

Stronger 201

Chapter 201: It's actually the Buddha Light Golden Body Elixir! Important News about the Location of the Spiritual Object_2

Among them, some herbs needed to be dispersed in the Pill Furnace by manipulating Qi Blood, constantly stirred with Qi Blood to ensure that dozens, or even hundreds, of different medicinal components were evenly mixed.

If Lin Xuankong hadn't passively absorbed a vast amount of alchemy insights and experience from Lii Xiaolan, he would not have been able to control such a complex alchemical process. His alchemy level was now on par with the Young Lady's, lacking only practical experience.

Operating the alchemy process for the first time, Lin Xuankong felt a mix of anticipation and excitement. This mysterious and intricate alchemical process, where not a single mistake could be afforded, felt quite exhilarating, akin to dancing on the edge of a blade at every moment.

Two tea times later, Lin Xuankong had already covered the Pill Furnace, carefully controlling his Qi Blood and constantly adjusting the temperature inside.

Outside the Alchemy Room, Ye Kai, Han Feiyan, and others, peering through the window, watched with wide eyes, utterly astonished by the scene.

Ye Kai muttered, his face etched with confusion, "Brother Lin is so skilled? Can he really be proficient in alchemy? But alchemy and Martial Cultivation are both extremely difficult and inherently conflicting. Brother Lin's Martial Dao is so extraordinary; how can he also possess such proficient alchemy techniques?"

Han Feiyan quickly covered his mouth. "Stop babbling! Don't you know that interrupting someone during alchemy is the biggest taboo?"

At this moment, Han Feiyan also felt a mix of surprise and doubt in her heart.

Just then, Lin Xuankong, who was channeling his Qi Blood, suddenly frowned. He had suddenly detected a faint burnt smell emanating from the Pill Furnace. Lin Xuankong's senses were incredibly sharp; the

moment the burnt smell appeared and something went wrong inside the Pill Furnace, he immediately stopped channeling Qi Blood into it.

Then, frowning deeply, he opened the Pill Furnace and looked inside carefully. He saw that the Golden Body Treasure Elixir inside the Pill Furnace was nearly complete. Unfortunately, some of its Secret Patterns had turned black, clearly indicating a problem with the refining process.

Lin Xuankong protected his palm with Qi Blood, removed the Elixir from within, cleaned off the residue, and began to ponder deeply.

During the recent refining of the Golden Body Treasure Elixir, every step was strictly according to the records in the Secret Manual, and the processed herbs were also of an extremely high standard. So why did a Wasted Elixir still result?

He frowned, examining the Wasted Elixir, then closed his eyes to meticulously recall every step of the alchemy process.

At this moment, a voice suddenly came from outside the window. It was Ge Cheng.

"Hmph! Just as I suspected. I smelled the scent of burnt medicine earlier. It seems your first batch of elixirs is ruined! Brother Lin, you'd best give up sooner. The value of these Golden Body Treasure Elixir materials might not concern you, but Ye Kai painstakingly collected them. If you waste three batches, who knows how much effort it will take to gather materials for another three!"

Outside the window, Han Feiyan's eyes widened as she glared fiercely at Ge Cheng. However, considering Alchemist Ge's esteemed status in the Ye Family, no matter how rash Han Feiyan's temper was, she forcefully suppressed her anger.

After all, Alchemist Ge isn't Ye Kai. If I were to offend him and he got angry, the Ye Family Patriarch might complain to my grandfather the next day! Still, Alchemist Ge's words were incredibly frustrating!

Han Feiyan frowned tightly, her breathing growing heavy.

Alchemist Ge scoffed, flicked his sleeve, and returned to his study.

「Inside the Alchemy Room,」

Lin Xuankong was completely immersed in recalling the alchemy process.

Moments later, his expression shifted as he silently reflected: An Alchemist refining Elixirs needs inherent Alchemy Talent... Just as Yu Fei said, the different talents among the Human Race are essentially due to different bloodlines! Does this mean the Qi Blood I generate might truly be unsuitable for alchemy? If that's the reason, then no matter how perfectly I handle the herbs or how standard my alchemy process is, I'll only end up refining one Wasted Elixir after another. I might even fail at refining the most basic Qi Replenishing Pill! Can the Golden Body Treasure Elixir truly not be successfully refined right now? Or should I rush back to Great Marsh Prefecture and give the materials to the Young Lady for her to try refining them? But there's definitely not enough time. Once the Ba Mountain Secret Realm opens, there's only an entry window of a few hours. After that, the Secret Realm's spatial ripples will change, and the next opportunity to enter or exit will be one or two months later!

Thinking of this, Lin Xuankong's frown deepened.

Suddenly, his eyes lit up as a crucial point occurred to him.

Since the Young Lady's Qi Blood is suitable for refining Elixirs, it means that the Qi Blood from her Shadow Concealment Primordial Technique can be used for alchemy! Why not try activating the Shadow Concealment Primordial Technique and infusing its Qi Blood into the Pill Furnace? It might work! After all, the Qi Blood I was using just now was from the Yin Talisman Thunder Skill. Perhaps it was because the Qi Blood of that Thunder Technique was too potent that the Elixir burned!

With this thought, Lin Xuankong didn't hesitate. He immediately circulated the Qi Blood of his Shadow Concealment Primordial Technique, then pressed one hand onto a Rune on the Pill Furnace and began to infuse it.

Then, he began to add the medicinal ingredients into the Pill Furnace one by one, in the correct sequence and at the proper intervals.

Three tea times later, the Pill Furnace began to tremble slightly. A faint medicinal aroma wafted from the gap beneath the Pill Furnace's lid.

Lin Xuankong stopped channeling Qi Blood. With a look of anticipation, he raised his hand to open the lid.

Instantly,

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Golden light continuously flashed within the Alchemy Room, and the rich fragrance of elixirs drifted out.

He extended his hand and grasped, pulling out twelve Golden Body Treasure Elixirs covered with complex Buddhist Secret Patterns. In his palm, they shimmered with a mysterious golden light. These elixirs had at least double the number of patterns compared to the ones Ye Kai had given him before. The dense golden patterns on the elixirs seemed alive, constantly flickering with spiritual light!

Ye Kai's astonished voice rang out,

"This... this?

The patterns are intricate, the Buddha's Light is spiritual!

This is definitely not an ordinary Golden Body Treasure Elixir!

This is certainly not a Grade-Entering Golden Body Treasure Pill!

It's the Mid-grade Treasure Pill mentioned in the Alchemy Manual: the Buddha Light Golden Body Treasure Elixir!"

Outside the window, Ye Kai, who had shouted this, had a rapidly changing expression, his mouth agape as if witnessing the most unbelievable scene in the world!

Han Feiyan, her hands on her hips, laughed heartily. "I told you! Brother Lin's talent is extraordinary. How could a mere Golden Body Treasure Elixir pose any difficulty for him!"

This square-faced girl had clearly forgotten the moment just before when, rendered speechless by Ge City's rebuttal, she had been unable to defend Lin Xuankong!

At that moment, a figure suddenly rushed into the Alchemy Room with rapid THUD-THUD-THUD footsteps; it was Ge City, emerging from the study.

He ran to Lin Xuankong's side, his eyes wide with astonishment as he stared at the Buddha Light Golden Body Treasure Elixirs in Lin Xuankong's hand.

He stared for a full ten breaths, and only after Lin Xuankong had placed the Treasure Elixirs into the Ghost Frog Pouch did his eyes begin to move again.

At this moment, this alchemist from Ba City—a man of extraordinary status, whom even the mid-stage Fifth Layer Patriarchs vied to win over—looked at Lin Xuankong with incredibly fervent eyes.

It was as if he were beholding the most enticing beauty in the world. "Alchemist Lin... you actually refined Buddha Light Golden Body Treasure Elixirs? Those are Buddha Light Golden Body Treasure Elixirs! They're extremely rare, even in the northern Rakshasa Kingdom!"

Lin Xuankong, having successfully refined the Treasure Elixirs, was naturally quite thrilled himself.

Initially, he had only hoped to refine Lower Grade elixirs capable of a sixfold boost to explosive power, and he would have been satisfied with that. The proficiency and experience provided by the Young Lady were truly invaluable; they had enabled him, on only his second attempt at refining, to directly produce Mid-grade Golden Body Treasure Elixirs: the Buddha Light Golden Body Treasure Elixirs!

A single one of these could boost explosive power by a full eightfold!

With these Buddha Light Golden Body Elixirs in hand, his strength would increase to an even more terrifying degree.

Even the Shadow Concealment Primordial Technique, which only those with Primordial Strange Veins could cultivate, currently only provided a sevenfold boost. One could only imagine the magnitude of this Treasure Elixir's contribution to his strength!

Lin Xuankong looked at the astonished Ge City and said, "It was just a bit of luck, nothing much. Fortunately, I didn't only succeed on the three hundredth furnace!"

Upon hearing this, Ge City felt deeply ashamed. He repeatedly cupped his hands and said, "It was I, Ge City, who was reckless. It turns out Alchemist Lin was merely being humble, just joking. To be able to refine Buddha Light Golden Body Treasure Elixirs, you must have meticulously studied Alchemy Technique for many years and possibly refined thousands of furnaces of other elixirs. Alchemist Lin, you must be a Pill Master from some top-tier Sect, surely?"

This truly is my first time refining elixirs... Lin Xuankong inwardly shook his head.

But looking at the expressions of those before him, he knew that no one would ever believe this truth!

Lin Xuankong looked at Ge City, who was engrossed in alchemy, and said with a touch of sentiment, "Alchemist Ge, there's no need for this. Refining elixirs is indeed extremely difficult. It was perfectly normal for you to have reservations about me earlier!"

Ge City shook his head repeatedly, respectfully cupping his hands. "As an Initial Grade Alchemist, the gap between my abilities and yours is simply too vast! With your level of Alchemy Technique, if you were to go to Kyoto, you would instantly be hired as an alchemist for the officials, capable of refining supreme elixirs like the Sunflower Water Treasure Elixir and Wood Treasure Pill. You would become a great figure whom even Sixth Layer and Seventh Layer experts would have to treat with respect! I hope Alchemist Lin might share some of your experience in refining Golden Body Treasure Elixirs. If it's possible, Ge City is willing to become your disciple in the future—no, no, I would even serve as your Medicine Boy, just to listen to your insights on the Alchemy Dao!"

Lin Xuankong: ...

This Ge City truly is an Elixir Obsession!

However, all his alchemy techniques were passed down from the Young Lady; he couldn't just casually impart them to others.

He frowned, pondering for a moment. "Let's forget about being a Medicine Boy or disciple. Next, I will refine one more furnace of elixirs in your presence. How much you can learn will depend on your own Comprehension!"

Hearing this, Ge City was slightly disappointed. However, the thought that Alchemist Lin would personally demonstrate elixir refining immediately caused his face to light up with extreme anticipation and excitement!

Outside the window, seeing Alchemist Ge—who was usually quite proud, even before Fifth Layer experts—behaving so respectfully towards Lin Xuankong, Ye Kai and Han Feiyan couldn't help but feel a sense of envy and marvel.

...

「The next day,」

Lin Xuankong departed from the Ye Family alone.

He touched the Jade Box in his breast pocket, which contained a full twenty Buddha Light Golden Body Treasure Elixirs.

He had originally refined twenty-four in total. However, since he had used the Ye Family's medicinal herbs and Pill Furnace, he felt he should offer something in return. Thus, he gave Ye Kai and Han Feiyan two Buddha Light Golden Body Treasure Elixirs each. As a result, Ye Kai was so overjoyed that he nearly fanned his Jade Fan in half on the spot, leading Han Feiyan to look at him with disdain for a good while!

It was no wonder Ye Kai was so ecstatic; what Lin Xuankong had casually given him were Buddha Light Golden Body Treasure Elixirs. Ye Kai was quite certain that elixirs of this caliber could be treasured as heirlooms by the Ye Family for hundreds of years to come...

After leaving the city, he traveled for more than half an Hour,

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A continuous mountain range appeared before him. At the foot of the nearest peak stood a giant, rippling arch, already surrounded by many Martial Cultivators. These were, naturally, the Fourth and Fifth Layer Martial Cultivators preparing to enter the Ba Mountain Secret Realm in search of Heavy Water Spiritual Objects!

Lin Xuankong took one glance before immediately slipping into a dense forest by the roadside. Moments later, when he emerged, his appearance had completely changed: black hair, sword-like brows, starry eyes, and quite handsome. His face now bore a slight resemblance to Yanzu from the movies and television shows of his previous life! Touching his face, altered by rearranging muscles and bones, Lin Xuankong's lips curled into a faint smile. He then headed towards the rippling arch.

Around the rippling arch, many Martial Cultivators were greeting each other, planning to form teams. Some had already formed groups; holding hands and stimulating their Qi Blood, they stepped into the transparent ripples. The ripples shimmered slightly, and these Martial Cultivators simultaneously vanished from where they stood.

Lin Xuankong watched for a few moments and was about to head towards the rippling arch alone when a Martial Cultivator beside him called out, "Brother, you must be here to search for Heavy Water Spiritual Objects in the Ba Mountain Secret Realm. Why not form a team and enter together? It's good to have someone to rely on in the dangerous Secret Realm!"

Lin Xuankong turned to look, seeing over a dozen Martial Cultivators standing together. The one leading them was a stranger with a Golden Forehead Scale Sword hanging from his waist.

Lin Xuankong took a closer look, his eyes narrowing slightly. He had now cultivated his Disguise Technique to eight points of proficiency and could easily tell that this Martial Cultivator was disguised. His Golden Forehead Scale Sword was also dyed. The methods used were crude; both the facial disguise and the sword exhibited numerous flaws. Others might not have noticed, but Lin Xuankong saw through it instantly!

But this voice is so familiar... Lin Xuankong mused, a thoughtful look in his eyes. This voice... it sounds like Yan Yunfei from the Seven Swords Sect! And the one next to him... that must be Yuan Butong!

The disguised Yan Yunfei and Yuan Butong were also carefully scrutinizing the handsome Lin Xuankong at this moment.

Yan Yunfei said in a low voice, "Brother, we have a map that shows the locations of Heavy Water Spiritual Objects, but those places are extremely difficult to reach alone. If you're planning to find the Heavy Water Spiritual Objects quickly, why not team up with us? When we reach the potential locations of the Heavy Water Spiritual Objects, we can eliminate the Corpse Scorpions guarding them together, and everyone will get a share of the Heavy Water Spiritual Objects!"

Lin Xuankong's heart skipped a beat upon hearing this. The locations of Heavy Water Spiritual Objects? Yan Yunfei actually has such information!

I came to the Ba Mountain Secret Realm specifically for Heavy Water Spiritual Objects. If I can find them sooner, that would be excellent!

With this in mind, Lin Xuankong nodded slightly. "Teaming up is fine, but I'm only at the Fourth Layer."

Someone in the group chuckled. "Don't worry, most of us in this team are at the Fourth Layer. No one's going to look down on you!"

Yan Yunfei's sworn brother, Guan Zhong, then said, "Rest assured, Brother, I'm also at the Fourth Layer. How could I possibly look down on you? Fourth Layer strength is already quite formidable! Once you join our team and enter the Secret Realm, we'll all help each other out. Besides, my two sworn brothers here are at the Fifth Layer; they'll look out for you if an opportunity arises!"

Yan Yunfei and Yuan Butong exchanged a glance and both nodded.

Yan Yunfei said, "Don't worry. As long as we don't run into Late Stage Fifth Layer Corpse Scorpions, fighting together won't be a problem for us... Besides, if you join, Brother Yuan here and I will definitely lend a hand when we can!"

The disguised Yuan Butong nodded slightly, looking extremely confident.

Chapter 204: The Highly Poisonous Mist and the True Qi Fierce Corpse, Li Baimei's Call for Help

A moment later, Yan Yunfei, having recruited a few more Fourth Layer Martial Cultivators, stood with everyone before the rippling archway.

According to Yan Yunfei, because no one had successfully refined the Celestial Demon Bone of the Ba Mountain Secret Realm for over a hundred years, it remained unclaimed territory. Upon entering the Secret Realm, everyone would be randomly transported to a location on its periphery. For the twenty members of the team to gather together, they had to hold hands and circulate their Qi Blood before entering the rippling archway. This would ensure they were all transported to the same location within the Ba Mountain Secret Realm.

Lin Xuankong, now disguised as 'Yanzu', glanced around in surprise. He found he had become quite the popular demand, with the team's only two burly Female Martial Cultivators holding his hands, one on each side...

Soon, the group standing before the rippling archway felt their vision blur; they had entered the Ba Mountain Secret Realm. The disguised Lin Xuankong withdrew his hands from the two burly Female Martial Cultivators and looked around. At that moment, they found themselves on a vast, desolate expanse of gravel. Within a hundred-mile radius, there was no forest in sight, only jagged rocks protruding from the ground and small patches of bizarre black and red vines. These thick vines twisted and stretched towards the sky, resembling the eerie tentacles of Demons. The strangest thing was that every few hundred feet, there was a large mass of black fog, covering hundreds to thousands of acres, connecting the ground to the sky.

Yan Yunfei spoke up, "These black clouds are the fog released by the Corpse Scorpions. Once you enter it, you'll be attacked by corpses controlled by the Corpse Scorpions. If you don't take Zhengyuan Grass in time, you'll be contaminated by the Corpse Scorpion Venom. Your Cultivation will gradually decline until you become an ordinary person and eventually die, only to become another corpse controlled by the Corpse Scorpions.

"The corpses of Martial Cultivators, once controlled by Corpse Scorpions, can regain their original Cultivation and become Puppets for the Corpse Scorpions' attacks! This Demon Technique used by the Corpse Scorpions to control corpses is even more terrifying than other Demons controlling Demon People!

"However, we're currently in the outermost area of the Ba Mountain Secret Realm, where the number of Corpse Scorpions is very small. Judging by the size of the fog, most of them are around Tier Three or

Tier Four. So, as long as we avoid the fog, we'll be safe! If a Corpse Scorpion targets you and chases you with Poisonous Fog, remember to use Zhengyuan Grass promptly!"

Everyone nodded. Beside Lin Xuankong, a burly Female Martial Cultivator with a double bun hairstyle, who appeared to be in her thirties, spoke up, "This gentleman, may I know your honorable name? I am Zheng Yunrui, an Early Fifth Layer. Even if a Tier Three or Tier Four Corpse Scorpion attacks you with Poisonous Fog, as long as you stay behind me, you'll be fine!"

Lin Xuankong glanced at the Female Martial Cultivator's thick arms. "Thank you!"

"Gentleman, may I know your honorable name?" The other burly Female Martial Cultivator also approached.

Lin Xuankong frowned. His original appearance might be better than this current one...

He casually said, "Just call me Mu Shiba!"

Mu Shiba, of course, was derived from deconstructing the character 'Lin'.

"What an elegant name!" the burly Female Martial Cultivator, Zheng Yunrui, praised.

Lin Xuankong thought, ...If I said my name was Li Gou Dan, would you still praise it like that!

At this moment, the group was already following Yan Yunfei and Yuan Butong deeper into the Secret Realm. Yuan Butong turned, saw this, and couldn't help but cough. He raised his hand, rubbed off his disguise mask, revealing his original appearance with rough brows and large eyes. Now that they were deep within the vast Secret Realm, he and Yan Yunfei no longer worried about encountering spies from the Black Tiger Gang, so they stopped hiding their identities.

Among the Martial Cultivators, someone immediately recognized him. "This... isn't this Yuan Butong, Sect Leader Yuan who made headlines in the Great Marsh Prefecture a few days ago?"

Upon hearing this, everyone couldn't help but look at him, including the two Female Martial Cultivators. The burly, pretty one with the bun hairstyle, Zheng Yunrui, couldn't help but ask, "The Sect Leader Yuan of the Blood Saber Sect?"

Yuan Butong gestured to his Blood Saber. It emitted a clear, resonant ring, and he nodded slightly.

Yan Yunfei secretly shook his head. My sworn brother is great in every way, except he loves showing off in front of Female Cultivators... But these two Female Martial Cultivators are so burly. Is he actually interested in them?

The bun-haired Female Martial Cultivator and the other one quickly walked to Yuan Butong's side, observing him intently. "So it really is Sect Leader Yuan!"

Seeing this, Lin Xuankong breathed a sigh of relief. Finally, it's quiet around me.

At this time, the bun-haired Zheng Yunrui spoke up, "I heard that Sect Leader Yuan led people to raid the Feng Family's transport caravan. What a heroic act; it was truly exhilarating! In the Great Marsh Prefecture, many Martial Cultivators wanted to do it but lacked the bravery and courage!"

Yuan Butong nodded solemnly. "The world is full of injustices; someone must always step forward!"

The bun-haired woman continued, "I also heard that the Conical Hat Guest saved you on the scene. It's said that the Conical Hat Guest smashed Feng Zhushi to death with a single blow! Feng Zhushi was an Early Fifth Layer, likely stronger than me. For the Conical Hat Guest to kill him in one strike, he must be at least a Mid-grade Fifth Layer, or perhaps even Late Stage Fifth Layer. Such strength and heroic actions truly command respect!"

Yuan Butong, who was gently stroking his Blood Saber, froze. ...

The bun-haired woman continued to ask, "Sect Leader Yuan, since you've met the Conical Hat Guest, do you know his identity? What does he look like?"

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Yuan Butong's heart suddenly became somewhat agitated, but seeing the eager eyes of the two female Martial Cultivators, he could only sigh, touch the Blood Saber at his waist, and say magnanimously, "I definitely cannot reveal the identity of the Conical Hat Guest to you! However, I have seen what he looks like; he has sword-like eyebrows and starry eyes, exuding an extraordinary aura. He is truly no ordinary person!"

The woman with the bun hairstyle asked, her eyes flickering, "How does he compare to this Mu Shiba?"

Yuan Butong's face turned solemn as he looked at Lin Xuankong. "Although this Brother Mu is indeed handsome, the Conical Hat Guest exudes a heroic spirit that none in Great Marsh Prefecture can match!"

Lin Xuankong was speechless. When did you ever see what I look like? How did I not know?

Lin Xuankong decisively shook his head. "Sect Leader Yuan, your words are mistaken! This appearance of mine is a mere mortal shell; how can it compare to the soaring heroic spirit of the Conical Hat Guest?"

...Amid their idle chatter, they had traveled nearly two hundred miles. These Martial Cultivators were all at the early, mid, and late stages of the Fourth Layer, with some even at the early stage of the Fifth Layer. Naturally, their speed was extremely fast.

A moment later, Yan Yunfei checked their position and called the group to a halt. He and a few others each took out a map from their robes, compared them for a while, then said,

"Ahead should be the first potential location for the Heavy Water Spiritual Object! At this place, several Corpse Scorpions gather all year round, making it hard to approach. We will definitely need a fierce battle to get into the Cold Pool to search for the Spiritual Object!

"Additionally, we are not the only team searching for Heavy Water Spiritual Objects at this spot, so everyone, stay vigilant. If we encounter a group with similar strength, we can discuss teaming up to deal with the Corpse Scorpions.

"But if we meet a more powerful team, it's best to avoid direct confrontation and search for Spiritual Objects elsewhere. What do you all think?"

Everyone murmured in low voices before nodding in agreement. After all, in such a Secret Realm, killing and looting were common occurrences. The reason they formed a team was partly to deal with the Corpse Scorpions together and partly because a larger group offered better protection against those with ill intentions.

Lin Xuankong was secretly shaking his head amidst the crowd. He was only following Yan Yunfei and the others because they had a map. As for banding together for defense? These people came from all over, each harboring their own suspicions. If they faced a strong enemy, they would likely scatter like loose sand, each fleeing for their life. Who would risk their life for a stranger, another Martial Cultivator!

After pondering for a while, he looked in the direction Yan Yunfei pointed, his eyes revealing a Double Pupil.

The next moment, his expression changed. Under the Eight Gates Celestial Eye, he saw distinctly that by a Cold Pool near a gorge dozens of miles away, several Martial Cultivators were fighting strange, black corpses amidst a swirling black mist.

Those corpses had purple-black faces and hands, and their eyes were a ghastly pale green. They were clearly dead, yet they moved with surprising nimbleness and could wield the Martial Dao, using True Qi to attack!

The three people being attacked by the corpses were Li Baimei of the Holy Dragon Association, Chu Yuhui, Vice Gang Leader of the Spirit Snake Gang, and Young Gang Leader Chu Qing—all of whom he had seen in Demon-Suppressing Valley.

Li Baimei and Chu Yuhui were both Fifth Layer experts, their strength formidable. With each of them activating a Demon Fox Demon Pearl, they managed to fight those corpses on relatively even terms.

However, Chu Qing, being only at the late stage of the Fourth Layer, could not use True Qi for attacks. Even with the support of the Demon Pearl, he was defenseless against the attacks of two black-purple corpses. Li Baimei and Chu Yuhui had to protect Chu Qing constantly, putting them in a passive position. Gradually, they were surrounded by twelve corpses.

Moreover, those corpses were enveloped in a thick, black demonic mist that was clearly Highly Poisonous, making close combat impossible. They could only use True Qi for long-range attacks to suppress their foes. Due to the sheer number of corpses, before long, all three were afflicted by the poison, continuously swallowing Zhengyuan Grass and Elixirs...

After careful observation, Lin Xuankong couldn't help but frown. That Li Baimei is a renowned late-stage Fifth Layer expert in Great Marsh Prefecture, his strength comparable to the Main Hall Masters of the top gangs. Even someone as powerful as him is struggling so fiercely against these corpses controlled by Corpse Scorpions. The Corpse Scorpions in this Ba Mountain Secret Realm are truly formidable! If I hadn't refined those Golden Body Treasure Elixirs back in the Ye Family's residence in Ba City, I'd find it incredibly difficult to contend with that dozen or so corpses!

Even with those Golden Body Treasure Elixirs, dealing with twelve Fifth Layer expert corpses would still be arduous. I'd have to use a number of my trump cards! Although I don't fear corpse poison, those purple-black corpses were once Fifth Layer experts...

Yan Yunfei and the others, obviously unaware that Lin Xuankong had already seen the battle ahead, continued to move towards the Cold Pool.

Lin Xuankong silently pondered strategies. When they were twenty miles from the gorge, his eyes suddenly flashed, and he gripped the Silver Saber tightly.

At this moment, Yan Yunfei, Yuan Butong, and Zheng Yunrui—all early-stage Fifth Layer cultivators—suddenly showed changed expressions as they carefully looked ahead.

Within a few breaths, from amidst an area filled with jagged boulders, a figure blurred, rushing towards them. It was Li Baimei, his face already turning purple.

Around him, fourteen purple-black corpses closed in from all directions, including Chu Yuhui and Chu Qing... Chu Yuhui and Chu Qing were now completely purple-black, transformed into half-dead bodies controlled by Corpse Scorpions!

Seeing this, Lin Xuankong's brow raised. In the short time I was considering how to deal with those twelve Fifth Layer corpses, the Vice Gang Leader and Young Gang Leader of the Spirit Snake Gang were

already controlled by the Corpse Scorpions? These Corpse Scorpions are indeed peculiar; once you can't suppress them, they grow stronger, and the number of Poison Corpses increases!

"Save me! I am Li Baimei, the Steward of the Holy Dragon Association! Save me quickly! Does anyone have spare Zhengyuan Grass? Give me one!"

As he fled for his life, Li Baimei shouted loudly, clearly having exhausted the Zhengyuan Grass he carried during the battle!

He frantically circulated his True Qi, trying to suppress the invading Corpse Scorpion Venom.

But at this moment, the corpse poison had invaded his body. His running speed was visibly slowing, and the concentration of his True Qi was rapidly decreasing. Evidently, the corpse poison was suppressing his Cultivation Realm, causing it to drop!

Yan Yunfei and Yuan Butong saw this scene, and their faces changed dramatically.

Zheng Yunrui frowned and reached into her robe.

She took out a Zhengyuan Grass and threw it towards Li Baimei, then quickly retreated.

"It's a dozen Fifth Layer Poison Corpses! While they haven't surrounded us yet, everyone retreat quickly! We are definitely no match for them!" she shouted while retreating rapidly.

The dozen or so Martial Cultivators around them all turned pale.

They were all Fourth Layer Martial Cultivators, capable of dealing with one or two Tier Five Corpse Scorpions together. But facing more than a dozen Fifth Layer corpses meant there were more than ten Tier Five Corpse Scorpions inside those bodies. Even if they were all early-stage Fifth Layer experts, they would be no match for these Poison Corpses and Corpse Scorpions!

When Zheng Yunrui swiftly retreated to Lin Xuankong's side, she reached out to pull him. "Retreat with me! What are you spacing out for?"

Lin Xuankong, however, sidestepped, dodging her hand. He could ignore Chu Yuhui and Chu Qing; after all, the Spirit Snake Gang and Yin Talisman Sect had always been at odds! But the Cold Pool ahead might hold Heavy Water Spiritual Objects, crucial for his advancement to the Fifth Layer. It's possibly within reach now—how could I retreat!

Seeing this, Zheng Yunrui sighed, no longer bothering with him. Her face showed fear as she retreated alone.

At this point, Yan Yunfei, Yuan Butong, and the others also quickly retreated.

Li Baimei, still running, caught the Zhengyuan Grass and stuffed it into his mouth, chewing. Only then did his complexion ease slightly. His Cultivation Realm had already dropped to the early stage of the Fifth Layer, nearly falling to the Fourth Layer...

However, despite having the antidote and temporarily not needing to worry about corpsification or his Realm dropping, he continued to flee desperately. He didn't dare to look back towards the Cold Pool, nor did he dare to stop for even a moment!

In a few breaths, the group bolted past Lin Xuankong's position, leaving him standing alone, one eyebrow raised as he faced the dozen or so encircling Poison Corpses!

Chapter 206: The Terror of the Corpse Scorpion is Nothing Compared to His Terror

In a flash, the group, their faces etched with fear, had already fled nearly twenty li without looking back.

Originally, the fastest among them should have been Li Baimei, a Late-Stage Fifth Layer cultivator. However, he had been poisoned by Corpse Scorpion Venom earlier, causing his Cultivation to plummet. Despite using Zhengyuan Grass for detoxification, the venom had penetrated too deeply to be completely expelled in a short time. Furthermore, his True Qi was also being consumed to combat the lingering venom. As a result, this dignified Steward of the Holy Dragon Association ended up being the slowest runner, his face etched with the most profound terror!

After running nearly twenty li, they finally breathed a sigh of relief and turned to look back. However, due to the great distance, they could only vaguely perceive that the dozen or so Poison Corpses seemed to have surrounded Mu Shiba.

"Is he crazy? Why didn't he run with us?" Yan Yunfei asked with a frown after regulating his breath.

"If he had run with us, we'd still be trailed by the Poison Corpses right now!" a Martial Cultivator spoke up, a hint of relief in his eyes. "The speed of a Fifth Layer Poison Corpse is exactly the same as that of a Fifth Layer Martial Cultivator. How could we possibly escape their pursuit? With Mu Shiba as bait, we're actually safer!"

"A Fourth Layer Martial Cultivator facing a dozen Poison Corpses will surely become one himself immediately. It's just a pity about his good looks!" sighed a sturdy Female Martial Cultivator standing with a girl with a bun hairstyle.

At this moment, Li Baimei had already sat on the ground, continuously circulating his Qi Blood to integrate the medicinal power of the Zhengyuan Grass. Soon, a faint phosphorescence appeared on the surface of his body, and the toxins clouding his face gradually dissipated.

Witnessing this, the surrounding Martial Cultivators immediately retreated to a safe distance, terrified of coming into contact with the toxins he expelled!

"Damn it! Yu Hui, Chu Qing, and I had just begun exploring the Cold Pool when we were ambushed by a large number of Poison Corpses lying in wait. Yu Hui and Chu Qing... both were exceptionally talented individuals, destined to advance to the Fifth and Sixth Layers. For them to die in the Ba Mountain Secret Realm is such a terrible injustice!" Li Baimei, having expelled the toxins, sighed as he gazed at the Poison Corpses surrounding Lin Xuankong in the distance.

This Late-Stage Fifth Layer Steward of the Holy Dragon Association still had dread written all over his face as he gazed at the dozen or so Poison Corpses, his heart filled with lingering fear.

If not for that Zhengyuan Grass, I might have turned into a Poison Corpse myself!

"This Ba Mountain Secret Realm is fraught with dangers, and the Corpse Scorpion Venom is particularly deadly..." Li Baimei lamented, a lingering hint of fear still in his eyes.

「Twenty li away.」

Lin Xuankong gazed at the 'Chu Yuhui' before him. The corpse's skin was purple-black, its eyes a ghastly blue-white.

This Vice Gang Leader, quite famous in the Great Marsh Prefecture, was far stronger than the likes of Guo Yunkui and Feng Zhusi. He had also spent many years carousing in Kyoto and was considered a prominent figure in the Great Marsh Prefecture. Alas, now he lay dead in the Ba Mountain Secret Realm, his very corpse controlled by a Corpse Scorpion!

At this moment, the nearby purple-black corpses surrounding him suddenly displayed stiff, seemingly mocking smiles as they advanced step by step.

However, at this very moment, though there were clearly fourteen corpses, only thirteen were moving...

Because Chu Yuhui's corpse had suddenly stiffened, standing motionless!

A hint of joy flickered in Lin Xuankong's Double Pupils. The Eight Gates Celestial Eye actually works on Corpse Scorpions! It seems the Heart Thought strength of the Corpse Scorpions hiding within these corpses is at most Sixth Grade... This is an unexpected boon! I initially thought I'd have to go all out and use a large number of Demon Pearls for this fight!

In the next instant, his gaze from his Double Pupils swept around. The other thirteen corpses immediately froze in place. Their purple-black faces twisted, and their blue-white eyes shrank to needlepoints, as if they had witnessed something utterly terrifying. Among them, Chu Qing's purple-black corpse even began to tremble slightly.

Lin Xuankong casually reached into his robes, and a crystalline Ghost Frog Demon Pearl appeared.

Immediately after, BOOM! An enormous amount of Demon Qi erupted.

A Ghost Frog King, the size of a two-story building and covered in intricate red patterns, crouched in place. It croaked several times as nearly a thousand tentacle-like long tongues wriggled out from its massive maw.

Lin Xuankong had now reached the Perfection of the Fourth Layer. Consequently, the Ghost Frog King he summoned was vastly superior to the Tier Three Ghost Frog King he could previously manifest. It was no longer merely the size of a millstone with a few hundred long tongues. Instead, it was as large as a two-story building, possessing nearly a thousand thick tongues, each capable of extending one hundred zhang!

SWISH SWISH SWISH SWISH!

The sound of rending air echoed continuously as the Ghost Frog King's thousand tongues shot out at high speed, simultaneously ensnaring all fourteen Poison Corpses.

Instantly, Poisonous Fog roiled around the Poison Corpses. A substantial amount of purple-black Corpse Scorpion Venom spread along the Ghost Frog King's long tongues, swiftly turning them all the same purple-black color.

Ordinarily, this terrifying Corpse Scorpion Venom, once it spread, could poison a Fourth Tier Demon down to Tier Three, Tier Two, or even Tier One in a short time. This would significantly reduce the strength of both Demons and any summoned creatures!

However, at this moment, though the Corpse Scorpion Venom spread quickly, the Ghost Frog King showed no discernible change, merely blinking its bulging frog eyes...

The Ghost Frog King Lin Xuankong summoned was formed from his own Qi Blood, converted by the Demon Pearl, so it naturally inherited his Immortal Tier Poison Resistance. His Qi Blood could neutralize even Ninth Tier Demon Poison; how could mere Fifth Tier Corpse Scorpion Venom possibly affect Immortal Tier Poison Resistance?

In a flash, one rigid, purple-black corpse after another was pulled into its massive mouth by the retracting tongues of the Ghost Frog King.

Chapter 207: The Terror of the Corpse Scorpion is Nothing Compared to His Terror_2

Its gigantic mouth had now grown to the size of several rooms, large enough to easily swallow a dozen corpses in one gulp!

When all the Corpse Scorpions, along with the corpses, entered the Ghost Frog King's stomach, strange thumping sounds immediately emanated from within. The life-or-death crisis arrived. Those dozen-odd Corpse Scorpions had already awakened from the 'Entering Illusion' state induced by the Eight Gates Celestial Eye and frantically attacked using the Poison Corpses. However, the Ghost Frog King's stomach was comparable to an Otherworld; even as Tier Five Demons, they could not escape!

Ten breaths passed.

Twenty breaths passed.

Forty breaths passed.

Sixty breaths passed!

The thumping sounds inside the Ghost Frog King's stomach lasted for over eighty breaths, only gradually stopping as they approached ninety. This was far longer than any other powerful entities the Ghost Frog King had ever devoured!

Lin Xuankong, observing the inside of the Ghost Frog King's stomach with his Celestial Eye, showed a hint of surprise. The Poison Corpses within had already dissolved into pus. The Corpse Scorpions, corroded by the venom, were now only palm-sized, merely tens of times larger than ordinary scorpions.

It turned out these Corpse Scorpions were parasitic, residing in the brains of the Poison Corpses. Using their claws and tail stingers, they pierced the Poison Corpses' Brain Mansions to control them. They could utilize the dead bodies to convert their Demon Qi into True Qi attacks—an extremely eerie and powerful ability!

This was the first time Lin Xuankong had encountered such small yet high-Grade, eerily powerful Demons!

Unfortunately for them, these Corpse Scorpions, possessing deadly toxins and eerie Demon Techniques, encountered Lin Xuankong, who is immune to all poisons!

Otherwise, if it were a Fourth Layer Martial Cultivator with Pupil Techniques, even if the Corpse Scorpions were controlled by a Pupil Technique and ensnared by the tongue of a Ghost Frog Demon summoned by that cultivator, they could have instantly reduced the Ghost Frog Demon's Grade with their deadly toxins. This would allow them to automatically escape control, preventing the Ghost Frog Demon from devouring them!

After the Ghost Frog King digested the Poison Corpses and Corpse Scorpions, it dissipated into a cloud of Demon Qi with a BANG.

On the ground, three sets of Battle Armor, over ten pieces of Exorcism Equipment, and three glistening Demon Fox Demon Pearls appeared. These items naturally belonged to the Fifth Layer Poison Corpses. Two sets of Battle Armor and two Demon Fox Demon Pearls came from Chu Qing and Chu Yuhui. The other Fifth Layer Poison Corpses, though not weak, were evidently powerful individuals from minor sects; among those ten or so, there was only one other complete set of Battle Armor and one Demon Fox Demon Pearl.

It's a pity not a single Corpse Scorpion Demon Pearl appeared! Still, with Demon Techniques that control corpses being so disgusting, even if they condensed a Demon Pearl, using it would probably make me sick. These three Demon Fox Demon Pearls, though, are quite excellent—a nice, unexpected gain!

Lin Xuankong casually picked up the three sets of Battle Armor and three Demon Pearls, which still carried some poison. As the toxins spread over him, they transformed into a rather pleasant, cool sensation. He then stored the precious Battle Armor and the even more precious Demon Pearls into his Ghost Frog Pouch, then turned into a shadowy blur and headed towards the canyon.

「Twenty miles away」

All twenty Martial Cultivators, including Li Baimei, were petrified on the spot.

"This... this... How is this possible? All the Poison Corpses were handled by the Ghost Frog King he summoned? And so quickly?" one Martial Cultivator exclaimed, squinting hard at the distant scene. However, even as a Fourth Layer Martial Cultivator, he couldn't see clearly due to the great distance.

"Is the Ghost Frog King's Demon Pearl really that powerful?!" Zheng Yunrui, with her hair in a bun, fell into the deepest doubt of her life.

She had previously planned to let this handsome Mu Shiba experience her strength, hoping to spark a romance during this Secret Realm trip! But it turned out Mu Shiba was so incredibly powerful—much stronger than her, how embarrassing...

Yan Yunfei frowned deeply. "Why does the Ghost Frog King Demon he summoned seem completely unaffected by the Corpse Scorpion's toxins? Normally, even for a Demon of the Same Tier, the outcome of a battle between a Ghost Frog King and Corpse Scorpions of the Same Tier would be uncertain!"

Everyone was filled with confusion and astonishment. Even the usually well-informed Li Baimei couldn't help but twitch his white eyebrows, his face a mask of bewilderment. He frowned for a long moment before speaking, "It's too far to correctly distinguish the Grade of the Demon he summoned. Judging by its size, however, it shouldn't exceed Tier Five. A Tier Five Ghost Frog King dealing with Martial Cultivators of the Same Tier isn't particularly difficult. But to handle so many Corpse Scorpions so quickly, the summoner must have enhanced the Demon significantly! Is there truly a Martial Dao enhancement in this world that could allow a single Ghost Frog King to deal with fourteen Corpse Scorpions independently? Who is he? What Realm is he in?"

Everyone shook their heads; they weren't familiar with this Mu Shiba either.

Yan Yunfei pondered for a moment, then cupped his hands and said, "Holy Dragon Steward, we encountered him at the Secret Realm entrance. He claimed his name was Mu Shiba, and his Realm... he said it's Fourth Layer!"

Li Baimei shot to his feet and declared resolutely, "Impossible! Absolutely impossible! A Fourth Layer Martial Cultivator... Even the Celestial Sect Saintess of our Great Xia Dynasty, at the Fourth Layer, couldn't summon a Ghost Frog King capable of handling over ten Tier Five Corpse Scorpions! He is definitely not Fourth Layer! He absolutely cannot be Fourth Layer!"

From the crowd, a pale-skinned Martial Cultivator hesitated before speaking up, "That Mu Shiba seems to have gone towards the canyon's Cold Pool, probably looking for a Heavy Water Spiritual Object. Should we head over?"

As soon as he spoke, everyone looked at him as if he were an idiot.

Zheng Yunrui hesitated, touched her hair bun, and said, "If we had stayed by his side earlier and fought those Corpse Scorpions together, maybe he would have let us explore the Cold Pool with him! But we all ran off faster than a Lightning Sparrow, leaving him alone to slay the Demons. Under these circumstances, still wanting to go over and get a piece of the pie?"

Yuan Butong glared at that Martial Cultivator. "Your courage is commendable. You can go over right now; we have no objections!"

Hearing this, the pale-skinned Martial Cultivator's face turned even whiter, and he shrank back into the crowd.

Yuan Butong then said, "All joking aside, to instantly kill over a dozen Tier Five Corpse Scorpions... his strength must be more than ten times as terrifying as those Corpse Scorpions!"

Li Baimei pondered carefully for a moment before concluding with certainty, "Even as a Late Stage Fifth Layer cultivator, I almost didn't escape with my life. Yet he instantly dealt with over ten Tier Five entities. Such a vast disparity can only mean one thing: he is at least at Fifth Layer Perfection and possesses many powerful Secret Techniques!"

"I suggest we wait for him to finish exploring the Cold Pool before we consider going over. While a Heavy Water Spiritual Object is precious, one needs to be alive to enjoy it!"

After speaking, Li Baimei sighed. So what if I'm a Steward of the Holy Dragon Association? This is a Secret Realm. Could I really use my status to pressure him into handing over a Spiritual Object? Facing such a terrifying Martial Cultivator at Fifth Layer Perfection, with such powerful techniques... am I eager to join Yu Hui and Chu Qing in death?

「At the edge of the Cold Pool」

The area was littered with jagged boulders and strangely shaped gravel. The water temperature in the Cold Pool was extremely low, with wisps of frigid air continuously emanating from its surface. Standing beside it, Lin Xuankong's exhaled breath turned into white mist.

This Cold Pool in the Secret Realm, once occupied by Corpse Scorpions, might not be so simple. There could be something truly strange within!

Lin Xuankong frowned, observing for a moment before taking out set after set of Battle Armor from his Ghost Frog Pouch—over ten sets in total. He then activated his Qi Blood, causing all the Battle Armor to flare to life and protect his entire body. Next, he activated the Blood-Burning Secret Technique, Fierce Tiger Roar Bone Technique, Kui Ox Drum, and Shadow Concealment Primordial Technique simultaneously.

Finally, he grasped nine Demon Pearls, took a deep breath, and leaped into the Cold Pool!

His eyes gleamed with intense anticipation. If I can find a Heavy Water Spiritual Object in this Cold Pool, I might be able to advance to the Fifth Layer today! Then I'll possess a powerful Thunder Technique with an attack range of hundreds of zhang! With a mere wave of my hand, Divine Thunder will cover an area hundreds of zhang wide... Moreover, the combat power of my Black Soul Wondrous Jade, Ghost Frog Demon Pearl, Twin Vine Demon Pearl, Manluo Demon Pearl, four Demon Fox Demon Pearls, Evil Sheep Demon Pearl, Marsh Python Demon Pearl, and other Treasures will instantly increase by more than tenfold!

Chapter 208: Obtaining the Spiritual Object, Little Yu King's Fierce Dominance Over the Six Ministries

The Cold Pool, tens of zhang wide, contained bone-chillingly cold water.

Lin Xuankong wore layers of Battle Armor, yet he could still feel waves of cold seeping through them. However, having activated the Blood-Burning Secret Technique, he could now easily raise his body temperature to seventy or eighty degrees Celsius. Consequently, the pool's extreme cold was nothing to him!

Weighed down by tens of thousands of pounds from his multiple layers of Battle Armor, Lin Xuankong didn't need to swim; his body simply sank rapidly.

During his descent, his Double Pupils carefully surveyed the surroundings. The pool walls were as smooth as mirrors, devoid of any footholds or handholds. As he sank deeper, the light within the Cold Pool grew increasingly dim.

By the time he had descended about a hundred zhang, darkness enveloped him completely. If not for his Eight Gates Celestial Eye, he would have been blind to everything.

However, this was a Cold Pool that might harbor Poison Corpses, and the absolute darkness weighed heavily on Lin Xuankong's mind. He circulated a small amount of his Qi Blood, and several bright flashes of Divine Thunder erupted from his right hand, illuminating the immediate surroundings.

Looking at the still-smooth stone walls around him, Lin Xuankong silently calculated his depth based on the time that had passed.

Moments later, he couldn't help but shake his head slightly. A hundred breaths have passed; I must have sunk over three hundred zhang by now. In my previous life, such a depth would have been a human exclusion zone; survival without large diving equipment would have been impossible!

However, for a Fourth Layer Martial Cultivator, this depth posed no pressure whatsoever. Even breathing was not an issue. Having cultivated to the Fourth Layer Late Stage, the refinement of his Qi Blood could sustain all his vital activities. With his current Qi and Blood Reserves, he could remain submerged at the bottom of this Cold Pool for hundreds, even thousands, of years without needing to surface for air!

After descending another two hundred zhang or so, Lin Xuankong finally touched the bottom of the Cold Pool. He raised the Divine Thunder in his hand and surveyed his surroundings.

The bottom of this Cold Pool was extremely wide, likely several hundred zhang across. This vast expanse was covered with countless bones—human bones, beast bones, and even Corpse Scorpion bones!

Retracting his gaze, Lin Xuankong raised his right hand, the one not holding the Divine Thunder. As his Qi Blood circulated rapidly, droplets of Essence Blood appeared at his middle fingertip, slowly diffusing into the stagnant water at the pool's bottom.

Preparing to search for Heavy Water Spiritual Objects in the Ba Mountain Secret Realm, Lin Xuankong had naturally consulted Zhao Yufei on the matter beforehand.

These Heavy Water Spiritual Objects generally appeared in Cold Pools hundreds or thousands of zhang deep within the Ba Mountain Secret Realm. Superficially, they looked identical to ordinary water, indistinguishable even with the Eight Gates Celestial Eye. The only way to find them was to use Essence Blood as bait, attracting the Heavy Water Spiritual Objects to consume it!

Although these Heavy Water Spiritual Objects were born from absorbing the essence of heaven and earth, they particularly craved the Essence Blood of Demons and Human Race Martial Cultivators. As they absorbed more Essence Blood, their Spirituality and volume would gradually increase. The numerous human, Demon, and beast corpses at the bottom of this Cold Pool had all been thrown here by Corpse Scorpions to nurture these objects.

Corpse Scorpions, like Human Race Martial Cultivators, needed to devour vast quantities of Heaven and Earth Spiritual Objects to break through their Realm and advance to the Fifth Layer. If not for this, the Tier Five Corpse Scorpions would not be guarding the vicinity of this Cold Pool. They hunted Human Race members and beasts nearby to obtain large amounts of Essence Blood, using it to nurture the Heavy Water Spiritual Objects for their offspring to consume.

Sensing his Essence Blood spreading outwards, Lin Xuankong decisively extinguished the Divine Thunder in his left hand. The bottom of the pool instantly plunged into utter darkness, without a single trace of light remaining.

In such profound darkness, it would be incredibly difficult for any other Martial Cultivator to spot a Heavy Water Spiritual Object coming to absorb the Essence Blood. However, Lin Xuankong's Eight Gates Celestial Eye was extraordinary; even in absolute darkness, he could clearly see the faint traces of his dispersed Essence Blood.

About the time it takes to drink a cup of tea, Lin Xuankong's Double Pupils constricted slightly in the darkness. The dispersed Essence Blood, now about ten feet away from him, suddenly and silently began to coalesce, as if iron filings were being drawn to a magnet.

The coalescing Essence Blood formed a sphere about the size of a thumb-pulp. As more Essence Blood gathered and was absorbed, the sphere grew increasingly vivid red. Finally, after it had absorbed about a third of the Essence Blood Lin Xuankong had expelled, the crimson droplet silently drifted away into the distance.

Witnessing this, a smile touched Lin Xuankong's lips. This Heavy Water Spiritual Object truly possesses a degree of spiritual awareness; it's incredibly cautious. If I hadn't extinguished the Divine Thunder, it definitely wouldn't have revealed itself!

However, now that I've found you, and you've consumed so much of my Essence Blood, how could I possibly let you escape!

His Qi Blood surged. Like a bolt of lightning, he shot forward, creating large ripples in the water as he instantly closed the distance to the Heavy Water Spiritual Object and snatched it!

The Heavy Water Spiritual Object, brimming with Spirituality, instantly dissolved into countless, incredibly fine streams of water, attempting to scatter in all directions and slip from Lin Xuankong's grasp. Suddenly, flashes of Divine Thunder erupted, and twenty-four strands wove into a net, trapping the Spiritual Object at its center. The Heavy Water Spiritual Object continuously changed forms, thrashing left and right in an attempt to break free. Alas, under the relentless barrage of Divine Thunder, this seemingly sentient Spiritual Object was shocked into repeated twitches, utterly unable to escape!

Chapter 209: Obtaining the Spiritual Object, Little Yu King's Fierce Might Dominate the Six Offices_2

Even if it immediately broke apart and transformed into twelve smaller Heavy Water droplets, it still could not pass through the incredibly dense lightning net!

At this moment, Lin Xuankong controlled the Heavy Water Spiritual Object with the lightning net, quickly floating up towards the surface of the Cold Pool.

His heart was filled with joy, and he thought inwardly: No wonder there are so many Tier Five Corpse Scorpions gathered here. It turns out this Cold Pool has already nurtured twelve drops of Heavy Water Spiritual Objects! Twelve extremely precious Spiritual Objects, obtained so easily!

But Lin Xuankong never imagined that this Cold Pool was the haunt of twelve Tier Five Poison Corpses and Corpse Scorpions. Even the Steward of the prestigious Holy Dragon Association, Li Baimei, couldn't withstand the attacks of these Corpse Scorpions, and the Vice Gang Leader and Young Gang Leader of the Spirit Snake Gang had met their demise here! As for the Fifth Layer Martial Artists Yan Yunfei, Yuan Butong, Zheng Yunrui, and other Martial Cultivators, they had fled at the mere sight of the danger. Anyone who escaped too slowly would have been doomed!

It was only he who found it easy! Anyone else who came here wouldn't just find it difficult to collect the Spiritual Objects; they would definitely die quickly and easily!

Shortly afterward, the surface of the Cold Pool splashed and the water rippled.

Lin Xuankong transformed into a shadow and leaped out, landing directly on the edge of the pool.

He looked down at the twelve Heavy Water Spiritual Objects in his hand, his eyes filled with intense joy and anticipation.

Although he knew he had a Vigorous in Old Age sixty-fold boost and probably needed only one drop to start breaking through to the Fifth Layer, the more of these extremely valuable Heavy Water Spiritual Objects, the better!

Suddenly, a soft laugh was heard from above the gorge. "You must be Mu Shiba, the one who killed over a dozen Tier Five Corpse Scorpions? Quite lucky of you to find twelve drops of Heavy Water Spiritual Objects!"

"Heavy Water Spiritual Objects are extremely vigilant and sensitive, very difficult to capture. It's exceedingly hard to see at the bottom of the Cold Pool, and ordinary Martial Artists can hardly discover Heavy Water Spiritual Objects there! For you to find these Heavy Water Spiritual Objects so quickly, you do have some skill!"

Originally joyful, Lin Xuankong couldn't help but look up when he heard the voice. He saw, at the top of the gorge thousands of feet above, among jagged rocks, Yan Yunfei, Yuan Butong, Li Baimei, Zheng Yunrui, and others standing with their heads lowered, looking quite tense.

In front of them were six Martial Cultivators clad in Golden Battle Armor.

Standing before these six Golden Armor Martial Cultivators were two people. One wore Golden Armor and a Golden Helmet, holding a twelve-foot Golden Crescent Saber. He looked dazzling and imposing, with the aura of a peerless warrior.

The other Martial Cultivator was about twenty-six or twenty-seven years old. He was dressed in a white long robe with a Gold-inlaid Jade belt, from which a Crimson Longsword was hung. He wore a Purple Gold Crown, had handsome features, and carried an air of nobility, clearly someone of high status. It was this young man who had spoken.

Suddenly, several strangers appeared. Li Baimei and the others seemed intimidated by them, not daring to say a word. Lin Xuankong, unaware of the strangers' strength and origin, remained silent but cautiously began to circulate his Qi Blood, activating several Secret Techniques, and touched the numerous Demon Pearls within his jacket.

Above the gorge, when Li Baimei, Yan Yunfei, Yuan Butong, and the others looked at the Golden Armor Golden Blade Martial Cultivator, fear showed on their faces. As for the young man, none of the twenty capable Martial Cultivators, including Li Baimei, dared to meet his gaze.

Only the bun-haired Zheng Yunrui looked worriedly at Lin Xuankong, continuously shaking her head at him and signaling with her eyes, clearly telling him not to act impulsively and definitely not to confront these people!

Seeing this, Lin Xuankong's suspicions and vigilance grew stronger.

At this moment, the Golden Armor Golden Blade Martial Cultivator, seeing Lin Xuankong remain silent, said sternly, "Mu Shiba, my Young Prince is speaking to you, and you dare ignore him?"

"Young Prince?" Lin Xuankong frowned.

Where did this Young Prince come from? He seems to have frightened Li Baimei and the others greatly. Surely it isn't just because of his so-called Young Prince status?

The Golden Armor Golden Blade Martial Cultivator leaped down, landing steadily tens of feet in front of Lin Xuankong. He raised his saber and declared, "My Young Prince is, naturally, the Little Yu King of the Nanyuan Yuwang Mansion!"

As he spoke, the people on the gorge had already leaped down.

Whether it was Li Baimei, Yan Yunfei, or Yuan Butong, they all looked at the Heavy Water Spiritual Objects in Lin Xuankong's hands with clear envy. But seeing the Little Yu King's status and the strength of the Guards around him, their envy turned into helplessness.

The young man known as the Little Yu King looked at Lin Xuankong and said, "Prince Yu's Mansion urgently needs Heavy Water Spiritual Objects. Hand over the Heavy Water Spiritual Objects in your hand, and I will reward you greatly!"

Lin Xuankong heard this, and his pupils narrowed. He had come to the Ba Mountain Secret Realm for these Heavy Water Spiritual Objects; now that he had them, how could he possibly give them to someone else!

Nearby, Li Baimei watched this scene and secretly shook his head, thinking: This Mu Shiba is undoubtedly a formidable opponent beyond my capabilities. Judging by his ability to instantly kill over a dozen Corpse Scorpions, he's far beyond what I can contend with! But the young man in front of me is the Little Yu King, renowned throughout the Six Prefectures of Nanjiang! He is the greatest talent in all six prefectures. Having entered the Sixth Layer two years ago, he is now already at the Mid-grade of the Sixth Layer. Within just two years, he progressed from Early Stage to Mid-grade Sixth Layer! This speed of improvement is exceedingly rare, even in the entire Great Xia Dynasty. Among the younger generation, perhaps only Celestial Sect Saintess Xiaoo Ying'Er's Cultivation speed can compare with his! Moreover, the Southern Border Yuwang Mansion has such profound resources; who knows what powerful Treasures this Little Yu King carries? No matter how strong this Mu Shiba is, he definitely cannot be the Little Yu King's opponent! It might not even require the Little Yu King to act personally. That Sixth Layer Early Stage Guard Captain in Golden Armor and Golden Saber beside him is a renowned expert in Nanyuan Prefecture; Mu Shiba might not even be able to defeat him!

As Li Baimei pondered, Zheng Yunrui looked at Lin Xuankong, repeatedly shaking her head, fearing he would turn hostile immediately. Confronting the Little Yu King, famed throughout the land—what good could come of it?

At this moment, Lin Xuankong carefully observed everyone's expressions, his vigilance increasing.

With my current strength, all abilities activated, plus the Battle Armor and Demon Pearls I possess, I could even contend with a Sixth Layer Early Stage cultivator, not to mention my Eight Gates Celestial Eye... However, these people have extraordinary backgrounds; even Li Baimei, the Steward of the Holy Dragon Association, is frightened into silence! Their strength is unknown, their techniques are unknown, and their Treasures are unknown. It's simply not the right time to engage rashly. But these Heavy Water Spiritual Objects are crucial for rapidly enhancing my strength. How could I possibly hand them over!

This Little Yu King is quite shameless, just waiting outside for me to find the Heavy Water Spiritual Objects so he can sit back and reap the rewards?

Seeing Lin Xuankong remain silent again, the Golden Armor Golden Blade Martial Cultivator's face hardened, and he said sharply, "The words of the Little Yu King are equivalent to the decree of King Yu of the Six Prefectures of Nanjiang. Even the Prefect of Great Marsh Prefecture would have to obey. You're stalling here. Are you looking to die...?"

"Zong Guang, don't be so impatient!" the Little Yu King interrupted, leisurely caressing the Crimson Longsword at his waist. "It makes it sound as if my Prince Yu's Mansion is trying to rob someone! Mu Shiba, I've already said, if you hand over the Heavy Water Spiritual Objects, I will reward you handsomely. Tell me what reward you want. You can speak now!"

Chapter 210: Breakthrough to the Fifth Layer, Sudden Increase in Strength, Mysterious Jade

At this moment, Little Yu King spoke leisurely, looking down on Lin Xuankong with an air of indifference. His confident demeanor and the implication in his words suggested he was certain Lin Xuankong wouldn't dare disobey his commands.

This wasn't specifically aimed at Lin Xuankong. For someone of Little Yu King's esteemed status, likely only experts from the Great Xia Royal Family were worthy of his attention. He didn't believe this 'Mu Shiba' before him would dare to defy his orders; rather, he believed no one in the entire Six Prefectures of Nanjiang would dare to do so.

As for Lin Xuankong single-handedly slaying over a dozen Tier Five Corpse Scorpions, it was insignificant in Little Yu King's eyes. Even his subordinate, Jin Zongguang, could accomplish such a feat with ease.

During this venture into the secret realm, Little Yu King had searched more than ten cold pools but had only managed to slay seven or eight Tier Five Poison Corpses, acquiring just three drops of Heavy Water Spiritual Objects. If not for this meager harvest, he might not have even bothered with Lin Xuankong's twelve drops.

After a moment of contemplation, Lin Xuankong looked up at Little Yu King, his expression firm, and said, "A generous reward? I don't need your reward. If you want my Heavy Water Spiritual Objects, then bring treasures of equivalent value for an exchange! Furthermore, I cannot give you all twelve drops. I must keep at least two. Otherwise, the deal is off!"

"How bold!" Hearing this, the Golden Armor Golden Blade Martial Cultivator's face instantly darkened like the bottom of a pot, and his Qi Blood began to circulate rapidly.

Meanwhile, the expressions of Li Baimei, Yan Yunfei, Yuan Butong, and the others changed drastically as they retreated.

Everyone feared being caught in the imminent battle! Li Baimei's face was filled with amazement. This Mu Shiba clearly knows Little Yu King's identity, yet he still dares to speak like that?

"Interesting, truly interesting! Mu Shiba, you do have some courage! Throughout the entire Great Marsh Prefecture, there's likely no second person who would dare speak to me like this. Not even Hua Yanluo and Prefect Liy, who guard the Great Marsh Prefecture, would dare! You are indeed quite interesting! Very well, ten drops it is. As for the resources you want in exchange, how about a Demon Fox Demon Pearl?" Little Yu King suddenly spoke.

He then reached into his robes, casually retrieved a Demon Fox Demon Pearl, and tossed it to Lin Xuankong.

His nonchalant demeanor suggested he viewed it not as a priceless Demon Fox Demon Pearl, but as an insignificant little Glazed Glass bead!

Moreover, by tossing it directly to Lin Xuankong, he displayed absolute confidence, seemingly unafraid that Lin Xuankong might take the Demon Fox Demon Pearl and attack them.

Lin Xuankong caught the Demon Pearl, thinking to himself, Under normal circumstances, one drop of Heavy Water Spiritual Object would be enough for me to advance to the Fifth Layer. With two drops, there would be absolutely no chance of failure!

Given my current lack of understanding of Little Yu King's true strength, it's unwise to engage him immediately. Besides, this Demon Fox Demon Pearl is indeed far more beneficial to me than ten drops of Heavy Water Spiritual Objects. I'm not losing out on this deal!

However, this Little Yu King is excessively arrogant, with an air that demands everyone bow to him. It's truly vexing...

He stroked the Demon Fox Demon Pearl in his hand and stared intently at Little Yu King for a moment. Then, with similar indifference, he tossed ten drops of Heavy Water Spiritual Objects to Little Yu King, turned, and walked out of the canyon. He paid no more heed to the domineering Little Yu King, unwilling to utter even another word to him.

Seeing this, Little Yu King's initially leisurely expression subtly changed, and his brows furrowed.

The Golden Armor Golden Blade Martial Cultivator noticed Little Yu King's change in expression. His own brow twitched, and he hefted his saber, ready to follow, but Little Yu King shook his head slightly. "Let him go."

He placed the Heavy Water Spiritual Objects into his Ghost Frog Pouch and then said coldly to Lin Xuankong's retreating figure, "Mu Shiba, if you're not satisfied, you can come find me anytime! I will keep these ten drops of Heavy Water Spiritual Objects for you until we leave the Ba Mountain Secret Realm. As long as you can defeat my subordinate Jin Zongguang, never mind ten drops of Heavy Water Spiritual Objects, I can give you even more! I just fear you lack the strength!"

After speaking, he raised his eyebrows at Li Baimei and the others nearby. "Those of you who are willing can follow me. Scouting ahead or exploring the next cold pool would be quite useful. My subordinates can naturally ensure your safety!"

Upon hearing this, Li Baimei and the others' eyes lit up. They all clasped their hands, expressing their willingness to join.

They weren't like Lin Xuankong; they lacked the confidence to survive alone in the Ba Mountain Secret Realm for an extended period. Even Li Baimei was in the same predicament. Despite his considerable strength, he had no Zhengyuan Grass left and thus lacked the means to venture out from this area.

In the crowd, only Zheng Yunrui, her hair in buns, furrowed her brow in thought for a moment. She clasped her hands towards Little Yu King in a gesture of apology, then quickly departed in Lin Xuankong's direction.

「Before long,」

Zheng Yunrui caught up with Lin Xuankong on a small hill outside the canyon.

"Heavens! How did you dare speak to Little Yu King like that? My heart nearly leaped out of my chest back there! I always thought that senior, the Conical Hat Guest, who dared to single-handedly challenge the Feng Family, the Guo Family, and the Black Tiger Gang, was incredibly audacious. I never imagined your courage surpasses even his!" Zheng Yunrui exclaimed, her expression still showing lingering fear.

Lin Xuankong shook his head slightly. "If I were truly that bold, I would have fought them just now. Truth be told, my own strength is still insufficient, and I don't fully understand their capabilities. If my strength were truly great enough, why would I have been strong-armed into such a transaction?"

Zheng Yunrui vigorously shook her head, her two hair buns wobbling. "What are you talking about?! That's Little Yu King! Even Elder Hua of the Profound Phoenix Celestial Sect, even the foremost figure of the Great Marsh Prefecture, Prefect Liy, would have to greet him with utmost deference! They would immediately comply with any order he gave, right then and there!"