

M. Slaying 124

Chapter 124: Golden-Furred Hou

"This is the one you are choosing?" Xu Hongqiu asked.

Immediately, the attendants from the Hall of Ten Thousand Beasts behind her appeared so happy, as though they couldn't conceal their joy.

Chu Liang hesitated for a moment, observing the joyful expressions around him.

He pondered, Oh, no. These people seemed so happy. Did I make the wrong choice?

"Then you two can have this Hou[1]," Xu Hongqiu declared, waving her hand to signal her subordinates to open the cage.

"Hou?" Di Nufeng and Chu Liang both exclaimed in surprise.

Distinguishing between demons, devils, monsters, and ghosts posed a challenge.

Among them, discerning between demonic beasts and spirit beasts that had yet to transform was the most difficult. Generally, the value of a spirit beast exceeded that of a demonic beast.

As humans were regarded as the most intelligent beings, many monsters that had achieved a certain level of cultivation would choose to take on human forms. This served the dual purpose of blending into human society and facilitating a deeper understanding of the laws of heaven and earth, thus advancing deeper in their cultivation.

Hence, demonic beings that had achieved higher levels of cultivation but failed to take on human form were commonly perceived as less intelligent.

The reality was that a majority of these creatures, apart from a few unwilling to transform into humans, were not as smart. For instance, creatures like foxes, yellow ferrets, hedgehogs, and snakes could readily adopt human forms as early as the second or third realm of cultivation. In contrast, plant and stone demons needed to attain the fifth or sixth realm of cultivation before they could undergo the transformation into a human form.

However, spirit beasts were different.

Spirit beasts, in contrast, consistently retain their original forms due to their possession of innate spiritual wisdom. They possessed a profound understanding of the laws of heaven and earth and being as intelligent as human beings rendered any need for transformation unnecessary.

Therefore, even if a collective of creatures shared the same level of cultivation, the spirit beasts would still be significantly more powerful than demonic beasts.

Moreover, the Hou represented one of the major families within spirit beasts.

Among these four, the giant turtle and the peculiar tree were clearly demonic creatures. As for the white cat, it was rather difficult to determine its type. However, the remaining creature with a big head might be the only spirit beast.

The choice to select this particular beast turned out to be a smart decision.

Certainly, when describing it as a large family, the comparison was made in relation to other spirit beasts like the Baize family, of which only two were known in the world. Many spirit beasts were part of a singular lineage, making them exceptionally unique. In contrast, the Hou family showcased a relatively wider diversity, boasting a more extensive population that encompassed both righteous and diabolical paths.

The imperial palace in the capital of Yu was safeguarded by two Heaven-Gazing Hou, renowned for their righteousness. They excelled as formidable protectors at the gates of the imperial palace. In contrast, the mountain-guarding beast of the Dark King Sect was a Moon-Eating Hou. This creature, shrouded in darkness, remained concealed during the day, emerging only at night. It harbored a preference for shadows and held an aversion to all things bright.

The one before them was called the Golden-Furred Hou.

"This Golden-Furred Hou is the pride of the Hall of Ten Thousand Beasts... It has been the pride of our shop for a decade." With Xu Hongqiu's approval, one of the attendants from the Hall of Ten Thousand Beasts eagerly introduced the creature to the teacher and her disciple. "It is gentle and friendly as well as diligent. Moreover, it is both brave and skilled in battle. This Hou has been an indispensable guardian for our establishment and could be a reliable mount for travel."

Crackle...

Crackle...

Before he could finish speaking, a jarring noise of metal scraping against metal resonated from the side. Di Nufeng looked over curiously and asked, "What's that sound?"

With a swift glance, she noticed that the Golden-Furred Hou was fiercely grinding its formidable fangs against the iron cage! In no time, it had already bitten out cracks in the metal and seemed to be on the verge of crushing it!

"Um..." The attendant continued, "The only drawback might be that it eats a bit too much. In the past, when it was hungry, it would devour the iron cage... Eventually, it got used to it and would chew on it even when it has nothing else to do..."

"Are these cages expensive? Do you have to replace them every few days?" Chu Liang couldn't help but inquire.

"The cage used for restraining the beast is crafted from Deep Sea Cloud-Grinding Iron. Initially, we had to replace this cage every three days. However, we devised a more efficient method. Now, we only need to reinstall the cage pillars, significantly reducing the cost," the attendant responded truthfully.

"Cool. It was raised by eating iron cages." Chu Liang remarked before turning to his teacher, staring intently. "Can we even afford this?"

"Why not?" Di Nufeng smirked and replied, "If it dares to be aggressive to anyone, we'll just have it for dinner."

Upon sensing Di Nufeng's hostile gaze, the Golden-Furred Hou's entire body quivered, and its golden fur bristled and stood on end, forming a sharp, pointed mane. As it crouched down, the Golden-Furred Hou bared its fangs, fixing its gaze on Di Nufeng while emitting a low growl.

It seemed like it was ready to challenge at any moment if there were no iron pillars holding it back.

Chu Liang cast a skeptical glance at the attendant, raising an eyebrow, and asked in confusion, "Gentle and friendly?"

"Uh..." The attendant wiped the cold sweat from his forehead, "It's just not familiar with you yet. This might not be a bad thing. Later, when it becomes a mount, it will respond when needed!"

While speaking, another attendant had already opened the beast-restraining cage and guided the Golden-Furred Hou out. Initially, they placed a large sealing collar around its neck and then secured it with a thick iron chain, handing one end of the chain over.

Typically, such procedures would demand strict control and even the use of formations to hypnotize the creature in advance. However, with Elder Cangxing at the sixth realm and Di Nufeng at the seventh realm present, there was no need for concern.

"If you take it to the streets, make sure to chain it. This is crucial," the attendant instructed in a serious tone.

"I understand," Chu Liang nodded and remarked, "Taking a Hou for a walk without a chain is akin to letting the Hou lead the way itself."

However, Chu Liang hesitated to even touch the chain. He directly handed the end of the chain over to Di Nufeng. In contrast, his teacher displayed no fear. Approaching the fierce beast that stood over one Zhang tall, she looked up, extended her hand, and commanded, "Sit!"

"Howl!" The Golden-Furred Hou crouched down, assuming a combat-ready stance once again.

"Forget it. We can work on bonding when we get home," Di Nufeng found this quite amusing. She turned around and was about to lead the Golden Fur away.

Xu Hongqiu promptly led a group of attendants to see them off, preparing to bid farewell to the two aggressive creatures[2] and Chu Liang at the door.

However, just as they were about to leave, Di Nufeng suddenly turned around. She cast a nostalgic gaze at Elder Cangxing, who stood behind Xu Hongqiu, and asked, "You seem familiar to me. Have we met before?"

Elder Cangxing had maintained a dignified and restrained demeanor, often being strict and authoritative, especially with Xu Nanling. Throughout the entire process, he seldom spoke. However, upon hearing Di Nufeng's question, he nodded hastily and said, "Yes, yes, yes," revealing a sudden friendly smile. "I didn't think you would still remember."

"Over a century ago, during that Assembly of Immortal Sects, you eliminated four disciples from the Whale Gang in the False Deity Competition with a single punch, and I was one of them." There was a hint of complex emotion in his tone.

Whether it was nostalgia or awe, it was hard to tell.

Chu Liang didn't feel too surprised about this. Although Elder Cangxing and Di Nufeng appeared to have a relationship resembling that of a grandfather and granddaughter or father and daughter, in reality, Di Nufeng's age should be similar to his own.

The higher the cultivation level of a practitioner before the seventh realm, the slower the aging process, but they still couldn't achieve eternal youth. It was only upon reaching the Dao Attainment Realm that one could maintain perpetual youth.

Typically, cultivators at the seventh realm would retain their current looks from the time they entered the Dao Attainment Realm unless they used special techniques to alter their appearance. Di Nufeng appeared remarkably young because she had entered the seventh realm at a very early age.

Her progress in cultivation is truly remarkable, enviable with every step. She was undoubtedly a true genius. No matter how envious someone was of her, they couldn't achieve the same level of success.

Upon hearing this, Di Nufeng showed a sudden understanding expression, then turned around and walked away side by side with Chu Liang. However, one could hear her patting her chest as she walked, proudly saying, "I told you we are all buddies!"

"Yeah right." Chu Liang added, chiming in with flattery.

Xu Hongqiu stood in place, watching their figures fade into the distance and finally disappear at the street corner. A relieved smile appeared on her face.

Meanwhile, the nearly dying Xu Nanling also wore a similar expression. Two tears trickled down his face. Those two individuals had finally departed, and his life had been spared.

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"Teacher, I will go handle some matters first." As they reached the corner of the street, Chu Liang parted ways with Di Nufeng.

As they strolled down the lengthy street, the two figures clearly stood out. Wherever this teacher and disciple passed, pedestrians avoided them as if creating a clear path. Although there were quite a few people in Taotie City walking with mounts and monsters, this pair was evidently different!

Is that creature still chewing on the iron chain?

Does that chain even work?

Why is that woman still walking so leisurely?

Judging from the expression of the giant beast, it will probably devour her the moment it breaks free.

Better keep a distance...

"Good!" Di Nufeng, leading the Hou and relishing her imposing presence on the street, casually waved her hand to Chu Liang. "Off you go! But don't let that guy off too easily."

"Don't worry," Chu Liang reassured, patting the thick ledger in his arms. "I won't let the person who dares to hit your disciple get away so easily!"