

Doctor 1751

Chapter 1751: Four Primordial Spirits

“What kind of spiritual artifact is that, with such formidable power?”

Lie Yao narrowed his eyes and looked carefully, discovering that his Fire Python Whip had actually struck against a Great Bell in front of the silhouette, yet the bell didn’t move at all, while his hand holding the whip felt numb.

The power of the Great Bell, which could withstand the strike of the Fire Python Whip and cause numbness in his hand, was evidently superior to that of the whip.

His Fire Python Whip was already a superior royal-grade spiritual artifact, one of the finest in the world, so what grade could that Great Bell be?

Lie Yao suddenly thought of a possibility, causing his pupils to contract and he inhaled a sharp breath.

But then he shook his head with self-mockery, thinking it unlikely.

The Three Thousand Great Worlds are, after all, low-grade planes. How could an immortal artifact exist here?

Even if immortal artifacts truly existed, they would be relics left by some fallen powerful beings from the ancient wars, but that would be extremely rare.

The martial artist standing behind the Great Bell had an aura indicating a mere first-level Thunder Tribulation Realm cultivation. With such cultivation, even if he obtained an immortal artifact, how could he possibly control it?

But if it wasn’t an immortal artifact, why could his Fire Python Whip not shake it in the slightest?

In an instant, countless thoughts flashed through Lie Yao’s mind.

Four figures continued to approach Lie Yao unhurriedly, and the pressure from the four spiritual artifacts bore down on him, making him feel immense pressure, causing cold sweat to start seeping from his body.

Lie Yao could sense that the spiritual artifacts held by the other three approaching martial artists were also not inferior to the Great Bell.

Could it be that the four people were wielding four immortal artifacts?

At this thought, Lie Yao trembled uncontrollably.

The surrounding pressure grew increasingly intense. As the four figures drew closer, Lie Yao finally saw clearly that they all had identical appearances and figures.

The only difference was that the martial artist aura released by the four people had four different attributes.

The person in the east held a Great Bell and emitted Water Spirit Qi.

The person in the west held an ancient Great Cauldron and emitted Wood Spirit Qi.

The person in the south had a Blood Blade across his chest, emitting Metal Spirit Qi.

The person in the north drew a long blade into a full moon shape, emitting Fire Spirit Qi.

“It’s you...”

Lie Yao recognized that the person holding the spiritual artifact to the south was the martial artist he had been pursuing all along.

The other three were the Primordial Spirits released by that martial artist.

A martial artist rarely releases his Primordial Spirit to battle because the combat power of the Primordial Spirit is slightly weaker than the entity, and once the Primordial Spirit is injured, the martial artist's body will also be harmed.

In Lie Yao's understanding, a Soul Severing Realm and above expert can only nurture one Primordial Spirit in the Qi Sea unless it is a "Extraordinary Holy Body" with two different elemental Innate Spiritual Roots, where two Primordial Spirits might be born.

But this expert before him had released three Primordial Spirits to prepare for combat with his body.

This was beyond Lie Yao's understanding, and he almost doubted his own eyes.

Although the opponent was only at the first level of Thunder Tribulation, with one body and three Primordial Spirits working together, he could at least contend with a second-level Thunder Tribulation expert.

Furthermore, with those four extremely powerful spiritual artifacts, he should be able to suppress a third-level Thunder Tribulation expert.

Although Lie Yao himself was a fourth-level Thunder Tribulation expert, he had just expended a lot of Spiritual Energy and Divine Sense in battle with the Purple Mane Wolf, and now he had no confidence in defeating the opponent.

If the opponent could simultaneously control those four powerful spiritual artifacts, he would stand unconquerable.

"Crack!"

"Crack!"

“Crack!”

“Crack!”

With four whip cracks, Lie Yao moved swiftly, swinging the Fire Python Whip at Fang Bai’s body and three Primordial Spirits.

At this time, Lie Yao no longer harbored any greediness, unwilling to sit and wait for death, thus taking the initiative to attack, hoping to find a flaw and escape.

At this moment, Fang Bai made his move.

He used his body and Primordial Spirits to simultaneously control four immortal artifact spiritual artifacts, which had most of their abilities sealed. Though this was extremely energy-consuming for his Divine Sense, he knew that if he wanted to kill Lie Yao, he had to do so.

The Soul Loss Bell, Houyi Bow, Blood-Drinking Mad Blade, and Five Elements Origin Qi Cauldron—all four immortal artifacts launched their attacks from various directions several dozen yards away.

These four immortal artifacts were far from being able to unleash their true power by Fang Bai, so each one alone was not enough to kill Lie Yao.

But with the simultaneous attack of the four immortal artifacts, the bell striking, the cauldron colliding, the bow shooting, and the blade slashing, it was an almost full encirclement. Lie Yao had nowhere to hide or escape, posing a lethal threat to him.

The attacks from the Fire Python Whip did not manage to stop the coordinated assault of Fang Bai’s immortal artifacts.

“Puff!”

Lie Yao's left arm was pierced by a Flame Arrow shot from the Houyi Bow, and the force of the arrow sent his body flying over a dozen yards.

With just this single hit, Lie Yao was severely wounded, greatly diminishing his combat power.

"Crack!"

The subsequent blow from the Soul Loss Bell broke his right shoulder's bones, causing him to drop the Fire Python Whip to the ground.

"Thump!"

The Five Elements Origin Qi Cauldron struck his chest, causing him to fly another dozen yards before he could even land.

"Swoosh!"

The blood-red glow of the Blood-Drinking Mad Blade's fierce blade light cleaved silently across Lie Yao's waist like the scythe of death...

With the nearly simultaneous assault of the four immortal artifacts, Lie Yao didn't have a chance to let out a scream before his life force was severed, dying a gruesome death.

A once-mighty fourth-level Thunder Tribulation expert thus perished in the Death Wasteland, destined to soon become just another among countless skeletons.

"Phew!"

Fang Bai retracted the three released Primordial Spirits back into his Qi Sea and stored the four spiritual artifacts into his Five Elements Space Ring before letting out a long breath and sitting heavily on the ground.

In the end, his cultivation level was still too weak, and releasing three Primordial Spirits for a short attack had considerably exhausted his Divine Sense and Essence Energy by seventy to eighty percent. Though successful in slaying Lie Yao, he himself was also utterly drained, nearly collapsing.

At this moment, Fang Bai was so weak that even a Soul Severing expert could easily defeat him. If an enemy or fierce beast were to suddenly attack, he would have no choice but to hide inside the Soul Loss Bell or Five Elements Origin Qi Cauldron for refuge.

After meditating for nearly two hours, everything returned to normal. Only then did Fang Bai pick up Lie Yao's Fire Python Whip and the beast cores from the dozen or so Purple Mane Wolves that Lie Yao had slain.

The Fire Python Whip, a superior royal-grade spiritual artifact, was a coveted treasure for any Thunder Tribulation Realm expert in this world.

And the dozen or so slain Purple Mane Wolves were all comparable to human Thunder Tribulation Realm experts. Their beast cores could be traded for many rare cultivation resources, making it a pity to leave them here. Better to take them back as gifts for his family.

"I wonder how Sect Master Qin is doing."

Fang Bai looked up and saw the first light of dawn appearing in the sky. He then dashed out of the Death Wasteland, riding the Blood-Drinking Mad Blade to cut a long red streak through the sky toward the Wind Blade Sect.

Chapter 1752: Fang Family Rules

After a long night of intense battle, the war of annihilation initiated by the Fire Cloud Sect against the Wind Blade Sect was gradually tilting towards a conclusion.

With the aid of dozens of Thunder Tribulation Realm spirit beasts, the elite forces of the Fire Cloud Sect suppressed the Wind Blade Sect comprehensively, gaining a significant upper hand.

Tens of thousands of Wind Blade Sect disciples either died, got injured, or fled, leaving less than one in ten still involved in the fight.

Only a handful of Wind Blade Sect disciples, determined to live or die with their sect, continued their fierce struggle.

The dozen or so high-ranking members of the Wind Blade Sect were at a numerical disadvantage from the start, thus falling into a losing position early in the confrontation.

By now, over half of the high-ranking members had fallen, with only strong individuals like Gu Mo holding on by gritting their teeth, though the situation was increasingly precarious.

As dawn neared, most of the remaining Wind Blade Sect disciples were eradicated, and thousands of freed-up elite disciples of the Fire Cloud Sect began to gather around the Sect Master Hall of the Wind Blade Sect, preparing to launch an attack on Gu Mo and his group.

“Boom!”

“Boom!”

Two heavily injured Wind Blade Sect stewards, on the brink of death, suddenly self-detonated, generating a powerful shockwave that killed or injured dozens of elite disciples from the Fire Cloud Sect nearby.

The three Fire Cloud Sect stewards closest to the self-detonators were also affected, suffering not insubstantial injuries.

Seeing this, Qin Ming was anguished and shouted sternly, ordering the disciples to retreat quickly while reminding the other high-ranking members to stay on high alert against such extreme self-detonation tactics from the opposition.

The Fire Cloud Sect disciples pulled back, leaving a large swath of space on the ground and in the air for the high-ranking members of both combatant factions to engage from afar.

“Sect Master Gu, elders, and stewards, the annihilation of the Wind Blade Sect is certain. For the sake of our past association, if you’re willing to destroy your own Qi Sea, I can spare your lives!”

Knowing that the opponent was bound to lose, Qin Ming, not wanting unnecessary sacrifices on his side, stopped attacking and loudly persuaded them.

“You old thief Qin! Nonsense! If you think I’ll destroy my own Qi Sea, dream on!”

Gu Mo laughed wildly.

He knew that escape was unlikely, but he would rather fight to the death than destroy his own Qi Sea and end up with a miserable existence.

The other high-ranking members of the Wind Blade Sect shared Gu Mo’s sentiment.

Once the Qi Sea is destroyed, they would be as powerless as ordinary people, weaker than even an ant, subject to bullying and humiliation by anyone. They would prefer to die in battle than live like that.

“You refuse the chance to live, then... you shall die!”

Qin Ming’s face turned cold as he rallied his strength to attack Gu Mo.

The other high-ranking members of the Fire Cloud Sect attacked simultaneously, two on one, with full force.

At this moment, Fang Bai had already appeared near the Wind Blade Sect.

He stood atop a distant mountain, quietly observing the fierce battle between Gu Mo, Qin Ming, and others, without intervening to help.

The disparity in high-level members between the two sects was growing, which inevitably meant the Wind Blade Sect would lose the confrontation; it was only a matter of time.

Fang Bai arrived near Zheng Family Village and indeed discovered a spirit stone vein in the mountains behind the village.

With reserves in the tens of millions, this could be categorized as a medium-sized vein, capable of being mined for a long time, providing extensive cultivation resources for the disciples of a powerful sect.

No wonder the Wind Blade Sect, upon discovering this vein, drove out hundreds of villagers from the Zheng Family Village, seizing the area. Any other sect would have found the temptation difficult to resist.

A moment later, Fang Bai returned to Red Maple City to reunite with his family, waiting for the Fire Cloud Sect people to return.

Fang Bai's collaboration with the Fire Cloud Sect against the Wind Blade Sect was known to his family and Baili Mingyue. Originally worried, they were relieved to see Fang Bai return unharmed.

"Sister, this is for you!"

Fang Bai took out the Fire Python Whip from the Five Elements Spatial Ring and handed it to Fang Yun, smiling as he said, "This Fire Python Whip is a superior royal-grade spiritual artifact, just right for you!"

Fang Yun, now a strong cultivator of the first level of the Thunder Tribulation Realm, had an innate Fire Spirit Root, making her fully capable of wielding and controlling the Fire Python Whip. Hence, Fang Bai gave it to her as her personal spiritual artifact.

With the Fire Python Whip as an aid, Fang Yun's combat power would undoubtedly be greatly enhanced, offering much stronger self-protection capabilities.

Fang Bai also wished to give his parents some more powerful spiritual artifacts for protection, but Fang Gang and Yang Mei were too weak in cultivation and not exceptionally talented, able only to manage lower-grade royal-level spiritual artifacts.

And this was already the result of Fang Bai having performed Marrow Cleansing for them.

Receiving the Fire Python Whip, Fang Yun used her own blood and divine sense to bind it as Fang Bai instructed, making it a spiritual artifact attuned to her, then casually swung it a few times.

“Little brother, thank you! I really like this Fire Python Whip!”

Feeling the whip’s power, Fang Yun happily put it away and smiled at Fang Bai.

Baili Mingyue grumbled, “Fang Bai, you brought a nice gift for Sister Yun, but nothing for me? You’re so biased!”

Fang Bai laughed helplessly, “I gave you a Willow Leaf Saber on Black Tortoise Island, remember? It’s also a superior royal-grade spiritual artifact! Don’t be greedy!”

Baili Mingyue replied, “Didn’t you say there are spiritual artifacts even more powerful than royal-grade ones?”

Fang Bai bitterly smiled, “Don’t think about immortal artifacts! Your cultivation isn’t high enough, and your divine sense is too weak; even if you had an immortal artifact, you couldn’t control it! Plus, if others found out, it could bring disaster upon you!”

Fang Yun patted Baili Mingyue’s shoulder earnestly, “Mingyue, Fang Bai gave you a superior royal-grade artifact, you should be grateful! If he gave you something even better, it would be more harm than good for you!”

Baili Mingyue giggled, “Sister Yun, I understand. I’m just teasing him!”

Fang Bai laughed wryly, saying, “You little girl, always so full of ideas! Be careful, I won’t give you any good stuff in the future!”

“Please don’t!”

Baili Mingyue lunged forward, hugging Fang Bai’s arm, playfully whining, “Good Fang Bai, good brother, I was wrong, okay? I won’t tease you anymore!”

Fang Bai snorted, “What do you think should happen when you’ve done something wrong?”

“I’ll accept your punishment if necessary!”

Baili Mingyue blinked her clear eyes with a pitiful look that could tug at anyone’s heartstrings.

Seeing the two young lovers tease each other openly, Fang Gang, Yang Mei, and Fang Yun laughed as they turned away, each heading off for closed cultivation, leaving the space for the two of them.

“Punishment? Hmm, that’s a must.”

Fang Bai’s gaze lingered on Baili Mingyue’s graceful curves as he chuckled, “Follow me. Now I’m going to enforce the Fang Family rules and give you a good punishment!”

He said this while taking her hand and leading her towards the grand hall where he stayed.

Baili Mingyue didn’t know what “Fang Family rules” were, thinking they were some strict ancient regulations for discipline, and felt a bit nervous, following Fang Bai, asking in a low voice, “What are the Fang Family rules?”

Fang Bai put on a stern face, “Less talk! Once inside, you’ll learn how formidable the Fang Family rules are!”

Baili Mingyue whimpered a reluctant “Oh” and dared not ask further.

Chapter 1753: Good News

The two of them entered the main hall hand in hand, and Fang Bai casually waved his hand to close the hall door.

A few moments later, the sound of a crisp “slap” echoed through the hall, followed by a soft cry of “ah” from Baili Mingyue.

“Fang Bai, is this the family law... of your Fang Family?”

Baili Mingyue’s voice carried a slight tremor.

“Yes, this is the family law that the men of the Fang Family enforce when their wives are disobedient! Just tell me, are you afraid?”

“Oh, I’m so scared... but, I actually want to receive the family law again...”

Baili Mingyue’s voice was sweet and lazy, with a hint of seductive charm.

“Slap!”

“Ah...”

“Do you still want to be served by the family law?”

“Yes... do it a bit harder!”

“You little enchantress, today I’m going to punish you harshly, so you can learn the power of the Fang Family’s family law!”

After Fang Bai said this, the hall suddenly fell silent.

It was because Fang Bai had hurriedly set up an isolation formation inside the hall, blocking all sounds from escaping, so no one knew what happened afterward.

More than two hours later, Fang Bai and Baili Mingyue walked out of the hall hand in hand.

Baili Mingyue's cheeks were flushed with two patches of red, her big eyes were watery, and the skin exposed to the air was a light pink; she looked like a rose after the rain, fresh and beautiful, exuding a rich fragrance.

Fang Bai's eyes were bright, his spirit was high, and he looked full of vigor.

Obviously, after executing the "Fang Family's family law" for over an hour, not only did they not expend any energy, but they actually benefited greatly from it.

They walked to the courtyard, looked at each other affectionately, and shared a knowing smile.

"Mingyue, how do you find my Fang Family's family law?"

Fang Bai asked playfully through sound transmission.

"Psh! What Fang Family's family law? It's clearly a way for men to take advantage of women!"

Pausing, feeling her legs still a bit weak, she said charmingly, "You really tire me out, I can hardly handle it... Hmm, I used to think I could have you to myself, but now it seems I need some sisters to help share the 'load'!"

Fang Bai laughed arrogantly, "Are you subtly praising my vigor?"

Baili Mingyue pinched him and exclaimed, "Hmph, just be proud of yourself!"

Fang Bai reached out, pinching Baili Mingyue's tender cheek that almost seemed to ooze water, and laughed, "Speaking of which, by executing the Fang Family's family law, you've benefited even more than I have! Using tens of thousands of Royal Grade Spirit Stones for cultivation isn't as effective as experiencing the Fang Family's family law once!"

"Phooey, phooey... you're still saying that, when clearly you're the one taking advantage!"

"Oh, are you shy now? Tsk, tsk, you're the fearless Little Witch with the thick skin! Hahaha..."

As they laughed and joked, they suddenly saw streaks of light cross the sky—Thunder Tribulation Experts heading towards the Fire Cloud Sect.

"The people from the Fire Cloud Sect have returned!"

Fang Bai muttered to himself.

Baili Mingyue said, "Their return, does it mean the Wind Blade Sect has been wiped out?"

Fang Bai nodded, "Probably."

Baili Mingyue's eyes lit up, and she excitedly clenched her small fists, "Doesn't that mean we will be able to get a massive amount of cultivation resources?"

Fang Bai nodded again, "According to the profit distribution plan I discussed with Qin Ming, that's correct."

Baili Mingyue cheered, her little face blushing with excitement, but then she started to worry, furrowing her brows, "With so many cultivation resources, how can we possibly carry them all?"

She knew that the Wind Blade Sect had a thousand-year inheritance and was profoundly rich. Even if Fang Bai could only distribute a small part of the resources, it would still be substantial in quantity.

She also knew that Fang Bai was always generous, and with so many cultivation resources, his relatives and friends would surely have their shares.

However, although each of them had more than one space ring, because of their low grade and small space, it would be impossible to fit everything no matter how they packed.

Seeing her worry over this, Fang Bai couldn't help but chuckle, "You forgot, my space ring can fit a medium-sized Spirit Stone vein!"

Only then did Baili Mingyue remember that during her journey with Fang Bai to the Eastern Desolate Continent, she learned that Fang Bai had obtained a Five Elements Space Ring, with a vast space of several hundred miles in circumference, capable of storing millions of Spirit Stones from a medium-sized vein.

She had heard Fang Bai say that his Five Elements Space Ring currently holds a massive amount of cultivation resources, with Fat Taoist Wu De and that sleep-loving Lightning Mink always staying inside for closed-door cultivation.

Baili Mingyue hadn't gone into the Five Elements Space Ring to take a look because, after being separated from Fang Bai for several years before finally meeting again, she wanted to stick together with him.

"Let's go find Qin Ming! Ask him for the cultivation resources!"

Baili Mingyue pulled Fang Bai's hand and walked out of the courtyard.

Fang Bai chuckled, "They've just returned from a big battle and need time to rest and recuperate. Waiting a few days won't be too late!"

Baili Mingyue anxiously said, "Only what's in hand is truly ours. What if in a few days Qin Ming goes back on his word and denies it?"

Fang Bai smiled, "I don't think he would dare!"

Although the Fire Cloud Sect destroyed the Wind Blade Sect, they must then prepare for potential retaliation from the Demon Flame Sect. Therefore, both Qin Ming and the high-level figures of the Fire Cloud Sect would only try their utmost to draw Fang Bai in and wouldn't dare to break their promises.

As they had nothing else to do, the two of them went to the largest Martial Artists Trading Market in Red Maple City again, planning to continue refining pills and artifacts at the stall Lei Zheng had rented for them.

Lei Zheng hadn't seen Fang Bai these days and was as anxious as ants on a hot pan, pacing frantically in front of Fang Bai's stall every day.

"Senior Fang, you finally came!"

Seeing Fang Bai arrive holding Baili Mingyue's hand, Lei Zheng was almost moved to tears.

"Lei Zheng, has there been any progress on the bounty I posted looking for someone?"

Seeing Lei Zheng's expression, Fang Bai felt a surge in his heart and blurted out anxiously.

Lei Zheng glanced around, and then whispered, "Senior Fang's foresight is remarkable, you guessed it right! Indeed, some of my friends from other places brought back good news..."

"Speak quickly!"

Fang Bai grabbed Lei Zheng's shoulder and shook him vigorously, "Who did your friends find?"

To Fang Bai, every friend or family member was important, and finding any of them would be cause for joy.

Lei Zheng felt his shoulders ache intensely and grimaced, "Senior Fang... ow, it hurts... please let go of me first..."

Fang Bai then released him, patted Lei Zheng's shoulder, and apologized, "I was too excited and lost my composure! Alright, now you can speak, and I'll listen."

Lei Zheng dared not keep Fang Bai in suspense and immediately said, "My friends have returned from their adventures and mentioned that while passing by the Cangyan Sect in the Xuanyang Realm, they heard from a disciple there about the whereabouts of Niu Ben and Xiong Yingxiong..."

Chapter 1754: Blind as a Bat!

"So, it turns out it's those two..."

Fang Bai's face lit up with joy, and he said to Lei Zheng, "Hm, both of them are my disciples. Please continue."

Niu Ben and Xiong Yingxiong were disciples Fang Bai accepted while in the mortal world. Unexpectedly, he received news of both of them at the same time.

Fang Bai knew that both Niu Ben and Xiong Yingxiong were straightforward and without much cunning. He had previously worried that if they encountered danger in this survival-of-the-fittest world, they might not be able to respond flexibly and might not be safe.

Now that he had news of them, though he didn't know whether they were faring well or not in this unfamiliar world, he felt slightly relieved.

Upon hearing that Niu Ben and Xiong Yingxiong were Fang Bai's disciples, Lei Zheng couldn't help but feel extremely delighted.

In Lei Zheng's mind, the bond between a master and disciple far exceeded that of ordinary friends. If Fang Bai could use this information to find his disciples, how could he forget his own kindness?

"Senior Fang, according to my friend, the situation of your two disciples doesn't seem very good..."

As Lei Zheng said this, he glanced at Fang Bai and saw his face darken slightly, making Lei Zheng's heart skip a beat, hesitating whether to continue.

"Speak!"

Fang Bai's sharp gaze bore into Lei Zheng, exerting an invisible pressure that almost suffocated Lei Zheng.

"Yes... I'll say it..."

Lei Zheng coughed dryly and said, "Your two disciples are currently menial disciples of the Cangyan Sect. Due to their low cultivation level, they've been sent to a Spirit Stone Vein to mine, and also..."

"And what? Stop dawdling, speak!"

Fang Bai said with a slightly cold tone.

Lei Zheng hurriedly said, "And according to what my friends found out, your disciples have been frequently bullied and humiliated in the Cangyan Sect, feeling quite aggrieved..."

He thought Fang Bai would be furious upon hearing this, but to his surprise, Fang Bai actually laughed.

"Bullying and humiliation... very well, experiencing more hardships is a kind of mental training too."

Fang Bai said with a laugh, then sighed and said, "It's just that my disciples, with their outstanding talent, known as Martial Dao geniuses, have ended up as mining disciples in that Cangyan Sect... haha, the sect leaders of Cangyan Sect must be blind!"

Hearing Fang Bai praise his disciples as Martial Dao geniuses, Lei Zheng couldn't help but secretly curl his lips. Still, he wasn't foolish enough to argue and instead forced a smile, saying, "Yes, the Cangyan Sect truly is blind... Senior Fang, what do you think should be done about this matter?"

In his previous life, before ascending to the Immortal Realm, Fang Bai had never heard of the Cangyan Sect. It was clear this sect was either obscure at the time or founded after his ascension.

"Bring your friends to see me."

Fang Bai said to Lei Zheng.

Fang Bai never fights unprepared battles. If he wants to rescue Niu Ben and Xiong Yingxiong, he must first learn some relevant information about the Cangyan Sect from Lei Zheng's friends.

For Fang Bai, his disciples are best taught by himself. Entrusting them to other strong individuals would be a waste of talent, unable to unearth their full potential.

Moreover, the leaders of the Cangyan Sect, having discovered Niu Ben and Xiong Yingxiong possessed Innate Spiritual Roots, still sent them to mine Spirit Stone Veins. How could Fang Bai let them stay in such a place wasting their time?

Though experiencing bullying and humiliation can help train their mindset, benefiting their future Martial Dao cultivation, several years is already enough.

Lei Zheng promptly agreed and left joyfully, quickly returning with three people.

The three were about the same age as Lei Zheng, in their forties, and their cultivation levels were also at the second level of Heavenly Tribulation strength.

The three were named Luo Xin, Luo Zhong, and Luo Yi. Although they shared the same surname, they were sworn brothers, not biological siblings.

The three had gone out to gain experience together previously and had heard of the high bounty Fang Bai posted in Red Maple City, which they took great interest in.

Later, while on their journey, they passed near the Cangyan Sect and mentioned the tempting bounty in Red Maple City to a friend from the sect. Surprisingly, this inadvertent mention brought them news of Niu Ben and Xiong Yingxiong.

After verifying the information together, they believed the Niu Ben and Xiong Yingxiong from the Cangyan Sect were the same people mentioned in the bounty. They flew to Red Maple City with great excitement.

They intended to directly inform Fang Bai of this news to claim the reward, but did not expect Fang Bai was not in Red Maple City.

Unsure of how they heard Fang Bai was on good terms with their friend Lei Zheng, they found Lei Zheng and told him the story, agreeing to share a portion of the reward with Lei Zheng once they received it.

"This is Senior Fang..."

Lei Zheng led Luo Xin and his sworn brothers to Fang Bai, introducing them to each other.

Luo Xin and the others were initially shocked by Fang Bai's youthful appearance.

However, considering Fang Bai's identity as both a Pill Master and Artifact Refiner, and seeing Lei Zheng's respectful attitude towards Fang Bai, they dared not underestimate him.

"Please tell me everything you know about Niu Ben and Xiong Yingxiong. If it's true, I won't treat you unfairly."

Fang Bai said directly to Luo Xin and the others.

Luo Xin, Luo Zhong, and Luo Yi exchanged glances, and then Luo Xin stepped forward to relay the information they had gathered about Niu Ben and Xiong Yingxiong to Fang Bai.

"Senior Fang, my friend from the Cangyan Sect is absolutely trustworthy and wouldn't deceive us! If Senior Fang doubts, we are willing to accompany you, and if the information is false, we'll accept any punishment you deem fit!"

Luo Xin declared confidently in the end.

He was of similar cultivation level as Lei Zheng, thus also addressing Fang Bai as Senior.

Nevertheless, being a second-level Heavenly Tribulation cultivator calling a first-level one "Senior" felt a bit awkward to Luo Xin.

Fang Bai nodded and said, "Very well. We'll go to the Cangyan Sect together then. Hmm, here are some mid-level Royal Grade Gathering Essence Pills, take them as my extra gift to you..."

With a wave of his hand, three bottles of mid-level Royal Grade Spirit Pills flew from the Five Elements Space Ring, landing in the hands of Luo Xin and his brothers.

"As for the cultivation resources listed in the bounty order, I'll give them to you once we reach the Cangyan Sect and meet Niu Ben and Xiong Yingxiong. You have no objections, right?"

Fang Bai asked with a smile.

Although he was sure Luo Xin and the others wouldn't deceive him, he was also not inclined to hand over cultivation resources immediately. After all, there's always the unlikely chance things could go wrong, and he didn't want to be gullible.

Luo Xin and the others, having heard from Lei Zheng about Fang Bai's skills in effortlessly refining mid-level Royal Grade spirit pills and artifacts, were confident he wouldn't break his word, so they all nodded in agreement.

"Fang Bai, I want to go with you to the Cangyan Sect to find Niu Ben and Xiong Yingxiong!"

After Lei Zheng, Luo Xin, and the others left, Baili Mingyue clung onto Fang Bai's arm and exclaimed.

Chapter 1755: Our Parents

Baili Mingyue is someone who likes chaos and loves bustling events. Previously, when Fang Bai joined hands with the Fire Cloud Sect to destroy the Wind Blade Sect, she couldn't tag along, which left her feeling quite resentful. But this time, she certainly didn't want to miss out.

"Girl, you heard earlier that the overall strength of the Cangyan Sect is much greater than the Fire Cloud Sect. Are you planning to be a burden if you follow me?"

Fang Bai rolled his eyes and said.

Baili Mingyue pouted and huffed, "I knew you would say that... I don't care; no matter what, you can't ditch me this time!"

Fang Bai glared and said, "If you dare disobey, the family law of the Fang Family will be enforced!"

Baili Mingyue giggled, her beautiful eyes shining with excitement, and whispered, "Enforcing the family law of the Fang Family? I couldn't be happier!"

As she spoke, her soft, delicate body snuggled up against Fang Bai, causing the wicked fire within him to rise.

"I'm heading to the Cangyan Sect; there might be a fierce battle. It's too dangerous for you, and it would be a distraction... Be sensible, girl. Stay here in the Fire Cloud Sect with our parents and wait for me to return with Niu Ben and Xiong Yingxiong. Then I'll give you some nice things!"

Fang Bai gently and softly persuaded.

Upon hearing him mention "our parents," Baili Mingyue's pretty face blushed, and she became somewhat coy, murmuring, "They're your parents, not mine..."

Fang Bai chuckled, "Between the two of us, we're already intertwined, having enforced the family law several times. How could we differentiate? My parents are your parents too."

Fang Bai kindly comforted her, mentioning the parents again, and Baili Mingyue immediately lost her temper, finally agreeing to stay at the Fire Cloud Sect to wait for Fang Bai.

The two strolled hand in hand through Red Maple City, enjoying the mountains and waters, visiting beautiful sights, and only returned to their residence at dusk.

The next day, Fang Bai went to the Martial Artists Trading Market stall to continue his artifact refining and alchemy.

Fang Bai's cultivation was unique.

To him, even alchemy and artifact refining were forms of cultivation.

While performing alchemy and artifact refining, he continuously circulated his cultivation technique, and the spiritual energy endlessly cycled between his Qi Sea and meridians. Through this perpetual cycle, his spiritual energy became increasingly pure, resulting in a more powerful force.

During this period, Fang Bai's artifact refining and alchemy for others gained him significant fame, along with a substantial amount of compensation, including some rare treasures.

Lei Zheng seemed like a loyal servant, as soon as Fang Bai appeared at the stall, he'd hurry over to clean and organize the stall and maintain order.

Luo Xin, Luo Zhong, and Luo Yi, three friends of Lei Zheng, often came over to help as well, though they had nothing to do.

Others secretly disdain their eager flattery, some even mocked them sarcastically, but Lei Zheng and the other three ignored those comments, enjoying their tasks.

In fact, those who mocked Lei Zheng also wanted to ingratiate themselves with Fang Bai, but with Lei Zheng and his friends already there, any additional presence would seem too crowded and chaotic.

To this, Fang Bai simply smiled without saying much.

For several consecutive days, while Fang Bai was artifact refining and alchemy, he would occasionally toss some cultivation resources to Lei Zheng and the other three from the rewards he received.

The cultivation resources he threw were of Royal Grade, and although limited in quantity, they were incredibly precious, which delighted Lei Zheng and his friends immensely. They secretly thought their efforts were definitely not in vain; everything was worthwhile.

“Elder Fang, the Sect Leader invites you for a conversation!”

On this particular morning, as Fang Bai was preparing to head to the Martial Artists Trading Market, a Fire Cloud Sect elder came over to invite him to the Sect Master Hall.

Under the guidance of the elder, Fang Bai arrived within the Fire Cloud Sect’s Sect Master Hall, where Qin Ming greeted him with a smiling face.

After everyone sat down, Fang Bai glanced around at the high-level members in the hall and frowned, “It seems the Fire Cloud Sect suffered quite a loss in the battle against the Wind Blade Sect!”

Upon hearing this, Qin Ming’s expression darkened, and he sighed, “Indeed! In that battle, we lost an elder and three stewards, which was quite damaging. However...”

As he spoke, his spirit suddenly revived, and he exclaimed, “The benefits we gained from the Wind Blade Sect far outweigh the losses!”

He didn’t hide anything from Fang Bai and listed the cultivation resources they harvested.

The thousand-year foundation of the Wind Blade Sect was indeed rich. Just the cultivation resources stored in their treasury are sufficient to meet the Fire Cloud Sect’s needs for several decades.

Moreover, within the Wind Blade Sect's territory, there is a medium-sized Spirit Stone vein, the reserves of which can support Fire Cloud Sect disciples' cultivation for a long time.

Even more exciting for Qin Ming was discovering a set of Royal Grade Superior Martial Arts Techniques in a secret room within the Wind Blade Sect's Sect Master Hall.

According to Qin Ming, with the massive cultivation resources and those Royal Grade Superior Martial Arts Techniques, within ten years, the Fire Cloud Sect not only can recover but also reach a new level of strength.

The most crucial aspect is, with the Wind Blade Sect gone, the Fire Cloud Sect lost its strongest competitor, allowing them to control everything within tens of thousands of miles, both inside and outside the city.

Therefore, Qin Ming believed that despite the battle with the Wind Blade Sect being damaging, it laid a solid foundation for the sect's future rise and was very much worth it.

"As for the Spirit Stone vein at the back of the Zheng Family Village, we could mine it and split the gains fifty-fifty with the Zheng Family Village. Senior Fang, do you think it's feasible?"

Finally, Qin Ming said to Fang Bai.

The Spirit Stone vein behind Zheng Family Village was originally very tempting, but after acquiring the massive cultivation resources from the Wind Blade Sect, the Fire Cloud Sect didn't think much of that vein.

Additionally, Qin Ming was aware of the close relationship between Zheng Family Village's villagers and Fang Bai's parents, which led him to propose this suggestion with sincerity and, in a way, as a gesture of goodwill towards Fang Bai.

With Zheng Family Village's capabilities, they couldn't mine the Spirit Stone vein, so the Fire Cloud Sect mining it and allowing the villagers to enjoy the Spirit Stones seemed like an agreeable proposal for them.

Fang Bai nodded with a smile, "Regarding this, I'll discuss it after returning to the village with Village Chief Zheng, I'm sure he won't object."

Qin Ming then said, "As for the Martial Arts Techniques we obtained from the Wind Blade Sect, if Elder Fang is interested, you're welcome to study them together."

Qin Ming realized that the Royal Grade Superior Martial Arts Techniques are treasures sought after by the strongest experts in the Three Thousand Great Worlds and are hoped for by those in the Thunder Tribulation Realm's Minor and Middle Tribulation Phases. He believed his offer would be irresistible to Fang Bai, who would undoubtedly agree.

In fact, Qin Ming's gesture aimed to keep Fang Bai in the Fire Cloud Sect.

Fang Bai, who possesses the prowess of both a Pill Master and an Artifact Refiner, is extremely rare and akin to an inexhaustible treasure. Keeping him in the sect would have extraordinary significance for the Fire Cloud Sect's future.

Chapter 1756: Pill Condensation Technique

"I appreciate Sect Master Qin's kindness. However, I have many tasks to attend to, and I fear I cannot stay long at the Fire Cloud Sect."

To Qin Ming's great surprise, Fang Bai did not show any excitement or enthusiasm towards his proposal; instead, he smiled and politely declined.

Qin Ming couldn't help but feel deeply disappointed and sighed with regret, "That's such a pity..."

Fang Bai, still smiling, continued, "Before I leave, I can exchange some thoughts on alchemy with several alchemists in the sect. I'm sure they will make great progress in the Alchemy Dao in the future."

Upon hearing this, Qin Ming's regret turned into joy.

The elders and stewards of the Fire Cloud Sect, who were also alchemists, all showed excitement, stepping forward one after another to express their gratitude.

Qin Ming and the others knew that with Fang Bai's alchemy technique, what he called "exchange" was actually guidance.

While it was astonishing that Fang Bai could refine mid-tier Royal Grade Spirit Pills, what was even more impressive was his extremely high success rate in pill formation.

In private discussions, the alchemists of the Fire Cloud Sect speculated that Fang Bai must possess some secret technique to achieve such a high success rate. If they could gain his guidance, their skills in alchemy would surely improve significantly.

"Elder Fang, feel free to attend to your matters. We will always keep the position of Honorary Elder for you at the Fire Cloud Sect and welcome you to return at any time. If Elder Fang ever needs assistance from the Fire Cloud Sect in the future, you can send someone to convey the message, and we will certainly lend our full support."

When Fang Bai left the Fire Cloud Sect, Qin Ming personally escorted him to the hall's entrance, saying with a reluctant expression.

The day after Fang Bai returned to his dwelling, several alchemists from the Fire Cloud Sect visited him together, seeking his advice on the alchemy technique.

An alchemist's success rate in pill formation is greatly related to the alchemist's own cultivation level and strength, their ability to control the fire, the grade of their pill furnace, and so on.

However, the most critical factor determining the success rate of pill formation is the Pill Condensation Technique that the alchemist employs.

The Pill Condensation Technique is the final step in the alchemy process and is of utmost importance.

If the Pill Condensation Technique learned by an alchemist is incomplete or of very low grade, then at the last step of condensation, the success rate will be low, and it might even result in an entire batch of Spirit Pills being ruined.

The alchemists of the Fire Cloud Sect were using several sets of Pill Condensation Techniques passed down by the sect.

Unfortunately, due to several great upheavals in the sect's history, these techniques had numerous deficiencies, leading to a decline in the alchemy skills of later generations of the sect's alchemists.

Yet, in Fang Bai's mind, there were hundreds or even thousands of Pill Condensation Techniques from his past life, any one of which could be considered a treasure by alchemists in the Three Thousand Great Worlds here.

In the following days, the alchemists from the Fire Cloud Sect, like little apprentices around Fang Bai, listened to his lectures on the Alchemy Dao and watched his demonstrations of alchemy techniques. By combining this knowledge with their own insights and experiences, their success rates in pill formation greatly improved.

These alchemists were all experts at the Thunder Tribulation second and third levels, hundreds of years old, and usually extremely proud and arrogant.

However, after witnessing Fang Bai's alchemy methods and receiving his guidance for several days, they all admired him wholeheartedly and were willing to perform the disciple's ritual in front of him.

On this day, several alchemists from the Fire Cloud Sect bid Fang Bai farewell and left with satisfaction.

Not long after, the portion of cultivation resources Fang Bai was owed for his part in the battle with the Wind Blade Sect was sent to him by the Fire Cloud Sect. In Fang Bai's presence, a distribution plan for the Spirit Stone Veins with the villagers of Zheng Family Village was finalized, leaving all three parties delighted.

During this period, the Fire Cloud Sect presented a generous gift to the Demon Flame Sect and expressed their willingness to follow the Demon Flame Sect's lead in the future, finally appeasing them.

As for the Demon Flame Sect Elder Lie Yao, whom Fang Bai had slain, the Fire Cloud Sect explained that Lie Yao and his son had left the sect for training before the two sects went to war.

Now that the Wind Blade Sect had been exterminated, and the disciples of the Fire Cloud Sect would keep silent, it would be difficult for the Demon Flame Sect to uncover the truth for a while.

Without evidence, even if the Demon Flame Sect suspected that Lie Yao and his son perished at the hands of the Fire Cloud Sect, they would have no justification to seek vengeance.

Even if in a few years the Demon Flame Sect discovered that the deaths of Lie Yao and his son were related to the Fire Cloud Sect, by that time, the Fire Cloud Sect might already possess the strength to rival the Demon Flame Sect, eliminating any worry.

Although Fang Bai could take his family and Baili Mingyue into the Five Elements Space Ring and bring them along to the Cangyan Sect, given the uncertainty of life and death in this journey, if he were to unfortunately fall, then his family and Baili Mingyue would never be able to escape from the Five Elements Space Ring.

For safety reasons, Fang Bai decided to let them stay temporarily at the Fire Cloud Sect.

Fang Bai had also discussed this matter with Wu De and the Lightning Mink, but this person and beast seemed to have become addicted to staying in the Five Elements Space Ring and refused to come out no matter what.

Fang Bai, helpless, had no choice but to let them remain there.

“Lei Zheng, call Luo Xin, Luo Zhong, and Luo Yi. We’re heading to the Cangyan Sect!”

After everything was settled in Red Maple City, Fang Bai found Lei Zheng and asked him to summon the three Luo brothers to meet him.

“Senior Fang, are we preparing to set out?”

The trio had been restless during their days in Red Maple City, and receiving Fang Bai’s summon, they could not help but feel overjoyed.

“Yes, we’re setting off now!”

Fang Bai nodded.

Fang Bai had previously promised Luo Xin and the others that if they could lead him to the Cangyan Sect and he confirmed the presence of Niu Ben and Xiong Yingxiong there, he would fulfill the reward of cultivation resources to them.

Thus, the five of them boarded their Spiritual Artifacts, transformed into streams of light, and flew away from Red Maple City, heading towards the Cangyan Sect.

.....

The Eastern Desolate Continent is divided into ten major realms, with the Cangyan Sect situated within the Xuanyang Realm, where it is one of the notable strong sects.

The most powerful figures within the Cangyan Sect are two Supreme Elders with Thunder Tribulation sixth-level cultivation.

If facing a sect like the Fire Cloud Sect, the Cangyan Sect would only need to deploy its two Supreme Elders to practically sweep them away.

However, compared to top-tier sects with Great Calamity Period experts stationed in the Thunder Tribulation realm, the overall strength and foundation of the Cangyan Sect were relatively lacking.

Despite that, the Cangyan Sect still is a powerful force over tens of thousands of miles, seldom looked down upon by others.

At this moment, over five thousand miles away from the Cangyan Sect, at Yuhu Mountain, nearly a thousand naked male disciples from the Cangyan Sect were mining Spirit Stones in an open Spirit Stone Vein.

The Cangyan Sect's menial servants sent to mine Spirit Stones are those deemed to have no future in the Martial Dao and are destined for a life of mediocrity.

They labor day and night, nearly drained of their time and energy, with their only consolation being the monthly allocation of one hundred lower-tier Royal Grade Spirit Stones.

There are numerous menial servants within the Cangyan Sect, but those sent to mine Spirit Stones are the weakest and lowest of all.

Chapter 1757: Collapse

Although they are the weakest and at the lowest rung, the menial disciples of Cangyan Sect also have dreams and practice cultivation silently.

Each of them hopes that one day, their cultivation level will break through, freeing them from their status as mining disciples.

Even becoming an ordinary menial disciple serving tea and delivering meals in the sect would be much better than their current situation.

However, the mere hundred pieces of a lower-grade royal spirit stone per month are truly a drop in the bucket for them. Using this to advance is as difficult as ascending to the heavens.

Therefore, for the Cangyan Sect disciples sent to mine the spirit stone veins, except for the extremely rare exceptions, most see no hope of advancement, destined to spend their lives here.

At this moment, in the northwest corner of the open-air spirit stone vein, two tall and robust young men with slightly dark skin were swinging their tools, extracting spirit stones from the mountain body ahead.

The large bearlike basket behind them was almost filled with spirit stones.

"Hero, if we keep working like this, when will it ever end?"

The man on the left, with tiger-like eyes and a wide mouth, as strong as an ox, throws a spirit stone into the basket behind him, then transmits a depressed voice to the companion on his right.

The man on the right, called Hero, with thick eyebrows and big eyes, broad shoulders, and bear-like waist, was about the same height as his companion on the left. He sighed upon hearing those words and said, "When will it end... I don't know either! It's just that we are too weak; we can't even escape!"

After a pause, he added, "Niu Ben, you must not act rashly. We must continue to endure! I believe that sooner or later, we can rid ourselves of the mining disciple status!"

The two strong men speaking were none other than Fang Bai's disciples, Niu Ben and Xiong Yingxiong, gathered in the secular world.

A few years ago, after arriving at the Three Thousand Worlds simultaneously and wandering for a while, they felt the place too dangerous, and their strength too weak, making survival a problem in the long run.

During their pass through Cangyan Sect, the two heard of its renowned reputation and joined in, hoping to find temporary shelter and protection.

The two initially thought that after entering the Cangyan Sect, they could be like other ordinary disciples and receive a fair amount of cultivation resources monthly for Martial Dao Cultivation, without needing to do anything else.

Unexpectedly, with their initial Soul Severing cultivation level, they could only start as menial disciples. Additionally, in the test a year later, they were still the weakest among menial disciples.

Of course, their weakness did not stem from poor talents.

On the contrary, one had the Innate Earth Spirit Root, and the other the Innate Fire Spirit Root— both were rare Martial Dao geniuses and had been taught by Fang Bai. Given enough cultivation resources, their cultivation levels could rapidly advance.

But the two remembered their master Fang Bai's advice to never publicly reveal the Martial Arts Techniques learned from him before gaining the ability to protect themselves, for fear of inviting deadly harm.

Therefore, in the year since joining Cangyan Sect, they spent most of their time practicing only the relatively simple Martial Arts Techniques taught by Cangyan Sect.

Moreover, being menial disciples, the cultivation resources they received monthly were too little to significantly aid their cultivation, resulting in extremely slow progress in their Martial Dao.

In this way, they became the two weakest among the menial disciples.

In fact, the Steward of Cangyan Sect who initially accepted Niu Ben and Xiong Yingxiong had discerned their extraordinary talent but, as they did not acknowledge the hint to present him with a tribute of cultivation resources, the steward was displeased and did not report it to the Sect Master.

Later, that steward deliberately oppressed them, dispatching them here to become mining disciples.

The oppression from the upper echelons and ridicule from fellow sect members left the two feeling aggrieved and indignant, yet they were powerless to rebel, leaving them no choice but to grudgingly endure the hardship, awaiting the day they could rise above.

"Niu Ben, Xiong Yingxiong, you two go to Pit No. 16 and continue extracting spirit stones!"

While the two were transmitting sound using Thread Condensation, suddenly, a loud voice from a Cangyan Sect disciple shouted.

The one calling, named Zong Jinhai, with the cultivation of one stage of Heavenly Tribulation, was a core disciple of Cangyan Sect, overseeing this area.

This Zong Jinhai had a good relationship with the steward who suppressed Niu Ben and Xiong Yingxiong. Under the steward's instructions, Zong Jinhai often provoked trouble for the two, assigning them the toughest and most exhausting tasks.

Niu Ben and Xiong Yingxiong heard from a friendly menial disciple about the relationship between Zong Jinhai and the steward, which made them hate Zong Jinhai to the core.

As Niu Ben said, if he ever became powerful, the first person he would defeat would be Zong Jinhai, followed by the steward oppressing them.

However, Zong Jinhai was a Heavenly Tribulation one-stage powerhouse, while they were merely at the initial Soul Severing stage—a colossal gap making any plan for revenge a mere fantasy for now.

As Zong Jinhai watched Niu Ben and Xiong Yingxiong obediently enter the depth of the hundred-zhang-deep Pit No. 16 with their baskets on their backs, a trace of a cold smile appeared on his lips.

"If you two die, don't blame me; blame Steward Qiu!"

A hundred breaths later, with this thought in mind, Zong Jinhai suddenly leaped to the front of Pit No. 16, stomped heavily on the ground with his right foot, then returned to his original spot.

Being a one-stage Heavenly Tribulation powerhouse, his strength was enormous. When he stomped down, the ground within a few hundred zhang began to tremble.

"Boom..."

A series of loud rumbles occurred as rocks on the summit of the mountain valley began to tumble.

The menial disciples mining spirit stone veins at the valley bottom dodged to avoid being crushed by the falling rocks.

Pit No. 16, where Niu Ben and Xiong Yingxiong were located, had long been at risk of collapsing in recent days. Yet, only a few people knew this; it hadn't been made public, and Niu Ben and Xiong Yingxiong were kept in the dark.

With Zong Jinhai's stomp, the force transmitted deep into the pit, immediately triggering a mountain collapse.

A great mountain instantly diminished in height.

"Niu Ben and Xiong Yingxiong are buried under the mountain!"

"The pit is a hundred zhang deep. With the mountain pressed down, how could they survive?"

"They're doomed!"

"Alas!"

....

Among nearly a thousand menial disciples, those who were on good terms with Niu Ben and Xiong Yingxiong could not help but sigh with regret at the sight.

Many of them knew of Zong Jinhai's intention to let Niu Ben and Xiong Yingxiong enter the dangerous Pit No. 16, likely with the aim of harming them, but who would dare speak out publicly?

Watching the vanished Pit No. 16 and the collapsed mountain, Zong Jinhai thought to himself that no matter how great Niu Ben and Xiong Yingxiong's abilities were, it would be hard for them to escape death this time, and he couldn't help but feel secretly pleased.

"What are you looking at? Mountain collapse is a commonplace in mining the spirit stone veins... stop looking and get back to work!"

Seeing many menial disciples looking his way, Zong Jinhai shouted sternly.

He assigned some menial disciples to clear away the spirit stones scattered by the collapse, while he left temporarily, intending to report this matter to Steward Qiu and gain some benefits from him.

Chapter 1758: Cangyan Sect

Swoosh!

Swoosh!

Swoosh!

Swoosh!

Swoosh!

Five figures flew from afar and successively landed on the peak of a mountain outside the Cangyan Sect's gates.

These five were Fang Bai, Lei Zheng, Luo Xin, Luo Zhong, and Luo Yi.

"Senior Fang, ahead is the Cangyan Sect."

Lei Zheng pointed to the majestic mountain gate a dozen miles ahead and said to Fang Bai beside him.

Luo Xin continued, "My friend named Zhou Peng is a direct disciple of the Cangyan Sect. I'll call him out, and Senior Fang can inquire about Niu Ben and Xiong Yingxiong from him."

After saying this, Luo Xin leaped from the mountain peak and swiftly sped towards the Cangyan Sect's gates along a mountain path.

In many sects of the three thousand great worlds, it is forbidden for outsiders or ordinary disciples to fly within the territory of the headquarters, otherwise, it would be considered disrespectful to the sect, possibly even a provocation.

Luo Xin dared not provoke the Cangyan Sect, so he could only traverse on the ground; otherwise, he might be intercepted by the mountain guarding disciples of the Cangyan Sect before even reaching the gate.

“Who goes there?”

As Luo Xin arrived at the Cangyan Sect’s gates, several guarding disciples came forward, and one harshly questioned him.

“Greetings, brothers.”

Luo Xin stepped up, cupped his fists to the Cangyan Sect disciples, and with a smiling face said, “I am Luo Xin, a friend of Zhou Peng, your sect’s direct disciple. I have urgent business and seek him today. Could one of you inform him to come out for a meeting?”

In the Cangyan Sect, the direct disciples are the top figures among tens of thousands of disciples. Upon hearing this, the mountain guarding disciples did not dare to neglect Luo Xin and asked him to wait while one turned to inform Zhou Peng.

A hundred breaths later, the guarding disciple brought Zhou Peng in front of Luo Xin.

“Brother Luo, why have you come?”

Zhou Peng, seeing Luo Xin, asked with a puzzled expression, not knowing his business.

“Heh, naturally, I have good news for you.”

Luo Xin grinned and mysteriously said, "It is inconvenient to talk here. How about we change the location?"

Zhou Peng, seeing him winking, couldn't help but laugh, "Brother Luo, nagging isn't your style! Just tell me the good news!"

"It's a massive good fortune! Follow me, you'll regret it if you don't come!"

Luo Xin said this, then turned and flew towards the outside of the mountain.

"Could it be the bounty in Red Maple City? It's a pity that Niu Ben and Xiong Yingxiong were buried deep under the mountain, likely dead beyond hope, no chance of claiming that bounty... Sigh!"

Zhou Peng, recalling the recent news from the Spirit Stone Veins at Yuhu Mountain, sighed.

Seeing Luo Xin flying away, he felt the need to discuss this matter with him, lest his expectations be for naught, so he followed swiftly.

The two soared ahead and behind to the base of the peak where Fang Bai and others stood, then flew to the top of the peak, standing before Fang Bai and others.

"Brother Zhou, this is Senior Fang Bai. It was this very Senior Fang who issued the hefty bounty to the three thousand great worlds! Senior Fang is both an Alchemist and an Artifact Refiner, and has slain a third-level Heavenly Tribulation expert. He is known throughout Red Maple City's millions of experts!"

Luo Xin introduced Fang Bai's identity to Zhou Peng, then turned to Fang Bai and said, "Senior Fang, this is my dear friend Zhou Peng, currently a direct disciple of the Cangyan Sect."

Initially, Zhou Peng had some disdain seeing Fang Bai as only at the first level of Heavenly Tribulation cultivation, but after hearing Luo Xin's introduction, he was greatly shocked, showed respect, and greeted him with cupped fists, very courteous.

Even if Fang Bai hadn't slain a third-level Heavenly Tribulation expert, showing extraordinary strength, with just his dual identity as an Alchemist and an Artifact Refiner, he was worth Zhou Peng's effort to win over.

"Brother Zhou, Senior Fang summoned you for a meeting, you should know the matter, right?"

Luo Xin asked with a smile.

Zhou Peng nodded, "Of course, I know. Senior Fang must be here for Niu Ben and Xiong Yingxiong, right?"

Luo Xin laughed heartily, patted Zhou Peng's shoulder with a look of envy, and said, "Exactly! Senior Fang mentioned that if we find Niu Ben and Xiong Yingxiong, you'd get a share of the reward, even more than us!"

Zhou Peng looked at Fang Bai and said bitterly, "To be honest with Senior Fang, things have changed a bit; I'm afraid I'm not lucky enough to receive your reward."

Fang Bai frowned slightly, "What's the matter?"

Zhou Peng said, "I just received the news today; Niu Ben and Xiong Yingxiong were trapped during mining when the tunnel collapsed, burying them... The pit is a hundred feet deep, under a thousand-foot mountain. With their early Soul Severing stage cultivation, there's little chance of survival."

Lei Zheng, Luo Xin, Luo Zhong, and Luo Yi all took a deep breath and looked at Fang Bai with apprehension.

They knew that Senior Fang valued those two disciples highly, and if Niu Ben and Xiong Yingxiong truly fell within the Cangyan Sect, who knew if he would vent his anger on the sect.

Despite Fang Bai's personal strength being no match for the great Cangyan Sect, his dual identity as an Alchemist and an Artifact Refiner had garnered powerful connections in Red Maple City. Although not assured of a unanimous response, it was certain thousands would be willing to act for him.

If Fang Bai mobilized his influence inside and outside of Red Maple City against the Cangyan Sect, it would be quite a headache for them.

Unexpectedly, Fang Bai didn't get angry, not even annoyed, he just frowned and murmured, "I can sense their existence..."

Fang Bai had a spiritual connection with close family, disciples, and confidant Hongyan, where happiness or distress would be felt regardless of distance.

If Niu Ben and Xiong Yingxiong perished, Fang Bai would feel a slight ache in his heart, as if something was lost, leaving sorrow and a low mood for a long while.

Conversely, if Fang Bai faced issues, his family, disciples, and soulmate would feel the same.

"Where is the Spirit Stone Vein located? Take me there!"

Fang Bai suddenly said to Zhou Peng.

"My apologies, Senior Fang, without high-level permission, I can't leave the sect, much less visit the spirit stone veins over there."

Zhou Peng shook his head with a wry smile, and promptly added, "However, I can tell Senior the exact location of the Spirit Stone Veins. You may go to investigate the whereabouts of your disciples. But at present, there's an Elder at the fourth level of Heavenly Tribulation and two Stewards at the third level stationed there from our sect. If Senior is not confident, do not approach..."

He carefully explained the location of the Spirit Stone Veins to Fang Bai, who nodded in acknowledgment.

As a direct disciple of the Cangyan Sect, Zhou Peng, saying this much, had been more than generous.

“This Spiritual Artifact is for you as a token of thanks!”

Fang Bai gifted a mid-tier Royal Grade Spiritual Artifact to Zhou Peng, then soared into the sky with Lei Zheng, Luo Xin, Luo Zhong, and Luo Yi, heading towards the Spirit Stone Veins Zhou Peng had pointed out.

Chapter 1759: The Bronze Coffin in the Cavern

The Yuhu Mountain spirit stone veins, subordinates of the Cangyan Sect, did not stir any waves despite the “fall” of Niu Ben and Xiong Yingxiong. Nearly a thousand mining disciples were as busy and tired as usual.

The core disciple Zong Jinhai, responsible for overseeing the area around pit sixteen, was currently sitting on a tall stone chair at the center of the valley, watching a group of menial disciples mining spirit stones.

Previously, under the instructions of Steward Qiu, Zong Jinhai deliberately caused a collapse accident in the pit, “eliminating” Niu Ben and Xiong Yingxiong, thus receiving generous rewards from the steward and private guidance and teaching.

With the guidance and teaching from the steward along with the generous cultivation resources reward received, Zong Jinhai felt his strength could make further progress, and becoming a direct disciple in the future was not impossible.

If he could become a direct disciple, he would be transferred back to headquarters, where the cultivation resources received each month would be more abundant, and he could always listen to the top explaining martial dao, progressing faster in cultivation. In fact, becoming a high-ranking member of the sect one day would no longer be just a dream.

Thinking of this joyful point, Zong Jinhai couldn’t help but be elated.

“Boom!”

“Boom!”

...

Just then, a huge sound came from outside the valley, and the earth trembled accordingly.

“What’s going on?”

Zong Jinhai leapt up and, together with a few overseers, flew into the air, looking around.

“It’s spirit beasts!”

“They’re rushing over here!”

“So many spirit beasts, are they crazy?”

“The spirit beasts in Yuhu Mountain always don’t interfere with our affairs, but this time...”

“Stop talking, quickly send out a cry for help to Elder Yin and the two stewards!”

...

Zong Jinhai and several other overseers turned pale, their faces showing shock, as they emitted a sharp cry towards the sky.

The cry had just started when three flashes of light flew in, it was Elder Yin Hao, who guarded this place, and two stewards heard the disturbance and hurried over.

All three of them saw the spirit beasts, like a tide, flooding into the huge valley, their faces all turned serious.

“The spirit beasts are powerful; let’s temporarily avoid them to prevent casualties!”

After observing for a while, Yin Hao immediately made a decision.

There were over a thousand spirit beasts, many comparable to human thunder tribulation experts. Although Yin Hao, who had a cultivation level at the fourth stage of thunder tribulation, was not afraid of them, he had to consider the nearly thousand mining disciples and these overseer disciples with him.

“Elder Yin, if we retreat, what about the spirit stone veins?”

Zong Jinhai cautiously asked.

Yin Hao scolded, “Fool! Spirit beasts cultivate by absorbing nature’s spiritual energy and consuming spiritual medicine, not by cultivating spirit stones! I assert this large batch of spirit beasts attacking us suddenly is not for our spirit stone veins but for something else... Besides, spirit stones are buried deep within the mountain; how could spirit beasts have the ability to mine them? Even if we mined them out, they wouldn’t be able to take them away!”

Zong Jinhai said, “Elder Yin is right! Let’s withdraw then!”

So, with a command from Yin Hao, Zong Jinhai and the high-ranking disciples along with nearly a thousand mining disciples from the Cangyan Sect withdrew from the valley to a safe location a hundred miles away.

Over a thousand spirit beasts roared from a distant mountain, surged into the gigantic valley where the spirit stone veins were, lingering around and temporarily occupying the region.

Fang Bai, clad in a white robe, leapt down from a long-haired white ape that had charged into the valley, striding to the spot in front of pit sixteen that had collapsed for days.

“Strange, they are clearly still alive, so why can’t I sense their aura? Could it be that they have left this place and gone beyond my sensing range?”

Fang Bai's divine sense spread out, but he found within dozens of miles, there was only the spiritual energy released by the spirit stones, without the martial artist aura of Niu Ben and Xiong Yingxiong that he was familiar with.

"Since I'm here, I will go in and take a look anyway!"

Fang Bai slightly bent his body, then directly crashed into the collapsed mountainside.

"Boom!"

With a loud sound, Fang Bai's incredibly strong physique directly crashed into the collapsed mountainside, creating a pit several feet deep, and his figure plunged into the mountain.

Fang Bai's chaos true body included an innate earth spirit root, and when he circulated earth spiritual energy, his body almost integrated with the surrounding rocks and soil, quickly advancing inside without much obstruction.

Niu Ben and Xiong Yingxiong, buried deep in the mountain, reached a depth of a hundred feet, yet Fang Bai only took tens of breaths to reach the place where they were buried.

Here, Fang Bai finally caught a slight trace of their remaining aura.

Your aura will remain where martial artists have been unless deliberately hidden, but over time, it will dissipate.

If Fang Bai had arrived a few days later, this last bit of weak aura in the pit would have no longer existed.

This aura was too faint and mixed with dense earth spirit energy, so Fang Bai couldn't sense it when outside.

"Hmm? There's a slanted hole leading underground here; could it be that Niu Ben and Xiong Yingxiong left through this passage?"

When Fang Bai directed his divine sense around again, he suddenly found under a huge stone at his feet, was an abyss black hole capable of accommodating a person.

The black hole was deep and bottomless, leading to an unknown place, but inside were traces of aura left by Niu Ben and Xiong Yingxiong.

Knowing that Niu Ben and Xiong Yingxiong did not die and possibly already escaped, Fang Bai's spirits lifted.

He exerted his divine power, shattering and clearing the huge stone covering the black hole, then quickly descended along with the black hole.

After descending several hundred feet, Fang Bai's figure landed in a huge cave.

This huge cave was illuminated by hundreds of spirit stones, as bright as daytime.

In the center of the cave was a bronze ancient coffin several feet long, with its surface full of moss and rust, etched with strange symbols and tiny characters.

From its ancient appearance, it was clear that it had been placed here for unknown thousands of years.

"It turns out there is a tomb chamber of such scale beneath this mountain body; I wonder what kind of person the tomb's owner was!"

Fang Bai walked to the bronze coffin to examine carefully, realizing the symbols above were a sealing formation. Without cracking the sealing formation, even a thunder tribulation stage nine expert won't be able to open or damage the bronze coffin.

Looking more closely, Fang Bai found that some moss and rust on the bronze coffin had been wiped away, leaving handprints and fingerprints, as well as martial artist aura.

"It seems that Niu Ben and Xiong Yingxiong had been here. Luckily they hadn't thought of destroying the bronze coffin; otherwise, they would have long been dead!"

Fang Bai secretly felt relieved for the two disciples.

This bronze coffin, although touchable, if anyone attempted to forcefully attack and destroy it, would face powerful counterattacks from the formation on it. Even a thunder tribulation stage nine expert might be injured if not fully prepared to counter it.

Fang Bai, firmly believing that the owner of the bronze coffin was undoubtedly a formation expert before death, and his power was at the peak of thunder tribulation, was full of curiosity of who this person really was.

Chapter 1760: Li Fenghou

Back in the Immortal Realm, Fang Bai was unparalleled in the art of formations, surpassing all the powerful figures in the Immortal Realm.

Therefore, the sealing formation set up around the copper coffin by its owner appeared inscrutable and unbreakable to others, but to Fang Bai, it was riddled with flaws.

"When powerful beings know their lifespan is nearing its end, they usually prepare rare cultivation resources to accompany them in burial. If I'm not mistaken, this copper coffin surely contains many treasures. Otherwise, the owner wouldn't have set such a meticulous sealing formation!"

Fang Bai circled the copper coffin while his fingers moved rapidly, tracing and altering the runes around the coffin in secret, finally returning to stand directly in front of it.

Suddenly, the intricate runes on the copper coffin became vivid and lively, radiating bright light that illuminated the vast cavern even more.

"Open!"

Fang Bai stretched out his right palm and struck the side of the coffin lid forcefully.

"Boom!"

The coffin lid made a loud noise before flying backward several meters and landing on the ground.

Fang Bai stepped forward two steps, fixing his gaze on the corpse inside the copper coffin.

The corpse inside the copper coffin was clad in a blood-red robe, with hair as black as ink, sword-like eyebrows, and a prominent nose, appearing no older than thirty-some years. Even though devoid of life, it seemed vivid, as if merely sleeping.

"Li Fenghou, it's actually him! I never thought a contemporary strongman of mine would fall here!"

When Fang Bai recognized the face of the person inside the coffin, he couldn't help but exclaim.

Li Fenghou was a strongman from tens of thousands of years ago. During the time he roamed the three thousand great worlds, it was also when Fang Bai was rapidly rising, and they had even fought once.

At that time, Fang Bai was a level five Heavenly Tribulation expert, while Li Fenghou was at level seven. The two clashed in a desolate plain for three days and nights without a winner, agreeing to meet again in ten years, thus ceasing hostilities.

Later, Fang Bai advanced rapidly in cultivation, eventually ascending to the Immortal Realm.

However, Li Fenghou, who could be considered an equal of Fang Bai, seemed to vanish without a trace, as if he evaporated.

Li Fenghou also possessed an Innate Spiritual Root, with outstanding talent. Back then, he was deemed one of the contenders likely to break through the ninth level of Heavenly Tribulation and ascend to the Immortal Realm. Yet, surprisingly, his ambitions were thwarted, and he perished here before ascending.

Fang Bai speculated that following his battle with Li Fenghou, the latter must have encountered some misfortune; otherwise, with his cultivation level and proficiency in the Array Path, few in the three thousand great worlds could have done him harm.

During his prime, Li Fenghou wielded a Red Blood Sword, a Royal Grade superior Spiritual Artifact with formidable power, capable of enhancing its might by drinking the blood of the strong. It shared a similarity to Fang Bai's Blood-Drinking Mad Blade in this regard.

In his time, Li Fenghou, with just himself and his sword, became renowned across the three thousand great worlds, earning a great reputation.

Li Fenghou's original name was not such, but because he preferred to cut his opponent's throat in combat, causing his opponents to bleed out and perish, people nicknamed him "One Sword Seals Throats," and so he changed his name to Li Fenghou.

Fang Bai looked at Li Fenghou's corpse for a moment, then shifted his gaze to the Space Ring on Li Fenghou's left hand.

"If I'm not mistaken, Li Fenghou's Red Blood Sword and all the cultivation resources he collected throughout his life are probably inside this ring."

Considering that Li Fenghou was a strongman from tens of thousands of years ago, and like himself, had journeyed through the three thousand great worlds, the cultivation resources in his Space Ring must be vast and rare, Fang Bai thought with excitement.

Fang Bai did not rush to take the Space Ring off Li Fenghou's finger. Instead, he returned to the front of the copper coffin and wiped away the thick moss and rust from its surface.

Sure enough, as he expected, there were lines upon lines of tiny script, recording Li Fenghou's life events and the occurrences before his fall.

Throughout his life, Li Fenghou killed countless people, earning him the nickname of "Demon Head Li." Whether he was righteous or evil, good or bad, was hard to discern, but in Fang Bai's eyes, he killed many innocents, leaning more towards evilness and wrongdoing.

"He who kills will be killed. Li Fenghou's death at the hands of an enemy is a cycle of cause and effect, retribution without delay!"

Fang Bai muttered to himself.

"Li Fenghou, oh Li Fenghou, you did not perform many good deeds in your life, and if you leave your Space Ring to me after your death, it might count as a good deed!"

Fang Bai spoke, then unabashedly took off Li Fenghou's Space Ring.

When Li Fenghou was alive, he was an array master, and his Space Ring was naturally protected by formations. Ordinary strongmen, even if they acquired his Space Ring, would not be able to utilize the cultivation resources within.

After Fang Bai cracked the array on the Space Ring, he immersed his Divine Sense within and was instantly overjoyed.

Though Li Fenghou's Space Ring was merely a Royal Grade superior storage Spiritual Artifact and could not compare to Fang Bai's Five Elements Space Ring, its space was vast, extending for miles on all sides, filled with Royal Grade superior cultivation resources.

While these Royal Grade superior cultivation resources were not in massive quantities, their auxiliary effect on a Martial Artist's cultivation was unmatched even by a large Spirit Stone vein.

At the center of the Space Ring's space, a five-foot-long sword floated high. The blade seemed stained with blood, emitting a blood-red aura with sinister Qi reaching the heavens.

If one listened carefully, there seemed to be a wailing sound emanating from the sword, as if the dying howls and roars of strongmen who fell beneath the blood sword, eerie to the soul.

"This is the Red Blood Sword Li Fenghou used in his lifetime. The sword's Evil Qi is too heavy for ordinary strongmen to subdue and wield. I'll hold onto it for now and see who might be fated with it in the future!"

After collecting Li Fenghou's Space Ring, Fang Bai's gaze returned to Li Fenghou's corpse in the copper coffin.

"This Li Fenghou's corpse is so well-preserved, thanks in part to the copper coffin and the sealing formation, but he must have taken some life-maintaining elixirs while alive... Hmm? These leaves beside him... could they be the leaves of the World Tree symbolizing life?"

Fang Bai picked up a green leaf beside Li Fenghou and examined it closely. Indeed, it was identical to the leaves from the World Tree growing in his Five Elements Space Ring.

In the natural order, there are various attributes like the five elements and wind and thunder. Each attribute has its world, and within each world, there is a World Tree continually emanating Spiritual Qi.

The World Tree represents the source of Spiritual Qi for each attribute's world.

The piece of wood in Fang Bai's Five Elements Space Ring is a fragment of a World Tree capable of generating vitality and Wood Element Qi.

Now that World Tree has grown into a small tree as tall as a person, with lush, flourishing branches.

Due to the existence of the World Tree, the Wood Spirit Qi within the Five Elements Space Ring is incredibly abundant. The vast amount of Spiritual Medicine Fang Bai placed within has even regrown roots and sprouted anew, teeming with vitality.