

Genius 2011

Chapter 2011 Father and Son Reunited! (Part 2)

"Enforcement disciples..."

Qin Fang looked at these people with some surprise; their strength seemed no less than Master Level Late-Stage, and quite a few were Grandmaster Peak Strongmen.

In terms of quality and strength, these people were much stronger than the Hunters, yet they could only act like minions as enforcement disciples, maintaining order on the scene.

"It's about time..."

The leader then stood up slowly, glanced at the time, and muttered softly. His gaze flicked to a certain spot on the mountain, and he gently shook his head, seemingly ready to issue orders.

"Wait..."

Just at this moment, a clear voice arrived, and many trialists present felt a gust of wind, as a slender middle-aged man appeared on the sidelines.

"You go over there..."

However, this man didn't come alone; he was holding someone in his hand. With a slight shake of his arm, the person landed steadily among the crowd, and their hand bore a metal tag.

Buzz~~

Upon seeing this person, Qin Fang's eyes shot out a captivating gleam; words almost erupted from his mouth.

"Qin Tiannan..."

This newcomer was none other than Qin Fang's father, Qin Tiannan—the very person Qin Fang had been tirelessly seeking... He was now less than twenty meters away from Qin Fang!

Qin Tiannan had hurried back upon hearing the assembly horn, and the person he grasped happened to be a casual choice, nothing meticulously picked.

After delivering them, his gaze quickly scanned the faces of the eighteen trialists present, but his eyes revealed considerable disappointment shortly after.

He didn't even notice the peculiar gaze Qin Fang deliberately exhibited before turning around to leave... presumably because the ensuing events weren't suitable for a Great Grandmaster Level Expert like him, or perhaps due to specific regulations, he escorted the person and left immediately like other Great Grandmaster Level Experts.

Poof~~

Seeing Qin Tiannan about to depart, Qin Fang grew anxious, yet with so many experts watching closely, Qin Fang dared not act recklessly.

If he made any sound, he might invite unforeseen danger; even an expert like Qin Fang wouldn't dare act rashly.

Thus, when hard tactics failed, he resorted to something softer... just as Qin Tiannan turned away, a sudden crisp noise rang out.

The sound was extremely peculiar and quite sinister...

"Who's there?"

Making such a sound at this juncture was indeed irritating; at the very least, the leader's expression changed entirely, and he immediately shouted angrily.

Not only him, but even Qin Tiannan paused his steps and turned to look...

Everyone's gaze focused in one direction, on one person, each with a rather odd expression.

"Not me! It's not me..."

The faced child under scrutiny blushed green, desperately explaining, but... a grenade lay quietly at his feet!

Swoosh swoosh swoosh~~

Seeing this grenade, everyone unanimously chose the same action... dodge!

In the blink of an eye, nearly thirty people had already scattered far away, with no one daring to approach the unlucky child.

Who was this unlucky child?

Unfortunately, it was Damon, brought by the 006 Great Grandmaster, who had intense hostility towards Qin Fang...

As for why such a grenade lay at his feet, it was naturally Qin Fang's handiwork; due to their numbering, they were quite close, making it easier for Qin Fang to make a move.

Damon was likely still plotting to harm Qin Fang, even kill him, but Qin Fang had already turned the tables on him first.

For these trialists, killing was commonplace, but place mattered here; at least on Devil's Island, it wasn't so easy.

Yet, these trialists arrived island empty-handed, perhaps with someone secretly smuggling weapons onboard, but that was permitted.

However, grenades clearly counted as contraband... especially when revealed at such a crucial moment, making the matter even graver.

Bang, slap, poof~~~

Poor Damon—given little chance to explain, three or two enforcement disciples had already acted, directly employing a terrifying joint assault to pulverize Damon, who had reached Grandmaster Mid-Stage.

The 006 numbered tag in his hand was swiftly retrieved... simultaneously, the leader marked a large "X" on the roster!

Qin Fang was a person of opportunity; those who meant him harm were dealt with firmly when given a chance.

Damon was such a person; for unknown reasons, he harbored intense hostility towards Qin Fang, his red aura nearly blinding Qin Fang.

Given that, Qin Fang decided not to offer Damon any opportunity, even before he acted...

Especially since Qin Fang's timing had specific objectives.

For example, when everyone fled, they all avoided the direction of that grenade, yet unnoticed, Qin Fang consciously edged closer to Qin Tiannan's side.

Being a Great Grandmaster Level Expert, Qin Tiannan immediately detected Qin Fang's approach, his piercing gaze locked onto Qin Fang, and his energy focused on him.

Seeing Qin Tiannan's reaction, Qin Fang naturally understood and sought to prevent a tragic father-son encounter; he promptly presented something to verify his identity.

Swoosh~~

Almost nearing, Qin Fang patiently threw something towards Qin Tiannan while slowing his pace.

Qin Tiannan must examine and verify the item before acknowledging him... or risk Qin Fang rushing over and possibly being sliced alive by his father, Qin Tiannan.

"Huh..."

Upon receiving the item, Qin Tiannan noticed immediately, his expression slightly shifting, as his wrist pulsed and the item fell into his hand.

Seeing this item, Qin Tiannan's face changed dramatically, quickly lifting his gaze towards Qin Fang not far away, his eyes welling with gleaming tears.

Of course, this wasn't sadness but excitement...

Though Qin Fang's appearance seemed inexplicably older than his son's, seeing this item, Qin Tiannan knew the person before him was his son, Qin Fang.

"Son..."

Qin Tiannan, nearly shouting out loud in excitement.

"Time's up, departure..."

Unfortunately, before Qin Fang could approach and greet Qin Tiannan, the leader interrupted, grim-faced, ordering the trialists forward, cutting short Qin Fang and Qin Tiannan's reunion. Enforcement disciples swiftly surrounded them, trapping the trialists in the center.

"There's another one here..."

An eerie voice echoed as a silhouette sliced through the sky, landing steadily among Qin Fang's group.

Simultaneously, a middle-aged man with a long scarred face appeared beside Qin Tiannan, smirking at him mockingly, "Old pal, what's wrong with you? How come you're shedding cat tears?"

As Scarface spoke, his sharp gaze swept through their crowd, seemingly searching for someone specific...

Chapter 2012 Devil's Trial, Second Round!

...

His biological father is not far away, and both father and son have already seen each other, but at this moment they cannot acknowledge one another, which is undoubtedly one of the most tragic things in the world...

Even more frustratingly, his father's enemy is also watching closely from the side, and if Qin Fang slips up, he will definitely be targeted by this enemy.

Although the man with the scar talks to Qin Tiannan in a friendly manner, as if they have been friends for many years, Qin Fang sees that the relationship between this person and his father Qin Tiannan is not harmonious and is even quite hostile...

Scarface's electric gaze swept over the group of trialists Qin Fang was part of, carefully observing the expression and demeanor of each, as if searching for something.

Undoubtedly, he plans to single out Qin Fang... He might not know the relationship between Qin Fang and Qin Tiannan, but he does know how concerned Qin Tiannan is about Qin Fang.

The two are enemies, perhaps due to certain reasons, they cannot directly act against each other, or their powers are matched, making it impossible to distinguish victory or defeat even if they fought.

Yet, with the strength of a Great Grandmaster Level expert, killing the trialists on the island is far easier, as simple as picking something out of a bag...

Sensing Scarface's hostility, Qin Fang's expression slightly stiffens, trying to appear as normal as possible.

Scarface's gaze quickly moved from Qin Fang's face, stopping briefly just like with the others, and then immediately shifted to the next person's face.

Qin Fang doesn't know if he has shown any flaws for Scarface to notice, but time waits for no one, and he cannot pay attention to these things now.

"Move out..."

With the leader's command, those enforcement disciples moved to the sides, surrounding Qin Fang and all the trialists, then escorted the group forward.

Although Qin Fang desperately wants to acknowledge Qin Tiannan, and Qin Tiannan is equally eager to call out to his son, they must part ways at this moment.

Despite Qin Tiannan being a formidable Great Grandmaster level expert, among the top on Devil's Island, his status is not very high.

At least, in this current situation, Qin Tiannan has the authority to summon trialists but is unable to single out any particular one from them...

Especially since his son, Qin Fang, was selected by another Great Grandmaster Level expert...

In his hand was a delicately crafted jade pendant, a family heirloom from the Qin Family. It was a token Qin Tiannan gifted to Qin Qing as a declaration of love, intended to be passed on to his son, Qin Fang.

It is also a crucial piece of evidence for confirming his and Qin Fang's identities...

Yet now, he can only watch helplessly as his son Qin Fang leaves with the trialists, unable to do anything.

"No! I must..."

Having lived on Devil's Island for nearly twenty years, Qin Tiannan naturally knows what trials Qin Fang and the other trialists will face next.

Thinking of this, Qin Tiannan's expression involuntarily changed slightly, a trace of worry appeared in his eyes, and he couldn't help but tighten the fist holding the jade pendant.

"Old chap, what's the matter with you? You seem quite agitated..."

Of course, the man with the scar was not going to miss Qin Tiannan's changes, and he immediately murmured with a smile.

The long scar on his face made the smile appear particularly sinister, ugly, and inexplicably eerie.

In a vague sense, he seemed to pick up on something from Qin Tiannan's expression. While speaking to him, his eyes couldn't help but glance towards the gradually disappearing trialists' group, his pupils slightly contracting, and a murderous intent flashing briefly.

"Hmph..."

Qin Tiannan naturally noticed Scarface's reaction, but he didn't say much, simply giving Scarface a deep look before disappearing instantly without a trace.

"Interesting, truly interesting..."

Scarface was not concerned in the slightest, and as he looked at the disappearing silhouette of Qin Tiannan, his face showed a peculiar smile. He muttered to himself, "For twenty years, he has always been solitary and ruthless, suddenly starting to care about someone... this is truly fascinating!"

"Looks like I have to do something, can't disappoint this old friend!"

Soon, Scarface's face turned serious, his evil smile vanished, replaced by a chilly ruthlessness.

Especially as the murderous aura flickered in his eyes, it surged instantly, with his entire aura becoming colder.

Then, just like Qin Tiannan, he also twisted his body, disappearing swiftly...his movement technique seemingly from the same lineage as Qin Tiannan's.

...

"Where are we headed?"

Qin Fang naturally doesn't know anything about his father's dealings with Scarface, and at this moment, he is quite confused.

Just following the trialists' team, protected by the enforcement disciples, and heading in the direction of that mountain along with the leader.

Chapter 2013 Devil's Trial Second Stage! (Part 2)

These enforcement disciples guarding Qin Fang and his group seemed more like surveillance than escorting.

Qin Fang and the other trialists appeared to be quite important, so the enforcement disciples were worried about them escaping midway, which was why they accompanied them.

Though these eight enforcement disciples were few in number, each possessed considerable strength, and with their leader matching the skills of a Grandmaster-level expert, these nineteen trialists together were no match for these nine.

If the nineteen trialists could coordinate seamlessly or form some kind of attack formation, they might be able to contend with the nine.

However, Qin Fang and his group were disorganized, hardly able to unite, and not sabotaging each other was already considered polite.

"Forget it, let's take it one step at a time!"

Feeling helpless, Qin Fang remained among the crowd, waiting for further developments.

The idea of breaking through had crossed Qin Fang's mind, but he dismissed it—it was quite unwise, with low chances of success.

He had assessed the eight enforcement disciples and their leader; the disciples were formidable, yet if Qin Fang attempted a breakout, the success rate was still relatively high.

But the problem lay with their leader, who appeared not much stronger than the disciples; Qin Fang used his Scouting Skill to investigate and discovered the leader was hiding a significant part of their strength, comparable to a Grandmaster-level expert when fully unleashed.

The reason for not advancing seemed to be some kind of restriction; yet their actual combat power was extraordinarily strong.

At least, Qin Fang felt that against the leader, he stood no chance; although he had his own countermeasures, he would not resort to his ultimate weapon unless absolutely necessary.

That weapon was akin to a nuclear arsenal, useful for intimidation or boosting morale, but Qin Fang was cautious about using it.

Not wanting to risk escaping, he decided to follow the group obediently; based on previous Devil's Trials, despite significant risks, survival was possible, maybe even likely.

"As long as there's a chance, I'll have a way..."

Qin Fang was quite optimistic and soon felt at ease, scanning the crowd around him, noting silently,

"If I can't handle a Quasi-Grandmaster expert like him, but surely I can manage those at Grandmaster-level, or else I've been wasting my time..."

Although Qin Fang was modest, he possessed essential self-confidence—the hallmark of a martial artist, which he undoubtedly had.

Even surrounded by foes, mostly from Devil's Island, these did not include the trialists.

Since many trialists were gathered, surely, they were intended to fight; the leader and disciples were unlikely to join the fray. If they stayed out, Qin Fang felt untroubled.

With this thought, Qin Fang relaxed, moving with the group while his mind wandered.

So far, the plan to rescue his father had not officially commenced.

However, Qin Fang found joy in the fact he finally located his father, Qin Tiannan; although they barely met, at least his father was alive.

This confirmation justified the trip, alleviating his initial fear of something having happened to his father.

Devil's Island was far more perilous than Qin Fang had anticipated, teeming with experts—not to mention the 20 Grandmaster-level experts he knew of.

Not all Grandmaster-level experts had surfaced; there could be more Qin Fang was unaware of.

Grandmaster-level experts were ultimate authorities, each a martial world luminary, capable of dominating regions alone.

In the martial world, Grandmaster-level experts were capable of founding lifelong sects, and as for Great Grandmaster-level experts, they could establish a sect lasting centuries.

Such elite strength was rare; only longstanding Great Sects might possess a few.

The Dao Shen Sect, dominant across Japan, controlled various massive factions like ninja and Sword Path Stream, yet had less than ten Grandmaster-level experts.

Devil's Island, renowned underground but obscure in the martial world due to its offshore location, surprisingly boasted numerous Grandmaster-level experts including those like Qin Tiannan, totaling twenty or more unaccounted for.

This powerful force, perhaps unmatched by prestigious sects like the millennium-old Shaolin Temple known as martial arts' mightiest institution.

Chapter 2014 Devil's Trial, Second Stage! (Part 3)

When he saw Qin Tiannan earlier, Qin Fang had already used his Scouting Skill to inspect him. His father had indeed stepped into the Great Grandmaster Level.

However, the advancement was not long-standing, likely within the last year or two, which corresponded with what the Bloody-handed Demon Tu San had said.

Having only advanced for a year or two, he had just solidified his strength at the Early Stage of the Grandmaster Level...

That Scarface was about the same, roughly on par with Qin Tiannan... Of course, if the two were to genuinely clash, the outcome would depend on their individual skills!

This Scarface is just a common Grandmaster-level expert, and there may be many experts on Devil's Island who are stronger than him...

It is precisely because of this that Qin Fang understood why his father Qin Tiannan did not help him just now.

Because the timing wasn't right...

Not to mention, although Qin Fang's mini-map surveillance range extended to nearly a hundred meters, that was just a blink of an eye for an expert of the Great Grandmaster-level tier.

If Qin Tiannan were to make a move, not only would Scarface definitely block him, but it might also attract even more terrifying experts to intervene.

If that were to happen, although the father and son would reunite, escaping from Devil's Island would be as difficult as reaching the heavens.

Don't think that Qin Fang's Stealth Skill is that formidable; it is formidable relatively speaking. Perhaps an average Grandmaster-level expert can't see through it, but there are definitely people on this island who can... possibly quite a few!

Qin Fang had already scouted this area. The distance to the sea was quite far. Even if he and his father were to run at full speed, it would take at least several minutes... and that's assuming there were no obstacles.

If they were blocked by experts, the time would be endlessly extended... which basically spells failure in their escape.

The result of failure is evident; the punishments they would face would be the harshest imaginable... possibly even more gruesome than death.

"We have to think of a plan..."

Qin Fang took a careful look. At the moment, his route was heading not towards the sea but inland, directly towards a mountain.

Escaping from the sea was the escape plan that Qin Fang had already devised, and it was the only way to safely get his father Qin Tiannan off Devil's Island.

However, how the father and son would reach the sea is indeed a rather troublesome issue, especially since they hadn't even exchanged a word yet.

"A month... there will definitely be opportunities!"

For now, Qin Fang could not act on his own and had to take things one step at a time.

Fortunately, time was still relatively abundant, as the Devil's Trial lasted a month. It's only been two or three days now; there is still plenty of time for Qin Fang to plan.

"Hmm, isn't this..."

Just as Qin Fang's mind settled and he prepared to endure the current trial, he noticed that their group had arrived at a mountain area.

When Qin Fang saw that a portal had opened on the mountain surface, a strange glint appeared in his eyes.

He glanced briefly at the other trialists around, seeming to notice nothing out of the ordinary, but still couldn't help but show a faint smile.

This door was hidden on the rocky surface of the mountain, almost indistinguishable from its surroundings, matching the mountain's color perfectly.

However, this door wasn't made of stone but rather crafted from special alloys, much stronger in hardness and thickness than rock.

"This is your next challenge in the Devil's Trial, also known as the Elite Trial... Only those who complete this trial are true elites!"

The leader began his briefing in front of the door, while the eight Enforcement Disciples stood scattered, still surrounding the trialists at the center.

"Inside is a giant mountain maze, filled with many cultivation treasures, such as various Genius Earth Treasures, Martial Arts Manuscripts, and even rare Elixirs... If you're lucky enough to find them, they will be yours..."

The leader gave a simple introduction to the mountain maze, and just mentioning these benefits instantly made the trialists' eyes light up.

"Hiss~~"

Some couldn't help but gasp, their breathing becoming rapid, eager to rush inside to find the treasures.

"However, opportunities and risks coexist. Inside are not only mechanisms and traps galore but also various poisonous insects and fierce beasts... If you're unlucky, heh... you know!"

However, the leader's next words made everyone shiver, their brows furrowing slightly.

It seemed as if they had anticipated this. Although their expressions were not as excited as before, no one showed signs of retreat or fear.

Anyone daring enough to participate in the Devil's Trial is pretty much a renowned figure in the Underground World, having survived countless life-and-death situations. How could they fear such a trial?

"Alright, I won't say much more. Enter according to the numbers on your cards... Once everyone is inside, this door will be completely sealed!"

After this introduction, the leader did not bother to say more. He was also too lazy to talk further with the trialists and started counting people for entry directly.

"Three days! You only have three days... After three days, I will open this door and bring you out... I wish you all good luck!"

Of course, when letting people in, he also briefly mentioned the time limit. If they were locked inside for ten days or half a month, they'd likely not survive even if they weren't killed...

Chapter 2015 Perils of the Trial!

...

Opportunities always come with risks, and the same goes for this second stage of the Devil's Trial... It can even be said that the risks far outweigh the opportunities.

But do these trialists have a choice?

Obviously not!

Just look at the commotion of the eight enforcement disciples nearby, and it's not hard to see this point.

At this time, the only thing trialists need to do is to walk through this portal in order and enter the mountain maze inside.

If there's even a hint of resistance or unwillingness, then the outcome... refer to Damon, who was previously duped by Qin Fang and was directly killed by their joint attack.

No choice means they can only obediently enter the mountain maze.

"Before you go in, let me remind you, you are entering a trial, and there are some luminous pearls placed within this mountain maze. I think you have already noticed that there's a hole on the back of your tokens, which can fit the luminous pearls you collect!"

The leader spoke leisurely at this moment, and all the trialists couldn't help but flip their tokens to take a look.

Sure enough, there was indeed a circular hole on the back of the token. It's not very large, but it should fit a luminous pearl perfectly.

"After three days, all trialists whose tokens are filled with luminous pearls can come out! Otherwise... hmph!"

After noticing the hole, the leader said this ominous sentence, causing everyone to shiver involuntarily.

Originally, many were murmuring about how to ensure their survival, such as staying in a relatively safe place.

Three days of trial time, neither long nor short, but as long as there's a relatively safe location, experts at their grandmaster-level tier could easily endure it even without food or water.

But hearing the leader's words, everyone couldn't help but tremble, obviously Devil's Island had already thought of countermeasures.

These luminous pearls are certainly not placed in extremely safe places, and they are likely accompanied by considerable risk.

Only in this way must the trialists face endless crises, otherwise how can the trial have its intended effect?

Of course, because they need luminous pearls, these trialists not only have to face the traps and beasts in the mountain maze, but also be wary of trialists around them.

To obtain luminous pearls, sneak attacks, assassinations, robberies, backstabbing... needn't be imagined as they are bound to happen frequently.

Besides the luminous pearls, the treasures obtained in the maze by the trialists might also be coveted by others, since the treasures here may be quite extraordinary.

In this era of scarce resources, the outside world is well developed, but resources for cultivation are becoming increasingly scarce.

Devil's Island has so many experts, presumably, cultivation resources are much richer. However, these trialists have roamed the island, and even in such a primitive forest, there are hardly any cultivation resources found, so it's estimated that the good stuff is concentrated in some relatively secret places.

For example... the mountain maze before them!

"Nineteen trialists... Tsk tsk, I still wonder how many can walk out alive in the end?"

The more Qin Fang understood this, the more he realized how cruel the competition ahead would be, and couldn't help but mutter to himself.

Compared to the frenzy of other trialists, Qin Fang felt much calmer.

He naturally hoped for more good things, but not to the extent of desperation... From this moment on, Qin Fang maintained the most peaceful mindset.

"Alright, let's not waste words, contestant No. 001... commence!"

The leader did not give these trialists too much time. He had already explained what needed to be said, and the rest depended on the trialists themselves.

He directly started calling out, unwilling to let these trialists delay any longer...

Upon hearing the leader's call, all the trialists narrowed their eyes, quickly scanning the surrounding crowd to seemingly identify who the unlucky first person would be.

Those trialists with numbers further back breathed slightly more easily,

The trialist holding the No. 001 token had an incredibly grim face, glaring at the pitch-black entrance, could only grit their teeth, step forward, and rush in.

The people following also closely watched the movements of the No. 001 trialist, but once he entered the dark portal, he vanished without a trace, with nothing visible from the outside.

However, there were no screams heard, which secretly made many trialists breathe a sigh of relief.

To rashly enter a crisis-laden maze, the first person is naturally the most dangerous. No one knows if there are extremely dangerous traps set at the entrance, or if there are ferocious beasts waiting...

However, with the No. 001 trialist entering and without any sound or movement, naturally, others assumed the entrance is safe.

As long as the entrance is safe, the subsequent trialists can naturally temporarily establish a foothold, then slowly advance. Although the three days are very tight, progressing steadily clearly seems more reliable than rushing in blindly.

Chapter 2016 Deadly Trial! (Part 2)

Many people were whispering and wondering whether they should form a small team after entering, to coordinate and assist each other, as it would certainly be much more efficient.

However, even though many were thinking this, they didn't dare to express it, fearing that the rather sinister-looking leader might cause some trouble again.

But after the leader spoke, he lay down on a large rock by the mountain, basking in the sun leisurely, seeming indifferent to the development of events here.

In contrast, the eight enforcement disciples executed their duties diligently, watching these trialists vigilantly, observing as they stepped one by one into this portal, entering the mountain maze.

Qin Fang's number was 005, which was relatively at the front. The four people before him quickly went in, and Qin Fang also stepped slowly into this dark portal.

The interior of the mountain seemed quite eerie, and even when Qin Fang reached the door, he could barely see what was inside.

However, he thought the same as everyone else. Since those who entered didn't make any noise, naturally, it would be fine for him to enter as well.

Qin Fang didn't think much and stepped inside...

However, upon entering the portal, Qin Fang's mind slightly tightened, vaguely sensing something was amiss.

"Huh, there's actually a formation set up here..."

Sensing the change in the surrounding environment, Qin Fang muttered involuntarily.

He initially thought this was just a man-made mountain maze, but unexpectedly, there was a formation set here as well.

"Teleportation array?"

What astonished Qin Fang even more was that this was actually a teleportation array... a rare formation indeed.

"Great Grandmaster Level... what a pity!"

Possessing cheating skills comparable to grandmaster-level tier, Qin Fang's understanding on formations wasn't weak. After carefully studying the teleportation array, he shook his head involuntarily.

Although this formation was of very high grade for Qin Fang, at least beyond what he could unravel or construct, it was clearly not laid out by a top array master.

At this moment, Qin Fang was deep in a pitch-black chaos, where others might not feel anything, but Qin Fang could sense changes in the surrounding space.

About three meters later, the surrounding darkness began to fade, and Qin Fang's body lightly halted, finally setting foot on solid ground.

Meanwhile, Qin Fang's little map, which had just lost its functionality, immediately returned to normal, revealing the surrounding map.

"Sigh, teleportation array..."

As an array master, though his grade wasn't very high yet, Qin Fang was quite eager to acquire the construction plan for the teleportation array.

It was an extremely rare and unique formation, one which Qin Fang thought was lost, but unexpectedly encountered here.

Judging from the signs of this mountain maze, it wasn't constructed long ago, but not too short either, likely completed within the last fifty years.

Meaning, the teleportation array was also constructed within the last fifty years... thus, the array master capable of laying this teleportation array might still be alive, or has passed on the knowledge.

This made Qin Fang a bit eager...

"Tsk tsk, if I could get the construction plan of the teleportation array, I could make one too..."

Basically, no array masters wouldn't want to learn the teleportation array, but it's so rare, with fewer who could do it, and people's secretiveness, it's not surprising if it got lost.

"Such a good formation, to be left here... it's really a pity!"

The more he understood this, the more Qin Fang couldn't help but complain a bit.

The teleportation array in front of him, if laid out by a top array master, wouldn't have temporary darkness like earlier, it would connect perfectly.

For example, the Chess Sword Formation Remnant left by the Master of Yijian, Fu Cailin, in Korea's Sword Forest that Qin Fang once experienced was such a formation.

Entering it, one could hardly find any flaws, everything was connected so perfectly!

But the one in front of him had obvious connection issues, with quite apparent flaws... If someone could disrupt during the teleportation, this array might become chaotic.

Perhaps such disruption wouldn't collapse the entire array, but the consequences wouldn't be peaceful either...

Formation flaws were quite normal, even if, in future teleportations, the coordinates went wrong, it wouldn't be unusual.

Teleportation coordinate errors might seem insignificant, but they are actually terrifying... For instance, being teleported to a passage in the maze but ending up inside the mountain belly instead.

Surrounded by airtight stone walls, a living person trapped inside with no air would suffice for instant suffocation.

As for breaking out of the mountain, that's nonsense... Grandmaster-level experts, though powerful, can merely break stones; breaking a mountain... even a Supreme-level expert might fail!

Of course, to disrupt teleportation, one must not only understand the formation well but also possess enough power... at least of a level comparable to the array master who laid this teleportation array.

Chapter 2017 The Perils of the Trial! (Part 3)

This teleportation formation in front of him was arranged by an Array Master of Great Grandmaster Rank, so whoever destroys it must have at least Great Grandmaster Level strength.

Although Qin Fang's accomplishments in formations are not weak, matching the first condition, his personal strength clearly falls short, so naturally, he couldn't destroy it.

Therefore, Qin Fang could only obediently be teleported to this place.

"As expected..."

Looking at the surroundings, it was a man-made passageway, with both sides artificially processed and decorated, quite different from a natural cave.

In the passage, there were lamps at intervals, emitting a faint glow, and though the light was dim, it was enough for experts like Qin Fang and his peers...

However, in this long passage, there was only Qin Fang, and not a shadow of the trialists who had entered earlier.

Clearly, all the trialists were randomly teleported by this teleportation formation, scattered to various parts of this massive mountain maze.

Some might run into each other, but with nineteen trialists spread across the maze, the likelihood of meeting was quite slim.

Of course, since it's a maze, there has to be a correct path.

Therefore, as all the trialists wandered through the maze, they would most likely find this path and eventually converge.

But by then, competition and struggle would have begun...

Qin Fang was number 005; with only four having entered before him, each had been teleported to different locations, making their chances of meeting tiny.

At least, Qin Fang's mini-map didn't show any signs of trialists... no one was close to him.

"Whatever, let's first search for treasures and luminous pearls..."

Since he was already inside, without any immediate path found, Qin Fang could only move forward cautiously... And since this maze hid treasures, Qin Fang felt no hesitation taking them.

Compared to other trialists, Qin Fang could be considered at a wealthy level, with spiritual medicines, spiritual liquids, and many elixirs at hand.

He also had numerous pill recipes in his mind, and as long as he found the ingredients, Qin Fang could start refining... far better off than others.

But in the Martial World, even a golden mountain couldn't withstand consumption... Qin Fang had almost exhausted hundreds of Blood Replenishing Pills absorbing the energy from the Netherworld Blood Pool, showing how fast resources were consumed.

Qin Fang might have abundant resources, but he couldn't withstand such drain repeatedly...

With this chance for replenishment, how could Qin Fang possibly pass it up?

Swoosh, swoosh, swoosh, swoosh~~~

The passage looked peaceful, seemingly without danger, yet just as Qin Fang moved his foot, countless arrows shot out from the surrounding walls...

The arrows flew wildly, startling Qin Fang greatly, catching him before he had time to scout for traps.

Fortunately, Qin Fang reacted quickly, slightly pushing his arm, causing a large, black object to appear around him out of thin air.

The numerous arrows struck it with thuds but not one could pierce through...

Moments later, the arrow shower ceased, allowing Qin Fang to put the object away, and seeing the arrows scattered all over the ground, he couldn't help but take a breath.

"Phew~~~ Luckily, I was prepared, otherwise I would've been at a loss!"

Though the arrow rain came swiftly and urgently, Qin Fang was quick to react, bringing out an item that blocked all the arrows.

The arrow shower was powerful, but it couldn't penetrate the Xuan Shui Python's python skin Qin Fang had taken out... thus posing no threat to him.

"Nonetheless, this place is indeed dangerous, everything must be approached with great caution..."

Despite being startled greatly, Qin Fang became more vigilant, realizing the truth in the leader's words.

The more serene a place seems, the more dangerous it often is, as seen with that arrow rain... Other trialists might not be killed outright but would certainly suffer serious injuries.

Perhaps only two or three out of the nineteen trialists could dodge unscathed like Qin Fang.

Having faced this danger, Qin Fang became even more cautious, advancing slowly while fully utilizing the mini-map and his Scouting Skill to thoroughly scan the road ahead, ensuring safe passage...

Little did he know how startled he would become once he paid attention.

The straight passage under Qin Fang's feet, about twenty or thirty meters long, was laid with three extremely dangerous traps.

The teleportation had already triggered one; Qin Fang carefully bypassed the other two, but still triggered them...

This time, however, Qin Fang was well-prepared with strategies passed down to handle these. Though he triggered them, they posed no threat to him!

This made Qin Fang feel quite satisfied... At least his personal safety was substantially guaranteed this way.

"Hmm, what's that?"

Of course, safely passing was just one of Qin Fang's goals; he had others, like searching for luminous pearls and treasures in the maze.

Soon, Qin Fang noticed something quite distinct on his mini-map, making his heart skip a beat, his eyebrows slightly rising.

"Crouching Tiger Grass..."

The Scouting Skill quickly confirmed it, sparking Qin Fang's interest as this was one of the rare herbs he had been searching for, unexpectedly finding a stalk here!

Chapter 2018 Crouching Tiger Grass

...

Crouching Tiger Grass, named because it resembles a reclining tiger, is a very rare herb. Although it cannot be classified as spiritual medicine, it is only one step away from it.

Of course, this one step makes the difference between Crouching Tiger Grass and spiritual medicine as vast as heaven and earth; they are not on the same level at all.

Even so, the value of Crouching Tiger Grass cannot be denied...

In some cases, the value of Crouching Tiger Grass surpasses that of spiritual medicine... such as when refining a pill called the Tiger's Roar Pill.

The Tiger's Roar Pill is an extremely rare elixir, although the raw materials for its preparation do not reach the level of spiritual medicine, the effect of the refined pill is not weaker than that of spiritual medicine at all.

Especially in certain critical moments, the Tiger's Roar Pill can produce unimaginably miraculous effects... This is an elixir that functions somewhat similarly to the Berserk Potion that Qin Fang has used before.

It's just that the Berserk Potion is an incomplete strengthening potion with significant flaws, which are difficult for Qin Fang to overcome.

But the Tiger's Roar Pill has far fewer side effects than the Berserk Potion. After use, apart from a moment of physical weakness, there is basically no other damage.

Moreover, the strength unleashed by the Tiger's Roar Pill is much stronger than that of the Berserk Potion... This is due to the different enhancement properties they provide.

The Berserk Potion overdraws the body's potential, naturally causing greater damage, and in severe cases, it can cause irreparable damage.

The Tiger's Roar Pill, however, is different. It mainly stimulates the power of every bit of True Qi lying dormant in the body's cells.

Normally, this True Qi lies dormant within the body, not circulating with the True Qi in the meridians, akin to being in a "dormant state". It only unleashes its power when faced with a significant threat.

The efficacy of the Tiger's Roar Pill is to unleash this power of True Qi before the body encounters a threat, enhancing the body's True Qi reserves significantly without causing any harm...

The total amount of True Qi dormant in the bodies of some experts can even exceed the amount circulating in the meridians. Once stimulated by the Tiger's Roar Pill, the amount of True Qi could easily double or multiply several times!

The rarity of the Tiger's Roar Pill is mainly due to the extreme difficulty in finding the primary ingredient, Crouching Tiger Grass. Although some of the other auxiliary materials are also rare herbs, they are relatively easier to find.

And now, not far from Qin Fang, there stands a stalk of Crouching Tiger Grass. How could Qin Fang not be excited?

The Tiger's Roar Pill is a rare elixir that Qin Fang is eager to refine, offering considerable benefits to his safety and strength.

The benefits of consuming the Tiger's Roar Pill are not just limited to unleashing a burst of super strength temporarily. As the True Qi dormant in the muscles and cells is released, it surges into the meridians for a short time, expanding them.

The expansion of the meridians allows them to absorb and contain much more True Qi than before... The larger the amount of True Qi released, the more the meridians expand, resulting in greater overall benefits.

"This stalk of Crouching Tiger Grass is mine..."

It is precisely because of this that when Qin Fang saw the Crouching Tiger Grass, he immediately resolved in his heart that he must obtain it.

Currently, Qin Fang has officially stepped into the Grandmaster-level tier, though he remains at the Grandmaster-level Initial Stage. While his combat strength rivals that of a Grandmaster-level Mid-stage expert, he is still capable of contending with a Late Grandmaster Level Expert.

However, the enemies Qin Fang faces are becoming increasingly powerful... Nowadays, Late Grandmaster Level Experts are nothing outstanding, and Grandmaster Peak Strongmen are as common as dogs, with even Great Grandmasters emerging one after another!

Although Qin Fang personally possesses numerous skills that can effectively assist him in overcoming stronger experts... the risks are also becoming greater.

A couple of ventures might be manageable, gritting his teeth to persevere, but three times, five times, ten times? Whether he can continue to hold on is genuinely an unknown factor.

It's uncertain when a mistake might occur, and Qin Fang could lose the chance to start over.

Therefore, Qin Fang must exhaust all means to enhance his own strength, striving to narrow the gap between himself and those frighteningly powerful experts...

The Tiger's Roar Pill is a good avenue for this, and Qin Fang naturally won't miss the opportunity. Thus, giving up this stalk of Crouching Tiger Grass is out of the question for Qin Fang.

With this in mind, Qin Fang quickly moved along the corridor, proceeding cautiously in the direction of the Crouching Tiger Grass.

Unfortunately, the maze harbors hidden dangers everywhere, and any slight mistake, even for a Grandmaster-level expert like Qin Fang, could lead to demise here.

"Someone..."

Despite moving at a relatively fast pace, as Qin Fang approached closer to the Crouching Tiger Grass, he suddenly noticed a figure moving swiftly on the small map, causing Qin Fang's heart to tense slightly.

After roughly examining the route composition of the maze on the small map, Qin Fang couldn't help but furrow his brows, as this person was also heading in the direction of the Crouching Tiger Grass.

Chapter 2019 Crouching Tiger Grass!_2

"Not good..."

Confirming this point, Qin Fang's expression turned grim, quickening his pace toward the location of the Crouching Tiger Grass.

Judging by the speed of the opponent's movement, this person was also a rather formidable expert. If a conflict were to arise, Qin Fang might not gain any advantage.

In this perilous maze, it's best to avoid conflict if possible; otherwise, it's very likely both could die here.

From Qin Fang's understanding of the arrangements on Devil's Island, the closer to the treasure, the more dangerous the hidden threats become.

Qin Fang feared not this opponent, but was concerned that while combating this enemy, he might unluckily fall victim to a trap, which would be quite regrettable.

That's why Qin Fang planned to acquire the Crouching Tiger Grass before the other party did... Once it's in Qin Fang's pocket, the other side could not hope to reclaim it.

After storing it in the Props Box, even a body search by the other party would not reveal the Crouching Tiger Grass's whereabouts... This was Qin Fang's plan.

However, plans are plans, but reality may not always follow Qin Fang's script...

Thud, thud, thud~~~

Just as Qin Fang was about to reach the Crouching Tiger Grass's location, a mechanism appeared in front of him, blocking his way. Sharp spikes shot out from the stone floor, their tips glowing with a venomous blue light.

Though Qin Fang wasn't afraid of poison, stepping on such spikes would still injure the feet...

Reluctantly slowing his pace, Qin Fang carefully weaved through the mechanism, which delayed him significantly.

"Damn it..."

This mechanized trap delayed him enough that when Qin Fang reached the Crouching Tiger Grass, another competitor had already arrived.

Both of their eyes were focused on that lone Crouching Tiger Grass, growing quietly in the corner of the maze, next to which ran a dark river...

The Crouching Tiger Grass stood there, resembling a crouching tiger, exuding a powerful aura.

Nonetheless, this was precisely the sign of the Crouching Tiger Grass's maturity, causing both Qin Fang and the competitor's eyes to light up.

Such Crouching Tiger Grass could be used directly in medicine, and if processed correctly, one might obtain the ultimate medicinal effect...

The Crouching Tiger Grass could indeed be used to brew the Tiger's Roar Pill but could also be used directly in medicine. Although the efficacy would diminish, for Grandmaster-level experts, it was still a rare medicinal herb, almost equivalent to one or two drops of Qin Fang's Golden Dragon Saliva...

With Golden Dragon Saliva, a superb spiritual medicine in hand, Qin Fang naturally didn't care much about the Crouching Tiger Grass's efficacy. However, he was a rare exception; others didn't have his fortune.

All these strong individuals have painstakingly emerged over time, valuing rare herbs immensely. At least, this person before him revealed profound greed and desire upon seeing the Crouching Tiger Grass...

This was a man in his forties, appearing Asian but clearly not from Dragon Country, seeming to originate from India judging by his looks, identified as A-San.

"Yoga expert..."

Seeing A-San, a strong warning surged in Qin Fang's heart. His Scouting Skill returned feedback: this was a yoga expert at the Grandmaster Mid-Stage level.

Feeling such a strong sense of crisis from Qin Fang, this person's strength was undoubtedly quite terrifying... At least, the speed at which this man reached here was telling.

However formidable the opponent might be, Qin Fang could not relinquish the Crouching Tiger Grass... for it was the primary ingredient for refining the Tiger's Roar Pill.

The Tiger's Roar Pill was crucial for Qin Fang to accelerate his progress to the Grandmaster Mid-Stage, though it may not guarantee direct advancement, it would significantly shorten the time.

Time is money!

This was true for Qin Fang as well; facing increasingly powerful enemies, speeding up his cultivation was even more essential.

While most martial artists advance steadily over years or decades, sudden rapid improvement, though swiftly enhancing strength, could lead to uncontrollable hazards, many experts facing tremendous harm from such growth spurts.

Incidents like going berserk are quite common...

Due to personal reasons, Qin Fang didn't have to worry about the risks of rapid advancement; he just needed to boost his strength as much as possible.

This Crouching Tiger Grass was crucial for Qin Fang's advancement to the Grandmaster Mid-Stage, and he naturally didn't want to give it up.

Glimpsing at A-San, Qin Fang slightly shifted his steps, focusing on the Crouching Tiger Grass, prepared to utilize his advantage in Light Body Technique to secure the plant.

"Get lost!"

However, A-San seemed to have noticed this beforehand, shifted his steps slightly, directly blocking Qin Fang's path, and cursed in his broken English.

Chapter 2020 Crouching Tiger Grass!_3

Almost simultaneously, the middle-aged A-San also unleashed a tremendously violent power, a fierce killing intent that even Qin Fang couldn't underestimate.

Qin Fang's steps halted, his complexion turned extremely grim, and his eyes stared dead at A-San, a captivating brilliance deep within them.

However, the A-San across from him seemed completely indifferent to Qin Fang's gaze, glaring at Qin Fang with an air of disregard.

This was understandable, for the Indian A-San's strength was indeed a level above Qin Fang's, and the mastery of yoga, like martial arts from Dragon Country, easy to learn but hard to master, once developed, becomes an exceptionally formidable skill...

The Indian A-San before him had cultivated yoga to the Grandmaster Mid-Stage, making his strength absolutely terrifying.

Qin Fang contemplated that even if he fought with all his might, he would at most be evenly matched with this person, and might even suffer a bit!

After all, Qin Fang's realm was only at the Grandmaster-level Initial Stage, slightly weaker than the opponent by a level; it's not surprising that the opponent had such confidence!

Qin Fang's face looked unpleasant, his expression fluctuated non-stop, occasionally glancing at the Crouching Tiger Grass close by, or at the formidable yoga master, as if he struggled to make a decision.

"Hum~~"

Yet after a moment of silent hesitation, Qin Fang coldly snorted, deciding not to act, and directly turned around, heading towards the passageway he came from, seemingly abandoning the Crouching Tiger Grass before him.

The Indian A-San seemed to have anticipated Qin Fang's choice, his gaze filled with contempt and disdain, but he didn't rush to attack, instead quietly waiting for Qin Fang's figure to slowly disappear in the passageway.

"Hum~~"

Only when the Indian A-San could no longer see Qin Fang's figure did he lightly snort, and then slowly approached that stalk of Crouching Tiger Grass.

Yoga masters have cultivated their bodies to a very peculiar level, somewhat similar to the Metamorphosis skill Qin Fang acquired.

But Metamorphosis can only change body shapes with no attack power, whereas yoga is different; it allows the body to extend, stretch, and flex into various postures while maintaining a frightening attack power...

The reason the Indian A-San was able to swiftly navigate the passageway avoiding various traps was significantly due to his yoga techniques.

The Crouching Tiger Grass was right before him, and naturally, the Indian A-San wouldn't let it slip away, so he immediately moved closer... Though he lacked Qin Fang's Scouting Skill, he couldn't scout for any traps ahead, thus appearing cautious.

Even so, the distance wasn't far, a few steps would bring him to the Crouching Tiger Grass; just crossing this not very wide Underground Dark River would allow him to pick that stalk of grass.

However, he might never have expected that roughly five or six meters away, someone was watching him with a smile.

That person was none other than Qin Fang, who had supposedly left.

Though Qin Fang had indeed left earlier, he quickly returned invisibly... The Indian A-San, busy with picking the Crouching Tiger Grass, failed to notice Qin Fang's return.

"Idiot~~"

Watching the Indian A-San moving towards the Crouching Tiger Grass, Qin Fang couldn't help but laugh at him, genuinely feeling sorry for the Indian A-San's intellectual shortcomings.

"I hope you survive... dying at my hands might be somewhat better!"

Qin Fang murmured with deep sympathy, the smile on his lips growing stronger, yet he remained standing, without any intention of approaching, seemingly waiting for something.

"Did he truly think I left out of fear? This A-San is too naive..."

Qin Fang's decision to leave wasn't truly to abandon the Crouching Tiger Grass... In reality, he could never abandon it.

However, under the threat from the Indian A-San, Qin Fang decided to turn away for his own purposes.

Because just earlier, Qin Fang discovered something particularly interesting, which led him to forgo competing with the Indian A-San.

As for the reason...

It was actually because there was a problem with the growth location of the Crouching Tiger Grass... Specifically, this sudden Underground Dark River.

Additionally, this Underground Dark River naturally formed in the mountain's belly, yet Devil's Island people cleverly integrated it into the maze.

But the architect of the maze was definitely a master, perhaps Qin Fang speculated a Thousand Gate master created it.

This dark river being naturally woven into the maze wasn't a meaningless act but a stroke of genius.

Because this Underground Dark River had a problem, a significant problem.

"Ah~~~"

Almost at that moment, when the Indian A-San just crossed the dark river and was about to pick the Crouch Tiger Grass, he suddenly let out an incredibly tragic howl.

A huge shadow suddenly attached itself to the Indian A-San's leg, even dragging him towards the dark river below.

"Serves you right!"

This scene naturally entered Qin Fang's vision clearly, yet he felt no sympathy, instead sneered disdainfully.

The Indian A-San was caught by the shadow; Qin Fang looked closely, seeing a very strangely shaped strange fish, with a snake-like body, fish-like head, and its sharp teeth deeply embedded in the Indian A-San's leg, crimson blood streaming relentlessly...