

Doctor 1741

Chapter 1741: Infiltration

Fang Bai's teachings caused more than half of Zheng Family Village's villagers to advance to different degrees, with dozens breaking through previous shackles and finally achieving the long-yearned-for Soul Severing Realm.

And Zheng Yi thereby became the first Thunder Tribulation Expert in the history of Zheng Family Village.

In no time, hundreds of villagers from Zheng Family Village grew even more respectful and adoring of Fang Bai, treating him like a deity.

On the third day after Zheng Yi advanced to the Thunder Tribulation Realm, Fang Bai used a large amount of Royal Grade Cultivation Resources, combined with his own Spiritual Energy, to successfully help Fang Yun break through to the Thunder Tribulation Realm.

Furthermore, Fang Gang and Yang Mei, under Fang Bai's dedicated assistance, reached the Soul Severing realm.

Attentive experts would notice that the courtyard where Fang Bai resided has been exuding Martial Artist Aura fluctuations every day recently, evidently due to Martial Artists continuously advancing.

However, the commotion of those Martial Artists' advancements was not substantial, so it didn't attract much attention.

"Within a month, Zheng Family Village will return to your hands, and a portion of those Spirit Stone Veins will be yours!"

On that day, after discussing matters related to Zheng Family Village and Wind Blade Sect with Zheng Yi, he happily led several hundred villagers from Zheng Family Village back to their city residences, waiting for Fang Bai's good news.

As for Fang Bai, he left the courtyard alone, heading to Fire Cloud Sect to meet its Sect Leader, Qin Ming.

Realizing Fang Bai's intention, Qin Ming, with a grave expression, escorted Fang Bai into his secret chamber.

A whole half-day passed, and no one knew what the two discussed, but many Fire Cloud Sect disciples saw them walking out of the secret chamber side by side, both with satisfied smiles on their faces.

Subsequently, Fang Bai seemed to have disappeared, vanishing into thin air, and nobody knew where he went.

Some perceptive experts in Red Maple City noticed that Fire Cloud Sect's tens of thousands of disciples had been frequently mobilizing in recent days, with mysterious movements, seemingly planning something significant.

Far away from Red Maple City, in Wind Blade Sect, high-level figures had mysteriously disappeared one after another in recent days, causing the sect's tens of thousands of disciples to be filled with anxiety, fearing to go out.

The missing high-level figures of Wind Blade Sect were all Thunder Tribulation second-level or third-level experts, and after their disappearance, their Soul Lamps extinguished, indicating that their disappearance meant their demise.

"Who did this? Who dares to be so bold?"

Wind Blade Sect Master Gu Mo angrily questioned in the Sect Master Hall, roaring like thunder.

On both sides below, the high-level figures of Wind Blade Sect stood with grim expressions, silent.

"Sect Master, in the past five days, a total of one Elder and four Stewards have disappeared with their Soul Lamps extinguished within our sect."

An Elder said with a somber face.

“To slay our sect’s Elder, the perpetrator must have at least Thunder Tribulation fourth-level strength!”

Another Elder said with focused eyes.

“Our Wind Blade Sect hasn’t seemed to offend any formidable sect or figure recently... How could this happen?”

A Steward frowned, pondering.

“Investigate! We must find the perpetrator! No matter who they are, we must shred them to pieces!”

Gu Mo’s eyes were bloodshot, clenching his fists as he roared.

Wind Blade Sect, known as the strongest sect outside Red Maple City, and standing alongside Fire Cloud Sect, was always untouchable, yet now numerous high-level figures have mysteriously fallen, and the culprit remains elusive, making this a grand humiliation for Wind Blade Sect.

“I suddenly remember, we recently discovered a Spirit Stone Vein, driving away all villagers from a nearby village... Could this have anything to do with the villagers?”

A Steward suddenly recalled this matter and spoke out.

Another Steward, with a dismissive voice, said, “The strongest in that village are said to be merely a dozen Soul Severing beginners; with their insignificant power, how could they manage such things?”

The previously speaking Steward rolled his eyes and said, “They can’t, but what if they have a powerful backer?”

“A small village of a few hundred people, what kind of backer could they have?”

“You haven’t investigated, so how can you know they don’t have a backer?”

Seeing the two Stewards argue, Gu Mo impatiently waved his hand to interrupt them, saying sinisterly, “No matter what, don’t overlook any clues! Go investigate, follow the line of Zheng Family Village!”

...

Soon, hundreds or thousands of Wind Blade Sect disciples, like an invisible net, spread in all directions, pursuing the whereabouts and movements of the hundreds of villagers from Zheng Family Village.

However, shortly after Wind Blade Sect’s disciples mobilized, Fire Cloud Sect received news and similarly dispatched a large number of experts to intercept Wind Blade Sect’s disciples outside the city.

Of course, all of this was done in secret; even if the interception failed, it would be hard for Wind Blade Sect to figure out who was targeting them.

At this moment, Fang Bai was lurking on a mountain peak fifteen miles away from Wind Blade Sect’s headquarters, like a falcon, observing Wind Blade Sect’s movements.

Fang Bai had set up Offensive and Defensive Great Formations around several key locations of Wind Blade Sect. These formations would determine life and death at critical moments.

Fang Bai had been lurking around Wind Blade Sect’s headquarters in recent days, preparing to inflict as much damage as possible, especially targeting Wind Blade Sect’s high-level figures, and had already succeeded several times.

In just a few days, Wind Blade Sect had lost one Elder and four Stewards, suffering considerable losses, reaching a stage of severe damage, no wonder Wind Blade Sect Master Gu Mo was furious.

The time was already late at night, with silence all around, yet Wind Blade Sect’s headquarters was as bright as day, illuminated by tens of thousands of Spirit Stones.

A team of patrol disciples walked amongst the thousands of pavilions and halls, each highly vigilant.

Ever since several high-level disappearance and demise incidents happened consecutively in recent days, every Wind Blade Sect disciple was nervous, fearing bad luck would fall upon them.

However, those high-level figures who perished were lost while out, so it seemed the perpetrator hadn't dared yet to enter Wind Blade Sect headquarters for killing.

Fang Bai's Divine Sense seeped into the halls where Wind Blade Sect's Stewards and Elders resided, probing around, but didn't dare to penetrate the Sect Master Hall.

After all, Fang Bai's strength demanded full effort to slay a Thunder Tribulation third-level expert, and wasn't enough to confront a Thunder Tribulation fourth-level expert.

Therefore, unless absolutely necessary, Fang Bai wouldn't disturb Wind Blade Sect Master Gu Mo, avoiding direct confrontation with him.

Moreover, Fang Bai knew the Wind Blade Sect's back mountain concealed a Supreme Elder with Thunder Tribulation fifth-level cultivation, presenting an even greater nuisance.

"You are the next target!"

Fang Bai's Divine Sense roamed around Wind Blade Sect and ultimately set his next target on a Steward.

That Wind Blade Sect Steward had Thunder Tribulation second-level cultivation and had just finished cultivating, sitting cross-legged in the courtyard with closed eyes, meditating.

His residence was relatively distant from other buildings, in an isolated area, making it less likely for him to alert other experts when targeted.

Chapter 1742: Fierce Battle at Wind Blade Sect

Fang Bai moved like a ghost of the night, his form blending seamlessly with the darkness as he approached the Wind Blade Sect's headquarters.

His speed was extremely fast, and he had completely concealed his aura, making less noise than even a mosquito in flight.

"Whoosh..."

A gentle breeze swept past the treetops outside the high walls of the Wind Blade Sect.

Fang Bai's figure drifted with this breeze, landing outside the courtyard wall of a steward.

He swiftly circled the courtyard, carving array runes into the ground and inlaying spirit stones, successfully setting up a simple isolation formation.

This kind of isolation formation could shield the leakage of martial artist aura and all sounds for a short period, so even if a battle erupted in the courtyard, outsiders wouldn't notice right away.

Fang Bai planned to kill the Wind Blade Sect's steward during this brief window when the formation was active and leave silently, avoiding an onslaught from Wind Blade Sect's powerful members.

Fang Bai was confident he could slay a Heavenly Tribulation second-level expert within a hundred breaths.

With the formation in place, Fang Bai leapt into the courtyard.

"Who's there?"

The Wind Blade Sect's steward sensed Fang Bai's martial artist aura, abruptly opened his eyes, and stared directly at Fang Bai.

"The one who will kill you!"

Fang Bai shouted lowly, his body shooting like a cannonball towards the steward, simultaneously slashing with a palm like a blade.

As he executed the palm blade, spiritual energy condensed into a crescent new moon, and the space along its path seemed to crack, emitting a piercing whistle.

Cold Moon Slash!

Fang Bai didn't act lightly; when he did, he went all out.

This slash was an all-out effort for a lethal strike.

The Wind Blade Sect's steward didn't expect Fang Bai's attack to be so swift and powerful and was utterly overwhelmed, showing a look of shock.

"Not good!"

When Fang Bai's Cold Moon Slash was within a few feet of the steward, he suddenly sensed a strong threat.

Fang Bai's gaze swept across the steward's chest to a jade pendant.

The intense sense of danger emanated from that jade pendant.

In an instant, Fang Bai understood that a powerful intent had been imbued into that pendant, akin to the self-protecting jade tiles he gave friends and family.

Fang Bai was certain that only the intent from a Heavenly Tribulation fifth-level or higher cultivator could cause such a strong sense of danger.

Fang Bai immediately thought of the Wind Blade Sect's Supreme Elder.

In the entire Wind Blade Sect, only that person had such capabilities.

To inject intent into a jade pendant required mastery of the array path, indicating the Wind Blade Sect's Supreme Elder was not a simple character.

Fang Bai didn't know that after he had successively killed several high-ranking members of the Wind Blade Sect, Gu Mo, the sect master, specifically went to the back mountain to request the Supreme Elder specialized in arrays to create some jade pendants for the high-ranking members to wear, to prevent any more calamities.

The steward in front of him had just received the pendant today and casually wore it, unexpectedly serving as protection.

Otherwise, Fang Bai's strike would have already claimed his life.

As Fang Bai's attack neared the steward's body, it triggered the killing intent within the pendant, releasing towards Fang Bai.

This was equivalent to a full-strength strike from a Heavenly Tribulation fifth-level expert, fast and fierce. Fang Bai couldn't dodge and had to summon the Soul Loss Bell in front of him to block its sharpness.

"Twang!"

The killing intent struck the bell's body, producing a crisp, loud sound.

Fang Bai felt the bell tremble violently, an overpowering force spreading, pushing him back several zhang with the bell.

Fortunately, the Soul Loss Bell was, after all, an immortal artifact, so the Heavenly Tribulation fifth-level expert's killing intent couldn't damage it.

"I'll exhaust the killing intent in your pendant before killing you!"

Fang Bai, having missed his first strike, showed no intention of retreating, charging forward with the Soul Loss Bell, hurling it fiercely at the steward's head.

The steward, seeing that the formidable intent comparable to the Supreme Elder's full-strength strike hadn't harmed Fang Bai's spiritual artifact, was shocked to know it was no ordinary spiritual artifact.

He realized that facing a formidable opponent with an extraordinary spiritual artifact meant a dire situation today and tried to retreat under the pendant's remaining killing intents for protection, intending to escape.

However, Fang Bai was determined to kill him and wouldn't let him escape.

"Buzz!"

The bell roared as the Soul Loss Bell once more hurtled towards the Wind Blade Sect's elder.

As the bell approached the steward, it again triggered the killing intent from his chest's pendant, sending the bell flying.

This cycle repeated several times, with the Soul Loss Bell repeatedly being sent flying and then immediately falling back under Fang Bai's control.

Although the Soul Loss Bell couldn't harm the steward, the steward also couldn't find time to flee.

"Let's see if you won't die!"

When the Soul Loss Bell fell again, the steward's chest pendant no longer emitted killing intent, and Fang Bai knew the pendant's killing intent was finally exhausted, feeling a surge of joy.

"Boom!"

The massive bell body of the Soul Loss Bell crashed hard onto the steward.

Though the steward's body was strong, he couldn't withstand the Soul Loss Bell's power; amidst his anguished cries, he was knocked flying. In mid-air, blood spurted wildly, bleeding from seven orifices, with his organs shattered.

The steward was heavily wounded but hadn't fallen yet. Fang Bai intended to follow up and end his life, but he noticed a dozen figures rushing from the distant halls at high speed.

The isolation formation Fang Bai set up could only shield the martial artist aura released during a Heavenly Tribulation third-level bout, but the killing intent from the steward's pendant was akin to a Heavenly Tribulation fifth-level, penetrating the formation and immediately alerting the Wind Blade Sect's high-level members.

The dozen Wind Blade Sect seniors rushing at high speed included the sect master Gu Mo.

Before they arrived, a powerful pressure already surged forth, aiming to envelop and lock onto Fang Bai.

"Consider yourself lucky!"

Fang Bai knew that with his strength alone, he couldn't withstand the joint attack of over a dozen Heavenly Tribulation second-level, third-level, or even fourth-level experts and had to abandon the idea of killing the steward, summoning the Blood-Drinking Mad Blade to soar skyward, fleeing towards the distant mountains.

"The culprit has shown up! After him!"

Gu Mo recognized Fang Bai as the killer responsible for repeatedly murdering Wind Blade Sect high-level members. Seeing him injure another steward, Gu Mo was furious.

If the killer escaped this time, Wind Blade Sect would lose all face, so he roared and led the pursuit with a spiritual artifact.

The dozen Wind Blade Sect elders pursuing Fang Bai all had higher cultivation levels than him, but they found that his escape speed was not slower than theirs.

After chasing nearly a thousand miles from the Wind Blade Sect, except for the Heavenly Tribulation fourth-level sect master Gu Mo, none of the others could close the distance with Fang Bai.

This realization caused the Wind Blade Sect's high-level members, including Gu Mo, to be secretly startled.

Chapter 1743: The Powers Unite

Fang Bai flew into the deep mountains, lowered his figure, and landed in a valley filled with scattered rocks.

Holding the Blood-Drinking Mad Blade, he raised his eyes and looked at Gu Mo and the others, his eyes flashing with electric-like cold light.

In this valley, there was the Nine Bends Soul Loss Formation set up by Fang Bai. Unable to shake off the pursuit of Gu Mo and the others, he simply lured them into this formation.

As long as the other party enters the formation, he would activate the great formation, trap them, and then take the opportunity to escape.

"Why isn't that kid continuing to run away?"

"Could it be that his spiritual energy is running out and he can't fly anymore?"

"That's possible, after all, he only has a cultivation level of Thunder Tribulation Level One."

“But it was precisely this Thunder Tribulation Level One martial artist who killed several high-ranking members of our sect! Steward Liu was also seriously injured by him just now...”

“Maybe he relied on the power of a spiritual artifact? Look at that blood blade in his hand, its oppressive force is overwhelming, its evil qi is sky-high, it must be a remarkable spiritual artifact!”

“Indeed! A powerful spiritual artifact can greatly enhance a martial artist’s combat power!”

...

Gu Mo and the others, following Fang Bai as he descended into the valley, surrounded Fang Bai, and discussions arose instantly.

“Did you kill our Wind Blade Sect’s several high-level members? Or was it the person behind you?”

Gu Mo saw Fang Bai’s appearance clearly, seeing such a young martial artist, he couldn’t help but feel puzzled, finding it difficult to associate him with the murderer of several high-ranking members of his sect.

Gu Mo suspected that behind this young martial artist before him might be an even stronger martial artist or force lurking.

He didn’t believe that a mere loose cultivator would dare to challenge a strong sect like the Wind Blade Sect.

Fang Bai smiled and said: “That’s right, it’s me! If you hadn’t come fast enough, I could have killed another one today! What a pity!”

“Why?”

Gu Mo did not conceal his murderous intent, his cold gaze fixed on Fang Bai’s face, asking: “Why did you do this? What grudge does my Wind Blade Sect have with you?”

Fang Bai laughed lightly and countered: “Does Sect Master Gu still remember the matter of Zheng Family Village?”

Not long ago, the Wind Blade Sect discovered a vein of spirit stones, and Zheng Family Village was the only village near the vein. After that, the Wind Blade Sect dispatched dozens of disciples to drive out all the villagers of Zheng Family Village.

Though Gu Mo was not fully aware of the details of this matter, he knew a little. Upon hearing this, he raised an eyebrow and said: “You... are a villager from Zheng Family Village?”

Before Fang Bai could answer, he shook his head, saying: “Impossible! The disciples who drove away the Zheng Family Village villagers reported that the strongest was only a Soul Severing beginner martial artist. Yet you are a Thunder Tribulation Level One expert...”

Fang Bai laughed lightly and said: “If I had been present at that time, how could I have allowed your Wind Blade Sect disciples to run wild?”

One of the Wind Blade Sect’s Elders shouted: “Who exactly are you? Why did you kill our sect’s high-level members?”

Fang Bai replied: “Who I am doesn’t matter. What matters is that among the Zheng Family Village villagers you drove away, there were my relatives. Moreover, your disciples attacked them, severely injuring them, almost leading to their death...”

His gaze suddenly became as sharp as a sword, as cold as ice, staring at Gu Mo, he said grimly: “Sect Master Gu, if you encountered such a thing, what would you do?”

Gu Mo was speechless, but thought in his heart: “If it were me, I would definitely flatten the opposite sect to vent the hatred of my injured relatives!”

Facing Fang Bai’s sharp, cold, and indifferent gaze, Gu Mo suddenly felt an inexplicable chill.

At this moment, Gu Mo decided internally to eliminate this person, otherwise the Wind Blade Sect would face endless future troubles.

Gu Mo's expression became serious, and using the Thread Condensation Sound Transmission Technique, he mobilized more than a dozen high-level members of the Wind Blade Sect, sealing off all Fang Bai's escape routes, giving him no chance to flee.

Fang Bai saw through their intentions, sneered silently, and gripped the Blood-Drinking Mad Blade tighter in his fist.

"This kid must be eliminated, otherwise there will be no peace for the Wind Blade Sect! Everyone, let's join forces to avenge the fallen Elders and Steward!"

Gu Mo suddenly shouted, taking the lead in launching an attack on Fang Bai.

He was a Thunder Tribulation Level Four expert. Once he moved, it was like a rapidly moving gust of wind, a thunderous force, and exceedingly terrifying.

The Wind Blade Sect disciples mainly cultivated in wind system techniques, and Gu Mo was no exception.

Gu Mo's movement speed was astonishingly fast. In a flash, he had closed the distance between himself and Fang Bai by more than ten meters, then swung his arm fiercely, and a black long blade appeared in his hand from who knows when, whistling as it slashed out a wind blade a meter long.

That black long blade was a wind-elemental royal grade lower spiritual artifact. As it swung, fierce winds swept up, an invisible wind blade slashed forward vigorously, stirring ripples in the surrounding space.

Within the range of the ripples, grass bent and stones shattered, nothing could withstand it, everything was leveled.

However, that seemingly indestructible invisible wind blade encountered resistance when it slashed towards Fang Bai.

“Boom!”

The Blood-Drinking Mad Blade in Fang Bai’s hand swung downward, its tip deeply inserting into the ground, the broad blade completely shielding Fang Bai’s body.

“Clang!”

Gu Mo’s wind blade struck the Blood-Drinking Mad Blade, emitting a clear chime.

The strike from a Thunder Tribulation Level Four expert was overwhelmingly strong, Fang Bai, along with the blood blade, were pushed back several meters before he steadily regained his footing.

“Hiss...”

Gu Mo gasped, looking at the blood blade blocking Fang Bai, which was unscathed, and his eyes involuntarily flashed with amazement.

“To withstand my wind blade strike without any damage, the blood blade in that kid’s hand must be of a higher grade than mere royal grade mid-level. How can a mere Thunder Tribulation Level One martial artist possess such a formidable spiritual artifact?”

Gu Mo thought to himself, and the surprise in his gaze had already turned into greed.

Fang Bai blocked Gu Mo’s strike, but attacks from more than a dozen Wind Blade Sect high-level members from all directions reached him at this time.

Fang Bai let out a long cry and instantly activated the Nine Bends Soul Loss Formation.

So suddenly, Gu Mo and the high-level members of the Wind Blade Sect found themselves engulfed in illusions of corpse mountains, blood seas, and martial artists’ slaughter, as though plunged into a fantasy realm.

Meanwhile, Fang Bai's figure at this moment hid inside the Five Elements Origin Qi Cauldron, blocking attacks from the dozen Thunder Tribulation experts, then flew out of the formation, escaping towards the distance.

Fang Bai knew that Gu Mo and the dozen high-level members of the Wind Blade Sect were Thunder Tribulation experts. The combined force of them was exceedingly powerful. Though his formation was also formidable, it probably wouldn't trap them for long, so it was not suitable to remain here.

Since the Wind Blade Sect had discovered his trace, Fang Bai realized that the temporary residence of hundreds of Zheng Family Village villagers in Red Maple City would soon be discovered by the Wind Blade Sect.

His identity and his becoming an Honorary Elder of the Fire Cloud Sect would also alert and alarm the Wind Blade Sect.

Therefore, Fang Bai was prepared to launch ahead of time the plan he had devised with the Fire Cloud Sect Sect Leader Qin Ming, to achieve the purpose of preemptive action.

Fang Bai turned into a stream of light, escaping in the direction of Red Maple City.

He flew only a few hundred miles away when an intense "boom boom" sounded from the Nine Bends Soul Loss Formation he set up in the valley.

Moments later, the Nine Bends Soul Loss Formation was forcefully broken by Gu Mo and more than a dozen Thunder Tribulation experts working together.

Chapter 1744: Powerful Reinforcements

It was fortunate that those trapped within the Nine Bends Soul Loss Formation were over a dozen Thunder Tribulation Experts from the Wind Blade Sect, and thanks to their overall strength, they were able to break free in a short time.

If Gu Mo had been trapped alone, it would not have been easy for him to break the formation.

And if it were a steward trapped within, the final result might be exhaustion and death after battling with the illusions in the formation.

“That kid is sly, using this formation to trap us and escape in the meantime! Damn it!”

A Wind Blade Sect disciple flew into the air, looked around, and couldn't see any trace of Fang Bai, not even sensing his presence, which made him furious.

“Return to the sect and tell all the disciples to keep silent about today's events! Also, everyone needs to be on high alert to prevent this from happening again!”

Gu Mo said with a gloomy face.

Gu Mo never imagined that with over a dozen high-ranking members chasing Fang Bai over thousands of miles and having him surrounded, the opponent would still manage to escape smoothly.

The most embarrassing part for Gu Mo was that the opponent's cultivation level was only at the first level of Thunder Tribulation.

If this matter were to spread, the face of the Wind Blade Sect would be lost, and its leaders would become the laughingstock of strong practitioners everywhere.

“Also, after returning to the sect, deploy some ordinary disciples to search for that kid's whereabouts. It seems he only targets our sect's leaders, so he shouldn't trouble our ordinary disciples.”

After pondering for a moment, Gu Mo continued to give instructions.

Thus, the dozen or so Wind Blade Sect's leaders, like defeated roosters, returned to the Wind Blade Sect under Gu Mo's lead, dejected.

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Several hours later, Fang Bai appeared in Red Maple City. Without visiting his family or the villagers of Zheng Family Village, he went straight to the Fire Cloud Sect to discuss matters with Sect Master Qin Ming.

“What? In just a few days, you’ve killed a Wind Blade Sect elder and four stewards?”

Upon hearing Fang Bai briefly describe his actions over the past few days, Qin Ming was taken aback, asking in disbelief.

One of the matters Fang Bai had discussed with Qin Ming previously was that Fang Bai would covertly weaken the Wind Blade Sect as much as possible.

Qin Ming originally thought that although Fang Bai had many methods, since he was only a first-level Thunder Tribulation expert, he might only target core disciples or direct disciples as emerging talents to weaken the Wind Blade Sect.

However, what Qin Ming never expected was Fang Bai aimed directly for the higher-ups of the Wind Blade Sect.

In just five days, Fang Bai successively hunted down a third-level Thunder Tribulation elder and four second-level Thunder Tribulation stewards from the Wind Blade Sect, a feat that could be termed as glorious.

Qin Ming, being a fourth-level Thunder Tribulation expert, believed that although he could achieve similar feats, accomplishing it as stealthily as Fang Bai would not be as easy.

This revealed that Fang Bai certainly had some unknown miraculous techniques to kill without leaving any trace.

Qin Ming couldn’t help but secretly marvel that with such a genius combining multiple skills, Fang Bai could be regarded as incredibly talented. In the vast three thousand worlds, such talent might not appear for thousands or even tens of thousands of years. It was fortunate for the Fire Cloud Sect to ally with him rather than become enemies.

The significant losses the Wind Blade Sect suffered were as if injuring their muscles and bones, not only weakening their overall strength considerably but it was also conceivable that their tens of thousands of disciples would feel anxious, greatly affecting their morale and fighting spirit.

If the Fire Cloud Sect were to mobilize all their forces now and launch an all-out war with the Wind Blade Sect, they could win.

However, Qin Ming was still somewhat hesitant to proceed with a decisive battle now.

Although the Wind Blade Sect suffered significant losses, their Essence Energy was not heavily damaged, so even if the Fire Cloud Sect could win a decisive battle, it would certainly be at a great cost.

As the Sect Leader of the Fire Cloud Sect, Qin Ming naturally hoped to achieve the greatest victory at the smallest cost, thus preventing any other sect from taking advantage and rising in power.

Fang Bai, knowing what Qin Ming hesitated about, smiled and said, "Sect Master Qin, after sweeping through the Wind Blade Sect, the thousands of years of wealth and several Spirit Stone Veins they possess would mostly belong to your Fire Cloud Sect. Isn't that incentive enough?"

Qin Ming smiled bitterly and said, "Elder Fang, I have my difficulties too! In Red Maple City, besides the Fire Cloud Sect, there are other major forces, whose strengths aren't far from ours. If we suffer too great a loss in this battle, the consequences would be unpredictable."

Fang Bai said, "Sect Master Qin can rest assured. When we launch the final attack, I will have strong reinforcements to assist! By then, we will have an overwhelming advantage, and the Wind Blade Sect will surely collapse with one strike!"

Qin Ming's eyes brightened and he asked, "What kind of reinforcements?"

Fang Bai, smiling, pointed to a Snow Lion lying outside the hall and said, "That Snow Lion, is it not the mount of Sect Master Qin?"

Qin Ming nodded and said, "I captured that Snow Lion as a cub from the mountains and it took ten years to tame it. Its attack power is comparable to a human first-level Thunder Tribulation expert... Elder Fang, why do you ask? Could it be..."

Fang Bai said, "That's right, our reinforcements are Spirit Beasts!"

Without waiting for Qin Ming to reply, he faced outside the hall and let out a sharp whistle.

Among his whistles, the Snow Lion lying placidly on the ground outside the hall, seeming harmless, suddenly had bloodshot eyes, restlessly roaring, and charged towards the hall.

With fangs and claws bared, bringing wind and thunder, it attacked Qin Ming at full force.

Qin Ming was shocked, shouting, "Are you mad, beast?"

He struck out with his right palm, sending a Spirit Qi Big Palm onto the Snow Lion's body, which let out a muffled grunt. Its long body curled mid-air, falling several meters away, shaking the ground slightly.

Qin Ming didn't use his full strength in this palm strike, and the Snow Lion was thick-skinned, so it didn't get hurt.

Once the Snow Lion landed, it immediately bounced back and lunged at Qin Ming again with even more force.

"This..."

Qin Ming struck another palm to repel the Snow Lion, catching out of the corner of his eye that Fang Bai was still whistling. Experienced as he was, Qin Ming immediately understood what was happening.

"Elder Fang, stop! I understand what you mean by reinforcements now!"

Qin Ming shouted urgently.

Fang Bai closed his lips, and the whistling ceased.

The Snow Lion in its crazed state quickly calmed down as the bloodiness in its eyes faded away, looking at its master Qin Ming in confusion, not knowing what had just happened.

“Go back outside and lie down!”

Qin Ming gave a “humph” and waved at the Snow Lion.

The Snow Lion gave a low growl, obediently ran outside the hall, and lay by the door again.

Seeing the Snow Lion outside, a smile spread across Qin Ming’s stern square face, and he said to Fang Bai, “I never expected this! Truly unexpected! Elder Fang not only excels in Alchemy and Artifact Refining but is also proficient in Beast Taming Art... Just curious, how many Spirit Beasts with similar strength to the Snow Lion can Elder Fang control simultaneously?”

Qin Ming knew to control multiple Spirit Beasts required powerful Divine Sense, and since Fang Bai mentioned having reinforcements, Qin Ming thought Fang Bai should be able to control at least ten or eight.

If ten or eight Spirit Beasts comparable to human first-level Thunder Tribulation experts could assist, then Fang Bai and the Fire Cloud Sect could greatly enhance the chances of victory over the Wind Blade Sect and minimize losses.

Chapter 1745: A Dark and Stormy Night

The Spirit Beasts have formidable attack power, and those at the Thunder Tribulation Realm are even more terrifying.

At the same realm level, the attack power of spirit beasts far exceeds that of human Martial Artists.

A Like-Snow Lion at the first level of Thunder Tribulation Realm, if it goes berserk and attacks with full force, would cause even a second-level human Thunder Tribulation strong practitioner quite a headache, struggling to cope.

Thus, Qin Ming thought that if Fang Bai could control ten Thunder Tribulation level one Spirit Beasts to assist in the attack, they could at least tie down five Stewards of the Wind Blade Sect.

This way, the Fire Cloud Sect could spare several Stewards to participate in other battles, effectively reducing their own casualties.

“Only able to control five?”

Seeing Fang Bai shake one hand, Qin Ming was somewhat disappointed.

Fang Bai laughed, “Fifty.”

“Huh?”

Qin Ming thought he had misheard, exclaiming, “Fifty? Are you kidding?”

Fang Bai shook his head, and said, “Controlling Spirit Beasts consumes a lot of Divine Sense. With my current ability, controlling these Spirit Beasts is the limit, and it can only be maintained for about two hours at most...”

Qin Ming exclaimed joyfully, “Two hours is enough to resolve the battle! Haha, Elder Fang, your Beast Taming Art is truly remarkable! When do you think we should start the operation?”

Now that there’s confidence to sweep through the Wind Blade Sect, Qin Ming appeared a bit impatient.

Although the Fire Cloud Sect and the Wind Blade Sect are separated by thousands of miles, there are irreconcilable conflicts between them due to benefits inside and outside the city.

The Wind Blade Sect wants to extend its reach into Red Maple City, while the Fire Cloud Sect seeks to get a share of the Spirit Stone Veins and other cultivation resources outside the city, leading to frequent clashes, each side wanting nothing more than to eliminate the other.

Now, with an excellent opportunity to wipe out the Wind Blade Sect, as the Sect Leader of the Fire Cloud Sect, how could Qin Ming not be thrilled?

Fang Bai said, "If we are to act, the sooner the better! I wonder if Sect Master Qin is ready on your side?"

Qin Ming nodded, "With my command, tens of thousands of Fire Cloud Sect disciples are ready to mobilize at any time!"

Fang Bai said, "In that case, let's set off for the Wind Blade Sect!"

After agreeing on the time and signal for action, Qin Ming went to convene the Fire Cloud Sect disciples, while Fang Bai returned to the grand hall where he stayed to visit his family, and also took a look at the residents of Zheng Family Village before leaving Red Maple City again.

Shortly after Fang Bai left Red Maple City, tens of thousands of Fire Cloud Sect disciples also disguised themselves, broke into smaller groups, and quietly left the city, avoiding attention as they flew towards the Wind Blade Sect.

Three days later, on a moonless and windy night.

In the dense forest hundreds of miles from the Wind Blade Sect, Fang Bai, in white robes, stood proudly on a mountaintop.

In the valley below the mountain he stood, nearly a thousand Spirit Beasts were gathered, among them were dozens of various flying Spirit Beasts akin to Thunder Tribulation level one, and the rest were high-rank Soul Severing or Soul Severing Perfection level Spirit Beasts.

These near thousand Spirit Beasts were controlled by Fang Bai using the Beast Taming Scripture, now Fang Bai only awaited the signal from Qin Ming, and he would drive this near thousand Spirit Beasts into the Wind Blade Sect to cause a riot.

Once the Wind Blade Sect fell into chaos, it would be the time for tens of thousands of Fire Cloud Sect disciples to launch their attack.

Two hours later, on a mountain ten miles away, flames suddenly appeared, flickered three times, and then extinguished.

Upon receiving the signal, Fang Bai immediately let out a soft whistle.

The whistle sounded like an incantation, driving nearly a thousand Spirit Beasts to charge frantically towards the Wind Blade Sect.

The Spirit Beasts were extremely fast, nearly a thousand powerful Spirit Beasts swept across the land like a whirlwind, everything in their path was felled, with trees broken and stones flying, all was flattened.

As nearly a thousand Spirit Beasts rapidly approached the Wind Blade Sect, the Wind Blade Sect Master Gu Mo and dozens of high-ranking sect members were receiving two important guests.

These two guests were an old man and a vibrant young man.

The young man appeared no more than twenty-six or seven years old, with sharp brows, an aquiline nose, fair skin, quite handsome, but his gaze held a certain lurking hostility, giving a sense of deep scheming.

The young man was not old, yet he was a second-level Thunder Tribulation strong practitioner, showing exceptional aptitude.

The old man was over a hundred, with wrinkles all over his face, cloudy eyes, holding a serpent-shaped cane, appearing old and infirm, about to leave this world.

Yet this old man was a fourth-level Thunder Tribulation strong practitioner, his cloudy eyes occasionally emitting a terrifying sharpness.

As a Sect Master and having cultivation equivalent to the old man, Gu Mo was exceedingly respectful towards him, ostensibly considering himself a junior.

Even towards the second-level Thunder Tribulation young strong practitioner, Gu Mo was amicable, not daring to put on airs.

“Elder Lie, I am having the cultivation resources for your sect prepared, please wait a moment. As for the recent attacks on our sect, we hope your sect can provide help...”

Though Gu Mo sat in the Sect Master seat, he slightly bowed, speaking in a subservient tone with an ingratiating smile, showing none of the dignity and demeanor of a usual leader.

Elder Lie, whose name was Lie Yao, and the young man named Lie Shijie, were both from the Demon Flame Sect and were father and son from the same sect.

The overall strength of the Demon Flame Sect far surpasses the Wind Blade Sect, though they are different sects, they have a dependent relationship.

The Demon Flame Sect provides protection to the Wind Blade Sect, while the Wind Blade Sect annually tribute a portion of cultivation resources to the Demon Flame Sect, a relationship maintained for many years.

Lie Yao and his son, as envoys sent by the Sect Master of the Demon Flame Sect, come to the Wind Blade Sect every year to collect its tribute, while also asking if the Wind Blade Sect needs any assistance.

At this moment, hearing Gu Mo lamenting that several high-ranks of his sect were killed by a first-level Thunder Tribulation strong practitioner, Lie Yao couldn't help but feel disdain, thinking, for a prestigious sect with tens of thousands of disciples, that they couldn't handle even a first-level Thunder Tribulation Martial Artist, utterly useless.

However, while he thought this, he said, "Sect Master Gu, do not worry, we will not sit idly and let this matter continue! Once I return to the sect, I will report this to the Sect Master, who will surely send disciples to assist in investigating! No matter who the opponent is or how strong, our Demon Flame Sect will uphold justice for you!"

"Sect Master Gu said the one who killed your sect's high-ranks was a first-level Thunder Tribulation strong practitioner, is this true?"

Lie Shijie suddenly asked.

Gu Mo nodded solemnly, "This is what we witnessed with our own eyes, absolutely true!"

The attending Wind Blade Sect elders and stewards also nodded in agreement.

Lie Shijie smirked slightly, his gaze swept across Gu Mo and the others, saying with a half-smile, "As far as I know, Sect Master Gu, you are a fourth-level Thunder Tribulation strong practitioner, and your sect elders and stewards are also third and second-level Thunder Tribulation strong practitioners, yet all ten of you failed to slay the first-level Thunder Tribulation strong practitioner?"

Seeing he spoke with unconcealed contempt and disdain, seemingly looking down upon themselves, Gu Mo couldn't help but feel anger well up inside, his eye twitching involuntarily.

Chapter 1746: Lend Us a Helping Hand!

"Dear nephew, there's something you don't know!"

Gu Mo initially wanted to lash out at Lie Shijie's rudeness, but upon reconsideration, he held back and said with a bitter smile, "That person, although only a first realm Thunder Tribulation expert, can challenge higher levels and has the aid of a superior Royal Grade Spiritual Artifact. The key is that he set up a very formidable formation, trapping us within it and escaped in the chaos..."

Lie Shijie was the son of Lie Yao, and Lie Yao doted on this exceptional son, so Gu Mo dared not show his dissatisfaction, fearing it would displease Lie Yao and affect the "friendship" between the two sects.

“A superior Royal Grade Spiritual Artifact? Are you sure you saw it correctly?”

Upon hearing Gu Mo’s words, both Lie Yao and his son were visibly moved, especially Lie Shijie, who stood up abruptly to ask.

A superior Royal Grade Spiritual Artifact is extremely rare in the world and is very attractive to a fourth realm Thunder Tribulation expert like Lie Yao, let alone a second realm Thunder Tribulation expert like Lie Shijie.

“Father, how about... we stay a few more days to investigate this person’s whereabouts?”

With eyes sparkling, Lie Shijie excitedly proposed, “That person has killed several Wind Blade Sect higher-ups in recent days, surely with a motive. I think he will come again. If we can kill him and obtain a superior Royal Grade Spiritual Artifact, it would be a great gain!”

Lie Yao was quite tempted, responding with a grunt, looking towards Gu Mo.

Gu Mo quickly replied, “If Elder Lie can stay, we would be most grateful!”

He was also worried that the young expert with the Blood Blade might return. If the Lie father and son could stay in the sect for some time, it would be a deterrent to that person.

Perhaps seeing Lie Yao here, the person would not dare to act and instead flee.

In this way, the Wind Blade Sect would have one less headache-inducing opponent.

At that moment, from the distance of the grand hall, a sudden “rumbling” sound broke out, followed by faintly heard wails and cries of martial artists.

The sound continued unabated, and what was at first at the mountain gate quickly spread to various parts of the sect headquarters.

Gu Mo sensed a strong fluctuation of Spiritual Energy and an intense Killing Qi, frowning, releasing his Divine Sense, discovering hundreds of Spirit Beasts storming into the sect headquarters, launching a frenzied attack on the sect disciples.

A feeling of foreboding rose in Gu Mo's heart. He stood up, darting out of the grand hall.

A dozen Wind Blade Sect Elders and Stewards, faces heavy, followed closely.

"Something seems to be happening outside, let's go take a look as well!"

Lie Yao gave a look to his son, and both strode out.

Gu Mo and others, standing atop the hill where the Sect Master Hall was situated, looked around to see nearly a thousand strong Spirit Beasts, like the wind under the illumination of Spirit Stones, rampaging and attacking at will, ferociously and fearlessly.

Especially dozens of fierce birds akin to first realm Thunder Tribulation in human terms, tore through the hastily arranged defenses of the Wind Blade Sect disciples, charging toward the Sect Master Hall like sharp blades.

At this moment, all the high-level members of Wind Blade Sect were within the Sect Master Hall, leaving the thousands of outside disciples leaderless and without the strong to contend against those fierce birds, unable to halt the Spirit Beasts' assault.

"Those Spirit Beasts are being controlled by someone!"

Gu Mo and other high-ranking members of the Wind Blade Sect, as well as the Lie father and son, being experienced warriors, could tell at a glance that the frenzied fierce birds were being commanded to attack.

However, they couldn't fathom who might be secretly controlling the Spirit Beasts.

“Could this... be related to the culprit who killed our sect’s higher-ups?”

An Elder asked.

Gu Mo decisively replied, “Impossible! That person’s cultivation level is only first realm Thunder Tribulation, how could he have such a strong Divine Sense to control dozens of Spirit Beasts of the same realm?”

Suddenly, in the distant night sky, countless streams of light flew in.

As they neared, it became evident that each stream of light was a strong individual riding a Spiritual Artifact.

“It’s people from the Fire Cloud Sect! Damn it!”

Upon seeing the attire of those experts, Gu Mo’s face turned grim, his eyes blazing, and a Killing Qi burst forth.

He had been suspecting recent matters were linked to the Fire Cloud Sect, and seeing thousands of Fire Cloud Sect disciples invading confirmed his suspicions were correct.

The Wind Blade Sect and the Fire Cloud Sect, two major sects, had always been of equal strength, with neither able to wipe out the other, maintaining a stalemate.

This time, the Fire Cloud Sect launched a massive attack, in conjunction with those mad Spirit Beasts, Gu Mo knew that the Fire Cloud Sect must have enlisted strong reinforcements, thinking they had the advantage in a confrontation between the two sects.

“You of the Fire Cloud Sect have strong reinforcement, but you didn’t expect that we of the Wind Blade Sect also have formidable allies, did you? Ha ha, this time, we will ensure you have no return!”

Looking at Lie Yao beside him, Gu Mo's inner rage subsided, replaced by a sense of excitement and exhilaration.

Compared to their opponent controlling dozens of first realm Thunder Tribulation Spirit Beasts, they had Lie Yao, a fourth realm Thunder Tribulation expert, on their side, giving them the upper hand.

Today, the attacking force must be the elite of the Fire Cloud Sect, and if they could be slain here, the Fire Cloud Sect would suffer greatly and would no longer have the power to contend with Wind Blade Sect.

Afterwards, Wind Blade Sect could strike at Red Maple City, completely wiping out the remaining forces of the Fire Cloud Sect, thus securing a foothold within Red Maple City.

And even, Wind Blade Sect could, with the prestige of destroying the Fire Cloud Sect, seize control of Red Maple City's discourse.

At this thought, Gu Mo couldn't help but feel overjoyed, turning to Lie Yao, saying, "Elder Lie, the Fire Cloud Sect launches a massive invasion, please lend us an arm of assistance!"

Seeing Lie Yao hesitate, Gu Mo said loudly again, "If we can wipe out the Fire Cloud Sect this time, all their sect's cultivation resources accumulated over millennia will belong to your sect!"

Initially, seeing the Fire Cloud Sect's formidable forces, Lie Yao intended to stay out of the matter, but upon hearing Gu Mo's words, his eyes lit up.

He knew the Fire Cloud Sect was a powerful sect, with rich resources accumulated over millennia, getting those would be an outstanding achievement for his sect.

Moreover, joining this great battle, even if the Wind Blade Sect ultimately fails, he is confident in his ability to escape unharmed.

Even if the Fire Cloud Sect knows his identity and background, what of it? They wouldn't dare to seek revenge from the Demon Flame Sect!

Thus, seeing that taking action would be beneficial and harmless, why not do so?

“Very well! Sect Master Gu, may our two sects join forces, united in spirit, to destroy the Fire Cloud Sect!”

Lie Yao said boldly.

Seeing Lie Yao willing to assist, Gu Mo was overjoyed, saying, “Please trouble Elder Lie to seek out the one controlling the Spirit Beasts, if we can eliminate him, victory is assured for us!”

By now, tens of thousands of Fire Cloud Sect disciples had already entered the Wind Blade Sect headquarters, each seeking opponents, and fierce battles erupted.

Additionally, a dozen strong Fire Cloud Sect members were flying towards the Wind Blade Sect Master Hall.

The leading figure was none other than the Fire Cloud Sect Leader Qin Ming, followed by high-ranking members of the Fire Cloud Sect.

Fang Bai had previously wiped out five high-ranking members of the Wind Blade Sect, and with dozens of Thunder Tribulation Spirit Beasts restraining other Wind Blade Sect Thunder Tribulation experts, including Qin Ming, all were confident in this battle.

Chapter 1747: Self-Interest

“Qin Ming, you old scoundrel, it’s really you!”

Gu Mo saw Qin Ming leading his men to attack, and his anger surged, roaring fiercely: “Your Fire Cloud Sect killed several high-ranking members of my Wind Blade Sect. If this hatred is not avenged, I, Gu Mo, swear not to be human!”

He summoned the spiritual artifact in his hand, a black long blade that shot into the night sky, emitting dazzling brilliance, like a bolt of black lightning, aimed at Qin Ming.

The other high-ranking members of the Wind Blade Sect also hurriedly initiated attacks with their spiritual artifacts.

A storm whipped up, spiritual energy collided, thunder roared, and dozens of Thunder Tribulation experts from the two sects clashed fiercely in the air, creating astounding waves.

Qin Ming was just on a distant mountain peak, seeing chaos within the Wind Blade Sect headquarters, and knew that the spirit beasts controlled by Fang Bai had already charged into the Wind Blade Sect, so he immediately led his Fire Cloud Sect high-ranking members to attack.

In Qin Ming's view, now with the comparison in numbers of high-ranking experts from both sides, his side had an absolute advantage. As long as they concentrated their superior strength to eliminate Gu Mo and other high-ranking members of the Wind Blade Sect, this decisive battle between the two sects could be definitively won.

However, when Qin Ming led his men to the scene, he discovered that beside Gu Mo stood two unfamiliar experts, one of whom seemed somewhat familiar.

Anyone who could stand beside Gu Mo wasn't an ordinary person; Qin Ming took a careful look at the person's appearance and couldn't help but gasp, feeling secretly troubled.

Qin Ming had already recognized that the person was Elder Lie Yao of the Demon Flame Sect.

The Demon Flame Sect and the Wind Blade Sect have an alliance relationship, which Qin Ming knew well.

The reason Qin Ming was persuaded by Fang Bai to collaborate with him to annihilate the Wind Blade Sect was, on the one hand, driven by interests, and on the other hand, he thought that if the Wind Blade Sect could be wiped out overnight, creating a fait accompli, perhaps the Demon Flame Sect wouldn't go to great lengths against a sect that had already been annihilated, especially against such a strong sect like the Fire Cloud Sect.

By then, as long as the Fire Cloud Sect expressed “submission” to the Demon Flame Sect and offered more cultivation resources, perhaps this matter could be minimized and resolved amicably.

But what Qin Ming never expected was that when he led his sect’s high-ranking members to the front, he saw Elder Lie Yao of the Demon Flame Sect standing beside Gu Mo in mid-air.

With Lie Yao present, Qin Ming felt extremely apprehensive, worried that he might assist the Wind Blade Sect.

Qin Ming was not only apprehensive about Lie Yao’s possession of a fourth-level Thunder Tribulation cultivation but also about the Demon Flame Sect behind him.

If Lie Yao took action, Qin Ming wouldn’t know how to respond.

If they were to engage Lie Yao, it would be the same as opposing the Demon Flame Sect behind him, with unimaginable consequences that Qin Ming couldn’t afford.

However, withdrawing now seemed already too late, and would the Wind Blade Sect let them go easily?

At that moment, Qin Ming felt regret.

“At this point, I can only give it my all!”

Qin Ming pretended not to recognize Lie Yao, braced himself, and fought fiercely with Gu Mo.

He could only hope that Lie Yao would remain neutral and not help either side.

“Sect Master Qin, don’t you know that the Wind Blade Sect and my Demon Flame Sect are allies? You come attacking so audaciously, don’t you regard our Demon Flame Sect at all?”

Lie Yao initially intended to search for the person controlling the spirit beasts, but upon catching sight of Qin Ming fighting Gu Mo, he felt moved and sharply questioned.

Upon hearing Lie Yao's question, cold sweat immediately dripped from Qin Ming, and in distraction, he almost got hit by Gu Mo's spiritual artifact attack.

"Elder Lie, this is a grievance between my Fire Cloud Sect and the Wind Blade Sect. Please don't interfere! Once this matter is resolved, the Fire Cloud Sect will offer generous rewards! How many cultivation resources the Wind Blade Sect has contributed to your sect in the past, our Fire Cloud Sect is willing to offer 30% more!"

Qin Ming resisted Gu Mo's attack and offered substantial benefits to Lie Yao.

Gu Mo, seeing Lie Yao's hesitance, felt a pang of anxiety, truly worried that Lie Yao might be swayed, hurriedly sneered: "Can't our Wind Blade Sect offer what your Fire Cloud Sect can?"

After pausing, he continued: "Every powerful figure knows that the Demon Flame Sect and the Wind Blade Sect have an alliance. Now that we're in trouble, how could Elder Lie stand by and do nothing? Old thief Qin, by saying this, are you trying to put Elder Lie in an unjust position, inciting the Demon Flame Sect to break their oath?"

Upon hearing this, Lie Yao's expression tightened, agreeing, he said: "Indeed! I, Lie Yao, am not that kind of person! Sect Master Qin, I advise you to retreat quickly, let this matter be! Otherwise, you will be opposing our Demon Flame Sect!"

Lie Yao spoke so partly out of personal interest.

After all, the Fire Cloud Sect is one of the strong sects of this time.

Even though the Demon Flame Sect is stronger, they don't want to have a direct confrontation with the Fire Cloud Sect; otherwise, it would be enemy-damaging a thousand while hurting themselves eight hundred.

If they could scare off the Fire Cloud Sect's experts by relying on the Demon Flame Sect's power, that would be the best possible outcome.

If the people from the Fire Cloud Sect are wise, they should offer the Demon Flame Sect a substantial amount of cultivation resources after this, to prevent the Demon Flame Sect from taking out their anger on the Fire Cloud Sect.

And to solidify the alliance and prevent any future invasions from the Fire Cloud Sect, the Wind Blade Sect would also certainly double their efforts to please the Demon Flame Sect.

Thus, without a single soldier sacrificed, the Demon Flame Sect could profit from both sides; what could be more pleasant?

Considering the sect's interests, Lie Yao's thoughts weren't wrong, but Sect Master Gu Mo and Sect Master Qin Ming both felt anxious.

In Qin Ming's view, this time, the Fire Cloud Sect had mobilized massively, thoroughly tearing faces with the Wind Blade Sect. If they return with nothing, it would really be a loss.

And from Gu Mo's perspective, the Fire Cloud Sect killed several high-ranking members of his sect; if they let Qin Ming and his people go this time, it would be tantamount to indulging and showing weakness to the Fire Cloud Sect. Spread this, and the Wind Blade Sect would not only lose face but become a laughingstock to many.

However, both of them don't want to offend the Demon Flame Sect, otherwise, the consequences would be even more severe.

"We're leaving!"

Qin Ming gritted his teeth, ready to retreat, thinking that a hero doesn't suffer immediate losses.

"Hold on a moment!"

Gu Mo's mind raced, then suddenly stopped Qin Ming, quickly using the Thread Condensation Sound Transmission Technique to say to Lie Yao: "Elder Lie, don't you want that Royal Grade Superior spiritual artifact? From what I know, those who killed our sect's high-ranking members are likely allies of the Fire Cloud Sect..."

Gu Mo spoke with malicious intent.

If Lie Yao asked Qin Ming to hand someone over, after Qin Ming did, not only would he lose a strong ally, but also lose face.

If he couldn't hand someone over, it would arouse Lie Yao's dissatisfaction, and perhaps tonight's situation might take a turn.

Upon receiving Gu Mo's message, Lie Yao remembered this matter, raised his brows, and sinisterly said to Qin Ming: "Sect Master Qin, grievances have roots and debts have masters. The reason for your conflict is that your people have killed several high-ranking members of the Wind Blade Sect. Now hand over the culprit to me. Then I will mediate, how about having both sides shake hands and make peace?"

"This..."

Hearing this, Qin Ming was dumbfounded, immediately landing in a dilemma.

Chapter 1748: No Turning Back Once the Bow Is Drawn

In Red Maple City, the Fire Cloud Sect is undoubtedly the largest power.

But now, Fang Bai is also a renowned figure in Red Maple City.

He can slay a Thunder Tribulation Realm three-layer powerhouse and can refine Royal Grade medium-level Spirit Pills and Spiritual Artifacts, something unprecedented in the history of Red Maple City.

Therefore, Fang Bai's identity and status should not be underestimated.

Moreover, Fang Bai is already an Honorary Elder of the Fire Cloud Sect, sharing both success and failure, honor and disgrace, with the Fire Cloud Sect.

If Qin Ming dares to hand Fang Bai over to the Wind Blade Sect for disposal, it would be a true betrayal. The senior members of the Fire Cloud Sect would be cursed for a lifetime, and no strong individuals would dare to cooperate with them in the future.

But if they don't hand over Fang Bai, with Lie Yao's fury descending, they cannot bear it.

For a moment, Qin Ming only felt an extreme headache.

"Whoosh!"

At this moment, an arrow trailing long flames whistled through the air like a fiery meteor across the night sky.

That arrow, like an arrow of death from hell, carried the power of death and terrifying pressure, piercing the void and instantly reaching the vicinity.

At this moment, Lie Yao's son, Lie Shijie, stood suspended in the air not far away, and the arrow shot towards him.

Lie Shijie, a formidable Thunder Tribulation Realm two-layer powerhouse, was caught off guard by the arrow, which pierced through his chest, leaving a large, bowl-sized bloody hole in his heart.

That arrow instantly took his life; he didn't even have time to scream before he fell from the night sky to the ground, falling dead on the spot.

While everyone was dumbfounded, a voice suddenly came from the distant horizon.

"I carry more than one Royal Grade Superior Spiritual artifact. If you want it, come and get it with your skills!"

The voice came distantly, echoing in everyone's ears.

"It's him! It's him!"

Gu Mo saw Lie Shijie shot dead, his eyes protruded, his mouth agape, a stupefied expression.

Upon hearing that familiar yet hateful voice, Gu Mo immediately shouted in a stern voice, "Elder Lie, the Royal Grade Superior Spiritual artifact I mentioned is on that person! Quickly chase him down, kill him, and take his spiritual artifact to avenge your beloved son!"

Several high-level members of the sect fell at Fang Bai's hands, and Gu Mo hated Fang Bai to the core. Seeing Fang Bai kill Lie Shijie, he had mixed feelings.

The joy was that with Lie Shijie's death, Lie Yao would definitely hate the Fire Cloud Sect and thus stand on the side of his sect.

The worry was that Lie Shijie died in the conflict between the two sects, and Lie Yao might vent his anger on the Wind Blade Sect.

"Ah..."

Lie Yao witnessed his son being shot dead, but it was too late to save him. His eyes almost burst, and he roared in anger. Before Gu Mo finished speaking, his figure turned into a stream of light, rushing toward the source of the voice.

"I'll draw this person away for you! Deal with the Wind Blade Sect! You can shoot an arrow but not turn it back; decide for yourself!"

Fang Bai's voice reached the ears of Qin Ming and the Fire Cloud Sect's senior members. Toward the end, the voice gradually faded, indicating Fang Bai had gone far.

Qin Ming knew that Fang Bai had a point. With Lie Shijie's death, the situation was pushing Lie Yao to stand against the Fire Cloud Sect, forcing the sect into a dead end.

Only by destroying the Wind Blade Sect, obtaining their cultivation resources, and strengthening their own power could they make the Demon Flame Sect where Lie Yao belonged, be wary, giving Fire Cloud Sect a slim chance of survival.

Qin Ming didn't know if Fang Bai intended that previous arrow or if it was an unintentional mishap, but the fact remained, and nothing could change it. Now, they could only fight. So, he gritted his teeth, his eyes red, and shouted, "The life and death of the Fire Cloud Sect rests tonight! Kill!"

Thus, led by Qin Ming, the strong cultivators of the Fire Cloud Sect once again clashed with the strong cultivators of the Wind Blade Sect led by Gu Mo.

With the advantage in the number of strong cultivators, plus the assistance of nearly a thousand powerful spirit beasts, the Fire Cloud Sect quickly gained the upper hand in the battle between the two sects.

...

Fang Bai used Wind Spirit Energy to flee at full speed into the wild mountains and forests.

A few miles behind him, a stream of light pursued relentlessly, carrying the furious Lie Yao, whose son had been killed.

Lie Yao's cultivation level far surpassed Fang Bai's, and Fang Bai intentionally tried to drag him, so the distance between the two grew closer.

In the primeval forest of the deep mountains, Fang Bai descended, diving into the forest.

The vast sea of trees stretched for miles, and Fang Bai concealed his own aura, like a needle dropped into the ocean, making it incredibly hard for Lie Yao to find his trail.

Lie Yao was in deep pain from his son's death, determined for revenge; how could he let Fang Bai go?

He lingered in the air where Fang Bai vanished, unleashing his Divine Sense for a meticulous search.

If he heard even a single sound or sensed a trace of Spiritual Energy fluctuation, the snake-headed cane in his hand would unleash a blast of Fire Spirit Energy, bombarding the forest below.

He attacked relentlessly, without regard for consequences. Each attack would destroy several towering ancient trees below in the primeval forest.

The Fire Spirit Energy he unleashed congealed into fireballs, which, driven by the wind, quickly spread in all directions, covering miles and forming patches of fiery sea.

As a result, many Spirit Beasts in the primeval forest suffered, fleeing the area.

Some powerful Thunder Tribulation Realm Spirit Beasts, enraged by the destruction of their territory, launched attacks on Lie Yao.

However, the Spirit Beasts in this primeval forest, the strongest among them at most equivalent to a human Thunder Tribulation Realm two-layer, were no match for Lie Yao, who, in his fury, killed quite a few.

"If you don't come out, I'll destroy this primeval forest with fire to see how long you can hide!"

Lie Yao, like a great eagle, flew back and forth in the air, his sharp eyes scanning, occasionally shouting into the primeval forest below, his voice carrying tens of miles.

Yet he didn't know Fang Bai possessed an Innate Fire Spirit Root and two Spiritual Fires within, rendering him fearless of any earthly fire. Immersed in the fiery sea, it was like a warm bath to him, unharmed even after a year or half.

Amidst Lie Yao's roaring, a sudden bright light emerged among the primeval forest below, followed by a Flame Arrow shooting up rapidly.

This arrow was fiercer and faster than the one that took his son Lie Shijie's life.

Fortunately, Lie Yao had been on high alert and saw the Flame Arrow coming, immediately dodging sideways tens of zhang, narrowly avoiding the arrow. Nonetheless, he broke out in a cold sweat.

He knew that if he had been half a beat slower, he would have been locked by the arrow's aura, making it nearly impossible to dodge. Though it wouldn't have been fatal, it would likely have resulted in severe injury.

Lie Yao speculated that the Spiritual Artifact firing this Flame Arrow must be a Royal Grade Superior Spiritual Artifact, given its formidable power.

Recalling Gu Mo, the Wind Blade Sect Master, saying that the person also had a sword-type Spiritual Artifact, likely also a Royal Grade Superior, Lie Yao's tormented heart stirred, and his grief slightly subsided.

"Killing that person and taking the two Spiritual Artifacts from him will soothe my heart's hatred!"

Lie Yao thought with hatred.

At this moment, not far ahead, a furious roar sounded from within a sea of fire, and Fang Bai's figure soared into the sky, continuing to flee towards the distant mountains.

Chapter 1749: Death Wasteland

"Trying to escape?"

Lie Yao sneered coldly, then let out a long howl, pursuing in the direction Fang Bai was fleeing.

Fang Bai's goal was to lure Lie Yao away and delay him for a while, so that the Fire Cloud Sect could annihilate the Wind Blade Sect.

Therefore, even though Lie Yao was intent on killing Fang Bai, Fang Bai didn't want to fight desperately and only exerted all his strength to power his flight with Wind Spirit Energy.

Although Lie Yao's cultivation level far surpassed Fang Bai's, he consumed a great amount of spiritual energy while flying, making it difficult for him to maintain a high-speed flight.

However, Fang Bai could directly absorb the spiritual energy from the heavens and earth for his own use, maintaining sufficient spiritual energy to keep his flight speed unchanged.

As a result, in a short time, Lie Yao couldn't catch up with Fang Bai, nor could he significantly close the distance between them.

Lie Yao was secretly surprised, not expecting Fang Bai to have such abilities, and surmised that besides the two royal-grade superior spiritual artifacts, Fang Bai might have other unknown secrets.

"Once I capture this kid, I'll interrogate him slowly, surely forcing out the secrets he holds!"

Lie Yao thought to himself.

The two flew thousands of miles west, leaving the primeval forest, and a vast wasteland suddenly appeared ahead.

The wasteland was covered with wild grass and dead trees, where unknown spirit beasts and human bones and remains were everywhere, presenting a lifeless scene with no signs of life.

Lie Yao knew this wasteland was called the "Death Wasteland," a deadly forbidden territory that made martial artists tremble just speaking of it in the three thousand great worlds.

It is said that in ancient times, the Death Wasteland was a battlefield where top-level experts frequently fought and countless spirit beasts and human experts fell.

Over millions of years, the fallen spirit beasts and human experts' bones turned into ghastly white skeletons after being eroded by time, but the spiritual artifacts left by those experts, the blood seeped into the ground, the undissipated divine sense, will, evil qi, killing qi, etc., all gathered and mixed within the Death Wasteland, causing any strong fighter who steps here to become confused, face dangers repeatedly, and come close to death numerous times.

Of course, some exceptionally strong spirit beasts also adapt to the environment of the Death Wasteland and survive here.

These spirit beasts are also one of the reasons why various experts recoil at the thought of entering the Death Wasteland.

"Is this kid mad? He dares to enter the Death Wasteland!"

Seeing Fang Bai descend and slip into the Death Wasteland, Lie Yao's expression changed slightly.

"Two royal-grade superior spiritual artifacts, come and get them if you dare!"

Fang Bai stood on the edge of the Death Wasteland, displaying the Blood-Drinking Mad Blade and Houyi Bow in his hands, flaunting them at Lie Yao.

The pressure released by the two spiritual artifacts made Lie Yao feel a twinge of fear, knowing they were rare treasures, his eyes showing a greedy look.

"If that kid dares to enter, why shouldn't I? As long as I'm careful and don't go deep inside the wasteland, it'll be fine!"

Thinking this way, Lie Yao couldn't resist the temptation of the two royal-grade superior spiritual artifacts in Fang Bai's hands. He reckoned that Fang Bai would only dare to linger at the edge of the Death Wasteland and wouldn't venture deeper, so he dashed after Fang Bai like a shooting star.

Fang Bai chuckled lightly, his body like a flying swallow, bypassing several giant spirit beast skeletons, heading deeper into the Death Wasteland.

Initially, Lie Yao had some trepidation about this legendary Death Wasteland, but once inside, he encountered no threats and gradually lost his fear, relentlessly chasing after Fang Bai.

Deeper into the Death Wasteland, the spirit beast and human skeletons grew more numerous, with some areas piled with bones like mountains.

Some strong spirit beasts or human experts, though fallen for many years, their bones and the blood seeping into the ground still emitted faint pressure and evil qi.

While chasing Fang Bai, Lie Yao threaded through the uneven skeletons, feeling as if strong fighters were lurking everywhere around him, forcing him to be cautious and fully alert.

Little did he know, in his previous life, Fang Bai had ventured in and out of here to temper his will, becoming more familiar with the place than anyone else. Bringing Lie Yao here now was also to delay as much time as possible.

This Death Wasteland was like a gigantic maze, making it extremely difficult for a martial artist who wasn't strong or resolute enough to find their way out once inside.

Fang Bai thought that after luring Lie Yao in, if he could seize the opportunity to kill him, that would be the best outcome. If not, he would at least try to trap him for a while, so once the Fire Cloud Sect dealt with the Wind Blade Sect, everything would be set, and Lie Yao wouldn't be able to change anything.

Fang Bai's figure twisted left and right between clusters of wild grasses and deadwood, piles of bone hills and relics, quickly vanishing into an enigmatic mist, disappearing from sight.

The area was chaotic with energy, making it difficult for Lie Yao to sense Fang Bai's presence, realizing the situation was bad, wanting to temporarily exit the Death Wasteland, only to find the marked path he took had disappeared.

Thus, Lie Yao was disoriented, becoming a lost powerhouse.

Helplessly, he could only wander aimlessly, cursing and shouting in hopes of provoking Fang Bai to come out.

“Whoosh!”

It seemed in response to Lie Yao’s cursing and shouting, Fang Bai occasionally fired off a Flame Arrow from the shadows, catching him off guard.

The Flame Arrows flew like thunder and lightning, with astonishing power, several times nearly piercing through Lie Yao’s body, leaving him in a sorry state.

The Flame Arrows Fang Bai fired carried the might of Spirit Fire. If it weren’t for Lie Yao’s cultivation of a fire-based technique, being close to the Fire Spirit Energy, the surging heat brought by the Flame Arrows would’ve been unbearable for him.

Only then did Lie Yao realize he was up against such a difficult and formidable opponent.

Although the opponent’s cultivation level was far inferior to his, his various formidable techniques were endless. Despite not being able to take his life, Lie Yao also couldn’t do anything to him.

This left Lie Yao feeling a headache and regretting his greed for the opponent’s spiritual artifacts, leading him into the Death Wasteland, unable to find a way out.

The sky over the Death Wasteland was also murky, not even the stars or moon visible. As Lie Yao charged around, he entered a patch of dead forest.

Within the dead forest, all was still, with a chilling wind blowing, making Lie Yao shiver.

“Awoo...”

Suddenly, around the dead forest, a series of howls rang out, and then, in the distant darkness, pairs of purple lights appeared, one after another.

“Purple Mane Wolves!”

Lie Yao’s pupils contracted, his anxious expression revealing a hint of fear.

The Purple Mane Wolf is a thunder attribute spirit beast, naturally able to absorb lightning, with extremely formidable attack power. It’s named for its purple mane on the neck.

A just-adult Purple Mane Wolf is equivalent to a human warrior at the first level of Heavenly Tribulation.

A mature Purple Mane Wolf is comparable to a human warrior at the second level of Heavenly Tribulation. Its flesh and bones are several times tougher than steel. Even Lie Yao wasn’t confident he could kill it.

Purple Mane Wolves usually appear in packs, encountering them is nothing less than a nightmare for weaker experts.

Chapter 1750: Fire Python Whip

The Spirit Beasts able to survive in the Death Wasteland are none weaker than those in the Thunder Tribulation Realm.

Therefore, upon seeing the Purple Mane Wolves appearing around the withered forest, Lie Yao knew an intense battle was inevitable.

This pack of Purple Mane Wolves numbered about forty or fifty, and among them, the leading wolf was a middle-aged Purple Mane Wolf equivalent to a human Thunder Tribulation Second-Level expert, while the others were all at the First Level.

Lie Yao had no confidence in escaping these ferocious Spirit Beasts unharmed, and if luck didn't favor him, he might even lose his life here.

Thinking of Fang Bai, who had led him into the Death Wasteland, Lie Yao couldn't help but curse aloud.

"Crack!"

A streak of purple light flashed, as a Purple Mane Wolf opened its mouth to spew a bolt of lightning, launching an attack on this human expert who dared to intrude into the Wolf Clan's territory.

Lie Yao swiftly darted several feet away, just narrowly avoiding the strike. The withered tree where he had been standing was severed at the waist by the purple light, emitting wisps of white smoke.

Facing the Purple Mane Wolf's attack, Lie Yao didn't dare fight back.

If he retaliated, it would undoubtedly provoke the wolves' ferocity, causing the whole pack to swarm and attack him.

He spotted a gap between the wolves, quickly darting toward it, trying to break through the encirclement.

Among Spirit Beasts, the Wolf Clan was not only extremely cunning but also incredibly intelligent. As soon as Lie Yao moved, they knew what this human expert intended to do.

Another Purple Mane Wolf blocked Lie Yao's path, spitting out lightning and forcing him back.

Lie Yao charged left and right but was unable to find a breakthrough in the wolf pack to escape.

"These damn Purple Mane Wolves, they're deliberately toying with me, wearing down my Spiritual Energy!"

Seeing the mocking glint in the anthropomorphic eyes of the Purple Mane Wolves, Lie Yao couldn't help but become angry.

He swung his serpent staff fiercely around him, sending scorching flames in all directions, instantly igniting countless weeds and withered trees.

In an instant, an area of several miles centered on Lie Yao was engulfed in a sea of flames.

Most Spirit Beasts feared fire. Seeing the flames erupt, the Purple Mane Wolves retreated, maintaining their encirclement while closely watching Lie Yao.

Lie Yao repeatedly attempted to ride a Spiritual Artifact to fly away from the Death Wasteland, but the sky here was extraordinarily peculiar, as if an invisible Qi Shield tightly enveloped this vast wasteland, making it impossible to fly away from the ground.

Which meant that if Lie Yao wanted to escape, he could only make a break from the land, which made it easy to lose his way, presenting a troublesome problem.

Fang Bai concealed his aura, blending into the surrounding darkness, hiding behind a large tree in the distance,

quietly watching Lie Yao battle the Purple Mane Wolves, his gaze indifferent.

After using the Houyi Bow to shoot and kill Lie Shijie, the son of Lie Yao, Fang Bai had no intention of sparing Lie Yao.

If the Fire Cloud Sect could completely annihilate the Wind Blade Sect, and he could also kill Lie Yao father and son, the Demon Flame Sect behind them wouldn't find out for a while, thus saving a major trouble.

By the time the Demon Flame Sect learned he was the one who had killed the Lie family, he would have already left Red Maple City, and in the vast Three Thousand Worlds, where would the Demon Flame Sect search for him?

However, Lie Yao was after all a Thunder Tribulation Fourth-Level expert; it wasn't easy for Fang Bai to kill him.

For now, the strategy was to wait for the Purple Mane Wolves to exhaust Lie Yao's Spiritual Energy as much as possible, then deliver a fatal blow when he was utterly spent.

Fang Bai was like a masterful assassin, silently lurking in the shadows, waiting for the moment Lie Yao revealed a flaw.

Two hours later, the weeds and withered trees around Lie Yao were almost burnt out, the flames gradually diminishing. The dozens of Purple Mane Wolves pounced on Lie Yao once more.

With the cover of vegetation gone, Lie Yao was exposed to the onslaught of dozens of Purple Mane Wolves, falling into a perilous situation.

"Damn beasts, do you think you can easily provoke me, Lie Yao? I'll show you my real power!"

In his fierce battle, Lie Yao successfully killed several Thunder Tribulation First-Level Purple Mane Wolves, but he also started becoming injured, with his clothes and hair in disarray, looking rather pathetic.

Lie Yao knew that if he didn't unleash his ultimate means, he might fall here. In a rage, he roared out loud, and with a grasp in the air, his hand held a red whip about an arm's thickness and over a yard long.

The body of the red whip burned with fierce flames. As it swung, it looked like a Fire Python, its momentum intimidating.

"Fire Python Whip, Royal Grade Superior Spiritual Artifact!"

Fang Bai recognized it at a glance, having seen a similar whip in his previous life, knowing this whip was a type of Fire Spirit Weapon, its attacks unpredictable and immensely powerful.

It's uncertain what kind of opportunity or encounter Lie Yao had, but he managed to obtain such a treasure.

With the Fire Python Whip in hand, Lie Yao's combat strength doubled. With the whip striking left and coiling right, any part wrapped by the whip would immediately be incinerated by the surrounding flames, inflicting injuries or causing severe damage leading to demise.

"Snap!"

The Fire Python Whip whipped a flower pattern in mid-air, making a crisp, resounding sound before wrapping around the left leg of a Purple Mane Wolf.

Immediately, with a "boom," the section of the whip wrapping the Purple Mane Wolf's left leg erupted into intense flames, rapidly increasing in temperature, severing the left leg of the Purple Mane Wolf.

Although the Purple Mane Wolf had a body far tougher than steel, as long as it touched the Fire Python Whip, it would suffer unrepairable wounds.

The tremendous power of the Royal Grade Superior Spiritual Artifact was evident.

Lie Yao wielded the Fire Python Whip, fervently lashing at the surrounding Purple Mane Wolf pack, the sound of the whip snapping echoing constantly.

In the blink of an eye, more than a dozen Purple Mane Wolves fell, and the others bore injuries.

The lead wolf, seeing the situation turning unfavorable, howled once, tucked its tail, and fled.

The other dozens of Purple Mane Wolves, seeing this, scattered in all directions to escape.

In the blink of an eye, the dozens of fierce Purple Mane Wolves had disappeared without a trace, leaving only the corpses of a dozen or so Purple Mane Wolves on the scene.

With his strength alone, Lie Yao slew more than ten Purple Mane Wolves and repelled dozens more, his victory triumphant, causing him to laugh loudly with pride.

But just as his laughter started, it abruptly ceased.

Because he sensed four Martial Artist Auras and four Spiritual Artifacts' pressures surging from all directions, enveloping him.

The four Martial Artist Auras were not strong, coming from four Thunder Tribulation First-Level experts.

But the pressure from the four Spiritual Artifacts made Lie Yao feel a strong sense of crisis.

"Who? Who is it?"

Lie Yao looked around, Divine Sense spreading, spotting four figures wielding Spiritual Artifacts closing in on him from a hundred meters away.

With Lie Yao's eyesight, he couldn't penetrate the murky night fog, unable to discern the features of the figures.

"Sneaky... You all go die!"

The four figures harbored killing intent, obviously enemies not friends, and Lie Yao saw no point in conversing with them. He swung the Fire Python Whip, its length exploding, tearing through the mist, striking toward one of the figures.

"Thunk!"

The Fire Python Whip hit like it had struck a Great Bell, emitting a deep, resonant sound.

The sound wave generated by the bell sound spread to the front of Lie Yao, causing his eardrums to buzz and his mind to spin with dizziness.