

M. Slaying 154

Chapter 154: The Peculiar Duo

Run away from home?

Chu Liang turned around and stared at the main gate of Xuan Yuan Mountain Manor that was less than a hundred zhang away. The four words on the plaque were particularly clear...

Looking at Ji Lingyu again, he couldn't help but say, "It must have been exhausting to walk such a long way."

"Hehe..." Ji Lingyu smiled awkwardly and said, "You don't understand. It's not that I don't want to travel far. It's just that our family has strict regulations on clan members leaving the house. I've run away from home many times before, but the elders always detected my whereabouts using various divination methods. So, this time, I took a different approach and stayed on the outskirts of Xuan Yuan Mountain Manor. There's a formation in the Great Emperor Valley that shields divine prediction, making it impossible to track me. This way, I can evade their investigation."

"Miss Ji is indeed clever," Chu Liang praised, then asked, "But with your approach, staying close to avoid scrutiny means you can't go far. And if you go far, you can't escape scrutiny. In the end, you still can't leave the house. What's the point of running away like this?"

"..." Ji Lingyu paused and said, "Oh well, I just need to hide for a few days this time. I won't explain it to you."

"Alright." Chu Liang had no intention to pry into others' private matters, so he stood up and said, "Then I wish Miss Ji a smooth journey."

Since Ji Lingyu didn't know the whereabouts of the thirteenth aunt, it was useless to chat with her. Now, Chu Liang had no choice but to return to Mount Shu.

As he left, he could still hear Ji Lingyu muttering to herself, "This time, I will definitely beat my eighth brother..."

After bidding farewell to Ji Lingyu, he mounted the Golden-Furred Hou, its large head and four limbs galloping away, swiftly leaving the Great Emperor Valley.

Speaking of which, flying on the back of the Golden-Furred Hou might not be necessarily much faster, but it felt exceptionally prestigious. He couldn't help but wish to fly a bit lower, so that everyone on the ground could all take a look.

Having a fifth-realm spirit beast as a mount wasn't a privilege that ordinary cultivators enjoy! It was a manifestation of status.

Ordinary cultivators wouldn't be able to afford the cost of raising one, let alone capture or purchase one.

It was said that in places where cultivators gather, such as the three islands of Penglai, the Taotie City, or the capital of Yu, there were specialized businesses renting out high-level mounts. Many people were willing to spend some money for such an experience.

With the purpose of deceiving romantic feelings from fellow cultivators, some even rented mounts at the fifth or sixth realm of cultivation to disguise themselves as young masters of prestigious families or second-generation disciples of immortal sects. There were indeed quite a few successful cases.

But after flying not too far, Chu Liang sensed that something was amiss.

As he remained seated on the back of the Golden-Furred Hou, he had a constant feeling that there were eyes watching him from behind. This sensation of being observed was a result of reaching a certain level in the cultivation of divine sense. It seemed like someone had been spying on him.

This sensation made Chu Liang feel uneasy.

But in this vast and boundless sky with no visible signs of any shadows nearby, who could be following him all the time?

After pondering for a moment, he could no longer endure it. He immediately summoned the Dustless Sword and used the Hundred Swords Technique to encircle himself with swords.

Whoosh, whoosh, whoosh—

Now that he was encircled and protected by the sword lights, he felt slightly more at ease. Following that, he took out the Treasure Leaf Lamp and ignited the Crimson Lotus Divine Fire to illuminate the surroundings.

Whoosh—

As the divine fire lit up, a faint and elusive shadow was revealed.

Surprisingly, the figure was seated right on the tail of the Golden-Furred Hou, not far behind Chu Liang!

"Who's there?" Chu Liang shouted, and a hundred sword lights were directed straight at the figure.

"Brother, hold your swords. I am not your enemy!"

In response, the ethereal figure slowly solidified, transforming into a youth with a fair complexion in the blink of an eye.

This young man was dressed in a bright yellow robe, with narrow and well-defined eyes. He had very refined facial features, and to some extent, his fair skin resembled the appearance of Ji Lingyu, whom Chu Liang had met earlier.

The only difference was that his pupils were blue.

Chu Liang speculated that he should also be a member of the Ji family. He remained vigilant and said in a deep voice, "State your name."

"I am Ji Lingfeng, the eighth child of the eldest of the Ji family." The youth gave a slight bow and continued with a smile, "I saw you talking to Little Yu[1] earlier; she's my younger sister."

"So, you're the eighth young master of the Ji family." Chu Liang nodded and continued, "I wonder why you're following me all the way on this Golden-Furred Hou, Eighth Young Master?"

"Hehe, it's like this..." Ji Lingfeng, in response to Chu Liang's vigilant attitude, showed much cooperation. He lifted both hands in a gesture of surrender and patiently explained.

"I made a small bet with my ninth sister to see who can stay away from the family the longest. While I can sneak out using invisibility, flying away through wind manipulation leaves behind foundational qi fluctuations that can be tracked by the family elders. That's why I wanted to hitch a ride on your mount for part of the journey. If you hadn't noticed, I would have quietly left soon. I didn't mean to disturb you. I'm truly sorry," Ji Lingfeng apologized.

"But don't they possess the ability to scan the heavens, scrutinize the earth, and unravel the mysteries of the celestial realm? Are you sure you can evade detection so easily?" Chu Liang asked, his confusion evident.

"Hah, I have this." Ji Lingfeng raised his hand, revealing three old copper coins. "This can help me shield my presence from divination for three days. Even if I'm caught and brought back after three days, it should be better than losing to my ninth sister."

"Won't the use of your divine skill of invisibility result in fluctuations of foundational qi?" Chu Liang asked again.

In fact, as Chu Liang listened, he had a feeling that Ji Lingfeng was not lying. However, since he appeared out of nowhere, Chu Liang cautiously pondered over any suspicious aspects in Ji Lingfeng's words.

"This is the innate and mystical talent of the Xuan Yuan Eyes. It's not some kind of divine skill," Ji Lingfeng explained. "Brother, you may not be aware, but in the Ji family, each color of the Xuan Yuan Eyes corresponds to different mystical abilities. And what I have is the ability of invisibility."

"I see..." Chu Liang nodded and felt finally at ease.

He had previously heard about the various mystical abilities associated with different colors of the Xuan Yuan Eyes, but he never learned more about it. It appeared that the blue Xuan Yuan Eyes of Ji Lingfeng corresponded to the ability of invisibility.

The use of this invisibility wouldn't reveal any signs of qi fluctuations... Just the thought of this was quite frightening.

"Alright, now that I've explained it to you, I'll be on my way," said Ji Lingfeng as he waved his hand. "Brother, we may meet again if fate allows."

Before one had hardly finished speaking, he leaned his body backwards, and his entire body floated into the high sky. In an instant, he disappeared into the clouds, leaving no trace behind.

"Eh..."

Chu Liang called out, but before he could react, Ji Lingfeng had already disappeared in the blink of an eye.

"Do you think a ride on the Hou is free...."

He added softly before sitting back down. With that, the sense of being spied on disappeared, and his heart finally settled down.

Thinking about the previous encounter with the siblings from the Ji family, he couldn't help but find it somewhat amusing.

These two were no ordinary scions of a prestigious family; one could say they were top-tier second-generation cultivators. Instead of playing other games, they engaged in a competition to see who could stay away from home the longest.

They were truly peculiar.

...

Swoosh.

On a raised platform in the dimly lit hall, stood over a hundred black candle holders, some with candles still burning and others now extinguished.

Another one had just gone out. Nearly all the candle holders positioned in the south and southwest directions had lost their flames, leaving only three flickering lights still persevering.

"Marquess, it appears that both the Southern-Route Guider and Southwest-Route Guider have perished in Southern Bastion Mountain. The Fiends and Soul Subjugators under their command

have also suffered near-total annihilation," reported a figure dressed in black, their tone calm, within the hall.

And on the seat in the main hall sat a terrifying figure.

He was a middle-aged man in a tall crown and brocade robe. He should have had a straight posture, but he was currently curled up in that seat with an expression of pain on his face. Upon closer inspection, one would notice that more than half of his chest and abdomen on one side of his body were empty!

Indeed. The whole left side of this person's torso was gone, creating a complete semicircular gap. Yet he was still alive! The remaining part of his flesh was constantly trying to spread and grow, but every time new flesh started to grow, a power resembling golden flames appeared and destroyed all the new growth to ashes!

The entire process emitted a terrifying sound of "Sizzle, sizzle..."

"Aaaaah!!!" The process was evidently extremely painful. The middle-aged man let out a low, painful groan, gritting his teeth tightly. "They are one of my more loyal subordinates, and now they're all dead. It seems that by the time I end this closed-door cultivation, there won't be many useful people left by my side."

"Marquess, rest assured. Your prestige within the sect is still strong. Once you return after recovering, there will naturally be people responding to your call," the person in black replied, bowing his head.

"It's difficult," the middle-aged man sighed deeply. "In the past, even with the cooperation of the White Silver King, we barely held our ground against the Four Halls of Darkness. Now that the White Silver King is dead, and I, the Right Guardian, am left alone, how can my status be restored to what it once was?"

The person in black remained silent.

After a moment, the middle-aged man glanced at the candles on the high platform and said, "Surprisingly, there are three minor ones left. Those who managed to escape from the Southern Bastion Mountain are quite fortunate."

"There are also hidden talents among the Soul Subjugators" said the person in black.

"Didn't we discuss earlier about seizing the opportunity to infiltrate the Four Halls of Darkness? We should send those three over there as well. Otherwise, it wouldn't be of any use to keep the few candles that survived," the middle-aged man casually remarked.

"Yes." The person in black bowed in acknowledgment of the order.

"Aaaaarggh!!!" As another round of newly formed flesh was burnt away, the middle-aged man once again emitted a painful roar. However, his gaze remained calm, as if he had become numb to this extreme agony.

"So this is the power of the Divine Mirror of the Eight Trigrams. I have truly experienced it," the marquess declared with fierce determination, looking up to the sky. "Jiuyi![2] If the day comes when I, the Violet Gold Marquess, return, I will make you repay this agony a hundredfold! Aaaaarggh!!!"