

War God 181

Chapter 181: Tomb-guarding Divine Beast!

The weather was hot, and the mountains felt even more oppressive. Huang Laoshi was drenched in sweat and felt miserable. He found a rock to sit on, fanning himself with his sleeve while keeping a vigilant eye on his surroundings.

They were deep in the mountains now, and the last thing he wanted was to encounter a wild beast. He carried a machete for protection, but he knew it would be useless against a real beast.

Lin Mu, on the other hand, looked every bit the pampered city boy. Even though he has decent stamina, if we really ran into danger, he'd probably wet his pants in fright. Huang Laoshi couldn't help but be secretly amused at the thought.

Lin Mu surveyed the mountain range, waiting for Huang Laoshi to rest. With his current Cultivation Level, such a small mountain path was a walk in the park. Even the most treacherous places would be like level ground to him. But Huang Laoshi was a mortal, after all.

"Hey, this is really strange," Huang Laoshi said with a puzzled look, slowly getting up to continue toward their destination. "Usually when I come into the mountains, I might not see any beasts, but I can always hear them. This time, though, it's completely silent."

He held the machete in his hand, his heart feeling heavy. The quieter it was, the more abnormal it seemed.

"Mr. Lin, you'd better stick close. If we run into trouble, I can't guarantee I can save you."

However, there was no response from behind.

Huang Laoshi's whole body tensed, and a cold sweat broke out on his skin.

"Mr. Lin?"

He called out again, but still there was no reply. His body went rigid as he turned, clutching the machete tightly and swallowing hard.

SWISH.

A sudden noise from the woods startled Huang Laoshi so badly that he squeezed his eyes shut and swung his machete wildly several times.

"Stay back! Don't come any closer, or I'll cut you down!"

Someone grabbed the machete.

"What are you doing?"

When Huang Laoshi slowly opened his eyes and saw it was Lin Mu, his entire body went limp with relief, and he almost collapsed to the ground.

"Mr. Lin, where did you go? Didn't I tell you to stick close to me?" Huang Laoshi let out a huge sigh of relief, having been scared half to death. He was just glad Lin Mu was alright. If something had really happened, he wouldn't be able to explain it to his nephew, and he might even face a lawsuit. These city people are so shrewd!

Lin Mu frowned. "I've been right behind you the whole time."

"What?" Huang Laoshi's eyes widened. "But just now I..."

"Don't talk!"

Suddenly, Huang Laoshi saw a blur in front of him as something shot out from Mr. Lin's body, and his face went pale with fright.

Lin Mu stepped in front of Huang Laoshi, his sharp gaze scanning the jungle.

Nothing!

Lin Mu's brows furrowed slightly. My senses shouldn't be wrong.

Huang Laoshi gripped his machete, his eyes darting around nervously. He couldn't shake the feeling that something was very wrong with this mountain.

"Be careful. Let's get what we came for and then head back," Lin Mu said, taking the lead.

"Right, right, right!" Huang Laoshi followed closely, feeling completely on edge.

As Lin Mu walked, his gaze swept the surroundings. His brows were knitted tightly as his Divine Sense continuously scanned the dense forest. Just moments ago, he had clearly sensed something approaching, but even with the power of his Divine Sense, he had been unable to pinpoint it. Coupled with Huang Laoshi's odd reaction earlier, Lin Mu felt something was deeply wrong.

Half an hour later, the two were nearly at their destination. Across a ditch, Lin Mu could see several green fruit trees hanging from the cliff ahead. The trees bore a dozen or so green fruits. On one tree, three of the fruits had already turned a deep, date-red color, looking extremely enticing.

Even from more than ten meters away, Lin Mu could smell a peculiar fragrance wafting over.

Green Spirit Fruit! And they're ripe!

Lin Mu was overjoyed, but he also grew more vigilant. Because amidst the fragrance, he could detect a faint wisp of... Corpse Qi.

Why is there Corpse Qi here? And it's moving. It... it seems to be avoiding my Divine Sense!

"Mr. Lin, look! Hundred Fragrance Fruit!" Huang Laoshi pointed to the trees ahead. "We've finally arrived."

All he had to do was get the Hundred Fragrance Fruit, and then he could go home. He'd already made up his mind never to return to Tiger's Lair Mountain again.

Lin Mu's eyes narrowed slightly. "Be careful!" he warned.

With that, Lin Mu slowly walked forward. Huang Laoshi followed closely, unable to hide the excitement on his face.

Lin Mu stopped at the edge of the ditch. It looked like it had been formed by rainwater runoff and wasn't very wide; a simple leap would be enough to cross it.

"There wasn't a ditch here the last time I came," Huang Laoshi said, confused. However, he quickly rationalized, "The weather in the mountains is unpredictable. It probably stormed here last night."

He laughed. "Mr. Lin, why don't you wait here? I'll go pick those Hundred Fragrance Fruits for you."

Before Lin Mu could speak, Huang Laoshi tucked his machete into his belt and leaped over the ditch.

ROAR!

Just as Huang Laoshi was about to land, an angry roar echoed from within the ditch. A huge, furry hand shot out, reaching for him.

"AH!"

Huang Laoshi cried out, his face turning deathly pale. He felt his body go limp, about to be seized by the massive hand.

"Vile creature, how dare you!"

At that moment, a light glinted in Lin Mu's eyes as he pointed a finger, shooting out a sharp ray. Immense sword intent erupted and shot forward.

PFFT!

A flash of sword-light sliced past, severing the hand that was about to seize Huang Laoshi. At the same time, Lin Mu leaped forward, grabbed Huang Laoshi, and pulled him back to safety on the ground.

ROAR!

A ghastly roar erupted, scaring the already petrified Huang Laoshi so badly that he wet his pants.

"Mr... Mr. Lin, what was that thing?"

Huang Laoshi's face was ashen. He swore to the heavens he had never seen such a terrifying hand in his life. It was like the claw of a beast. A beast?

"It's the Tomb-guarding Divine Beast!" Huang Laoshi suddenly screamed, falling to his knees with a thud and kowtowing toward the ditch. "Oh, great Divine Beast, General of Tiger's Lair, I, Huang Laoshi, didn't mean any harm! I have a family to care for, old and young! Please don't blame me!"

Ignoring Huang Laoshi, who was kowtowing and begging for mercy, Lin Mu narrowed his eyes and focused on the severed hand on the ground. Covered with black fur, it didn't look like a hand at all but a claw. The Corpse Qi he had sensed earlier emanated from the owner of this severed hand.

"To think I'd run into a cultivated Zombie here. What a rarity," Lin Mu mused with a light chuckle, no trace of fear in his eyes.

"A Zombie?" Huang Laoshi froze for a moment, then began to tremble like a leaf. "How can Zombies exist in this world? It's too terrifying! I want to go back! I want to go back!"

Lin Mu said indifferently, "If you're not afraid of dying, you can head down the mountain alone right now."

Huang Laoshi fell silent.

By now, the Zombie had already fled underground, and Lin Mu couldn't be bothered to pursue it. What made him curious was the rule of thumb that Spiritual Objects were always guarded by wild beasts. Yet, around this Green Spirit Fruit, there were no beasts to be found—only a lurking Zombie.

It seems this Tiger's Lair Mountain is more dangerous than I imagined.

Chapter 182 Feng Shui Nurtures People, It Can Also Kill!

"I'll pick the Green Spirit Fruit first."

Since the Zombie had already fled, Lin Mu wanted no further complications. On the fruit tree, besides the unripe green ones, were three vividly red fruits emanating an enticing, sweet fragrance. A slight smile touched Lin Mu's lips; three were enough.

He reached out, but instead of touching a fruit with his hand, he enveloped it in Spiritual Energy to prevent its essence from dissipating. Fruits preserved this way retained superior medicinal properties. After placing the three Green Spirit Fruits into the wooden box he had brought, Lin Mu felt a deep sense of satisfaction. The task was half-complete. All that remained was to find the Beauty Flower, which grew near the Green Spirit Fruit, and he would have all the main ingredients for the Ever Youth Pill.

Meanwhile, Huang Laoshi had finished kowtowing. He stood up, looking both embarrassed and terrified. "Mr. Lin, how about... how about we head back first, okay?"

He was utterly frightened. Whether that creature was a Tomb-guarding Divine Beast or a Zombie, it was something Huang Laoshi had only heard stories about. Seeing one in the flesh had completely shattered his perception of the world and filled him with a profound, primal fear.

Lin Mu frowned. "I haven't finished what I came for. We can't leave yet."

"But... this place is too dangerous!" Huang Laoshi wailed. "Didn't you see how terrifying that thing was?"

Lin Mu chuckled. "What are you afraid of with me here?"

With you here? You can't even protect yourself, and you're asking me what I'm afraid of? Huang Laoshi thought frantically. He hadn't seen Lin Mu make a move; he assumed Lin Mu had only pulled him back. As for how the Zombie's hand got severed, wasn't it because he himself had flailed his chopper around?

Huang Laoshi glanced down. The chopper was still securely fastened to his waist. And with his strength, could he really have cut through a Zombie's hand? The thought only amplified his panic. He didn't want to stay here a second longer.

"Mr. Lin, I'll be honest with you. You can keep the rest of the money, but I have to go down the mountain now!" Huang Laoshi glanced at the horizon. Dusk was settling in, and it would soon be dark. Descending the mountain after nightfall would be a fool's errand.

Lin Mu's brow furrowed. "Are you determined to leave?"

Huang Laoshi nodded firmly. "Yes. I have to go down now. This mountain is too dangerous. I don't ever want to come back."

"But won't it be dangerous for you to go down alone?" Lin Mu countered. "Stay with me, and I'll ensure your safety."

"Oh, Mr. Lin, I'm just a simple, honest man from the mountains! I have a wife and family at home. If something happens to me, what will they do?" As Huang Laoshi spoke, he began to weep. Seeing a man in his fifties squatting on the ground and sobbing gave Lin Mu a headache.

"In that case, I won't force you. You can go."

Huang Laoshi looked up. "You're not leaving?"

Lin Mu shook his head. "My business isn't finished. I can't leave yet."

"You..." Huang Laoshi was so exasperated he was speechless. How can this person be so oblivious to the danger? Ah, forget it. I must have owed him in a past life.

He pushed himself to his feet, gripped his chopper tightly, and said through gritted teeth, "Fine. Leaving you alone in these mountains isn't something we mountain folk do. I'll stay and keep you company." While his words sounded noble, the bigger reason was that he was terrified to go down the mountain by himself.

Lin Mu smiled slightly. "Don't worry. You'll be glad you made this choice."

"Let's hope so," Huang Laoshi muttered.

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"Master Feng, have you found it yet?"

On a path winding up Tiger's Lair Mountain, a group of people was slowly making their ascent. A woman in hiking gear carefully posed the question to an old man in front of her who was holding a Compass. The elder wore a traditional Tang suit and sported a goatee, giving him the distinct air of a Taoist immortal.

Hearing her, Master Feng glanced at the needle on his Compass and replied, "Patience, Miss Huang. We are almost there. Tiger's Lair Mountain possesses an excellent geographical location and Feng Shui configuration. However, your ancestors have been buried here for over two hundred years. Finding the exact location requires some effort."

A young man nearby added with a grin, "Don't you worry, Miss Huang. My master is a man of profound abilities, whose skill rivals creation itself. He will certainly locate your ancestral burial site."

Huang Ning frowned. "Master Feng, are you certain this black patch on my back was caused by the destruction of my ancestral grave?"

Two years ago, a black patch had appeared on Huang Ning's back. Initially no larger than a fingernail, it was neither painful nor itchy, so she paid it little mind. But after trying numerous medicines, she found it not only failed to improve but had actually grown. Now, it was the size of her palm.

Eventually, her family's elders sought out Master Feng, a renowned Feng Shui master from Harbor Island. He diagnosed it as a "sand spot," an affliction caused by the desecration of her ancestral grave's Feng Shui. Thus, Huang Ning accompanied Master Feng to Tiger's Lair Mountain to find the grave and seek a solution.

Master Feng continued to survey the terrain, following the direction his Compass needle pointed. "People today only know that Feng Shui can nourish a person, but they are unaware that it can also kill."

He smiled proudly. "The sand spot on your back, Miss Huang, is known in the study of Feng Shui as 'grave poison.' It means the ancestral grave has been desecrated, turning what was once a fine Dragon's Lair into an Ominous Lair. With the ancestral foundation damaged, you, as a direct descendant of the Huang Family, are naturally affected."

Huang Ning's elegant brows knitted together. Master Feng's theories seemed to challenge everything she knew. Still, having witnessed some of his skills, she said, "Once we find the ancestral grave, I will be counting on you, Master Feng."

Master Feng stroked his beard and smiled. "Rest assured, Miss Huang. Your grandfather and I are old friends. At his request, I will certainly help you resolve this matter."

Yan Lun chimed in with a smile, "Miss Huang, you can relax. For my master, a task like this is a trivial matter."

Huang Ning's ancestors came from a long line of prominent families. She had heard that one of them was even a General, buried right here on Tiger's Lair Mountain. Later, circumstances forced her ancestors to travel by sea and settle overseas, and they rarely returned to their homeland. If not for the sand spot on her back, she would never have known her lineage originated from Tiger Residence Village.

Huang Ning sighed softly. Why did something like this have to happen to her? Back on Harbor Island, the Huang Family was a major household, and she was their prized jewel, a true heir to generational wealth.

But ever since the sand spot appeared, the family business had plummeted, and her own health had steadily declined. Master Feng had warned that if this issue wasn't resolved, the Huang Family could slowly wither away into obscurity.

The thought made Huang Ning's face turn pale. At her side, Yan Lun offered quiet words of comfort, his undisguised adoration for her evident in his tone. But Huang Ning was in no mood to pay him any attention, her mind consumed with finding a solution as quickly as possible.

Suddenly, Master Feng let out a hearty laugh.

"At last, I've found it!"

Huang Ning's spirits lifted. Following his gaze, she saw a depression in the mountainside not far ahead. There, a solitary grave mound was visible. The moment she saw it, Huang Ning knew. This was her family's ancestral grave. This was the reason she had come.

Chapter 183: When Dragons Wrestle with Tigers, One is Bound to Get Hurt!

"At last, we've found it."

A smile touched Huang Ning's lips. Heaven have mercy. Since she was a child, she had always traveled in luxury cars or by plane; this was the first time she had ever walked such a long mountain path. Moreover, they had already been wandering around in the mountains for several hours.

"Master Feng, let's quickly get this settled and then head down the mountain," she urged.

For some reason, the longer she stayed in the mountains, the more uneasy Huang Ning felt. It was already afternoon, and it wouldn't be long before dark.

Master Feng chuckled. "Miss Huang, don't rush. We have enough time."

As long as he found the Huang Family Ancestral Grave, it wouldn't take much time for a man of his skill to help the tomb's occupant relocate to an auspicious new feng shui site for reburial.

"Thank you for your trouble, Master Feng."

A look of happiness appeared on Huang Ning's face. With this issue resolved, not only would the dark spots on her skin disappear, but the family business could also recover. It was a significant accomplishment for her and the family alike, one that would certainly be recorded in the family's book of merits.

"Let's pick up the pace," she said. "We can head down once we're done here."

The group hurried toward the gravesite.

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Although he had agreed to stay, Huang Laoshi still felt deeply unnerved. Tiger's Lair Mountain was simply too bizarre. The presence of a Zombie, and the possible existence of a Tomb-guarding Divine Beast, kept his heart in a constant state of suspense.

"Mr. Lin, what are you searching for?" Huang Laoshi asked. He had noticed that ever since picking the fruit, Lin Mu had been scouring the area, carefully parting clumps of grass to look for something.

How can it not be here? Lin Mu frowned slightly, filled with confusion. Logically, the Beauty Flower and the Hundred Fragrance Fruit grew no more than a hundred meters apart, sometimes even in the same spot. But despite expanding his search area, Lin Mu still couldn't find the Beauty Flower.

Suddenly, Lin Mu's gaze returned to the ditch, a strange light flashing in his eyes.

Could it be...?

A sense of alarm struck Lin Mu. He felt that things were spiraling beyond his expectations. He walked to the edge of the ditch and scrutinized it.

At first glance, the ditch seemed to have been carved out by rainwater, but closer inspection revealed that wasn't the case. The weeds on both sides were bent in one direction—strangely, upward. If it were from rainwater, they should have been pushed downward. This was highly abnormal.

Soil had been churned up, and several thicker branches were snapped. If it had truly rained, it was impossible that only this single ditch would have been left behind. It was more like the trail left by a large reptile.

Lin Mu spread his Divine Sense, searching carefully within the ditch.

"Found it!"

Lin Mu's eyes lit up. He bent down and picked up a piece of something white.

Snakeskin?

As if struck by a thought, Lin Mu turned to survey his surroundings. The mountain's terrain rose and fell, but from this vantage point, the entirety of Tiger's Lair Mountain was visible.

"When the Dragon coils and the Tiger crouches, Yin and Yang clash, and one must suffer!"

After reciting these words, Lin Mu looked back at the Green Spirit Fruit tree. He finally understood why only three Green Spirit Fruits had matured while the rest were not only unripe but seemed to have lost a significant amount of Spiritual Energy.

So that's what happened. Its Spiritual Energy was siphoned away, and the Beauty Flower was stolen.

The Green Spirit Fruit tree grew toward the sun, absorbing the pure yang essence of the heavens. The Beauty Flower, however, grew in the shade, absorbing the essence of the moon. That so-called "dragon" was the thief who had stolen the Beauty Flower, which had amassed the moon's essence, in an attempt to achieve a breakthrough. This wasn't a ditch at all, but a trail left behind by the creature as it moved.

"Follow me."

Lin Mu began to follow the trail upward, hoping to retrieve the Beauty Flower before the creature could consume it. Huang Laoshi was completely baffled, but he hurried to keep up.

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"What's going on here?"

The scene before them puzzled Huang Ning and the others. Within a ten-meter radius around the entire gravesite, not a single blade of grass grew, creating a desolate and withered scene. Compared to the lush greenery elsewhere, this area was jarringly out of place.

Yan Lun suggested, "Maybe the villagers from Tiger Residence Village chopped it down for firewood or burned it."

Huang Ning shook her head. "Impossible. Tiger's Lair Mountain is huge. They wouldn't come all the way here to chop wood. As for burning it, why would they burn a perfect circle like this?" Yan Lun was suddenly at a loss for words, looking embarrassed.

With a stern expression, Master Feng stepped forward, dug into the soil in front of the tomb, and lifted a pinch to his nose to sniff.

"This is wrong!" he exclaimed. "This ancestral grave has been tampered with. It could be tomb robbers!"

The ancestral grave had been robbed?

Huang Ning was shocked—this was a major issue. A middle-aged man beside her looked particularly grim. "Master Feng, are you sure you're not mistaken?"

He was the mayor of Qinxian Town. If the Huang Family Ancestral Grave had been robbed on his watch, he would be held responsible. Others might not know who was buried here, but he knew perfectly well. This was the tomb of General Huang Weihu. And Huang Ning was his descendant!

"What, are you questioning my master?" Yan Lun, still annoyed from his earlier exchange with Huang Ning, bristled. How dare the mayor of Qinxian Town suggest his master was wrong?

The mayor realized his slip of the tongue and quickly said, "That's not what I meant. It's just that no one has ever dared to rob a grave on Tiger's Lair Mountain."

"We'll know soon enough," Master Feng declared. He pointed to a spot. "Dig here, but be careful not to go too deep."

The men the mayor had brought, along with Huang Ning's bodyguards, immediately complied. As they dug, Master Feng's expression grew even darker.

He pointed at the freshly exposed earth. "The Huang Family Ancestral Grave is at least two hundred years old, but this soil is so fresh, as if it was just turned over. It even has a foul, fishy stench."

Following Master Feng's example, Huang Ning took a pinch of the soil and sniffed it.

"UGH!"

Instantly, the repugnant odor made her retch. "It's so foul!"

Master Feng's face was grim. He began searching around the grave, the compass in his hand spinning wildly, its needle unable to settle. Suddenly, the needle jerked to a stop. Master Feng hurried toward a particular spot on the gravesite. When he saw what was behind the tomb—toppled weeds and a shattered, vine-entwined stone—he cried out in alarm.

"The Dragon coils where the Tiger should crouch! The feng shui is in chaos!"

"Master Feng, what does that mean, 'The Dragon coils where the Tiger should crouch'?" Huang Ning asked, fighting back her nausea.

Master Feng sighed. "As the saying goes, a proper feng shui site requires the Azure Dragon, White Tiger, Vermilion Bird, and Black Tortoise to preside over the four directions. They both sustain and restrain one another, coexisting without interference. Your ancestor chose an excellent dragon's lair for this grave. Furthermore, as a Martial General, he was blessed by the White Tiger's spirit, which should have protected his descendants."

Pointing at the shattered stone, he continued, "However, because the grave was robbed, the White Tiger's influence was broken, and the Azure Dragon seized the opportunity to dominate."

"When the Dragon and Tiger fight, one is sure to be injured. In this case, the Azure Dragon was clearly the victor. The White Tiger met a tragic end, and the resulting malevolent energy would inevitably bring harm to the descendants."

Master Feng brushed aside the weeds, revealing a dark, deep hole.

"Look. This is the robbers' tunnel."

The mayor turned deathly pale, breaking out in a cold sweat.

Chapter 184: If You Don't Want to Die, Don't Move!

"Miss Huang, please rest assured. After I return, I will conduct a stringent investigation and ensure that the Huang Family receives a proper explanation!"

The town mayor felt like he could just die.

These despicable tomb raiders! Of all the tombs to rob, they had to choose the ancestral tomb of the Huang Family.

The Huang Family was a powerful household on Harbor Island. Although their family businesses were overseas, their influence on the Mainland was not to be underestimated. Forget a small-town mayor like him; even the city mayor would struggle to answer for this.

"Hmph!" Huang Ning snorted coldly. "We'll discuss that later. The priority right now is to see if this situation can be resolved."

"Miss Huang is right, absolutely right," the mayor said, wiping away a cold sweat. He then turned respectfully to Master Feng. "Master Feng, we'll be counting on you."

Master Feng nodded silently and spoke gravely, "The ancestral tomb has been plundered and the feng shui disrupted. Now the Azure Dragon is ascendant while the White Tiger is in decline. To resolve this, we must enter the tomb for a closer look."

"This..." The town mayor gritted his teeth. "I will accompany you, Master!"

The incident had occurred on his turf, giving him an inescapable responsibility. If he dared not go down, the Huang Family would certainly not spare him.

"I'm definitely going down!" Huang Ning declared with determination.

Yan Lun looked at the thief's hole and felt a chill run down his spine. "Maybe... I shouldn't go down?"

Noticing Huang Ning's disdainful expression, Yan Lun quickly added, "I mean, if you all go down, it's good to have someone up here as backup, just in case something happens."

Master Feng's brows furrowed slightly as he nodded. "I think that's a good idea. Better to be safe than sorry."

Of course, Huang Ning wasn't going to object. Yan Lun breathed a quiet sigh of relief.

"Let's go," Master Feng said, and was about to climb into the thief's hole.

"Wait! You can't go down!"

A sudden voice rang out, startling everyone.

"Who?!" Frightened, Yan Lun ducked behind a bodyguard. Realizing how embarrassing that looked, he quickly coughed twice and moved to stand next to Huang Ning.

Huang Ning pursed her lips and looked toward the woods. Two figures emerged from the trees: Lin Mu and Huang Laoshi.

"Who are you? What are you doing here?" the town mayor immediately stepped forward, pointing at Lin Mu.

Huang Ning's bodyguards watched the two newcomers with vigilance, looking as if they were ready to subdue them at a single word.

"Wait, wait! Mayor Fang, it's me." Huang Laoshi clearly recognized the mayor and jogged over. "I'm Huang Laoshi from Tiger Residence Village. I visited you last year when my son started school in town."

Mayor Fang frowned, having no recollection of this Huang Laoshi. He met countless people every day, and a simple-looking villager like this man had left no impression on him. However, Mayor Fang didn't let it show. Instead, he snapped, "What are you doing here?"

Huang Laoshi immediately bowed obsequiously. "It's like this, Mayor Fang. I was accompanying Mr. Lin up the mountain to pick some fruit, and we just happened to..."

Mayor Fang waved him off. "If you're done picking fruit, then hurry down the mountain. Don't you know how dangerous it is here?" As for Lin Mu, he was completely ignored.

"Yes, yes, of course." Huang Laoshi turned his head and whispered to Lin Mu, "Mr. Lin, these people are clearly important. We should leave quickly and not meddle in their affairs."

Seeing Mayor Fang and the others preparing to enter the thief's hole, Lin Mu spoke up. "If you don't want to die, you'd better not go in there."

"Kid, what nonsense are you spouting?" At that moment, Yan Lun seized the chance to display his manliness. He stepped in front of Huang Ning, pointed at Lin Mu, and snarled, "Believe it or not, I'll smash your mouth in!"

Lin Mu frowned slightly. Just as he was about to speak, Master Feng interjected, "Yan Lun!"

Yan Lun immediately fell silent.

Master Feng stepped forward. Looking at Lin Mu, he asked, "May I ask for the reasoning behind your words, young friend?"

Lin Mu pointed at the thief's hole. "The dragon and tiger are in conflict, and the entire feng shui arrangement has been broken. What was once an auspicious burial site has now become a place of extreme danger. If you go down like this, one wrong move could lead to your complete annihilation."

Lin Mu was putting it mildly. If these people went down there as they were, none of them would make it out alive.

"Nonsense!" Yan Lun erupted in fury. "What do you know? With my master here, it doesn't matter how dangerous the place is! We'll be perfectly safe!"

Huang Ning also had a look of disdain. This guy who just popped out of nowhere really doesn't know how to talk, does he?

Master Feng, however, fell silent for a moment before letting out a sudden laugh. "Thank you for the warning, young friend. But I, too, have some small knowledge of the feng shui arts. A trivial matter such as this is beneath my notice."

"Let's go." After speaking, Master Feng gestured to the others and entered the thief's hole.

Lin Mu frowned slightly but said nothing more. If they want to go in there to die, then let them.

"Mr. Lin, let's go," Huang Laoshi said nervously. He had been worried the others would cause trouble for Lin Mu. You can't just say things like that! If they got angry, Mayor Fang definitely wouldn't let us off the hook either. All Huang Laoshi wanted now was to leave this place as quickly as possible.

"Let's wait a little longer." Lin Mu gave a slight smile, found a spot to sit, and settled in as if waiting for something.

Helpless, Huang Laoshi could only stay with him.

Yan Lun was even more displeased to see that Lin Mu hadn't left. He shot a look at the two bodyguards who had remained with him, and they all watched Lin Mu warily.

As time passed, the sky began to darken. It wouldn't be long before night fell.

Not long after Huang Ning's group had entered the tomb, a series of shrill screams and a bizarre roar suddenly erupted from within.

"A monster!"

A figure scrambled frantically out of the thief's hole, a look of pure terror on his face as if he had just witnessed something unimaginably horrifying.

It was Mayor Fang!

"What happened in there?" Yan Lun's expression changed as he rushed forward to ask.

Mayor Fang was clearly terrified out of his wits. He stammered, "Snake... a huge snake... a monster... It was terrifying!"

"Where is my master? Where is Miss Huang?" Yan Lun demanded, grabbing Mayor Fang's arm.

"They... they're still down there," Mayor Fang said, then burst into tears, his voice choked with the terror from his ordeal and the lingering fear of a survivor.

"You..." Yan Lun flew into a rage, shocked that Mayor Fang had run out alone.

Hearing that Miss Huang was in danger, the two Huang Family bodyguards didn't dare to delay for a second. They charged straight for the opening.

"Wait," Lin Mu spoke up again. "Going down there like that is just sending yourselves to your deaths."

The two bodyguards exchanged a look, then one of them clenched his jaw. "Thank you for the warning, but the Miss is still down there. We have to go in!"

Lin Mu sighed, slapped his thigh, and stood up. "Alright, then. I'll go in with you."

"Mr. Lin!" Huang Laoshi cried out in shock. That's a tomb! It's terrifying!

Mayor Fang and Yan Lun were also astonished. This seemingly ordinary guy is actually going into the tomb?

Lin Mu paid them no mind and started walking toward the tomb entrance.

As he passed Yan Lun, he said coolly, "If you don't want to die, stay right here and don't move."

Yan Lun froze.

Chapter 185: Fierce Battle with the Python!

The thief's tunnel was not large; one had to stoop to barely make it through. Inside was pitch-black, and a faint, putrid stench was discernible in the air. Lin Mu, with his excellent vision, was hardly affected. However, he could hear intermittent roars and growls coming from deep within the tunnel.

Worried about Miss Huang's safety, the two bodyguards quickened their pace and rushed into the tomb. Lin Mu followed suit.

"ROAR!"

A furious roar, accompanied by screams and angry shouts, echoed from inside the tomb, signaling a fight.

"Miss Huang, you must hurry and leave!" It was Master Feng's voice, laced with urgency and pain.

"Beast! I'll fight you to the death!"

A few minutes later, following a final, piercing scream, the sounds of battle ceased. The thick scent of blood drifted out into the air. Realizing something was wrong, Lin Mu sped up once more. In the next moment, he appeared inside a tomb chamber.

The spacious chamber was lined with numerous burial artifacts, including stone oxen and horses, as well as many terracotta warriors holding bows and shields, all in a state of decay. None of this caught Lin Mu's attention. His gaze was fixed on a tightly shut Stone Gate at one end of the chamber, from which the roars were emanating.

Huang Ning was slumped on the ground, disheveled and covered in blood and dirt, looking utterly wretched. She shivered uncontrollably, clearly still in a state of shock. Beside her lay half of a mangled body, as if it had been gnawed on by some creature. The scene was gruesome and terrifying.

"Miss!"

Seeing her in this state, the two bodyguards rushed forward, which only startled Huang Ning further. She brandished a dagger, waving it wildly.

"Ah, don't come any closer!"

For a moment, the two bodyguards dared not approach. At that moment, Lin Mu stepped forward, grabbed Huang Ning's wrist, and gently tapped her on the head with his other hand.

"What are you doing!" the two bodyguards roared, ready to attack.

Lin Mu spoke nonchalantly, "She's been terrified and invaded by Yin Qi. If you don't disperse the Yin Qi in her body, it won't be long before you're collecting her corpse."

Immediately, the two bodyguards witnessed a shocking sight. As Lin Mu's palm descended, a golden radiance bloomed, and a black mist billowed from the top of Huang Ning's head.

"This is..."

The two bodyguards exchanged a look, seeing the utter shock in each other's eyes. The mist bizarrely took the shape of a serpent and a tiger tangled together, creating a terrifying image. However, as soon as this mist was expelled from Huang Ning's body, it met the golden light and slowly dissipated like snow in the spring sun.

"Ugh..."

With a soft groan, Huang Ning's body went limp and she collapsed to the ground. She opened her eyes, saw Lin Mu standing before her, and said weakly, "Thank... thank you."

Lin Mu withdrew his hand and stated flatly, "It seems this tomb belongs to your ancestor. Its feng shui was destroyed, and the spirit within intends to use your bloodline to be reborn."

Although Huang Ning couldn't understand what Lin Mu was saying, her recent ordeal had clearly traumatized her, and she began to tremble. "Save me, please save me! I'll pay you any amount of money," she pleaded, clinging to Lin Mu's hand as if it were a lifeline.

Lin Mu gently shook his hand free. Gazing at the Stone Gate, he asked, "Is that thing behind that door?"

Huang Ning scrambled to her feet and explained hurriedly, "As soon as we entered, a giant serpent attacked. It killed two of my bodyguards. Master Feng held it off and pushed me out." Then she asked frantically, "Mr. Lin, I know you're an expert. Could you please save Master Feng?"

Master Feng held a high status back on Harbor Island, and she didn't want anything to happen to him.

"Miss, this Stone Gate is too solid. It won't open." One of the bodyguards approached with a grave expression. He had just inspected the gate and found its mechanism destroyed. Conventional methods would be useless.

"Then what do we do?" Huang Ning grew extremely anxious. If she couldn't open the Stone Gate, she couldn't enter the main tomb chamber. If she couldn't find her ancestor's coffin, the sand spots on her body would never be cured.

"Let me try."

Lin Mu slowly stepped forward and stood before the Stone Gate. The two bodyguards, startled, took a few steps back to shield Huang Ning. This man's identity was mysterious and his power was unfathomable. He was definitely no ordinary person, and coupled with his unclear motives, they had to remain vigilant.

Lin Mu ignored them, placing his palm on the Stone Gate. A frigid chill traveled up his arm. His brow twitched as he unleashed a burst of spiritual power.

BOOM!

With a deafening roar, the heavy, sturdy Stone Gate exploded into pieces.

WHOOSH!

A foul gust of wind, thick with the smell of blood and Yin Qi, rushed toward them. Lin Mu waved a hand, and the wind was forced back.

"ROAR!"

At that moment, a pair of crimson eyes, as large as lanterns, locked onto Lin Mu. It was a python as thick as a man's thigh, its body pitch-black and covered in a layer of hard, faintly glimmering scales.

Hm, has it already started transforming into a Jiao? Lin Mu raised an eyebrow in surprise.

"Young man, be careful!" Master Feng's anxious and worried voice echoed from the darkness of the inner chamber. "This python has begun its transformation into a Jiao! Its strength is on par with a pinnacle Martial Arts Grandmaster!" His voice was strained with pain, a clear sign of severe injury.

Lin Mu simply smiled. Showing no fear, he raised his arm and threw a punch.

BANG!

Golden light exploded from his fist. The punch, brimming with power and weight, landed squarely on the python's head.

"ROAR!"

The python's massive body slammed against the chamber wall. Shaking its head, it coiled up, its cold eyes fixed intently on Lin Mu.

A mere beast, daring to usurp the rightful owner's nest. With his hands clasped behind his back, Lin Mu stepped into the tomb chamber.

Huang Ning and the two bodyguards exchanged a look, their eyes wide with disbelief and awe.

This guy is that strong? He knocked back that python with a single punch?

Beyond her shock, Huang Ning's eyes filled with delight. With Lin Mu here, the purpose of her trip was as good as accomplished.

In a corner of the tomb chamber, an old man sat cross-legged on the ground. He held a Compass that emitted a faint light, which formed a protective barrier around him. It was this barrier that had allowed him to hold on until Lin Mu's arrival. Even so, Master Feng was gravely injured. His face was pale, and a large patch of blood stained his chest.

"Young man, this python is no simple creature. You must be careful," Master Feng warned, looking at Lin Mu with no small amount of shock. He had assumed Lin Mu was just an ordinary person, never imagining his strength would be so immense. Having lived for so long, Master Feng had to admit he had completely misjudged the young man.

"A mere reptile, unworthy of mention!" Lin Mu's lips curved into a slight smirk as he looked at the python. "You stole my Beauty Flower," he muttered, "you're not getting away!"

As his words fell, Lin Mu took a sudden step forward, and the entire tomb chamber trembled violently.

Chapter 186: Trouble Strikes Again!

"Roar!"

The giant python clearly knew that the newcomer was extremely powerful and didn't dare to ignore them, choosing to strike first. A dark shadow suddenly lashed out at Lin Mu, only to be stamped to the ground under his foot.

BOOM! BOOM!

The entire tomb chamber shook as if there were an earthquake. Huang Ning nearly lost her footing, her pretty face paling as she stared at Lin Mu in shock. Is this guy even human?

Even though the two bodyguards had undergone special training, their limbs now felt like jelly and their mouths were parched.

"Roar!"

Having missed, the coiled python suddenly straightened, opening its massive, blood-red jaws to bite at Lin Mu. A foul gust of wind erupted, its mouth dripping with saliva. The stench alone was enough to knock an ordinary person unconscious, leaving them severely ill afterward.

Lin Mu, though unconcerned, had no desire to be touched by something so disgusting. He lifted his foot and kicked.

THUD!

The kick landed squarely on the giant python, sending it flying.

"Roar!"

The giant python wailed, but it quickly coiled up again and rushed toward Lin Mu.

This is endless! Lin Mu snorted coldly, preparing to use his Infinity Sword Qi to slay the python. However, at that very moment, the python suddenly changed direction and charged toward Master Feng in the corner.

Not good! Master Feng was aghast. He knew his current protective shield was not enough to protect him. He quickly formed a series of dazzling hand seals, creating a large cyan net in front of him.

"Go!" Master Feng roared, pushing forward with both hands to cast the net over the python's head.

"Roar!"

The giant python crashed right into the net, letting out an angry bellow.

"Contract!" Master Feng was overjoyed. His fingers flew through more spells as the net rapidly shrank, binding the giant python tightly.

"HISS! HISS! HISS!"

As the net tightened, a foul mist emanated from the giant python's body, and it struggled wildly in pain. But no matter how hard it thrashed, it couldn't break free.

Master Feng let out a sigh of relief, a smile appearing on his face.

"Well done, Master Feng!" Huang Ning shouted, her face filled with excitement.

Master Feng smiled faintly, put away his Compass, and slowly stood up.

CRACK!

At that moment, a mocking, human-like gleam appeared in the giant python's eyes. It contracted its body and instantly burst the net open.

"Not good, run!" Master Feng's face changed dramatically. As soon as the words left his mouth, a dark shadow accompanied by a formidable presence whistled through the air and slammed into him.

PUH!

Master Feng spat out a mouthful of blood. His body slammed heavily against the wall before he slumped to the ground, his breathing faint.

"Roar!"

Just as the giant python had succeeded and was about to devour Master Feng in one fell swoop, a sharp gleam of light suddenly flashed through the tomb chamber.

"Roar!"

Terror filled the giant python's eyes. It no longer had time to devour Master Feng. With a twist of its body, it darted toward a corner.

"Trying to run?" A cold voice rang out as an impossibly sharp Sword Qi howled forth and slashed down.

SLASH!

Following a piercing shriek, black blood sprayed into the air, and a severed python tail landed on the tomb chamber floor. The rest of the creature had already vanished into a hole in the wall.

Huang Ning and the others could only stare, their minds completely blank. The giant python that even Master Feng couldn't handle had just had its tail severed by Lin Mu? Even if the python wasn't dead, it had to be gravely injured.

Lin Mu paid them no mind. He walked forward, bent down to pick something up from a corner of the tomb, and tucked it inside his robes.

"Master Feng, what should we do now..." Huang Ning's expression was a whirlwind of emotions. The strange splotches on her body had not been cured, and her mission here was incomplete. To make matters worse, her group had suffered heavy losses, and even Master Feng was seriously injured. She was extremely unwilling to accept this outcome.

Master Feng sighed, his voice full of resignation. "Forget it. Perhaps this is simply your fate."

Hearing this, Huang Ning's expression fell. She clenched her teeth, walked over to Lin Mu, and bowed a full ninety degrees. "Master Lin, we were blind before. I implore you, for the sake of the Huang Family, please help me this one time."

"Miss!" The two bodyguards cried out in shock and moved to help her up, but she pushed them away. This is my last chance!

Lin Mu shook his head. "That's your problem. It has nothing to do with me." He had achieved his goal and gotten what he came for. It was time to leave.

Seeing that he was about to leave, Huang Ning's expression changed drastically. She said quickly, "I can give you money! A lot of money! As long as you save my life, I guarantee you a life of wealth and luxury!" To a young lady of her status, there was no problem that money couldn't solve. If there was, it just meant the amount wasn't enough. Lin Mu is just posturing to demand a higher price.

"Five million to help me this once!" Huang Ning suddenly beamed. "With your strength, a small matter like this is a piece of cake for you. Not only will you get several million, but you will also earn a favor from the Huang Family. What's not to like?"

Master Feng's expression changed slightly when he heard this. He had only received a symbolic one million for this entire trip. Yet, Huang Ning was promising this young man five million, plus a favor from the Huang Family.

However, just when Huang Ning was confident Lin Mu would agree, he simply shook his head and said, "A favor from the Huang Family is of no interest to me."

Huang Ning's face changed abruptly. "Are you really going to stand by and watch me die?" she asked coldly.

Lin Mu suddenly laughed. "We are strangers. Why should I save you?"

"Because I'm..."

Lin Mu raised a hand, cutting her off. "Don't give me that 'I'm a woman, so you must help me' nonsense. And don't even think about threatening me. In all my life, threats are what I fear the least!"

Huang Ning was used to being spoiled and flattered; everyone had always catered to her whims. That attitude was useless against Lin Mu.

Master Feng, having recovered a little, bowed to Lin Mu. "Young friend, please don't take offense. You have your reasons for not acting, and we will not force you."

"But..." Huang Ning started to protest, but Master Feng gave her a slight shake of his head.

Huang Ning snorted, her gaze toward Lin Mu turning icy. The gratitude she felt for him saving her life earlier was completely forgotten.

Lin Mu couldn't be bothered with the woman. It wasn't worth arguing with someone so conceited.

"Let's go," Master Feng sighed and began to lead the way.

However, just as they stepped out of the tomb chamber, the unexpected happened again.

RUMBLE!

"Roar!"

The ground shook violently, accompanied by the giant python's piercing, desperate roar. In the blink of an eye, the commotion vanished.

Lin Mu, however, wore a surprised expression as he looked toward a specific spot. It was a passage leading deeper into the tomb, from which the sound of slow, deliberate footsteps began to emerge.

Chapter 187: The Real Me Is Here!

CREAK! CREAK!

Heavy footsteps and chewing sounds echoed from the passage, making them all the more spine-chilling in the gloomy, terrifying tomb chamber.

Huang Ning's face turned pale as she trembled, hiding behind a bodyguard.

Master Feng, however, took a step forward. He drew his Compass and watched the passage warily.

THUD!

A foot slammed down, creating a small pit in the hard floor. The newcomer was a tall figure completely clad in tattered armor. Most shockingly, he held a thick, rust-streaked Long Spear. Impaled on it was the very same giant python from before, still writhing and wailing.

THUD!

He planted the Long Spear into the ground. Then, with one hand, he ripped off a chunk of the snake's flesh and began chewing it vigorously, producing a sickening, crunching sound.

This horrifying scene made Huang Ning's face turn ashen, and a wave of nausea rose in her throat.

"What is that thing?" a bodyguard yelled out, his voice tinged with terror. The giant python had been frightening enough, but now this snake-eating monster had appeared.

Because the creature was encased in armor, they couldn't make out its appearance. Master Feng's expression, however, turned extremely grave.

"Who are you?!" Master Feng clenched his teeth, struggling to control the Compass in his hands, for its needle was spinning wildly.

"Who am I?" The figure paused, its voice cold and hoarse. "Who... exactly am I?"

Muttering to itself, the creature suddenly shook its arm. The giant python on its Long Spear instantly exploded into a spray of minced flesh that splattered everywhere.

"Ah!" Huang Ning screamed, then quickly clapped a hand over her mouth. She had seen the monstrous being staring intently at her. It even seemed to... lick its lips.

"Such wonderful, fresh blood," the hoarse voice rasped as the figure began to walk toward Huang Ning.

"All of you, run! I'll hold it off!" a bodyguard roared, his eyes fierce as he charged forward to block the monster.

Before Huang Ning and the others could even react, the monster opened its mouth. A cloud of green mist shot toward the bodyguard. The man only had time for a single, horrifying scream before he melted into a pool of pus and blood, leaving not even a sliver of bone behind.

"This is bad! It's Corpse Poison!" Master Feng's face fell. He stumbled back two steps, staring at the monster in horror. "It's a Zombie!"

"How can a Zombie talk?" Huang Ning asked, her voice trembling.

For a moment, Master Feng was speechless.

However, Lin Mu slowly began to speak. "It's nothing but a beast whose Divine Soul is being controlled by another. It doesn't even qualify as a Zombie."

At Lin Mu's words, everyone turned to look at him.

The creature also cocked its head to inspect Lin Mu. As if suddenly remembering something, it said in its cold voice, "So it was you who severed my arm. To think you'd dare to return!"

As soon as it finished speaking, the creature let out a low growl and thrust the Long Spear in its hand toward Lin Mu.

Lin Mu's expression remained unchanged. He simply raised a hand and threw a punch.

THUD!

His fist smashed into the Long Spear, knocking the tip slightly aside. Lin Mu instantly took two steps forward, his fists a blur.

THUD! THUD! THUD!

The monster retreated step by step, letting out furious roars.

BANG!

With one final punch from Lin Mu, the Long Spear in the monster's hand snapped in two.

"You're courting death!" Enraged, the monster gripped the two halves of the broken spear. It ignored Lin Mu and charged toward Master Feng and the others.

"You dare!" Master Feng shouted. He bit his finger and smeared the blood across his Compass.
"Limitless Heaven and Earth, lend me the power of the cosmos! Swiftly, as the law dictates! Decree!"

As Master Feng's last word fell, the Compass erupted in a brilliant light. A golden beam shot out, expanding in all directions.

"Hmph?" The monster sounded surprised, but then it scoffed and smashed the two pieces of the broken spear downward.

BOOM!

The golden light vanished, and the broken spear turned to dust.

However, the monster's attack didn't stop. It raised its hands and lunged, claws outstretched, for Master Feng.

"I'll give you my life!" A grim light flashed in Master Feng's eyes. His robes billowed as he circulated True Qi through his chest, then swung his arm out to meet the attack.

RIP!

An arm flew into the air in a spray of fresh blood. The monster had torn off one of Master Feng's arms.

"Master Feng!" Huang Ning cried out, her face pale with shock and her heart filled with dread.

"Miss Huang, go quickly! I'll hold this beast off! We can't let it escape to harm the world!" Although Master Feng was gravely injured and his face was deathly pale, his eyes shone with resolve.

"Young man," Master Feng said, turning his firm gaze to Lin Mu, "I'm entrusting you to get Miss Huang and the others out of here. Today, I am determined to perish with this beast!"

"Master Feng, you..." Huang Ning's eyes were red, but she finally spoke with resolve. "Don't worry. When I get back, I will set up a memorial tablet for you for a lifetime of worship. I will also take good care of your family!"

After speaking, Huang Ning, protected by the other bodyguard, began to back away slowly toward the exit.

"Lin... you there. Get me out of here, and I'll pay you!" Huang Ning knew Lin Mu was strong; with his protection, her chances of escape were much higher.

However, Lin Mu paid no attention to the scheming, ruthlessly pragmatic woman. Instead, he took a step forward to stand before Master Feng.

"Master, your concern for the common people is truly touching," Lin Mu said. "But do you really think you can perish together with it? Even if you die, it won't let anyone else go."

Master Feng's expression shifted, but he remained silent.

It was Huang Ning who snorted coldly. "What do you mean by that? Are you saying that even if Master Feng gambles with his life, he's still no match for this beast?"

Lin Mu's gaze fell upon Huang Ning. "I don't know about the others, but I can guarantee that its true target is you."

Huang Ning's face paled, a flash of panic in her eyes. "You... Don't talk nonsense."

Lin Mu didn't miss that flicker of panic. He said indifferently, "Because this thing that has undergone a corpse transformation is your ancestor. You share the same bloodline. If it consumes your essence and blood, its power will surge."

Huang Ning pointed at Lin Mu. "You're spouting nonsense!" But her voice was laced with extreme terror. She could feel it—the monster's gaze on her was filled with excitement and greed.

"Then, young friend, what should we do now?" Master Feng asked humbly.

"The feng shui of this place has been altered, creating a battle between the dragon and the tiger," Lin Mu explained. "The person who arranged this is sitting back, waiting to reap the rewards. But he didn't anticipate one thing."

A mysterious and powerful aura began to emanate from Lin Mu's body.

"That I am here."

Lin Mu slowly raised his hand, as if grasping something from the air.

"All I have to do is kill them all, and this whole scheme will fall apart on its own!"

Chapter 188: Demonslaying Hand!

Lin Mu took a step forward, a trace of cold light flashing through his calm eyes.

ROAR!

The monster seemed to realize Lin Mu was tough to deal with, and it instinctively retreated two steps.

"It... It's actually afraid?" A hint of shock appeared in Huang Ning's eyes, and she felt a twinge of regret. If I had treated Lin Mu better initially, perhaps I could have recruited him. That would have been greatly advantageous. Although she thought this, Huang Ning still didn't believe Lin Mu was truly that strong. After all, even Master Feng was no match for the monster; it's not likely Lin Mu could be stronger than Master Feng.

TAP.

Lin Mu took another step, a hint of mockery touching his lips. "So, you know fear now?"

ROAR!

Evidently provoked, the monster let out a low growl and charged directly at Lin Mu.

PFFT!

Before it could get close, the monster abruptly opened its mouth and spewed out a green mist.

Corpse Qi!

"That won't work on me." Lin Mu shook his head slightly as a powerful aura burst forth from him, spreading out in all directions. Instantly, the Corpse Qi was forced back.

Simultaneously, Lin Mu took a step and vanished, reappearing a moment later at the monster's side.

BOOM!

A fist radiating power descended, smashing fiercely onto the monster's head.

ROAR!

With a miserable scream, the monster's body flew through the air and crashed into the wall.

Huang Ning and Master Feng were struck dumb. Lin Mu... he's so strong!

Without giving them time to think, Lin Mu appeared before the monster once again, his foot stomping down toward its head.

"Courting death!" the monster uttered in a hoarse voice, slapping a palm on the ground to flip its body over and kick at Lin Mu. However, its movements were stiff and clumsy, which slowed it down considerably.

CRACK!

A crisp snap echoed out as Lin Mu's kick connected with the monster's leg, breaking it.

The sole remaining bodyguard swallowed hard, his eyes filled with terror. How much strength would it take to do that?

Of everyone present, perhaps only Master Feng saw the truth. A Martial Arts Grandmaster, with the strength of a thousand pounds! He was even more shocked than before. And he's so young! A Martial Arts Grandmaster under the age of thirty is practically unheard of, whether on the Mainland or overseas.

The monster's leg was broken, but the Corpse Qi around it only grew denser. It glared at Lin Mu and said solemnly, "Who are you? Why must you interfere in this matter?"

Lin Mu tilted his head and looked at the monster. "It doesn't matter who I am. Since I've already intervened, I'm not about to stop halfway."

"Boy, don't push your luck! Do you really think I can't handle you?" The voice was now laced with anger and murderous intent.

Lin Mu replied indifferently, "Heh, a petty Corpse Control Technique. I don't even take it seriously."

Master Feng was startled. "Corpse Control Technique? There's someone else here?"

Huang Ning asked, "Master Feng, what is the Corpse Control Technique?"

A hint of fear crept into Master Feng's voice as he explained, "The so-called Corpse Control Technique is a sinister method from the heterodox arts. Practitioners of this technique seek out suitable corpses and refine them with secret rituals, allowing them to control the bodies at will."

His voice trembled as he continued, "Such methods defy the natural order and are not tolerated by the righteous path. However, their techniques are so bizarre and well-hidden that they have been impossible to completely eradicate."

Master Feng gave a bitter smile. "The sand-like spots on your body are the result of one of these people refining your ancestor into a zombie. It destroyed your family's Feng Shui, and the curse manifested on you."

Huang Ning's face turned deathly pale. So that's the real reason for the spots on my body... It's that complicated.

"Then... is there any way to save me?" Huang Ning asked fearfully.

"Yes!" Master Feng looked at Lin Mu. "It's just as this... young friend said. If we kill the person controlling the corpse, the curse can be resolved."

"Hmph, I'm surprised you know so much!" A sinister voice suddenly emanated from the monster's mouth. It was different from the previous hoarse growl—this voice was indifferent, merciless, and terrifyingly eerie. It was the voice of the one controlling the corpse.

"But so what? You can't even deal with this thing, let alone find me," the puppeteer proclaimed, his voice growing agitated. "Even if you do find me, my divine arts will be complete by then. I won't even spare a glance for ants like you."

A smirk touched Lin Mu's lips as he looked at the monster. "You've been hiding and showing your tail for this long just to buy time, haven't you? But it's all just a waste."

As his words fell, a piercing aura erupted from his body. This aura was even more powerful and alarming than any he had previously released.

"This youth is truly an unparalleled prodigy! To possess such a cultivation level at his age!" Master Feng marveled, then added with puzzlement, "But why have I never heard of such a figure in the Martial Arts World?"

Huang Ning commented, "No matter how strong he is, he can't compare to you, Master Feng."

Master Feng gave a wry smile, but his expression was serious. "The world is vast and the Great Dao is boundless. You must remember that there is always a heaven beyond the heavens, and always someone stronger."

Huang Ning pursed her lips, unconvinced.

Lin Mu spread his arms, his Spiritual Energy surging within him as he regarded the monster with utter calm. It's just a beast controlled by someone else. Even if it managed to cultivate a sliver of consciousness before, it's nothing more than a puppet now.

Lin Mu muttered, "The time is about right," raising his palm toward the monster.

Sensing something, the monster suddenly became agitated. It spread its large hands as a rolling mist billowed from its body—the entirety of the Corpse Qi it had cultivated. Combined with its pitch-black armor, it looked just like a Demon General.

ROAR!

The monster roared as the nails on its ten fingers grew wildly, becoming sharp and pointed. Its mouth stretched open impossibly wide, revealing two terrifying fangs.

"A Zombie!" Huang Ning cried out in alarm, retreating frantically.

Master Feng watched the zombie with extreme vigilance.

The monster had finally revealed its true form: a zombie that had been cultivating for over two hundred years.

"Logically, to become a sentient zombie, you'd not only need exceptionally favorable conditions but also arrangements made in your lifetime," Lin Mu said. "Unfortunately for you, while your plan was good, you never expected someone to usurp your nest, break your Feng Shui Great Array, seize your cultivation site, and ultimately turn you into their puppet. A truly pitiful fate. Instead of living in such agony, it would be better to find release."

As his words ended, a blinding light burst forth from his palm.

The Twelve Forms of Slaying Gods and Demons and Punishing Immortals, Fourth Form—Demonslaying Hand

Chapter 189: Hit without error!

Light swirled around him, and Lin Mu's aura became savage and brutal. It was more terrifying and powerful than the zombie's. The pupils of his eyes suddenly turned pitch black, like deep, soul-capturing black holes. A single glance seemed enough to have one's entire soul devoured.

At this moment, Lin Mu was the very picture of a true Demon Lord incarnate.

To slay demons, one must first become a demon!

The Demonslaying Hand could slaughter every demon in the world!

He slowly extended his hand and opened his palm, his fingers slightly bent, poised to clench.

BOOM!

A terrifying aura suddenly exploded from his palm.

ROAR!

The zombie let out a terrified roar, sensing the aura of death. It had already died once, but after painstakingly cultivating a sliver of consciousness, it could have been reborn through another path. It was utterly unwilling to die now.

However, facing that despair-inducing aura, the zombie could only let out a roar of defiance, completely helpless.

CRACK!

As Lin Mu clenched his fingers, the air in the entire tomb chamber suddenly compressed, becoming suffocating. At the same time, the zombie's armor shattered, followed by its claws and teeth. Finally, its entire body began to break apart.

"Don't!" Huang Ning suddenly leaped out, trying to stop Lin Mu.

"Miss!" The bodyguard failed to grab Huang Ning, his heart nearly leaping out of his chest.

That's a zombie! Miss, if you rush out like that and get hurt, what then?

"Miss Huang, what are you doing!" Master Feng, severely injured and missing an arm, never expected Huang Ning to rush out. His expression changed dramatically.

To charge into a battle of this level without reason... she could easily get caught in the crossfire. She'd be seriously injured at best, and at worst, she could lose her life.

But Huang Ning stood before Lin Mu with her arms outstretched, her face pale as she pleaded, "Don't kill it! Please don't kill it, I beg you!"

Just as Lin Mu was about to completely annihilate the zombie, Huang Ning had felt a strange summons, a desperate plea for help. It terrified her. Without even thinking, she had run out. She was certain this zombie was her ancestor, the great General Huang Weihu! The feeling from her own bloodline could not be wrong! Moreover, because of the birthmark on her back, she was especially sensitive to such sensations.

"Do you want to die?" Lin Mu looked coldly at Huang Ning, a grim light flashing in his eyes.

Because he had used the fourth style of the Demonslaying Hand, Lin Mu's aura was now like that of a true Demon King. His chilling gaze made Huang Ning shiver.

"If you want to kill it, you'll have to kill me first!" Huang Ning squeezed her eyes shut, casting all caution to the wind.

He was her ancestor, after all. She couldn't just stand by and watch Lin Mu kill him.

"Fool," Lin Mu said coldly.

As if stung, Huang Ning's eyes flew open. "What did you say? Say that again!"

To think that she, Huang Ning, was treated with the utmost respect by everyone on Harbor Island. Even back on the Mainland, mayors and county heads were all unfailingly polite to her. To be called a fool by Lin Mu... it made her blood boil.

"Since you insist on courting death, you're on your own," Lin Mu said, giving Huang Ning one last deep look before retracting his hand and turning to leave.

"You..." Huang Ning began, furious, but just as she was about to speak, the zombie she was shielding let out a grotesque, human-like, sinister grin. Its hands shot out violently toward her.

"Miss, look out!" The remaining bodyguard's face paled. He lunged forward in an instant, pushing Huang Ning aside.

THUD!

Taking Huang Ning's place, the bodyguard was impaled through the chest by the zombie's hands. The creature then bit into his neck, voraciously sucking his blood. In the blink of an eye, a living man was turned into a desiccated corpse.

"Miss, run... quick!" From beginning to end, that was all the bodyguard managed to say.

Huang Ning screamed, staring in horror at the dried corpse on the ground as tears streamed down her face. Her heart was now filled with agonizing regret.

If she hadn't been so willful, this bodyguard wouldn't have died.

But the zombie didn't care. After feeding on fresh blood, its injuries not only healed, but it also grew much stronger. It took a step, then another, slowly advancing on Huang Ning. An unmistakable greed shone in its dull gray eyes.

Huang Ning scrambled backward, letting out a piercing shriek.

"Miss Huang, run!" At the critical moment, Master Feng rushed forward, grabbed Huang Ning's arm, and threw her out of the way.

ROAR!

The zombie, enraged, swiped its palm at Master Feng.

Master Feng spat out another mouthful of blood, his face growing even paler.

"Master Feng!" Huang Ning cried out, sitting on the ground, her face streaked with tears.

Through it all, Lin Mu watched coldly from the sidelines.

As if remembering something, Huang Ning scrambled over to Lin Mu. Wiping her tears, she said, "Please, save Master Feng! I beg you, please!"

Lin Mu gave Huang Ning a faint glance. "Why should I?"

Huang Ning froze.

Yes, why should he? She was the one who stopped him from acting, and now she was begging him for help. Things didn't work like that. Even for her, Huang Ning, her reputation wasn't worth that much.

"Young friend, Miss Huang was in the wrong," Master Feng said, his face bitter and his heart filled with sighs. "Please, consider it a plea from an old man... help me get Miss Huang out of here."

This Huang Ning had been pampered since childhood, developing a haughty and imperious nature. On Harbor Island, that was fine, as everyone would give the Huang Family some face. But this was the Mainland, a land full of remarkable and hidden talents. Huang Ning had finally learned a harsh lesson.

"Thinking of leaving?" a wild laugh suddenly erupted, shaking the entire tomb chamber as if an earthquake had struck. "Even if you want to leave now, you can't!"

The zombie pounded its chest, then smashed its fist into the floor of the tomb chamber.

BOOM!

With a deafening roar, the passageway leading out of the chamber collapsed.

"Not good!" Master Feng's expression changed dramatically. "The exit has collapsed."

Huang Ning's face was a mask of despair. "It's over. It's all over. None of us are getting out of here."

Suddenly, she looked up at Lin Mu, her face twisting in a snarl. "This is all your fault! If you had acted sooner, we would have left this place already!"

"Hmm?" Lin Mu looked at her, one eyebrow raised slightly. "What, are you blaming me?" His tone was utterly frigid.

Huang Ning's heart trembled, but she stubbornly stuck her chin out. "Am I wrong?"

"Huang Ning, shut up!" Master Feng roared.

Though still resentful, Huang Ning closed her mouth and said no more.

"Young friend, I'm terribly sorry. If you would just do me the honor..."

Lin Mu slowly said, "Your reputation, perhaps, isn't enough."

Master Feng's face was instantly filled with bitterness.

Huang Ning shrieked, pointing at Lin Mu. "What, you dare hit me? Let me tell you—"

SLAP!

Her words were cut off as she was sent flying through the air.

"Ah! You bastard! How dare you hit me!" Huang Ning screamed, clutching her swollen face.

Lin Mu slowly withdrew his palm. "Don't think I won't hit you just because you're a woman," he said. "If you dare spout one more word of nonsense, you can stay here forever."

Chapter 190: Who Are You, Exactly!

Lin Mu ignored the self-righteous woman and looked at the Zombie.

"Tsk, ts. Killing a woman as foolish as this would be of no consequence," the Zombie cackled. "How about we make a deal?"

Lin Mu raised an eyebrow.

"Stay out of this, and I'll let you leave. How about it?" the Zombie offered.

Huang Ning's face paled. She shook her head frantically. "No, you can't!" She was terrified Lin Mu would agree.

"The passage has already collapsed, and the way out is blocked," Master Feng said grimly. "He's deliberately trying to sow discord between us."

"We don't exactly have a relationship to sow discord in," Lin Mu replied, shaking his head slightly.

As far as Huang Ning was concerned, it was no skin off his back whether she lived or died. Master Feng, on the other hand, was fundamentally a decent person, judging by his earlier declaration to perish with the Zombies to ensure their escape. But in the end, he was only trying to protect this foolish woman, Huang Ning.

"Sir, you must know that you're no match for me alone," the Zombie said. "I can guarantee your safe departure."

"He's lying! Don't believe him!" Huang Ning shouted. "If you can get me out of here, I promise I'll give you ten million!"

"Ten million?" Lin Mu scoffed. "Are you saying your life is only worth ten million? Or that ten million is enough to buy my help?"

Huang Ning was speechless.

In truth, she was dying of regret. From the words of the one controlling the Zombie, it was obvious the man was wary of Lin Mu; otherwise, he never would have made such an offer. If she had known how powerful Lin Mu was, she would have adopted a much better attitude.

Thinking this, Huang Ning bit her lip and shakily stood up, walking toward Lin Mu. "I know my attitude was poor before, but as long as you promise to get me out of here, not only will I give you a substantial amount of money, but I can even..." A look of determination flashed in her eyes. "I can even let you..."

Lin Mu looked at Huang Ning with a wry smile, then said disdainfully, "Sorry, I'm not interested."

Huang Ning felt as if she had been struck by lightning.

She, Huang Ning, might not be a peerless beauty, but she was still a famous belle on Harbor Island. And this Lin Mu actually said he wasn't interested in her?

Taking a deep breath, Huang Ning suppressed the fury in her heart and asked, "What will it take for you to act?"

"Sir, you should think this through. Do you really want us both to perish in a fight to the death?" the Zombie said coldly.

"You sure think highly of yourself," Lin Mu said, uttering a seemingly nonsensical phrase. "I imagine you're about ready? In that case, let's begin."

Flexing his fist, Lin Mu added, "After all, we've already wasted enough time."

As his voice fell, to Huang Ning's shocked and delighted gaze, Lin Mu reached out his palm and gave a gentle squeeze.

BANG!

The once-imposing Zombie instantly exploded, its entire body disintegrating into a shower of gore.

"Aargh! You're courting death!" a pained and furious roar echoed faintly from within the tomb chamber. Clearly, with the Zombie's destruction, its controller had also suffered a backlash.

"Heh, I'd like to see just how you plan to kill me," Lin Mu chuckled and walked toward a wall.

"Young... Senior, what are you...?" After witnessing Lin Mu's astounding power again, Master Feng no longer dared to treat him as a peer, his tone filled with respect.

Lin Mu extended a hand and pressed it against the wall. "I have matters to attend to." He hesitated for a moment before adding, "If you're afraid, you can wait here. I believe the people outside will come looking for you."

Master Feng hesitated but said nothing.

Huang Ning scoffed, "Hmph, Mayor Fang will definitely send people for us. Following him might just be a dead end." She glanced around. "Besides, there's no way out of here unless we..."

BOOM!

Before Huang Ning could finish, the wall in front of Lin Mu exploded, revealing a deep, dark passage.

Huang Ning choked as if a hand had clamped around her throat, unable to speak another word. She felt her face burn with shame.

This Lin Mu had slapped her face time and time again.

"Don't assume everyone is as foolish as you," Lin Mu said, slowly shaking his head. "If not for your family background, an idiot like you would have died countless times by now."

With that, Lin Mu ignored Huang Ning and stepped into the passage.

"Ah!" Huang Ning screamed in a frenzy. "That bastard! He deserves to die!" She wished she could tear Lin Mu to pieces.

But she knew she was no match for him.

Master Feng gave a wry smile. "Miss Huang, you should hold your tongue. That senior has already shown great magnanimity. If it were anyone else, your disrespect would have gotten you killed, and even I couldn't have stopped him."

Master Feng sighed inwardly. This trip to the Mainland had certainly broadened his horizons, but it had also taught him a profound lesson: the descendants of the Huang Family were getting worse with each generation. After this was over, he planned to retire from the world and its affairs.

"Even Master Feng is no match for him?" Huang Ning asked, stunned.

The main reason she had dared to look down on Lin Mu and speak to him so coldly, despite all her setbacks, was because Master Feng was there. Hearing Master Feng's admission now, Huang Ning finally realized that from the very beginning, she had been a frog in a well, utterly self-righteous.

"Indeed. That... senior's strength is unfathomable. I am no match for him whatsoever," Master Feng said, his voice laced with weariness.

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At this moment, Lin Mu was walking through the passage. He had only gone about ten meters when the tunnel behind him collapsed with a roar.

"Hmph, boy, you've got quite the nerve!" a cold voice echoed from the darkness.

Lin Mu's expression remained unchanged. "As the saying goes, fortune favors the bold. Aren't you doing the same?"

He took a step forward and arrived in another tomb chamber. This one was much larger than the previous two, and in the center stood a coffin. Atop the coffin sat a man in a black robe, perfectly illuminated by a shaft of moonlight from above.

So it's already night.

The moment Lin Mu appeared, the man snapped his head up and fixed his gaze on him. "Hmph, since you've come to seek death, I'll grant your wish!"

The man's hands blurred into motion, and a dark shadow shot out from the darkness, lunging at Lin Mu.

ROAR!

The shadow was incredibly fast, reeking of a thick, putrid stench.

"So you were the one controlling that creature we encountered earlier," Lin Mu remarked with a slight smile. He suddenly brought two fingers together, and a fierce beam of Sword Qi shot out.

SHLICK!

The whistling Sword Qi sliced the dark shadow in two. It turned out to be another fur-covered Zombie, this one missing a hand.

Lin Mu then remembered—this was the monster he and Huang Laoshi had encountered before.

The man froze, stunned to see Lin Mu dispatch his Puppet in a single move. He stared at him in horror. "Who in the world are you?"