

Medical 751

Chapter 751 Golden Root_2

"Before I teach you this new ability, I need you to prove to me that you have perfected the Holy Sun Flames. Similarly, during the latter half of this year, specifically six months before they enter the unknown tomb, you and I will focus on enhancing your combat capabilities. We will improve your survival skills and impart some powerful techniques to you." Lan Feng grinned as he looked at the young man before him. "After all, we have the matter of reconciliation with the Third Prince."

As he closed his eyes and took a deep breath, Yan Xiaobao couldn't help but smile. When he opened his eyes, he channeled his spiritual energy through specific patterns in his meridians. Shortly after, a massive Solarflare fireball exploded, obliterating everything around him and forming a crater ten meters wide.

Unlike the first time Xu Yue caused a massive rumble, no servants appeared this time; instead, they all smiled at one another knowingly. They shook their heads and grinned, knowing their master was in the midst of training. After the explosion, a team of gardeners would head to the site to fill and flatten the ground. They had long stopped planting any new vegetation in the surrounding areas, leaving it barren to serve as the perfect training ground for the young man.

"Another four Solarflare explosions—if you perfect them, then I'll teach you a new skill," he said. Not long after, four more bursts echoed. The ground trembled, but no one seemed disturbed. Everyone had long learned to conduct their daily routines amidst the frequent rumblings that rippled through the landscape. Initially, they had feared the mansion might collapse, but as weeks turned into months, their fears dissipated, and now the tremors often brought an amused smile to their lips.

"You've truly perfected it," Lan Feng smirked, pointing a finger at his forehead. A silver mist appeared and dispersed as he released it. The information was stored in Yan Xiaobao's mind.

Earth Tremor—just as its name suggests—was Yan Xiaobao's first spiritual art tied strongly to his Earth Element affinity. While he could merge with the earth and manipulate it at will, it wasn't a spiritual art that came with the extra power of spiritual energy.

Earth Tremor has four distinct mastery levels. The first is called Earthquake, which shakes the earth. This allows the cultivator to inject their spiritual energy underground, causing seismic activity.

The second mastery level is known as Earth Tremor: Sharpen the Earth. This ability is very similar to the Earth Spike technique but creates an entire forest of needle-sharp protrusions three meters high. When this attack is used, it will undoubtedly injure many.

The third mastery level is called Earth Tremor: Earth Hand. This ability allows the cultivator to create a hand formed from the ground itself, which moves according to their will. The hand can range in size from as small as the cultivator's own hand to towering heights like a tree. The size of the hand depends on the mastery of the skill and the extent to which the cultivator can merge with their element. Of course, even without synchronized elemental fusion, a smaller hand can still be formed after learning the skill.

The fourth and final ability of Earth Tremor is Earth Grasp Heaven. This is an ability that truly lives up to Holy Level standards. It creates a box-like prison that warps and twists the world, sealing anyone it touches inside and making them unable to move or resist. Once trained to the peak of Holy Level, this ability becomes unassailable, rendering anyone helpless for a while. Even someone more powerful than Yan Xiaobao would struggle to break free. This is a rare and truly dangerous Holy Saint spiritual art skill.

Unfortunately, it didn't take long for Yan Xiaobao to realize that mastering such an advanced ability was far more difficult than anything he'd ever attempted before. "I'll have you practice this for several hours every day. The rest of your time will be spent training your sword skills and physical body. Though you have the ability to easily absorb energy from other cultivators, the energy you take in must be thoroughly refined; otherwise, it will severely weaken your own cultivation base, rendering such absorption ineffective."

His other option was to use his wolf form. Whenever he was in his wolf form, he was immensely powerful, but he wanted to keep this hidden. Unless he was on the brink of death, he wouldn't resort to it. Much like Lan Feng, his beast form was a secret he wished for no one to uncover.

The following days were a blur for Yan Xiaobao. In the mornings, he would teach Lao how to cultivate while observing him practice his earlier Martial Arts techniques. All of the skills were low-grade, with the highest being at Master Level, which was relatively simple to learn.

After instructing Lao, Yan Xiaobao would train Earthquake for several hours, followed by sword training for a few more hours. Finally, he would train his physical body. After completing his daily regimen, Yan Xiaobao would dine with his friends before retreating to his room to begin absorbing Yin Energy under moonlight.

Sitting on the floor, he felt content with his current life. Though his days were filled with extra effort, he could sense himself growing stronger and stronger. Although his cultivation base sometimes didn't soar like it usually would, he could feel a different kind of strength within himself—a strength gained not from an enhanced cultivation base but from increased combat prowess, making him less likely to succumb in battle.

He smiled as he closed his eyes and relaxed his body, feeling how the energy flowed into him. His stable life in Muchuan City was calm, yet beneath its serene surface, the city bubbled with excitement. One after another, prominent families received invitations from the Royal Family to explore an unknown tomb rumored to be brimming with treasures. What was once a closely guarded secret had now become common knowledge, and mercenaries from all over the city began eagerly preparing to join in. They awaited the Royal Family's next move.

When Yan Xiaobao internally invoked "Earth Tremor—Earthquake," seismic ripples spread through the earth! It had been three months since he first acquired the advanced Holy Level skill. He understood every practical aspect of the skill, yet still needed three months of grueling training to finally perfect Earthquake.

Throughout these three months, Yan Xiaobao had more or less adhered to a very simple schedule. First, once the moon disappeared over the horizon, he would rise and spend two to three hours training and mentoring Lao.

Though Yan Xiaobao felt his own training was plateauing, he was surprised to see Lao leap from student level to disciple level within just three months. Despite his rapid progression, Lao's aura remained incredibly refined—it had a pearl-like luster that would incite envy in anyone.

While Yan Xiaobao taught him, the young boy had perfected a variety of Martial Arts Skills. Though all of them were ranked fairly low, they should have posed some difficulty for him. Yet surprisingly, they did not; it seemed his talent was truly terrifying, allowing him to effortlessly master one skill after another.

After two hours of morning instruction, Tiger Yue would head to the garden and pour all his energy into practicing his seismic techniques. Every day he spent five hours honing this ability. While Yan Xiaobao felt his own learning pace was frustratingly slow, Lan Feng was impressed by the speed at which he grasped the intricacies of the skill. Earth Tremor was undoubtedly one of the most challenging skills Lan Feng had ever encountered.

Following five hours of Earthquake training, Yan Xiaobao would dedicate several hours to physical training and refining his sword skills. Initially, he was clumsy with a sword. He wielded it as though it were a dagger, so he was forced to start from the very basics. Standing in a fixed position, he would repeat a single striking motion for six straight hours. He practiced it so many times that the motion became as natural as breathing. By now, after three months of rigorous training, Yan Xiaobao had learned all the fundamentals, and his sword had transformed into a lethal weapon.

After six hours of sword practice came two hours of physical training. What he used to accomplish in wolf form was now being carried out in human form. He spent an hour running while wearing metal weights sewn into his clothing to build resistance.

The remaining time was devoted to employing various routines to enhance his strength. Everything was done in human form, and although the training was far tougher than he had imagined, Yan Xiaobao didn't relent. Stubbornly, he stuck to his planned regimen day after day, finding the exercises growing easier and easier. So much so, he had to increase their intensity twice over the past three months.

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On the day his body was pushed to its limits, it absorbed an astonishing amount of Yang Energy through the essence of sky and earth. This energy directly entered the Upper Dantian, and although he absorbed Yin Energy at night, it was far from enough to balance the energy within him.

Considering his options, Yan Xiaobao continued to work hard, and in three months, significant changes occurred.

Although he only perfected the Earthquake, shaking the earth, he was fully aware of how surprising this attack was. He hoped that in the remaining three months, he could also perfect the earth. If he could accomplish this, then he would perfect half of the skills, giving him a very powerful attack that could be used in the unknown tomb. He was prepared to secretly bring some treasures into his storage stone, hoping to also get rid of the Third Prince. Although he gave the prince a high-level skill, he had already ensured it was a skill that wasn't very useful to Yan Xiaobao. With his wings, it was impossible to pin him to the ground.

While Yan Xiaobao focused on training, the Third Prince visited him once. This visit was a few weeks after he visited the castle, and their meeting was brief. It was obvious that Shiu Ye was uncomfortable with the fact that Hui Yue had no demands after giving him such an amazing skill, and when they met, Hui Yue had already made it clear it was a gift in exchange for telling him about the tomb. Now he was invited to join them.

The prince had asked why he was rewarded, as his father had both told him about the tomb and invited him, but Yan Xiaobao snorted and asked the prince how much support the prince had in the court. Everyone knew the prince was the master controller. Thus, the gift was meant for the prince, and if he had to choose between princes, he only had a relationship with the Third Prince.

This brought a smile to the Third Prince's face. He was happy to stay and chat. However, when he heard that Yan Xiaobao was training to improve his combat skills for the tomb raid, he quickly had the young man promise to join Shao Ye's personal squad and excused himself.

Not only was Shao Ye satisfied with this, but Yan Xiaobao was also excited. He quickly agreed to approach the Third Prince. Even if he did not obtain any treasure, at least he should be able to find an opportunity to lure him away from his guards and avenge his two friends at that moment.

The only person who visited regularly was Cou Ling. She often came to hear about Yan Xiaobao's performance. When she came, she usually brought gossip and often provided information about how she persuaded some of her friends to visit the Ma family and join Yan Xiaobao's faction. Every time she spoke, she was very excited, and her pretty face blushed. When Cou Ling appeared, Hui Yue always had time to talk with her because he enjoyed their conversations so much. It was a brief, relaxing break from training. While Yan Xiaobao was busy with his training, Muchuan City was getting busier. Mercenaries from all over the country came to the city and stayed in the area. This ensured they knew when the raid on the tomb began. Experts from families in the Sun Kingdom and Moon Province came here. Not only those who were invited, but also many who were not. Information about the appearance of the unknown tomb turned into the most secretive secret. Even some magical beasts had heard about it and were tempted by these treasures, causing them to appear in the city in human form. Even if they were seen as hybrids, it was worth the chance to grab at least a little treasure.

Most people were unaware that some beasts could shape human bodies. The most trusted sources of information said that beasts needed to become Saint experts to transform; however, Yan Xiaobao knew from his time in the Divine Domain that this wasn't true. Indeed, controlling and changing a person's appearance required becoming a Saint, but every beast had the ability to transform into a human. This would change their features in various ways. They would acquire different colored hair, different eyes, and even various colors of skin. Generally, they would stand out in the crowd.

The general population considered many citizens of mixed blood to be fully mature beasts, although no one had anything to say about it. This was the beasts' secret to bringing themselves to the tomb.

It had only been three months since Yan Xiaobao left the castle, but by this time, every house in Muchuan City was filled with excited cultivators ready to share their fortune. Any house or mansion put up for sale had been sold, and all rooms had been rented. The inns had no free rooms at all. Soon, even the cities surrounding Muchuan were as full as the capital itself.

Another two months passed, and suddenly there was a burst of joyful eruption. Yan Xiaobao stood on the same land he used to perfect the Divine Sun Flames, and this time, there was no crater. Now, there were thousands of sharp spikes protruding from the ground. Some were no more than 1 meter tall, and some reached up to 3 meters. Regardless of which sharp spike one saw, all they saw was a tip so sharp it could easily pierce anyone. If one did not have proper defenses, they would surely meet a terrible end. Even Saints wouldn't feel safe unless Wu Wei protected them. He took a long time to find the process for using the Earth Hand in his mind, and when he closed his eyes, he watched the complex patterns he needed to push his spiritual energy through. The use of this skill was twice as difficult as his previous successes, but he was not one to give up easily. Before he actually began to put the theory into practice, he continued to memorize the path in his heart, with a sinister smile on his face. He long understood the importance of taking time when learning the paths his spiritual energy had to flow. If he made a mistake, it was obvious he would suffer. This was something he could not afford now, as he was so close to the raid on the tomb. Every time he thought about it, an uncontrollable excitement arose within him.

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This was Yan Xiaobao's first treasure hunt. Considering Lan Feng found it quite interesting, it surely was a great opportunity to test his skills and acquire precious cultivation treasures. This was a world he would never miss. Grinning widely, Yan Xiaobao once again focused his mind on the abilities within his consciousness. After two hours had passed, he stood up, ready to attempt Earth's Tremor and Earth Hand skills for the first time. Training for the Level 3 Earthquake was smoother compared to the other levels. Although the skill was incredibly difficult, Yan Xiaobao appeared to have grasped a fundamental understanding of it by perfecting the earlier levels of the earthquake.

Though he had yet to completely master the third ability, there was still a week before everyone departed for the tomb. Yan Xiaobao now had a 70% chance of summoning a hand that stood two meters tall. If he chose to summon a smaller one, his success rate would be significantly higher.

Feeling satisfied, Yan Xiaobao decided he needed the past week to prepare for it. He was now standing in the middle of the park, scratching his chin. Heading back to the mansion, he began pondering whether he should invite anyone to go with him.

"The only ones you should invite are Cai Jie or maybe Deng Wu," a voice suddenly interrupted. After grumbling for a moment, Yan Xiaobao nodded in agreement. They were both incredibly powerful, even more so than King-level expert Xu Biao, who had been on that level far longer than Deng Wu. This was mainly due to Xu Biao's interrupted cultivation. At that time, he had never known that when one reaches God's level, they possess the ability to bring dead souls back to life.

"Honestly," Yan Xiaobao began, "I think we shouldn't invite anyone to join us. While befriending others could be helpful, it could also be our Achilles' heel. I don't want to take care of anyone else—even if they're strong enough to take care of themselves, I would still worry about them. If I truly want to defeat the Third Prince, I need to focus entirely on the task. Alone, with your help, it'll be easier for the two of us," he argued, and Lan Feng seemed to agree.

"Maybe Cai Jie," he murmured. That man appeared to be stronger than Yan Xiaobao, so he should be capable of taking care of himself. That man should also be able to find the treasure on his own. Yan Xiaobao made up his mind to invite Cai Jie and headed straight to the room belonging to his newly discovered mysterious friend.

Truthfully, Yan Xiaobao didn't know what Cai Jie had been up to in the past six months, as he had been too focused on his training. Aside from spending some mornings with Lao and evenings with Gao Yan, all his time had been devoted to cultivating, training, and improving his mastery over earthquakes.

When he arrived at Cai Jie's room, his nose crinkled slightly as his heightened sense of smell detected a trace of blood. He was able to notice it only because his senses had been enhanced after he first transformed into a full wolf. These senses now told him that something was amiss.

Opening the door, he quickly discovered that Cai Jie wasn't in the main room, which contained his bed, a desk, and some shelves. Looking around, Yan Xiaobao didn't see anything out of the ordinary. Everything was in its proper place, but he could hear faint hissing sounds coming from the bathroom. He waited for a moment before rushing to the restroom.

Inside, he encountered a shocking sight. Cai Jie was sitting in the bathtub, which should have contained milky oils and soap water but was instead a dark red color. A metallic scent wafted outward, clearly detected by Yan Xiaobao's sharp sense of smell.

Yan Xiaobao leaned against the bathroom door, staring at his young friend who was bleeding heavily. Above the water's surface were long, deep wounds from which blood continued to flow. The once fair-skinned young man now had a ghastly pale complexion.

"You know water will keep you bleeding, right? Water slows the coagulation process necessary for clotting," he remarked. His voice startled the golden-haired man into a shaky movement followed by a sharp scream. Cai Jie cursed like a dockworker, attempting to rise out of the water but failing. Yan Xiaobao sighed, extended a helping hand, and together they made their way to the bed, where he placed him on the soft mattress.

Grabbing multiple towels from the bathroom, he returned to the bed, gently wiping away the blood before pressing them firmly against the wounds to apply pressure and stop the bleeding.

"Stop! It hurts so much; I don't want you to do it!"

"Don't act like a child; you'll feel better soon. Just lie still," he demanded.

Outside the room, various servants had gathered upon hearing the screams. Now, listening to the conversation inside, all of them were red-faced.

"I swear you enjoy seeing me in pain," Cai Jie's strained and pained voice reached Yan Xiaobao. He murmured under his breath, "Who told you to take a bath and nearly bleed to death!"

"I had to wash it," Cai Jie grumbled irritably. "If I didn't clean it, it would've gotten worse. But who would've thought I'd lose all my strength once I entered the water?"

Cai Jie, a proud man, had never been treated like this before. However, the argument triggered memories of his early life. Memories no longer seemed so distant, and soon, he was struggling in pain as Yan Xiaobao pressed a towel to his wound.

"Call for help!" Yan Xiaobao shouted, his voice echoing through the mansion. Moments after the door was opened, about twenty maids peered into the room, eager to see what had happened. When they spotted Cai Jie's pale face and blood pooling on the floor, all of them gulped nervously. Misfortune seemed to have struck him.

"Send the swiftest rider to summon Wang Julong. Tell her it's an emergency, and she needs to hurry," he commanded. Not long after, a horse rider and guard dashed out of the mansion to the medical room where Wang Julong was currently working.

Yan Xiaobao could see the deep and large wound. Removing the towel nearly made him feel woozy. There was no doubt that the proud Cai Jie insisted on doing things his way. Anyone else, including Yan Xiaobao himself, would've died from such an injury. Knowing this, Yan Xiaobao didn't dare wait as he closed his eyes and focused deeply on his Dantian Cave. Within it, two cores—one red beast core and one blue mist—stood, yet a green pearl shimmered with healing abilities. It was something Yan Xiaobao couldn't control, but given the circumstances, he deemed it necessary to at least try.

"I can control other phenomena; don't tell me I can't control this one," he snarled through clenched teeth as he reached toward the green pearl in his Dantian Cave. Watching it, he waged an internal tug-of-war. Yan Xiaobao could feel himself pulling energy from the pearl, but the pearl resisted with all its might to prevent extraction. Soon, the struggle left both sides in a stalemate, neither willing to yield an inch out of fear of losing ground.

The standoff lasted for a while until Yan Xiaobao finally gained the upper hand. Over time, he began to seize more of the advantage. During this process, he extracted energy from the green pearl and began funneling it into his Dantian. Mixing it with his spiritual energy, the typically silver droplets of energy slowly turned a faint green.

Yan Xiaobao had never healed anyone before and didn't know what to do. Fortunately, this green pearl wasn't merely a pearl containing wood element—it also carried extraordinary healing powers. Once the green energy from within combined with Yan Xiaobao's spiritual energy, the mixed energy flowed from his palms into the body beneath him. The energy began healing on its own. All wounds closed rapidly, causing the green pearl's size to diminish steadily. Soon, all the energy was used up, and what had once been a large green pearl had now shrunk to the size of a grain of sand.

Delving into his consciousness, Yan Xiaobao stood in front of the green pearl's cave, bowing deeply with both hands. "I know I forced you to help, but I thank you for saving my friend," he said. A barely perceptible ripple passed through the green pearl. However, it was so small that no one could see it.

Yan Xiaobao opened his eyes to find that Cai Jie looked much stronger than before. He had regained control over his body, but his face still appeared rather pale. "I healed you with my powers," Yan

Xiaobao said. "You're not fully recovered yet, so let Wang Julong take a look at you when she arrives. I also couldn't do anything about your blood loss. Hopefully, she knows what to do," he sighed.

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The healing progress was smooth for his first attempt. "What managed to injure you so badly?" Yan Xiaobao curiously looked at the young man who was slowly starting to look more like his former self.

With a bitter smile toward Yan Xiaobao, he only answered two words. These two words immediately made Yan Xiaobao understand what he had done. "Pest control."

Cai Jie hated one person in the world, and that was An Hee. Just like Yan Xiaobao, he swore to kill this formidable opponent, but now he was too weak to even consider attacking this adversary. Instead, he focused on eliminating An Hee's followers one by one. As for those alive who might know An Hee, neither Yan Xiaobao nor Cai Jie truly knew, but the Crusaders were easy targets. They were everywhere in the city, undeniably linked to An Hee's secrets.

Hearing Yan Xiaobao scoff at his friend, as though he were a fool, he said, "Killing Crusaders isn't a bad thing, but make sure you don't die in the process. When it comes down to it, with An Hee as your ultimate target, your life shouldn't be traded merely for defeating followers."

His tone carried faint reproach, causing Cai Jie to make a face at his white-haired friend. "I should be fine, but it turned out to be far more challenging than I initially expected. Killing that fourth one took all I had."

Yan Xiaobao frowned. "The fourth one?" He expressed some confusion. "I remember you've killed far more than that in the Spanish Empire," he said, his words making a pained smile appear on Cai Jie's face. "I can't use that kind of power frequently. It's a strength that doesn't belong to someone like me in the King Ranking," he complained. But before Yan Xiaobao could ask any more questions at the door, Wang Julong arrived. Her eyes were focused, seemingly ignoring Yan Xiaobao despite his presence. Since returning from Spain, she had been avoiding him. Without noticing him, she moved straight to Cai Jie. A gentle light slowly entered the young man's body, illuminating everything around with green spiritual energy.

Only then did she take out a blood-red pill and exhale in relief. "The healing was well done, but you're lacking blood. Take this pill, and you'll recover faster." After saying this, she glanced at Yan Xiaobao, and her face turned red again. As awkward silence prevailed, she stood up once more and muttered a quick goodbye before hurriedly leaving.

"You really have no luck in love," his friend commented bluntly. The injured friend smiled bitterly, and Yan Xiaobao couldn't help but remark, "You have no idea how right you are." Shaking his head, he continued, "I'll be leaving for a while." He effortlessly changed the topic, getting to the main reason he sought his friend in the first place.

"I will follow the Third Prince into the unknown tomb. One of us won't return alive. If I die, everything I've worked for will be meaningless, so I can't avoid this battle," he said, his face grim and his voice imbued with deep emotion. Seeing this, Cai Jie nodded. Yan Xiaobao would absolutely not die here.

"I originally planned to invite you to join me, but it seems you have your own agenda," he said with a smile. "Not to mention you're unwell. Since you're not at peak condition now, it wouldn't benefit either of us."

"Hey, I'll be ready before the raid begins, but I have no intention of joining you. With most of the nobles gone, killing the Crusaders has become even easier. It's as though Heaven itself is aiding me," he grinned, and Yan Xiaobao merely shrugged. He hadn't expected much when asking Cai Jie to join him.

"Well then, in that case, I need to go prepare for this journey. Before you return to clearing the streets again, stay in bed and recover properly." Yan Xiaobao left the room, waving goodbye to his bedridden friend with a small smile on his lips.

Leaving the luxurious residence, Yan Xiaobao headed to the market. He needed to buy pills and herbal medicine that could help him recover, as well as maintain the Green Pearl's previous state before it turned stubborn again. He also needed pills capable of replenishing internal energy. Medicine for restoring Qi was cheap, pills for replenishing spiritual energy were reasonably priced, but medicine for recovering Wu Wei was extraordinarily expensive. Yan Xiaobao knew that if he wanted to survive inside this tomb, he would need them.

Yan Xiaobao spent three hundred spirit coins filling his Memory Stone with pills for his journey. Just as he was about to look for any other useful items, Yan Xiaobao suddenly stopped in his tracks, an insidious smile forming on his lips. Standing right in front of him was the young Master of the Jing Clan.

The young Master hadn't yet noticed Yan Xiaobao, but this time, he was surrounded by an astonishing ten King Experts for protection. These Kings were all wearing the same armor adorned with metal lilies.

As they followed closely behind their Master, glaring sharply at the other customers in the market, they caused unease wherever they passed. Whenever they saw young women, their predatory gazes lingered. Witnessing this, Yan Xiaobao's blue eyes darkened. The skies before a storm looked no darker than they did now.

Standing there, Yan Xiaobao waited for the young Master to notice him, and as expected, it wasn't long before the young Master's gaze fell upon the white-haired youth before him. "It's you!" he shouted, his eyes instantly turning red, his hands trembling with rage.

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"This time, kill him! Don't let him escape! He killed all my people! He even dared to steal from our family! Such a filthy half-blood bastard actually dares to challenge me!" he shouted, and the entire marketplace fell silent. Then, everyone turned to see what was happening.

Yan Xiaobao sighed, gazing at the numerous experts in front of him. He narrowed his eyes slightly. "You're all men — what a pity." He muttered as the blue cloud began swirling around him.

The ten Kings moving forward could feel a sinister presence within the blue cloud surrounding him, something they had never encountered before. Although there were numerous indications suggesting they were no match for him, the ten experts decided to attack anyway. After all, there were ten of them against him.

Yan Xiaobao scoffed at their decision and unleashed the blue cloud, transforming it into a long stream of blue energy. The moment the energy came into contact with the cultivators, they froze in their tracks and collapsed to the ground. Yan Xiaobao was now devouring the energy they had cultivated over many years. Soon enough, all ten experts lay on the ground. Some were a few meters away from Yan Xiaobao, while others were only centimeters away, yet none of them managed to touch even the corner of his garments.

The marketplace descended into absolute silence. No one dared utter a single word. Every gaze was fixed on Yan Xiaobao — the strikingly handsome mixed-blood man before them. He wielded an energy they had never seen or heard of before, an ability undoubtedly unparalleled in their experience. To subdue ten King-level experts so effortlessly — even an Emperor could not achieve such a feat.

The young Master of the Jing family stood alone, his face pale, his mouth opening and closing as though he wanted to speak, yet he seemed incapable of doing so. Yan Xiaobao took a step toward the young Master, who, in his attempt to back away, fell on his rear. His eyes were filled with horror as he stared at Yan Xiaobao — as if facing a monster.

"I am the heir of the Jing family!" he shouted. "If you kill me, our family's Saints will avenge me!" he cried out. Yan Xiaobao's lips curled into a sinister smile. "I've met you twice now, and both times you ordered your men to attack me. Even if I let you live, you'll send your Saints after me. Knowing this, why should I spare you?" he questioned. His voice was slow but loud enough for everyone to hear.

In an instant, a sword appeared from his storage stone. The young Master immediately recognized the blade. Only the soft hiss of the sword's unsheathing could be heard, followed by a faint, sharp sound. Soon, red blood stained the marketplace streets. Like a shadow, Yan Xiaobao moved among the ten experts, and before long, their heads fell to the ground. Looking at the men who had tried to claim his life twice, his expression became resolute — he would never allow those who sought his demise to live.

Without lingering, the young man departed the marketplace, leaving behind eleven lifeless corpses on the ground. The chilling silence and the stench of blood made everyone fix their gaze on the figure walking away.

The battle had been swift, absent of any exchange of techniques; instead, it was a complete slaughter. When the market guards arrived at the scene, all they found were the Jing family's eleven enforcers lying lifeless.

Not long after, disbelief swept through the city. Those who had personally witnessed the event began selling Memory Stones recording what others could only describe as war.

Currently, the city was brimming with experts, soldiers, noble families, and factions from around the world. Knowing the necessity of understanding others' power, they all purchased Memory Stones to witness the abilities of the white-haired man.

Soon, word spread everywhere that this man wasn't just a master of combat; he was also the Great Marshall who had annihilated the Beast Army of the Spanish Empire.

Among the mercenaries and families that had once flocked to Muchuan City — including the aristocratic families of the former Spanish Empire — there was displeasure when they learned he was now in the same city as them. Many began fantasizing about how to kill him, but none had the courage to act. When they recalled the Beast hordes they saw in the Capital and across the Empire, they feared provoking retaliatory destruction upon their families.

Before long, it became widely known that Yan Xiaobao had immense backing. The more people learned about this young man, the more astonished they became. Stories of the Battle of Liluo City gradually reached the Capital, along with endless rumors of his Holy-level mentor and his ability to unleash Holy Rank attacks. Some even whispered that he truly controlled the Beast Army behind the scenes.

As rumors began to spread around Muchuan City, Yan Xiaobao found himself receiving increasing numbers of guests day after day at his mansion. For three entire days, he greeted visitors endlessly. Eventually, he decided that for the final two days leading up to the raid, he would no longer host any guests.

Yan Xiaobao was well aware of all the rumors. Gao Yan ensured he had new updates every day, but he knew there was little he could do.

The days passed quickly. Before he knew it, the day of the raid had arrived. Yan Xiaobao opened his eyes and slowly exhaled. He had spent the entire night absorbing Yin Energy, and for the first time in a week, his body felt like it was devouring wild weeds. He had once carefully balanced his energy; however, using blue cloud on the ten cultivators had completely disrupted the balance he had worked so hard to achieve. Sighing softly, he understood that he would have to start rebuilding the balance anew.

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Despite this, it's the simplest way to deal with ten King's Experts in an instant. Yan Xiaobao hoped he might encounter herbal medicine containing Yin Deficient Energy, or even pills containing Yin Energy Storage.

For now, unless absolutely necessary, he could not use the monks' male-specific abilities. Though he had gained power, he later spent a long time balancing his energies. This prolonged the time required for him to become one with the world, thereby ascending to the domain of the Gods. Unfortunately, one could see how challenging it was to become one with the surrounding world by observing Lan Feng's

efforts to perfectly balance Yin and Yang. He had already spent thousands of years, yet he still could not maintain perfect balance, and thus had never succeeded in becoming God.

Not just Lan Feng, but Wan Qiao and General Frozen as well, who were all at the peak of Holy-level, yet none of them had been able to break through.

"I can't afford to spend so much time advancing," Yan Xiaobao muttered to himself as he left his mansion. "I need to find Yin Energy some way or another. Even if I have to steal it from someone; I will do so!" He mumbled to himself as he made his way toward the Royal Castle's gathering point.

Every individual personally invited by the Royal Family would gather in the castle grounds usually used for training the guards. They would be the first to leave Muchuan City, and once they departed, the streets filled with uninvited followers also prepared themselves to trail behind. A sense of excitement pervaded the entire city. Everyone was eager to begin the raid, but no one dared make a move until the Royal Family took the first step.

Arriving at the castle grounds, Yan Xiaobao saw all the local experts gathered in groups. Some groups counted the Emperor as their strongest member, while others had their King. Looking around, he did not see any Saints; however, he recalled the conversation he overheard in the mansion. For the raid on this unknown tomb, all the Saints of the Sun Kingdom had been summoned.

It wasn't just the Sun Kingdom with Saints; there were experts from the Moon Province as well, along with families from both kingdoms who also had Saints among their ranks. These families were few, but when they came together, they seemed anything but small.

Families with Holy Name Experts were the last to arrive at the castle grounds, and wisely, everyone in their path stepped aside. Space was cleared for them to walk, allowing them to pass without having to weave through the crowds like others.

Finally, the Sun Kingdom's Royal Family appeared, accompanied by seventeen Holy Name Experts. All of these experts were the cream of the crop. They had been Saints for thousands of years, fully aware of their significance to the kingdom. Saints held the authority to veto a King's decisions; hence, they were crucially involved in choosing heirs as well.

Behind the cultivators of the Sun Kingdom appeared another group of people. These were individuals Yan Xiaobao had never seen before. Carrying the same grace and demeanor as the Royal Family, he quickly deduced they were representatives sent by the Moon Province.

When the two groups of Saints emerged, the entire castle grounds fell silent. Even families with Saints within their ranks quieted down. They understood that compared to the power held by these two kingdoms, their own family's strength was insignificant.

The King stepped forward a few paces, his eyes gleaming with excitement. "Everyone!" he shouted, his voice reverberating across the area. "The unknown tomb is a long journey away, but follow us, and we'll lead you to its location. Everyone should already be aware of this, but for anyone seeking entry, you must accept the possibility of never returning. It is a tomb; every corner of it will be littered with traps, inscriptions, and death. If this place becomes your final resting spot, you cannot blame anyone." He proclaimed sternly.

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Chapter 757: The Young King

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Everyone was waiting to hear if he had more to say, but the King had already ended his speech. Although everyone was pondering his mention of someone bringing a splendid Qilin, equipped with various magical beasts, Yan Xiaobao couldn't suppress a smile. Part of his daily training involved running, and now, unburdened by weight, he was confident he could keep up with all kinds of beasts. It might not look particularly graceful, but considering that Yan Xiaobao had no one to look after his mount, the beast would eventually become a nuisance. Besides, the young man didn't care about others' opinions.

Yan Xiaobao wasn't in a rush to join the procession; instead, he stayed in the middle. He belonged to one of the families ranked as the most influential under the King and the Emperor. It seemed no one had noticed that this young royal was also an expert in combat.

While the Royal Family rode their mounts, their procession moved slowly through the narrow city streets. They were everywhere, with citizens peeking through their windows, cheering and urging them on as they watched the entourage heading toward the tombs. Everyone knew that those who left the city might never return; everyone knew just how dangerous that place was.

Xu Yue was surprised to find that no groups had gathered to wait for departure alongside the Royal Family's procession. But once they left the city, he understood why. The ground outside the city gates was teeming with people. It was so densely packed that one couldn't see the ground beneath them. If Yan Xiaobao were to fly overhead, it would look like a disturbed ant colony.

However, that wasn't the first thing his eyes landed on. When he spotted someone recognizing him, it was immediately apparent and shocking. Her snake-like figure and seductive curves drew the gaze of every man nearby, leaving them slack-jawed. Whenever she moved, her enchanting eyes and captivating beauty made her alluring waist all the more mesmerizing.

Seeing Sha Yun among the crowd following the Royal Family's entourage, Yan Xiaobao couldn't help but feel worried, though he knew he had no right to tell her not to go.

She was with a group of mixed cultivators. All of them were clearly either hybrids in human form or fully evolved magical beasts. Noticing that this group was quite large and even had an Emperor figure among them, Yan Xiaobao calmed down.

Unfortunately, this wasn't the only surprise waiting for him. Far from the city, his gaze fell on a woman he could recognize anywhere. She was stunningly beautiful, and her indifferent expression paired with her lack of emotion only made her even more alluring.

She wore a long white robe, overstuffed with a large cauldron. She stood among a large group of people similarly dressed in white robes.

The cauldron was a symbol of therapists. While not all of them were alchemists, they all possessed healing abilities. Knowing that she was with the therapists, Yan Xiaobao breathed a sigh of relief.

No one would harm a therapist. Therapists existed for the benefit of everyone; they were prepared to heal individuals who had faced misfortune and injury.

As he walked past many heading toward the tombs, Xu Yue soon noticed that the Gao Yan and the Ma family were present as well. Seeing them together, Yan Xiaobao could only shake his head with a smile. By now, he wished that all his friends could make it here. After scanning the crowd he could see, he realized that Xu Biao, the Rong twins, and Deng Wu were not nearby. However, with so many people

present, it was impossible for Yan Xiaobao to identify everyone. The fact that he had recognized as many as he did was already an astonishing achievement.

Understanding the allure of the tomb, Yan Xiaobao could only sigh, hoping his friends would take sufficient precautions and prioritize their safety. Treasures only mattered if one stayed alive to claim them.

Deciding not to dwell on the friends who had chosen to partake in the raid, he resolved to simply follow the human flow—people moving together in a long, snake-like formation toward the unknown tomb. Only the Royal Family knew the tomb's exact location. As such, they led the procession, and no one dared to rush ahead. They maintained a slow pace to ensure no one was left behind. Gradually, everyone advanced, and, over time, the Royal Family finally brought the snake-like procession to a pause. Tents were being set up, and stalls suddenly sprang up all around.

It appeared not only warriors had followed the Royal Family, but that many merchants had done the same. Food stalls dotted the campsite, alongside blacksmiths, puppet makers, and mercenaries offering their services. Even some mercenaries and adventurers had set up stalls, selling treasures they had obtained from various Magic Forests or mountains in the past. Beast cores were especially abundant among these temporary stalls.

Yan Xiaobao knew he would bathe under the moonlight tonight, as he needed to absorb as much Yin Energy as possible. As such, he wasn't in a hurry to stop exploring the temporary marketplace.

While walking through the temporary market, Yan Xiaobao felt a sense of relief. Many cultivators here weren't from Muchuan City, and most didn't know who Yan Xiaobao was. Although they'd heard of the white-haired Great Marshall of the Beast Army, no one would believe that the young man wandering the market was him. To many mercenaries, many merchants, and even many nobles from different cities and nations, Yan Xiaobao was nothing more than a mixed-blood youth.

Looking at the items around him, he soon arrived at a stall belonging to a spiritual blacksmith. When he noticed someone he recognized there, a smile spread across his face.

Chapter 758 The Young King_2

Ten meters in front of him was a shabby stall, yet the items on display were attracting the entire crowd. Numerous mercenaries and young masters scoured through the wares for sale. Managing all these customers was a young man named Fang Wei. Cou Ling was nowhere in sight at first, but as he approached the stall, he noticed her lying on the ground behind it, observing the commotion but not assisting in selling anything.

Grinning widely, Yan Xiaobao moved behind the stall. "How can you let poor Fang Wei handle all these customers on his own? Don't you think he might be swallowed up by those terrifying mercenaries?" he laughed, his voice drifting into Cou Ling's ears. A flush of red swept across her cheeks as she immediately sat up, glaring at Yan Xiaobao angrily.

"You cheap b****rd," she muttered as she looked at the young man she hadn't seen in half a year. "Even though I often meet with the Ma family, I still hoped to see you from time to time," she said. "I mean, I decided to help you, but when I visited your mansion, I was turned away because they said they were too busy training."

Seeing Cou Ling's confusion, Yan Xiaobao looked puzzled. "I never heard about you coming to visit me. If I had known a beauty like you took the time to see me, I'd have dropped whatever I was doing immediately!" he said with an apologetic smile. "Though I've been busy training to polish my skills. I need all the strength I can muster to survive in that terrifying tomb," he continued. "I'm only a King. Without enough skill, I'll never gain any treasures. More importantly, I might just end up dead," he said with a shrug.

The two sat silently on the ground, watching as the flustered Fang Wei sold item after item. An hour of silence passed between them, and the young man managed to sell nearly half of the items they had brought.

"Close the shop now," Cou Ling ordered, and Fang Wei nearly started crying in relief. He apologized to the remaining customers before wrapping up all the leftover armor and weapons in oilcloth and storing them in a storage stone.

Even the entire stall could be stored inside one of the stones. Once the stall vanished, Fang Wei let out another sigh of relief. Then he rushed to Cou Ling's side and handed her a golden Memory Stone—a stone containing all the gold coins they had earned that day.

Although they had only earned about two or three spirit coins, for Cou Ling, this was still an incredible haul for just one day. Beaming at Yan Xiaobao, she said enthusiastically, "I suppose you haven't had dinner yet. Why don't you eat with us? I've prepared some meat before we leave Muchuan City."

The direct invitation had Yan Xiaobao agreeing quickly. Especially after hearing how she had frequently visited him before but was turned away without meeting him. Feeling guilty, he offered an awkward

smile, yet he was also relieved that the spiritual blacksmith before him hadn't become so discouraged as to deem him unworthy of her support anymore.

Seeing that Yan Xiaobao had agreed so readily, Cou Ling felt a surge of joy. She quickly started a fire and took out some meat. Since Cou Ling no longer ate Magic Beast meat, the meat was venison. Watching Yan Xiaobao, she remembered the shivers she couldn't stop when she had once eaten wolf meat.

The meat grilling over the fire smelled delicious, various herbal seasonings having been rubbed into it before cooking. A small pot of vegetables boiled nearby, and Fan Wei and Fang Wei relaxed calmly by the fire with Yan Xiaobao.

As more stalls selling weapons and items closed for the night, food stalls began bustling, catering to cultivators and mercenaries who preferred buying food to cooking after a long day. Insults flew whenever someone thought they were being cut in line or accidentally bumped into another.

Unlike in the cities, there were no guards here to break up scuffles, some of which escalated into full-blown brawls, dragging even bystanders into the chaos. Most fights, however, served as pure entertainment, with people placing bets on them.

Turning his head, Yan Xiaobao watched everything with an indifferent smile on his face. His icy blue eyes observed the surrounding happenings, ensuring no fights erupted too close.

As they moved some distance away from their stall, the trio was finally left alone. They managed to enjoy their meal amidst pleasant conversation and the calm weather. Watching the fights and the growing rowdiness, Yan Xiaobao decided to head toward the blacksmith area. Though they were here to sell items, if they got caught in the crossfire of many ongoing battles, they'd be in a terrible straight path. Neither blacksmith was a strong cultivator and lacked the ability to defend themselves on this journey.

Once everyone reached the tomb, all merchants and craftsmen would return to Muchuan City, but until then, they were easy prey. Glancing around, Yan Xiaobao frowned slightly as he saw a group of threatening-looking cultivators moving from one group of mercenaries to another. As they moved, merchants handed them coins. Why this was happening, Yan Xiaobao didn't know.

"Oh, we'll find out soon enough," he thought as he watched the group approach. Seeing Yan Xiaobao looking at something, Cou Ling turned her attention in the same direction. Her brows furrowed upon seeing what was happening, and her hand instinctively clutched the golden Memory Stone, promptly storing it in a storage stone.

Though a hint of worry crossed her mind, she glanced at Yan Xiaobao's calm demeanor and felt her anxiety diminish. He had once handled six King-level experts simultaneously. Even though a group of four was advancing toward them, Cou Ling trusted that as long as Yan Xiaobao was by her side, he wouldn't let anyone harm her.

Before long, the group of experts appeared in front of Yan Xiaobao, Cou Ling, and the young Fang Wei. Their smiles brightened immediately upon seeing Cou Ling, but their joy dimmed slightly when they noticed Hui Yue calmly sitting by her side.

"We are from the Bloody Vulture family," one of the men said with a smile directed at Cou Ling. "We're here to help merchants and craftsmen stay safe. For the modest fee of 500 gold coins, we'll ensure your safety. No one will threaten you on your journey. We'll even escort you back to Muchuan City, so you won't have anything to worry about," he said politely. If it weren't for the sanctimonious expressions worn by other merchants, Yan Xiaobao might have thought this was a decent deal.

"No, thanks," he said nonchalantly, cutting off whatever Cou Ling was about to say. Turning his attention back to Cou Ling, he resumed their conversation.

The woman was taken aback. But as Yan Xiaobao took the lead, she eventually followed, albeit her responses were somewhat scattered as she continued to ignore the cultivators.

A vein throbbed visibly on the forehead of the man who had just spoken, his face turning red with rage. His eyes burned with fury, and he stepped forward, only to be stopped by one of his companions.

This newcomer was much smaller than the angry man. His body appeared frail, yet his aura revealed him to be a King-level expert like the others. Unlike his three companions, a smile still lingered on his lips, and his sharp eyes seemed to constantly assess everything around him, calculating his next move based on what he gleaned. It was clear he wasn't as easily provoked as the others.

"Young man, I don't think you fully understand what's going on here," the frail-looking man said with a sly smile that was impossible to miss. Lifting his gaze, his eyes fell on the face of the slender man. The moment their eyes met, the other man's spine tingled, and he involuntarily took a step back, his forced smile faltering into tension, his gaze growing serious.

Yan Xiaobao didn't do anything. He neither unleashed killing intent nor displayed any form of power, yet this scruffy man still felt uneasy and recoiled. Staring at the young man before him, he was filled with an overwhelming sense of danger.

The initial feeling was paralyzing, but this was a man hardened by battles where his life was on the line. Having faced death countless times, he wasn't the type to retreat at the slightest hint of danger anymore.

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Chapter 759: The Initial Fear

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As time passed, his senses overcame his initial fear, and he began to mock himself for feeling threatened by such a young man. Smiling, the older man straightened up once more. "Little brother, we're here to help all merchants and craftsmen, but when someone like you refuses to join us, how can we offer assistance? After all, everyone travels together, so we need everyone to pay their share."

"Not my problem; we're not interested," Yan Xiaobao shrugged and finally stood up from his seat, facing the group of experts. He gently shook his hands to warm them up, then stretched his neck. His eyes remained as patient as before, but his actions drew the attention of many merchants and craftsmen who had been forced to pay abnormally high safety fees earlier.

Looking at Yan Xiaobao, everyone around felt a pang of bitterness. If Yan Xiaobao won, he would likely take all the money for himself. In that case, they would still lose their money and also lose the protection of the group. Well, the group from the Bloody Vulture family seemed genuinely intent on forsaking the unknown tomb to bring them back safely. No one knew whether this was the truth, but if they survived, at least they might receive some help on their way back. Thus, most of the nearby people secretly supported the group extorting money from them.

Cognizant of everything, Yan Xiaobao paid no heed to those around him. He cared little for others; his focus was solely on Cou Ling and Fang Wei. He knew they hadn't been robbed tonight. If he couldn't even protect them from something so simple, how could he ask for their support?

Observing his movements, the four experts felt puzzled. It was obvious Yan Xiaobao intended to stand in their way, but they couldn't comprehend why he would choose to do so. It was four against one, and they were clearly much older than him. Seeing his foolish behavior left the four men laughing. The man who was once filled with rage now laughed hysterically, as if Yan Xiaobao had done something utterly ridiculous.

Hearing the laughter and seeing their faces, Yan Xiaobao rolled his eyes, wondering what he should do. One option was to use the blue cloud to disable them instantly, then decapitate them while they lay on the ground. However, the four cultivators before him were men, and he already had an excess of Yang Energy; he needed Yin Energy. Absorbing more Yang Energy would do him no benefit.

Another option was to use his sword. After some contemplation, he waved his hand, and moments later, a beautiful silver sword appeared in his hand. Many of the spiritual blacksmiths nearby gasped, seeing the unique metal.

Nine Heaven's Devouring Blood Metal was legendary. Only Cou Ling had successfully forged a hammer from this metal, and every spiritual blacksmith in Muchuan City had at one point gone to see her. They begged her to allow them to witness her creation. Because of all this, they recognized the metal's distinctiveness. Seeing this young man standing beside Cou Ling, they understood what this weapon was forged from. Everyone revered Nine Heaven's Devouring Blood Metal, but the only blacksmith who had successfully worked with it was Cou Ling. All others had perished. Until now, the only item ever crafted from this elusive metal was her privately owned hammer, but seeing this sword in the hands of the young man in front of them, every blacksmith couldn't help but inhale sharply.

The four experts in front of him noticed some changes when Yan Xiaobao drew his weapon, but this only heightened their desire to defeat the young man. Once he died, they planned to steal his treasures. After all, a dead man has no need for possessions.

Cou Ling was shocked to see Yan Xiaobao choose this sword. She knew he wanted to maintain his Wolf Form, but facing an enemy of this magnitude, she couldn't help but worry whether he could keep it hidden.

On the other hand, Yan Xiaobao didn't see his opponents as a real threat. Looking at them, he decided his best option was his sword, and since his newly forged sword offered no chance against them, he would have to resort to using the blue cloud.

Although he also wanted to keep the blue cloud a secret, he would rather use it than resort to his Wolf Form. The blue cloud was an unknown branch of technology in this realm, so even if they saw it, they wouldn't understand what was happening.

Raising his hand, spiritual energy surged into the sword, and shards of ice flew at the four experts one after another. When they saw the shards coming their way, they snorted. Such direct attacks weren't even enough to pose a threat to them. They had encountered far stronger attacks in their lives, but their decision made a smile appear on Yan Xiaobao's face.

Underestimating these shards as mere ordinary ice was a grave mistake. These shards were powered by a sword forged from Nine Heaven's Devouring Blood Metal. During the forging process, the inscription pattern underwent transformation and fused with lightning. This made the inscriptions more intricate and enhanced them to a terrifying degree, doubling the attack's intensity compared to the past when the sword reached its pinnacle. The Ice Cold Storm Sword was now deadlier than ever.

Seeing the four experts defending against Wu Wei's power, Yan Xiaobao grinned. He launched clusters of ice shards at them one after another. Although a single set of ice shards wasn't enough to penetrate their martial power shields, the relentless barrage of shards began creating cracks in their martial cloaks. The four experts, annoyed, were forced to exert more of their martial power to defend themselves.

Chapter 760: The Initial Fear_2

Gululu gululu gululu gululu gululu gululu gululu gululu gululu gululu gululu gululu gululu gululu gululu gululu gululu—thus, amidst the ferocious growls, as two daggers appeared in his hands, he dashed forward.

He mercilessly slashed at the young man, but no matter how fast his movements or how swift the flurry of his strikes, the young man managed to evade each blow. He didn't even let the older man touch the edge of his sleeve.

Everyone watched in stunned disbelief. Even though Yan Xiaobao incessantly retreated and deflected attacks, he still managed to send icicles toward the four experts.

Seeing the disheveled man advancing while slashing and thrusting in succession, none of the others moved to follow up with an attack; instead, they stood back. Their gazes were filled with awe at the rapid aggression of the man attacking Yan Xiaobao. From their expressions, Yan Xiaobao understood that this man was undoubtedly the leader of the group. Unless he asked for intervention, the others wouldn't step forward. Their mission was to ensure Yan Xiaobao couldn't escape.

Yan Xiaobao sneered at their reactions and eased up slightly. If he had to face all four at once, it might require greater effort and focus, but for just one expert, it wasn't even worth a glance.

Without embedding Wu Wei into his sword, Yan Xiaobao ceased his retreat. Instead, he drew his blade and nimbly deflected the leader's shadowy onslaught of blade strikes raining down upon him.

Feeling pity for the writhing desperation to survive, Yan Xiaobao decided not to waste more time. With a smooth motion, his sword blocked the dagger once more before slicing through a gap in the opponent's defense. For a moment, Yan Xiaobao felt the faintest resistance before the blade plunged into the older man's body.

It was as if time had frozen still. Blood slowly slid from the corner of the man's mouth, evident shock filling his wide eyes. This moment seemed to stretch on eternally, and as he attempted to speak, blood began to seep out, his pupils rolling upward before his body collapsed to the ground, slipping off the blade.

The corpse hit the floor with a resounding thud that shattered the silence like some eerie spell breaking. Screams erupted from the three remaining experts who'd been waiting for their leader to finish the fight; they were completely unable to comprehend how their leader could die so easily.

Had they kept their reasoning intact, they might have reconsidered attacking someone capable of effortlessly killing their leader. But at the moment, their thoughts were shrouded by emotions. In such a state, they immediately leapt at Yan Xiaobao, disregarding their own safety entirely. Witnessing their desperate charge, Yan Xiaobao knew this fight wouldn't be as straightforward as before.

The mocking glint in his eyes dimmed into seriousness, his smirk fading gradually. As he looked around, he heightened all his senses to match those of a wolf. The world before him faded into grayscale; yet, even as the world morphed, his agility remained unaffected. After years of arduous training, Yan Xiaobao had mastered the art of controlling his beastly instincts without transforming his body entirely. He could amplify his sensory abilities to rival that of a red wolf while maintaining his human form.

Sidestepping narrowly, he avoided the massive man's strike as a fist landed precisely where he'd been moments ago. Spotting the extended arm, Yan Xiaobao raised his sword and sliced toward it in a beautifully arcing motion.

The large man tried to withdraw the arm upon noticing the blade heading his way, but his speed fell short; bloodcurdling screams pierced the air as the severed limb landed on the ground, cut cleanly through.

Though the man howled in agony, Yan Xiaobao paid him no further attention. His immediate aim was to deal with the remaining two experts before circling back to address the injured man.

Too consumed by rage, neither of the two experts could truly grasp the magnitude of the situation, which played to Yan Xiaobao's advantage. Unlike the now one-armed giant, they weren't foolish enough to act recklessly anymore—instead, they waited for the right moment to strike.

Exchanging sharp gazes, the duo clenched their teeth and charged together toward Yan Xiaobao. Weapons materialized in their hands—a barbed whip in one hand, lightweight throwing knives in the other—flung in synchronized pursuit of Yan Xiaobao.

Evasive maneuvers made sidestepping these knives relatively easy, yet unlucky bystanders fell victim to their scattered trajectories, triggering screams. Sighing deeply, Yan Xiaobao realized ignoring the knives wasn't a viable long-term solution; unsheathing Wu Wei, he intercepted them mid-air with precise ease. One knife after another dropped harmlessly to the ground.

While catching the incoming knives, Yan Xiaobao also had to deal with the whip's relentless harassment. Despite their insistent and vindictive strikes, they were incapable of pinning him down. It didn't take long for them to understand that the man before them was leagues beyond their reach, rendering victory with their current prowess a futile endeavor.

Sharing a brief glance of resignation, the two experts prepared to flee the battlefield. Just as they were about to retreat, a golden flash blinded everyone present. Shortly afterward, the duo found their movements entirely restricted—their legs anchored by golden roots sprouting upward from the ground.

No one knew the origin of the radiant roots, but the sight of the immobilized experts pushed the crowds' confusion into utter shock as the last breath drained from their bodies. Then, the lifeless figures collapsed in heaps. Of the four Kings, only one remained alive—disfigured with a missing arm. Fixing his gaze on the surviving man, Yan Xiaobao approached him silently, severing his head without hesitation. Xu Hui had learned countless lessons through his ventures, a crucial one being: never allow a wounded tiger to reclaim strength unless you wish for calamity later.

Looking at the golden roots, Yan Xiaobao offered a slight bow to the silent crowd. "Your Highness, I didn't expect to encounter you here," he remarked. A man cloaked in black with a wide-brimmed hat responded with a chuckle.

Upon hearing these words, murmurs filled the air as spectators exchanged whispers before collectively withdrawing further, their focus drawn to the cloaked figure's grin.

Yan Xiaobao strode toward the fallen experts, rifling through their corpses. Gathering all visible storage stones, he handed the luminous golden storage stone to Cou Ling. "Pay the merchants their dues and keep the rest for yourself," Yan Xiaobao declared in a voice loud enough for nearby merchants to overhear. Their gratitude blossomed instantly, sparking excitement among the craftsmen and traders alike as they spread the news to others who hadn't caught wind of this gesture.

Once in possession of the golden storage stone, Cou Ling quickly motioned for Fang Wei to follow her. She departed gracefully, leaving Yan Xiaobao and the cloaked figure to converse as she began distributing coins back to their rightful owners.

"I noticed Your Highness has successfully mastered the golden roots," he complimented, his tone carrying a hint of admiration.

"You're quite adept at theatrics," Lan Feng remarked flatly from the sidelines, though Yan Xiaobao ignored him entirely, maintaining his smile toward the Prince seated before him.

"I came here merely to observe your progress. It's intriguing how the Beast Army's Great Marshall is seen here alongside spiritual blacksmith Cou Ling. Truly surprising," the Prince mused with a chuckle while taking a seat on the ground. Smiling faintly, Yan Xiaobao sat beside him. "Cou Ling and I share a history," he remarked nonchalantly. "When I saw her here, I figured it would be prudent to step in to protect her." Continuing, he earned a subtle nod from the Prince.

"I came to ensure you're still interested in entering this tomb," the Prince added with a laugh. "The tomb is rumored to overflow with treasures, assuring everyone here at least a minor fortune to claim. While I hope for cooperation among adventurers, regrettably, conflict is inevitable."

Yan Xiaobao shrugged, offering no response. Deep within, he resolved to guarantee that the Third Prince wouldn't leave the tomb alive. Simultaneously, he felt indifference toward most others present. Despite mild concern for his companions' welfare, he trusted their instincts wouldn't lead them astray, assuring survival.

The Prince and Yan Xiaobao sat quietly until parting ways. The Prince returned to the Royal Family, leaving Yan Xiaobao to await Cou Ling's return.

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