

Immortality 1261

Chapter 1261: Source Armor (3)

"They're all promising seedlings."

Elder Xun silently mused in his heart.

The next part, it seems, would fall to him as the elder to take action... not to show off, no, but to manage the aftermath.

Elder Xun brought his fingers together again, preparing to condense sword qi.

But just as the sword qi was about to emerge, he froze once more, gazing toward the battlefield in the forest, his expression overtaken by astonishment.

"The aura seems to... have strengthened?"

What is going on?

At this moment, within the mountain forest.

Mo Hua stood at the edge of the group, his gaze as profound as the waters. Divine Sense surged forth, instantly connecting with the Five Elements Source Armor and activating the Five Elements Source Formation within it.

The golden-hued Divine Thought he unleashed merged into the Five Element Ultimate Formation, fusing with the formation patterns and spiritual power.

Upon the Five Elements Source Armor, intricate and unique formation patterns once again flared to life.

A distinct humming sound resonated.

Clad in the Five Elements Source Armor, Cheng Mo and Yang Qianjun, who were unleashing their killing moves, suddenly felt a foreign intent syncing with their armor.

The armor was activated, spiritual power enveloped their bodies.

A mysterious force resonated with the meridians throughout their bodies.

Their spiritual power began burning fiercely, circulating faster, stronger—so strong that even their meridians tingled faintly in pain...

"What is this?!"

Their eyes filled with astonishment in that very instant.

They felt themselves strengthened, their spiritual power intensified, and even when facing the terrifying monster, they felt no fear.

"Kill!"

Exchanging a glance, the two roared deeply, immediately striking out together.

The Mountain Splitting Axe erupted with gray-brown Mountain Stone spiritual power, churning strength that descended with unstoppable momentum.

The tip of the Yang Spear gleamed with dazzling golden light, transforming into a streak of brilliance at incredible speed, aiming directly for the Pig Monster's neck.

In an instant, spiritual power collided fiercely with demonic power.

The Pig Monster, sensing imminent death, screamed frantically, its demonic power surging wildly, but it was utterly futile.

Mere moments later, the dust settled.

The overwhelming force of the Mountain Splitting Axe split open the Pig Monster's skull.

The piercing gold gleam of the Yang Spear impaled the Pig Monster's throat.

Sword qi from Situ Jian and Hao Xuan arrived right on time, shredding the Pig Monster's flesh.

The Pig Monster's skull shattered, blood gushed from its throat, and within moments, its large form slumped to the ground.

Cheng Mo and the others felt a sense of relief wash over them and were about to let their guard down when they suddenly recalled Mo Hua's "instructions"—at once, their spirits sharpened.

They must guard against the Pig Monster feigning death.

Once more, they unleashed their remaining spiritual power, cycling through their blade, spear, and sword techniques, each delivering an additional strike.

When the Pig Monster's massive pig head lay motionless on the ground, entirely devoid of breath, the group finally relaxed entirely.

Meanwhile, in the distance, Elder Xun's fingers, still pressed together, abruptly halted halfway through condensing the sword qi.

He watched everything unfold, but despite his worldly experience, he couldn't help but inhale sharply.

Just now—what in the heavens was that?

Armor? Formation?

Elder Xun, a Xun family descendant and elder of the Taixu Sect, having inherited the orthodox traditions of Tao cultivation, had lived many years—and yet he had never seen such armor, such a formation.

He could sense the moment the armor was activated and the formation's effects took hold: the spiritual power of the Five Elements was greatly amplified.

A formation capable of enhancing spiritual power...

Elder Xun felt his heart tremble.

Where did this formation come from?

His gaze silently shifted to Mo Hua.

Although the armor was worn by Cheng Mo and Yang Qianjun, and the powerful Pig Monster was mainly vanquished through their amplified high-impact Taoist techniques...

It was obvious that the formation wasn't something they had designed.

Among this group, the only one potentially capable of crafting such an astonishing formation was Mo Hua.

Moreover, he had clearly felt Mo Hua unleash Divine Sense earlier, manipulating the formation on the armor.

"But..." Elder Xun frowned, deeply perplexed. "Where did he learn this formation?"

Enhanced spiritual power, transcendent slaying of enemies.

This level of formation had to be an ultimate inheritance.

Even within the Eight Great Gates of Qian State, it would be deemed equivalent to a sect-protecting technique for the Taixu Sect.

How could this lad possibly learn such a thing?

"Could it be..." Elder Xun hesitated briefly, pondering, "that the Patriarch taught him?"

If the Taixu Sect had such a rare inheritance, it could only belong to the Patriarch, the most knowledgeable and skilled formations expert.

Elder Xun nodded slightly but soon reconsidered:

"That doesn't make sense..."

He had grown up under the Patriarch's watchful eyes and had never seen, let alone heard of, such an ultimate formation inheritance within the Taixu Sect or the Xun family.

Did the Patriarch keep it hidden?

Could it be a genuine treasure secretly hoarded, not passed on to anyone else, and exclusively taught to this young man?

Elder Xun's brows furrowed even tighter.

At this moment, he even started doubting whether Mo Hua might truly bear the surname "Xun."

Otherwise, the Patriarch's favoritism was inexplicable.

The Patriarch was notoriously strict and rigid, adhering firmly to sect rules, treating Xun family disciples no differently, maintaining utmost rigor.

On this, Elder Xun was fully aware.

But humans are, after all, human, and even the strictest and most rigid individuals have their preferences.

If this Mo Hua truly bore the surname "Xun"...

Would the Patriarch's care for Mo Hua signify they shared an even closer blood relation?

How close?

Was he a distant great-grandson? A direct grandson? Or perhaps... a great-grandson?

As these thoughts crossed Elder Xun's mind, his heart skipped a beat.

"Oh no!"

"By this logic, could this Mo Hua kid... turn out to be my elder?!"

Would he have to call him "Uncle" or "Granduncle"?!

Elder Xun inhaled sharply once again.

This would mean falling several ranks in family hierarchy!

What to do?

Cold sweat streamed down Elder Xun's back as his thoughts raced.

"No way!"

He absolutely couldn't accept being the junior!

Since the Patriarch hadn't said anything explicitly and Mo Hua hadn't admitted to anything, he would pretend nothing had transpired.

No matter what the truth was, it didn't exist!

He would act as if he knew nothing!!

With that thought, Elder Xun finally calmed down somewhat, though his gaze toward Mo Hua carried an involuntary hint of "reverence."

Meanwhile, the Pig Monster was slain.

Mo Hua exhaled lightly and severed his Divine Thought, halting the formation on the Five Elements Source Armor, nullifying the spiritual power enhancement.

Cheng Mo and Yang Qianjun exited their "enhanced" states, returning to their original spiritual power levels, no longer feeling that "I've grown stronger" sensation, their eyes betraying a touch of disappointment and melancholy.

Yang Qianjun, however, felt mostly shaken inside.

"Junior Brother, this armor..."

Yang Qianjun's voice trembled slightly.

Mo Hua did not hide the matter and replied, "This is the 'Five Elements Source Armor,' engraved with formations that can temporarily enhance the Five Elements, amplifying spiritual power..."

Enhancing the Five Elements, amplifying spiritual power!

Yang Qianjun's gaze trembled fiercely.

As a Yang family disciple and member of the Taoist soldiers Court, his knowledge went deeper, understanding the implications. His heart surged like a storm.

Cheng Mo, on the other hand, hadn't thought as far.

He simply remembered the feeling upon donning the armor—spiritual power surging, unstoppable might, unyielding before god or demon alike, invincible.

Clutching the armor tightly, Cheng Mo gazed at Mo Hua with gleaming eyes, looking as though he was about to call him "Foster Father" if he opened his mouth.

Chapter 1262: Sever Gold Sect

"Junior Brother..."

Cheng Mo, tall and broad-shouldered, with eyes clear and brimming with a faint hint of admiration, stared at Mo Hua, making him feel all kinds of discomfort.

"Can you sell me a set of this armor? I'll pay any amount of Spirit Stones!"

Cheng Mo was practically drooling with desire.

The others, hearing his words, all turned their blazing gazes toward Mo Hua.

Especially Situ Jian and Hao Xuan.

The two had never worn this armor before and hadn't experienced the sensations of spiritual power augmentation or greatly enhanced Taoist Skill potency, so their faces were full of curiosity and longing.

Situ Jian, who was a Sword Cultivator, was eager to know how powerful his Li Fire Sword would become when amplified.

Hao Xuan, now a "Club" Cultivator, had once been a Sword Cultivator.

Even though he now favored surprise attacks with a club, no one could resist the allure of trying out a sword technique of overwhelming power.

Mo Hua said, "This armor has a lot of restrictions. The Formation inside is very complex. Without my Divine Thought controlling it, there's no way to amplify spiritual power..."

The group looked slightly disappointed.

But Cheng Mo quickly said, "Junior Brother, whatever thing you're working on next, be sure to bring me along! I won't ask for much—just let me wear this armor, and I'll chop wherever you point."

Cheng Mo solemnly swore.

Mo Hua gave a resigned nod, "Alright..."

He looked up at the sky, noting the late hour, then said, "It's getting late—we should skin this Pig Monster and deal with the rest back home."

"Agreed."

This was a Second Grade Middle Stage Pig Monster, with a fat head, big ears, and a unique species. Skinning, dismembering, and extracting materials from it promised considerable Merit Points.

Cheng Mo raised two large axes and began hacking the pig's head.

The others busily divided the work.

Off in the distance, Elder Xun, after a complicated internal struggle, finally calmed himself.

No matter what Mo Hua's identity was or where he learned the Formation, it wasn't his business.

This was a matter for the Patriarch.

The Patriarch's affairs were beyond the reach of him, a mere Golden Core Stage descendant. He lacked both the courage and the authority to intervene.

His sole responsibility was to heed the Patriarch's orders—ensure this child's safety.

Beyond that, none of the rest mattered.

Elder Xun nodded to himself, then quietly glanced over at Mo Hua and the group.

"Still, for these kids to manage to kill a Second Grade Middle Stage Pig Monster with its tough hide and heavy build..."

"Youth truly is formidable..."

Elder Xun reflected with admiration.

Though it had taken combined effort, it was still remarkable.

The last time he saw a disciple capable of leading a team to hunt Foundation Establishment-level Monster Beasts with mid-stage Foundation Establishment cultivation, it was Brother Xuan...

The image of that upright, strong-featured man with sword-like brows and long beard floated to mind.

Lost in thought, Elder Xun's gaze dimmed, and his heart sank with melancholy.

The heavens truly envy talent...

Back then, Brother Xuan was hailed as a peerless Sword Dao Genius—a descendant of the legendary Patriarch Dugu, who was unrivaled in Sword Dao, a divine figure of Taixu Gate. He carried the hopes of the entire sect.

But for reasons unknown, his Lifebound Spirit Sword was shattered. From then on, he fell into obscurity and disappeared among the masses.

Now, his whereabouts remain a mystery.

In those days, the two of them had cultivated side by side, practiced swordplay together, shared punishments inseparably—a bond of deep camaraderie.

But now, with time drifting by and the Great Dao stretching endlessly ahead, the chances of meeting again seemed slim.

Elder Xun momentarily stood stunned and lost in memory...

But he didn't have long to grieve. Soon, he felt several cultivators' essences approaching from afar.

Elder Xun turned, following the sensation with his gaze, his brows furrowing slightly.

Meanwhile, Mo Hua and the others were busy skinning and dismembering the Pig Monster.

A moment later, Mo Hua suddenly froze, looking up toward the mountain path, his eyes sharpening as he said in a deep voice:

"Someone's coming."

Cheng Mo was a bit surprised and released his Divine Sense, but found no figures nearby.

Seeing Mo Hua's grave expression, however, Cheng Mo and the others instinctively understood something was amiss. They each tightened their grips on their axes and swords, their faces tense with vigilance.

Soon enough, several cultivators' essences entered their Divine Sense range.

The group exchanged uneasy glances, sensing trouble.

These cultivators clearly knew of Mo Hua and the others' presence and made no effort to hide it, arrogantly striding forward until they emerged at the forest's edge.

A group of eight cultivators, all clad in golden Taoist Robes, swords at their waists, uniformly attuned to Golden Series Spiritual Roots. Their faces were handsome but carried a haughty air.

Mo Hua thought, I knew it.

The Sever Gold Sect...

Among the group, their faces were unfamiliar. Seven were Foundation Building Middle Stage, while the leader stood out as Foundation Establishment Late Stage.

It seemed to be a senior disciple from Sever Gold Sect leading a team in a Monster Hunt.

This late-stage Sever Gold Sect senior disciple was tall and thin, impressive-looking on the surface, holding his head high with an air of self-importance.

To his right, a Sever Gold Sect disciple stepped forward, pointed at Mo Hua and the group, and sneered:

"You brats have some nerve, stealing our Sever Gold Sect's monster!"

Cheng Mo's eyes narrowed as he retorted coldly:

"This Pig Monster was killed by us with great effort—what does it have to do with your Sever Gold Sect?"

The Sever Gold Sect disciple let out a derisive laugh. "A bunch of mid-stage Foundation Establishment disciples still wet behind the ears—how could you possibly kill this Second Grade Middle Stage Monster Beast?"

"This Pig Monster is clearly our kill!"

"Indeed," another disciple chimed in, "We joined forces to encircle and injure it, chasing it for ages. It was just within our grasp when you little whelps swooped in and snatched it away."

"Since we're all sect disciples of the Qian Learning State Boundary, leave the Pig Monster, and we'll let this slide."

Cheng Mo, irate at their lies, shouted, "Shut your damn mouth!"

The faces of the Sever Gold Sect disciples darkened. One snapped back harshly:

"Watch your tongue, boy!"

"Or we'll teach you unruly whelps a proper lesson on behalf of your elders!"

Chapter 1263: Sever Gold Sect (2)

Cheng Mo sneered, "A bunch of trash, too scared to do it yourself, only knowing how to snatch others' prey."

The Sever Gold Sect disciple was slightly enraged, "You refuse to drink the wine of respect, so you'll be forced to drink the wine of punishment."

The leading brother of Sever Gold Sect was already somewhat displeased and said coldly, "What are you talking so much for?"

Pointing at Mo Hua and the others, he ordered:

"Leave the Monster Beast, and get lost!"

Cheng Mo was furious, and the gazes of Situ Jian and the others also turned icy.

However, Mo Hua's eyes flickered slightly, and he said softly:

"Leave."

Cheng Mo and the others were momentarily stunned. They glanced at Mo Hua, suppressed their anger, and slowly nodded.

They had just fought a fierce battle with the pig-headed monster, depleting a significant amount of Spiritual Power. Their strength had yet to recover, making it impossible to contend with these Sever Gold Sect scumbags.

Not to mention, one among them was at the Foundation Establishment Late Stage.

They may look down on Sever Gold Sect for being petty, despicable, and shameless, but they never underestimated Sever Gold Sect's Gold-Cutting Imperial Sword technique.

The brother from Sever Gold Sect, with a golden sword at his waist and Sword Qi hovering around him, was clearly a Sword Cultivator with notable cultivation.

A Sword Cultivator at the Foundation Establishment Late Stage would undoubtedly be a formidable opponent.

Under normal circumstances, their youthful recklessness might drive them to charge in recklessly, win or lose, without any prior considerations.

But now that their Junior Brother had spoken, they had to comply.

Cheng Mo and the others shot the Sever Gold Sect disciples a ferocious glare before slowly retreating.

Mo Hua blended in among them, retreating unobtrusively, not catching the eyes of the Sever Gold Sect disciples at all.

The Sever Gold Sect disciples, seeing Cheng Mo and the others slink away dejectedly, refrained from pursuing them and instead burst out with mocking laughter.

"Let this teach you a lesson..."

"Acting all tough, but in the end, you still ran away with your tails tucked between your legs, huh?"

"The next time you run into us Sever Gold Sect disciples, you'd better scam early just like today."

The more perceptive disciples gave a thumbs-up and flattered the brother at the Foundation Establishment Late Stage:

"Brother, you're the most intimidating! Just one word from you, and this group of little brats didn't even dare to fart."

The Sever Gold Sect brother sneered coldly, "This is nothing..."

He glanced disdainfully at Mo Hua and his group disappearing into the distance and said, "Just a few little kids. At least they know their place. Otherwise, I'd have had to teach them the rules of this Refining Demon Mountain myself."

"Brother, you're so mighty!"

"Thanks to you, Brother, we got to bask in your glory this time."

"Those so-called Eight Great Gates aren't they still subject to Sever Gold Sect's authority?"

A crowd of disciples began to heap on compliments again.

Crouching in a bush, Elder Xun ground his teeth in frustration, itching to attack and teach those little Sever Gold Sect bastards a lesson to uphold Taixu Gate's honor.

But after thinking about it, he decided against it.

This wasn't their family or Sect grounds but the Refining Demon Mountain.

These disciples would have to fight not only monsters but inevitably run into conflicts with disciples from other Sects as well.

This was a matter for the disciples to resolve on their own.

He was following the ancestor's orders to protect Mo Hua's safety, nothing more.

Real men could bend and stretch.

Since Mo Hua knew how to tolerate and avoid conflict, there was no need for him to intervene forcefully.

Besides, experiencing setbacks could be a valuable lesson.

Encountering trouble now and learning from it was better than being taken advantage of later after leaving the Sect and ending up getting yourself killed.

However...

Mo Hua's calm demeanor resurfaced in Elder Xun's mind.

Despite the Sever Gold Sect disciples' mocking and taunts, Mo Hua's expression remained calm as still water, showing no hint of reaction.

"Does this child have a nature to endure humiliation for the sake of greater plans?"

Elder Xun was momentarily unsure...

But clearly, Mo Hua was not.

Once out of the Sever Gold Sect disciples' Divine Sense range, Mo Hua squatted down and began rifling through his Storage Bag.

He selected some Formations and Spiritual Artifacts.

"I'll set up the Formation myself in a while..."

"These Spiritual Artifacts include some Armor and Spirit Swords, all of which I've inscribed with the 'Kejin Formation'..."

The Kejin Formation, as the name implied, could suppress the Five Elements Golden Spiritual Power and was a type of Five Elements restriction Formation.

Mo Hua had mastered this Formation long ago.

He had also asked Master Gu to forge a few customized gold-breaking spiritual tools during his free time, keeping them in his Storage Bag as a contingency.

Now they came in handy.

"Additionally, here's the Cangmu Wolf's poison, to be smeared on blades and swords..."

"And the blood of the Tianqing Snake, which is also poisonous. Mix this and coat the weapons with it..."

Originally feeling aggrieved and indignant, Cheng Mo and the others were momentarily stunned but, upon reflection, did not seem surprised.

Cheng Mo whispered:

"Junior Brother, are we going to take revenge now?"

Mo Hua corrected him, "Not revenge. We're simply reclaiming what is ours and giving them a lesson in the process..."

Mo Hua's gaze turned icy.

They dared to steal my pig?!

Mo Hua continued, "Take this time to meditate and use Pills to recover your Spiritual Power. Later, we're going to take them down!"

Cheng Mo and the others' spirits lifted, and they responded in unison:

"Understood!"

Mo Hua had refrained from acting earlier for two reasons: first, they had just battled fiercely, and their Spiritual Power was depleted;

Second, they were outnumbered and at a disadvantage.

Forcing a confrontation would have been unwise.

A gentleman takes revenge, even if it takes ten years.

Retreating safely had been the priority.

But once their Spiritual Power was restored and, with them in the shadows and their opponents out in the open, given time to plan and prepare, the situation changed completely.

A gentleman does not delay revenge overnight.

A few mere Sever Gold Sect disciples were not worthy of making them wait ten years for vengeance.

They weren't even worth waiting overnight.

With everything prepared, Cheng Mo and the others, having recovered their Spiritual Power, donned the gold-breaking armor, gripped their swords and blades coated with various Monster Beast poisons, and executed their movement technique to advance swiftly through the forest.

Their youthful vigor had long been simmering with rage after being mocked by the disciples of the Sever Gold Sect.

Now that they had a chance to strike back, their eyes gleamed with cold menace.

In the distance, Elder Xun paused in surprise.

He had just praised Mo Hua inwardly for his "restraint," but in the blink of an eye, they were carrying axes, knives, and swords, ready to "pick a fight."

Some even went as far as poisoning their Spiritual Artifacts.

This kind of treacherous method... who taught them this?

Elder Xun shook his head.

Looks like a real conflict is inevitable now. Ignoring it would no longer work.

Nonetheless, he had made up his mind.

If Mo Hua and his group won, he'd watch from the sidelines.

If Mo Hua and his group lost, he'd step in to tilt the odds.

After all, he was an elder, and an elder must maintain their "demeanor"...

Elder Xun silently started moving, trailing after Mo Hua and his group.

Mo Hua and the group, meanwhile, headed south, pursuing the direction where the Sever Gold Sect disciples had departed.

Throughout the chase, Mo Hua unfurled his Divine Sense, carefully combing through the traces left by the Sever Gold Sect disciples. After nearly an hour, they finally spotted the group at the top of a hill.

The pig-headed monster had already been skinned for materials.

Looking triumphant, the Sever Gold Sect disciples were now gathered at the foot of a slope, drinking and feasting.

To Mo Hua's surprise, it was already dusk by now. The twilight hung heavy, the sunset fading beyond the hills, and soon, darkness would take over.

And yet, these disciples seemed in no rush to leave Refining Demon Mountain.

"Are they planning to spend the night in the mountains?"

Mo Hua frowned.

Why choose to stay in the mountains instead of leaving while they could?

Though, staying here works just fine.

Easier to act under the cover of darkness.

Mo Hua pulled out several pieces of black cloth, instructing everyone to cover their faces.

Cheng Mo said, "Senior Brother, even with our faces covered, won't they still recognize us...?"

Mo Hua shook his head, his expression dead serious as he replied:

"If we're going to strike in the dark, we need to do it 'professionally.' Since others wear masks, we must follow suit. Otherwise, we would be breaking the rules."

Cheng Mo nodded hesitantly, half-understanding.

Once their preparations were complete, the group waited until nightfall. The night deepened; a cool mountain breeze swept through the area.

The Sever Gold Sect disciples gathered around a fire formation, drinking themselves into a light stupor, leaving only two on the outskirts for guard duty.

Mo Hua lowered his voice and said, "Stick to the plan."

Cheng Mo, biting a twig to suppress any noise, obediently nodded.

Soon, the group moved into their designated positions.

Mo Hua activated the Concealment Technique, quietly approaching the fire formation, stopping in its outer periphery, where he took out a bottle of Spiritual Ink and discreetly poured it onto the ground.

The ink seeped into the mountain soil.

Guided by Mo Hua's Divine Thought, under the cloak of night, the ink slithered and coalesced, forming a Formation.

Elder Xun, still puzzled at what Mo Hua was plotting, froze briefly.

He knew Mo Hua was creating a Formation, but how could he manage this under the disciples' noses?

Now, the truth unfolded before his eyes.

Even amidst the deepening night, Elder Xun, with his Golden Core Divine Sense attuned to twenty-eight patterns, sensed the intricacies of Mo Hua's Formation creation.

Divine Thought as the brush, the earth as its canvas—a Formation came into existence in utter silence.

Elder Xun inhaled sharply.

Although he avoided the path of Formation due to fear of the patriarch's strictness, decades of exposure granted him insight.

This technique was far beyond the reach of ordinary Formation Masters!

Could it be... something taught by the patriarch as well?

But...

Elder Xun's gaze flickered uneasily, "Could the patriarch himself even perform something like this...?"

...

Then, everything seemed to unfold naturally.

The Sever Gold Sect disciples were arrogant and reckless. Despite their Cultivation, their lack of experience with Tao Cultivation left them negligently complacent. Amidst their lively drinking and chatting, their guard dropped completely.

Mo Hua completed the Formation without them noticing a thing.

Mo Hua shook his head.

He had prepared multiple contingency plans in case his Divine Sense-drawn Formation was discovered—but it appeared he was overthinking it.

Finally, Mo Hua activated the Formation.

The seventeen-pattern, high-level second-grade Formation, though entry-level among high-rank ones, was more than sufficient to blast away these middle-phase second-grade disciples.

As the Formation detonated, soil and rubble swirled, flames erupted in the darkness.

Five of the eight Sever Gold Sect disciples collapsed instantly.

Even the senior disciple, though a late-stage Foundation Establishment Cultivator, was gravely wounded by the blast.

Despite being a Sword Cultivator, he had neglected body cultivation.

Of the remaining three, Hao Xuan struck one unconscious with a sneak attack.

Yang Qianjun and Cheng Mo exploded into action, each dispatching one disciple.

Finally, the four of them teamed up to corner the weakened Sever Gold Sect senior disciple.

That same senior, once arrogant and aloof during the day, now looked utterly wretched, his airs shattered, trembling like a lost dog.

It seemed he genuinely hadn't expected anyone in Refining Demon Mountain to ambush them.

However, he quickly regained composure amidst the chaos, summoning his Broken Gold Sword Qi and roaring:

"Who are you? How dare you offend the Sever Gold Sect?"

Mo Hua remained unfazed.

Cheng Mo, still biting the twig, couldn't respond.

The others also kept silent, unleashing everything they had to attack the Sever Gold Sect senior disciple relentlessly.

With Gold-breaking armor defenses, deadly Spiritual Artifacts, and poisoned weapons, subduing a heavily injured late-stage Foundation Establishment Cultivator wasn't overly challenging.

However, mid-battle, the Sever Gold Sect senior disciple suddenly recognized them, exclaiming in shocked disbelief:

"It's you! Those five little punks from earlier in the day?!"

But how could it be...

How could these little punks dare—and be able—to ambush his hunting squad of eight Sever Gold Sect disciples, led by a late-stage Foundation Establishment Cultivator?

Enraged and incredulous, he sneered:

"Fine! Fine! You impudent little brats! Today I will..."

Before he could finish, Mo Hua saw through him.

"He's about to use the Sever Gold Sword Control Jue!"

Yang Qianjun and the others immediately intensified their assault, suppressing the Sever Gold Sect senior disciple.

Desperate, the senior reached for his runes.

Mo Hua warned: "He's going for the Golden Body Talisman."

Yang Qianjun, hearing this, swung his spear sharply to strike the disciple's arm.

The Sever Gold Sect senior was stunned. Who were these brats to anticipate his every move, reading him so cleanly?

Biting through the pain, he knowingly suffered Yang Qianjun's spear strike to seize this fleeting chance and activated the talisman.

A hazy golden glow enveloped him.

The Sever Gold Sect senior withdrew several steps under the talisman's protection, gathering his Spiritual Power to enforce the fatal Sever Gold Sword Control Jue.

Golden light radiated from him.

Golden Sword Qi and the golden Spirit Sword before him intertwined brilliantly, exuding immense force.

Mo Hua instantly countered with a Water Prison Technique, but the pale blue water-light was repelled by the Golden Body Talisman, failing to interrupt the Sever Gold Sword Control Jue's buildup.

The talisman rendered him immune to ordinary spell control.

Quick as lightning, Mo Hua shouted crisply:

"Attack! Cut him down!"

Simultaneously, Mo Hua began channeling the Five Elements Origin Armor.

Cheng Mo immediately picked up on this, excitement lighting his face. Without hesitation, his Spiritual Power surged, unleashing the Mountain Splitting Axe, cleaving at the Sever Gold Sect senior.

Being a Body Cultivator, Cheng Mo's strike was exceptionally quick.

The Sever Gold Sect senior's expression darkened.

He calculated the attack mentally.

This axe move, though fierce, wasn't enough to stop his Sword Control Jue.

So long as his move was completed, these vile, despicable little wretches would meet their doom!

His gaze sharpened coldly.

But just as Cheng Mo's axe swung midway, the armor on his body shimmered. An enigmatic force descended.

Cheng Mo's power surged exponentially.

The axes he wielded gleamed with greater brilliance, their force escalating.

The Sever Gold Sect senior turned pale.

This... isn't right!

Why has the axe's power suddenly escalated?!

At that moment, his heart sank. He could do nothing but watch helplessly as Cheng Mo's massive axe struck his shoulder.

The strike, immense in might, shattered the Golden Body Talisman, shaking him so hard he trembled all over.

The axe blade inflicted severe injuries, causing profuse bleeding.

The attack's overwhelming force interrupted his half-cast Sever Gold Sword Control Jue.

Spiritual Power backlash coursed through him; blood spurted from his mouth, leaving him utterly powerless.

The Sever Gold Sect senior disciple, a late-stage Foundation Establishment Cultivator, was ultimately defeated, forced to kneel before Mo Hua, held down by Cheng Mo's mighty axe.

Chapter 1265: Reporting Back

"Dare to steal my pig?"

Mo Hua's voice was crisp, carrying a faint tone of disdain.

The Sever Gold Sect Senior Brother knelt before him, feeling utterly humiliated.

He had been blasted by a Formation, struck by blades and axes, and even poisoned. His body was now riddled with wounds.

But as someone in the late stage of Foundation Establishment, his foundation wasn't weak. Though his injuries were severe, they were not fatal.

Moreover, his bones were still quite sturdy. He stubbornly cursed:

"A pack of little bastards!"

Hearing this, Cheng Mo slapped him hard across the face.

Blood seeped from the corner of the Sever Gold Sect Senior Brother's mouth. His gaze was venomous, yet his voice remained defiant. Gritting his teeth, he said:

"Today, the tiger has fallen to the plains, ending up in the hands of little mongrels like you. I'll accept this humiliation for now! But I swear, I will settle this score. Just wait."

Mo Hua raised an eyebrow.

Bones this hard?

He asked curiously, "You're not afraid that we might kill you?"

The Sever Gold Sect Senior Brother sneered, "You don't dare to kill me."

Mo Hua paused for a moment, then his thoughts clicked into place.

Indeed...

He truly couldn't kill this man.

If it were a Sin Cultivator, Evil Cultivator, or Demon Cultivator, it would be another story. But this man was from the Sever Gold Sect, one of the Twelve Sects within the Qianxue State Boundary. He hadn't committed any major violations of Taoist Law. If they truly killed him, the Sever Gold Sect would undoubtedly seek justice.

The Taoist Court wouldn't stand idly by either.

What's more, they were in Refining Demon Mountain now.

Though the mountain was known for its monster beasts and perilous environment, it wasn't a lawless zone.

Mo Hua sank into deep thought.

The Sever Gold Sect Senior Brother, seeing this, became even more certain that Mo Hua wouldn't dare kill him. His expression grew more brazen and fearless.

"Kid, let me give you a piece of advice: don't make an enemy of my Sever Gold Sect. You have no idea of our power!"

Mo Hua curled his lip in disdain.

What's so arrogant about a man kneeling on the ground?

"If the Sever Gold Sect was truly so powerful, you wouldn't be kneeling here before me."

The Sever Gold Sect Senior Brother's chest tightened with frustration, his face twitching. But he forced himself to maintain a defiant and cold sneer.

Cheng Mo found this stubborn attitude repulsive and said:

"Senior Brother, are we really letting him live?"

Mo Hua asked, "Do you want to kill him?"

Cheng Mo shook his head.

He was merely asking.

Though reckless, he wasn't foolish.

If they really killed him, it would bring big trouble. It would be hard to explain to the Sever Gold Sect, Taixu Gate, the Taoist Court, or even their own Cheng Family in Qianxue State.

A little roughing up should suffice.

Mo Hua nodded and said, "Strip him naked, hang him on a tree, and draw a turtle on him."

The Sever Gold Sect Senior Brother froze for a moment, then his expression changed drastically.

Such humiliation was worse than death!

"You little bastards, dare you?!" the Sever Gold Sect Senior Brother roared in anger.

Mo Hua raised an eyebrow. He decided to show this man, with action, exactly how daring he was.

"Tie him up, hang him, and draw the turtle."

"On it!"

Cheng Mo didn't hold back. He immediately stripped off the Sever Gold Sect Senior Brother's Taoist Robe, tied him up with a spirit-binding rope artifact, and prepared to hang him on a tree.

The Sever Gold Sect Senior Brother, consumed with rage yet powerless to resist, could only seethe silently as the towering Cheng Mo carried out the task. Humiliated and livid, he muttered venomously:

"I will never forgive you for this!"

"This humiliation, I'll make you pay back a hundredfold!"

Mo Hua kindly reminded him, "Then next time, be more careful. If you're this useless and land in our hands again, I'll make you kneel a hundred times and draw a hundred turtles on you."

The Sever Gold Sect Senior Brother's eyes reddened with fury. "It's because you fought dirty, ambushing me. Otherwise, I wouldn't have..."

Mo Hua was speechless. "Do you think this is some child's play, talking about 'fighting dirty'? You're a grown man, so childish. All your cultivation might as well have gone to the dogs..."

"All your eating seems to have done is make you grow taller, not smarter, huh?"

"And besides, if we're talking about underhanded tactics, we can't even compare to your Sever Gold Sect..."

"Relying on numbers, shamelessly robbing junior disciples of their monster beasts."

"Fine, you robbed them. But then you were counter-robbed. And not only that, you couldn't even win the fight. Now you're kneeling before us."

"Kneeling isn't the worst of it, but getting stripped, hung on a tree, and having a turtle drawn on you..."

Mo Hua sighed. "I admit I overestimated the disciples of the Sever Gold Sect."

"To think I prepared so many tricks, yet you're not even as tough as the pig I killed earlier..."

The Sever Gold Sect Senior Brother was so furious that he coughed up blood on the spot.

Hao Xuan reminded, "Stop it, Senior Brother. If you keep talking, he's going to die of anger."

If that happened, it wouldn't be the weapons or poisons that did him in, but Mo Hua's words. When the Taoist Court investigated, how could they explain that?

"Oh."

Mo Hua glanced at the Sever Gold Sect Senior Brother hanging on the tree. His face was pale, breath shallow, and he seemed more dead than alive. Only then did Mo Hua halt his tirade.

But Mo Hua remained true to his word and dipped a brush in Spiritual Ink, drawing a turtle on the man's chest.

The turtle was drawn with impeccable realism.

Mo Hua was quite pleased with his work.

At that moment, the Sever Gold Sect Senior Brother rolled his eyes and fainted outright in anger.

"Is he dead?" Situ Jian asked.

Mo Hua checked his breathing. "Luckily, no."

"Good, as long as he's not dead."

"Pack up, we're done here."

"Got it!"

Then, like a windstorm, they began to loot the storage bags. But halfway through the process, someone suddenly realized something:

"Wait, are we allowed to take the storage bags?"

"Seems... not."

Situ Jian mused, "Beating up a disciple from Sever Gold Sect will definitely cause them to hold grudges, but it's not a big deal."

"But if we take their storage bags, that counts as robbing cultivators. The optics of that aren't great."

"Moreover, if their storage bag contains Sect legacy items, like the Sever Gold Sword Controlling Technique or something, taking it would undoubtedly make us targets of Sever Gold Sect's wrath..."

Chapter 1266: Report (2)

"When the time comes, if Sever Gold Sect shamelessly accuses us of stealing their sect-protecting sword technique, it'll really be troublesome..."

The group discussed.

"That's right, that's right!"

Mo Hua, feeling guilty, nodded repeatedly.

Because he did, in fact, steal Sever Gold Sect's sect-protecting sword technique.

The jade slip containing the Sever Gold Sword Control Jue currently lay in his storage ring...

He absolutely couldn't let the "Petty Sect" find out.

Mo Hua said, "We're proper people, not bandits. We only take back what's rightfully ours—we won't stoop to robbery."

"If people don't offend me, I don't offend them."

"But if people do offend me, then I'll strip them, hang them on a tree, and draw a turtle on them!"

Cheng Mo and the others nodded in agreement, "Junior Brother is absolutely right!"

Afterward, the group gathered all the materials from the Pig Monster, taking them for themselves, while returning the storage bags of Sever Gold Sect's disciples to their owners.

After tidying up, and with the night still young, Mo Hua and his companions left Refining Demon Mountain.

As for whether Sever Gold Sect's disciples would end up eaten by Monster Beasts...

Mo Hua didn't care.

It wasn't like he killed them anyway—if they got eaten by Monster Beasts, that was just their own fault.

Still, Mo Hua had a kind heart. Before leaving, he fed each of them a healing pill, so they wouldn't actually die.

After Mo Hua left, some time passed, and the medicinal power took effect. Sever Gold Sect's disciples' injuries improved, and they gradually regained consciousness.

And then they saw—

The "heroic and proud" senior brother they had always looked up to was stripped naked, hanging from a tree, with a turtle drawn on his chest, looking like a ridiculous clown.

All the disciples were stunned.

"Senior Brother, you..."

The Sever Gold Sect Senior Brother awoke as well and angrily roared, "Aren't you going to let me down already?!"

The group of disciples immediately scrambled in panic and hastily brought him down.

"Senior Brother, who did this?!"

"Senior Brother, I felt a strike to my head and blacked out—it was all a blur..."

"I swear I saw countless shadows—could it have been a group attack?"

One of them frowned and said gravely, "Even Senior Brother Jin couldn't defend himself, and suffered such humiliation. The ones responsible likely included more than one Foundation Establishment Late Stage cultivator..."

"Brother Jin..."

"Shut up, all of you!"

Surname Jin, the Sever Gold Sect Senior Brother, shouted angrily.

Each word from his disciples stabbed him like a knife to the chest.

He felt deeply humiliated, furious, and a burning frustration in his chest—he couldn't help but spit out another mouthful of blood.

Night had fully fallen, the forest was desolate, and the occasional growls of Monster Beasts echoed faintly.

The atmosphere in the mountains grew increasingly dangerous.

"Let's return first. I swear we'll settle this debt!"

The Sever Gold Sect Senior Brother's eyes burned with venomous hatred.

The other disciples dared not speak; helping each other, they headed down the mountain.

Not long after they left, Xun Ziyou stepped out from the shadows on the dark hillside, sighing softly.

No need for him to intervene.

A single Sever Gold Sect Foundation Establishment Late Stage Senior Brother, paired with seven Foundation Establishment Middle Stage disciples, had been handled so thoroughly.

The methods were a bit ruthless, but there had been restraint—not truly lethal.

Still, where did the boy learn such tactics?

Despite looking every bit pure, fair-skinned, and obedient, in his actions, he was cunning to the bone, brimming with deviousness...

Xun Ziyou shook his head, musing to himself:

"But perhaps it's better this way. He's not one to be easily bullied. Should he be wronged, he wouldn't need the sect elders to support him—he'd reclaim his dignity by himself..."

"That's a rare and valuable quality."

"To act with inner principles while outwardly adaptable; to have ideals, yet not shy away from any means; to follow rules, yet not be shackled by them..."

Xun Ziyou suddenly felt a pang of melancholy, losing himself to his thoughts.

"Brother Xuan, back in the day... unparalleled talent and unyielding virtue. But perhaps it was that same unwavering virtue that led to his downfall..."

"If only he hadn't been so staunch..."

...

Mo Hua and his group returned to the sect without incident.

The next day, Mo Hua acted as if nothing had happened, attending cultivation classes as usual.

Xun Ziyou quietly observed Mo Hua, noting his calm demeanor, as though last night had never occurred...

He hadn't killed the Second-Grade Middle Stage Pig Monster.

He hadn't been robbed by Sever Gold Sect.

And he especially hadn't turned the tables, robbing Sever Gold Sect, crippling their Foundation Establishment Late Stage Senior Brother, stripping him, hanging him on a tree, and drawing a turtle...

Xun Ziyou felt a tinge of helplessness.

This boy's audacity was boundless.

Indeed, if he had truly slaughtered those Sever Gold Sect disciples last night, he'd probably still show up today with a composed face.

With such resolve, he was destined for greatness.

It was merely uncertain whether the great deeds he pursued, straddling the line between righteousness and darkness, would be virtuous or villainous.

Xun Ziyou shook his head.

Turning away, he walked toward the Elder's Residence to pay a visit to Elder Master Xun.

After all, he needed to report what he'd seen and heard.

Yet upon entering the Elder's Residence, Xun Ziyou was surprised to find Elder Master Xun standing frozen in place, holding a jade slip.

Elder Master Xun looked as though he'd discovered something monumental. His face was pale with shock, and his trembling hand gripped the jade slip tightly.

Xun Ziyou had rarely seen the ancestor display such an expression.

The elder had lived countless years, his temperament stern and reserved, rarely revealing joy or anger on his face; he was almost never this visibly shaken.

Something significant must have transpired...

Not daring to intrude, Xun Ziyou stood at the door like a block of wood.

Meanwhile inside, Elder Master Xun stared at the jade slip, his heart churning like waves in a storm.

A disciple sent to investigate Mo Hua's history had returned today and just delivered this jade slip.

What was recorded within was deeply shocking:

Tongxian City. Mo Hua.

Rumored to have, while still in Qi Refinement, spearheaded the creation of the First-Grade Five Elements Demon Slaying Array to crush the Big Demon Feng Xi, rescuing an entire city of cultivators.

Afterward, this array collapsed, and Mo Hua perished alongside the Big Demon Feng Xi.

Chapter 1267: Report (3)

According to the rumors, when the Formation collapsed, the heavens underwent a great change, and the Heavenly Dao Thunder Punishment descended upon him, circled thrice above his head, and then retreated without causing him any harm...

...

There was a master, of unknown origin.

Once traveled abroad and returned after reaching Foundation Establishment.

Now he goes alone to Qian State for further studies.

All his achievements are inscribed on the Demon Suppression Monument, and cultivators within a hundred miles sing his name...

Elder Master Xun took a deep breath.

In the Qi-refining Realm, he set up a Large Formation, slew a Big Demon, and evaded the Robbery Thunder!

These things seem like tales from over the moon, sounding like fictional Immortal anecdotes fabricated by storytellers, legends among cultivators, practically unbelievable.

They don't even know the level of the Formation.

Nor do they understand what it means to build a Large Formation during the Qi Refinement Realm.

And the Big Demon...

That was a karmic mutation birthed from the Great Dao, reigning over a state, a terrifying Taoist Demon.

To have Robbery Thunder descend upon one without harm is even more absurd.

The origin of the Robbery Thunder is derived from the Heavenly Dao, containing the Power of Laws to annihilate all.

Within the Law, it kills all: gods, ghosts, and even Taoist Demons, let alone a mere little cultivator in the Qi-refining Realm.

Such words, in the eyes of those truly experienced in Tao Cultivation, who understand the unfathomable Great Dao, appear utterly absurd.

But the protagonist of these events...

Is Mo Hua.

Elder Master Xun's heart trembled.

Mo Hua, this child, possesses a Superior Divine Sense, that much I know.

With a Superior Divine Sense, theoretically, it is indeed possible to learn and construct a Large Formation in the Qi-refining Realm...

Being able to construct a Large Formation implies the capability to combat Big Demons.

The collapse of the Formation, perishing together with a Big Demon, is also possible.

And the Heavenly Dao Thunder Punishment erases all within the rules.

But a Superior Divine Sense signifies being outside the rules.

Therefore...

To have Robbery Thunder descend upon him without harm is not out of the question either.

So, thinking in this way, these outrageous rumors... are actually reasonable?

Elder Master Xun's pupils slightly shook.

He suddenly realized that from within his eight hundred years of Taoist cultivation knowledge, he deduced a "fact" that obviously contradicts his understanding of Tao cultivation, yet seems reasonable?

For a moment, Elder Master Xun found it hard to believe.

He reviewed the Jade Slip one word at a time.

With each word he read, his eyelids twitched a little.

Afterward, he noticed a line:

"There was a master, of unknown origin..."

What kind of "master" could teach such a disciple?

Elder Master Xun suddenly had a chilling guess:

Could this mysterious, enigmatic "master" possibly be...

An image suddenly surfaced in his mind.

A figure in white, with an extraordinarily handsome face, three parts nonchalance, three parts arrogance, three parts freedom, and an integral one of pure immortal aura between his brows.

A name carved deeply in his mind yet rarely mentioned to others appeared again:

Zhuang Daoling!

Elder Master Xun inhaled sharply, his heart trembling slightly.

Mo Hua...

Is a disciple of that person?!

Elder Master Xun felt a chill on his back, breaking out in a cold sweat.

He had not completely dismissed such a suspicion before.

Once Mo Hua entered the sect, he vaguely sensed something.

Although their appearances were distinctly different, and so were their temperaments—one unruly and extraordinary, the other delicate and lovely—they were unmistakably different.

But that kind of transparent comprehension, understanding the essence of Formations, and the affinity with the Great Dao were nearly identical.

A loose cultivator from a Little Immortal City could not possibly possess such a natural unity of Heaven and Man without guidance.

But... how could this be?

Elder Master Xun frowned.

The person had an unusually high standard, and all his disciples were exceptionally talented; why would he take on a little cultivator with a Mid-Lower Grade Spiritual Root as a disciple?

Moreover, through this period of interaction, Elder Master Xun could confidently affirm that this child did not know the Immortal Sky Formation Flow.

This doesn't make sense...

Understanding of Formations and comprehending the "Dao," this child has learned well.

These are by no means ordinary guidance.

To painstakingly teach such things indicates that the person intends to impart all his knowledge to this child.

But why wouldn't he teach the most crucial Immortal Sky Formation Flow?

Not learning the Immortal Sky Formation Flow, not entering the Immortal Sky Formations.

How then can one claim to have truly acquired Immortal inheritance?

Is it that the time has not come yet...

Elder Master Xun's pale eyebrows furrowed, and then he sighed deeply.

In any case, if Mo Hua is truly that person's disciple, this indeed would be karma of colossal magnitude...

Elder Master Xun's thoughts were numerous, and he even felt a slight anxiety.

Until he snapped back to reality, slightly startled to find a "wooden stake" standing at the doorway.

"Come in."

Elder Master Xun collected his thoughts, speaking calmly.

Outside the door, Xun Ziyou saw that the ancestor's expression had calmed, and the oppressive aura had dissipated; only then did he breathe a sigh of relief, respectfully stepping inside.

The Taoist Child came forward with tea.

Xun Ziyou, feeling somewhat apprehensive, took a sip of tea before speaking in a low voice:
"Ancestor, you..."

He wanted to ask if something had happened to cause such a dramatic shift in the ancestor's mood...

But as the words reached his mouth, he wisely swallowed them.

He knew well the perils of speaking carelessly, better to say less and err less.

Elder Master Xun was a bit displeased, "Speak your mind, you're already an Elder, stop hesitating like old women..."

Xun Ziyou felt bitter inside and spoke softly: "It's about Mo Hua..."

Who knew that with just those two words, Elder Master Xun's expression changed abruptly, unwittingly releasing the powerful aura of the Heaven Void Realm.

Xun Ziyou's heart trembled, hastily saying:

"Ancestor..."

Elder Master Xun was slightly startled, and then he reined in his aura, calmly asking:

"What happened to Mo Hua?"

Xun Ziyou sighed: "Nothing much, just that in the matter you asked me to watch over him, this child's methods are somewhat... unusual?"

Elder Master Xun slightly frowned.

Xun Ziyou recounted everything he had witnessed on Refining Demon Mountain.

"The Formations he draws are excellent, and he has a reputation among his peers..."

"Last night, he led four fellow disciples to slay a Second Grade Middle Stage Pig Monster, using what seemed to be a special 'Spiritual Power Amplification' Formation, which I've never seen before..."

"Later, there was a conflict with disciples from the Sever Gold Sect."

"Sever Gold Sect, a group of eight, including one late Foundation Establishment, were no match at all."

"His formation-building method was also rather baffling, seemingly using Thought as a brush and ground as the medium..."

Elder Master Xun was taken aback.

Amplification Array, the method of drawing ground into formation...

These extraordinary methods were very much akin to that person's craftsmanship.

Given all these, Elder Master Xun could almost certainly affirm that Mo Hua, this child, must be a direct disciple of Zhuang Daoling!

Elder Master Xun was momentarily in a daze, still finding it hard to believe, and simultaneously deeply puzzled.

Why would that person's direct disciple end up in my Taixu Gate?

Why not Qian Taoist Sect?

Xun Ziyou, unaware of Elder Master Xun's thoughts, asked his own question:

"These formations and methods of arrangement, I've never seen them before, could it be... Ancestor, did you teach him?"

Elder Master Xun frowned, just about to deny it when a thought crossed his mind.

Elder Master Xun's eyes glinted slightly, giving Xun Ziyou a meaningful look:

"This matter, do not speak of it to anyone."

He neither confirmed nor denied.

But Xun Ziyou thought he understood.

These formation methods were indeed privately taught by the Ancestor.

Such affairs, indeed, cannot be disclosed, lest others think the Ancestor shows favoritism.

Although everyone knew the Ancestor played favorites.

Xun Ziyou nodded: "Ancestor, rest assured, I will absolutely keep my lips sealed!"

Elder Master Xun slightly nodded.

"It's just..." Xun Ziyou was still a bit puzzled, "these things, do you know them, Ancestor?"

Be it Spiritual Power Amplification Array or Divine Sense Arrangement methods, he had never seen the Ancestor use them.

If the Ancestor doesn't know them, how could he teach them?

Elder Master Xun silently glanced at Xun Ziyou.

Xun Ziyou's heart tightened, hurriedly forcing a smile: "The Ancestor is knowledgeable and well-versed in everything, it's just my limited vision..."

At these words, Elder Master Xun remained expressionless.

Being stared at by Elder Master Xun, Xun Ziyou felt like sitting on pins and needles.

Unsure how much time had passed, Elder Master Xun waved a hand, "Attend to your own matters."

Xun Ziyou felt as though he had been granted amnesty, immediately saying:

"Then I won't disturb the Ancestor any longer, I take my leave."

With that, Xun Ziyou wished to linger not a moment longer and immediately rose to leave.

In the Elder's Residence, Elder Master Xun sat alone.

Elder Master Xun mulled over, his expression changing several times.

If it truly involves that person, then the heavenly secrets entailed here are profoundly unfathomable.

The waters run too deep, the karmic ties too great as well...

Elder Master Xun frowned, then paused, his gaze gradually deepening.

Or perhaps there is another possibility:

That this "chance," is too terrifying...

Chapter 1268: Manuscript of Formation Flow

On the next day, after finishing his lecture in the Tao Teaching Room, Mo Hua was tidying up the jade slips and books, preparing to return to the Disciple's Residence, when he looked up and saw a Taoist Child at the door waving at him.

"Mo Hua, Elder Master Xun is calling for you."

Mo Hua paused for a moment, then nodded slightly, "Alright."

Walking along the long mountain steps of Taixu Mountain, Mo Hua couldn't shake off a sense of foreboding. He softly asked the Taoist Child:

"What is it about this time?"

The Taoist Child shook his head and answered honestly: "I don't know."

"Is Elder Master Xun angry this time?"

"Angry..." The Taoist Child frowned and then shook his head again, "But also not quite—it's more like something big has happened. Even Elder Xun looked anxious and on edge."

"Elder Xun?"

"Elder Xun Ziyong, the great-grandson of the ancestor, who serves as an Elder in the Inner Gate."

Mo Hua nodded slightly, imprinting the name in his memory.

The Taoist Child gave Mo Hua a worried glance and said, "Anyway, you'd better be careful and try not to upset the ancestor."

Mo Hua was puzzled, "I haven't done anything. If the Elder Master is upset, what does it have to do with me?"

"Who knows..." The Taoist Child walked ahead but suddenly turned back, whispering, "Mo Hua, the Little Tiger you made for me—I broke it again..."

"What did you do?" Mo Hua looked at him quietly.

The Taoist Child felt embarrassed and muttered, "I was battling beasts with puppets with Qingfeng and Mingyue. The tiger won, but it broke afterward..."

Mo Hua sighed softly.

The Taoist Child looked guilty.

Mo Hua then said, "If I have time, I'll make you another one. If you want to fight beasts, I'll make you a more ferocious one. But for the puppet materials, you'll need to provide them yourself. I'll handle the Formation Patterns..."

The Taoist Child's eyes lit up, and he nodded eagerly, "I've gotten some top-quality gold jade. When I craft it into a puppet, I'll bring it to you to draw the Formation Patterns."

Mo Hua nodded, "Alright."

The Taoist Child beamed with joy, "Mo Hua, you're the best. Next time something happens, I'll tip you off again."

As they chatted, they arrived at the Elder's Residence.

The Taoist Child immediately composed himself, taking on a respectful demeanor as he led Mo Hua to Elder Master Xun, bowed, and then withdrew.

Mo Hua covertly observed Elder Master Xun, noticing that while the Elder Master looked complex, he didn't seem particularly angry. Finally, Mo Hua quietly exhaled in relief.

"Greetings, Elder Master," Mo Hua bowed and said respectfully.

Elder Master Xun nodded slightly and said:

"I called you here, not for anything else, but because I suddenly remembered that I have some collected insights on formations. They might be of some help to you in your studies. Take them and have a look..."

Mo Hua was greatly surprised. He had assumed that Elder Master Xun had discovered some "misdeed" of his and intended to reprimand him.

He hadn't expected it to turn out to be something good.

Delighted, Mo Hua said sincerely, "Thank you, Elder Master!"

Elder Master Xun retrieved several dark-colored jade slips and some ancient manuscripts, handing them to Mo Hua.

Mo Hua accepted them respectfully and leafed through them briefly.

As expected, the contents of the jade slips and manuscripts were reflections on formations, including insights into Formation Eyes, Formation Pivots, and even discussions on variations of Formation Patterns.

Out of the corner of his eye, Mo Hua suddenly froze.

He saw two unexpected words:

Formation Flow!

A tremor ran through Mo Hua's heart as he quickly picked up that manuscript, scanning it swiftly with his eyes. Sure enough, it contained reflections and understanding regarding "Formation Flow":

"The Formation Flow is the origin stream of all formations under the heavens, the convergence of ten thousand formations, where understanding one leads to grasping a hundred."

"The pinnacle of formation mastery lies in comprehending formations across all realms, achieving self-returning to the source while consolidating the Formation Method Origin Stream."

"To comprehend Formation Flow is also to transform one into many, capturing the essential essence, and governing all formation principles..."

...

Mo Hua's heart trembled violently.

These words... felt incredibly familiar. This wasn't the first time he had heard them...

Mo Hua glanced at Elder Master Xun in a daze and asked in a halting voice:

"Elder Master, this manuscript... where did it come from?"

Elder Master Xun replied, "It belonged to an old acquaintance."

"An old acquaintance?"

"Yes." Elder Master Xun nodded slightly, his gaze tinged with melancholy, "Many years ago, this old acquaintance visited our Taixu Gate as a guest. We discussed formations, sharing our thoughts and concepts. This manuscript is a record of some reflections and insights from our exchanges back then..."

"This old acquaintance..." Elder Master Xun's voice was calm, his gaze solemn as he slowly said, "Had the surname Zhuang."

Zhuang...

Mo Hua's mind went blank for a moment, standing frozen in place, his heart a whirlwind of mixed emotions.

"Master..."

Elder Master Xun observed Mo Hua's expression, seeing his initial daze shift into sorrow, with eyes filled with tender longing that eventually dissolved into deep, profound loss.

Elder Master Xun let out a faint sigh.

There was no doubt—this boy was that person's disciple...

The grief and disappointment in Mo Hua's eyes lasted only for a fleeting moment before they were buried deeply within, transforming into a still, unfathomable pool, impossible for others to discern.

Mo Hua regained his composure, his tone admiring as he said:

"Elder Master, your old acquaintance must have been an exceptional master of formations."

Elder Master Xun nodded and sighed, "Indeed."

"And this master..." Mo Hua hesitated briefly before continuing, "He... where is he now?"

Elder Master Xun looked at Mo Hua in mild surprise, silently observing him for a moment before shaking his head and replying:

"In this life, it's unlikely we'll meet again."

Mo Hua lowered his head, saying nothing.

Seeing this, Elder Master Xun could not help but feel a pang of heartache.

He silently studied Mo Hua before him.

It had been three years since this boy joined the sect. Mo Hua had grown taller, but his temperament hadn't changed much.

At first, Elder Master Xun had thought the boy was simply innocent and lovable, earnest, and diligent in studying formations with remarkable perceptiveness—traits he had grown fond of.

Later, upon discovering that Mo Hua possessed an extraordinary Divine Sense Talent, he cherished him like a rare treasure.

Now, knowing Mo Hua was that person's disciple, Elder Master Xun found himself feeling ever more conflicted, shaken as he was by the revelation.

That person had command of the Heavenly Mechanism Calculation Mastery. His every action carried profound purpose, veiling secrets of unfathomable scope within the folds of destiny.

Chapter 1269: Formation Flow Manuscript (2)

Now that person's heavenly secret is cut off, the Back Ruins Heaven Burial has appeared in the world, yet secretly left an unassuming little disciple, and by chance, joined the Taixu Gate...

Could there be some deeper meaning within this?

Elder Master Xun was filled with thoughts.

After a moment, Mo Hua raised his head, eyes full of expectation, and asked softly: "Old gentleman, this manuscript..."

"You keep it." Elder Master Xun said gently, "It was meant for you, hold onto it well, and read it often."

Mo Hua gripped the manuscript tightly, and said gratefully: "Thank you, old gentleman!"

Elder Master Xun smiled slightly, patted Mo Hua on the shoulder, and said: "Alright, go back, you still have class in the afternoon."

"Mm."

Mo Hua nodded, and after bowing respectfully to Elder Master Xun, took his leave, his departing figure appearing somewhat lonely.

Elder Master Xun sighed.

Within that thin and frail body may carry a terrifying great karmic cause...

Some things he did not point out, but he kept them in mind, letting nature take its course.

The important thing, there's only one.

That is, Mo Hua.

Regardless of what karmic cause he carries, now he is wearing the Taoist robe of the Taixu Gate, he is a disciple of the Taixu Gate.

And in the future, he must always be a disciple of the Taixu Gate!

Elder Master Xun's eyes sharpened, a glint of sharpness flashed, and he called out: "Bring Ziyou here."

After a while, Xun Ziyou came to see Elder Master Xun.

Elder Master Xun instructed: "Take good care of this child, Mo Hua."

Xun Ziyou was stunned, "This, haven't you instructed before..."

"This time it's different," Elder Master Xun said blandly, "before I told you, you can lose an arm, but he cannot lose a strand of hair, was to urge you to handle things well."

"Now it's different, now this sentence is the truth."

Xun Ziyou: "..."

He was dumbfounded for a long time, then frowned slightly and weakly said: "Ancestor, what exactly is the identity of this child, that you regard him so highly..."

"Don't worry about it," Elder Master Xun looked at Xun Ziyou, eyes heavy, voice low, "All you need to know is that he is of great importance to my Taixu Gate, possibly even related to..."

Elder Master Xun paused, then slowly said:

"...the Taoist inheritance of my Taixu Gate!"

Xun Ziyou suddenly froze, a shiver ran through his heart.

Taoist inheritance?!

Xun Ziyou's eyelid twitched, just about to say "aren't you exaggerating", he is just a mere Foundation Establishment Cultivator, even with the best talent and most special identity, it should be impossible to relate to Taixu Gate's Taoist inheritance.

Taixu Gate is one of the Eight Great Gates of Qian State, with a profound foundation and long history.

If traced back to the time before the Three Sects split, it was nothing but a gigantic entity of Qian State.

Such a Taoist inheritance, what does it have to do with a little cultivator?

Xun Ziyou couldn't understand no matter how he thought about it.

But he knew, the ancestor was a serious person, and never lied.

If he said it concerns the Taoist inheritance, then surely there is a deep karmic cause within.

Xun Ziyou straightened up, saluted: "Ancestor, I understand."

Elder Master Xun nodded slightly.

"Just..." Xun Ziyou thought for a bit, then said, "This child seems to have some grudge with Sever Gold Sect, should I intervene..."

"No need." Elder Master Xun shook his head, "I told you to look after him, not to blindly shield him."

"He must not be harmed, but aside from that, whether it's Sever Gold Sect or other sects, let disciples' matters be settled by themselves, and no need to interfere too much."

Xun Ziyou understood the ancestor's meaning, and asked, "What if it's the high-ranking members of Sever Gold Sect..."

Elder Master Xun said: "Do not fear, I will handle everything."

Xun Ziyou let out a long breath in relief.

The ancestor has spoken, giving him much more confidence.

"Go," Elder Master Xun waved his hand, "Do not be careless, if something unexpected really happens..."

Elder Master Xun thought for a moment, then, to urge him, said a harsher word, "I will remove you from the family genealogical record..."

Xun Ziyou's scalp went numb, and he was dumbfounded.

This joke, can it really be made casually?!

"Ancestor, are you serious..."

Elder Master Xun silently looked at him.

Xun Ziyou wisely, with a bitter expression, resignedly said:

"Yes."

After leaving the Elder's Residence, Xun Ziyou let out a long sigh.

He had a premonition that this temporary "bodyguard" role might turn "permanent" as a long-term bodyguard.

In the future, life may not be peaceful...

...

In the afternoon after class, Mo Hua, together with Yu Er, finished eating and returned to the Disciple's Residence.

Upon entering the house, Mo Hua took out all the manuscripts given by Elder Master Xun.

Especially the manuscript related to the "Formation Flow."

Mo Hua carefully, completely read through this manuscript, his expression somewhat desolate.

This was indeed the master's manuscript.

Although there were some discrepancies, it was uncannily similar to the "Formation Flow" insights passed to him by his master back in Li Mountain City at the Five Elements Sect.

Mr. Zhuang's celestial demeanor, carefree and uninhibited, yet gentle as water's expression, reappeared in Mo Hua's mind.

Mo Hua was lost in thought for a long time before heaving a deep sigh.

He read through the manuscript again.

This was a manuscript on the Dao.

Inside, the explanation about the "Formation Flow" was more detailed, more comprehensive than what his master had told him, and more profound.

Mo Hua looked at it and realized he couldn't quite understand it.

Strictly speaking, he hasn't learned Formation Flow yet.

The Taoist inheritance of the Five Elements Sect, that piece of "Source Pattern" manifested by the Five Elements Formation Flow, though in his hands, but he actually doesn't know, that sinister eye-like "Source Pattern", in essence, what exactly it is...

And those who can summarize Formation Flow, no doubt are Formation Masters who have cultivated a certain type of formation to great success.

So it is no wonder he couldn't understand this Formation Flow manuscript.

"I'll keep it first, and when my formation skills are higher, I'll study it carefully..."

Chapter 1270: Formation Flow Manuscript (3)

Mo Hua nodded slightly, then carefully placed the Formation manuscript into the Storage Ring.

This was the master's possession.

Mo Hua cherished it deeply.

And Elder Master Xun...

Mo Hua hadn't expected that Elder Master Xun had once debated the Dao and discussed Formations with the master.

So does this mean Elder Master Xun and the master might share some other connections?

Mo Hua's thoughts stirred, and he suddenly realized something.

The concept of "Formation Flow" was clearly beyond his learning capabilities at the moment.

Now that Elder Master Xun handed the master's Formation manuscript to him, and casually pointed out that it was the work of "an old acquaintance surnamed Zhuang," could it be he was testing him?

"Did the old gentleman figure out that the master is my teacher?"

Mo Hua muttered in his heart.

Still, it seemed not to be a big deal...

Quite a few people seemed to know about this.

Aside from the Uncle, there's also the senior apprentice sister's mother—who is, of course, his Aunt—Senior Situ of Mystery Valley, and those Feathered Immortal Cultivators glimpsed during the change at Li Mountain City.

They are all Great cultivators, their cultivation profound and business busy.

He's just an insignificant little cultivator—probably forgotten by them shortly after encountering him.

Elder Master Xun, having previously sat with the master to debate the Dao, likely bore no enmity and harbored no malice toward him.

At least Mo Hua felt no ill will from him.

Moreover, the elder even gifted him the master's manuscript.

In daily interactions, he treated Mo Hua exceptionally well and passed on knowledge and teachings like a benefactor.

Elder Master Xun truly is a great good person!

Mo Hua nodded in agreement.

Right now, he decided to devote himself to studying Formations. Should the opportunity arise in the future, he would repay the elder's kindness.

A drop of water should be repaid with a fountain—that was the principle of conduct his mother taught him.

Having thought it through, he flipped through Formation Books for a while, studied Formations for some time, and when 1 p.m. arrived, his Divine Sense sank back into the Taoist Stele to continue practicing Formations.

He needed to find a way to practice Formation more frequently and temper his Divine Sense.

Since he couldn't go outside now, he could only rely on this clumsy method to refine his Divine Sense.

The goal was to break through the Heavenly Dao Laws' seal as soon as possible, elevate his Divine Sense to Eighteen Patterns, and learn more advanced Formations.

...

Thus passed some calm days dedicated to studying Formations.

He visited Refining Demon Mountain a few times, tested the effectiveness of the Five Elements Origin Armor, formulated several Monster Hunting strategies, and then stopped going temporarily.

But on this particular day, while having his meal in the dining hall, Cheng Mo suddenly walked over with a bruised and swollen face.

Mo Hua froze, "Cheng Mo, did you get smacked by a bear again?"

"I'm not stupid; getting smacked once is bad enough—how could I let it happen twice..." Cheng Mo muttered, his expression carrying a hint of anger, "It's those bastards from Sever Gold Sect."

Mo Hua's gaze narrowed slightly, "Sever Gold Sect?"

"Yes." Cheng Mo sat down, mimicking Mo Hua as he took a bite out of a chicken leg, grumbling, "Junior Brother, you've not been back to the mountain these days, so you don't know—Sever Gold Sect has been stirring up trouble with us..."

"Those little punks keep bothering us every other day."

"They dare not engage us directly but loiter sneakily nearby. When we kill a Monster Beast, they swarm in to snatch it."

"If we choose not to hunt Monster Beasts, they creep after us like flies."

Mo Hua frowned, "Doesn't Refining Demon Mountain have rules? With their arrogance, aren't the elders intervening?"

Cheng Mo replied, "They do intervene, but it's useless. The Sever Gold Sect scoundrels are shameless gambit-mongers."

"They insist on claims like the Monster Beasts were their kills, or that we struck first and they were innocently drawn in..."

"Even their sect elders always shield them."

"When Sever Gold Sect disciples gain the upper hand, their elders muddle things through, saying boys will be boys—that playful skirmishes are normal and not worth fussing over."

"But if Sever Gold Sect suffers losses, those same elders accuse us Taixu disciples of lacking discipline and proper upbringing..."

"Our Taixu elders aren't eloquent in rebutting them and end up incredibly infuriated."

"All the verbal sparring accomplishes nothing—the Sever Gold Sect disciples remain as they have been, indulging in these underhanded deeds..."

Cheng Mo sighed heavily, "Basically, rules only work on people who care about their face. For those shameless, rules mean absolutely nothing."

Cheng Mo sneered coldly but winced at his facial wounds, his pain forcing him to grimace.

Nonetheless, being a Body Cultivator, with skin as tough as hide, these injuries were insignificant.

Cheng Mo took another bite of meat and continued speaking:

"These wounds—I fought with Sever Gold Sect disciples while out Monster Hunting this morning after they tailed us again. I finally lost it and fought them head-on."

"Though I look battered, they fared much worse."

"I broke several of their legs."

"But I doubt that will stop them—they'll likely be back at it the next time."

Mo Hua frowned slightly and said to Cheng Mo, "Next time during the rest period, I'll enter the mountain myself and take a look."

"No need." Cheng Mo immediately objected, "You just focus on painting Formations. You're Junior Brother; dealing with these little punks doesn't require your involvement."

Cheng Mo understood that Mo Hua had been busy drawing Formations daily and did not wish to disturb him.

Furthermore, the troublemakers in Sever Gold Sect were mostly disciples in the Foundation Building Middle Stage—the same cohort as him and his companions.

No need for Mo Hua to step in personally.

Mo Hua thought for a moment and nodded, "All right then."

He truly was preoccupied lately.

That was because he faintly sensed that within his Sea of Consciousness, the restrictions imposed by the Heavenly Dao Laws were loosening considerably.

Perhaps his Realm had ascended high enough for it to seem not too outrageous.

Or maybe the Heavenly Dao Laws were "satiated," resulting in their gradual dispersal.

Mo Hua felt he might just breakthrough into Eighteen Patterns of Divine Sense very soon.

The matters surrounding Refining Demon Mountain, he would leave to Cheng Mo and the others to handle.

Although Cheng Mo appeared brash—and indeed was brash—he still possessed a sharp mind.

Furthermore, having been close companions with Mo Hua for so long, he had gained plenty of practical experience and picked up no small number of "shrewd" tricks.

Dealing with the arrogant Sever Gold Sect disciples, who relied on their strength to bully, was well within his capacity.

Thus, led by Cheng Mo, the Taixu Sect Disciples began engaging in open and covert conflicts with the disciples from the same cohort of Sever Gold Sect within Refining Demon Mountain.

After a month passed, Cheng Mo came to visit Mo Hua again, his expression somewhat dispirited.

It wasn't that they hadn't won.

Their victories, ultimately, amounted to nothing.

"Those Sever Gold Sect bastards are truly despicable—they resemble beasts more than humans. In Refining Demon Mountain, they do absolutely nothing productive but shadow us Taixu Sect disciples, stealing our Monster Beasts."

"At first, they'd still confront us for a few rounds head-on, but after realizing that our Gold-breaking Armor makes us formidable, they stopped fighting altogether."

"Now they behave like flies—when we hunt Monsters, they disrupt us."

"If we retaliate, they flee."

Cheng Mo was thoroughly disgusted by their behavior.

"Refining Demon Mountain's entry fee costs one hundred Merit Points, yet they willingly squander it purely to harass us. Engaging in such vile acts of harming others to gain nothing themselves."

"Though we don't fear them, their constant interference prevents us from successfully hunting Monsters or earning Merit Points. So, we can't claim victory either..."

Cheng Mo sighed ruefully, frustration evident.

Mo Hua's gaze darkened slightly.

This Sever Gold Sect truly was despicable.

"It's fine..." Mo Hua took a sip of fruit wine, paused in thought, and calmly remarked, "They keep up their indecency because they haven't been properly scared yet."

"Strike them hard enough, break some bones—they feel the pain, and they'll cease their despicable conduct..."

Mo Hua's eyes turned cold.