been placed in a safe place by me."

Huo Zhenying finally felt relieved, showing a hint of apology on her face, and said in a deep voice, "Fang Bai, about the last incident, it was our Yunhai Sect that wronged you... please don't take it to heart. Also, tell Xiao Lian that her master is sorry."

The "last incident" she mentioned referred to the injustices Fang Bai and Shi Xiaolian faced at the Yunhai Sect. Huo Zhenying knew her sect was at fault but did not want Fang Bai to harbor any hatred, so she apologized on behalf of the sect.

Fang Bai nonchalantly waved his hand and said, "I understand. Your Yunhai Sect's higher-ups considered things from the sect's interest, so there's nothing wrong with us. However, your methods were somewhat appropriate. Since that incident, not just me, even Xiao Lian has lost faith in your Yunhai Sect."

Huo Zhenying's expression dimmed, she sighed deeply, and said no more.

Fang Bai looked out toward the distant sea and suddenly asked, "Elder Huo, on this trip to the Eastern Desolate Continent, are you planning to gain experience?"

Upon hearing his question, Huo Zhenying's eyes showed a trace of sadness, and she replied with a bitter smile in a low voice, "Some things happened in our Yunhai Sect recently, and I need to go to the Eastern Desolate Continent to find something to resolve them..."

Fang Bai thought carefully and then communicated a message to Huo Zhenying, saying, "Did your sect's Supreme Elder fail to cross the Fourfold Thunder Tribulation?"

"How do you know that?"

Huo Zhenying was taken aback, staring at Fang Bai like she had seen a ghost.

The failure of their Yunhai Sect Supreme Elder in crossing the Fourfold Thunder Tribulation, resulting in shattered meridians, damaged Qi Sea, and severe injuries, was tightly sealed information known only to Yunhai Sect's higher-ups. Huo Zhenying couldn't fathom how Fang Bai knew about it.

"I guessed,"

Fang Bai grinned and explained, "That day, when Xiao Lian and I were mistreated at your sect, your Sect Master intended to act against us but suddenly left us unattended. I noticed at the time that tribulation clouds were gathering over your sect's back mountain, with thunderclaps echoing, so I knew someone from your sect was crossing a Thunder Tribulation..."

After pausing, he continued, "Your sect's higher-ups were all in the Sect Master Hall at that time, so the one crossing the Thunder Tribulation could only be your sect's Supreme Elder."

Huo Zhenying, not avoiding the subject, silently nodded, as if waiting for Fang Bai to continue.

Fang Bai proceeded, "Elder Huo, this trip to the Eastern Desolate Continent, you said 'something happened to Yunhai Sect, and you need to go there to find a solution.' Coupled with the matter of your sect's Supreme Elder crossing the Fourfold Thunder Tribulation and your expression showing not joy but sorrow and sadness, I deduced it must be due to some problem when your sect's Supreme Elder crossed the Thunder Tribulation..."

"On the Eastern Desolate Continent, there are many high-rank Alchemists and countless rare treasures. Elder Huo, you are likely entrusted by the sect's higher-ups to try your luck there, hoping to find a spirit pill or medicine to save your sect's Supreme Elder... Elder Huo, am I correct?"

Huo Zhenying gazed intently at Fang Bai for a long time before sighing and sending a message, "Since you've guessed it, Friend Fang, please keep it confidential. If our Yunhai Sect's adversaries learn of this, it could spell disaster."

Fang Bai smiled and nodded.

Huo Zhenying further communicated by voice, "I need to remind you of one thing. On this ship, Elder He Polang, the Supreme Elder of Blue Sea Sect, is present. He is a three-fold Thunder Tribulation Expert!"

Fang Bai was slightly taken aback, and his expression turned serious.

Some days ago, when Fang Bai boarded the ship, he used his Divine Sense to probe and found two three-fold Thunder Tribulation Experts on the top tier of the ship, one being a strong cultivator from the Fan Hai Sect. Unexpectedly, the other was the Supreme Elder of the Blue Sea Sect.

Chapter 1695: Lending a Helping Hand

The interactions between Fang Bai and the Blue Sea Sect were limited, but because he killed Elder Han Dongweng of the Blue Sea Sect and his disciple Yang Heng, he became the sect's mortal enemy.

When Han Dongweng and his disciple were slain, many powerful practitioners witnessed it. After learning it was Fang Bai's doing, the Blue Sea Sect dispatched their strong practitioners to hunt him down. However, Fang Bai, accompanied by Shi Xiaolian, left the Yunhai Sect and flew all the way to Immortal Stone City, thus eluding the sect's pursuit.

Fang Bai was unaware that the Blue Sea Sect had issued a bounty order across the entire Three Thousand Worlds, offering a substantial reward for his head. Fortunately, the order was issued not long ago and had yet to reach the Fan Hai Sect; otherwise, Fang Bai would have faced trouble aboard this sea vessel.

It's crucial to know that on this sea vessel are numerous Thunder Tribulation Experts, and the bounty from the Blue Sea Sect is tempting. If those on the ship were aware of the bounty order, many would undoubtedly covet Fang Bai's head.

Fang Bai never expected that He Polang, the Supreme Elder of the Blue Sea Sect, would be on the same sea vessel as him. Currently, they hadn't crossed paths, so He Polang shouldn't be aware of his presence, otherwise, he would have already come looking for him.

"Since He Polang is not aware of Friend Fang's presence on this ship, it would be best for Friend Fang to change his appearance."

Huo Zhenying suggested through voice transmission.

If it were only He Polang, Fang Bai wouldn't be afraid, but given the Blue Sea Sect's bounty's allure to all the strong practitioners on this ship, to avoid unnecessary trouble, Fang Bai decided to heed Huo Zhenying's advice.

He swiftly returned to his cabin, modified his bones and muscles, altered his appearance slightly, and changed into a new set of clothes, transforming into a middle-aged man in his forties before returning to the deck.

With so many powerful practitioners on deck, no one paid attention to someone who appeared to be at the Soul Severing Perfection level.

Thus, out of the two thousand Martial Artists on the ship, only Huo Zhenying knew Fang Bai's true identity.

"Thank you for the reminder, Elder Huo."

Returning to the deck, Fang Bai expressed his gratitude to Huo Zhenying.

Huo Zhenying sighed, "No need to thank me. Just treat Xiao Lian well in the future."

Fang Bai solemnly nodded.

"Friend Fang, it has only been a month or two since departing the Yunhai Sect, yet your cultivation level has grown to such a realm. Truly astonishing."

At this moment, Huo Zhenying realized Fang Bai's cultivation had reached Soul Severing Perfection, and he couldn't help but marvel at it.

Huo Zhenying recalled when Fang Bai, with Shi Xiaolian, went to the Yunhai Sect, he was only at the initial level of Soul Severing, yet his combat prowess could contend with a First Stage Thunder Tribulation Expert. Now, his cultivation had skyrocketed, and who knows how terrifying his combat prowess might have become.

In any case, Huo Zhenying knew he was no match for Fang Bai anymore.

Thinking of Fang Bai's limitless potential, Huo Zhenying was also happy for Shi Xiaolian, who could accompany him.

"Whether our sect's Supreme Elder's injuries can be healed concerns the survival of the sect. I hope you can assist us once we reach the Eastern Desolate Continent, regardless of past grievances."

Huo Zhenying requested Fang Bai.

“Oh, what does Elder Huo want me to do to help?”

Fang Bai replied lightly.

To be honest, aside from having a good impression of Huo Zhenying, Fang Bai had no interest in the life and death of the other members of the Yunhai Sect, nor was he inclined to get involved.

Huo Zhenying knew Fang Bai harbored a grudge against the Yunhai Sect and sighed, “It’s said that the Eastern Desolate Continent is abundant with high-rank heavenly materials and earthly treasures. I hope to find some Royal Grade Superior Wansui Fruits and have an Alchemist refine them into Marrow Cleansing Pills to help our Supreme Elder reshape his meridians and repair his Qi Sea.”

Fang Bai said, “Royal Grade Superior Wansui Fruits are extremely rare and hard to come by!”

Huo Zhenying smiled bitterly and said, “Indeed! Even Royal Grade Intermediate Spiritual Medicines are incredibly rare to me, let alone Superior ones, which are said to be near Immortal grade.”

Fang Bai thought to himself that he could heal the injury, but currently being on this sea vessel, how could he return?

“Once we reach the Eastern Desolate Continent, there will surely be a way.”

Seeing Huo Zhenying’s anxiety, Fang Bai consoled him, “Let’s exchange contact information; if any findings are made on the Eastern Desolate Continent, I’ll get in touch with Elder Huo.”

Knowing Fang Bai’s numerous methods and his strength now surpassing his own, Huo Zhenying felt hopeful about finding the Royal Grade Superior Wansui Fruits and expressed his gratitude to Fang Bai with a cheerful face.

A month into the sea voyage, the vessels entered the deep sea region of the Black Sea, where the waves were higher and more fierce, and sea beasts began to appear on the sea surface.

Sea beasts in the sea were often aggressive, but because the two sea vessels were massive, they resembled moving islands, causing most sea beasts to steer clear.

However, some large sea beasts, sensing the strong presence of numerous practitioners aboard the vessels, would attempt to ram into the vessels, hoping to capsize them and feast on the human Martial Artists on board.

At such times, the strong practitioners from the Fan Hai Sect aboard the vessels would activate the Defensive Formations of the vessel to ward off the sea beasts' attacks.

The Defensive Formations on board were set by the most renowned Array Masters from the Western Desolate Continent and, together with the ship's robust structure, could withstand attacks from Third Stage or even Fourth Stage sea beasts. This was the confidence behind Fan Hai Sect's daring to build sea vessels and transport mighty practitioners back and forth.

The vessels passed through several perilous areas where sea beasts congregated, not without a scare, but ultimately safe. Both the practitioners of the Fan Hai Sect and those accompanying the sea voyage breathed a sigh of relief.

However, the practitioners of the Fan Hai Sect remained cautious, knowing the real test was yet to come.

Practitioners from Fan Hai Sect, who had traveled between the Eastern and Western Desolate Continents many times, knew of Thunder Tribulation level Three and Four sea beasts active in the core regions of the Black Sea, whose attacks would pose the greatest threat.

If one of those powerful sea beasts capsized or broke the vessel, the fate of the Martial Artists aboard would likely be grim.

After all, in the tens of thousands of miles of the Black Sea, even the most powerful practitioner could not fly across it, and the ocean's surface was too sparse to find a foothold, leading to the possibility of ending up in the belly of a sea beast.

Of course, some fortunate practitioners might encounter a few islands and await rescue from passing vessels, but the odds were indeed slim.

On this day, at dusk, the skies, covered by dark clouds for nearly half a month, finally cleared, and sunlight spread across the rolling sea surface like golden dragons tumbling.

More practitioners gathered on the deck than usual, including Huo Zhenying and Fang Bai, who came out to chat together.

“Elder Huo, it’s been a while. Where are you headed now?”

An aged voice suddenly sounded in Huo Zhenying’s ears. His body trembled slightly as he looked up toward the highest level of the ship, where, on the deck before a cabin, an elderly white-haired man stood by the railing.

The white-haired elder, dressed in a gray robe, looked down at Huo Zhenying with a cold smile on his wrinkled face, sending a shiver down one’s spine.

Chapter 1696: He Polang

In the eyes of ordinary people, the white-haired elder seems unremarkable, just a hunched old man, but only a strong figure like Huo Zhenying knows how terrifying the white-haired elder truly is.

The cold sneer of the white-haired elder contained endless pressure, making Huo Zhenying shiver.

His seemingly cloudy eyes occasionally shot out a sharp gaze, as if capable of penetrating human hearts.

Huo Zhenying seemed quite afraid of the white-haired elder, daring not to meet his gaze. After taking a deep breath, he forced a smile, cupped his fist and slightly bowed, saying, “I didn’t expect to see Elder He here... I am preparing to train for a while on the Eastern Desolate Continent.”

Upon finishing this sentence, he immediately transmitted his voice to Fang Bai, saying, “This person is the Supreme Elder He Polang of Blue Sea Sect, whom I mentioned before. You must be very careful not to show any flaws.”

Fang Bai responded with a nod, slightly raising his head to glance at the white-haired elder, He Polang.

He Polang's gaze happened to fall on Fang Bai beside Huo Zhenying.

Their gaze met, surprising He Polang that the opponent, a mere Soul Severing Perfection cultivator, actually dared to meet his gaze without dodging, even if it was only for a brief moment.

In He Polang's eyes, the Fang Bai before him, at just over forty years old with cultivation at the Soul Severing Perfection realm, is considered extraordinary in talent, but still falls short compared to the geniuses of the Eastern Desolate Continent.

However, from Fang Bai, He Polang saw a unique temperament not even possessed by those geniuses on the Eastern Desolate Continent, an indescribable quality that made him feel this young man was far from simple.

"Friend Fang..."

Huo Zhenying hadn't expected Fang Bai dared to stare He Polang down, couldn't help but break into a cold sweat, gently coughed and nudged him with his elbow as a reminder.

In this world where strength rules, viewing a Supreme Elder's interest, a younger Soul Severing Perfection cultivator and a triple Heavenly Tribulation expert in such a way is considered disrespectful and could lead to deadly consequences.

Fang Bai only withdrew his gaze then, grinning at Huo Zhenying, exhibiting a relaxed and carefree demeanor.

Seeing He Polang didn't show any signs of anger, Huo Zhenying secretly breathed a sigh of relief, thinking Fang Bai probably didn't realize that he strode past the Ghost Gate just now.

"Eastern Desolate Continent is filled with strong individuals and danger at every turn. Elder Huo, you ought to be careful."

After a deep look at Fang Bai, He Polang shifted his gaze back to Huo Zhenying, gently stroking his white beard, speaking faintly.

Huo Zhenying bowed and replied, "Thank you for your advice, elder. I will be careful."

"By the way, I wonder if there is any news from your sect about the murderer who killed my sect's Elder Han and his disciple?"

He Polang slightly squinted his eyes and suddenly asked, his gaze towards Huo Zhenying tinged with more coldness.

The murder of Elder Han Dongweng and his disciple, although not committed by Huo Zhenying and his disciples, was somewhat connected to them. Although Blue Sea Sect never accused Yunhai Sect afterward, they demanded Yunhai Sect report any news of Fang Bai, and not to harbor or hide him, which Yunhai Sect agreed to.

Upon hearing He Polang suddenly mention it, Huo Zhenying's heart tightened swiftly, hastily responding, "There hasn't been any news of Fang Bai yet... If there is any in the future, we will definitely inform your sect."

He Polang nodded, said grimly, "Daring enough to kill an elder and disciple of my Blue Sea Sect, Fang Bai has audacious impudence! If captured, he will certainly face a fate of being skinned and shattered! Hmph, with Blue Sea Sect disciples spread all over the world, I don't believe Fang Bai can escape pursuit!"

As he spoke, his face showed savage expressions, murderous aura spreading all around, causing many strong figures on the lower deck to feel chills running down their spines.

Lowering his head, Huo Zhenying quickly glanced at Fang Bai, seeing that he wore a somewhat indifferent expression, couldn't help but smile wryly, thinking he is the classic case of a newborn calf unafraid of a tiger, unaware of the triple Heavenly Tribulation strong expert's might.

Now Blue Sea Sect offers a huge bounty for Fang Bai's head. Once his identity is exposed, he might become a coveted prey for the strong ones on this entire ship, and at that time, on this vast sea, he absolutely couldn't escape.

Fortunately, He Polang retreated to his room after finishing speaking, no longer paying attention to the two of them, allowing Huo Zhenying to finally relax his suspended heart.

"Friend Fang, it's better to avoid the deck on the sea ship! If He Polang sees even a shred of evidence against you, it'll be hard to save your life. Once we reach the Eastern Desolate Continent, you are free as a bird and won't have to worry anymore."

Huo Zhenying, caring deeply for Shi Xiaolian, and Fang Bai being Shi Xiaolian's beloved, naturally couldn't bear to see Fang Bai get into trouble, thus transmitting a reminder of caution.

Though Fang Bai wasn't afraid of He Polang, he still appreciated Huo Zhenying's sincere kindness.

That night, as two sea ships were sailing, disciples of Fan Hai Sect suddenly sounded a warning of sea beast attack.

Along the way, the strong individuals on the sea ship already accustomed to seeing sea beast attacks, thus when the warning from Fan Hai Sect came, they didn't show much panic.

However, this time seemed different, as the Fan Hai Sect elder stationed on the sea ship also began to transmit messages summoning strong ones to the deck, making everyone aware that something was amiss.

Two thousand strong individuals rushed out of their rooms; some stood in the narrow corridor in front of their cabins and stared at the sea, while others came to the deck to stand with Fan Hai Sect disciples.

"That's..."

Every strong figure on the sea ship had excellent vision; as they stared closely under dim moonlight, they saw not far from the ship, rolling water waves and enormous black shadows moving forward with the ship, their speeds matching the ship's.

The enormous black shadows are sea beasts, with sizes ranging from over ten lengths to more than twenty or thirty lengths, veritable giants of the sea.

"It's Dragon Pythons!"

"Both sides of the ship, there might be over a hundred of them!"

"The Dragon Python is supposedly a descendant of the ancient Dragon Clan, with powerful attack capabilities. Now we're in trouble!"

"This ship is sturdy, it should withstand those Dragon Python attacks, right?"

"Let's hope so!"

...

Seeing the row upon row of Dragon Pythons on the sea, feeling the overwhelming spirit beast aura emanating from them, the two thousand strong individuals aboard couldn't help but grow tense.

Dragon Pythons are some of the fiercest, most troublesome sea beasts in the Black Sea. It is said that the largest Dragon Python seen by Martial Artists is fifty lengths long, with attacking power comparable to a human's fifth Heavenly Tribulation expert, having the strength to flip a sea ship.

However, such Dragon Pythons are exceedingly rare and usually lurk deep in the sea, remaining unseen. Until now, there hasn't been any reports of a sea ship being attacked by those most formidable Dragon Pythons.

Chapter 1697: Battle with the Dragon Pythons

"Everyone, those dozens of dragon pythons, each one comparable to a human Thunder Tribulation tier-one or tier-two expert. Even though our sea ship is sturdy, it cannot withstand their ongoing attacks alone. We need to rely on all of you to work together to protect the sea ship from damage."

The Fan Hai Sect elder leapt onto the lookout tower at the very top of the sea ship, clearly shouting to the two thousand strongmen on the ship.

The strongmen on the sea ship were all keenly aware that if the ship they were aboard was destroyed, their lives would be in grave danger. Hence, protecting the ship equaled protecting themselves; thus they responded with a resounding agreement.

As the people on the sea ship conversed, dozens of dragon pythons suddenly changed direction and swam rapidly towards the ship.

Although the dragon pythons had enormous bodies, akin to leviathans in the sea, their swimming speed was astonishingly fast, far outpacing the ship.

In just the blink of an eye, the dozens of dragon pythons were within a hundred feet of the ship. Some experts could already clearly see the two distinctive dragon horns on their heads.

"Let's speed up and hurry onward! We will reach Black Tortoise Island within a thousand miles. As long as we enter Black Tortoise Island's port, the sea ship will be safe!"

The Fan Hai Sect elder, seeing the dragon pythons rushing towards the ship, opened his eyes wide and shouted loudly.

Then, the two sea ships accelerated together, forging ahead with all their might toward Black Tortoise Island.

Black Tortoise Island is one of the few large islands amidst the vast Black Sea, with its sole sect, the Black Tortoise Sect. All tens of thousands of island residents are disciples of this sect.

Among the tens of thousands of disciples of the Black Tortoise Sect, it is said that three thousand possess Tribulation cultivation, making it a powerful sect capable of wielding influence even on the expert-rich Eastern Desolate Continent.

Typically, sea ships traveling between the Eastern and Western Desolate Continents stop at Black Tortoise Island for several days en route, allowing passengers to rest and trade cultivation resources with the island's disciples, while the ship can restock supplies.

The residents of Black Tortoise Island are known for their hospitality. As long as any passing ship enters within a hundred miles of the island and is pursued by sea beasts, the island's experts will intervene to help drive the beasts away.

However, the two sea ships from the Fan Hai Sect still have a thousand miles to go to reach Black Tortoise Island, and it's uncertain whether they can escape the dragon pythons' attack and reach the island's waters.

"Boom!"

Just a hundred miles into their full-speed voyage, there was a dull thud as the left side of the ship was rammed fiercely by a dragon python.

The ship rocked and swayed, forcing the experts on deck to use immobilization techniques to remain still.

The dragon pythons have robust physiques, particularly their horned heads, whose durability far exceeds steel. Despite the massive collision against the sturdy hull of the ship, they remained unscathed.

"Boom!"

Before the experts on the ship could recover from the first collision, another dragon python struck the hull on the right side.

This dragon python was even longer, and stronger, so the ship swayed even more violently.

Though these two strikes did not cause significant damage to the ship, the impacted sections were slightly concaved inward, and repeated strikes would eventually lead to trouble, no matter how sturdy the ship.

"Activate the defensive array!"

The elders from the Fan Hai Sect aboard the two ships shouted sternly and sequentially.

Consequently, disciples of the Fan Hai Sect activated the defensive array on the ship, causing beams of dazzling light to radiate from the array pattern inscribed on the hull, forming a thick protective Qi shield around the two ships.

Although the dragon pythons increased the ferocity of their strikes, the strongmen on the ship felt only slight tremors, indicating that the defensive array was effective.

All the strongmen on the ship breathed a sigh of relief, thinking if the defensive array could safeguard the ship for several hours, they could reach Black Tortoise Island a thousand miles away, ensuring their safety.

The dragon pythons were very cunning, splitting into three groups; the two flanking groups attacking the ship, while the front group used their massive bodies to obstruct the ship's path.

Consequently, the ship's speed was greatly reduced, as if stuck in a swamp, progressing slowly.

Activating and maintaining the operation of the ship's defensive array required the consumption of a large number of Royal Grade Spirit Stones. At the current pace, it's likely that the ship won't reach Black Tortoise Island before the defensive array fails due to depletion of Spirit Stones.

"This is not going to work! Thunder Tribulation experts on the ship, let's unite and repel the sea beasts!"

The elders from Fan Hai Sect on the two ships shouted loudly.

"Alright! Listen to Elder Hai."

"Show those sea beasts what we're made of!"

"Sea beasts are strong, but we're not weak!"

"Two ships, three thousand Thunder Tribulation experts, it's more than enough to deal with hundreds of dragon pythons!"

"Everyone, don't hold back, attack with all your might!"

"If we can slay a dragon python and acquire its beast core, it will be highly useful!"

...

The moment the elders of Fan Hai Sect finished speaking, nearly three thousand Thunder Tribulation experts across the two ships spoke out enthusiastically.

Although the dragon pythons are formidable, and the strength of those at the same realm far exceeds human experts, the ship's experts hold an absolute numerical advantage. By working together and cooperating, they may be able to drive back the dragon pythons.

As some experts mentioned, if they can slay a dragon python and obtain its beast core, it would be a great benefit indeed.

Upon deactivating the defensive array on both sea ships, they lost their protection and were subjected to the dragon pythons' violent strikes, leading to a continuous barrage of thunderous booming sounds and intense shaking of the ship's hull.

"Kill!"

Two elders from the Fan Hai Sect aboard the two sea ships shouted and took the lead by flying out of the ship, attacking the dragon pythons from a commanding height over the sea.

Other experts followed suit, launching their attacks as well.

They understood that whether they could repel the dragon pythons was critical to their survival, thus none held back.

Fang Bai, a Soul Severing Perfection expert, didn't even qualify to join the fight, so he stood on deck with several others of similar cultivation level and observed the intense battle unfolding around the sea ship.

Aboard the ship, Fang Bai knew only Huo Zhenying personally, hence he paid extra attention to him.

Among the many dragon pythons besieging the ship, they were mostly Thunder Tribulation tier-one, tier-two strength, making Huo Zhenying, who was only at Thunder Tribulation tier-one, still at a certain risk while attacking them.

Considering Shi Xiaolian, if Huo Zhenying truly faced a life-and-death crisis, Fang Bai would not mind lending a hand.

The Black Sea is the home turf of the dragon pythons, granting them a significant advantage in battle here, thus showing no fear of the numerous human experts opposing them.

The dragon pythons have robust bodies, and a Thunder Tribulation tier-one dragon python can withstand the attacks of a human Thunder Tribulation tier-two expert solely with its body without being harmed.

Furthermore, the water balls spewed by a Thunder Tribulation tier-one dragon python, formed from condensed Water Spirit Qi, pose a substantial threat to human Thunder Tribulation tier-two experts.

As a result, despite the human experts having an absolute numerical advantage, often with dozens attacking a single dragon python, they struggle to overcome their thick-skinned and tough-bodied

adversaries, with many human experts being continuously injured by the water balls spat by the dragon pythons.

Chapter 1698: Blood Blade Beheads the Dragon Python

Among the nearly four thousand strong warriors on the two sea ships, the two elders of the Fan Hai Sect and the Supreme Elder He Polang of the Blue Sea Sect were the most powerful.

They were all Thunder Tribulation Experts of the third level. When they struck, spiritual energy surged turbulently, thunder boomed deafeningly, creating an overwhelming momentum and destructive power.

Even massive pieces of iron, several tens of yards long, would be shattered under the attacks of these three Thunder Tribulation Experts led by He Polang.

But the flesh of the Dragon Python was too formidable. After being attacked by the three experts including He Polang, it was only forced to sink into the sea briefly, before quickly resurfacing to launch a counterattack.

The human warriors hovered in the air to attack, consuming vast amounts of spiritual energy, unable to remain airborne for long. After a brief attack, they had to return to the ship's deck to meditate and recover their spiritual energy before flying back into the air to continue the assault.

Though the Dragon Python also consumed spiritual energy, their robust bodies allowed them to leap out of the sea to attack human warriors by either ramming with their heads or sweeping with their tails.

Human warriors, unless gifted with extraordinary talents, could not physically compete with the Dragon Python. If struck by the Dragon Python, they would spit blood and suffer injuries.

Those lightly injured still had a chance to retreat back to the ship to heal.

However, the severely injured would fall directly into the sea, only to be swallowed and killed by the Dragon Python.

The battle had only lasted for mere hundreds of breaths, yet dozens of first-level Thunder Tribulation warriors were already dead or injured.

Although some Dragon Pythons were wounded and bled, it didn't really impact their combat effectiveness.

Most of the first-level Thunder Tribulation warriors among the human strong were demoralized, their morale low, with some retreating to the ships to save their lives.

Only a few first and second-level Thunder Tribulation warriors, along with the two elders from the Fan Hai Sect and the Supreme Elder He Polang from the Blue Sea Sect, continued to fiercely battle the Dragon Python on the sea.

Elder Huo Zhenying from the Yunhai Sect was hit on the left shoulder by a water ball spat from a Dragon Python, causing half of his body to go numb, yet he gritted his teeth and persevered.

Huo Zhenying joined forces with nine first-level Thunder Tribulation warriors to deal with a first-level Thunder Tribulation Dragon Python. The Dragon Python had a nimble body, moving with the speed of the wind and lightning, consistently dodging Huo Zhenying and the others' dense attacks, and occasionally launching sharp counterattacks, forcing Huo Zhenying and his party into chaos.

"The protruding area between the Dragon Python's two horns must be where its beast core is located. Hitting it should deal significant damage!"

Huo Zhenying, seasoned and battle-hardened, identified the Dragon Python's weakness after a prolonged battle and shouted loudly while wielding his spiritual artifact.

The nine first-level Thunder Tribulation warriors fighting alongside Huo Zhenying, upon hearing this, tacitly divided into two teams: one sinking down to attack the Dragon Python's body on the sea surface to prevent it from diving, and the other focusing their power on attacking the protruding area between its horns.

The Dragon Python seemed intent on protecting the bulge between its horns, twisting its massive head left and right, causing Huo Zhenying and the others' attacks to repeatedly miss.

"Puff!"

Despite the Dragon Python's excellent defense, flaws would inevitably appear. Huo Zhenying seized a chance, releasing his spiritual artifact which transformed into a fierce sword light, piercing the protruding area between the Dragon Python's horns, driving an inch deep, causing blood to spurt out.

However, the Dragon Python's skin was tough and its flesh was thick. The sword strike didn't reach the depth of its beast core, thus failed to inflict severe damage.

But the Dragon Python was enraged by Huo Zhenying's attack, abruptly turning violent.

"Yang!"

The Dragon Python let out a dragon's roar, thrusting its body upward by several yards, rushing at high speed towards Huo Zhenying.

Having struck the Dragon Python, Huo Zhenying was exhilarated and became somewhat heedless, forgetting he was too close to the Dragon Python in his attempt to attack. Seeing the Dragon Python charge, he was caught off guard and though he tried his utmost to dodge, he still couldn't fully avoid it.

"Ah!"

Huo Zhenying was hit by the Dragon Python, its razor-sharp, several-yards-long right horn completely piercing his left shoulder.

The Dragon Python's sharp horn was as thick as a large bowl. With his left shoulder pierced, Huo Zhenying was in unbearable pain, nearly fainting on the spot.

"Not good!"

Seeing the Dragon Python dragging Huo Zhenying downward into the sea, a strong warrior couldn't help but shout in alarm, but it was too late to rescue him.

Once the Dragon Python submerged in the sea, Huo Zhenying would certainly die, beyond even a god's salvation.

At that moment, a white figure shot towards them like a flash of lightning, instantly reaching the sky a few yards from the Dragon Python.

Immediately after, a blood-red light, several yards long, broke through the air with a whistle.

The blood-red light came from a blood-colored long knife radiating intense evil Qi, bringing an unstoppable momentum, fiercely slashing under the Dragon Python's head.

Amidst exclamations, the Dragon Python's head flew high, actually severed by the blood light, with a shower of blood raining down from the sky.

This was the first Dragon Python to be slain by the human warriors on the sea ships, instantly boosting their morale, with some warriors cheering.

"Who is he?"

"A Soul Severing Perfection expert that managed to slay a first-level Thunder Tribulation Dragon Python!"

"His cultivation level isn't that outstanding, but the blood blade he wields isn't ordinary!"

"A spiritual artifact that can slay a Dragon Python must be at least of medium Royal Grade!"

"I think it could actually be high Royal Grade!"

"If it's really high Royal Grade, then it's a rare treasure!"

"If I possessed that blood blade, I could even slay a second-level Thunder Tribulation!"

...

Only then did the warriors see clearly that the one who slew the Dragon Python was an average-looking middle-aged man with only a Soul Severing Perfection cultivation level.

Perhaps because of his weak cultivation, no one had paid him any attention before. Unexpectedly, at the critical moment of life and death for Huo Zhenying, it was he who unleashed such a stunning strike, slaying the Dragon Python.

Among the human warriors, many cheered for Fang Bai for slaying the Dragon Python, yet quite a few stared at the blood blade in his hand, their eyes flashing with greed.

The middle-aged man was naturally Fang Bai. Originally intending to stand aside, he couldn't bear to see Huo Zhenying fall, so he intervened to save her.

Fang Bai knew that invoking the Blood-Drinking Mad Blade would surely arouse the covetousness of many strong warriors, but confident in his skill, he remained fearless.

After slaying the Dragon Python, he carried its head to the ship.

Martial Artists possessed immense vitality, especially Thunder Tribulation warriors who were not easily felled. Although Huo Zhenying was severely injured, it was not fatal.

After separating Huo Zhenying from the sharp horn, Fang Bai handed her a bottle of medium Royal Grade elixirs for her to consume. If she could recuperate peacefully for a while, her injuries would heal.

"Friend Fang, thank you!"

Huo Zhenying knew her life was saved by Fang Bai, and though extremely weak, she bowed deeply to express her gratitude.

Fang Bai smiled and motioned for her to return to her room to rest and mediate, then wielded the blood blade to extract the Dragon Python's beast core.

Chapter 1699: Black Tortoise Island

The dragon python slain by Fang Bai was comparable to a Thunder Tribulation first-stage expert. Its beast core was a dream cultivation resource for Soul Severing Perfection experts.

Even for a Thunder Tribulation first-stage expert, obtaining that beast core would greatly assist in cultivation.

Thus, seeing Fang Bai carve out that beast core, many Soul Severing Perfection and Thunder Tribulation first-stage experts had their eyes fixed on it.

But the fierce battle at hand continued, and the multitude of experts had no leisure to covet that beast core.

Some Thunder Tribulation experts even thought, Fang Bai is merely a Soul Severing Perfection expert, yet with the advantage of a Spiritual Artifact, he could slay the dragon python; why can't I?

Thus, the fighting spirit of many experts was reignited, hurling them into combat with the dragon pythons.

For a while, figures crisscrossed the sea surface, Spiritual Artifacts flew in all directions, and the roar of battle was unending.

Nearly three thousand Thunder Tribulation experts launched fierce attacks against dozens of dragon pythons. Some wished to drive the dragon pythons away for a safe sea passage, while others aimed to slay them to obtain their beast cores as auxiliary cultivation resources.

However, the power and Spiritual Artifacts of Thunder Tribulation first-stage experts were still inadequate, posing little threat to the dragon pythons.

There were a few Thunder Tribulation second-stage experts who inflicted some injuries on the dragon pythons, but unfortunately, their Spiritual Artifacts weren't sharp enough to deliver a killing blow, leading the injured dragon pythons to dive into the deep sea and escape, much to the regret of the attackers.

In the hours of fierce fighting between humanity's experts and the dragon pythons, despite occasional losses among the experts, Fang Bai's earlier feat of slaying a dragon python spurred their fighting spirit, leaving none to retreat.

Meanwhile, the sea vessel continued its slow advance, drawing ever closer to Black Tortoise Island.

The dragon pythons, seeing they gained nothing, and with the waters gradually becoming shallower, reluctantly dove and fled afar.

"They retreated! The sea beasts retreated!"

"Haha, we won!"

"It's a pity we couldn't slay the dragon pythons!"

"It's enough to drive away the sea beasts; you're still thinking about slaying dragon pythons? Wake up!"

"That Soul Severing Perfection expert had good luck!"

"Indeed! Truly envious!"

...

Seeing the dragon pythons retreat, the experts descended back onto the sea vessel, cheering aloud.

At this moment, Fang Bai had already returned to his cabin, sitting cross-legged in meditation, unaware that many experts on the sea vessel had set their sights on him.

With the sea beasts no longer attacking, the sea vessel's speed increased again. After several more hours, a black line appeared on the sea horizon ahead, and upon closer inspection, it turned out to be an enormous island.

"We've arrived at Black Tortoise Island!"

An expert familiar with the sea route pointed in the direction of the island, exclaiming with excitement.

When the sea vessel approached Black Tortoise Island, a small boat from the island set out to guide it into the harbor.

Black Tortoise Island spanned a thousand miles in circumference. Though not large, it was ample enough to accommodate tens of thousands of residents. Some experts, visiting for the first time, found upon landing that despite being deep within the sea, the island's scenery was beautiful, with landscapes shrouded in spiritual energy, tame birds and beasts at peace everywhere, presenting an idyllic paradise-like existence.

No wonder it is said that some experts come to this place and are reluctant to leave, choosing instead to settle here for cultivation.

Once the sea vessel docked, the majority of the experts disembarked, with some going to admire the island's beauty and others heading to the Martial Artists Trading Market to try their luck.

Fang Bai extended his Divine Sense and found that Huo Zhenying was meditating with closed eyes, looking much better, letting him ease his mind. He then left his cabin on the sea vessel and set foot on Black Tortoise Island.

This Black Tortoise Island existed tens of thousands of years ago, and during Fang Bai's past life training, he had passed through here and even had some encounters on the island.

Who knows if, after tens of thousands of years, some relics from the past life still remain in this place, after all the changes over time.

Compared to the past life, many halls and residences had been added to the island, presumably for the students of the Black Tortoise Sect. Additionally, some exquisite buildings were prepared for guests traveling on the sea.

After reaching the island, Fang Bai strode towards the tallest peak at the center of the island.

This peak, named Black Tortoise Peak, had a turtle-like shape as viewed from the distance.

Black Tortoise Peak rose nearly three thousand zhang above sea level, piercing the sky, with its summit covered in snow that remained unmelted year-round.

Over the tens of thousands of years, numerous experts had ascended the peak, hoping to chance upon some fortuity, only to return disheartened.

"Boy, stop right there!"

As Fang Bai drew within a few dozen miles of Black Tortoise Peak, suddenly a voice called from behind.

Fang Bai didn't need to turn around to know who it was.

Though Fang Bai's current appearance is that of a middle-aged man in his forties, the person calling him from behind was several hundred years old, so addressing him as "boy" was natural.

"What do you want?"

Fang Bai turned around, looking at He Polang, the Supreme Elder of the Blue Sea Sect, and asked with a frown.

When Fang Bai disembarked from the vessel, He Polang had been tailing him, only calling out to him in this sparsely populated area.

Fang Bai could roughly guess his intent, laughing at him silently inside.

"Let me have a look at that Blood Blade of yours!"

He Polang, assuming the advantage of his status, demanded the Blood Blade from Fang Bai without courtesy.

Fang Bai said, "Why should I let you see my Spiritual Artifact?"

He Polang replied, "Because my strength is superior to yours!"

He seemed to realize his tone was a bit harsh, so he asked more amiably, "What grade is that Blood Blade?"

Fang Bai replied, "I don't know."

He Polang chuckled, "You may not know, but I do. Judging by its sharpness, it's likely a Superior Royal Grade Spiritual Artifact!"

Fang Bai said, "Oh, really? I thought it was an Immortal Artifact!"

He Polang raised an eyebrow and exclaimed, "Immortal Artifact? Wishful thinking! A Superior Royal Grade Spiritual Artifact is already among the top Spiritual Artifacts in the three thousand worlds!"

After a pause, he continued, "Such a Spiritual Artifact is a disgrace in the hands of someone merely at Soul Severing Perfection! You might as well give it to me, and I'll gift you some Royal Grade cultivation resources. How about that?"

Fang Bai replied, "No!"

He Polang glared, "The cultivation resources I'm offering could help you advance to the Thunder Tribulation Realm! Isn't that enough? Humph, others may not be as agreeable as I am! They might outright kill you and snatch this Blood Blade from you!"

Fang Bai smiled and asked, "If I don't give you the Blood Blade, would you kill me?"

He Polang said coldly, "What do you think?"

Fang Bai earnestly replied, "If you kill me, I will call for help. This is Black Tortoise Island; if you recklessly kill the innocent, the strong on this island will intervene!"

He Polang laughed, "You can shout yourself hoarse and it will make no difference! Within ten miles of here, there's no one else but you and me! Even if there were others, who'd dare interfere with me, a Thunder Tribulation third-stage expert, killing you, a mere Soul Severing Perfection?"

As soon as he finished speaking, Fang Bai opened his mouth and shouted, "Help! Murder!"

Chapter 1700: Hypocrisy

He Polang looked coldly at Fang Bai yelling over there and couldn't help but want to laugh.

In his eyes, Fang Bai was just a fish on the chopping board, only able to be slaughtered by him.

Even if someone heard Fang Bai's cries for help, so what? Who would dare to risk offending him, a Thunder Tribulation Expert, to rescue him?

Fang Bai's shouts could be heard for over ten miles, attracting many strong warriors nearby who swiftly flew over to see what was happening.

However, when they arrived at the scene and saw He Polang standing proudly, they immediately turned and left.

Just as He Polang anticipated, those strong warriors realized it was a Thunder Tribulation Expert wanting to kill a Soul Severing Perfection expert, and no one dared to intervene. They only wanted to get as far away as possible to avoid the ire of the Thunder Tribulation Expert.

"See? Here, even if you scream yourself hoarse, it's useless! Quickly give me the Blood Blade, and I'll spare your life!"

He Polang said impatiently.

He was a Supreme Elder of a sect, his status so esteemed that uttering even one more word with this Soul Severing Perfection expert felt beneath him.

He had already decided that if Fang Bai dared to say the word "no," he would immediately strike to kill and seize the blade.

Fang Bai pointed behind him and smiled: "Who says it's useless? There's someone behind you!"

He Polang laughed heartily: "At death's door, you'd better not..."

He stopped mid-sentence, suddenly turned around, and looked at an old man in a blue robe approaching slowly from the distance, his face becoming unsightly.

"Elder Hai, why are you here?"

He Polang squinted slightly, looking warily at the blue-robed elder as he asked.

The blue-robed elder was one of the two Fan Hai Sect elders accompanying the ship, named Hai Dongsheng, whose strength was comparable to He Polang, both being Thunder Tribulation Experts.

He Polang had thought Hai Dongsheng, as the owner of the ship, should have stayed on the ship, and had not expected him to appear here.

"I was just taking a walk on the island, and didn't expect to meet the two of you here... Elder He, Friend Fang, what are you doing here?"

Hai Dongsheng asked with a smile.

Hai Dongsheng and He Polang were equally Thunder Tribulation Experts, having known each other for a long time, although their relationship was merely average.

And after Fang Bai had previously slain a Dragon Python, gaining fame, Hai Dongsheng had sought him out for a chat, thus knowing his name.

By addressing Fang Bai as "Friend," given Hai Dongsheng's status and strength, he was effectively elevating Fang Bai.

"Old man, I wouldn't believe your words!"

He Polang naturally did not believe Hai Dongsheng was just taking a casual walk, thinking this old man was sneaky and had been quietly paying attention to Fang Bai, aiming to get Fang Bai's Blood Blade just like him.

Ever since Fang Bai displayed the Blood Blade on the ship to slay the Dragon Python, He Polang knew there were countless Martial Artists on the ship coveting the blade, and the two elders of the Fan Hai Sect couldn't possibly be indifferent.

It's just that coveting is one thing; some things can only be kept in mind or done secretly, not openly spoken or known by others.

"I... just like you, am taking a casual walk... this island's scenery is quite nice... haha..."

He Polang said with a dry laugh.

Saying this, he secretly cursed Hai Dongsheng, thinking if it weren't for this old man suddenly appearing, he would've killed Fang Bai and claimed the Blood Blade for himself.

Hai Dongsheng laughed like an old fox, nodded at the words, and then turned his gaze to Fang Bai.

Fang Bai said: "I originally intended to look around Black Tortoise Peak, but unexpectedly encountered Elder He along the way. Elder He said he wanted to admire my Blood Blade, but I felt this blade is my intimate Spiritual Artifact, not convenient to show casually, thus was unwilling to take it out, and Elder He got a bit upset..."

He Polang "hmphe," interrupting Fang Bai's words, his gaze at Fang Bai as sharp as a blade, full of warning.

Fang Bai grinned at him, fearless, and chose not to continue.

Hai Dongsheng stroked his beard and said: "Elder He, is this truly so?"

He Polang turned and looked elsewhere, choosing simply to ignore and not respond.

Hai Dongsheng sighed: "Elder He, let me say something fair: the intimate Spiritual Artifact of any Martial Artist isn't casually shown; since Friend Fang naturally doesn't want to let you see it, why be difficult?"

He Polang didn't bother to argue, replied with mock indignation: "Doesn't Elder Hai also wish to see that Blood Blade?"

Hai Dongsheng laughed and said: "I, Hai, am openhearted. If it's not mine, I don't care to pay attention nor covet it."

His remark implied that He Polang was sinister, secretly desiring Fang Bai's Blood Blade.

He Polang's face darkened, cursing "hypocrite" under his breath.

If other strong warriors had said those words, He Polang would've already fallen out with them, but he was to travel to the Eastern Desolate Continent on the Fan Hai Sect's ship, so he couldn't offend Hai Dongsheng, thus merely snorted coldly and turned away.

Seeing He Polang leave, Hai Dongsheng smiled at Fang Bai and said: "Friend Fang, possessing a peerless Spiritual Artifact must make countless Martial Artists envious. Be careful on this island, lest someone takes advantage!"

After saying this, he looked meaningfully at Fang Bai and gracefully walked away.

Fang Bai watched as He Polang and Hai Dongsheng left east and west, one after another, and with a slight twist of his mouth, muttered in a voice only he could hear: "Two old geezers, both false, neither a good thing! Want to get my Blood-Drinking Mad Blade? Trade your life for it!"

He knew both He Polang and Hai Dongsheng were indeed coveting his Blood-Drinking Mad Blade; it's just He Polang was shameless enough to grab it openly, while Hai Dongsheng behaved more covertly, his true intentions yet unrevealed.

The two Thunder Tribulation Experts surreptitiously tracked Fang Bai from different directions, neither willing to show their face, while being wary of each other, thus forming a subtle equilibrium.

Under such circumstances, Fang Bai was instead safer.

Fang Bai no longer concerned himself with them and dashed forward, continuing his journey toward Black Tortoise Peak.

Upon reaching below Black Tortoise Peak, several Black Tortoise Sect disciples blocked Fang Bai's path.

"Our sect's disciples are in closed-door cultivation at the peak. Guests, please wait patiently."

One Black Tortoise Sect disciple said.

Though the disciple was a Thunder Tribulation Expert, he showed no contempt towards Fang Bai and spoke politely.

Fang Bai glanced at the peak of Black Tortoise Peak, then nodded, walked to the side, leaped onto a flat stone, sat cross-legged, and closed his eyes to wait quietly.

Seeing this, several Black Tortoise Sect disciples guarded the mountain path, staying in a high alert state.

At the peak of Black Tortoise Peak, clouds of tribulation gathered, thunder roared, and lightning flashed, obviously indicating someone was preparing to cross the tribulation there.

With many Thunder Tribulation Experts on Black Tortoise Island, crossing the Thunder Tribulation would be nothing unusual, but having several Black Tortoise Sect disciples standing guard while someone crosses the tribulation suggests that the person is either an elite of the Black Tortoise Sect or a prodigy of the sect.