

M. Slaying 121

Chapter 121: Taking From and Using For

Golden-Core Puppet?

Chu Liang carefully read the information about this new reward he had gotten, feeling a bit confused.

Because he was only at the Spiritual Awareness Realm, his knowledge on the fourth realm of cultivation, the Golden Core Realm, was limited. It was challenging for him to determine how powerful this reward truly was. Nevertheless, regardless of the specifics, the effect of this Golden-Core Puppet was undoubtedly beyond his imagination.

In the realm of cultivation, the phenomenon of a puppet achieving core formation has never occurred before.

According to the description, even after the puppet had achieved Core Formation, he would still have the capability to form his own core. Consequently, both cores could be activated simultaneously during cultivation or even in the midst of battle. This implied that he could have two Golden Cores.

Undoubtedly, having two Cores would be better than having just one. If presented with the option, it was indisputable that anyone would prefer having two Cores.

However, this might also be a burden.

In the Human Gate of cultivation, the focus would be on enhancing the body's strength.

As one step into the Earthly Gate of cultivation, the acquiring of resources to sustain and advance further in cultivation then became necessary.

The three realms within the Earthly Gate demanded a significant amount of resources, and this expenditure would start during Core Formation.

To form a Golden Core, a cultivator must adhere to the specific alchemical recipe aligned with their chosen cultivation method. They must gather all the necessary materials for core formation.

Subsequently, they need to ignite the three fires of circulation within their meridians with their vitality, qi, and spirit. This mandated process is crucial for the successful formation of the core.

The entire process was full of challenges, and the difficulty of forming the Golden Core increased proportionally with its quality. To successfully form the Golden Core, each cultivator would usually gather experience from the previous three to five failed attempts.

Cultivators commonly adhered to a practice of preparing enough materials for two attempts each time. If the first attempt failed, they could promptly proceed to the second attempt while the insights gained from the initial attempt remained vivid in their minds.

Nevertheless, the gathering of materials for each attempt would incur a substantial expense.

This was precisely why many cultivators would halt their progress before reaching the Golden Core Realm. In a path of endless cultivation, people never gave up due to lack of talent. Instead, they would give up due to the despair resulting from the shortage of funds needed to acquire the necessary cultivation resources.

Coincidentally, Chu Liang wasn't rich.

He was presently in the later stage of the Spiritual Awareness Realm, on the verge of reaching the pinnacle of this realm. As he prepared for his own Core Formation, the pressing question remained: if he hadn't amassed sufficient resources for his own Core Formation, how could he possibly gather what was needed for the puppet's Core Formation?

Nonetheless, this was unquestionably a substantial reward. For Chu Liang, it was like someone from a poor family achieving the status of a top scholar or a seventy-year-old man marrying a young and beautiful wife—a situation where resources were lacking but had to be managed nonetheless.

There has never been anyone with two cores, and whether the benefits would outweigh the costs remained to be determined.

Chu Liang placed the new, motionless puppet with its expressionless face beside the old puppet that was emitting smoke. Both possessed oversized heads and compact bodies, functioning in a similar manner, as if they had inherited the same cultivation legacy.

However, Chu Liang had a preference for the old puppet.

Putting aside everything else, the old puppet could function for a whole day with just three Qi-Gathering Pills, while the new puppet would require three Spirit-Concentration Pills.

A single sword coin could purchase a gourd of Qi-Gathering Pills, yet the same amount would only cover the cost of two Spirit-Concentration Pills. A single sword coin wouldn't even be enough to cover a full day's expenses. On top of the additional requirement of paying the new puppet double for working night shifts, the puppet also required double pay during battles, further stretching the budget.

Wouldn't the cost of nighttime battles be quadrupled?

Is there any justice? Is there any law? Chu Liang thought to himself.

Chu Liang couldn't help but feel that these puppets were pushing the limits by charging more for longer durations and higher intensity; it felt as if he would end up being the one working for these puppets.

Unfortunately, there was only one of each type of puppet. If he had many such puppets, he could make them all compete for a chance to work for him.

Are you willing to work for a Spirit-Concentration Pill per day? No? Then, get out! There are many others who can take your place!

"I know the standard price is three pills a day and double during battles. However, others are reducing their prices instead of adhering to the standard rate. What can we do if you are the only one following the rule? Sigh, I'm really in a dilemma."

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The next morning.

Xu Sui prepared a sumptuous breakfast for the teacher and her disciple. However, Di Nufeng was obviously not going to wake up at this time, and no one dared to wake her up. And so, Chu Liang enjoyed it alone.

Master Kunwu, who crafted swords, remained in the grass hut. Yet, not a sound came from the grass hut.

This was because the grass hut was no ordinary grass hut. A spell has been cast within the grass hut, creating a small world with restrictions applied.

This was the effect of an immortal art known as Hidden Mountains and Seas.

The seemingly small grass hut, upon entering, might even contain a city larger than the Taotie City. Not a sight or sound of this world could be noticed from outside the grass hut.

"Thanks, Brother Xu," Chu Liang politely thanked Xu Sui for his hospitality and then asked, "How long will Master Kunwu take to complete the sword?"

"My father might need another two days or so. If you feel bored, feel free to leave this place and explore the area. There are many places to visit in Taotie City," Xu Sui said with a smile.

"Oh? Brother Xu, any recommendations?" Chu Liang asked.

Since Chu Liang had come all this way and Taotie City was such a prosperous city, it would indeed be a bit of a loss not to go out and explore.

He almost died yesterday, but that was an accident.

"Taotie City is renowned for its cuisine. In the eastern part of the city, there's a gourmet shop that offers various dishes from all over the nine provinces. At night, the area is bustling with numerous snack stalls, creating a lively atmosphere," introduced Xu Sui.

"To the slightly north of the Sword Hut lies an alley known as the Alley of Peculiarity. Many cultivators set up stalls there, selling all sorts of strange things, and the prices are not as high as in the shops. It's often a place to find cheap bargains," explained Xu Sui.

"In the western part of the city, there is a street known as the Street of Wind and Moon, where a multitude of brothel businesses operate. There are probably hundreds of them, varying in size. On a day like this, courtesans and musicians might openly perform in the street to attract customers.

However, given your prestigious background, you might not be interested in such things," Xu Sui continued explaining.

"The southern part of the city is more chaotic, serving as the main entrance for most people coming into the city. Numerous individuals from different organizations and cults gather there. Law enforcement is the strictest in this area due to frequent accidents. Residents of Taotie City rarely venture into the southern part of the city," Xu Sui elaborated.

"I see. No wonder I was in such a mess yesterday," Chu Liang nodded and said, "Thank you."

"Young Hero Chu, you don't have to be courteous. If you want to explore, just let me know, and I can arrange for someone to be your tour guide," offered Xu Sui. He had a good impression of Chu Liang, considering him a polite and courteous teenager unlike his teacher, who seemed to have the word 'rogue' written all over her face.

"There's no need to trouble you. I can just walk around by myself," Chu Liang politely rejected with a smile.

Later in the day, he walked out of the sword hut. He waited on the roadside for a while until a carriage pulled by a Mountainous Beast, heading towards the west of the city, finally arrived.

Unexpectedly, as soon as he got on the carriage, he saw a few familiar figures, and Chu Liang's eyes lit up.

There were three familiar figures squeezed into the corner of the carriage.

In the middle was a tall young man with an absent-minded expression, appearing preoccupied. On the left was a short and thin teenager with an undisguised expression of fear, and on the right was a short and chubby teenager, looking extremely weak.

"What a coincidence." Chu Liang greeted them.

"Ahhhh," the three of them exclaimed in surprise upon seeing Chu Liang.

Especially the short and chubby youth; he rolled to the ground with a startled expression, then crawled under the seat, muttering strange words like, "It's already the character '干,' one more cut, and it'll be the character '王,' can't take it anymore, can't take it anymore..."[1]

He was spouting all kinds of nonsense.

Chu Liang observed the peculiar behavior of the tall young man and then turned his attention to the remaining two. "What's going on?"

"My... my brother has been a bit stressed lately," the tall young man explained, stiffening his neck. "What do you want?"

The thin and short youth on the side chimed in softly, "Yes, you promised not to hit us anymore."

"I mean no harm," Chu Liang smiled. "It's just a chance encounter; you don't need to be afraid. How about this, let's shake hands and make peace."

With that, he extended his hand toward the tall young man.

"Haha..." The tall young man finally forced a smile and shook hands with Chu Liang.

At that moment, the beast-drawn carriage stopped, and the two quickly stood up, pulling up the short and chubby one from under the seat, saying, "We've arrived. We're leaving."

After saying that, the three of them quickly left.

"Weird," Chu Liang muttered to himself. "And why does that chubby guy's voice sound strangely familiar?"

He didn't think too much about it. With a flip of his hand, an exquisite treasure chest appeared on his palm. The red outer surface gleamed with a lustrous sheen, and the material appeared very sturdy. There was no lock on the outside of the chest, and the intact box was only set with a piece of jade. It seemed that a specific technique was required to open it.

Last night, he had studied the Mystic Fingers technique and was unsure where to test it. Coincidentally, when he saw these three individuals, he thought of trying it on them to observe the effects.

Given that he acquired this divine skill from them, it was fitting that he tested it on them.

It could be considered as taking from the people and using it for the people.