

High Martial 103

Chapter 103: Be Careful on Your Journey

After unleashing the power of the Body Tempering Third Layer, Chen Fan felt the same despair as before.

A distance of three meters seemed like a huge chasm. Even if he occasionally took a step forward, he would be pushed back the next second.

Liu Yong and the others cast sympathetic glances toward Chen Fan.

"Oh no, Xiaofan is going to get beaten again."

"Yeah, seems like it's the same as before."

"Don't worry," Gao Yang laughed heartily, "With Xiaofan's abilities, Old Zhang will soon admit defeat again."

"Really?"

Everyone was half-believing, half-doubting.

They had a feeling that this time it might not be that simple or fast.

Little did they know, Zhang Ren also heard the discussions around him, and the corners of his mouth lifted slightly.

Of course, it wouldn't be that fast.

Although the physical condition of a Body Tempering Third Layer martial artist was almost twice as good as someone at the Early Stage of Muscle Refining, his spear skills were solid and uncompromised.

Plus, he had the natural advantage of longer reach with his spear.

"However, fighting this kid is quite enjoyable."

The sound of the saber blade clashing with the spear tip echoed continuously.

Chen Fan was still full of fighting spirit.

For him, the more strength Zhang Ren used, the faster his Basic Saber Technique would improve.

Even now, despite the three-meter gap between them, each successful block increased his skill level by 0.3%. If it was a slashing attack, it could reach nearly 1%. This was Basic Saber Technique at Level 5. If the distance were closer, the improvement would be even more noticeable.

Of course, this was unlikely in the short term.

As time passed, the people in the open space gradually dwindled.

After all, most of them had not even reached the First Layer of Body Tempering; their physical strength and energy were far from matching the two of them, so it was pointless to overexert themselves.

At that moment, Chen Fan felt a warm current rising within him, followed by a lightness in his step. He suddenly lunged forward, only to be struck by the spear.

"What's wrong?"

Zhang Ren withdrew his spear in confusion.

Chen Fan's recent movements appeared as if he had lost control of his body and used too much force.

It was obvious that such a low-level mistake was not one he should make.

"Maybe I am a bit tired."

Chen Fan quickly said.

"Hmm, then how about resting for a while, or perhaps calling it a day?"

"It's fine, Uncle Zhang. I'll just rest a bit and drink some water."

Chen Fan quickly replied.

He still needed quite a bit of practice to reach Level 6 in the Basic Saber Technique, and it wasn't even nine o'clock yet; it would be too early to head back now.

"Alright."

Zhang Ren didn't think much of it.

He, too, could use a moment to rest and adjust his state.

At that time, Gu Ze, who had been watching for a long time, walked over and said, "Uncle Zhang, can I learn some saber techniques from you?"

"You want to learn saber techniques?"

Zhang Ren was slightly surprised.

Even Chen Fan, who was about to check his skill bar, looked over in surprise.

"Yes."

Gu Ze glanced at Chen Fan and nodded, "Just in case, I also want to learn some close combat skills. In case someone gets too close, I can still fight."

"Fine, how about I teach you tomorrow?"

"Uncle Zhang, how about teaching me a few moves first? I can practice them on my own."

Gu Ze hurriedly said.

The reality of someone far superior to him in skill, working even harder, only made the gap between them grow larger.

And he remembered that this was how Chen Fan had started training as well.

"Alright."

Zhang Ren saw through him but didn't expose him.

Obviously, the kid wanted to emulate Chen Fan. However, the latter had a one-in-a-million aptitude, while Gu Ze was far from that.

Still, having a goal and being willing to work for it are good things.

Even if the outcome isn't ideal, it wouldn't be a waste of time. You never know, maybe there could be a miracle?

Chen Fan's surprised expression faded, replaced by a look of satisfaction.

Gu Ze's superpower was power amplification. If he used a melee weapon, the power might be formidable. However, close combat was also much more dangerous.

Fortunately, it was better to be prepared.

He turned his gaze back to the skill bar.

Just then, his feet felt light, and his speed increased a bit. Clearly, there had been a change somewhere.

He found the "culprit" eventually.

[Basic Step Technique: Level 3 (0%), Trait: Swift Level 3]

"Basic Step Technique reached Level 3?"

Chen Fan's eyes widened, and a thought emerged in his mind. When did the Basic Step Technique reach Level 2?

He tried to recall but had no clear memory.

"Maybe I just learned too many things, and I haven't been paying attention to it."

Chen Fan scratched his head.

He guessed that his practice of spear technique and saber technique had incidentally increased the proficiency of the Basic Step Technique.

Of course, it was also possible that during the fierce battle with the bandits today, a lot of it could have been improved.

No doubt, this was good news. It brought him one step closer to unlocking the [Basic Body Technique].

After teaching Gu Ze two or three basic moves, Zhang Ren returned and continued to serve as a sparring partner. Surprisingly, he seemed to be enjoying himself.

Time passed slowly, and two hours went by.

Gradually, Chen Fan reduced the distance between them from three meters to about two meters and sixty or seventy centimeters. After that, it was hard to get any closer.

Finally,

As a faint warm current flowed through his body,

An odd sensation welled up inside him again.

[Basic Saber Technique: Level 7 (0%), Traits: Powerful Level 7, Fierce Assault Level 7, Fierce Slash Level 4, Deadly Level 1]

[Deadly: Each skill level increases the chance of attack or block success by 30%, effective when using blade weapons]

"Deadly? It's similar to the must-kill trait of the Basic Spear Technique."

Chen Fan glanced at it, which increased the chances of hitting or blocking. It seemed to work not only on single-handed blades.

He then looked at [Basic Step Technique]. The skill level had actually increased, just very little — less than 1%.

However, in one night, he had leveled up the Basic Saber Technique to Level 7 and also increased the Basic Step Technique by one level. He was very satisfied.

"Uncle Zhang, it's almost eleven o'clock. How about we stop here for today?"

"Alright."

Zhang Ren nodded. For him, even if he didn't sleep all night, he would be energetic the next day.

"Gu Ze, you should get some rest too."

In the distance, Gu Ze responded, sheathed his saber, and appeared exhausted, only managing to stay upright through sheer will.

After saying goodbye, Chen Fan walked on the way back, looking at the [Shadowless Swift Blade] with great anticipation.

Then he chose to proceed.

With the Basic Saber Technique at Level 7, the upgrade time reduced from one day to ten hours, meaning it could be unlocked by tomorrow morning.

"Only the Basic Step Technique left."

He thought to himself.

According to Uncle Zhang, placing countless wooden stakes on the ground to train step technique would be much quicker than incidental practice.

Hopefully, he could get it done in one day.

Mental strength and agility attributes were his current shortcomings. Though he couldn't find a method for the former, as long as he had a means for the latter, he should quickly unlock and cultivate it.

Thinking about this, he checked the attribute panel,

Realm: Early Stage of Muscle Refining

Level: 9 (0/200)

Constitution: 97.13

Strength: 89.50

Agility: 49.33

Spirit: 17.15

Potential Points: 128 (10 points/1 day)

Experience Points: 460

Compared to noon, his Strength attribute had the biggest increase — a whole 10 points!

Constitution 5 points, Agility attribute also increased by 4 points.

"Still a few points short of the threshold."

Chen Fan looked at the attribute panel, noticing no plus sign.

"Even if I reach the threshold, I might not be able to break through with one hundred percent certainty. My Agility attribute is still a bit low."

"Keep working hard; don't forget Archery either."

After the battle at noon, his proficiency in Basic Archery had soared. Currently, he was less than 30% away from reaching Level 9.

Once at Level 9, he's likely to unlock new traits.

But before that, he needed to visit the Song Family Castle and assess the situation.

"I hope there will be some gains."

Chen Fan sighed lightly.

The next day, at dawn, his younger brother Chen Chen was still in bed while Chen Fan quietly got up and went to the main hall.

His mother, Yin Fang, had also awakened early and was in the kitchen, making porridge with Blood Rice.

Chen Fan sat across from Chen Guodong. The latter looked worried and asked, "Xiaofan, do you really have to go? Dad thinks that the person who spied on us with a telescope might not remember the rest of us, but he's likely to remember you. If you get caught when you go in, it would be terrible."

Chen Fan smiled wryly, "Dad, I know, so this time I don't plan to take the bow with me."

"What?"

Chen Guodong's mouth fell open, "You're not taking the bow? What if you encounter danger?"

"Dad, don't worry."

An internal warmth surged in Chen Fan's heart, "I'm merely going without the bow, not without weapons. Just in case, I'll take a long spear. If I encounter fierce beasts, it's not hard to run."

"But..."

Chen Guodong was still worried.

"Dad, you said that person remembered me well, right? If I bring the bow, it'll likely arouse suspicion. So to be safe, I'm not taking it. Of course, this doesn't mean I won't bring a bow back."

Chen Fan smiled slightly, "I plan to buy a bow with 500 pounds draw strength with the money looted from the bandit leader. I'll also buy more Blood Rice."

Yesterday, he had split 20 pounds of Blood Rice, giving Gu Ze five or six pounds. With only fourteen pounds left, it had nearly run out after two or three meals. At most, there would be another three to four days' worth.

So, surely, he would need to buy more.

Chen Guodong didn't know what to say.

He wanted to go with Chen Fan but knew he'd only hold him back if anything happened.

Not going, but still worried.

"Dad, don't worry, it'll be fine."

Chen Fan reassured, "I'm just going to buy some stuff and gather information. Perhaps we're overthinking it; maybe the person didn't take it seriously after all?"

"Hopefully."

Chen Guodong forced a smile, looking more like he was about to cry.

"What are you two talking about, looking so glum?" Yin Fang came over with steaming porridge, asking with a smile.

"Nothing, Mom."

Chen Fan smiled.

It was better not to let her know and have an extra person worry.

After drinking several bowls of porridge, Chen Fan felt his body warm up. Checking his Potential Points, he noted a 20-point increase.

But he indeed had no intention of clashing with anyone on this trip.

Given his current strength, making trouble at the Song Family Castle would be folly.

After finishing the porridge, Chen Fan stood up and, taking advantage of his mother's absence, whispered, "Dad, I'm leaving now."

"Be very careful."

Chen Guodong's eyes reddened.

"Don't worry, it'll be alright."

Chen Fan patted him reassuringly and headed towards the warehouse.

He needed to retrieve his weapons and inform Zhang Ren. If the Song Family Castle showed up while he was away, he would rely on him.

"Don't worry, I'll guard the village," Zhang Ren reassured, patting Chen Fan's shoulder, "You, be careful out there."

Under several curious gazes, Chen Fan took up his spear and headed towards the village gate.

He didn't seek out Meng Yu. Her grasp of her superpower wasn't proficient.

If there had been any outcome, she would have reported to him. Since this didn't happen, the result was clear.

Thus, if he sought her out now, it would only burden her with guilt.

"Ultimately, I have to rely on my own strength. If I solely depend on predicting the future, how would I be different from the worthless lot in Anshan City?"

He murmured, striding forward.