

Genius 1001

Chapter 1001: Young Tribe Leader Carries My Sedan Chair!

"I don't mean much, seeing that you all have some strength, you can serve as sedan chair bearers for us..."

Qin Fang's face then revealed a slightly mischievous smile, as he playfully looked at this Young Tribe Leader.

This mountain path was indeed difficult to traverse, Qin Fang and Song Qingshan didn't care, but the three members of the Wen Family were quite fatigued, and these people had come right to their doorstep, it would be a pity not to make use of them.

Just like some tourist areas, especially in the mountains, there are artificially carried sedan chairs, and the income is quite decent, though it is a bit tiring.

However, this mountain area is different; it is all hardworking tribes, worshiping strength and courage, but comforts clearly cannot compare to beyond the mountains.

Of course, there are sedan chairs available, but they are extremely rare, perhaps only the mountain's respected High Priests, Tribe Chiefs, and Witch Doctors would qualify for such a privilege.

Coincidentally, Qin Fang had just seen people carrying a sedan up ahead, which is why he thought of this—naturally, the hefty task of carrying the sedan fell onto these people.

"Sedan chair bearer?"

When the Young Tribe Leader heard Qin Fang say this, he was immediately stunned...

He was the esteemed Young Tribe Leader, a warrior of the tribe, the future Tribe Leader Heir, in the Gelan Tribe, he was a figure second to none and above thousands; it was others who should carry the sedan for him, not him carrying for others.

"That's impossible!"

Almost without need to think, the Young Tribe Leader immediately shook his head and sternly refused Qin Fang's suggestion.

"There's no such thing as impossible, you will agree soon..."

Qin Fang's face wore a faint smile, calmly speaking as if this were no challenge at all for him.

"Xiao Qin, maybe... let's drop it?"

Auntie Song at this moment still looked as if she was in a dream; she had previously been worried that Qin Fang might be at a disadvantage, but did not expect that Song Qingshan alone had wiped out the opposition completely and even captured them alive, hence, the crisis was naturally considered passed.

However, she did not expect Qin Fang to still be unrelenting, although she was also dissatisfied with the behavior of the Young Tribe Leader, but they were in the mountains, not far from the Gelan Tribe, in case the people of Gelan Tribe got provoked, they might also be in trouble.

With the mindset of avoiding more trouble than necessary, Auntie Song immediately whispered to Qin Fang advising him.

"Auntie, let me handle this! Don't worry, it's okay..."

Qin Fang naturally understood what Auntie Song was worried about, but there was still a long way to go, and the group in front of them was just the vanguard; not to mention the possibility of encountering several more groups with similar intentions, just the Young Tribe Leader himself was contemplating bringing more people to rob the bride, it would not be possible to let him go without hindrance.

Killing was definitely not an option, he wasn't that brutal... nor could he let them go, so might as well keep them close and have them serve as sedan chair bearers, this way it would be easier for the three members of the Wen Family, especially since Wen Yan really couldn't withstand the mountain roads, having people to carry her would make it much easier.

"Are you carrying or not?"

Song Qingshan also began to understand Qin Fang's thinking, and he walked up to those trembling villagers, his face showing no change of expression, just a slightly colder tone as he asked.

That sharp gaze swept over gently, immediately making those villagers tremble with fear, their bodies slightly quivering, as Song Qingshan had instilled great fear in them.

"Carry! Carry..."

It is unclear who shouted first, but the others immediately echoed in agreement.

The mountains were very backward, and these villagers' thoughts were very simple, plus they had unnoticeably deified Song Qingshan, assuming that such an invulnerable ability was only possessed by the tribe's esteemed High Priest Elders...

That Great Priest Elder was indeed the spokesperson of the gods—

Could this man be a messenger sent by the gods?

Yes, it must be!

With thoughts in disarray, they quickly deified Song Qingshan completely.

People outside the mountains were mostly atheists, but mountain folks were different; they had their own gods to worship, and the highest position in the tribe wasn't the Tribe Chief, but the Great Priest Elder representing the gods.

If the Great Priest Elder were to travel, he would definitely be surrounded by numerous people vying to carry his sedan...

If this person was a messenger of the gods, then carrying his sedan would be an honor, a grace from the gods, why would anyone oppose it?

With that thought, the mountain folk immediately became busy expressing themselves, and someone even dragged the Young Tribe Leader aside to talk, with a rather assertive attitude, although Qin Fang and the others didn't understand what was being said.

"Alright, I will carry it..."

A short while later, the Young Tribe Leader came over with a livid face, first very respectfully performing a ceremonial gesture towards Song Qingshan, and then looked at Qin Fang, gritting his teeth as he spoke.

Qin Fang was quite speechless about this completely different treatment.

"It seems that having you taking action has its pros and cons, huh..."

Qin Fang joked with Song Qingshan.

Song Qingshan simply laughed it off, not expecting the mountain folk to have such wild imaginations. He merely practiced the Thirteen Taibao Horizontal Training Golden Bell Cover, yet they thought of him as an envoy of the gods—

Anyway, this problem seemed to be resolved.

Of course, there were no ready-made sedan chairs, but there was no shortage of trees in the mountains. Every mountain folk carried a Miao Knife, and they were quite sharp. Several people together chopped some wooden sticks, quickly tied them together, and made several simple sedan chairs.

"Uncle, Auntie, please sit in the sedans as well..."

Since Wen Yan was weak and couldn't handle the mountain paths, there was naturally a sedan for her, with two additional sedans made for the Wen Family Couple.

As for himself and Song Qingshan, they planned to continue walking on the ground. On one hand, it facilitated taking care of these three people and on the other hand, it also served as a precaution against any tricks from the mountain folk—though this possibility was very low.

Unable to refuse Qin Fang, the Wen Family Couple nervously climbed into the sedan, carried by the mountain folk, and the group set off again, heading deeper into the mountain.

Mountain people and outsiders are indeed different; these people tread these rugged mountain paths every day. Even though their shoes were simple, they could still stride along swiftly, not much slower than Qin Fang and Song Qingshan, who were martial artists.

With a dozen or so mountain folk and four people per sedan, with some spare carriers to switch in turns, their pace not only didn't slow down but even went a bit faster.

However, they were delayed by the Young Tribe Leader for a while, which cost them quite some time, and the increased speed just about compensated for the delay.

When the sun gradually set, they had no choice but to stop, only able to find a nearby tribe to stay overnight, and they would continue their journey the next day.

The conditions in the mountains were poor, lacking even electricity; as soon as the sun set, the entire mountain plunged into darkness.

With no lighting and the mountains infested with venomous snakes and fierce animals, they couldn't travel by night and had no choice but to stay overnight.

"Xiao Qin, let's stay here tonight..."

This was already discussed by Auntie Song and the others beforehand, so Qin Fang wasn't surprised, "This tribe is called the Luosang Tribe, and I have a friend from this tribe. We can stay at his house for the night! However..."

Staying over was something Auntie Song and the others had already arranged. It was certain that the five of them could find lodging, but the problem was with the additional sixteen Sedan Chair Bearers—it was a bit tricky!

"Don't worry about us, we won't leave..."

The Young Tribe Leader from the Gelan Tribe named Zhuoda, though still hostile towards Qin Fang, was very respectful towards Song Qingshan.

Upon hearing Auntie Song's words, he immediately expressed this on the side.

The others nodded their heads in agreement too. In their eyes, Song Qingshan was an envoy of the gods, and serving the envoy was an honor, a story worth boasting for a lifetime. Why would they give up such an opportunity and let others benefit?

"Auntie, let's not bother about them, let's rest..."

They had reached Luosang Tribe, and the distance to their destination wasn't too far anymore, just about a dozen or so li of mountain paths. If it wasn't for the mountains being impassable at night, they could have pressed on a few more hours and arrived.

Therefore, whether Zhuoda and the rest of the sedan bearers stayed or left didn't matter much anymore... Qin Fang naturally didn't care much either.

"Alright then..."

Auntie Song and the others didn't have any objections. For the mountain folk who caused a mess, being made to carry the sedan was already a form of punishment. Though it seemed they didn't mind at all, and even seemed to relish it—

The mountain folks settled down at Luosang Tribe; a dozen people gathered together, made a fire, and some went to visit friends in the tribe, planning to bring some food back.

Mountain people were simple and hospitable. As long as the tribes weren't hostile towards each other, they generally weren't stingy. Perhaps they themselves weren't well-off, but when guests arrived, they still offered the best food generously.

Perhaps this too was a perk of Type of Pingback: Simple virtues were indeed better than many modern people outside the mountains who now are afraid to even do good deeds, not to mention the unconscionable acts performed by crooked merchants all for the sake of money.

Indeed, due to the enthusiasm of these mountain folks, by the time Qin Fang and his group found Auntie Song's friend's house, Zhuoda and his group had already started eating, drinking, and dancing...

The tribe seemed to be celebrating a festival; the mood quickly became joyful and lively, and laughter and songs soon filled the dark mountain woods of the night.

Chapter 1002: Sudden Incident in the Tribe!

"Brother, is the outside world really as fun as you say?"

The soon-to-be-sixteen girl, Li Yao, shook Qin Fang's arm, her eyes filled with a yearning inquiry.

"Of course it's fun! Way more fun than what I've told you..."

Qin Fang looked at the youthful and beautiful girl in front of him, a trace of helplessness in his eyes.

Qin Fang and his companions had stopped in the Luosang Tribe, staying for the night at a friend's house of Auntie Song, and Li Yao was the child of that household's host, who was fifteen this year or to be exact, turning sixteen in a few days.

Girls from the mountains are different from those outside, very much so.

Outside the mountains, sixteen-year-old girls are still in school, still high school students, still children—

But inside the mountains, a girl can be wed and bear children once she turns sixteen.

Li Yao is just at this age. During dinner, her parents were already discussing that it would soon be time to find a husband for her.

That's also why Auntie Song didn't allow Wen Yan to enter the mountains, as Wen Yan is already twenty years old. At such an age, a girl in the mountain would have long been married and might already have a pile of children.

Initially, when Auntie Song was sixteen, she didn't want to marry so early, so she secretly ran away from the mountain and after many hard years, she finally met Uncle Wen.

Girls in the mountains are simple; they have few thoughts. Just like that, they grow up slowly, then marry, bear children... and then slowly spend their lives.

Li Yao initially also planned to just let life pass her by in such a way. She had never been in contact with people from outside the mountain, didn't even recognize a single character. It was just that when Qin Fang and his companions came to stay, she saw the differently dressed Wen Yan and heard about some things of the outside flourishing world, which immediately piqued her interest. She then eagerly bombarded Qin Fang with questions...

"Yao Yao, it's late, the guests need to rest..."

Just when Li Yao still wanted to learn more about the outside world, her father came over and called her away with a stern face.

The men were very hospitable and polite to Qin Fang and his companions. They had even brought out three-year-old Wo Tuo Luo Wine for them to enjoy a feast.

However, when he noticed his daughter Li Yao persistently pulling at Qin Fang to inquire about the outside world, his heart clearly became unhappy...

People from the mountain are accustomed to living in the mountains; the outside bustling world might be tempting for them but it's also a sort of nightmarish presence. Those who had left and returned depicted the outside world as very horrible, which only made them even more fearful of leaving the mountains.

They do not venture out, naturally they do not hope for their children to be tempted away.

Although daughters don't have much status in a family, not comparable to sons at all, they are still a very important economic source because when a daughter marries off, they can receive a cow, several sheep, and other betrothal gifts...

Thus, in the tribe, the households with the best living conditions may not necessarily be the Family Heads, nor those with many sons, but rather those with more daughters. Each daughter married off brings a considerable amount of wealth.

For this reason, men do not wish for their daughters like Li Yao to be attracted by the outside world, lest she secretly runs away. Losing a daughter would be a minor issue, but missing out on such a wealth would be a major loss!

In the eyes of these mountain people, a daughter is not as valuable as cattle or sheep—otherwise, there wouldn't be such absurd events like bride-kidnapping.

Therefore, most girls in the mountains don't know a single character. Even if free education from the outside world comes to teach, it is mainly boys who attend classes, with only a very few girls participating.

Qin Fang could discern the worry in the man's eyes and could only helplessly shake his head at this. He was no saint who felt the need to meddle in everything.

Since the mountain folks have lived this way for so many years, naturally they have their own rules. If he were to meddle recklessly, perhaps he would not be helping people, but harming them instead...

Auntie Song once said that some tribes are very strict about running away from the mountain; the penalties are severe, ranging from crippling of the legs to being beaten to death with sticks.

"Xiao Qin, it's cold and desolate in the mountains, rest early..."

The conditions in the mountains are simple, much like the household they were staying with, which altogether had just four simple rooms. Only two were made of stone while the others were built from wooden planks, quite rudimentary.

The host couple occupied one room, the children squeezed into another, and since her parents were nearby, Wen Yan naturally couldn't stay with Qin Fang—they had never shared a room anyway. She was with her mother, Auntie Song, while Qin Fang, Uncle Wen, and Song Qingshan, the three men, squeezed into another room.

Just as Uncle Wen said, the mountain conditions are basic, and with nightfall comes a lack of electricity, extremely secluded. Apart from sleeping, there is no other activity.

"Uncle Wen, please go to sleep first..."

Qin Fang smiled. Uncle Wen had been carried for the latter half of the day's journey. Although he was physically weaker than the younger men, he was quite tired by now and soon fell asleep after lying down.

Meanwhile, Qin Fang and Song Qingshan sat cross-legged, silently practicing their cultivation...

True Qi is painstakingly trained bit by bit. Even though Qin Fang has shortcuts, he still needs to refine it slowly. The air in the mountain is very fresh, much better than the polluted air of the cities, and even the effects of training are much improved. This is why those great sects are all located in the mountains, rather than in bustling metropolises.

Chapter 1003: Sudden Incident in the Tribe!_2

Night was quietly settling, very serene; so much so that Qin Fang could faintly hear Auntie Song and Wen Yan whispering to each other in the next room.

Outside was the silent mountain, where the faint sound of insects could be heard, very slight.

Night gradually deepened.

The conversation next door also ceased, seeming as though they had fallen asleep, adding to the quietude.

ROAR~~

But Qin Fang and Song Qingshan, who were silently cultivating, were suddenly awakened by such a thunderous roar, jolting them from their cultivation.

Rustle~~

It wasn't just them; the household was also awakened, and the nearby neighbors were becoming noisy as well, with Qin Fang even clearly hearing the sound of sharpening knives.

"What's happened?"

Qin Fang and Song Qingshan were puzzled too, it being their first time in these deep mountains. As they stepped out of their room, they saw the whole tribe explode into chaos, with all men running out, wielding knives and bows as if going to war...

At that moment, Zhuoda came leading some people and Qin Fang couldn't help but ask.

"Apparently a bear blind wandered in and just killed someone..."

Although Zhuoda disliked Qin Fang, considering the relationship between Qin Fang and Song Qingshan, he still shared what he knew.

It turns out a bear blind had suddenly intruded into the tribe and killed someone, which explained why the entire tribe was agitated.

Generally, mountain people live in tribal clusters specifically to guard against wild animal attacks, and smarter wild animals wouldn't approach human dwellings, but there are exceptions, especially the less intelligent bear blinds, who would attack human settlements from time to time.

The Luosang Tribe was just a small community compared to the Gelan Tribe where Zhuoda was from; it had only a few hundred people, and among them, only about a hundred were capable men. Losing even one was a grave matter.

"It's not good, it's not just a bear blind, there seems to be a leopard too. It just snatched away Batu from the Batu family..."

Before Zhuoda could finish, people from the Luosang Tribe started talking, seemingly the situation was more troubling than anticipated, a leopard had emerged and snatched a child...

"Envoy, we need to help the people of the Luosang Tribe save the child, you stay back in the tribe and rest!"

Originally, with a bear blind, the many people of the Luosang Tribe gathering should have been able to handle it, but now with a child snatched by a leopard, they were clearly short-handed.

Zhuoda and his men, indebted through hospitality, naturally couldn't stand by idly; the dozen or so men around him, all warriors of the Gelan Tribe, immediately organized to go rescue the child.

Children are the future of mountain people, especially boys, who are immensely valuable, and they could not just watch a child lose their life.

At this moment, there was still hope to rescue them...

"We will go with you..."

Qin Fang frowned slightly, looking at the dark and dense mountain forest ahead, noting that these people totaled just over a hundred. They needed to guard against the bear blind causing harm and also venture into the mountain to rescue the child; clearly, they were short-handed.

Being guests of the Luosang Tribe, they absolutely couldn't just stand by idly. After exchanging a glance with Song Qingshan, they immediately said this to Zhuoda.

Although these people were tribe warriors, the few dozen of them combined couldn't match either him or Song Qingshan individually. With them joining, the chances of success would definitely be higher.

"You... are you up for it?"

Zhuoda was slightly astonished; actually, he also hoped that the divine envoy Song Qingshan would assist. Song Qingshan's strength was unquestionably reliable, but he was uncertain about Qin Fang.

Now, with lives at stake, he certainly didn't want to be burdened...

"Uncle Wen, please look after the tribe, we will be back soon..."

Naturally, someone needs to take care of the tribe, and as a police officer armed with a gun, Uncle Wen is naturally the most suitable candidate.

"Let's go!"

As for Zhuo Da, Qin Fang didn't even bother to glance at him. After nodding to Song Qingshan, the two chose their respective directions and disappeared in the blink of an eye like a gust of wind.

"I..."

Zhuo Da stared blankly at the receding figure of Qin Fang. He already knew that Wen Yan's man was not the godly envoy Song Qingshan he thought of, but this Qin Fang whom he looked down upon. Now, he suddenly felt foolish; the speed at which Qin Fang just left was definitely much faster than the most agile hunter in the mountains.

"Warriors, let's set off..."

Of course, being fast doesn't mean everything. This mission was about rescue, and without extensive experience, even determining direction in the mountains is difficult, let alone tracking a leopard.

The people of the tribe had already organized, and Zhuo Da could not hesitate anymore; he immediately led his warriors into the mountains to rescue.

The vast mountains were very quiet, appearing serene and peaceful.

If not for the incident that just happened, this place would seem like a serene paradise. However, the sudden appearance of Xiong Xiaizi and the leopard that took the child has disrupted this peace.

Qin Fang and Song Qingshan split in two directions, both powerful martial artists capable of independently dealing with beasts like Xiong Xiaizi and the leopard.

Song Qingshan, impervious to knife and gun, couldn't be hurt by fierce beasts, and, with his formidable Great Strength Eagle Claw Technique, rescuing others wouldn't be an issue.

Not to mention Qin Fang, with his various skills and terrifying physical strength, and at any moment ready to use his firearms, his gunmanship ensured that he would not accidentally injure anyone.

"This is... bear fur!"

Qin Fang quickly found some clues, some residual bloodstains, but after using his scouting skill he discovered some bear fur mixed within the bloodstains, indicating that Xiong Xiazi had left from here.

"I'll let you off for now..."

But presently, the priority was not dealing with this man-killing Xiong Xiazi, but to rescue the child taken by the leopard. Qin Fang had no choice but to temporarily abandon the trail of Xiong Xiazi and take another path to continue the search.

Having scouting skill, as soon as he found the slightest clue, he could keep pursuing. Even those old hunters in the mountains who had lots of experience might not be better than him.

Moreover, his movement speed was very fast, and as long as he found the trail of the leopard, he could catch up at the fastest speed...

"Ah, if only I could learn the Reed Crossing River Technique..."

While running swiftly, Qin Fang couldn't help but think of Monk Wukong's Reed Crossing River Technique, its lightweight and graceful posture soared high, making things much easier if mastered.

Of course, that was just a thought, as he was not a monk from Shaolin Temple, so cultivating it was impossible.

Despite countless thoughts in his mind, Qin Fang dared not neglect any clues. The forest was very dark, but fortunately, the moon in the sky was somewhat helpful. Together with Qin Fang's enhanced abilities, he managed to achieve a night vision level, which allowed him to clearly see the landscape in the forest.

"This is..."

Much later, Qin Fang finally discovered some clues. Not bloodstains, but a small piece of torn fabric, which had been scraped off by a branch of an old tree. There were also some fur residues left there.

"Found it..."

Scouting skill activated, and the results quickly came back. Qin Fang was delighted, confirming he hadn't followed the wrong trail; the fur belonged to a leopard, and this fresh torn fabric indicated that the child was likely carried away on this path.

"Hope the child is alright..."

Qin Fang didn't find any bloodstains, so he couldn't confirm the child was still alive, he could only silently hope for a while, then immediately continued at the fastest speed in that direction.

Chapter 1004: Fighting the Leopard

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In the dimly lit forest where light was exceptionally bleak and the trees dense, even the bright moonlight didn't prove much effective.

Yet, this did not hinder Qin Fang's tracking; only now did he realize that after absorbing the Golden Dragon Saliva, not only had his body been strengthened, but his five senses had also significantly enhanced.

Initially, his sense of smell was not particularly sensitive, but upon careful distinction now, he discovered that it was much stronger than before. That Leopard had a very distinctive scent, and although Qin Fang didn't pay much attention at first, he realized during the tracking that he could continuously smell it.

Comparing this to the slight traces left by Baozi while moving through the forest, Qin Fang suddenly became very confident in his sense of smell.

The dim light made visibility poor, but his sense of smell wasn't affected. He followed the trail, and the scent grew stronger.

"Soon, almost there..."

As the smell grew intense, it meant he was getting closer to the Leopard. Naturally, Qin Fang didn't notice how deep he had ventured into the forest.

Suddenly...

A white figure appeared in Qin Fang's view, lying about less than twenty meters away from him—it appeared to be a person.

This person was quite small, probably less than one meter tall, likely a child!

"Hmm? A child... Found him!"

Qin Fang was immediately overjoyed, quickly approaching while casting a Scouting Skill to first confirm if the child was still alive.

Of course, he remained vigilant, constantly cautious of his surroundings. Though he saw the figure of the child, he didn't notice the Leopard that had snatched the child, so Qin Fang remained guardedly wary of a possible sudden attack from the Leopard from some corner.

"Thank goodness... still alive!"

The Scouting Skill results quickly relayed back; the child wasn't dead but had sustained quite severe injuries, with several wounds from which the blood was slowly seeping. If not treated in time, the child would still die.

Luckily, Qin Fang discovered him in time; a moment later, and he might have only found a corpse.

Qin Fang quickly walked over to the child, flashed a Silver Needle, and immediately used Acupuncture to seal the child's Extraordinary Meridians, stopping the bleeding from the wounds and stabilizing the condition temporarily.

Though Qin Fang's acupuncture skills were formidable, he wasn't a real doctor. He could stabilize the injuries, but proper treatment still required a professional doctor, and besides, those wounds also needed bandaging.

The child was already unconscious, not aware of anything.

The surrounding forest was eerily quiet, terrifyingly so, as if an inexplicable threat was lurking, giving Qin Fang a chilling sensation.

He knew, that Leopard hadn't wandered far, and it might be hiding in some dark corner, possibly ready to pounce at any moment.

"Hmph, I hope you don't seek your own death..."

Qin Fang remained cautious, always alert; even while bending to lift the injured child, his eyes constantly surveyed the surroundings.

No movement!

Still no movement!

It was as if the Leopard didn't exist at all.

But Qin Fang knew clearly, the Leopard had come, and it was nearby—the scent he smelled was becoming more intense, and it couldn't be too far away.

However, the dim light, combined with the tree cover, made it very difficult for him, even with his good eyesight, to spot the possible hiding spots of the Leopard.

Qin Fang reached out to lift the child. Despite the danger from the Leopard, the child needed to be saved, and he needed to quickly get back to the tribe, or else his journey would have been for naught.

Whoosh~~

Just as Qin Fang had lifted the child and was about to turn and leave, suddenly a gust of foul wind arose, and the scent in Qin Fang's nostrils instantly intensified.

"It's here!"

Almost instantly, Qin Fang judged that the Leopard that snatched the child had appeared. Goosebumps immediately rose on his back—a strong premonition of danger.

Almost instinctively, Qin Fang's feet slightly misstepped, and his body swiftly stepped several strides to the side... just as a shadow with a whistling wind slid past him, evidently the Leopard had made its move.

Even being directly pounced to the ground by this leopard...

Although a leopard is not as strong as a tiger, it is still considered a large ferocious beast with a weight of several hundred pounds and very fast speed. Its explosive power is extremely strong, hardly any person can withstand its attack if pounced directly!

"Hmph... beast!"

Qin Fang moved swiftly, narrowly escaping the leopard's attack by a hair's breadth. His clothes were torn, and he could faintly feel the chill between his ribs—it was a very close call.

However, having escaped this sneak attack, the leopard could no longer hide and boldly appeared before Qin Fang.

One on one in combat, Qin Fang was truly not afraid of such a robust leopard.

It was a leopard, looking quite strong, probably in its prime with a healthy body and powerful limbs. Its fur patterned with rosettes added to its imposing aura.

A pair of pale blue eyes appeared eerily strange on such a night. Although not green like that of wild wolves, a few more glances gave one a creepy feeling.

Wuuu wuuu~~

The leopard stared directly at Qin Fang, making such a sound from its mouth. Its strong limbs slowly moved, seemingly looking for the best angle to attack or perhaps finding the right spot to bite...

Qin Fang was equally alert. He pulled out a simple rope from the Props Box, kept an eye on the leopard's movements while tying and securing the child to his front...

Once he finished these preparations, he relaxed a bit, his hand now wielding a black military spike.

To leave from here, he had to deal with the leopard first.

A face-to-face fight was the best approach. If Qin Fang were to run towards the tribe in a hurry, he couldn't match the leopard's burst of speed and power, not to mention a hidden leopard was the most dangerous. It's better to face it directly now.

This leopard was quite strong, and its level was not low—it had reached Level 5, comparable to the Golden Crested Snake Qin Fang had encountered before.

But in terms of lethality, the Golden Crested Snake was naturally more dangerous because it was massive and venomous. If caught, even if not eaten, one could die from the venom.

However, Qin Fang did not dare to underestimate this leopard; its speed was faster, and it was more agile with sharp claws and teeth, making it not an easy foe to deal with.

As for shooting it dead—

These are wildlife almost on the brink of extinction, and unless necessary, Qin Fang really did not want to be such an executioner, even though this leopard almost devoured the child...

"Beast, come on..."

Qin Fang snorted coldly, shifted his foot slightly, and lunged forward with the military spike in his hand.

He had killed the Grandmaster-level Expert Shangguan Tianling, so why would he fear a Level 5 wild beast?

Roar~~

Feeling threatened by Qin Fang, the leopard let out a deep roar, its legs suddenly exploded with power, and it quickly turned into a shadow, rushing towards Qin Fang.

Its sharp claws gleamed, as if indicating its strength.

Moving incredibly fast, completely surpassing human limits, it lunged at Qin Fang at an even greater speed. As it leapt, it also bared its sharp teeth and gradually revealed its gaping mouth...

"Hmph..."

Faced with such a threat, Qin Fang only snorted coldly.

If it were a sneak attack from the leopard, Qin Fang would indeed be quite apprehensive, but for such a frontal attack, no matter how fast it was, Qin Fang was fearless.

Suddenly, he paused, crouched down slightly, and his body leaned backward, completely appearing below the leopard.

At this moment, the leopard's speed reached its limit, its body soaring mid-air. Seeing Qin Fang's sudden move, it hesitated slightly, its simple brain apparently struggling to cope.

Qin Fang was below, and the leopard above, nullifying all attacks from the leopard in an instant. The only useful claws it waved and moved, but it couldn't touch Qin Fang at all...

However, Qin Fang clearly wouldn't just dodge; he needed to counter-attack, a very strong counter-attack!

Qin Fang successfully evaded the four powerful claws of the leopard, and the leopard completely flew over him.

But then, Qin Fang's body which had been leaning backward suddenly straightened like a spring, and his hand holding the military spike suddenly disappeared. His hands, white as jade, suddenly stretched out, quickly grabbing the leopard's two hind legs...

"Ah-ha..."

Accompanied by Qin Fang's roar, his whole body's True Qi surged, his arms seemed to be infused with boundless strength, forcibly dragging the weight of hundreds of pounds massive leopard back, then suddenly bursting forth.

One could see the leopard, like a pathetic bug, was pulled back forcefully by Qin Fang, its massive body turned into a giant sandbag, powerfully smashing towards the ground...

Chapter 1005: Rescuing People, Slaughtering the Bear

Whimper whimper~~~

The leopard was completely out of control, its legs, still free, struggled powerlessly, trying to escape Qin Fang's grasp, making such pitiful sounds from its mouth.

Unfortunately, such struggles were feeble.

By now, Qin Fang had reached a point of no return, come what may, he could not stop himself.

If he loosened his grip even slightly, the leopard, weighing several hundred pounds, would fall directly onto him, and those sharp front claws would definitely shred him to pieces.

Bang~~

The strong leopard ultimately could not escape its fate this time, and Qin Fang slammed it heavily on the ground, making a very dull noise.

Qin Fang could even clearly hear the crackling sound of bones breaking, as if the ground was vibrating.

This process was extremely brief, from Qin Fang dodging the leopard's attack, to his sudden burst of violence, and then heavy slamming of the leopard to the ground, all happened in an instant, just a few seconds in total.

Yet, these few seconds sent the leopard from heaven to hell, suffering a hefty blow and severe injuries.

Rawr~

The leopard was clearly seriously hurt this time, Qin Fang's strength was too savage, and its body was quite heavy. Plus, the ground was filled with hard stones, this slam directly broke several of its bones...

The intense pain could make it more angry and ferocious... but it also depends on the opponent!

The leopard's intelligence obviously could not be compared to humans, but its simple instincts made it very clear about the law of the jungle.

Qin Fang was human, but the terror of his strength was such that even this large beast could not bear it, directly comparable to Xiong Xiazi, known for inexhaustible strength.

Moreover, with its severe injuries, no matter how fierce it was, it could only become a sick cat now... and it didn't dare to show its teeth anymore, it could only look pitifully at Qin Fang in front of it, making such pitiful noises and trembling slightly.

"Phew~~"

Qin Fang was very satisfied with this outcome.

The leopard had surrendered; it was no longer baring its teeth at him, and he also didn't have to kill it, which was somewhat contributing to the nation's wildlife protection.

Experience points were indeed very important, but there weren't many leopards left in the country, unlike the Golden Crested Snake which was venomous and fierce. If possible, Qin Fang really didn't want to kill.

Defeated by Qin Fang, the leopard also appeared quite aggrieved, but in terms of actual injuries, it wasn't especially severe. It was rough-skinned and thick-fleshed, so even though it was heavily injured this time, it was far from fatal.

"I won't hurt you anymore, go on your way..."

Feeling that the leopard seemed quite intelligent, Qin Fang waved his hand, signaling it to go into the mountain, and he wouldn't take any further action against it.

Of course, if the leopard still intended to harm the child, Qin Fang wouldn't mind playing the hero who kills the leopard once again...

Whimper whimper...

The leopard was indeed quite smart, seemingly understanding Qin Fang's gesture, making such noises, then got up from the ground and hobbled into the forest, occasionally looking back at Qin Fang as if it was worried he might suddenly change his mind and strike it down.

"Time to go back..."

Seeing that the leopard had disappeared and its scent was getting farther away, along with its heavy injuries, it was likely to face a dire fate if encountered by hunters in the mountains, and probably wouldn't sneak back to launch a sneak attack on him.

Having been slightly delayed, Qin Fang looked at the child in his arms, whose injury had been stabilized and who was breathing fairly evenly. The situation was temporarily fine, but still needed proper treatment back at the tribe. Qin Fang immediately judged the direction and quickly entered the woods, sprinting towards the tribe.

Qin Fang was very fast, his sense of direction was also very accurate. After about seven or eight minutes of running, he could vaguely see some lights and hear human voices.

"I'm over here!"

To avoid a tragedy of being shot by random arrows in the pitch-dark night, Qin Fang roared in that direction as soon as he appeared.

Although he didn't understand the local dialect, speaking Mandarin, at least those villagers could judge that he was one of their own and wouldn't act rashly.

"Zhuoda, it's me... The child is here!"

Coincidentally, the people Qin Fang encountered were from the Gelan Tribe, Zhuoda's people. Seeing that someone could communicate normally, Qin Fang immediately shouted.

"The child has been rescued..."

However, what they were even more concerned about at the moment was the child that had been taken. Seeing the child Qin Fang had tied to his chest, someone immediately exclaimed.

At this moment, Zhuoda also walked over with a complex expression and took the child from Qin Fang, handing over the child to the people of the Luo Sang Tribe.

He always considered himself the first warrior of the Gelan Tribe, strong, brave, and powerful, but facing this incident, facing the leopard, he didn't think he could have rescued the child alone.

Chapter 1006: Rescuing People, Slaughtering the Bear_2

But Qin Fang, the Han person whom he originally looked down upon, managed to achieve this alone, and he couldn't help but feel considerable admiration.

Of course, when he thought about the relationship between Qin Fang and Wen Yan, he felt a bit uneasy, as the stronger Qin Fang was, the lower his chances of successfully taking her as his bride.

Whoosh~~

At this moment, while everyone was still celebrating the rescue of the child, a rustling sound came from the forest, and soon a huge figure emerged from behind the trees.

"Black Bear..."

The mountain villagers were immediately startled and cried out. Many of them quickly raised their bows and Miao knives, seemingly ready for a life-or-death fight with the bear.

Zhuoda's face also tightened. The Black Bear was immensely powerful, and even the strongest warriors in the tribe couldn't handle it alone. They only had primitive weapons, not firearms; killing a Black Bear could only be done by slowly wearing it down.

"Stop!"

But at that moment, Qin Fang suddenly shouted loudly, "He's one of us..."

Almost as soon as Qin Fang shouted that, and as others looked puzzled, they noticed a pair of human legs under the enormous body of the Black Bear.

"Holy moly, Qin Shou Brother, you're awesome..."

Qin Fang then walked over with a smile on his face, addressing the Black Bear.

At that time, everyone noticed a face emerging from the belly fur of the Black Bear—it was none other than Song Qingshan, whom they believed to be a divine messenger.

"This guy was really tough; it took a lot of effort to take him down..."

Song Qingshan said with difficulty, but his tone sounded more like he was boasting.

The Black Bear was incredibly strong, undoubtedly powerful, its body weight alone probably over a thousand pounds, and with tough skin and thick flesh, killing it was no easy task.

However, upon closer observation, one could see a blood-soaked hole in the soft crescent-shaped fur area on the Black Bear's chest...

Clearly, this was the fatal blow to the Black Bear—and from the look of the wound, it appeared to have been forcibly inflicted by Song Qingshan's Great Strength Eagle Claw Technique.

To fight a bear bare-handed!

Even Qin Fang would find it difficult to achieve such a feat. His strength might not necessarily be weaker than Song Qingshan's, but his hand strength clearly wasn't enough to compete with Song Qingshan, who specialized in claw techniques.

And with this kind of black bear, tough and with thick skin, even bullets could hardly penetrate completely; it seems the only vulnerability was this patch of fur on its chest.

However, this Black Bear stood over two meters tall, and with its powerful strength, a swipe of its paw, like smashing a watermelon, could smash a human head instantly. To approach it, one inevitably had to endure a hit or two.

It was only Song Qingshan, who had trained the Thirteen Taibao Horizontal Training Golden Bell Cover to Grandmaster Level, who could withstand it—Qin Fang figured that his defense, protected by Celestial Silkworm Golden Armor on his chest and abdomen, might barely withstand a blow, but other parts...

"Tsk tsk, Qin Shou Brother, your Thirteen Taibao Horizontal Training Golden Bell Cover is really awesome..."

The Black Bear was already dead, and Song Qingshan carried it out, now facing the stupefied Zhuoda and others, preparing to take it back to the tribe.

Qin Fang walked alongside Song Qingshan, full of admiration, and couldn't help but pat Song Qingshan on the back...

"Hiss~~ lighten up, it hurts!"

However, Qin Fang apparently overestimated Song Qingshan's Thirteen Taibao Horizontal Training Golden Bell Cover, or perhaps underestimated the Black Bear's strength.

His gentle slap turned out painful enough for Song Qingshan, who usually maintained a tough demeanor, to cry out in pain.

Qin Fang slightly lifted his clothes and found that his body was also covered in large patches of blue and purple...

There was no helping it, the bear's paw was too big; a single swipe was almost as large as a basketball. Song Qingshan, relying on the strength of the Thirteen Taibao Horizontal Training Golden Bell Cover, brazenly took several hits and sadly paid the price...

Although such blows were far from fatal for Song Qingshan, they had caused him significant flesh wounds!

"Hahaha... Who would've thought, who would've thought you'd have such a day!"

Seeing Song Qingshan in this state immediately lifted Qin Fang's spirits considerably. In terms of strength, he and Song Qingshan were not much different, but the beasts they confronted were not on the same level; though a Leopard was tough, it definitely was not as powerful as a Xiong Xiazi.

Defeating these two beasts was not particularly difficult, whether it was for Qin Fang or Song Qingshan; they both could handle it quite easily.

However, when it really came to killing, slaying the Xiong Xiazi was more than ten times harder than slaying a Leopard...

As if Qin Fang could defeat the Leopard without a scratch, and if need be, he could also kill it; the difficulty was not that great.

But if Qin Fang were asked to kill this Xiong Xiazi, his Military Spike might not even suffice, unless he used a gun, otherwise bare hands would absolutely not do the job.

There was no way around it, the Xiong Xiazi's strength was too overwhelming; although Qin Fang could eat Baozi to replenish his health, probably one paw swipe from the Xiong Xiazi would turn Qin Fang bloody, and two paw swipes would directly explode him...

However, Song Qingshan was fiercer, having directly killed this Xiong Xiazi with his bare hands; naturally, Qin Fang felt that perhaps Song Qingshan's strength was a bit stronger than his.

Now seeing the wounds on Song Qingshan's body, Qin Fang couldn't help but laugh out loud; even Song Qingshan, who had trained the Thirteen Taibao Horizontal Training Golden Bell Cover to the Grandmaster Level, was battered like this; what could he possibly complain about?

Key is, Song Qingshan was never afraid of being hit; this time, he was actually terrified by the beating, even though it wasn't Qin Fang who did it, but a Black Bear.

"Don't give me that cold talk, hurry up and stick some needles in me..."

The iron-faced Song Qingshan no longer tried to act tough, feeling severe pain in his body, and seeing Qin Fang laughing, couldn't help but roll his eyes and say.

"Alright! Alright! Alright! Hahaha..."

Qin Fang agreed while pulling out the Silver Needle, still laughing until his stomach hurt.

Mastering The Nine Revival Needles, although Qin Fang couldn't fully treat and heal yet, simple pain relief and swelling reduction were still no problem.

Song Qingshan's injuries were external, and the Thirteen Taibao Horizontal Training Golden Bell Cover had completely protected him; although the force of the Xiong Xiaizi was terrifying, it didn't cause any internal injuries to Song Qingshan, at most it was just a bit of internal organ shock.

A few needles from Qin Fang, and immediately the pain lessened considerably, and the blue and purple areas were significantly relieved.

"It's lucky everything went smoothly..."

After all was said and done, this was also Qin Fang's sigh.

The Xiong Xiaizi had killed a person, and according to what Song Qingshan had said, this Xiong Xiaizi seemed to have gone mad; if not killed in time, who knows who else might have suffered, so killing this Xiong Xiaizi was indeed eliminating a menace.

The leopard had snatched a child, but now the child had been saved, and that too had concluded quite satisfactorily...

"Don't speak too soon, I reckon it won't be that simple..."

But being mocked by Qin Fang for a long while, Song Qingshan couldn't help but retort.

"Yeah, indeed..."

Song Qingshan only retorted this out of frustration, but Qin Fang gently agreed, because he had noticed that the conditions in these mountains were quite backwards, including the medical standards...

Although he had temporarily stabilized that child's injuries, if timely treatment couldn't be administered, there could still be complications, and with the mountain's medical standards, that really was a big problem!

Chapter 1007: Witch Doctor

Whether Qin Fang's worries were superfluous would have to be seen later.

When Qin Fang, Song Qingshan, and Zhuo Da returned to the Luo Sang Tribe with the huge Black Bear, the child had already been sent back early.

Xiong Xiazi is the king of the mountains, and even large fierce beasts like Tigers and Leopards do not dare to approach it easily, let alone these people with their simple weapons.

Unless a group of people surrounded and gradually wore down the Black Bear, and even then, one could easily lose their life to the enraged and injured beast.

However, upon their return and seeing the dead Black Bear, and learning that it was killed by a single person, these mountain people, whose thoughts are relatively simple, were immediately amazed.

These mountain people live in tribes, where warriors have great power. Many take pride in marrying their daughters to these warriors, so the top warriors in a tribe often have the most wives and concubines.

Only the strongest warriors can hunt the most prey, support their wives and children, and of course, possess considerable wealth to afford bride prices...

But for this event, faced with such a powerful Black Bear, none of the warriors from the Luo Sang Tribe or Gelan Tribe dared to claim they could kill it.

Yet there was one person who did it, that Han person from beyond the mountains.

"This is a messenger of the gods, slaying a Black Bear is merely a trifle..."

The happiest person was not Song Qingshan nor Qin Fang, but Zhuo Da who was reluctantly serving as a Sedan Chair Bearer. He told everyone he met that Song Qingshan was a messenger of the gods, as if he wished every person in the tribe to know.

As for his motives, whether he truly saw Song Qingshan as a messenger of the gods or was just looking for an excuse for his own embarrassment, that remained unknown.

However, Zhuo Da's publicity was very effective. His men were now utterly convinced, and the people of the Luo Sang Tribe, seeing the killed Black Bear with the huge wound on its chest and noticing the blood on Song Qingshan's hands that hadn't been completely wiped off, immediately believed it wholeheartedly.

So, Song Qingshan's status as a divine messenger gradually began to spread...

In the eyes of the mountain people, the highest status does not belong to the Tribe Chief but the High Priest, for he is the messenger of the gods, representing the gods' power, so the High Priest has supreme authority, and his words represent the gods' will...

During sacrificial rituals, the High Priest needs to select the purest girls from various tribes as Holy Women to offer to the gods.

At this time, every family scrambles to present their daughters, and the girls take pride in becoming such Holy Women.

The sacrificial ritual takes place only once every three years. There are hundreds of large and small tribes in the mountains, but there can only be one Holy Woman, and she must be a virgin between fourteen to sixteen years old. A girl has only one chance in her life, and if she misses it, it is gone forever.

But now, another messenger of the gods has appeared before the mountain people. Although he is a Han person, he possesses the strength that only free gods have, stirring up a lot of hope in people's hearts.

As soon as Qin Fang and his companions returned, many were already inquiring about Song Qingshan. After asking Zhuo Da, Qin Fang found out that many people wanted to offer their daughters to Song Qingshan as maids...

For such treatment, Qin Fang could only give Song Qingshan a teasing smile and then slipped back to the Li Family side, where Wen Yan and his family were still awaiting his news.

"Qin Fang, are you injured?"

Seeing Qin Fang return safely, a smile immediately spread across Wen Yan's somewhat worried face, but when she noticed the long cut in Qin Fang's clothing, her complexion turned very concerned again.

"No injuries..."

Qin Fang smiled, holding Wen Yan's tender body, and comforted her cheerfully.

Wen Yan was not reassured and inspected him several times before she was certain that Qin Fang was truly unharmed and finally felt at ease.

"Sister Xiaoyan, Brother Qin Fang is so amazing, he rescued Bali from the Leopard's mouth..."

With such a big event in the tribe, no one could sleep peacefully. Li Yao also got up to inquire about the situation and naturally heard about the great achievements of Qin Fang and his companions. She immediately spoke happily as if she herself were the rescuer and not Qin Fang.

Wen Yan didn't find this surprising; it seemed only natural to her. After all, not long ago, Qin Fang had rescued Tang Feifei and Xiao Muxue from the bomb madman Cao Chun. What was a mere Leopard compared to so many powerful bombs?

"Li Yao, how is the child?"

Qin Fang was indifferent as it was just a rescue, but then remembered his worries and asked Li Yao, as she still seemed to know more.

"Rest assured, Brother Qin Fang, the Tribe Chief has already summoned a Witch Doctor. Little Bali will surely be fine..."

Li Yao confidently assured Qin Fang, without showing any sign of worry.

"Witch Doctor? Can they really handle it...?"

Qin Fang hadn't even spoken, when Wen Yan, who couldn't help it, blurted out a question.

"Xiao Yan, don't talk nonsense..."

As soon as Wen Yan spoke up, Auntie Song's face changed suddenly, immediately chiding her in a soft voice, and glanced around cautiously, as if worried about walls having ears.

"What happened? Did I say something wrong?"

Wen Yan looked genuinely puzzled, not understanding what she had done wrong. Her mother, Auntie Song, had always been very affectionate to her, hardly ever raising her voice, so her current tone appeared quite out of the ordinary, and Wen Yan herself seemed quite innocent.

"Auntie, what's the matter? Is there a problem?"

Qin Fang was also somewhat puzzled. Auntie Song, being much older than them and having come from the mountains, must have had a reason for speaking up. Moreover, he noticed that Li Yao's expression also seemed a bit strange.

"This is a taboo in the mountains. It's better for you not to ask too much... Remember, no matter what happens, do not ask too many questions!"

Auntie Song's complexion appeared somewhat off, even somewhat downcast, as if she really didn't want to bring up these matters. Meanwhile, Uncle Wen gave Qin Fang a meaningful look.

Qin Fang and Uncle Wen stepped outside. Uncle Wen wasn't a mountain local, but having been married to Auntie Song for many years, he naturally knew quite a bit about the affairs of the mountains, and he shared some details with Qin Fang.

There were various ethnic groups in the mountains, but the majority were Miao Ethnicity people, so this mountain range was also the Miaojiang Region Qin Fang had heard about before.

In the very distant past, the practice of witchcraft and Gu Technique was prevalent in Miaojiang, but in modern times, the Gu Technique had almost been lost, with very few people still capable of it. However, the practice of witchcraft had continued to be passed down.

Within witchcraft, the art of the Witch Doctor was a very important branch. It is said to be divided into White Witch Doctors and Black Witch Doctors. White Witch Doctors referred to regular doctors and healers who cured and saved people; while Black Witch Doctors were a taboo, as they were often more inclined to harm people...

Of course, they did not intend to harm their own tribe's people, but those of other tribes.

Life in the mountains was tough, resources limited, so warfare was often inevitable for the survival of a tribe. To secure victory in war, these simple folk would resort to any means necessary, and that's where the Black Witch Doctors would come into play.

Gu Technique was one of their most commonly used methods, along with other practices like the very popular Sorcery in Southeast Asia— all of which originated from Miaojiang.

However, as the world changed, peace became the theme, and Black Witch Doctors gradually lost their place, coupled with the scarcity of Heaven and Earth Spiritual Qi, making it difficult to nurture Gu Insects. Hence, Black Witch Doctors gradually faded into obscurity.

When people fell ill, treatment was necessary, and this is why White Witch Doctors have always remained... However, there wasn't a clear line between Black Witch Doctors and White Witch Doctors. It was rumored that many Black Witch Doctors had transitioned from being White Witch Doctors.

Black Witch Doctors were a taboo among mountain locals, so while they respected White Witch Doctors, there was also a significant fear, worrying that crossing these Witch Doctors could lead to being cursed with Gu discreetly.

Auntie Song had left the mountains many years ago, but she still knew quite a bit about these taboos. Seeing Wen Yan bring it up, she naturally became somewhat anxious.

This child named Bali had been bitten by a Leopard, and although Qin Fang had managed to temporarily stop the bleeding and stabilize the injury, treatment and bandaging were still needed, and the Tribe Chief had called for a Witch Doctor to treat him.

After a simple explanation of the situation by Uncle Wen, Qin Fang somewhat understood Auntie Song's apprehension, but he became even more intrigued by the Witch Doctors.

Qin Fang was not unfamiliar with Gu Insects; he had expended a great deal of effort in the past to force out a Gu Insect from inside the body of Grandmaster-level Expert Old Master Wu and kill it.

Although it was later confirmed that Chen Liang was the culprit who had harmed Old Master Wu, Qin Fang had fought with Chen Liang, and even read part of his memories, but found no information about Gu Insects. It was clear there were some unknown secrets involved...

Too many secrets dared not be spoken, but there should at least be a Gu Master involved in this matter. It now seemed that this person could be a Black Witch Doctor from Miaojiang.

With no apparent boundary between Black Witch Doctors and White Witch Doctors, to understand the Black Witch Doctors, Qin Fang would at least need to first encounter a White Witch Doctor...

Previously, Qin Fang had no chance, but now he had a very good opportunity, and naturally, he wouldn't let it slip by!

"Uncle Wen, I'll go over there to take a look; maybe I can be of some help..."

Deciding to act on his thoughts, since the child had been brought back some time ago and the Witch Doctor had likely already started the treatment, he might miss everything if he went too late.

After greeting Uncle Wen, he joined Song Qingshan, who had finally managed to sneak out, and headed towards the injured child's home...

Chapter 1008: Tang Sect

The turbulence had subsided, and the village quieted considerably. Gone was the tense atmosphere of drawn knives and arrows, as many of the mountain villagers returned to their homes.

As for the child who was rescued, it is said that a Witch Doctor had been invited over, and these villagers seemed to have completely stopped worrying, as they all started chatting and laughing again.

Perhaps the only ones in sorrow were the family of the unfortunate child killed by the Leopard, but accidents in hunting are quite common among mountain people, who generally have a much greater capacity for acceptance than those from outside.

Perhaps in their eyes, this was not death, but a return to the embrace of the gods...

Qin Fang and his companions were not interested in these matters, and went directly to the home of the child, Bali. Although the number of people had decreased, there still was a crowd of several dozen waiting for news.

Seeing Qin Fang and Song Qingshan arrive, the crowd immediately opened up a path for them to reach the inside, and the looks they gave to Song Qingshan were filled with curious fascination, seemingly a mix of worship, respect, and fear!

Maybe they gradually started to see Song Qingshan as an envoy of the gods...

Qin Fang only smiled in response, feeling not a tinge of jealousy, but rather relieved, as such troubles did not fall on his head.

The people's faith in Song Qingshan was akin to that of fanatical fans chasing stars outside, though it was coupled with an added layer of reverence.

Zhuo Da naturally followed along. Qin Fang and his companions were Han people and had some communication issues with the mountain villagers. Although some understood Mandarin, most still predominantly spoke their local dialect. Having him along would make communication much easier.

After passing through the crowd, Qin Fang and his companions reached the innermost part of the house, where they saw Bali, the child, lying on a bed, with his father, Baru, beside him. Also present was an extremely gaunt old man applying a dark, ointment-like substance to the child's wounds.

"Master Geda..."

Seeing this frail old man, Zhuo Da's face showed utter respect as he quickly stepped forward and greeted him with great veneration. It seemed that his respect for the old man could well be on par with that for Song Qingshan.

The old man merely turned his head slightly, glanced at Zhuo Da, and nodded gently. As the Young Tribe Leader of the Gelan Tribe with some status, and although this place was not within the Gelan Tribe's territory, it was not far off.

Witch Doctors commanded immense respect among the mountain people. Due to their limited numbers, each was cherished almost as if they were deities themselves and no negligence was tolerated in their presence.

Especially someone like Master Geda, whose Medical Arts were profound, his status was comparable to that of a High Priest who represented the gods...

Although Zhuo Da had some status, even his father—the chief of the Gelan Tribe—must pay respectful homage when meeting Master Geda.

When mountain villagers fell ill, seeking medical help was even more difficult than for those outside—the Witch Doctors were few, and with the vast mountains and many tribes, just traveling to reach them was strenuous. Could you expect them to just arrive on demand?

Thus, often seeking a Witch Doctor's aid depended on their mood; the slightest displeasure and their refusal to treat was all it would take.

If you dared to draw sword or gun, you might find the entire tribe descending upon you...

Master Geda appeared to be a very kind and noble healer, simply greeting Zhuo Da briefly, and nodding to Qin Fang and Song Qingshan before continuing to treat Bali...

His methods seemed few, and perhaps it was because the wounds were non-fatal, external injuries: stopping the bleeding and applying medicine seemed sufficient for healing. Thus, all Qin Fang and the rest saw were these dark ointments being smeared by Master Geda onto the wounds...

The child had already awakened, and despite his young age, he showed remarkable resilience. At this moment, he was clenching his teeth, enduring the pain—

Not crying or fussing, even holding back the tears in his eyes without letting them fall.

In this aspect, the children outside clearly could not compare. Furthermore, seeing others take this as expected revealed just a glimpse of the harsh environment these mountain children grew up in.

Qin Fang couldn't say this was necessarily bad. At the least, it fostered a strong will in the children, far more so than those pampered and spoiled children outside.

Yet Qin Fang couldn't commend it as purely good either. Bali was just a few years old and had just experienced a tragedy, now being forced to bear such intense pain, which might cause problems too.

However, these were not problems that concerned Qin Fang and his companions. Most mountain men grew up this way, and only the strong could become true warriors and survive in the mountains.

Master Geda carefully treated each wound with precision. Qin Fang used his Scouting Skill to check the ointment. Though dark and somewhat repulsive at first glance, it contained quite a few effective healing herbs with excellent remedial properties for the injuries at hand.

Even a hint of spiritual energy permeated these herbal concoctions, ensuring not only a quick healing of wounds but also preventing any complications—

It could be said that even in the world beyond the mountains where Medical Arts were highly advanced, the treatment of such wounds might not reach this level of efficacy.

"It seems that the witch doctor is not as unreliable as imagined..."

Although the ultimate result of the treatment has not yet fully materialized—after all, even the best medicine can't cure diseases instantly—these wounds will need several days at least to heal completely.

But Qin Fang's worries had already been somewhat alleviated; if this witch doctor could become the guarantor for so many villages in the mountains, he must possess genuine abilities. Otherwise, he would have been eliminated long ago. How else could his practice have been handed down in Miao Jiang for thousands of years?

Qin Fang and the others did not have the luxury of time to ponder these matters, as Master Geda had finished applying the medicine and was already walking toward them.

"Master, greetings..."

Qin Fang and Song Qingshan addressed him with great courtesy as well.

For a healer who truly treats and saves people, at least some level of respect is obligatory, particularly for martial artists like themselves...

"I heard just now that we owe a great deal to the help of you two young friends tonight. Otherwise, the consequences would have been unthinkable..."

Unexpectedly for Qin Fang and the others, Master Geda spoke fluent Chinese, not at all like the other villagers who spoke only the local dialect.

"Master flatters us..."

Language was not a barrier, so communication was much easier. Qin Fang immediately responded with a modest fist salute.

"Zhuoda, prepare a place for me. I would like to have a good chat with our two young friends..."

Master Geda seemed to have something he wanted to discuss with Qin Fang and the others, and immediately ordered someone named Zhuoda, while he himself walked outside together with Qin Fang and the others.

The status of witch doctors within a tribe is lofty, and their requests are generally no problem to fulfill. Although Zhuoda was not from the Luosang Tribe, he had been a great help today, and on top of that, it was Master Geda's request—so the preparations were made quite swiftly.

"Do you two young friends possess martial arts skills?"

When the three of them, one elder and two younger, sat down, Master Geda's first question was just that.

"Yes, Master!"

Qin Fang nodded. He had already scouted out the situation and knew that Master Geda himself was trained in martial arts, although only of Level 3 strength, but with remarkably profound energy circulation.

Martial artists have an innate intuition about each other, although it's not always accurate. Yet, combined with some facts, it isn't too hard to make judgements.

For instance, how could Qin Fang and Song Qingshan retrieve the child from the jaws of the leopard, and how could they kill a blind bear with their bare hands today if they had not been trained in martial arts?

"So, did you two come into the mountains looking for the Tang Sect?"

Master Geda did not seem at all surprised by the answer and promptly followed with another question.

"Tang Sect?"

Upon hearing this, however, Qin Fang and Song Qingshan were both stunned, showing considerable shock in their eyes.

In many wuxia novels, the Tang Sect of Shu is known as a rather famous sect, said to be a family-style sect famous for hidden weapons and poison.

But Qin Fang was no longer the novice to the martial world that he once was. The Tang Sect does exist in reality, just not in Shu. As for where exactly it is, few people know.

The heritage of the Tang Sect goes back a very long time, almost a thousand years. Its prestige in the martial world is no less than that of Shaolin Temple, Wudang, or Kunlun. It's just that the Tang Sect is so reclusive that people in the martial world thought it had completely vanished, or considered it merely a legend.

Qin Fang had heard about it once before—when he poisoned Shangguan Tianling. Before dying, Shangguan Tianling had mentioned that the Tang Sect would trouble him. But Qin Fang himself had paid it no mind, particularly since he still had Shangguan Tianling's body in his possession.

"Master Geda, is the Tang Sect in these mountains?"

This time, the one asking was not Qin Fang but the usually quiet Song Qingshan.

Although Song Qingshan knew quite a bit about the affairs of the martial world, he knew very little about the Tang Sect. His backing, the Flying Eagle Sect, was situated in the large mountains of Shu, and he had not expected to find the Tang Sect within these very same mountains.

"You don't know?"

Master Geda was slightly taken aback by Song Qingshan's question, and his words seemed to carry a clear note of disappointment...

However, upon hearing this, Qin Fang and Song Qingshan exchanged a glance, and through their eyes, they had already confirmed that the legendary Tang Sect of Shu did not in fact reside in Shu, but in the secluded and isolated depths of the Yungui mountains.

Chapter 1009 Contrast

And it seems that the Tang Sect is not completely closed off; at least some of the mountain people are aware of its existence, such as Master Geda, the Miaojiang Witch Doctor before us.

Perhaps the reason why the outside world is unaware of the Tang Sect is that the mountains are too secluded and it's too much of a hassle to make a trip out, let alone the fact that the mountain people have become completely disconnected from the outside world.

"Is there something you need, Master?"

Master Geda seemed somewhat disappointed, which Qin Fang noticed, so he couldn't help but ask.

He faintly felt that Master Geda might have some connection with the Tang Sect. Shangguan Tianling's words still echoed in Qin Fang's ears. To claim he had absolutely no interest in the mysterious Tang Sect would definitely be nonsense.

At least knowing a little bit of information to prevent any problems before they arise would be quite good...

However, seeing that Master Geda appeared to have some secrets, whether it was out of kindness, or out of respect for such a venerable elder, Qin Fang also wanted to lend a small hand.

"The Tang Sect has been hidden in the mountains for hundreds of years, only coming out once every decade to select children with good aptitudes from the mountains to cultivate... My grandson was taken into the mountains when he was seven, and it has been more than ten years now, with no news at all..."

Master Geda looked at Qin Fang and Song Qingshan before slowly speaking.

Listening to Master Geda's story, Qin Fang finally understood what was going on. Master Geda was already getting on in years, over seventy, and the lifespan of mountain people is actually not long. At his age, he was basically not far from the end of his life.

And the Master's son was once the bravest warrior in the tribe, but sadly he never returned from a hunting trip in the mountains...

This grandson is the only relative the Master has left, yet he has not seen him for over a decade. Master Geda fears that he may not be able to see his grandson again before he dies, and if so, he would not be able to rest in peace even in death.

The reason why he placed such importance on Qin Fang and Song Qingshan, besides them coming from outside the mountains, was most importantly because he could see that Qin Fang and Song Qingshan possessed highly formidable martial arts skills.

The Tang Sect is an ancient sect that has been passed down for a thousand years, famous for its mastery in hidden weapons, poisons, mechanisms, and of course, every disciple of the Tang Sect also needs to practice martial arts.

The mountains are quite desolate, with very poor conditions, and the mountain people are rather xenophobic; very few outsiders ever come to the mountain. Yet Qin Fang and others entered, which itself was already a bit strange.

Furthermore, both Qin Fang and Song Qingshan have strong martial might, and being so young, they must definitely hail from renowned sects. Master Geda didn't understand the real situation of Qin Fang and their entry into the mountain, naturally assuming these two were going to the Tang Sect, hence his question.

If Qin Fang and Song Qingshan were truly going to the Tang Sect, he would like Qin Fang to help deliver a message to his grandson; even if he couldn't see him in person, at least knowing that his grandson was living well would grant him peace before he passed...

"Master, since you know the Tang Sect is in the mountains, haven't you ever gone searching for it?"

Qin Fang couldn't help but ask another question.

"Alas, who says I didn't go searching? But the Tang Sect is elusive. I have gone into the mountains dozens of times, and every time I have returned empty-handed, never even finding the mountain gate."

Master Geda shook his head and sighed. After so many years, and missing his child so dearly, how could he possibly not have gone searching? However, the reality was too harsh.

"This I do know a little about; the people of the Tang Sect are experts in mechanisms, which is also known as formation arts. Many ancient sects are like this, only if one knows the location of their mountain gate and understands the mechanisms art, then they might be able to enter... Otherwise, not only would one fail to enter the mountain gate, but there might also be the risk of losing one's life."

Song Qingshan who was at the side gave a simple explanation, "For instance, the Inner Temple of the Shaolin Temple where Monk Wukong resides, is hidden within a formation, and it is said that Wooden Men Lane is the only path out of the mountain..."

Hearing this explanation, even though it was just hearsay, it seemed likely to be the case, after all, with so many people at Shaolin Temple, it's impossible that everyone would honestly stay on the mountain.

In addition, Song Mountain is so big, if the Inner Temple really existed, it's impossible that it wouldn't have been discovered. The theory of the formation must indeed exist.

Not to mention that, after Qin Fang acquired the Cheating Skills, he became aware of the existence of these Qimen Dunjia formation arts.

"I'm sorry, Master..."

Understanding all this, Qin Fang felt somewhat apologetic.

They ended up venturing into the mountains solely because Wen Yan's grandmother was on the brink of death, and he was accompanying Wen Yan to see her one last time.

Even before this, his understanding of the Tang Sect was limited to having heard the name and knowing that such a sect existed, but beyond that, he was utterly clueless.

"Sigh, I can't blame you all... It's me who's been too anxious."

Master Geda waved his hand, naturally aware that this matter was unrelated to Qin Fang and the others; it was he himself who had thought too wishfully, his expression nonetheless marred by profound disappointment.

"Master, what is your grandson's name? Perhaps during our journey into the mountains, we might coincidentally locate the Tang Sect. Then we can relay the message to him..."

Seeing the old man's forlorn state, Qin Fang couldn't help but feel an urge in his heart, despite knowing that the likelihood was slim to none, it still provided a glimmer of hope.

"My grandson took the surname Tang upon entering the Tang Sect, his name is Tang Xing..."

At such an advanced age, having seen through the world, how could Master Geda not see that Qin Fang's offer was simply to comfort him?

But, as Qin Fang had thought, it represented a kind of hope; perhaps a miracle could indeed occur. Therefore, he didn't refuse Qin Fang's goodwill and immediately disclosed his grandson's name.

Although the Tang Sect is a time-honored institution, unlike other great sects, it exists in a familial form. With such a massive family secluded for centuries, they couldn't always marry within the family, so selecting disciples from outside was essential for the sect's continuity and the family's bloodline preservation.

However, upon joining the Tang Sect, one would no longer use their former name; all would take the surname Tang...

"Master, rest assured, if we happen to come across the Tang Sect, we will definitely pass on your message to Tang Xing!"

Knowing the name, Qin Fang confidently assured with a pledge.

The Tang Sect was too elusive, and neither Qin Fang, Song Qingshan, nor Master Geda held much hope; thus, the matter was left at a simple conversation. Soon after, the three chatted briefly, and as night had fallen, they each retired to rest.

The latter part of the night was relatively quiet; the child Bali had applied medicine and rested without further danger, believing in a speedy complete recovery.

The next morning, the group departed from the Luosang Tribe, heading towards their destination – the Nayi Tribe, located some dozen miles away.

Different from the day before, there was no resistance in the hearts of Zhuoda and his people; they were eager and ready early in the morning, and the simple sedan chairs from yesterday were now fortified and even more impressive to behold.

The number of Sedan Chair Bearers had also doubled from the day before, with over thirty people jostling for the chance to be bearers – half were Zhuoda's men and the other half were locals from the Luosang Tribe.

The number of sedan chairs increased from three to five, meaning not only did the Wen Family of three each have a seat, but so did Qin Fang and Song Qingshan.

Regarding this, Qin Fang and Song Qingshan could only manage a wry smile.

Just yesterday, Qin Fang saw Zhuoda being too arrogant, and to minimize trouble, he forced them to bear the sedan chairs. They found a reason to comply temporarily but still harbored some reluctance.

Yet, after one night, things had changed entirely; this wasn't ordinary compliance—it was as if they were being served like emperors...

Over thirty Sedan Chair Bearers scrambling—for which they had fiercely competed to obtain the opportunity, and even more would have come if allowed.

Left with no choice, Qin Fang and Song Qingshan settled themselves into the sedan chairs and were carried forward by these people. Their initial small group of five entering the mountains had now become an impressive convoy of over forty, marching deeply into the heart of the mountains.

To anyone unaware, the procession resembled more a force mounting an assault on a tribe than a mere visit to the Nayi Tribe...

The Wen Family of three observed these developments, knowing full well that such reverence from the mountain villagers was due to Song Qingshan's influence. However, in their eyes, since Song Qingshan was Qin Fang's bodyguard, it reflected Qin Fang's abilities.

They were already quite pleased with Qin Fang, their prospective son-in-law, and with the current turnout, their satisfaction was undeniable. Sitting in their chairs, the two exchanged glances and silent communications.

As for Wen Yan, seeing her parents communicating silently, she blushed with embarrassment, occasionally stealing glances at Qin Fang while reminiscing about the conversation she and her mother had the previous night.

Auntie Song was quite satisfied with Qin Fang, yet the previous night, during an earnest heart-to-heart, she had inquired about the tension between Qin Fang and Wen Yan and reminded her daughter not to fall for Qin Fang too soon...

However, after the bear hunting and life-saving incident, the mother and daughter had another round of discussions upon returning to rest. Auntie Song almost did a complete one-eighty in her stance, advising Wen Yan to seize the moment, strike when the opportunity arises, and take bold action...

Of course, she also stressed the importance of contraception for the time being since Wen Yan was still pursuing her education. While Auntie Song looked forward to having a grandchild, she preferred that Wen Yan wait until after graduating from university.

Chapter 1010: A Miraculous Needle

Wen Yan's conversation with her mother ended with her feeling incredible shame, and that night, her dreams were somewhat different.

When she got up this morning, Wen Yan's face was pinched with distress as she changed out of her damp undergarments. The blush of embarrassment did not fade from her cheeks when she thought of the events that had unfolded in her dream.

Fortunately, Qin Fang didn't pay much attention and didn't pry into the matter; otherwise, she felt she might not have been able to face anyone all day.

The Nayi Tribe was located deep within the mountains. Although these "deep parts" meant little in comparison to the entire mountain range, it was indeed very deep for those outside the mountain world.

A new sedan chair and more bearers were arranged, significantly speeding up the journey. The rugged mountain path, which extended for more than a dozen miles and was difficult to traverse on foot, was nothing for these mountain men used to hiking all day. They managed to arrive in just over two hours...

Don't be fooled by the dozen or so miles and more than two hours it seemed quite slow; consider this included crossing two mountain ridges. For those hiker enthusiasts, such a distance would take an entire day to walk.

This large convoy was quite astonishing, and passersby paid special attention to the five people on the sedan chair, pointing and making comments, clearly finding it quite strange.

However, Qin Fang and the others were in a hurry and had no time to bother with these things.

When the troop finally arrived at the Nayi Tribe, Auntie Song almost jumped out of her sedan chair and rushed towards a somewhat dark-skinned middle-aged man not far away.

More precisely, the man should be considered old—compared to Auntie Song herself, who was in her forties, this man appeared to be in his fifties but looked even older.

According to Uncle Wen, this man was Auntie Song's brother, Sang Duo. He was only two years her senior, yet he seemed to belong to an entirely different age group.

"Yima, you've finally come back. Mother is not doing well..." Sang Duo immediately approached Auntie Song, his voice urgent.

He had been waiting here since the early morning, and now that she had finally arrived, he was extremely anxious.

"Quick, let's go... Xiaoyan, come here, this is your Uncle..." Auntie Song was, of course, in a state of urgency. Seeing her brother's expression, her mother's condition seemed even more dire than she had imagined.

While hurrying towards home, she called for Wen Yan, who was behind her, and took the opportunity to introduce her daughter, someone Sang Duo had never met.

"Uncle..."

Wen Yan appeared timid at meeting her uncle for the first time, and it was only with Qin Fang holding her hand that she managed to greet him.

"Sigh..."

Sang Duo felt a bit bewildered by his beautiful niece. The difference in attire and temperament between mountain folk and those from outside was stark, and he was somewhat unaccustomed to it at the moment.

However, this was not the time for pleasantries, and everyone quickly made their way home.

"Yima... Mother, she has... passed away!"

As they arrived at a row of stone cottages, they saw a woman in her fifties, tears streaking down her face, walking out just in time to see Auntie Song and the others arrive and immediately conveyed the sad news.

"Mother..."

Hearing this, Auntie Song's face turned pale, and she nearly collapsed to her knees on the spot, tears flowing uncontrollably as she cried out in grief.

They had hurried as fast as they could, but it was still a step too late; they had missed seeing the old woman for one last time.

"Auntie, restrain your grief and accept fate!"

Qin Fang's expression was solemn, regretting that they were a step too late. Alongside Uncle Wen, they supported Auntie Song, who was overwhelmed with sorrow and not in good health. They feared she might collapse from grief.

Wen Yan, although she had never met her grandmother, had red-rimmed eyes and could not help her tears from falling.

With the support of Qin Fang and Uncle Wen, they all entered the house. In the elder's room, the elderly woman lay still on the simple stone bed, silent and breathless.

"Mother..."

Seeing her departed mother, Auntie Song's grief, which had slightly eased, collapsed again, and Wen Yan could no longer hold back her tears, embracing her mother and weeping with her.

Sang Duo and his wife also couldn't help but cry, and even Uncle Wen, a strong man, was brought to tears.

Even Qin Fang felt a surge of emotion that made him want to cry. He had no close relatives and found it difficult to comprehend the sadness of losing a loved one, yet he was moved at that moment.

Perhaps the only one who remained emotionally stable was Song Qingshan. Completely an outsider to the situation and with profound martial abilities, emotional control was a skill a martial artist had to master.

"Eh..."

Just when everyone was drowning in sorrow, Qin Fang suddenly let out a surprised gasp, as if he had seen something very strange.

Almost instinctively, Qin Fang hurried a few steps and went towards the bed where the "corpse" of the elder lay, moving so quickly that it seemed like a gust of wind had swept by.