

## Martial Arts 441

Chapter 441: Star Absorption Technique!

When he reappeared, it was five kilometers away.

However, there was bad news—the instant teleportation item was shattered.

"How on earth did this guy find me?"

He gnashed his teeth and said.

In the past, nothing like this ever happened when he used it?

This time, instead of running away as he did the previous two times, he stood still, pricking up his ears to detect any movement around him.

One second passed, two seconds passed, nearly half a minute passed.

He didn't notice anything unusual around.

Tang Yong breathed a sigh of relief and said, "Looks like that guy didn't catch up this time."

"Really?"

A voice sounded from behind.

And it was very close, seemingly just at his back!

Tang Yong was startled, forming a palm with his right hand, he wildly mobilized the True Essence within his body and struck behind him.

He finally understood that this guy had been following him all along, and was just toying with him.

But before he could turn around, he felt a numbness in his body and lost all sensation.

He realized someone had lifted him, and the wind whistled past his ears, making it nearly impossible to open his eyes.

When he came to his senses, he found himself back in the same underground chamber from earlier.

The corpses of several subordinates still lay on the ground.

The air was filled with the smell of blood.

Tang Yong tried to move, but found he couldn't, his body wouldn't respond, and his Elixir Field and Sea of Qi were as silent as a dead sea.

It was clear that the person who had sealed his acupoints had incredible skills.

At this moment, he was like a cripple; even if a Mid to Low-level Fierce Beast barged in, it could kill him.

"Chairman Li,"

Tang Yong gave a bitter smile and said, "Chairman Li, I admit I'm not as skilled. I concede. But, from beginning to end, we've never wronged you. Now, my subordinates are dead by your hand. Can't you let me go?"

"Do you think that's possible?"

Chen Fan asked expressionlessly.

"Chairman Li,"

Tang Yong pleaded, "Chairman Li, I am willing to give you the space items on me. There's a lot of good stuff inside. As long as you'll let me go today, is that okay?

I can even swear to the heavens that if you let me go, I will never set foot in Anshan City again until I die. If I break this oath, let me die a horrible death. How about it, Chairman Li? Will this make you let me go?"

"No need."

Chen Fan shook his head and said, "Even if I kill you, I can still get your space items. And even if I don't, so what? Do you think I care about what's in your space items?"

Tang Yong was stunned.

Indeed, the other party was an A-level Awakened!

Things he considered extremely precious, like space items, instant teleportation items,

were of no significance to the other. The other man had far better items.

After hesitating for a moment, he made a decision with gritted teeth.

"Chairman Li, I admit that the things in my space items are ordinary to you, but I have a complete Supreme Martial Arts skill. If you spare me, I'll give you this technique in exchange for my life."

"A complete Supreme Martial Arts skill?"

Hearing this, a strange light flashed across Chen Fan's face.

"Yes, a complete Supreme Martial Arts skill."

Tang Yong hurriedly said, "Chairman Li, I saw you using martial arts earlier, right? I didn't expect that you're both an Awakener and a Martial Artist. Amazing! With this supreme martial art, your Martial Arts skills will advance rapidly. It won't be long before you reach the Celestial Realm."

"Is that so?"

Chen Fan smiled, "Then I'd like to hear just what Supreme Martial Art it is."

Tang Yong swallowed his saliva and lowered his voice, "Chairman Li, have you ever heard of the Star Absorption Technique?"

"Star Absorption Technique?"

Chen Fan's face changed slightly.

He had indeed heard of this martial art.

In the Awakened Association, it was priced at an astounding 90,000 points, nearly reaching the threshold for Supreme Martial Arts.

"That's right, the Star Absorption Technique."

Tang Yong's face showed a look of pride, "This Star Absorption Technique can absorb a martial artist's Inner Strength, even to the extent of draining an opponent's Inner Strength completely, reducing them to less than an ordinary person, and this Inner Strength can be converted into our own Primordial True Essence."

"What? Primordial True Essence?"

Chen Fan exclaimed.

It was well known that there were only a few ways to increase Primordial True Essence.

One was through the natural growth that came with age.

Another was through meditation and cultivation, but this method's efficiency was limited compared to natural growth. Eventually, it might take up to a month of continuous meditation to increase even a little Primordial True Essence.

The third, most efficient yet difficult method, was by consuming Heavenly Materials and Earthly Treasures to boost one's Primordial True Essence.

This method yielded the most increase.

However, Heavenly Materials and Earthly Treasures were hard to come by, making them expensive, and there was also a diminishing return effect everytime one used them. Consequently, their effectiveness would eventually diminish significantly.

So, according to this guy's words, there was a fourth method for increasing Primordial True Essence?

Seeing Chen Fan's reaction, Tang Yong's heart surged with delight.

As expected, no one could resist the allure of the Star Absorption Technique.

Neither could he,

nor his senior brother and master,

nor this Chairman Li.

"That's right, Chairman Li, you didn't hear wrong, and I'm not exaggerating. As long as you master the Star Absorption Technique, you can increase your Primordial True Essence by absorbing others' Inner Strength, thus enhancing your True Qi."

Tang Yong ingratiatingly smiled, "Just like me, I was able to move from the Meridian Refining Realm to the True Essence Realm in less than three years, and my Sea of Qi is now almost full. Soon, I'll be able to reach the Celestial Realm."

"Is that so?"

Chen Fan squinted his eyes.

From the tone of the other's words, it could be deduced that he wasn't lying.

Unexpectedly, the Star Absorption Technique actually had such powerful effects.

However, using a method of stealing other people's Inner Strength to enhance oneself was ultimately not the right path.

"It seems that over these three years, you've absorbed quite a lot of people's Inner Strength?"

Chen Fan sneered.

The smile on Tang Yong's face froze instantly, and he stammered, "Actually, it wasn't that many, and most of them were trying to kill me, so I had no choice."

Chen Fan chuckled.

A three-year-old child might believe his words.

"Chairman Li,"

Tang Yong hurriedly changed the subject, "If you swear to let me go, I'm willing to give you this martial art. How about it?"

"Not much appeal."

"Chairman Li, you?"

Tang Yong was shocked.

He stared at Chen Fan with wide eyes.

It didn't make sense. From what he saw earlier, wasn't the other interested in this martial art?

Why reject his offer now?

"Because I don't need you to tell me. I can still learn this technique from you."

As he said this, Chen Fan's eyes glimmered.

Almost instantly, Tang Yong lost consciousness and collapsed on the ground like a fallen log.

"Name."

"Tang Yong."

"Why did you come to Anshan City?"

"Because someone was chasing us. To evade them, we had to flee. While passing by Anshan City, we heard it was easy to enter, so we chose to come here."

Tang Yong spoke each word clearly.

"Why were they chasing you?"

"Because we absorbed a lot of martial artists' Inner Strength. Many of them held significant positions within the Noble Families, and some wanted the complete Star Absorption Technique we possessed. So, they kept tracking us."

"As expected."

Chen Fan nodded.

He knew the other was lying earlier.

However, knowing people were hunting them for the Star Absorption Technique came as a surprise.

But it was understandable.

After all, painstaking cultivation increases only a small amount of Primordial True Qi.

If one mastered the Star Absorption Technique, they could continually absorb others' Inner Strength.

It would be both simple and efficient.

Even he couldn't resist such temptation.

But he held a moral boundary: this technique could only be used on evildoers, never for wanton killing of innocents.

Otherwise, how was he different from those ruthless cult followers who treated human lives as worthless?

"Tell me the complete version of the Star Absorption Technique."

A look of hesitation suddenly crossed Tang Yong's face.

It seemed as if some keyword had triggered a trace of rationality in him.

"Hmm?"

Chen Fan intensified his Spiritual Power.

"Yes."

This time, Tang Yong answered promptly, spilling all the secrets of the Star Absorption Technique.

Chen Fan looked at his Skill Bar.

As soon as the other uttered some twenty to thirty words, a new martial art appeared on the Skill Bar, exactly the Star Absorption Technique.

It was a fragmented version.

As more words spilled out, the collection of the Star Absorption Technique advanced, until it finally reached one hundred percent.

Chen Fan breathed a sigh of relief.

It seemed that the Star Absorption Technique from this guy's mouth was genuine.

"The Soul Shifting Technique truly is a wonderful thing."

Chen Fan mused.

Without the Soul Shifting Technique, this guy might have said something misleading, even if willing to talk, or inserted some deceptions at critical points.

Though he could identify these, it would still have been quite troublesome.

How convenient it was to get it directly like this.

"Since I have 5 million points of experience, I'll max out this martial art and use this guy to test its effectiveness."

Chen Fan looked icily at Tang Yong on the ground.

This guy had absorbed countless people's Inner Strength.

As they say, what goes around comes around. Heaven won't spare anyone.

It was time for him to taste the fate of having his life's power drained by someone else.

Chapter 442: Somewhat Evil

[Star Absorption Technique: Completely Ignorant (0%)]

Chen Fan moved his mind and added ten thousand experience points.

The progress of the Star Absorption Technique increased by twenty percent.

"Fifty thousand experience points will do."

Chen Fan nodded secretly.

It's acceptable.

Of course, this is after the Sun Observation Technique reduces 40% experience points.

He added the remaining forty thousand experience points.

Chen Fan immediately felt that the True Essence in his body increased significantly.

His Constitution also greatly improved.

[Star Absorption Technique: Initial Glimpse (0%), Traits: Solid as a Rock Level 1, Nascent Soul Level 1]

[Solid as a Rock: Every level-up of the skill increases Physical Attribute by 3000 points]

[Nascent Soul: Every level-up of the skill increases Primordial True Essence by fifty percent]

Seeing these two traits, Chen Fan took a deep breath.

As expected of a Supreme Martial Arts, the traits unlocked at the beginner level are already so powerful.

The Level 1 Solid as a Rock can enhance the Physical Attribute by 3000 points, and the Star Absorption Technique at Perfection Realm, the Solid as a Rock trait can reach Level 5.

Bringing a 15000 point Physical Attribute boost!

Chen Fan looked at his current Physical Attribute, which was just 53,900.

This Supreme Cultivation Technique alone increased his Constitution by nearly 20%.

And this is just one trait; there's also Nascent Soul.

At Level 1, it can increase Primordial True Essence by 50%! At Level 5, it's 2.5 times.

Whereas the top-level Inner Strength technique, Purple Mist Divine Skill, reaches only up to 1.5 times in the Perfection Realm.

Chen Fan smiled.

He directly added one hundred thousand experience points, and as expected, the proficiency realm of the Star Absorption Technique advanced once again.

However, no third trait was unlocked.

Chen Fan didn't mind and continued adding points.

After spending another two hundred thousand experience points, a flash of inspiration struck his mind.

Chen Fan's eyes immediately lit up.

[Star Absorption Technique: Entering the Hall (0%), Traits: Solid as a Rock Level 3, Nascent Soul Level 3, Star Absorption Technique Level 1]

"I didn't expect just Entering the Hall realm to unlock the Star Absorption Technique trait."

Chen Fan looked over,

[Star Absorption Technique: Active Skill, upon activation, absorbs the opponent's Inner Strength, converting 30% into one's own Primordial True Essence. Each skill level increases the conversion rate by 30%. Note, this skill is ineffective on opponents with deeper Inner Strength than oneself]

30% indeed seems a bit low.

Since for someone like him, who has learned numerous Inner Strength techniques, the additional proportion of True Qi in his body has increased nearly fortyfold.

For other martial artists of the Yan Country, being able to cultivate a top-level Heart Method to the Perfection Realm is already considered remarkable.

In such cases, the additional proportion of True Qi in the body reaches 1.5 times.

Mastering a Supreme Inner Strength Technique to perfection, the additional proportion of True Qi in the body reaches 2.5 times.

Even with the bonuses from some top-level Inner Strengths, achieving an additional proportion ratio of fivefold is extremely difficult, while achieving tenfold is almost unheard of.

30% of the proportion may not be able to fully absorb the Primordial True Essence in their bodies.

But, if the Star Absorption Technique is advanced to the Perfection Realm, the conversion rate would reach a terrifying 90%! Almost 100%!

What does this mean?

If a martial artist's Primordial True Essence in their body is 100 points, with Heart Method and age bonuses, the total True Essence in the body may reach 500 points.

Using the Level 3 Star Absorption Technique to absorb all the opponent's Inner Strength,

the absorber's Primordial True Essence would instantly increase by 450 points!

What does 450 points of Primordial True Essence mean?

Chen Fan's Primordial True Essence in his body at this moment is just 1300 points.

Instantly increasing by 30%!

Chen Fan took a deep breath to calm his inner excitement.

Undoubtedly, this is definitely a shortcut to accumulate True Essence.

As for the drawbacks, it seems there is only one.

It cannot be used on those with deeper Inner Strength than oneself.

Chen Fan wasn't worried about this point because his Inner Strength, when viewed across True Essence Realm Martial Artists in Yan Country, is among the top.

But he still had two concerns.

One,

Is the True Essence absorbed from others truly becoming one's own? Would there be any risk of Inner Strength backlash?

Two,

This method of enhancing oneself by absorbing the Inner Strength of others leans more towards the Demon Dao. Even a righteous person might gradually lose their humanity and increase their demon nature if they use it too much?

"Forget it, let's keep adding points and see what other traits it will unlock."

Chen Fan added another four hundred thousand experience points.

The Star Absorption Technique advanced to the Great Success Realm.

Still, no new traits were unlocked.

Chen Fan wasn't disappointed. He added another eight hundred thousand points.

After spending nearly 1.5 million experience points in total, the Star Absorption Technique finally advanced to the Perfection Realm.

[Star Absorption Technique: Perfection (cannot be advanced), Traits: Solid as a Rock Level 5, Nascent Soul Level 5, Star Absorption Technique Level 3, Merging Skill Level 1]

"Merging Skill?"

Seeing this trait, Chen Fan's breathing became rapid.

If he guessed right, this trait should resolve his first concern.

[Merging Skill: Active Skill, can be activated during meditation. After activation, it merges the different True Essence in the body for one's use. The more True Essence in the body, the faster the merging speed.]

"Not bad."

Chen Fan nodded with satisfaction.

With this trait, the True Essence absorbed from others can be merged with one's Primordial True Essence, eliminating the risk of Inner Strength backlash.

Chen Fan let out a sigh of relief, then looked at the attribute panel.

Realm: True Essence Realm-First Realm (45.5%) (+)

True Essence: 54898.65/1304.75 (+4110%)

Level: 29 (0/100 million)

Constitution: 68.9 thousand

Power: 205.2 thousand

Agility: 55.6 thousand

Spirit: 1,363.3 thousand

Potential Points: 2 million

Experience Points: 3,260,000

Looking from the bottom up, he still had 3.26 million experience points left, enough to max out two Supreme Martial Arts.

He had several Supreme Martial Arts techniques at hand, and even a Supreme Martial Arts, but unfortunately, they were all in the process of unlocking.

He didn't have many Potential Points left because he had used all the Potential Points gained from taking elixirs to enhance his Primordial True Qi.

Otherwise, the progress of the Sea of Qi wouldn't have increased so quickly, reaching nearly 50%.

Power, Agility, and Spirit attributes hadn't changed.

The Physical Attribute had increased by 15 thousand points compared to before.

Chen Fan's gaze fell on Tang Yong in front of him.

The latter looked bewildered.

"Let's use you for a test."

Chen Fan activated the Star Absorption Technique.

The True Essence in the Sea of Qi immediately began to swirl, forming a gigantic vortex.

Chen Fan placed his palm on the other's forehead.

In the next moment, Tang Yong's face twisted in pain, and a scream erupted from his mouth.

A massive amount of True Essence flowed out of him and entered Chen Fan's Sea of Qi.

The Primordial True Essence rapidly surged.

With each tick of the number, it increased by 10 points.

In just over ten seconds, the Primordial True Essence rose from 1300 points to 1400 points, and it was still increasing at a stable rate.

At this moment, Tang Yong broke free from his controlled state and woke up.

A look of confusion appeared on his face, he clearly didn't know what had just happened.

But the rapidly depleting True Essence in his body made him quickly realize his situation.

"Star, Star Absorption Technique!"

His twitching mouth uttered in terror.

"How, how do you know the Star Absorption Technique!"

Chen Fan didn't respond, he just gave a cold smile.

"No, please don't."

Tang Yong was completely flustered. In such a short time, he felt more than half of his True Essence gone.

If this continued, all his True Essence would be gone, and he would be worse than an ordinary Muscle Refining Realm Martial Artist!

"Please, Chairman Li,"

Tang Yong pleaded tearfully: "Please give me a way out, don't take all my True Essence, I beg of you, Chairman Li."

"Many people must have said that to you, haven't they?"

Chen Fan asked.

"..."

Tang Yong was stunned.

Yes, he had absorbed the power of nearly a hundred people.

From the Early Stage of Meridian Refining to the Late Stage of Meridian Refining.

There was even one injured True Essence Realm Martial Artist.

Every person he absorbed Inner Strength from begged for their lives.

He would agree verbally, but his actions never stopped. Most of them were directly absorbed dry and died on the spot!

He never imagined that he would have such a day.

Within a few seconds, most of Tang Yong's True Essence was gone.

"Chairman Li, I was wrong, I know I was wrong, please spare me."

Tang Yong cried bitterly.

He had only a little True Essence left.

If even that little bit was gone, even if Chen Fan let him go, he wouldn't escape the pursuit of others.

But unfortunately, it was as if Chen Fan didn't hear him.

A few seconds later, he withdrew his palm, and Tang Yong fell limply to the ground, face ashen.

Chen Fan looked at the panel, delighted.

His Primordial True Essence increased from 1300 points to 1800 points, a gain of 500 points!

points of Primordial True Essence, almost equaled what he would get from two days of alchemy.

But it also felt not quite right.

First, the Primordial True Essence absorbed was very chaotic, counting them individually, there were over a hundred!

Apparently, the guy on the ground hadn't advanced the Star Absorption Technique to the Perfection Realm to unlock the Merging Skill trait.

He absorbed Inner Strength from hundreds of people but hadn't fully integrated it.

Second, Chen Fan felt somewhat irritable, as if a voice was tempting him to absorb more Inner Strength from others for greater power.

"The Star Absorption Technique is indeed somewhat sinister. Until I completely merge these various types of True Qi, I should avoid using this martial art easily."

Chen Fan thought to himself.

The former was manageable. Given enough time, no matter how many types of Exotic True Qi there are, he could merge them.

The main issue was the psychological influence. No matter how high the Spiritual Power, it could only weaken but not eliminate it.

With just one use of the Star Absorption Technique, the effect wasn't significant, but if he used it three times, ten times, twenty times, it would be different.

The guy in front, who lost his humanity and viewed other martial artists as tools, was the most evident proof.

Chapter 443: This is Not Something You Should Worry About

"It seems you have indeed absorbed quite a lot of people's power, haven't you?"

Chen Fan looked down at Tang Yong and said.

The latter let out a bitter laugh, his eyes losing their former brilliance. He looked at Chen Fan and said, "Kill me."

For a martial artist, being crippled was worse than death.

"Are you sure?"

Chen Fan suddenly said.

Tang Yong's body trembled a bit.

He hesitated again.

After all, a bad life is still better than a good death, right?

"However, I truly don't intend to let you go."

"You!"

Tang Yong was furious to the point of death.

This Li Ping was truly despicable!

After draining his inner strength and putting all his effort to waste, he intended to humiliate him once more before killing him.

This was simply too much!

"Haha, hahahaha."

Suddenly, he started to laugh.

"Kill me then. Don't worry, soon enough someone will come and avenge me. Li Ping, I'll be waiting for you in the netherworld!"

"What?"

Chen Fan seemed a bit surprised, "You mean you have companions?"

"That's right."

Tang Yong said sinisterly, "My master is a Celestial Realm Martial Artist. Even if you are an A-level Awakened, so what? The power of a Celestial Realm Martial Artist is beyond your imagination."

Today, you have drained my inner strength. Tomorrow, my master will come and drain yours. This is the cycle of heaven and retribution that you cannot escape, hahahaha!"

"Cycle of heaven and retribution? Are you capable of uttering such words?"

Chen Fan sneered.

Sword Qi shot out of his fingers and pierced the opponent's skull.

Tang Yong fell to the ground with a hysterical expression.

He completely lost his breath.

"A Celestial Realm master, huh?"

Chen Fan muttered to himself.

As the saying goes, when it rains, it pours.

He had already offended the Black Demon Sect, and soon a beast tide would erupt.

One more Celestial Realm enemy really didn't matter.

The key was that his strength increased daily.

When the day came that the enemy arrived at his doorstep, it might just be a question of who drained whose inner strength.

"Tonight was not in vain."

He sighed.

First, he obtained a complete Supreme Martial Arts.

Then, he gained several hundred points of Primordial True Essence.

"Let's go back and fuse this True Essence, then refine True Qi Pills."

Chen Fan walked out. Before leaving, he didn't forget to open the door.

This way, it wouldn't be long before a Fierce Beast, attracted by the smell of blood, arrived to destroy the corpse.

...

Meanwhile, a thousand miles away from Anshan City.

Several people were sitting on chairs.

Sitting in the main seat was an old man with a few strands of white hair at his temples, but his eyes were piercing and commanding.

The others were in their thirties or forties, except for a young man standing with his head bowed, clutching the corner of his robe, not daring to make a sound.

"So, after searching all day, did you find anything?"

The old man asked, his voice deep.

"Third Uncle, I searched several cities in the direction of Huzhou City, but I couldn't sense the aura from the sheepskin scroll."

Replied a middle-aged man on the left cautiously.

"Third Uncle, I couldn't sense anything either."

"Neither could I."

Everyone said one after another.

Each time someone finished speaking, the young man's face turned a shade paler.

"So, none of you found anything?"

There was no answer, and the room was terrifyingly quiet.

"Thud!"

The young man knelt on the ground and burst into tears, saying, "Third Grandfather, it's all my fault. If it weren't for me, the family wouldn't have lost such an important thing. It's all my fault."

Saying this, he slapped his own face.

Seeing this, the first middle-aged man on the right showed a look of pity.

After all, he was the young man's father and the current visible patriarch of the Qin family.

If it were any other time, he would have pleaded for his child. But this time, the trouble caused by the latter was too great!

That was a Divine Demon Level Technique!

Each Divine Demon Level Technique was a priceless treasure, with even the Awakened Association possessing only a few.

A thousand-year-old noble family like the Qin family had only three Divine Demon Level Martial Arts.

Of course, they were all incomplete. Complete Divine Demon Level Martial Arts? Don't even think about it!

It was said that the Longevity Technique, this Divine Demon Level Martial Art, had a total of seven diagrams, and the Qin family had two of them.

One of them was lost a couple of days ago, and the culprit was the young man kneeling on the ground, continuously slapping his face.

Of course, he also had some responsibility.

If he hadn't used his authority, the latter wouldn't have smoothly obtained one of the diagrams.

"Hmph, what's the use of doing this now?" the middle-aged man on the left snorted coldly.

"Second brother is right. If slapping ourselves could bring back the stolen secret manual, we could all slap ourselves."

"Exactly, eldest brother. Xiaohao might have been ignorant, but how could you be so ignorant? How could you let him take such an important thing to look at privately? If it weren't for that, it wouldn't have been stolen."

"Right? That was a Divine Demon Level Martial Art. Even the Thunder Emperor, if he came to our Qin family, would have to follow the rules, looking at it only in a private room, without taking it out. You, sigh, how foolish!"

Several middle-aged men chimed in.

Each had a hint of glee in their hearts.

If the eldest brother made such a mistake, even if the secret manual were recovered, he would still be severely punished by the clan.

If it went badly, he might be removed from the patriarch position.

Then, they would all have a chance.

"It's my fault."

Qin Jiming nodded, saying, "When we retrieve the Longevity Technique and return to the clan, I will voluntarily step down as the patriarch."

"!"

Hearing this, Qin Zihao and several middle-aged men looked shocked.

"Dad!"

Qin Zihao cried out, "It's all my fault, it has nothing to do with you."

"The fault of the son is the fault of the father. How can it have nothing to do with me?"

Qin Jiming shook his head.

The middle-aged men were overjoyed.

They hadn't expected the eldest brother to say this voluntarily.

How great!

"Enough."

At this moment, the old man in the main seat frowned, looking at Qin Jiming with displeasure, "Jiming, are you defeated by such a minor setback? Are you thinking about quitting already?"

"Third Uncle, that's not what I meant."

Qin Jiming hurriedly said, "This time, it's indeed my fault. I have to do this to silence the clan's murmurs."

"That's not your concern."

The old man glanced at him, saying, "The top priority now is to retrieve the lost secret manual quickly; the longer we delay, the more variables there'll be.

As for the patriarch's position, whether you should continue or not is for the clan to decide. Your opinion doesn't matter, understand?"

"Yes, Third Uncle."

Qin Jiming gratefully glanced at the old man.

He knew, the old man was speaking up for him.

After all these years of his contributions to the Qin family, the older generation saw everything.

If he stepped down, replacing him with someone else as patriarch might not work as well.

The other middle-aged men looked at each other, feeling a bit resentful.

This Third Uncle was really partial!

The Qin Jiming line made such a big mistake, yet, as long as they retrieved the secret manual, all would be forgiven?

"Hmph, get up."

The old man snorted, "A moment of passion for a woman led to all this trouble?"

"I'm sorry, Third Grandfather."

Qin Zihao wiped his tears, standing from the ground.

"Are there any places you haven't searched?"

The old man glanced at the group.

The sheepskin scroll with the Divine Demon Level Technique was not an ordinary sheepskin scroll.

There was a special mark on it, which could be sensed by a token made of certain material. The maximum sensing range was a hundred kilometers.

In other words, as long as the Longevity Technique was within a hundred kilometers, the tokens they carried would react.

The closer it was, the stronger the reaction.

"Third Uncle, there are three directions we haven't checked yet. Also..." the speaker hesitated.

"Speak up, what is it?"

"Yes, Third Uncle. I was wondering if that thief might have done the opposite of what we expect and instead went inward?" The middle-aged man on the left frowned.

"Second brother is right. This isn't like ten years ago with so many small villages outside. Even if a thief finds an empty village, unless we search the Yan Country thoroughly, it's like finding a needle in a haystack."

Hearing this, Qin Jiming and Qin Zihao both had their faces turn grim.

This was also their concern.

The clan's tolerance was based on retrieving the secret manual.

If they couldn't retrieve it, people in the clan would surely have opinions.

"Don't worry."

The old man snorted coldly, "You all think I haven't thought of that? Tomorrow, your fifth uncle will arrive, and we will find that little thief."

"Fifth Uncle!"

"Fifth Grandfather will come too!"

Qin Jiming and his son were excited.

The fifth uncle might be only in the True Essence Realm, but he was proficient in a very rare martial art, the Emperor's Qi Observation Skill!

This martial art not only could see through the opponent's reality but also divined successes and failures, making it not difficult to find the lost secret manual.

As long as they found the person, even without the third uncle's help, the father and son could kill the thief.

In contrast, the other middle-aged men weren't as excited.

They exchanged looks.

The clan valued the secret manual and their elder brother, even dispatching that master to rush over.

With his arrival, it was only a matter of time before they retrieved the secret manual.

"Enough, it's late. Go get some rest, and start searching for the thief early tomorrow." The old man waved his hand.

"Yes."

They replied in unison.

#### Chapter 444: The Dangerous Rat City

As the first rays of dawn sunlight filtered through the window into the alchemy room,

Chen Fan, sitting on a meditation cushion, slowly opened his eyes and exhaled a soft breath.

He spent the entire night refining the exotic true qi within his body, attempting to fuse it with his own true qi.

He initially thought it would be an uncomplicated task.

However, the result was far beyond his expectations.

After an entire night, he had only managed to fuse less than 100 points out of 500 points of Primordial True Essence, requiring at least another 40 hours to complete the remaining 400 points.

Nevertheless, there was good news.

Once he successfully refined all 500 points into his very own Primordial True Essence, the next fusion process would be at least one-third faster.

Fortunately, even though several hundred points of true essence remained unrefined, they were still part of his own true essence.

There was a risk of internal backlash, but it was very minimal.

Chen Fan's gaze shifted to the status panel,

Realm: True Essence Realm · First Realm (63.2%) (+)

True Essence: 75948.4 / 1804.75 (+4110%)

With the addition of these 500 points of true essence, his total volume of true essence now reached 76,000 points, over 60% of his Sea of Qi.

"This method of increasing Primordial True Qi is much faster than honestly practicing alchemy."

Chen Fan sighed with emotion.

To be honest, he was genuinely tempted.

He even entertained the idea of capturing more wanted criminals to drain their inner strength.

After all, these heinous individuals deserved death.

But within him, there was a voice constantly reminding him.

To resist the temptation.

Indeed, though there was no current risk of internal backlash due to the disparity between the exotic true qi and Primordial True Qi within him,

what if he absorbed the inner strength of several more martial artists?

Once the ratio neared one-to-one, the risk of internal backlash would become significant.

If the ratio reached two-to-one or three-to-one, the probability of backlash would multiply exponentially, leading to chaotic true qi, internal injuries, or worse, demonic possession, or even burst body and death in severe cases!

The second concern was his mental state.

If a good person kills too many bad people, evil can override humanity, turning one cold-hearted; if an evil person spares more people, humanity can win over evil, making one compassionate. Nothing is set in stone.

Chen Fan worried that excessive absorption of others' powers, even those of the wicked, would cause him to lose himself.

Throughout the night, he was not only refining exotic true qi but also racking his brain for a solution.

Indeed, he devised a plan.

[Ice Heart Technique].

This heart method belongs to a supreme martial art.

Unlike other heart methods, it focuses on mental cultivation rather than inner strength.

At advanced stages, it can suppress inner demonic nature, making the mind as clear and pure as ice.

However, even this heart method cannot eliminate demonic nature, merely suppress it.

There was another unparalleled technique, the Nine-Character Mantra Hand Seal, especially the characters that preach goodness – "All soldiers, fighters, and arrayed marchers", "My Heart is Zen", and "All Transformations Merging".

They encourage righteousness but only suppress rather than eliminate demonic nature.

Above these supreme techniques, a peerless martial art called [Carefree Wander] exists.

This technique differs from the aforementioned ones.

Both the Ice Heart Technique and the Nine-Character Mantra Hand Seal intentionally suppress inner evil while amplifying true goodness and beauty within.

In contrast, Carefree Wander cultivates a state of absolute freedom.

Neither human nature nor demon nature can affect the practitioners, for concepts like right and wrong, good and evil, do not exist for them.

They transcend worldly entanglements, roaming in boundlessness, which is why the technique is named Carefree Wander.

Thus, those who master this technique are often great benefactors, immune to any evil influences, unwavering in their righteousness, saving numerous lives.

Conversely, it can make them grand villains who wreak havoc, unaffected by righteous concepts, finding it easy to kill many.

Or they may be those who act purely on their whims, embodying both good and evil.

Among the three techniques, Carefree Wander is the best.

The redemption points needed to exchange for it reflect this.

The Ice Heart Technique costs only 50,000 points.

The Nine-Character Mantra Hand Seal requires 80,000 points.

As for Carefree Wander, it costs an astonishing 700,000 points!

Chen Fan really wanted to get Carefree Wander for a perfect start.

However, considering the 700,000 points, which would take him two to three days to accumulate,

and the fact that the available Carefree Wander was an incomplete version,

he likely wouldn't be able to practice it until he perfected the Ice Heart Technique and the Nine-Character Mantra Hand Seal.

So, he decided to purchase the Ice Heart Technique first.

"Therefore, before using the Star Absorption Technique again, I must fully fuse the remaining exotic true qi and master the Ice Heart Technique. 'A gentleman practices discretion, does not deceive in the dark.' The heart's changes often go unnoticed until it's too late, thus one must be prepared in advance," Chen Fan mused.

If he could achieve these two points,

the Star Absorption Technique wouldn't be a catastrophic technique but a great assistance in rapidly filling his Sea of Qi.

It might even allow him to break into the Second Realm of True Essence, further enhancing his inner true essence. Once he achieved Second Realm Perfection, he could attempt a breakthrough to become a Celestial Human Realm Martial Artist!

"That's enough true qi refining for now; it's getting late, time to hunt fierce beasts."

The thought made Chen Fan frown slightly.

As per the agreement, Meng Xue should have already informed him of the locations of those flying and underground fierce beasts last night.

Yet it was already the next day.

"Could something have happened?" he muttered, planning to check on her.

"Buzz, buzz."

Just then, his phone vibrated.

Chen Fan's face revealed a peculiar expression; could it be mere coincidence?

He answered the call, which indeed was from Meng Yu.

As soon as the call connected, Meng Xue's slightly weak voice came through.

"Sorry, Chen Fan, I got delayed. You haven't left the city, have you?"

"Are you okay?" Chen Fan asked with concern.

"I'm fine, just overexerted my spiritual power," Meng Xue chuckled weakly. "Finding the beast locations wasn't difficult; by yesterday afternoon, I could have provided them. You know, though, that both types of fierce beasts are hard to deal with."

"Yes."

Chen Fan nodded.

Flying beasts need no explanation.

If they fly high enough, even with a bow and arrow, it's hard to deal with them.

Of course, mastering the long-range Nine Provinces Archery might improve the situation, but that technique wouldn't unlock until the following afternoon.

As for the underground beasts, they were even harder to combat.

They hide underground, with passages extending everywhere. At depths of several tens of meters, even a nuke might not reach them.

"So, I've drawn a tunnel map indicating the locations of the two commander-level fierce beasts. Come over, and I'll give you the map, which might help you."

Upon hearing this, Chen Fan's eyes widened.

So, the reason Meng Xue was late was because she was drawing a map.

This meant he could directly venture into those underground beasts' lairs with a straight-forward route, significantly reducing the difficulty level!

"Meng Xue, thank you."

Chen Fan quickly responded.

"No need for thanks," Meng Xue smiled, "I am also a part of Anshan City, just doing my part. But Chen Fan, don't celebrate too soon."

Meng Xue's tone turned serious. "The Vajra Rat King and Bloodthirsty Ant King are both commander-level fierce beasts with intelligence and are adept at burrowing. If you can't defeat them swiftly, within seconds they could dig hundreds of meters underground, making them hard to catch. This is the first point.

Secondly, the Bloodthirsty Ant resides in a rainforest, a dangerous but manageable place for you. However, the Vajra Rat's location is special."

"How special?"

Chen Fan asked patiently.

"The Vajra Rat resides in the ruins of a city called Rat City, known today but formerly called Smoke City, a second-tier city with convenient transportation and subway lines spread throughout.

After the Beast Tide, the omnipresent underground tunnels were occupied by the rat beasts, turning into complex burrows. This fact was exploited by wanted criminals and cultists who use the city as their stronghold."

Chen Fan's eyes narrowed.

"You mean I'm guaranteed to encounter these people in Rat City."

"Correct," Meng Xue sighed. "According to the Awakened Association, near ten A-level Awakened individuals reside there. The Association has dispatched Hunters to eradicate them, but every attempt has failed.

These criminals and cultists excel in navigating the underground spaces, retreating into tunnels when threatened and planning counter-attacks.

Recently, they caused heavy losses to an Association Hunter squad, after which the Association abandoned their eradication plans.

Chen Fan, if you go there, it will be very dangerous."

Meng Xue hesitated.

"Got it. What about the Flaming Flame Eagles' location?" After a brief contemplation, Chen Fan asked.

Chapter 445: Reunion with an Old Friend

"Sunset Valley."

Meng Xue said, "It's in the northwest direction of Anshan City, about fifteen hundred kilometers away. The terrain isn't as complicated as those burrowing Fierce Beasts' nests, but they can fly. Once their numbers increase, it can become very troublesome."

"That's no problem."

Chen Fan said casually.

If possible, he actually hoped these flying Fierce Beasts would swoop down one by one to be slaughtered by him.

"Hmm."

Meng Xue responded, after a moment of silence, she said, "Chen Fan, about Rat City, if possible, try not to go there. If you really have to go, I think you should deal with those Bloodthirsty Ants first, then inform me. I can foresee the future,

If the future really changes, and there are no Bloodthirsty Ants in the Beast Tide attacking Anshan City, you can go to Rat City then. It won't be too late."

Her tone carried a hint of helplessness.

Because she knew what kind of person Chen Fan was.

Once he made a decision, others couldn't change his mind.

Unless with facts.

"Alright."

Chen Fan nodded, "Then I'll look for you later."

After getting the map, he would first make a trip to the rainforest. If the future really changes,

No matter how dangerous Rat City is, he would still go.

"Okay, I'll wait for you."

Meng Xue said, hanging up the phone.

Chen Fan put away his phone, got up, and walked towards the outside.

In the hallway, Gao Shan and Tu Yue were coming towards him.

"Brother Chen, heading out again?"

Gao Shan said with a smile.

"Yes."

Chen Fan smiled, "It's getting late, I should go out and hunt."

"Brother Chen, you really are dedicated. Going out to hunt Fierce Beasts during the day, and then burying yourself in the Alchemy Room at night to refine pills; it's too exhausting."

Tu Yue sighed, "Why not give yourself a day off, and rest well?"

Chen Fan couldn't help but laugh.

Sometimes, knowing the future in advance wasn't always a good thing.

"Yes, Brother Chen," Gao Shan misunderstood Chen Fan's meaning and added to the persuasion, "Even in martial arts, you need to balance work and rest. Today is the day our association recruits members. Do you want to come along and select students?"

Upon hearing this, Chen Fan's face showed a hint of surprise.

"Our association is recruiting today?"

Gao Shan and Tu Yue exchanged glances, their smile deepening.

"Yes, Brother Chen, I thought the president had informed you. Apparently not, but it's no big deal." Gao Shan explained, "Recently, a lot of people have come to Anshan City, and the president decided to recruit some potential youngsters for training. Maybe some of them have good talent."

"A few days ago, the president already asked people to notify, and today many people are expected to come. Brother Chen, do you want to come and take a look?" Tu Yue showed a hint of anticipation on his face.

"Forget it, I won't join the crowd for this kind of thing."

Chen Fan smiled and shook his head. After a few more words with them, he walked towards the exit.

Watching Chen Fan's gradually receding figure, Gao Shan sighed and said, "Brother Chen's talent is already high enough, even the genius at headquarters can't match him, yet he works so hard. It's really discouraging."

"Indeed."

Tu Yue also smiled bitterly, "Comparing with him is pointless. Let's not make ourselves miserable by competing."

"Yes, forget it, let's go. The president is still waiting for us."

Chen Fan left the association gate and was almost startled by the scene before him.

Thousands of people stood on the open ground in front of the association, with those who couldn't fit standing across the road, lining up along the street.

"Quite a lot of people have come."

Chen Fan glanced around, a thought flashing in his mind.

He wondered if any of his fellow villagers had come along.

Suddenly, his eyes lit up as he saw a familiar figure.

"It's Uncle Zhang. I didn't expect him to lead this time."

Chen Fan's lips curled into a smile.

In the distance, Zhang Ren's face was stern, and the youths behind him didn't dare to make a sound.

"Brother Zhang, can the kids from our village really pass the assessment and enter the Martial Arts Association?"

A grown man asked quietly.

The others also looked over expectantly.

The youths' eyes were glowing even more.

"Not sure."

Zhang Ren shook his head and said, "Whether they pass the assessment depends on their luck. Passing is naturally the best."

After all, the resources within the Martial Arts Association aren't something a small village can possess.

No matter how talented a martial arts prodigy is, if his conditions are mediocre, his achievements in the future are also bound to be limited.

Whereas, those with average talent and superior conditions can be pushed to the Muscle Refining Realm even by relying on resources.

But the progression from Muscle Refining to Entry Force requires some luck and aptitude.

The people behind him had a look of semi-comprehension.

They trusted Zhang Ren wouldn't harm them or their children.

Since he said attending the assessment was beneficial, they came to participate.

Suddenly, Zhang Ren sensed something and looked towards where Chen Fan was.

Yet, he saw no one.

"Strange, could it have been my illusion?"

Zhang Ren frowned.

He clearly felt someone watching him.

But turning his head, there was no one.

Either it was an illusion, or the opponent's strength was far beyond his.

"Could it be a Meridian Refining Realm expert?"

Zhang Ren thought.

Recently, he had been diligently cultivating, coupled with a continuous supply of Top-grade Qi Blood Pills, he had broken through from Dark Power. Now, he was a Transforming Force Martial Artist.

"Perhaps I'm overthinking?"

He shook his head, looking towards the association with complex feelings.

This place was once frequented by him, but due to circumstances, he hadn't visited for years. Now, coming here again,

At that moment, several figures emerged from the association hall, with the person in the center immediately recognizable to him.

Sun Wei!

A few years ago, he was the president of Anshan City's Martial Arts Association; years later, he still held the position.

Sun Wei's gaze swept across the scene, instantly creating a silent atmosphere.

Not just the youths, but even the adults accompanying them lowered their heads, afraid to make eye contact with those who had emerged.

Only one person stood out.

Thus, Sun Wei, Xu Jie, and others immediately noticed this person.

"Hiss..."

Sun Wei took a sharp breath, staring at Zhang Ren's face.

This person looked so familiar!

"That person?"

Xu Jie froze.

"What's the matter?"

Gao Shan asked curiously.

"Brother Gao, don't you think that person looks familiar?" Xu Jie hinted with his gaze.

Gao Shan looked over, and in the next moment, a name came out of his mouth, "Zhang Ren?"

"Yes, yes!"

Xu Jie shivered with excitement, "It's him! It's him! More than three years ago, Brother Zhang left the city to hunt and never returned. At the time, we all thought he was dead."

"Dead? But now he..." Tu Yue looked puzzled.

"Indeed, that's why I find it incredible, isn't that right, President?"

Turning to Sun Wei, Xu Jie was about to speak when the president had already disappeared from his side.

"Zhang Ren, is it really you? You're not dead?"

Sun Wei came up to Zhang Ren, asking in disbelief.

"It's me, President. I'm not dead."

Zhang Ren smiled.

Today, he brought his village people to see how his old friends in the association were doing.

Judging by the scene, almost everyone he knew was gone.

Times had changed.

Everyone around was stunned by this scene.

Especially those from the Chen Family Fortress; their eyes nearly popped out.

Uncle Zhang was this impressive?

He even knew such big shots from the city?

"That's great, I always thought you were..."

Sun Wei's eyes reddened, looking Zhang Ren up and down. When his gaze fell on Zhang Ren's limping leg, his eyes widened.

"Brother Zhang, your leg?"

"Coming back from the gate of hell, one always has to give up something, right?"

Zhang Ren smiled.

Sun Wei froze.

Looking at Zhang Ren.

Compared to years ago, Zhang Ren seemed much more optimistic.

If it were him, having a crippled leg might be worse than death since mobility impairment for a Martial Artist is deadly.

"He must have gone through a lot these years, right?" Sun Wei thought. The journey from the gate of hell sounded easier than it was.

Going through such an ordeal could only be truly understood by the person who experienced it.

Sun Wei was overwhelmed with mixed emotions.

This was not the time for a conversation due to the crowd.

So he patted Zhang Ren's shoulder and said, "It's good you're back. Let's talk more after the assessment ends and we enter the association."

Part of it was curiosity about Zhang Ren's breathtaking experiences these years.

Another part was to update Zhang Ren on recent changes within the Awakened Association.

"Okay."

Zhang Ren smiled and nodded.

He looked at Gao Shan and Xu Jie, nodding in greeting.

They exchanged glances, feeling joyous.

...

"Uncle Zhang has reached Transforming Force quickly." Chen Fan's lips curled slightly.

Seeing Zhang Ren's progress, he genuinely felt happy for him.

Of course, if he wished, he could find Zhang Ren now and help him clear a couple of meridians, promoting him from Entry-level Martial Artist to Meridian Refining Martial Artist.

Yet, this forceful method of advancing through external aid wasn't always the best.

Sun Wei had been stuck at Transforming Force for years, unable to find a breakthrough.

While Uncle Zhang had just entered Transforming Force, perhaps he could convert his internal Power into True Qi through his own efforts.

If he couldn't, Chen Fan could then step in.

"First, find Meng Xue, get the map, then deal with those Bloodthirsty Ants."

He quickened his pace towards where Meng Xue and her sister lived.

Chapter 446: One Man Defends a City

"Chen Fan, you're here!"

Meng Yu opened the door, a bright smile on her face.

"Yes, where's your sister?"

Chen Fan smiled at her and glanced inside the room.

There, sitting at the table, was Meng Xue with a thick piece of paper laid out before her.

"Chen Fan."

Meng Xue looked up and gave him a smile, "Come over, I'll explain it to you."

"Alright."

Chen Fan walked over.

After all, everyone had different habits, and that included map drawing.

"This is the map of the Bloodthirsty Ants. There are twelve entrances in total. These three in the southeast are the closest to their nest. You can enter from here and eliminate the Bloodthirsty Ant King in the shortest time. That way, without their leader, they might not attack Anshan City in two days."

"Got it."

Chen Fan nodded.

For safety's sake, he decided to kill more Bloodthirsty Ants.

After all, a Commander-level Fierce Beast could command Elite-level and lower beasts.

Even if the Ant King died, the remaining Bloodthirsty Ants might continue attacking Anshan City under the orders of other Commander-level beasts.

"This second map is of Rat City's underground. It's much more complex than the Bloodthirsty Ants' nest, and many places are hideouts for fugitives and cultists. I've marked them with exclamation points. If possible, avoid them and don't engage."

Chen Fan glanced at it.

There were hundreds of exclamation points.

Thankfully, he didn't have a problem with trypophobia.

"Alright, I will."

He put the two maps away and smiled at Meng Xue.

If the opponents weren't strong, he'd consider wiping them out on the side.

After all, the longer they lived, the more victims they claimed.

But according to Meng Xue, Rat City had nearly ten members whose combat power could rival A-level Awakened ones.

If he clashed with them, there was a risk of being attacked by all of them.

So, he decided to be cautious. He went to Rat City just to eliminate the underground rat beasts. Of course, if they sought trouble, he wouldn't mind using a tactical retreat to wipe them out!

"Chen Fan, be careful."

Meng Yu's eyes revealed admiration and worry.

In the vast Anshan City, few knew what Chen Fan had done for it.

Except for her and her sister.

"Don't worry."

Chen Fan smiled, "If I encounter a strong enemy, I'll retreat first. As long as the mountains remain, there'll always be firewood."

"Yes!"

Meng Yu nodded emphatically.

"Alright, it's getting late. I should set off."

As Chen Fan turned to leave, he looked at Meng Xue, "Thanks for this, Meng Xue. But there's one more thing you need to look out for."

"I understand."

Meng Xue looked at him, "Is it about the Black Demon Sect?"

"You foresaw it?"

"Just a bit."

Meng Xue smiled wryly. Drawing the two maps had almost drained her spiritual power.

But she knew the Black Demon Sect's threat was perhaps greater than the impending Beast Tide.

So, it was essential to determine if they'd act against Anshan City.

"What did your foresight show?" Chen Fan asked curiously.

"I foresaw whether the Black Demon Sect would take action before the Beast Tide broke out."

"And the result?"

Meng Xue shook her head.

"That's good." Chen Fan breathed a small sigh of relief.

If the Black Demon Sect caused trouble during the Beast Tide, it would drive people mad.

"I'll keep following up on this. If I foresee any action against Anshan City, I'll notify you immediately," Meng Xue said.

"Great."

Chen Fan smiled, feeling fortunate he'd decided to invest in Meng Xue.

With her help, many troubles could be avoided.

Thinking about it, he decided to continue providing support.

After all, helping Meng Xue was helping himself.

"Meng Xue, you're still cultivating the Moon Observation Technique, right?"

Meng Xue froze, then realized something, her breathing getting a bit quicker.

"Looks like it."

Chen Fan smiled, "If you have any questions, you can ask me now. I have some expertise in the Moon Observation Technique and should be able to help."

Meng Xue listened and couldn't help but laugh and cry.

Others might not know his strength, but she did.

On the day the Beast Tide broke out, he single-handedly defended a city.

Not just High-level Fierce Beasts or Elite-level Fierce Beasts, even Commander-level Fierce Beasts were killed in an instant.

If it weren't for a beast horde sneaking into the city, it would've been a perfect battle.

"Alright, I'll ask then."

Meng Xue asked three questions in one breath.

Chen Fan answered the first, and Meng Xue's eyes widened.

By the second, she was utterly shocked.

After the third, Chen Fan asked, "Any more?"

"No."

Meng Xue shook her head.

She was eager to verify them.

"Meng Yu, you?"

Chen Fan looked at Meng Yu.

Since he was there, he might as well give some guidance. It would only take a few minutes.

Meng Yu shook her head.

She glanced at Meng Xue.

Her daily cultivation was mainly guided by Meng Xue.

So, she had no questions.

Chen Fan understood and couldn't help but chuckle.

Guiding Meng Xue was also guiding Meng Yu.

"I'm off."

He headed to the door.

"I'll see you..."

Before Meng Yu could finish, Chen Fan had disappeared.

Moments later, Chen Fan was outside the city.

Though it was still morning, there was already a line of hundreds at the city gate, carrying bags and looking travel-worn.

Chen Fan scanned the crowd and suddenly a familiar figure caught his eye.

"Is that the woman from last night?"

He frowned.

In his view, the person had changed her appearance, wearing coarse clothes and looking rough-skinned, like a middle-aged woman.

But the figure was too similar.

Chen Fan activated his Celestial Response.

The next moment, he narrowed his eyes.

Indeed, the aura matched the woman from last night.

Unexpectedly, after he drove her away, she tried to sneak in again today.

After some thought, he decided to ignore her for now.

If she acted as she did last night, he wouldn't hesitate to teach her a lesson.

"Strange."

In the crowd, disguised as a middle-aged woman, Wang Lingling felt uneasy and looked back.

Nothing unusual.

"Am I becoming paranoid from being hunted?"

Wang Lingling thought,

"Damn the Qin Family. So petty over a single cultivation technique."

She fumed silently.

While the Qin Family's power surpassed the ordinary, their reach wasn't like before. Finding her wouldn't be easy and might not happen at all.

Thinking this, a smug smile appeared, and she looked at the city walls with a twinge of resentment.

That Chairman Li from last night had heartlessly thrown her out despite her pleas.

No sense of pity at all.

Determined, she had come back today in disguise, confident she wouldn't be recognized this time!

But it wasn't just spite.

Anshan City, though small and lacking compared to larger cities, was much better than the small settlements outside.

A hot bath, hot food bought with money—that was enough.

Time was precious. She needed to decipher the secrets of the map quickly.

...

Over an hour later, Chen Fan gazed at a rainforest in the distance.

No mountains, but the trees were tall, the shortest as high as ten stories, like giant umbrellas blocking the sky.

Rarely, a ray of sunlight broke through the thick leaves.

The underbrush was tall enough to hide a Fierce Beast.

"Here I am."

Chen Fan took out Meng Xue's hand-drawn map from his space items.

He confirmed his position.

The nearest entrance was five to six kilometers away.

He put the map away and decided to enter there and make his way to the Bloodthirsty Ants' nest.

At that moment, several auras approached rapidly.

In no time, they were near Chen Fan.

They appeared surprised to see him but said nothing and soon entered the rainforest.

"So many people."

Chen Fan muttered to himself.

He could guess why.

Just like mountains had many Heavenly Materials and Earthly Treasures, this place likely had plenty too.

"Too bad my Emperor's Qi Observation Skill isn't unlocked yet. Otherwise, I could gather those treasures too."

Chen Fan sighed and entered the rainforest.

Immediately, a damp, decaying smell hit him.

Not far away, a gray venomous snake nearly three meters long stared at him with triangular eyes from a branch.

Unwilling to waste time on these beasts, Chen Fan headed to his destination.

As he drew closer, he spotted several Bloodthirsty Ants.

These ants varied in size; the largest was nearly four meters long, over two meters high, like a car, covered in black armor with sharp pincers in front.

The smallest were over two meters long and about a meter high, also with sharp pincers.

#### Chapter 447: Bloodthirsty Ant King

The several groups of Bloodthirsty Ants touched their pincers together, then merged into one group, moving in the same direction.

At this moment, an angry and pained roar echoed from nearby.

Curious, Chen Fan approached.

He saw a bear-like fierce beast, standing eight or nine meters tall, being surrounded and attacked by a swarm of Bloodthirsty Ants.

"Is that the Earth Bear?"

Chen Fan exclaimed in surprise.

The Earth Bear was an Elite-level Fierce Beast, known to be troublesome in this part of the rainforest.

Yet, this moment, it was surrounded by these Bloodthirsty Ants, with dozens of them climbing up its legs and attacking its body with their sharp pincers.

Logically, these Bloodthirsty Ants were just High-level Fierce Beasts, and some smaller ones were even Mid-level Fierce Beasts, not capable of breaking the Earth Bear's defense.

However, these Bloodthirsty Ants could spit out a highly corrosive liquid, burning large patches of the Earth Bear's skin, then attacking the weakened spots with their pincers.

Just imagining it made one realize how painful it must be.

"Roar!"

The Earth Bear, with its massive paws, swatted at its body, killing several Bloodthirsty Ants with each swipe.

However, there were too many Bloodthirsty Ants, relentless and fearless, charging forward ceaselessly.

Within two or three minutes, the Earth Bear let out a sorrowful cry and fell to the ground.

The surrounding Bloodthirsty Ants swarmed over, quickly ensuring the Elite-level Fierce Beast was completely dead.

Of course, they paid a hefty price, losing over a hundred Bloodthirsty Ants in this battle.

But this loss was acceptable to a swarm of around fifty or sixty thousand.

The Bloodthirsty Ants began cutting up the Earth Bear's body, seemingly intending to take the pieces back to their nest.

Chen Fan drew an arrow.

The bowstring sound resonated.

Hundreds of Bloodthirsty Ants, along with the Earth Bear's corpse, were instantly blasted to pieces.

The surviving Bloodthirsty Ants quickly sensed danger and scattered, soon disappearing into the ground.

"They really can run."

Chen Fan muttered.

He didn't pursue them but turned to approach a cave entrance.

The entrance was about two meters in diameter, pitch black, with no end in sight.

Even though Chen Fan was prepared psychologically, he still hesitated.

But you can't catch tiger cubs without entering the tiger's lair.

He took a deep breath and jumped in.

The sound of wind whooshed past his ears, and he was surrounded by darkness, with the air filled with a rotting smell, making him nauseous.

"Thud!"

Chen Fan landed with a light sound.

The cave remained pitch black, his hand invisible before his eyes.

Even with his eyesight, visibility was only twenty to thirty meters.

The good news was that the tunnel was much wider than he expected, around four or five meters high and two to three meters wide.

But then, a rustling sound came from not far away.

Clearly, his landing had disturbed the surrounding Bloodthirsty Ants, and they were quickly approaching from all directions.

"Good, saves me the trouble of finding them."

Chen Fan smiled.

He waited for about three seconds.

Ground tremors ensued, and black shapes surged from both directions, closing in rapidly.

Chen Fan drew his bow and fired an arrow forward.

"Boom!"

A deafening explosion followed, and dozens of Bloodthirsty Ants were blown apart.

He turned and shot another arrow behind him.

Again, dozens of Bloodthirsty Ants were blown apart.

But new Bloodthirsty Ants quickly filled in from both sides, launching fearless attacks at Chen Fan.

Suddenly, a figure burst from the ground, a meter-long pincer clamping towards Chen Fan's leg.

Moreover, Bloodthirsty Ants were emerging from all around Chen Fan, spitting acid at him.

Above him, more Bloodthirsty Ants appeared, spewing acid like artillery shells at Chen Fan.

"Hiss..."

However, before the acid could touch Chen Fan's body, it was evaporated by his protective True Qi.

The Bloodthirsty Ant trying to sever Chen Fan's legs was blasted away, exploding in mid-air.

"This won't work."

Chen Fan frowned.

Though he could attack the Bloodthirsty Ants with his bow and arrow,

the ones above and below were hard to target.

Even if he could, the efficiency was very low.

"Bows and arrows really aren't suited for fighting in such narrow spaces."

He sighed softly.

In that case, he would use martial arts.

He put away his bow and arrow, lunging into the Bloodthirsty Ant swarm like a fierce tiger.

The air crackled, Powerful Qi surged, and Bloodthirsty Ants burst apart one after another, their bodily fluids splattering the tunnel walls, filling the air with a pungent smell.

There was indeed a faster way to kill these Bloodthirsty Ants than with his fists and feet.

The Vajra Lion's Roar.

This martial art was powerful in its own right, and in this enclosed environment, its power would be greatly amplified, though it wouldn't help increase his Basic Martial Arts level.

Thus, Chen Fan was willing to spend more time to level up his Basic Fists and Feet.

Fortunately, these Bloodthirsty Ants were truly simple-minded and strong-limbed.

Despite the deaths of numerous companions, more Bloodthirsty Ants kept coming, launching suicidal attacks on Chen Fan.

Their fearless nature was terrifying to other fierce beasts.

For Chen Fan, though, it was a great advantage.

A tunnel originally two to three meters wide and four to five meters high was turned into a three-room apartment by Chen Fan, almost punching through the ground.

He glanced at his experience points after an indeterminate amount of time.

He was almost shocked.

His experience points had increased by nearly five million!

From three hundred thousand, it had now accumulated to eight million.

And it was still jumping at thousands or tens of thousands per second.

Though these Bloodthirsty Ants were only Mid to High-level, each one gave only tens to hundreds of experience points.

Yet there were so many of them, concentrated in one place.

A single palm could kill dozens, so the experience points accumulated rapidly in thousands and tens of thousands.

Suddenly, a strong gust of wind surged from behind, and a Bloodthirsty Ant, larger by half, pounced.

Its pincers were almost two meters long, with tips gleaming coldly.

An Elite-level Bloodthirsty Ant.

Chen Fan turned and struck with his palm.

"Boom!"

With a loud explosion, the Elite-level Bloodthirsty Ant and dozens of normal ones were blasted apart, turning into a rain of flesh.

His experience points increased by over a hundred thousand.

Chen Fan was momentarily stunned.

What happened? How did they increase so much?

Could it be that he had just killed a big one?

No point dwelling on it, the corpse was untraceable.

He turned and punched again.

Dozens of Bloodthirsty Ants exploded.

Such situations where experience points increased by tens of thousands happened a few more times, the highest being three to four hundred thousand at once.

During that time, Chen Fan saw clearly.

Among the Bloodthirsty Ants he had killed with one palm, several were Elite-level.

But, be it Elite or Commander-level, they were all killed by one slap, differing only in the experience points they gave.

As time passed,

Chen Fan sensed something was amiss.

Fewer Bloodthirsty Ants were coming.

Now, there were no more living Bloodthirsty Ants around, and no sound could be heard.

He calculated that the swarm was close to sixty thousand, and he had killed about thirty thousand.

Which meant half of them were still alive.

But they had ceased their attacks.

"It seems the Commander-level Bloodthirsty Ant has ordered a retreat."

Chen Fan thought.

Realizing that direct attacks weren't working, sending more would be futile.

"What a pity."

Chen Fan sighed.

He wasn't bent on extermination, but if he didn't do it, the people of Anshan City would suffer.

He continued deeper into the cave.

Not encountering any Bloodthirsty Ants along the way.

Chen Fan pressed on.

His intuition told him, this was just the calm before the storm.

The tunnels became wider, turning from passages to underground spaces.

Even Chen Fan felt amazed.

Suddenly, a huge figure appeared ahead.

Over ten meters long and more than four meters tall, pitch black with red streaks, its pincers exceeding three meters in length, and its mouth filled with sharp teeth.

Chen Fan halted.

Clearly, this was the leader of the Bloodthirsty Ants.

An intelligent being, waiting here for some time.

The Bloodthirsty Ant King, seeing Chen Fan arrive, showed fiery rage.

Its mouth opened like a machine gun, spewing dozens of acid pools.

Their speed was so fast, even a True Essence Realm Martial Artist would struggle to react.

Chen Fan dodged, the acid corroding the ground into deep pits.

Undeterred, the Bloodthirsty Ant King spat out more acid, like a relentless cannon.

"No wonder it's alone, afraid of friendly fire."

Chen Fan thought.

He drew his bow.

To catch the thief, capture the king first.

Killing this one would leave the rest mindless.

Sensing a life-threatening crisis or frustrated by missing so many times,

the Bloodthirsty Ant King poured out even more acid like a storm.

#### Chapter 448: Who is Speaking

In the blink of an eye, half of the underground space was enveloped by acid rain, with no room for dodging.

At that moment, Chen Fan released the bowstring, and accompanied by a booming sound, the arrow shot out.

The huge amounts of acid in front evaporated immediately due to the substantial true qi attached to the arrow.

The remaining acid fell to the ground and walls, producing sizzling sounds.

The Bloodthirsty Ant King's exposed massive eyes showed a hint of human-like shock.

It then opened its mouth again, releasing a large amount of acid.

Differing from last time, this time it wasn't a torrential downpour of acid.

Instead, it gathered into a fountain-like burst, colliding with the incoming arrow.

The true qi attached to the arrow was consumed at a startling rate.

Consequently, the arrow's velocity also slowed down.

"The Sun-Shooting Arrow's speed is still too slow."

Seeing this, Chen Fan thought to himself.

When dealing with the Dragon-man earlier, the Sun-Shooting Arrow he shot out could easily be evaded by the opponent.

Now, even at such a short distance, the Bloodthirsty Ant King reacted quickly enough to use acid to block.

However, this Bloodthirsty Ant King is not simple.

With just a bit of acid, this guy can come up with so many ways to use it.

If this guy successfully infiltrates Anshan City,

many people will die from this kind of indiscriminate attack.

"Unfortunately, it won't have the chance."

Chen Fan murmured to himself, producing a second arrow and nocking it on the string.

"Boom!"

The second arrow rushed forward.

The Bloodthirsty Ant King noticed the arrow and spat out a second stream of acid, intercepting the second Sun-Shooting Arrow in mid-air.

However, visibly, the second stream of acid was smaller compared to the first, and the rate at which the true qi on the arrow was corroded slowed considerably.

"?"

Chen Fan frowned, then sneered.

There weren't many arrows in his space items, but he did have around one or two hundred.

How much more acid could this guy spit out from its mouth?

While thinking this, the ground suddenly began to tremble.

A large number of Bloodthirsty Ants erupted from the ground.

Some opened their iron pincers, ferociously charging at him.

Others pounced towards the two airborne arrows.

Chen Fan seemed to not notice, aiming at the Bloodthirsty Ant King, consecutively firing three Sun-Shooting Arrows.

"Boom!"

With a loud explosion, countless Bloodthirsty Ants were blasted to pieces.

And that Bloodthirsty Ant King also sprayed out a third stream of acid.

However, there were simply too many incoming arrows.

The fourth arrow directly hit its body, blasting open a huge hole, and the acid spraying from its mouth ceased abruptly.

Subsequently, several arrows hit it in unison, reducing the Bloodthirsty Ant King to merely a pincer.

Seeing this, Chen Fan breathed a sigh of relief.

The sudden appearance of so many Bloodthirsty Ants,

was because the Bloodthirsty Ant King knew it wasn't an opponent and deliberately ordered its subordinates to launch a kamikaze attack.

Unfortunately, the strength gap between the two sides was too vast.

Quickly, all the surrounding Bloodthirsty Ants were killed by Chen Fan.

Just as he thought, there weren't many Bloodthirsty Ants, only around one or two hundred.

Chen Fan walked up to the Bloodthirsty Ant King, bent down, and stored the iron pincers on the ground into his space items.

Then, he took out the map given by Meng Xue, examined it for a while, and continued moving forward.

The Bloodthirsty Ant Swarm actually had two Commander-level Bloodthirsty Ants.

One was the Bloodthirsty Ant King just encountered, responsible for guarding the Bloodthirsty Ant Swarm.

The other was the Bloodthirsty Ant Queen, responsible for reproduction; in fact, the entire Bloodthirsty Ant Swarm, including the Bloodthirsty Ant King, was born from it.

Compared to the Bloodthirsty Ant King, the Bloodthirsty Ant Queen's body was enormous, but it was slow, and its combat ability was not impressive.

Despite this, Chen Fan hastened his pace towards the Queen's location.

Along the way, not a single Bloodthirsty Ant appeared, as if all the underground Bloodthirsty Ants were dead.

Until about three or four kilometers away, the situation changed.

A tide of Bloodthirsty Ants surged from the passage in front, dense and endless.

Chen Fan was fearless, channeling true qi into his fists and feet, and charged forward.

Ahead was the Bloodthirsty Ant Queen's location; if you don't cut the weeds and remove the roots, they will regrow with the spring wind.

These Bloodthirsty Ants controlled by the Queen naturally would not retreat an inch.

But as always, the strength gap between the two sides was too big.

The Bloodthirsty Ant King couldn't last more than three breaths in Chen Fan's hands, let alone these High-level Fierce Beast level Bloodthirsty Ants.

Yet countless companions fell, and the remaining Bloodthirsty Ants kept charging forward.

Until no Bloodthirsty Ant remained alive.

Chen Fan took a deep breath and looked ahead.

There lay a Bloodthirsty Ant about twenty to thirty meters long, sprawled on the ground, approximately twenty meters tall.

It didn't have the massive iron pincers of the Bloodthirsty Ant King, its chest legs were very small, barely able to support its body, and its abdomen was tremendously large.

Behind its body lay piled countless man-sized eggs, densely packed, innumerable.

Noticing Chen Fan's approach, many of the eggs began to crack open, and numerous Bloodthirsty Ants covered with mucus pounced towards Chen Fan.

They were killed by his Protective True Qi before they could even get close.

"So this is the Bloodthirsty Ant Queen."

Chen Fan looked up at it, and couldn't help but feel goosebumps.

Just as he was about to take out his bow and arrow, a sense of crisis suddenly emerged.

A Mental Shock fiercely attacked his spirit.

He quickly mobilized all his spiritual power to resist, subsequently feeling his head pierce with pain as if thousands of steel needles stabbed at once.

Thankfully, the pain came quickly and disappeared just as swiftly, like an illusion.

But Chen Fan knew that it wasn't an illusion.

Because just now, his spiritual power had been consumed by more than half.

Chen Fan's gaze at the Bloodthirsty Ant Queen became serious.

He initially thought that the opponent had no offensive power; after all, its immense size made even moving a challenge.

But he hadn't expected that the opponent excelled at spiritual power attacks.

That Mental Shock certainly would have doomed an average A-level Awakened.

The Bloodthirsty Ant Queen seemed surprised that this human could block its full-force attack and suffered a backlash, its aura significantly dwindling.

"Is it over?"

Chen Fan sneered, readying himself for action.

"Human."

A weak, pleading voice suddenly echoed in his mind.

"Please, spare me. My children have all been killed by you."

Chen Fan paused, his hands hesitating.

He glanced around and then fixed his gaze on the Bloodthirsty Ant Queen in disbelief.

Was this thing speaking to him?

A talking Fierce Beast?

"Our species has always lived peacefully here, never attacking human cities, nor have we wronged you, right?"

The Bloodthirsty Ant Queen stared at Chen Fan.

Evidently, it was speaking, but not with its mouth; it was communicating mentally with Chen Fan.

Chen Fan squinted his eyes.

Was this a Commander-level Fierce Beast? Truly?

To his knowledge, only Beast King-level Fierce Beasts could communicate mentally.

And Beast Emperor levels could speak human language.

He tried several times to mentally communicate his thoughts.

Finally, it worked.

"Are you a Beast King-level Fierce Beast?"

Chen Fan asked.

"No, no,"

The Bloodthirsty Ant Queen quickly denied, responding:

"According to your human classification of our Fierce Beast strengths, I'm not a Beast King level, just a Commander level, but my spiritual power is stronger, thus I can use spiritual power to communicate with you."

"I see."

Chen Fan nodded.

The Bloodthirsty Ant King encountered previously was just a guard commander for this Bloodthirsty Ant Queen.

The Bloodthirsty Ant Queen was the true leader of the Bloodthirsty Ant Swarm.

This creature's overall strength was Commander level, while its spiritual aspect had reached the threshold of Beast King level, able to use rare spiritual attack skills.

Apart from spiritual attacks, its combat ability wasn't even top tier among Commander-level Fierce Beasts.

It had one exceptional trait though—high reproductive ability.

Just one of it meant an entire swarm; even if the whole Bloodthirsty Ant Swarm died, leaving only it, given some time, it could produce thousands more Bloodthirsty Ants and new Bloodthirsty Ant Kings.

"Human, spare me."

The Bloodthirsty Ant Queen continued to plead.

"I promise to leave this place and will never harm humans again."

"Really?"

Chen Fan sneered.

It could have begged sooner, but chose not to.

Instead, it attempted to kill him with a Mental Shock first, and after suffering backlash, it began to beg.

This showed its deceitful nature; its words were not trustworthy.

Even if the Queen's words were true,

the Bloodthirsty Ants lived nearby; even if they didn't attack human camps previously, it didn't mean they wouldn't in the future.

He trusted Meng Xue's predictions.

Her forecasts had never been wrong till now.

These Bloodthirsty Ants would emerge during future beast tides, attacking people inside Anshan City.

He couldn't take that risk.

"Sorry, I think seeing you as a corpse will make me feel safer."

Chen Fan said, drawing his bow and aiming at the Queen.

"Human!"

The Bloodthirsty Ant Queen panicked, its body trembling, "Don't kill me! Spare me, and I will serve you forever."

"Boom!"

"Boom!"

"Boom!"

The successive Sun-Shooting Arrows whistled through the air, representing Chen Fan's reply.

Chapter 449: Is That Chairman Shen and Their Presence?

Amidst the thunderous roar.

The Bloodthirsty Ant Queen's body exploded completely, countless green liquids shooting in all directions. Soon, the entire underground space was filled with a strong stench.

Seeing the kill notification popping up in his mind, Chen Fan nodded slightly.

The experience points from the Bloodthirsty Ant Queen were close to one million, similar to the Dragon-man he encountered last time. Clearly, it was somewhat special.

There were still many insect eggs around, so Chen Fan simply lit a fire.

The flames burned fiercely, and amidst the firelight, the faint cries of Bloodthirsty Ant larvae could be heard.

Chen Fan's furrowed brows slowly relaxed.

The Bloodthirsty Ants were basically all killed by him.

If things go smoothly, two days later when the Beast Tide hits the city, the only Fierce Beasts attacking should be the Vajra Rats.

Of course, if Bloodthirsty Ants or other types of burrowing Fierce Beasts still appear, he might be at a loss.

"Let's hope it's the former."

He murmured inwardly.

After all, Anshan City was just one of many small cities, nothing special. Those Fierce Beasts wouldn't have any reason to give Anshan City special treatment.

If Anshan City withstands the first wave of the Beast Tide, it would stand out among the many fallen small cities.

It was likely that from then on, it would receive special attention from the Fierce Beasts.

After scanning the area again to ensure nothing was overlooked, he turned and walked toward the nearest exit.

A few minutes later, he emerged from the tunnel. It was deep within the rainforest, with lush foliage blocking out any sunlight.

"I'll send Meng Xue a message first, let her predict again. If it's useful, I'll head to that Rat City."

Chen Fan muttered to himself.

Then he pulled out his phone, saw the signal had only one or two bars and was quite unstable.

Fortunately, sending a message was still feasible.

Soon after the message was sent, the phone vibrated twice, indicating a new message had arrived.

It was Meng Xue's reply, saying she would predict around noon.

Chen Fan then put away his phone.

There were still one or two hours until noon. He could choose to return or explore other ruin cities, kill more Fierce Beasts to gain points and experience points. He could also stay here and try his luck, see if he could find any Heavenly Materials and Earthly Treasures.

Although the third option had a very small chance.

But luck is a fickle thing, who can really say?

Following the principle of "since I'm here," Chen Fan activated the Celestial Response.

Instantly, several powerful auras appeared in his mind.

Among them, three auras were most conspicuous.

Two of them were together, surrounded by more than a dozen other auras, much weaker in comparison.

The third powerful aura was surrounded by nearly a thousand auras.

The coincidence was that these auras almost clustered together.

Chen Fan squinted his eyes and smiled.

The Celestial Response Technique couldn't perceive the aura of Heavenly Materials and Earthly Treasures.

However, it could sense powerful humans or Fierce Beasts.

If these people or Fierce Beasts gathered together, it often indicated something significant.

There's likely a treasure, probably right there.

"Hm?"

Just as he was about to move, he suddenly sensed a few familiar auras.

"Is it Chairman Shen and his group?"

Chen Fan furrowed his brows,

Unlike last time, the auras of Shen Si and others were noticeably weaker, surrounded by more than ten other auras, several of which were stronger than Shen Si's.

"Looks like they're in trouble."

Chen Fan glanced in the direction of the three powerful auras, hesitated for a moment, then headed toward Shen Si and his group.

Firstly, the three auras seemed to be in a stalemate, indicating the treasure hadn't fully matured.

Secondly, they were all from the same association. He had a good opinion of Chairman Shen. Knowing this, he couldn't ignore it and decided to go and see if he could help.

At this moment, southeast.

Shen Si and his group were surrounded by a group of people, each spitting blood, clearly gravely injured.

One man was severely wounded, his chest collapsed, barely breathing.

The people surrounding them were all blond with blue eyes, clearly not Yan Country People.

Shen Si half-kneeled on the ground, holding a long knife, gritting his teeth and glaring at the tall blond man leading the group.

"Friends, we already handed over those Fire Scale Fruits, what more do you want?"

Just now, Shen Si and his group found a Fire Scale Tree with seven or eight Fire Scale Fruits.

These fruits, the size of cantaloupes, red all over, covered in scale-like skin.

The name speaks for itself; Awakeners consuming these fruits can greatly enhance their affinity for fire elements, thus using more powerful fire element techniques.

Other types of Awakeners consuming them can also increase their resistance to fire elements.

The price is twenty thousand points per fruit, eight fruits totaling one hundred sixty thousand points—a significant gain for Shen Si and his group.

However, before they could warm them in their hands, these people appeared and demanded the fruits.

He Dazhou refused and was severely injured.

Seeing this, Shen Si and the others were furious but naturally, not opponents.

The blond man exchanged glances with his companions and laughed heartily.

Seeing this, Shen Si and his group clenched their teeth.

These folks were actually Feng Country People from ten years ago.

Feng Country, surrounded by oceans, once wielded significant influence. However, post-apocalyptic events turned the seas into forbidden zones. Within a year, Feng Country was annihilated, its islands submerged.

The surviving Feng Country People scattered, some came to Yan Country, forming good relations with Yan Country's upper echelon, living in large and mega cities.

Even ordinary Feng Country People could live in the city, enjoying privileges most Yan Country People couldn't.

Shen Si knew all this, and was once angry, but knew he couldn't change things.

However, he never imagined he'd encounter these people, let alone have them dare attack here!

"Kevin, they seem unhappy with you."

A blond woman beside him spoke in Feng Country language.

A flame flickered in her palm.

"Should I burn one to show them our power?"

"Yes, Kevin, Julie's right. Look at their eyes, full of hostility towards us."

"No rush."

Kevin smiled, looking down at Shen Si, speaking in Yan Country language: "I think you misunderstood. I meant you should hand over all your belongings, not just the Fire Scale Fruits. Do you understand?"

Hearing this, Shen Si and his group were enraged.

Outrageous!

"You..." A man behind Shen Si tried to speak.

"Shut up!"

Shen Si sharply turned, interrupting him.

"Chairman?"

The man widened his eyes, full of confusion.

The enemy injured their comrades and demanded their belongings—this couldn't be tolerated?

Shen Si glared at him.

As the saying goes, "Under someone else's roof, you must bow your head."

Currently, they were at the mercy of the enemies. If they didn't comply, they'd be killed instantly.

The things in the space items were external possessions; lost, they could be earned back next time.

Others also shook their heads at the agitated man.

They knew angering the enemy served no purpose except fury.

If the enemy was enraged, their predicament would worsen.

"Is that true?"

Shen Si looked at the leading blond man, "If we hand over our belongings, you'll let us go?"

"Of course."

Kevin smiled, "In your Yan Country language, I'm a man of my word."

"Fine."

Shen Si began taking things out of his space items.

The eyes of the dozen Feng Country people instantly changed.

"Cyan Leaf Grass, consuming it increases speed significantly."

"Water Element Fruit? Oh my, I need that!"

"Ice Crystal Fruit, I want this!"

"Oh my gosh, how many treasures does this guy have? Just these ten or so items are worth one hundred thousand points!"

"Edna, don't act like you've never seen the world. It'll make the opponent think we're easy to fool."

They spoke among themselves.

Their faces gradually flushed, saliva nearly dripping.

Meanwhile, Shen Si's group watched with hearts bleeding.

These Heavenly Materials and Earthly Treasures were collected painstakingly over half a month.

Especially the Ice Crystal Fruits, guarded by an Ice Snake, the Chairman got severely injured.

But now, these treasures were handed over, given away.

"Chairman, that's enough!" Someone internally shouted.

Continuing would waste their half-month's effort.

Shen Si understood this.

But he knew, unless satisfied, they wouldn't leave alive.

"Celestial God Fruit!"

Next, the dozen Feng Country People exclaimed.

"I want the Celestial God Fruit, the rest you can have, it benefits me most." One spoke urgently.

"Gu De, stop talking nonsense. Do you think you're the only one who hasn't consumed a Celestial God Fruit?"

"Exactly, I haven't consumed one either. Kevin, the fruit can help me reach B-level!"

"I can reach B-level too. Kevin, give me the fruit."

#### Chapter 450: When Did I Say Such a Thing

Three Feng Country people, arguing until their faces flushed red.

Other Feng Country people, looking at the Celestial God Fruit on the ground, also showed a look of greed.

Although most of them had already consumed the Celestial God Fruit, and not just one, it was not to the point where it would have no effect.

Stepping back a hundred steps, they could still sell it for a considerable income.

Seeing this, Shen Si also stopped moving, looked up at the blonde man in charge, and smiled bitterly: "We've handed over everything we have, shouldn't you honor your promise and let us leave?"

The air suddenly quieted down.

Over a dozen Feng Country people's gazes focused on Kevin.

After all, he was their leader. How to distribute these spoils was up to him.

Kevin squinted his eyes, his lips curled into a smile that wasn't a smile, "Oh? You've handed over all your valuable items?"

"This bastard!"

A few Martial Artists cursed his ancestors in their hearts.

At the same time, other Feng Country people also responded, discussing.

"Kevin is right, this cunning Yan Country person definitely isn't telling the truth."

"Yes, these guys must have a second, or even a third Celestial God Fruit!"

"Hand it over, make him hand everything over!"

"Friends, this really is everything we have."

Shen Si smiled bitterly: "We spent over two months collecting these things, suffering unknown hardships and dangers along the way. You should know how difficult it is to gather these items, right?"

"Chairman is right, these things are all we have."

"Have some mercy, don't take everything, leave us with something?"

Other Martial Artists also chimed in.

In truth, this time was really a big loss for them.

Even if the Chairman's space items still contained two things.

It's still a big loss.

"Oh really?"

Kevin sneered, "It's not hard for me to believe you, as long as you're willing to open your space items for me to check one by one."

"What!"

Even Shen Si showed a look of shock.

"Didn't you say these were all your belongings just now?"

Kevin said smugly: "Then next, open your space items for me to check. If there's nothing valuable inside, it's not a big deal, right? According to you, there's nothing valuable inside, correct?"

"Not just him, all of you."

His gaze turned to the Martial Artists behind Shen Si.

"Open your space items and hand them over for inspection."

At this, everyone's faces turned ugly.

Previously, they were relieved that not all the valuable items were in the Chairman's space items.

Now it seemed, from the moment they were discovered.

The other side planned to squeeze them dry, not leaving them with anything.

"These Yan Country people are just like the others we encountered before, thinking they're clever." Zhu Li said smugly.

"Hurry up and open the space items, if you don't comply, don't blame us for being ruthless."

"Did you hear us? Hurry up!"

Several Feng Country people urged in broken Yan Country language.

"Friends, we Yan Country have a saying, leave some room in everything, so we can meet again." Shen Si showed a placating smile, "You got items worth twenty to thirty thousand points without any effort, which should be enough, right? To be honest, we are members of the Jiangnan Sub-district Martial Arts Association."

"Jiangnan Sub-district Martial Arts Association?"

"What's that?"

"I know, Yan Country has five Martial Arts Associations, Jiangnan Sub-district Martial Arts Association is one of them." Someone said.

"Oh, is this Jiangnan Sub-district Martial Arts Association very powerful?"

"Not really." They replied with a laugh, "Compared to our Revival Association, it's far behind."

Everyone smiled upon hearing this.

The Revival Association was founded by Feng Country people who fled to Yan Country, aiming to revive Feng Country.

The members were naturally all Feng Country people.

Hearing their discussion, Shen Si wasn't too disappointed.

Because he had already prepared for this scenario.

If revealing his identity could be effective, he wouldn't have waited until now to mention it.

However, he continued, "Everyone, our Jiangnan Sub-district Martial Arts Association has had good relations with your Revival Association over the years. Our Chairman Shi also knows some people in your association, such as Sir Hunter. I hope you can consider this and resolve today's matter."

Upon hearing Sir Hunter's name, the Feng Country people present showed a suspicious look.

But soon, Kevin sneered, "Don't say worthless things, open the space items for me to check. If everything is fine, we'll naturally let you go."

"Right, that Chairman of yours knowing Sir Hunter is their business, nothing to do with you, don't try to scare us."

"Hurry up and open the space items, don't make us get rough."

Over a dozen Feng Country people urged.

Gleams of malice shone in their eyes.

Shen Si suddenly had a bad premonition.

Or perhaps revealing his identity earlier was a mistake.

Originally, they could hand over their belongings and be let off. But after knowing their identity, to avoid leaks, they might choose to kill them.

Or maybe the other side never planned to let them go from the start?

"What to do?"

Shen Si's heart was anxious, like an ant on a hot pan, completely helpless.

Complying with their demands?

The other side might not actually let them go, probably leaving them with nothing in the end.

Not complying?

They could keep the items in the space, but they would surely die.

Most likely, they would die horribly.

Every minute felt like eternity.

Over a dozen Feng Country people gradually grew impatient.

The blonde woman with a floating flame in her hand smirked and said:

"Kevin, since they are unwilling to comply, perhaps I should teach them a lesson?"

"Zhu Li is right, this group won't cooperate unless we show some force, just like at the beginning."

Kevin nodded, "Zhu Li, I'll leave it to you."

"Wait!"

At this moment, Shen Si shouted, "We are willing to comply, as long as you swear to let us leave safely after inspecting our space items."

"Chairman!"

"Chairman?"

Everyone behind him stared wide-eyed.

"Chairman, these people probably never planned to let us go alive from the start. Since that's the case, let's fight them." The man who spoke first said excitedly.

"Yes, Chairman, we've handed over so many items, yet it's still not enough for them. These people are truly insatiable!"

Shen Si smiled bitterly.

Of course, he understood this principle too, but he still held onto a shred of hope in his heart.

Maybe these Feng Country people weren't as bad as he imagined.

At most, they would rob them, not dare to kill them.

Just like the fallen He Dazhou.

If these people truly wanted to kill him, he'd be long dead already.

"Of course, I said that earlier, didn't I?"

Kevin, without thinking, said: "You hand over all your valuable items, we will let you go."

"Alright."

Shen Si took a deep breath and removed the spatial ring he wore, "The lock on this is already open, you can look inside yourself."

"Chairman!"

The Martial Artists behind him were both angry and sorrowful.

Kevin cautiously accepted it.

Then he looked inside the spatial ring.

In an instant, his expression changed.

The surrounding people saw also became excited.

Without a doubt, there were many valuable items inside the spatial ring, even more valuable than the Celestial God Fruit!

This Yan Country person is indeed cunning!

Thinking about this, many Feng Country people greedily looked at the other Martial Artists.

Maybe they had treasures too?

Under their threat, the Martial Artists behind Shen Si also had no choice but to open their spatial rings and hand them over.

Kevin's smile grew wider.

Counting the Heavenly Materials and Earthly Treasures on the ground previously, their total gain this time, according to points calculation, could reach 500,000 points!

500,000 points!

As a B-level Awakened, he didn't know how long it would take to earn that many points normally.

"Sure enough, robbing these Yan Country people is the fastest way to make money."

He thought smugly.

The other Feng Country people were eagerly watching him.

But before they could speak, Shen Si's voice came first.

"Friends, we've handed over all our valuable items. Shouldn't you honor your promise and let us go?"

The scene was silent.

The hearts of everyone behind Shen Si were in their throats.

They had already done this, right? The other side couldn't go back on their word?

"Oh really?"

Kevin put away the spatial rings and said innocently, "When did I say that? Did I say that?"

He looked at his companions.

"Nope, I didn't hear you say that, Kevin."

"Me neither, I didn't hear it."

"I didn't either."

Over a dozen Feng Country people shook their heads in succession.

"See, I never said that."

Kevin smiled sinisterly.

"You!"

Shen Si was so enraged he spat out a mouthful of blood.

He never expected these Feng Country people to be not only greedy but also utterly shameless.