

High Martial 131

Chapter 131: They're Back, Everyone's Back

Chen Fan went up to the second floor.

The first thing that greeted his eyes was a spacious and bright living room. A carpet was laid out, and on the tea-colored wooden cabinet, there was an LCD monitor, with a game console beside it.

Opposite was a set of genuine leather sofas that looked very soft.

Further south, there were floor-to-ceiling windows, outside of which was a balcony with chairs and teapots arranged on it.

"Indulgence leads to decline."

Chen Fan sneered.

He found the bedroom, walked in, and started rummaging through the cabinets.

Soon, he had results.

Two entire bottles of Qi Blood Pills! Each bottle containing ten pills.

There was another bottle, with only three pills.

The smell was the same as the bottle he found downstairs earlier.

They might all be middle-grade Qi Blood Pills.

Chen Fan estimated that, at the price of five thousand yuan per middle-grade Qi Blood Pill, twenty-three pills would be worth over one hundred and fifteen thousand yuan.

In other words, just these two or three small bottles were worth as much as the equivalent of twenty wildebeest mounts from his stronghold.

He pocketed the elixirs and turned his attention to the three martial arts secret manuals on the table.

[Wind Chasing Spear Technique], a spear technique secret manual. According to the introduction, it focuses on flexibility, which is quite different from the style of the Level 8 Spear Skill.

[Eight Trigrams Palm], a palm technique secret manual. Uncle Zhang seems to know this technique, but finding it here is still quite something.

[Thunderous Blade Technique], a blade technique secret manual. The technique is ferocious, as swift as thunder. The introduction mentioned that at a certain level of mastery, the blade could produce a thunderous sound when slicing through the air.

Chen Fan accepted them all and looked at a long saber nearby.

This saber had been hanging on the wall. When he took it down, his first impression was its weight—at least thirty to forty pounds. Drawing the blade, he found its surface as reflective as a mirror, emitting a cold aura. The edge gleamed sharply, giving the impression that it could slice through gold and jade.

"It feels sharper than the arrowheads made of Tier One Original Alloy. Could it be made of Tier Two Original Alloy?"

Chen Fan wondered.

If so, it should be able to cut through the body of a high-level Fierce Beast.

How much would this saber be worth? Probably more than everything else he's found combined.

"I'll take it back and let Uncle Zhang have a look."

Chen Fan sheathed the saber, feeling that with it, he'd be much better prepared for self-defense.

Though no one had gotten close enough to harm him in his previous battles, today's fight with Zhao Da gave him the feeling that future opponents might have various unexpected tricks.

It's always good to be prepared.

There were also some paper currency, not much, just a few thousand yuan, a handgun, dozens of bullets, and some miscellaneous items.

He took everything, then double-checked to ensure nothing was missing before leaving the bedroom.

Feeling uneasy, he went to check the other rooms again.

Nothing more was found.

"Let's leave it at this. Later, I'll call Uncle Wei and the others over to distribute the rice in the basement."

Chen Fan walked out of the villa and glanced back.

Admittedly, this villa was practically a paradise in the apocalypse—a dream place for countless people.

But a single high-level Fierce Beast could turn it all into nothing.

Strength must constantly be increased.

After a while, a long queue formed in front of the villa. The emaciated people held bags, gratefully accepting the white rice, with tears of emotion in their eyes.

"Thank you, thank you."

An old woman knelt before Chen Fan.

Immediately, everyone in line knelt, expressing various words of gratitude.

Previously, they knelt out of genuine fear.

This time, they knelt out of genuine gratitude.

Chen Fan quickly helped the old woman up, embarrassed, saying, "Auntie, please don't do this. These things are what you deserve."

This remark struck a chord with many people.

"The people from the Zhao family are so heartless, treating us as slaves, making us work from dawn till dusk, barely giving us enough to eat, and hitting us if we were too slow."

"Exactly. When we first heard that the Zhao Family Castle was accepting people, we came here with our families. After a few years, I'm the only one left from a dozen people."

"That's right. Honestly, I thought I could barely hold on anymore. Unexpectedly, today we met a benefactor who not only saved us from the Zhao brothers but also shared so much food with us."

"Benefactor, why don't you stay here? We'll all listen to you, work for you as long as you let us have a bite to eat and don't let us starve," someone suddenly suggested, immediately echoing a general sentiment.

Indeed, Zhao Da was an invincible figure in their minds, someone they only dared to curse inwardly.

But this young man before them wiped out Zhao Da's gang alone.

If this young man stayed, they wouldn't need to worry about Fierce Beast attacks in the future.

Instantly, everyone earnestly pleaded in unison.

Chen Fan smiled and agreed.

From what he'd seen, this Zhao Castle was indeed much better than his stronghold. Just the wall was over four meters high and twice the thickness of his own. Plus, there was space to farm.

They say a bird in the hand is worth two in the bush, but that only holds in peaceful times.

Just like the mega cities guarded by top-level Awakeners, if possible, no one wouldn't want to live there.

Everyone was thrilled upon hearing this.

As it was nearing noon, Chen Fan chose some people who seemed honest and trustworthy to distribute the rice.

The few who realized they had gained Chen Fan's favor were overwhelmed with excitement.

Chen Fan smiled, encouraged them with a few words, and, after instructing everyone, took the Chen Family Stronghold members to load some supplies onto a large truck and drove away. The Zhao Family Castle people watched until they disappeared from sight before reluctantly returning to their fortress and closing the gate.

On the truck, Wei Tianyuan asked uneasily, "Xiaofan, is it really okay to not leave some people there?"

"Yes, especially since there are so many good things in the villa's basement. What if they rush in while we're gone..."

Someone trailed off.

That was secondary. What if they had a change of heart and locked the gate, shutting them out?

"It's okay."

Chen Fan smiled and said, "If we were to live with them, I specifically instructed a few people to keep watch. This is also a chance to see the character of these people. If they prove to have good character, we'll genuinely treat them well. If not, we'll use a mix of kindness and strictness, keeping the good ones and driving away the bad ones."

"So that's your plan."

Several people were surprised.

But it was indeed a great opportunity.

Hopefully, the Zhao Family Castle folks wouldn't disappoint.

As time passed, the outline of Chen Family Stronghold gradually came into view.

Seeing the familiar stronghold, Wei Tiangong and others had red eyes.

It had barely been a month since they left, yet it felt like years. They even thought they might never see it again.

According to Xiaofan, people inside the stronghold were living relatively well? Everyone had food, and they had started practicing martial arts. Moreover, the Gu Family Stronghold members had also joined.

It was unbelievable how many changes had happened in such a short time.

Wei Tiangong's gaze fell on Chen Fan.

The biggest change was in Chen Fan.

His strength had grown at such an astonishing rate. Without him, they would be facing Zhao Da's wrath.

At this moment, someone in the lookout tower of Chen Family Stronghold saw through the telescope and noticed the scene.

He froze for a moment, then his mouth dropped open, eyes popping out, showing a look of wild joy. He quickly rang the gathering bell.

Everyone in the stronghold, puzzled, gathered at the bell's sound.

"Old Xia, what's going on? I remember the Hunting Team didn't go out hunting today, right?"

"Yeah, we're all here, and I was just sparring spear techniques!" Gao Yang shouted, looking bewildered.

"I was cooking. What if it burns without me watching?"

"Old Xia, you can't be ringing it just for fun, can you?"

"You're talking nonsense!"

Old Xia cursed, pointing south, "I saw Xiaofan bringing Tiangong, Tianyuan, and the others back. They're driving a big truck, almost here."

"What!"

Instantly, the place fell silent, and everyone wore a look of disbelief.

"Old Xia, what did you just say?"

Chen Guodong asked, lips trembling, afraid he misheard, fearing a false hope.

"Guodong, I said I saw Tiangong, Tianyuan, Jianwen, and Xiaoyuanzi on the truck. They're all back!"

Old Xia said, voice choking and tears streaming.

Everyone heard these words clearly, each person frozen in place.

"Is it true? Tiangong and the others...are back?"

"Impossible. Weren't they at Zhao Family Castle? Zhao Da and his people are known for their ruthlessness; they wouldn't let anyone leave."

"It's Xiaofan! Xiaofan fetched them. No wonder he wasn't seen all morning."

"That's right, I heard too. Old Xia said Xiaofan is with them. Is it possible he went to Zhao Family Castle this morning and brought them all back?"

Everyone exchanged looks.

"What are we standing here for? Open the gate and see for ourselves," Liu Yong said, running ahead to open the gate.

Everyone, snapping out of their shock, hurried after him, pouring out of the stronghold.

And then they saw a large truck slowly approaching, less than three hundred meters away.

On the truck stood many people, all frantically waving their hands, faces familiar to them.

"It's Tiangong and the others! They're back!"

"It's truly them! Truly them!"

"Tiangong! Tianyuan!"

Everyone excitedly ran forward.

"They're back, all of them."

Chen Guodong wiped his tears.

Zhang Ren stood at the door, watching, with moist eyes.