

Y Master 1271

Chapter 1271: Passing Down Knowledge

The next day, when the sun just rose, the villagers who had slept through the night began to wake up from their dreams. As they looked around and realized they had slept on the open ground all night, they all found it incredibly unbelievable.

For them, this was simply impossible. No matter how tired they were, they could never have slept outdoors for an entire night!

What they didn't know was that this very night had brought about a dramatic transformation in their bodies, making them much stronger than usual.

Those with naturally good physiques woke up quicker, while those who had some chronic ailments and weaker physiques slept a bit longer.

As the village chief, Han Buguan was the first to wake up.

First, because his physique was excellent, and second, he was young and had fewer impurities in his body compared to the elderly and infirm.

The first sensation Han Buguan felt upon waking was a discomfort all over his body. He was sticky all over, with a pungent, sour smell that was overwhelming.

Han Buguan quickly took off his shirt, and what he saw nearly made him faint. His body was covered with a layer of grey-black filth, sticky and greasy.

“How could this be?”

Han Buguan leaped up like a rabbit, dashed to a nearby pond, and jumped in with a splash, enjoying a refreshing bath that revitalized him.

After Han Buguan woke up, the other young men in the village also woke up one after another, with almost identical expressions. They could hardly believe the filthy state they were in, and all jumped into the pond for a good wash.

The girls hurried back home, shut the doors, and washed themselves.

As time passed, everyone else on the open ground also woke up, and the first thing they did was to rush for a wash, as the sticky goo was utterly insufferable.

“Brother Guanzi, I feel like my strength seems to have increased a lot since yesterday. Do you feel the same?”

After washing up, a young man asked Han Buguan, who nodded and said, “I was just about to ask you guys. I feel the same way. Now, I feel like I could wrestle seven or eight of you at once without a problem.”

“Brother Guanzi, don’t brag. We feel the same. Our strength has increased a lot since yesterday. I feel like I can take you on one-on-one now.”

The young people of the village were full of energy and didn’t leave after washing up but began to frolic in the open ground.

“You guys are right. Even I feel the same. Didn’t I fracture my back before? It’s always been aching, but now it doesn’t hurt at all, just like before the injury. Also, my strength seems to have increased a lot.”

At this moment, an old man from the village walked over, moving with swift steps, his complexion ruddy, showing no signs of any previous injury.

“Uncle Seven, do you feel the same? What’s going on?”

After bathing, the rest of the villagers also returned to the open ground. Although they made their living by hunting, they didn’t go out to hunt every day. Sometimes, they stayed home to rest.

Yesterday, they came back with a plentiful haul. Some people suffered minor injuries during the hunt, so they planned to take a break for a couple of days instead of going out today.

“The reason you all feel this way is perfectly normal. That’s because the stew you ate last night was made from the meat of a powerful True Essence Realm Xuan Beast. During the cooking, I also added a spiritual medicine that helps with Washing Marrow and Removing Hair. If it didn’t have the effects of washing away impurities and achieving a rebirth, that would be strange.”

“The flesh and blood of the Xuan Beast contained a lot of Life Essence Energy. These Life Essence Energies are very effective in improving one’s physique and enhancing physical strength. After eating it, it can boost the bodily functions of the consumer.”

Upon hearing everyone’s confusion, Ye Fan explained the benefits of consuming Xuan Beast Meat in detail.

In fact, he had mentioned it the previous day, but the villagers hadn’t listened at all, only focused on their excitement and cravings.

“Brother Ye, I have an impolite request. I hope you can agree.”

At this time, Han Buguan stood up and sincerely said to Ye Fan, “You’ve seen it as well. Our village is full of ordinary people. At most, we are just physically strong, but we don’t have any cultivators. Could you teach the children in our village some cultivation methods? So they might have the chance to become cultivators?”

“Yes, Brother Ye, please agree. Our village is near the Xuan Beast Forest, and sometimes Xuan Beasts charge out. Without cultivators, it’s very hard for us to defend ourselves. Our village used to be much bigger, but after several attacks, nearly all of our strong villagers died in battle.”

“For the future of Stone Village, so that our line does not cease, we urge Brother Ye to act with justice.”

Not only did some young people kneel to make this request, but some elders also knelt for the future of the village, asking Ye Fan to teach their descendants some cultivation techniques, so they would have the power to protect themselves when facing Xuan Beasts.

“I agree, I agree, everyone please stand up quickly!”

Ye Fan hurriedly stepped forward, helped the leading elder up, and urged everyone else to stand.

Taking into consideration the situation in the village, Ye Fan decided to stay for a few days. He gathered the children of the village, regardless of whether they had cultivation talent, and taught them some basic mental methods. As for how much achievement they could attain, it depended on their personal opportunities, innate qualities, and disposition.

Ye Fan was a man of action. Without delay, he asked Han Buguan to gather all the children aged between four and sixteen in the village to check their talent, one by one.

After inspecting, Ye Fan indeed found several children with decent bones. Although far from being geniuses, they were still capable of practicing martial arts.

Once the check was complete, Ye Fan recited the heart mantra of the Xuanwu Sect for everyone present to hear.

Although Ye Fan knew these adults had missed the optimal age for cultivation, varied opportunities for individuals might still allow someone to succeed in cultivation.

Moreover, martial arts cultivation emphasized physique; a strong body made it easier to enter the basics. The villagers of Stone Village were not weak physically, so if they truly could cultivate, it would be a fortunate event.

The children in the village were very obedient and cherished this once-in-a-lifetime learning opportunity, studying earnestly.

However, the path of cultivation is not an achievement reached overnight. It requires accumulation over time to achieve success. What Ye Fan did was merely lead them to the entry point. As for how much they could achieve in the future, it would depend on their own hard work.

Under Ye Fan's careful guidance, these children have progressed rapidly, especially Doudou. With Ye Fan's special attention, her intelligence has already touched upon some paths of Cultivation.

Five days quickly passed, and the children in the village all mastered the basic mental method of the Xuanwu Sect, able to train on their own, so Ye Fan developed the idea of departure.

This journey out into the world is meant to gain experience, to hone himself, and to enhance his insights into Cultivation; he couldn't stay long in this small mountain village.

At lunchtime, Ye Fan mentioned his intention to leave to the village head Han Buguan and Uncle Su. Both were very reluctant, but they understood that, as a Cultivator, Ye Fan couldn't stay here for long.

That evening, Han Buguan organized a bonfire gathering for the entire village in the central open space of the village.

Some villagers let slip out the news, and the matter of Ye Fan leaving quickly spread through the small Stone Village.

The village children were extremely reluctant upon learning of Ye Fan's departure.

Even though Ye Fan was somewhat stern with them, they knew that meeting a mentor like Ye Fan was a blessing earned over several generations.

That night, all the children were particularly diligent and serious in their Cultivation, seemingly expressing their reluctance toward Ye Fan's departure in this way.

"Big Brother, please don't go, okay? Doudou can't bear to see you leave!"

After cultivating, Little Doudou tugged on Ye Fan's sleeve, pleading with great reluctance for him to stay, her big eyes glistening with tears.

"Yes, Master, please don't leave, okay? We all can't bear to see you go!"

The children crowded around, pleading for Ye Fan not to leave them, as they needed their master.

The children's sincere eyes and earnest voices touched Ye Fan's heart deeply; he almost agreed to stay.

But remembering his mission for coming out this time, he steeled his heart and slowly shook his head, crouched down, gently wiping the tears on Little Doudou's face, and said softly, "Doudou is sensible; Doudou, don't cry. Big Brother has other things to accomplish, but I promise you all, whenever I have time, I will definitely come back to see you. You must strive diligently in your Cultivation, because I will check when I return, and if anyone doesn't work hard, I will have to punish them!"

"Master, rest assured, we will definitely cultivate as diligently as we did when you were here." A silly boy foolishly said a sentence that made Ye Fan both amused and helpless.

How awkward does that sound? What does it mean to be like when he's here? Is he not here once he leaves?

"Silly one, don't speak nonsense. Master, Silly doesn't know how to talk; don't pay attention to him. You have your own things to do, and we disciples naturally cannot hinder you. Rest assured, after you leave, we will cultivate doubly hard and definitely won't let you down."

A sixteen-year-old boy slapped Silly and sternly spoke to Ye Fan like a little adult.

"Mm! That's right, your diligent cultivation is not for me, but so that you can grow up to help your parents and anyone who needs help."

Ye Fan was particularly gratified; although the ages of these children varied, their pure and sincere hearts were alike.

“Brother Ye, I toast to you, thank you for everything you’ve done for Stone Village.”

A middle-aged man approached with a bowl of alcohol, sincerely pouring Ye Fan a full bowl, thanking him for teaching the children cultivation techniques.

“It was merely a matter of raising an arm, no need to thank me.”

Ye Fan clinked bowls with him; the man laughed heartily and said to others, “Everyone, listen to me: Brother Ye has cultivated hope for our village. Shouldn’t we properly thank him?”

“Oh no!”

Upon hearing this, Ye Fan’s mind quickly flashed to the image of a crowd surrounding him with drinks, and he thought of sneaking away.

But at this moment, he definitely couldn’t leave, he could only brace himself to accept the group’s toasts.

Fortunately, Ye Fan’s cultivation was profound, the alcohol was not an issue, even without intentionally operating his energies, the alcohol couldn’t affect him.

As expected, following the man's words, everyone in the village, from elder seniors to babbling toddlers, almost all moved, each holding a bowl of alcohol.

In this scenario, if it were an ordinary person, they would be drunk without drinking, but Ye Fan didn't mind.

Amidst waves of praise, Ye Fan clinked bowls with everyone, drinking several jars of strong liquor.

In the end, their praises turned to exclamations; drinking so much strong liquor would topple even a bull, yet Ye Fan's complexion didn't change a bit; he was still talking and laughing like nothing happened.

But thinking carefully, it's understandable, Ye Fan is a Cultivator, Cultivators can certainly drink a little more, upon realizing this, everyone was relieved.

"Brother Ye, as entrusted by everyone, we request you to be the Holy Spirit for our Stone Village; how do you feel about this?"

After a whole hour of chaos, the crowd gradually dispersed, and village chief Han Buguan approached, speaking solemnly to Ye Fan.

Chapter 1272: Holy Spirit and Big Furnace

"Holy Spirit?"

Ye Fan was taken aback. Although Elder Xuan had explained many common knowledge of the Xuan Realm to him, he had never mentioned anything about the Holy Spirit. It was the first time he heard the term Holy Spirit.

Seeing Ye Fan's puzzled expression, Han Buguan quickly explained, "The so-called Holy Spirit means the Protector God. You, as the Holy Spirit of our Stone Village, are the Guardian Deity of Stone Village, to protect our village."

"I see..."

Ye Fan suddenly understood and then secretly sighed.

Although he was strong among the younger generation, he had just truly embarked on the path of cultivation and was far from strong people.

Moreover, he couldn't stay in Stone Village for long and couldn't possibly protect Stone Village.

After sighing, Ye Fan originally wanted to refuse, but seeing the eager expressions of the surrounding villagers, he changed his mind. Stone Village was just a normal village, and it was almost impossible for strong cultivators to be willing to protect Stone Village. Anyway, he was leaving tomorrow; fulfilling these simple villagers' wish before leaving was a good thing.

"Okay, I agree."

Thinking of this, Ye Fan nodded, successfully becoming the Holy Spirit of Stone Village, but still politely reminded, "Although I am strong in your eyes, I am very weak among cultivators and cannot stay in Stone Village long term, so it is difficult to fulfill the duty of a Holy Spirit and grant you protection."

"We know all of this. It's not a matter of power, but faith. You have great kindness towards our village and are the most suitable choice to be our Holy Spirit. If it were a random person, no matter how strong, we wouldn't want him as our Holy Spirit!"

Han Buguan readily admitted this, saying the Holy Spirit didn't actually matter, but it was the villagers' spiritual sustenance.

That night, the crowd was boisterous for a long time, disbanding only until midnight, each returning home to rest, while Ye Fan stayed at Elder Su's house.

The next morning, as the first light of dawn broke, the golden morning light spread over the earth.

About fifty miles away from Stone Village, two young men dressed in brocade clothes were rushing swiftly towards Stone Village.

The two appeared to be in their twenties, with ferocious and murderous expressions, and a strong stench of blood emanating from their bodies.

This bloody stench scared the nearby weak Xuan Beasts into silence, allowing them to fly overhead in peace.

Judging by their momentum, the two were early-stage True Yuan Realm cultivators who had just broken through, with average strength, but possessed an extremely dense evil aura that naturally formed after much slaughter.

“According to the information, within five hundred miles, there’s only this village called Stone Village. As long as we deal with this village, our mission is considered complete.”

While flying, a slender-faced cultivator said to his companion.

“Yes, we’ve been on the run for several days, finally we can catch a breath.”

Another cultivator gave a wicked smile, then with a cunning grin, said, “I wonder if there’s any beautiful woman in Stone Village. If there is, after we collect the Yin Blood from those girls, we must enjoy ourselves thoroughly.”

“Look at you, what’s there to enjoy with common people?”

The slender-faced cultivator looked at his companion with disdain. During the past time, they went to dozens of villages one after another, forcibly collecting girls’ Yin Blood, and then his companion ravaged all the pretty women in those villages before leaving after slaughtering.

“You can’t say that, like the young wife from Liu Yuan Village, though she’s just a commoner, the feeling during unification is... tsk tsk, indescribably wonderful, simply sensational...”

As he spoke, the cultivator revealed a lewd smile, as if savoring the endless pleasure.

The slender-faced cultivator impatiently said, “You’re really into this twisted taste, what’s so wonderful about common people? Don’t forget, as long as we can successfully complete the mission this time, collect enough girls’ Yin Blood, if Young Master Lou can seize this chance and successfully condense the Holy Embryo and step into the Holy Embryo Realm, our brotherly good days will come. At that time, even if we want beauties of the True Yuan Realm, Young Master Lou will surely reward us, let alone cultivation techniques, elixir pills, and martial arts.”

“You’ve got a point, common people indeed have nothing fun to offer. We should quickly collect the Yin Blood from the girls of Stone Village, then slaughter the village and report back.”

Upon hearing the slender-faced man’s words, the lewd cultivator seemed to realize that toying with ordinary women wasn’t entertaining after all, and said malevolently.

“That’s right, mere mortals, they’re just ants. Being able to serve Young Master Lou is their fortune, thanks to their ancestors. Come on, let’s speed up, the sooner we finish the mission, the sooner we can wrap it up.”

The slender-faced man said, suddenly accelerating towards Stone Village, the two men like two meteors crashing to Earth, pushing their speed to the limit.

...

At this time, the villagers of Stone Village had no idea that disaster was quietly descending, and continued to live their usual lives.

The only difference today was that all the villagers of Stone Village got up very early, waiting on the only path out of the village to bid farewell to Ye Fan.

Ye Fan had no idea about the villagers' efforts for him. After concluding a night of cultivation, he stood up straight and exhaled a breath of impure air.

Huh?

The whole village was quiet, and Ye Fan didn't want to disturb anyone, silently walking towards the village entrance. As soon as he reached the village entrance, he saw all the villagers standing on the path at the village head.

Ye Fan was deeply touched, feeling that he hadn't done much for this village, yet received such an honor.

Although the villagers of Stone Village were reluctant to see Ye Fan leave, they understood that the world of cultivators was completely different from theirs. Having shared six days of fate was not easy.

So despite the reluctance, no one asked him to stay but silently watched him.

Ye Fan's heart was full of emotions, thinking for a moment, he said, "Let me guide the children in cultivation one more time. After the children finish their cultivation, I'll leave."

As soon as he finished speaking, the children of Stone Village, led by Little Doudou, automatically came forward. They sat cross-legged on an empty lot at the village entrance, practicing the Xuanwu Sect mental method Ye Fan taught them.

"Meditation cultivation requires a calm and focused mind..."

Ye Fan kept explaining the common problems encountered in cultivation while correcting some mistakes the children made in cultivation.

Time flew by, and even though the children were reluctant, cultivation always comes to an end.

When the children finished their cultivation, and Ye Fan was about to leave, the village chief, Han Buguan, brought a few people carrying a three-legged furnace and a large box in front of him.

"Holy Spirit, this furnace was picked up by our ancestors in a dry river near the edge of the Xuan Beast Forest. I can tell you are very interested in it. Keeping it here would only waste it, so please take it with you."

"This..."

Ye Fan was touched upon hearing this, momentarily at a loss for words.

He was indeed interested in this mysterious big furnace, but hadn't mentioned it. Unexpectedly, Han Buguan saw through his thoughts and directly presented it to him.

Regarding this big furnace, he discussed it with Elder Xuan for a long time without reaching any conclusions. According to Elder Xuan's speculation, it might be an extraordinary item.

According to Elder Xuan, Ye Fan should take this big furnace, then store it in the Nine Heavens Mysterious Crown's virtual space for thorough research, to see if anything could be discovered from it.

However, Ye Fan hadn't asked Han Buguan to give it to him. While he was interested in it, it belonged to someone else, and he had no right to demand it, so he didn't say anything. To his surprise, Han Buguan noticed his interest and offered it to him directly.

"Holy Spirit, please don't be so modest, or we'll be upset. Besides, there's something else left by our ancestors, said to be Spiritual Origin. We don't dare let others see it, and if kept with us, it will eventually go to waste, so please take it with you as well." The village chief, Han Buguan, said again after seeing Ye Fan remain silent.

"Thank you, I do like this Big Furnace. Since you said so, I will respectfully accept it."

Hearing this, the lascivious cultivator also felt that playing with ordinary women wasn't worth it. Immediately, speaking with an air full of malice.

"That's the spirit. Mere mortals, just ants, being able to serve Young Master Lou is a blessing for them, a virtue passed down from their ancestors. Let's go, let's speed up and complete the task early so we can finish up."

The slender-faced cultivator said this and abruptly increased his speed, flying swiftly towards Stone Village, both like meteors hurtling through the sky, pushing their speed to the limit.

As they flew about, one of the cultivators noticed the stone village in the distance and said to himself, "Finally, we're almost done..."

...The villagers in Stone Village were completely unaware of the impending disaster. They continued on with their everyday lives as usual.

The only difference was that today, all the villagers got up early to gather at the main road leading out of the village to see Ye Fan off.

Unaware of what the villagers had prepared for him, Ye Fan finished a night of meditation cultivation and stood up, letting out a deep breath.

Hmm?

The whole village was eerily quiet, and not wanting to disturb anyone, Ye Fan quietly made his way outside, only to find all the villagers standing by the village entrance.

Ye Fan was particularly moved, as he felt he hadn't done much for this village, yet he received such a send-off.

Stone Village's residents, while reluctant to let Ye Fan leave, understood that John and Aeliana lived in two completely different worlds, and sharing six days of fate with Ye Fan was no small feat.

So, even though the villagers didn't want to see him go, they all gathered at the village entrance to send him off.

Ye Fan, who was oblivious to what the villagers had done for him, stood up after a night of meditation cultivation and exhaled a breath of stale air.

Hmm?

The entire village was silently quiet, and not wanting to disturb anyone, Ye Fan quietly made his way to the outskirts of the village. As he walked to the village entrance, he saw everyone standing along the road by the village head.

This deeply moved Ye Fan, making him feel he hadn't done much for this village to receive such an honor.

Although the people of Stone Village were reluctant, they understood that the world of cultivators was quite different from theirs, and being friends with Ye Fan for six days was not an easy fate.

So even though they felt reluctant, they all agreed. Even if it was just for a day, they wanted to choose someone like Ye Fan whose heart was inclined towards their protection.

Therefore, even though all of them were reluctant to see Ye Fan leave, they were willing to let him go, thankful for the fateful encounter between Ye Fan and Stone Village.

Thinking for a moment, Ye Fan decided, "Okay, I will guide the children in cultivation one more time. Once they are done, I will take my leave."

As soon as he finished speaking, the entire group of Stone Village children, led by Little Doudou, automatically stood by, sitting cross-legged beside the village entrance on a patch of open land, practising the mental method of the Xuanwu Sect that Ye Fan had taught them.

Time passed quickly, and even though the children were reluctant, cultivation inevitably comes to an end.

After the children finished their practice, and as Ye Fan was about to leave, village chief Han Buguan and several elderly villagers brought a three-legged furnace and a big chest in front of him.

"Holy Spirit, this three-legged furnace was picked up by our ancestor many years ago. We don't want to keep it collecting dust here, so please take it with you." Han Buguan said with a sincere look.

“This box contains some legacy items left by our ancestors, said to be Spiritual Origin, something we dare not let outsiders see. Keeping it here with us would eventually be a waste, so it’s for you to take.”

Upon hearing this, Ye Fan was taken aback!

Indeed, he was interested in the mystical Big Furnace, but he did not ask for it. Han Buguan saw through his mind and offered it to him directly.

“Holy Spirit, please don’t be so modest,” said village chief Han Buguan upon seeing Ye Fan remaining silent.

“Well, thank you very much. I truly like this Big Furnace. Since you said so, I will accept it with gratitude.”

With that said, Ye Fan nodded solemnly, then, as per Elder Xuan’s instructions, he respectfully received the mysterious Big Furnace and stored it in the Mystic Crown’s Virtual Space for further study to see if any clues could emerge.

This scene fell into the villagers’ eyes like a miracle, leaving them with their mouths wide open in surprise.

“Er...”

“Right, Holy Spirit, we have some belongings left by our ancestors here, said to be Spiritual Origin. We don’t dare let others see them. If they stay with us, they will be stolen sooner or later. Please take it with you,” said the village chief Han Buguan, as he led a few people forward and placed a large box in front of Ye Fan.

Ye Fan had long known that this trunk required complex mechanisms to be opened, which even Han Buguan couldn’t open. It must be opened by his father, Old Sir Han, himself.

Once the chest was open, Ye Fan was instantly stunned!

(...)

At this moment, the residents of Stone Village have yet to be aware of the impending disaster, still living as usual.

The only difference was that today all the villagers of Stone Village got up early and waited on the path at the village entrance to see Ye Fan off.

Unaware of what the villagers had done for him, Ye Fan stood up after a night of meditation cultivation and exhaled a deep breath of stale air.

Huh?

The entire village was quiet, and Ye Fan didn't want to disturb anyone, so he quietly made his way outside and saw all the villagers standing along the village road at its head.

Ye Fan was especially moved as he felt that he hadn't done much for the village but received such a respectful send-off.

The villagers were reluctant to let Ye Fan leave, understanding that it wasn't easy to have such fate with a cultivator for six days.

Therefore, although they were reluctant, Ye Fan could not stay with them forever, so they finally agreed to accompany him at the entrance to the village to say goodbye.

After the children had finished their practice, and with Little Doudou and other Stone Village children lining up staying at the village entrance, moved him. They were cross-legged, practicing the Xuanwu Sect mental method that Ye Fan taught them.

When the children had completed their practice, and as Ye Fan was about to leave, village chief Han Buguan and several people carried a large furnace and a large box in front of him.

"Holy Spirit, this three-legged furnace was picked up by our ancestors many years ago. We dare not let others see it. It would just be a wasted artifact if it remained here. Please take it away." Village chief Han Buguan said sincerely.

Surprised, Ye Fan was speechless when he saw this....

He was indeed interested in the big mysterious furnace, but he never mentioned it, not expecting Han Buguan to see through his thoughts and offer it directly to him.

“Holy Spirit, please don’t be polite, or we’ll genuinely become unhappy,” added village chief Han Buguan when he saw that Ye Fan was still silent.

“I do like this Big Furnace a lot. Since you say so, I shall humbly accept,” Ye Fan said.

Following the instructions of Elder Xuan, Ye Fan respectfully accepted the mysterious Big Furnace and placed it inside the Virtual Space of the Mystic Crown for further study, to see if it held any secrets to be discovered.

“Uh...”

This scene, viewed by the villagers, left them in awe as if they were witnessing a miracle.

Chapter 1273: Lou Family Cultivators

Because...

The large box, which could fit a person, was radiating light, like a whole box of jewels.

Upon closer inspection, the box was not filled with jewels, but with the purest Spirit Stones.

“Top-grade Spiritual Origin! What kind of person was the ancestor of this Stone Village to have left so many Top-grade Spiritual Origins?” This time, even Elder Xuan was shocked, excitedly saying in Ye Fan’s sea of consciousness.

“Kid, don’t refuse, quickly accept them. These Top-grade Spiritual Origins are not only essential for cultivation, but can also repair the Nine Heavens Mysterious Crown.”

Seeing Ye Fan’s hesitation, Elder Xuan hurriedly told him the preciousness of Top-grade Spiritual Origins.

Ordinary cultivators use Spirit Stones for cultivation, and Spirit Stones are divided into low, mid, and upper grades.

Top-grade Spirit Stones are extremely rare, but Spiritual Origins are even more rare. So-called Spiritual Origins are formed by the liquefaction of Heaven and Earth Primordial Qi, which is necessary before the formation of Spirit Stones.

When on Earth, Ye Fan had obtained a lot of Heaven and Earth Source Liquid during Master Zhang’s inheritance, but those Source Liquids were not even on the same level as Spiritual Origins.

Ye Fan originally wanted to leave some Xuan Beast corpses and Spiritual Medicine for the children to aid in their future cultivation, but never expected Stone Village to have such treasures.

Urged by Elder Xuan, Ye Fan didn't have time to think deeply and accepted after exchanging a few polite words.

To repay, Ye Fan didn't want to accept the gifts for nothing, so he took out some Xuan Beast corpses and over a dozen Spiritual Medicines from the Space Bag to give to Han Buguan.

"These are Xuan Beast corpses and Spiritual Medicines, store them well. You can boil them for the children every month, but don't let them eat too much. These things can improve physique and aid in cultivation, but too much is harmful."

In Han Buguan and other villagers' view, exchanging a big furnace used for cooking and some useless stones for future cultivation resources for the children was a huge gain.

But they didn't know that what they had given to Ye Fan couldn't be traded even for a thousand times these Spiritual Medicines and Xuan Beast corpses.

"Holy Spirit, thank you so much, you gave our village sustenance and hope for continuation. We don't even know how to thank you."

Han Buguan and the other villagers expressed deep gratitude for Ye Fan's generosity, making Ye Fan feel a bit embarrassed, as if it was the villagers who were getting a great benefit when it was actually the other way around.

Ye Fan was leaving, and Little Doudou and the other children were filled with reluctance, crying their hearts out with red eyes.

“Big brother, when you leave, Doudou will miss you, and you must remember to miss Doudou too!”

Little Doudou, wiping her tears, said to Ye Fan with deep reluctance.

Seeing this scene, Ye Fan’s nose tingled, he really didn’t want to see such a scene. Being a sentimental person, he often forced himself to stay rational, but now, his sentimental side was fully exposed.

“Little Doudou, be good. Big brother will definitely think of you often. As long as I have time, I will come to see you and visit everyone.”

Ye Fan once again promised everyone that as long as he had time, he would come back to visit.

Although he hadn’t stayed in this small village for long, he could truly feel that the whole village had treated him like real family, not just a revered cultivator.

Hmm?

Just as Ye Fan was about to leave, his eyebrows suddenly twitched.

He sensed two cultivators' auras rapidly approaching here, and although this place was close to the Xuan Beast Forest, cultivators coming here to train or hunt Xuan Beasts shouldn't be headed in this direction.

In the case of unknown friend or foe, it was not appropriate to reveal himself. Ye Fan instantly concealed his aura, making himself seem no different from a regular person.

Meanwhile, Ye Fan looked towards the direction of the two auras, to see who they were and what business they had in Stone Village.

Soon, two figures appeared in the sky not far from the village entrance, wearing bright brocade robes with faces full of sinister killing intent, descending like vicious demons at the village entrance.

"Damn, this village is so small, only a little over a hundred people, how many drops of Yin Blood can be collected?"

In the sky, as the two cultivators landed slowly, they grumbled.

They were truly frustrated, originally thinking Stone Village could have thousands of people, but didn't expect barely a hundred in total, hardly any women besides the men and children, far from their targeted number.

Watching the two descend slowly, Ye Fan couldn't help but squint, a sharp glint of killing intent flashing in his eyes.

The other villagers were already stunned. Although they hadn't eaten pork, they had seen pigs run. Being a village on the edge of Xuan Beast Forest, they had seen plenty of cultivators and immediately recognized the two's identities.

"Who are you? What are you doing in our Stone Village?"

As the village head, Han Buguan was the first to step forward and question the two young cultivators.

The two completely ignored Han Buguan, only the long-faced cultivator said, "Old fifth, I counted, there are nine girls in total, which means we can collect nine drops of Yin Blood, is that enough?"

The cultivator called old fifth did a quick calculation and said, "Together with what was collected from the previous villages, it should be enough. No more words, let's get started!"

The two didn't hide their early-stage True Essence Realm cultivation, and their powerful aura combined with the accumulated evil aura from countless killings suddenly erupted.

In an instant, an invisible storm seemed to form with the two at the center, sweeping over the entire Stone Village, making all villagers feel as though they had fallen into an ice cave, nearly freezing their blood.

The strong-bodied, middle-aged men like Han Buguan were horrified and trembling, while the more timid women and children collapsed to the ground from the impact of the sharp evil aura.

“Tsk tsk, killing some ants is really boring, not even one dares to resist.” Seeing this, old fifth laughed sinisterly, walking forward step by step.

“Be careful not to harm those girls, otherwise if they die, where will we collect the Yin Blood?” The long-faced cultivator admonished warningly, eyeing old fifth unhappily.

“Don’t worry, I will be careful.”

Old fifth said nonchalantly, slowly raising his right hand, preparing for a bloodbath on the villagers of Stone Village.

They had done this many times, very skillfully, clearly seasoned bandits.

“Stop!”

Just as old fifth was about to move, a thunderous voice rang out, startling him into forgetting to lower his raised hand, bewilderedly looking in the direction of the voice.

“As cultivators, do you think it’s right to target defenseless common people?”

In their astonished gaze, Ye Fan walked over, unfazed by their aura, not even changing his expression.

Though seemingly slow, in the blink of an eye, Ye Fan stood between the two and the villagers of Stone Village, like a mountain blocking the entirety of their aura!

At the same time, Ye Fan released his own aura without reservation, directly forcing the two back three steps.

“Late-stage True Essence Realm?”

The two were shocked simultaneously, but quickly calmed down, looking at Ye Fan with a mocking grin, “Tsk tsk, who would’ve thought, in such a godforsaken little mountain village, a late-stage True Essence Realm cultivator was hidden, quite an unexpected turn of events this year!”

“Who are you? What are you collecting girls’ Yin Blood for?” Ye Fan asked coldly.

“We are from the Lou Family.”

Old fifth replied with a cold smile, arrogantly saying, “As for collecting girls’ Yin Blood, heh heh, although you’re a late-stage True Essence Realm cultivator, there are some things better left unasked. Otherwise, you might not even know how you died!”

Chapter 1274: They All Deserve to Die!

“That’s right, it’s not just that you’re a small cultivator at the late-stage True Yuan Realm, so what if you’re a cultivator in the Holy Embryo Realm? You still wouldn’t dare interfere with the Lou family’s affairs.”

The long-faced cultivator sneered as he threatened Ye Fan, thinking that the Lou family had such dominance here that no one would dare not give them face.

Previously, when they massacred other villages, they had also encountered meddlesome cultivators, but once they mentioned the Lou family’s name, those cultivators were scared silent, not daring to interfere.

He thought Ye Fan would be like those cultivators, scared off upon hearing the Lou family’s name, but he was wrong.

“Is that so? If they’re afraid to interfere, I dare!”

Ye Fan coldly shouted, swung his right hand, and slapped towards the long-faced cultivator’s head.

“Slap!”

Ye Fan’s slap was as fast as lightning, and the long-faced cultivator had no time to react, even though he didn’t use his True Yuan.

“Bang!”

A crisp sound echoed as the long-faced cultivator’s head shattered like an exploding watermelon, blood splattering everywhere.

“You...you...you dare attack us? We are members of the Lou family, aren’t you afraid of our family’s retaliation?” Upon seeing this, the cultivator known as ‘Old Fifth’ was filled with shock, his body trembling uncontrollably as he instinctively brought up the Lou family’s name again.

“The Lou family is so incredible? Forget about the Lou family, even if it’s the Di Clan, so what?”

Ye Fan was extremely angry, believing the actions of these two cultivators to be a great affront to both humans and gods, deserving of death!

As for the Lou family...

Before leaving, Elder Wu Xinhai had told him about some forces in Qing Province, never even mentioning the Lou family, indicating it’s just a minor and insignificant clan in Qing Province.

Moreover, as the Holy Spirit of Stone Village, he was thoroughly enraged, with killing intent in his heart. As he said, even if they were from the Di Clan, he would still kill them!

Said without intention, understood with intention.

Ye Fan's mention of the Di Clan nearly scared the cultivator into fainting, his mind consumed by one thought: Who on earth is this person, that he doesn't even fear the Di Clan?!

Though the Lou family in Qing Province can be considered a force, compared to the Di Clan, they're like ants compared to dragons, completely in different leagues—even a servant from the Di Clan would have more power than the Lou family's ancestor!

"Who...who...who exactly are you?"

After the shock, the cultivator known as 'Old Fifth' trembled as he asked.

"Who I am doesn't matter, what's important is, you'll either answer my questions or end up like your companion!" Ye Fan evasively answered, brimming with killing intent.

Hearing Ye Fan's words filled with murderous intent, and feeling the overwhelming killing aura emanating from Ye Fan, the cultivator known as 'Old Fifth' realized Ye Fan wasn't joking and would indeed kill him.

Furthermore, he knew he probably wouldn't last even one move in Ye Fan's hands.

"We are collecting young girls' Yin blood under Young Master Lou's orders..."

Under the threat of death, the cultivator known as 'Old Fifth' finally relented, his psychological defenses completely crumbling, and he told Ye Fan everything he knew.

His name was Ma Wu, and together with the long-faced man, they were servants of Young Master Lou Mangong. This time, they were acting on Lou Mangong's orders to collect young girls' Yin blood within a radius of a thousand miles.

"What does he want so much Yin blood for? Cultivating a demon technique?"

Ye Fan frowned. He was aware of young girls' Yin blood, known to be the essence of a young maiden's blood Qi untouched by intercourse, and once collected, the maiden would die inevitably. This Young Master Lou truly lacked virtue.

"Young Master Lou is cultivating the Blood Demon Technique, currently trying to condense a Holy Embryo to break through to the Holy Embryo Realm. It requires soaking in a blood pool to practice, and the pure Yin of young girls' Yin blood is a critical form of blood guide. Only sufficient blood guides can increase the success rate during the condensation of a Holy Embryo."

Faced with death, Ma Wu held nothing back and answered all of Ye Fan's questions truthfully.

"Bastard!"

Ye Fan couldn't help but curse, then calmed down and continued questioning, "So far, how much Yin blood have you collected?"

“Well...”

The cultivator hesitated around this question, but seeing Ye Fan’s cold, emotionless gaze, he eventually said, “The two of us have scoured all the villages within a radius of three thousand miles, collecting nearly three thousand young girls’ Yin blood...”

“Hiss~”

The exchange left the villagers of Stone Village behind Ye Fan gasping in disbelief, the color draining from their faces.

Three thousand young girls’ Yin blood meant three thousand budding young girls had died at their hands, akin to murderers.

Upon hearing this, Ye Fan felt like finishing off Ma Wu’s life with a slap, but recalling something, suppressed the urge.

“One last question, where is this Young Master Lou you mentioned now?” Ye Fan forcibly restrained the urge to smash Ma Wu with a punch, squeezing the words out from between his teeth.

“In Bai Xie Valley, five hundred miles from here.”

That cultivator hesitated for a moment but eventually chose to answer under Ye Fan's sharp gaze, his fear of death overwhelming his initial hesitation.

Yet he was also curious about why Ye Fan asked.

Why?

The next moment, Ye Fan gave him the answer.

"Take me there, or die, your choice!"

At this moment, Ye Fan's whole body erupted with an uncontrollable killing intent, his voice as cold as eternal ice.

"Alright... alright, I'll take you there!"

Ma Wu was so frightened that his face turned pale, and he instinctively nodded in agreement.

However, he was also very curious in his heart. Who exactly was this young cultivator at the late-stage True Yuan Realm? How dare he meddle in the Lou family's affairs?

In his view, unless Ye Fan was a Saint Heir from the Holy Land or a descendant of an ancient family, going to Bai Xie Valley to find Lou Mangong was tantamount to seeking death.

Bai Xie Valley was no peaceful place; besides Lou Mangong, there were two Holy Embryo Realm family elders accompanying him. A late-stage True Yuan Realm cultivator like Ye Fan, without any backing, going to Bai Xie Valley was like sending meat buns to dogs—no return.

“Holy Spirit, you’d better not go!”

Ye Fan himself didn’t care, but the other villagers of Stone Village knew the Lou family’s overwhelming power in Qing Province, especially in this area.

If Ye Fan went to find Lou Mangong like this, he would probably meet a disastrous end. Almost everyone was advising Ye Fan not to take the risk.

Hearing the villagers’ terrified voices, that cultivator sneered instantly. It seemed Ye Fan was nothing much, perhaps just a naive hothead, completely unaware of how powerful the Lou family was.

“Rest assured, everyone, I’ll be fine. You all go back and wait for me at home. I’ll come back once I settle this matter.”

Ye Fan smiled and reassured the villagers of Stone Village and Little Doudou, then said to Ma Wu: “Let’s go, take me to find your Young Master Lou. I want to see if he really has three heads and six arms.”

As soon as the words fell, he stopped wasting words. With one hand holding Ma Wu like he was holding a chick, he took off into the air and left Stone Village.

“As a cultivator, you must have an extraordinary identity. Why meddle in the affairs of these ants and invite unnecessary trouble for yourself?”

On the way to Bai Xie Valley, Ma Wu suppressed his fear, trying to extract Ye Fan’s identity and background.

On one hand, he was genuinely curious. On the Tianxuan Continent, cultivators and ordinary people were almost two completely separate worlds, rarely intersecting, let alone meddling in ordinary people’s affairs.

On the other hand, he wanted to probe Ye Fan’s words. If he could find out which power Ye Fan came from, he could plan accordingly.

“They regard me as the Holy Spirit, and I once promised them to protect Stone Village. I cannot ignore this matter.”

Ye Fan thought of the villagers of Stone Village when they invited him to be the Holy Spirit of Stone Village, and his heart surged with killing intent.

This Lou Mangong was the true culprit, and it would be unjust to the innocent dead if he didn’t slaughter him.

“You... you want to kill Young Master Lou?”

Although Ma Wu was lewd, his mind was sharp. Sensing Ye Fan’s suppressed killing intent, he suddenly realized why Ye Fan made him lead the way to Bai Xie Valley and exclaimed.

Ye Fan no longer answered, but his face became more somber as he accelerated through the air.

“Once we reach Bai Xie Valley, I must find a way to save my life.”

Ma Wu dared not speak further, but secretly hatched a small plan in his mind.

In his view, Ye Fan lacked much experience out in the world; otherwise, he wouldn’t have become the Holy Spirit for an ordinary little village.

Moreover, judging by Ye Fan’s age and cultivation, he wasn’t one of the young elite coming out of the Holy Land or an ancient family—those from the Holy Land and ancient families were at least Holy Embryo Realm cultivators when they went out for training, while Ye Fan, over twenty, was merely at the late-stage True Yuan Realm, making it absolutely impossible for him to be from an ancient family or the Holy Land!

Even those who walked out from the Wu Shang Sect as Saint Heirs were inevitably at the Holy Embryo Realm, if not late-stage, and simply didn’t match someone like Ye Fan in the True Yuan Realm.

Furthermore, he reckoned Ye Fan was purely seeking death by going to Bai Xie Valley to kill Lou Mangong. How could Lou Mangong be killed so easily?

As Young Master of the Lou family, Lou Mangong had experts around him like clouds, and he and the now-dead tall, thin face were just the lowest tier, merely tasked with dealing with ordinary people.

...

Five hundred miles wasn't far during flight, and they quickly approached Bai Xie Valley. As soon as Ye Fan got close, he discovered the whole valley was filled with surging blood and evil aura, with faint sounds of ghostly weeping in the air.

The entire valley was completely shrouded in black mist; it was impossible to see inside. The black mist was a natural barrier.

"There are nine people in this valley. Two have early-stage Holy Embryo Realm cultivation, and the rest are at the Peak of True Yuan Realm with considerable strength. If you tackle them one by one, you have a ninety percent chance of victory."

Elder Xuan's sensing ability was terrifyingly accurate. While Ye Fan sensed nothing, Elder Xuan had already figured out the situation inside and conveyed it to Ye Fan through Mind Transmission.

"They all deserve to die!"

Upon receiving this information, Ye Fan's long-suppressed killing intent exploded completely!

Chapter 1275: Directly Blown Apart!

"Ahead is Bai Xie Valley, I beg you to let me go..."

Sensing Ye Fan's strong killing intent, Ma Wu felt a chill in his heart and quickly pleaded for mercy.

Although he believed Ye Fan couldn't leave Bai Xie Valley alive, if Ye Feng decided to strike, the first to die would definitely be him, not Ye Fan.

"Let you go? Do you think it's possible? Even if you're not the main culprit, you're an accomplice. How can the lives of three thousand young girls be brushed aside with just one sentence?"

Ye Fan glanced coldly at Ma Wu, his voice incredibly sinister, revealing endless murderous intent.

"Even if I die, you won't survive either, you're doomed!"

Hearing the despair in Ye Fan's voice, Ma Wu realized Ye Fan would never let him go. His facial muscles twisted with hatred as he spoke.

As soon as the words fell, Ma Wu's body suddenly began to swell rapidly, on the verge of exploding in just the blink of an eye.

Self-destruction!

Knowing death was inevitable, Ma Wu's heart was filled with hatred. He decided to go down with everything, opting for self-destruction, trying to take Ye Fan with him.

In his view, even if he couldn't kill Ye Feng, he wanted to inflict some damage on Ye Fan, and the sound of the explosion would definitely alert everyone in Bai Xie Valley, making it impossible for Ye Fan to escape.

Bang!

A loud bang, Ma Wu's body suddenly exploded, splattering purplish-black blood, which landed on a stone and made a "sizzle" as it corroded.

Ye Fan seemed to have anticipated this long ago. With preparation, he moved his consciousness, activated the True Yuan within him to form True Essence Armor, and simultaneously blurred his footing, flashing a hundred meters away, successfully dodging Ma Wu's self-destruct attack.

Although Ma Wu's self-destruction didn't harm Ye Fan, the explosion was indeed significant, immediately alerting those in Bai Xie Valley.

Within the mist-shrouded Bai Xie Valley, flowers bloomed in profusion, but all of them appeared as if soaked in fresh blood, red enough to be shocking.

In a corner of Bai Xie Valley, there was a man-made pool, but instead of clear water, it contained blood with a pungent stench, looking at it gave a horrifying feeling.

In the Blood Pool, a young man with long blood-red hair, handsome yet sinister in appearance, was immersing himself, cultivating with his eyes closed.

The essence of the blood in the Blood Pool was being refined by him bit by bit, releasing a blood-colored Primordial Qi like mist, enveloping him.

He was none other than Lou Mangong, the eldest young master of the Lou Family mentioned by the evil cultivator. Already at the Peak of True Yuan Realm, he was just a step away from successfully condensing the Holy Embryo and becoming a cultivator at the Holy Embryo Realm.

However, the “Blood Demon Technique” he was cultivating required the Yin Blood of maidens as a Blood Guide to successfully condense the Holy Embryo—though the “Blood Demon Technique” was domineering, allowing rapid progress in the initial stages, the step to condense the Holy Embryo was a formidable barrier almost impossible to surpass.

Because when condensing the Holy Embryo with the Blood Demon Technique, terrifying illusions would appear, and anyone with slightly weaker determination would inevitably lose their mind and become a mere killing machine.

Swoosh!

Lou Mangong, who was cultivating, was suddenly startled by the explosion outside the valley. He opened his eyes, shooting out two blood lights, and coldly asked the two elders sitting by the Blood Pool: "Uncle Yu, what happened?"

The one Lou Mangong referred to as Uncle Yu was the most loyal old servant of the Lou Family, granted the surname Lou by the master, named Lou Wangyu, and one of the two Holy Embryo Realm cultivators protecting Lou Mangong this time.

Upon hearing Lou Mangong's words, Lou Wangyu said solemnly, "Based on my judgment, it should be Old Fifth who used the Blood Demon Disintegration Technique you taught him and self-destructed."

"What? What exactly happened?"

Upon hearing that his personal servant sent on a secret mission had died, Lou Mangong immediately became furious, leaping out of the Blood Pool. The blood on his body evaporated in an instant, filling the valley with a choking bloody smell.

"Uncle Yu, quickly send someone to check, something must have happened, Old Fifth wouldn't have used the Blood Demon Disintegration Technique for no reason, surely something unexpected happened."

Lou Mangong was filled with murderous intent, although he didn't care much about the death of a servant like Old Fifth, Old Fifth and another servant were his minions sent to collect maiden Yin Blood for him, they couldn't just die for no reason.

Moreover, it's clear that they died, and the collected Yin Blood is definitely lost too.

This way, it'll take more effort for him to reach the Holy Embryo Realm.

"Yes, master, I will immediately send someone to investigate."

Lou Wangyu stood respectfully, casually pointed out six cultivators at the Peak of True Yuan Realm standing by, dispatching them to check outside Bai Xie Valley.

He couldn't go because he needed to protect Lou Man Gong with another Holy Embryo Realm cultivator, Lou Wangshan, as Lou Man Gong couldn't be allowed any mishap, otherwise they couldn't answer to the Ancestor of the Lou Family.

Whoosh, whoosh, whoosh, whoosh, whoosh, whoosh...

The six cultivators at the Peak of True Yuan Realm exchanged glances, said nothing more, and immediately flew out of the valley.

Hmm?

Passing through the black fog blockade, the six saw Ye Fan swaggering towards them, immediately darkened their faces, forming a fan shape to block him outside the valley.

“Who are you? Was it you who killed Old Fifth?”

The leader of the six cultivators at the True Essence Realm Peak asked Ye Fan gloomily.

Although he saw that Ye Fan’s cultivation was only at the late-stage True Yuan Realm, he did not act outright, instead planning to first understand the situation.

Because he knew that in Qing Province, among the ordinary cultivators, there were few who dared to confront the Lou Family. Seeing Ye Fan fly openly, he instinctively thought Ye Fan had support, so he politely inquired.

“Indeed, it was I who killed them!”

Ye Fan evaded nothing, even though the six before him all had higher cultivation than him. If a real fight broke out, he didn’t truly regard these people as a threat.

“Why did you kill members of our Lou Family? Aren’t you afraid of having no place to stand in Qing Province? What force are you from? Report your sect early to avoid making mistakes.”

Upon hearing Ye Fan casually admit that the old fifth and the lean-faced cultivator were killed by him, the leader's face darkened, a hidden killing intent emerging.

Yet he still restrained himself from ordering an attack, as he couldn't discern Ye Fan's background and didn't know why Ye Fan wasn't intimidated by the Lou Family.

"You talk too much!"

Ye Fan coldly declared, now within a hundred meters of the six men, a distance that was insignificant for Ye Fan, who was at the late-stage True Yuan Realm.

Woosh!

As soon as he finished speaking, Ye Fan suddenly attacked, his figure flashing. In an instant, he was before the nearest person, throwing a punch that directly exploded the leader into the air.

Bam! Bam! Bam! Bam! Bam!

Having succeeded with one strike, Ye Feng did not pause, launching a flurry of blows. In a mere three seconds, he killed the remaining five True Essence Realm Peak assassins from the Lou Family, leaving them no time to react.

Although the six Lou Family's assassins were all at the True Essence Realm Peak, when it came to combat power, they were no match for Ye Fan. Moreover, seeing Ye Feng at the late-stage True Yuan Realm, they underestimated him, leading to a careless defeat and a humiliating death.

"Clap, clap, clap..."

At this moment, the sound of applause came from afar, approaching as a young man in a red robe, exuding a bloodthirsty aura, appeared within Ye Fan's sight.

This young man was none other than Lou Mangong, the eldest young master of the Lou Family, flanked by two early-stage Holy Embryo Realm cultivators, Lou Wangshan and Lou Wangyu.

The three clapped as they walked through the air, seeming pleased that Ye Fan had slain their assassins.

Yet, Ye Fan knew their smiles contained endless killing intent, though he remained unbothered. With Elder Xuan backing him and his strength capable of handling early-stage Holy Embryo Realm cultivators, it was not difficult.

Moreover, Elder Xuan had previously said that if they attacked separately, Ye Fan had a ninety percent chance of winning, so he wasn't worried.

The applause ceased, and Lou Mangong, Lou Wangshan, and Lou Wangyu stopped three hundred meters from Ye Fan, six pairs of eyes fixed intently on him.

Outside Bai Xie Valley, the atmosphere was especially tense. Facing one True Essence Realm Peak cultivator and two early-stage Holy Embryo Realm cultivators, Ye Fan remained exceptionally calm, showing neither fear nor tension, only endless killing intent and war intent.

“Very impressive, Sir, managing to easily kill cultivators a small realm higher than yourself without difficulty. You must not be an unknown figure. I’m really curious, what kind of person are you to kill my followers of the Lou Family?”

Lou Mangong truly couldn’t understand who in Qing Province, in this area, would dare to challenge them so boldly, taking a risk with the tiger, stirring up trouble where they shouldn’t.

Although the Lou Family wasn’t the sole dominating power in this generation, even other massive clans equal in power had to show them some respect. Who was this young man before him?

How dare he not regard the Lou Family at all!

“The one who will kill you!”

Ye Fan coldly replied, facing the two Holy Embryo Realm cultivators without a shred of concern, his killing intent directed straight at Lou Mangong.

“Hahahaha...”

After hearing Ye Fan's words, Lou Mangong laughed wildly, saying, "Are you trying to be funny with me?"

"Even though you can easily kill cultivators one small realm higher than you, you are still merely a late-stage True Yuan Realm ant. You want to kill me? You likely don't have the capability, and in the end, you'll be the one to die."

As he spoke, a ruthless gleam flashed in Lou Mangong's eyes, brimming with murderous intent. "I don't care who you are or what astonishing background you may have. Today, you must give me an explanation for killing my people. If your explanation doesn't satisfy me, you'll be buried with my servants!"

"Young master, why bother talking so much? Simply capture him, and let the old servant use the Hundred Ghosts Soul Searching Technique to find out everything."

Lou Wangyu coldly stared at Ye Fan, as if looking at a dead man.

Chapter 1276: Slaughter in Adversity

"Young master, let this old servant take action!"

Lou Wangyu asked for permission from Lou Mangong, coldly staring at Ye Fan, as if ready to kill him the moment Lou Mangong nodded.

"Alright, don't kill him directly. Capture him, and use the Soul Searching Technique on him."

Lou Mangong sneered, knowing that even asking wouldn't yield anything useful. Having Lou Wangyu capture him and then using the Soul Searching Technique to get the desired information was the plan.

"Understood, old servant!"

Lou Wangyu received the order and strode towards Ye Fan, sneering as he walked, "Boy, do you surrender, or shall I make a move?"

"Just you?!"

Ye Fan's tone was icy, his killing intent erupted uncontrollably, his aura surged, adjusting his physical strength to the maximum, combining it with True Yuan, and secretly activating the Thunderclap Treasure Skill, ready to seize the moment of Lou Wangyu's carelessness to solve him with overwhelming power, chilling his enemy's courage.

"Courting death!"

Lou Wangyu hadn't expected Ye Fan to be so arrogant, his old face momentarily hung with shame, he punched, the Holy Power condensing into a giant bear paw, striking fiercely at Ye Fan's chest.

"You're the one courting death!"

Ye Fan shouted explosively, stomping heavily on the ground, causing it to shatter as he shot towards Lou Wangyu like a lightning bolt.

Whoosh!

His form moved, Iron Fist swung!

In this instant, Ye Fan perfectly combined his physical strength with True Yuan, simultaneously activating the Thunderclap Treasure Skill, his fist enveloped in Thunder Power, transforming into a Thunder Dragon, its momentum astonishing.

Swish!

Feeling the energy fluctuations emanating from Ye Fan's right fist, Lou Wangyu's heart trembled greatly, his expression changing wildly!

Never did he expect that Ye Fan, only at the late-stage True Yuan Realm, could possess such a heaven-defying combat power.

In his shock, he hurriedly mobilized his Holy Power, attempting to fully confront Ye Fan's blow.

However—

It was too late!

Boom!

With a loud explosion, Ye Fan's punch shattered the bear claw formed by Holy Power, and then his punch kept its momentum, hitting Lou Wangyu's chest.

"Ah...!"

Lou Wangyu screamed miserably, his Protective Holy Power penetrated, his chest bore a gaping transparent hole the size of a bowl, blood gushed out wildly.

One punch!

Just one punch!

Ye Fan severely injured Lou Wangyu at the early-stage of the Holy Embryo Realm!

Lou Wangyu's Holy Embryo within was unstable, Holy Power chaotic, his vitals floated as blood spewed, almost losing combat capability, and he crashed heavily onto the distant ground, his bones nearly shattered.

"Hiss~"

This result caused Lou Mangong and Lou Wangshan to suck in a breath of cold air in shock!

The two stared wide-eyed at the severely injured Lou Wangyu on the ground, filled with disbelief, as if questioning: How... how is this possible?

To them, a Cultivator at the early-stage of the Holy Embryo Realm, having already condensed the Holy Embryo and possessing Holy Power, being heavily injured by a late-stage True Yuan Realm Cultivator with one move seemed utterly impossible.

Is it possible?

On one hand, Ye Fan utilized his fullest combat power, combining physical strength with True Yuan, and activated the "Thunderclap Treasure Skill" to achieve such a result.

On the other hand, Lou Wangyu indeed underestimated and was careless, not using his full strength initially, holding back because he undervalued Ye Fan's combat power and was ordered by Lou Mangong to capture Ye Fan alive, fearing accidentally killing him outright.

Is it possible?

Whoosh!

The response to the two was a sound of something tearing through the air.

Having succeeded with a strike, Ye Fan didn't pause, his form flashed, right fist clenched in a fist seal, striking towards the incapacitated Lou Wangyu.

"How dare you?!"

Lou Wangshan roared in anger, having a close relationship with Lou Wangyu, shocked by the earlier scene, rushed forward to stop Ye Fan, seeing he intended to deliver a fatal blow.

Plop!

Unfortunately, it was too late, Ye Fan's Punch Ray smashed Lou Wangyu to pieces, scattered limbs and flesh flew everywhere, even his Divine Soul didn't escape, directly blown to bits.

Soul dispersed!

After two punches, Lou Wangyu completely vanished from this world!

Having slain Lou Wangyu in two moves, Ye Fan didn't pause for a moment, turning to Lou Mangong and Lou Wangshan, his eyes sharp as knives, his killing intent unfazed: "Next, it's your turn."

"You deserve to die!"

Lou Wangshan was crazed with hatred, his long, gray-white hair moved without wind, showcasing pure Holy Power. Though also at the early-stage of the Holy Embryo Realm, his overall strength was slightly superior to Lou Wangyu's.

Upon witnessing Lou Wangyu's tragic death, he went entirely berserk, letting out a long howl, a shadow of a dragon-like Green Flood Dragon appeared behind him.

Instantly, the Green Flood Dragon materialized, bellowing deeply and lunging at Ye Fan, meanwhile, Lou Mangong also used the Blood Demon Technique, forcibly transforming into a ten-zhang tall Blood Demon, stomping towards Ye Fan fiercely.

"You must die!"

Ye Fan let out a resonant long howl, his bones cracking loudly, eyes shooting out two silver beams, his whole body surrounded by purple-gold lightning power.

“Domineering Fist!”

Ye Fan shouted lightly, punching toward the Blood Demon, directly blasting it apart in mid-air, turning it into a shower of blood rain that fell down.

At the same time, both of Ye Fan’s hands moved, True Yuan forming a giant purple-gold palm, violently striking toward the Green Flood Dragon.

Bang!

The purple-gold palm formed by the True Yuan struck hard on the forehead of the Green Flood Dragon, causing it to stagger, brushing past Ye Fan but failing to attack him.

However, the Green Flood Dragon was manifested by Lou Wangshan’s Holy Embryo, moving according to Lou Wangshan’s mind, and in the instant it brushed past Ye Fan, its tail whipped back, fiercely striking at Ye Fan’s body.

At the same time, Lou Man Gong also launched a wild attack on Ye Fan, putting Ye Fan at a disadvantage with the two joining forces.

Originally, Lou Wangshan alone could match Ye Fan in a cautious situation, and with Lou Man Gong disrupting on the side and attacking by surprise, Ye Fan suddenly found himself struggling to cope.

Though falling behind, Ye Fan stayed calm in the crisis, honing himself in adversity, not even using Divine Soul attacks, frequently unleashing Domineering Fist and Thunderclap Treasure Skill, momentarily leaving Lou Man Gong and Lou Wangshan at a loss.

Of course, Ye Fan was also very aware that he must break this situation to seize the initiative and have a chance to defeat them individually.

As the battle among the three raged on, the entire outside of Bai Xie Valley was almost wrecked beyond recognition, the ground splitting into terrifying fissures, shattered rocks everywhere and century-old trees toppled.

Ye Fan was fighting two opponents, using a late-stage True Essence Realm cultivation to withstand a cultivator at the True Essence Realm Peak and an early-stage Holy Embryo Realm cultivator, managing to hold on for so long without defeat — this itself was a miracle.

“How...how can he be this strong?”

Lou Wangshan and Lou Man Gong grew more and more alarmed as they fought.

Initially, after their shock subsided, they saw that Ye Fan was able to kill Lou Wangyu in two moves because it caught Lou Wangyu off guard.

In their view, as long as they were cautious, the two of them joining forces against Ye Fan would pose no problem at all.

However—

Unexpectedly, even though Ye Fan was at the late-stage of the True Essence Realm, he forced them to continuously use their ultimate skills, even resorting to their trump cards, yet still couldn't successfully take Ye Fan down.

This left them incredulous, completely overturning their understanding of cultivation!

In their eyes, even the so-called Holy Land disciples and Emperor's disciples were no more than this!

“Unification!”

With a wild roar, Lou Wangshan instantly made the Green Flood Dragon appear behind him, forcibly merging it into his body.

Unification.

The fusion of a Holy Embryo Realm cultivator with the Holy Embryo, allowing for maximum power of the Holy Embryo. Lou Wangshan was compelled into this last resort with no other options.

He firmly believed that after merging with the Holy Embryo, killing Ye Fan would be as easy as chopping vegetables or cutting melons!

Clearly, by this time he had completely lost the thought of capturing Ye Fan alive, only wanting to kill him as quickly as possible to prevent future troubles.

Lou Man Gong also knew that capturing Ye Fan alive was almost impossible, so he did not stop or remind, letting Lou Wangshan unification.

Crackling!

The sound of joints cracking came as Lou Wangshan and the Holy Embryo Green Flood Dragon successfully merged, his entire body elongating significantly, moving to entangle Ye Fan like a real Green Flood Dragon.

Ye Fan knew the moment of life and death had arrived, he absolutely couldn't hold back anymore, he must unleash his strongest combat power.

Thinking of this, Ye Fan's divine soul condensed into a golden Divine Sword, rushing out swiftly from Niu Wan Palace, rapidly shooting toward Lou Wangshan.

"Ah..."

Lou Wangshan never expected that in such a dangerous situation Ye Fan still preserved a kill strike. Being careless, he was caught off guard, Ye Fan's divine soul treasure sword severely slashed into his Divine Soul, causing a miserable scream, his Divine Soul unstable.

Whish!

Taking advantage of this opportunity, Ye Fan's figure flashed, darting behind Lou Wangshan, striking a punch to the back of Lou Wangshan's heart, the Thunder Power entwined on his right fist, combined with physical strength, bursting instantly!

"Puff!"

Lou Wangshan spat blood, his body flew backward, slamming hard into the stone wall in front, his whole body almost embedded into the stone.

"Give me back Uncle Shan!"

Lou Man Gong screamed wildly, rushing at Ye Fan with reckless abandon.

He knew very well, once Lou Wangshan died, no one would protect him, so he must stop Ye Fan from attacking Lou Wangshan at all costs.

No response.

Seize the chance while one's ill, take their life!

Ye Fan, seizing the opportunity, once again performed the Divine Soul Sword Technique, directly annihilating Lou Wangshan's Divine Soul, then with a wave of his right hand, a True Essence Palm roared forth.

Bang!

In the next moment.

The True Essence Palm crashed down with a boom, like swatting a fly, directly turning Lou Wangshan's body into a pile of mush!

Chapter 1277: A Cornered Dog Will Jump Over the Wall

"Ah...!"

Lou Mangong was terrified and angry, but he hadn't lost his sanity. He knew very well that since even Lou Wangshan had died at Ye Fan's hands, he definitely wasn't Ye Fan's match.

At the same time, he also saw that Ye Fan simply didn't care that he was a child of the Lou Family and was determined to kill him.

All of this made Lou Mangong, who had always relied on his family's power to act unrestrained, feel helpless and fearful for the first time.

No matter the heinous acts he committed before, outsiders dared not touch him out of respect for the Lou Family, which further nourished his arrogant and domineering personality.

However—

At this moment, he finally understood what fear was—Ye Fan could crush him with his strength and didn't care about the Lou Family's revenge at all.

Against such a person, Lou Mangong had no means whatsoever. He wasn't afraid of powerful and influential people because they often acted with reservations and wouldn't go to the ends to kill him.

But someone like Ye Fan was different; he cared about nothing and had no clue about the current overwhelming power of the Lou Family.

Escape!

In his fright, Lou Mangong's only thought was to find a way to escape!

He was ruthless in his heart; as long as he could survive this disaster, he'd mobilize the entire power of the Lou Family to pursue Ye Fan to the ends of the earth, skinned and bones ground to dust, to avenge today's shame.

"Don't fantasize about escaping, that's impossible!"

Ye Fan spoke coldly, as if penetrating Lou Mangong's thoughts.

No response.

Knowing he was no match for him, Lou Mangong was seeking an opportunity to escape.

He had one final escape technique—Blood Demon Escape!

Blood Demon Escape.

At the cost of burning one's own Life-bound Essence Blood, escape a thousand miles away in an instant.

At this critical juncture, even though Lou Mangong was unwilling, he had to use Blood Demon Escape. As long as he escaped from here, he was confident that he could flee from Ye Fan's hands by using stealth techniques.

Thinking and doing so, Lou Mangong seized the opportunity when Ye Fan was slightly distracted and decisively performed Blood Demon Escape, biting his tongue tip and spitting out a mouthful of Life-bound Essence Blood, creating a barrier of blood mist, and his whole person darted to the distance like lightning.

Swish!

Ye Fan snorted coldly, moved his body, and overtook Lou Mangong, waiting for him to collide.

Although Ye Fan didn't understand the mysteries of Blood Demon Escape, he knew that any escape method that consumed one's Life-bound Essence Blood couldn't be interrupted. Once interrupted, escaping again would be nearly impossible.

A person's Life-bound Essence Blood is extremely limited and cannot withstand constant consumption. After consuming it a few times, one is finished; even as arrogant as Lou Mangong was, he wouldn't dare to continuously use Blood Demon Escape.

Seeing Ye Fan faster in executing Blood Demon Escape than himself, Lou Mangong's heart sank instantly!

"No need to struggle. You slaughtered tens of thousands of ordinary people. You must die!"

Ye Fan spoke again, his voice as cold as ice, directly announcing Lou Mangong's death sentence.

“You... you... you can’t kill me. I am the young master of the Lou Family. My sister is Qingzi’s fiancée. If you kill me, not only will the Lou Family not let you go, but the Qing Family won’t either. You might even offend the Di Huang Clan Ling Family ultimately. You need to think this through!”

Feeling Ye Fan’s fierce killing intent, Lou Mangong could no longer stick to the arrogance of an unruly son; he hurriedly revealed his backing, hoping Ye Fan would retreat knowing the difficulties and spare him this time.

Lou Mangong had even thought it through; if he managed to escape this time, he would use the family’s power to capture Ye Fan, extract his Life Soul, and imprison him in Hell forever.

He was not a good man; his usual belief was that if someone killed his dog, he’d massacre their family. Suffering such a great loss this time, how could he ever let it go?

“Is the Lou Family really that remarkable?”

Ye Fan didn’t strike immediately but squinted his eyes, wanting to get more information about Qing Province, about the Lou Family, and the Qing Family from Lou Mangong’s mouth. This guy was mindless; extracting information from him was just too easy.

“Our Lou Family...”

Seeing Ye Fan not striking immediately, Lou Mangong thought he had persuaded him and quickly persuaded with eloquent words, exaggerating the strengths of the Lou Family and the relationship between the Lou Family and the Qing Family, the Qing Family and the Di Huang Clan Ling Family.

Through his storytelling, Ye Fan gradually understood what kind of entity the Lou Family was.

In the Qing Province, several mighty families and forces exist, among which the Lou Family is one.

The Lou Family is filled with talent.

The siblings, Lou Mangong, and his sister, Lou Manyue, were beauties from a young age, and their natural talent was much stronger in cultivation than Lou Mangong.

To consolidate the Lou Family's power in Qing Province, the family head arranged a marriage between Lou Manyue and Qingzi, the genius of Qing Province's first family, the Qing Family, from a young age.

As they grew older, Qingzi had become an impressive talent, a graceful gentleman, and Lou Manyue had blossomed into exceptional beauty. The two families were already at the stage of discussing marriage, and under Lou Manyue's efforts to please, Qingzi was very fond of her.

Having aligned with the Qing Family, the Lou Family's status rose dramatically, becoming extremely powerful in Qing Province, feared by none.

If it were only the Qing Family, it wouldn't be enough to make Lou Mangong so arrogant. The more important reason is the marriage alliance within the family.

Lou Manyue is Qing Zi's fiancée, naturally making Lou Mangong Qing Yu's brother-in-law.

Meanwhile, Qing Zi's sister, Qing Lian, is the fiancée of an outstanding genius from the Emperor Clan Ling Family, thus linking them to the massive power that stands among the top-tier forces of the Tianxuan Continent.

Furthermore, it's said that this genius from the Ling Family is being groomed as a future Great Emperor, with talents and comprehension that are exceptional in this era.

After every ten thousand years, when the influence left by the previous Great Emperor completely dissipates, a flourishing golden age emerges.

At this time, each Holy Land, every Di Clan, and the Wu Shang Sect will secretly cultivate the strongest genius.

Such a genius will become a contender on the future Emperor Road, as every major power hopes to have their representative emerge as the victor, successful in Proving Dao and becoming a Great Emperor who overlooks the heavens.

Every Great Emperor leaves behind indestructible legacies, be it a clan or a Holy Land.

However, some Wu Shang Sect or Holy Lands without Great Emperor legacies manage to rival the Di Clans due to their deep foundations and strong cards that qualify them to contend with the Di Clans.

For a colossal force like the Lou Family, aligning directly with an Emperor Clan is naturally out of reach, yet through the Qing Family, they can tenuously connect with the Emperor Clan Ling Family through marriage.

Throughout the Qing Province, almost every faction, large or small, has some subtle tie, overt or covert, with the Qing Family, forming a tangled and complex web of relationships.

After hearing Lou Mangong's narration, Ye Fan couldn't help but marvel at the Lou Family's methods of clinging to a dragon. If they wanted a direct connection with the Emperor Clan Ling Family, it would be impossible, and the Di Clans wouldn't consider them worthy.

However, forming a bond with the Qing Family is attainable for the Lou Family, and through them, maintaining any relation becomes harder to criticize by the Emperor Clan Ling Family.

"Are you done talking?"

Ye Fan looked leisurely at the loquacious Lou Mangong, coldly asking.

"Uh..."

Lou Mangong didn't expect that after such a detailed explanation, Ye Fan's attitude toward him remained unchanged. For a moment, he didn't know what to say.

"If you're done, you can die now!"

Ye Fan acted decisively. Since they had already offended the Lou Family, there was no point in making amends.

Because he knew, even if he spared Lou Mangong at this moment, the Lou Family wouldn't let him go. It was better to eliminate the root — with no survivors, it wouldn't be easy for the Lou Family to discover that he was the one who killed Lou Mangong.

Moreover, Ye Fan had long harbored murderous intent. Even if Lou Mangong was a Di Clan member, he would show no mercy.

Whoosh!

Ye Fan threw a punch at Lou Mangong's head, determined to end the battle quickly.

"I'll fight you to the death!"

Lou Mangong's face contorted with rage as he let out a roar, secretly detonating the Blood Demon Bomb hidden in his sleeve and hurling it at Ye Fan, simultaneously retreating swiftly!

The Blood Demon Bomb, similar to the one-time use Spiritual Artifact Ye Fan had purchased from the Treasure Pavilion, could only be used once, but its power was immense.

The Blood Demon Bomb had been bestowed upon Lou Mangong by the Family Head, serving as his final card!

Bang!

With a loud bang, the ground was blasted into a massive crater with a diameter of several kilometers.

Lou Mangong crawled out from beneath the dust, covered in dirt.

The Blood Demon Technique he practiced allowed energy conversion through a Secret Technique, minimizing the damage of the Blood Demon Bomb.

Even so, the intense explosion left him extremely disheveled, with his crimson robe reduced to tatters like a beggar's clothes.

Emerging from the soil, Lou Mangong scanned the area where Ye Fan originally stood, finding it empty, without even a trace of flesh or blood.

This discovery led him to confidently believe that Ye Fan was dead — under the intense explosion of the Blood Demon Bomb, Ye Fan couldn't possibly leave behind anything.

"Damn it, you dared to exterminate me. Do you really think Lou Mangong is that easy to kill?" Lou Mangong spat a mouthful of dirt-ridden saliva and said viciously.

"Slap!"

The response to Lou Mangong was a loud slap.

Ye Fan appeared out of thin air, delivering a slap that sent Lou Mangong flying!

Chapter 1278: My Path, My Way!

Lou Mangong faced Ye Fan alone, first attempting a Blood Demon Escape that failed, then again attempting to intimidate Ye Fan by invoking the Lou Family, the Qing Family, and even the Emperor Clan Ling Family, to no avail.

In desperation, he chose to act recklessly, directly using his final trump card—the Blood Demon Bomb.

However—

Just as Lou Mangong thought Ye Fan had been killed by the Blood Demon Bomb, Ye Fan suddenly appeared and slapped him flying with a single blow.

“You... you’re not dead? This... this is impossible!!”

Lou Mangong’s Protective True Essence was breached, and he suffered severe injuries, continuously coughing up blood, with an expression of utter terror and disbelief that Ye Fan could survive the explosion of the Blood Demon Bomb.

After all, given the terrifying power of the Blood Demon Bomb, even a cultivator in the Holy Embryo Realm would be sentenced to death!

Impossible?

Whoosh!

Ye Fan’s response was another slap!

With a wave of his right hand, Ye Fan unleashed a torrent of True Essence, forming a True Essence Palm that descended from the sky, completely enveloping Lou Mangong.

Puff!

The True Essence Palm struck down with great force, causing Lou Mangong's entire body to explode into a mist of blood, killing him on the spot.

Killing Lou Mangong with a palm strike, Ye Fan's expression remained unchanged. He stepped forward, taking Lou Mangong's and his subordinates' space bags into his hands.

For cultivators, a space bag is like a small portable warehouse, filled with various items, either as collections or spoils.

Of course, most are cultivation resources, that is, Spirit Stones and some high-quality Beast Cores.

After a careful inspection, Ye Fan found that Lou Mangong's subordinates were quite wealthy, with space bags containing various spiritual medicines, elixir pills, spiritual artifacts, and spirit stones.

On Lou Mangong's person, however, Ye Fan made an unexpected discovery—though Lou Mangong did not have a space bag, he did possess a Space Ring!

Ye Fan easily erased the imprint Lou Mangong had left on the Space Ring, and upon exploring it with his Divine Sense, found that its space was significantly larger than that of a space bag.

Moreover, more importantly, Ye Fan discovered that this Space Ring could hold living things!

A space bag can only hold inanimate objects, and cannot hold living things, marking the rarity of this Space Ring.

Lou Mangong's Space Ring contained many precious materials and spiritual medicines, especially a surprising amount of Spirit Stones, almost equivalent to the treasury of a small clan, showcasing the Lou Family's great wealth and expectations placed upon him.

After looting the possessions of the few, Ye Fan walked into the valley shrouded in black mist. According to Elder Xuan, there were no people left in Bai Xie Valley at this time, and the black mist served only to obscure vision without any other special function, so it could be ignored.

Upon entering Bai Xie Valley, Ye Fan immediately discovered a man-made blood pool excavated into one corner of the valley.

The blood pool was filled with surging Blood Qi and brimming Spiritual Energy. Despite the intense stench of blood, the Life Essence Energy was exceedingly rich, making it an excellent place for cultivating Demon Techniques.

Ye Fan immediately judged that this was the place where Lou Mangong cultivated, and only someone cultivating Blood Demon Techniques would build such a blood pool for practice.

"Tsk tsk, though it's a Demon Technique, it cannot be denied that the lad did put in work. Apart from dozens of rare Xuan Beast bloods, this blood pool includes dozens of spiritual medicines and maiden Yin Blood, exceptionally precious. Lad, take it; it's a good choice for cultivation."

After sensing the blood pool, Elder Xuan remarked with some emotion and simultaneously suggested Ye Fan collect the blood pool's contents for cultivation purposes.

"No way. If I take away this pool of fresh blood, how am I any different from that Lou Mangong I just killed? Wouldn't I become a detested demon by man and god alike as well?!" Ye Fan raised his eyebrow, refusing Elder Xuan's suggestion with an unusually firm attitude.

"Lad, this is your weakness in benevolence. The path of cultivation is fraught with thorns and slaughter. The Emperor Road contest is a path paved with blood and bones, full of killing and bloodshed. Without a heart as cold as iron, how can you defeat all competitors and achieve the position of Great Emperor?"

Elder Xuan advised Ye Fan not to be overly benevolent, as the world of cultivators is extremely cruel, with deceit and strife every day. Such a gentle heart cannot travel far on the Emperor Road contest.

"Elder Xuan, please stop. People differ, and so do their Emperor Roads."

"Perhaps Emperor Xuan fought with cold ruthlessness to ultimately ascend to the throne, but I will not repeat his old path. My path I will walk myself, my Dao I will understand myself!"

Ye Fan declared with resolute force, determined to uphold his own stance— on the Emperor Road, there can also be a compassionate side. He can be ruthless to enemies, but will not resort to unscrupulous means to enhance his power, as that would be no different from a Great Demon.

"Sigh..."

Elder Xuan sighed deeply, knowing that he could not persuade Ye Fan.

After spending so much time together, he knew that Ye Fan was a person of strong opinions, with his own stance and principles, not one to change his principles due to anyone's persuasion.

"Then, since you won't take the fresh blood, destroy the evidence."

Though he couldn't persuade Ye Fan, Elder Xuan still considered his well-being, reminding him, "The Lou Family's connection to the Emperor Clan Ling Family may be tenuous, but their influence is definitely not small. For safety's sake, you should destroy this place to prevent the Lou Family from discovering it."

Regarding Elder Xuan's reminder, Ye Fan wholly agreed.

Although the Lou Family cannot compare to the Emperor Clan Ling Family, it is definitely more powerful than the Xuanwu Sect. In Ye Fan's opinion, it should be on par with the power of Jueluo Country.

Such a force is something Ye Fan cannot oppose at the moment. The only way is to erase all traces, leaving no clues for anyone to know that he was responsible for all of this.

...

After destroying all the evidence, Ye Fan decided to return to Stone Village, firstly to reassure the villagers that he was safe and to inform them that the crisis was over.

Secondly, he needed to remind them not to reveal that they had seen him and the two subordinates of Lou Mangong, to prevent bringing about a catastrophe that could obliterate the village.

“The Holy Spirit has returned!”

When Ye Fan returned to Stone Village, the entire village erupted with excitement, and everyone started worshipping him as if he were a True Immortal.

This made Ye Fan feel somewhat uncomfortable.

He was used to mingling with ordinary people. Back on Earth, there weren't so many cultivators, and he mostly interacted with regular folks, so Ye Fan had a special feeling towards ordinary people.

Meanwhile, the Lou Family was in a state of turmoil.

The Lou Family's main base was in Chi Yang City, but their ancestral land, where they originally rose to power, was not in Chi Yang City; it was in a picturesque place.

This was a forbidden land, a critical area of the Lou Family. Except for the direct lineage who gained approval from the Clan Leader and the Ancestor, other branches had no right to access the ancestral land.

Beneath the ancestral land of the Lou Family lay a Dragon Vein, with Dragon Energy swirling and Immortal Energy lingering. It was undoubtedly a perfect place for cultivation, but only a few outstanding disciples of the Lou Family were qualified to reside there long-term.

On this day, an elder guarding the soul lamp in the Soul Hall of the Lou Family's ancestral house stumbled out, muttering frantically as he ran: "Not... not... it's not good, Mangong... Mangong's soul lamp has gone out!"

Although his voice was not loud, it exploded like thunder in the Lou Family's ancestral land.

Lou Mangong was the son of the current Clan Leader of the Lou Family. Whether in terms of natural talent or comprehension, he was considered outstanding and was regarded as the future hope of the Lou Family.

Everyone who received the news in the Lou Family turned pale. As cultivators, they understood well what the extinguishing of a soul lamp meant.

In both clans and sects, every direct lineage disciple or disciple favored by the family would leave a wisp of their Divine Soul in the ancestral land, crafted into a soul lamp.

The soul lamp represents a person's life; as long as the soul lamp doesn't go out, it means that person is still alive despite any dangers encountered.

But once the soul lamp is extinguished, it means that the person no longer exists. Lou Mangong, being the Lou Family's most valued disciple, of course, had left his soul lamp, and its position was extremely important.

The extinguishing of Lou Mangong's soul lamp meant that he was already dead!

This event caused a huge uproar in the entire Lou Family's ancestral land, shocking everyone from the ancestor to the direct lineage disciples.

"Investigate! At all costs, we must find out the murderer!!"

Especially the current Family Head of the Lou Family, Lou Mangong's father, Lou Dongliang, was furious. He demanded that all disciples in the clan drop everything and dedicate themselves entirely to this investigation, to find the murderer in the shortest time possible and capture them.

With this order, the entire Lou Family immediately became busy. Everyone put aside their tasks and fully invested in finding the murderer who killed Lou Mangong.

...

Ye Fan was completely unaware of all this.

While staying in Stone Village for half a day, Ye Fan admonished the villagers to keep their mouths shut, to avoid the consequences of careless talk.

Additionally, Ye Fan specifically sought out the village chief, Han Buguan, instructing him to hide the Xuan Beast Meat and Spiritual Medicine so that no outsider could discover them.

Aside from this, Ye Fan also prepared for the worst. If the corpse of the Xuan Beast and the Spiritual Medicine were found, he told the people of Stone Village to say they discovered them in the Xuan Beast Forest.

Han Buguan nodded, now absolutely obedient to Ye Fan's words. He understood that Ye Fan was doing this for the good of Stone Village.

After leaving Stone Village, Ye Fan headed towards Chi Yang City.

The most dangerous place is the safest, as Ye Fan well understood the concept of hiding in the open.

He wanted to see just how much power the Lou Family wielded in Chi Yang City!

Chapter 1279: Chi Yang City

After half a day's long journey, Ye Fan finally saw the iconic large city of Qing Province—Chi Yang City—by dusk!

The feeling Chi Yang City gave Ye Fan was even grander than Tianyuan City, with its continuous ancient city walls resembling the Great Wall on Earth.

The city walls were worn but tall, and there was a moat seven or eight zhang wide outside. Even the narrowest parts at the city gates were at least four zhang wide.

The city gate towers were also very majestic. You could see many ordinary people walking on the city walls, indicating their thickness.

According to Elder Xuan, Chi Yang City was quite famous in the Xuan Realm. It had existed for a very long time and survived several wars, preserving itself through the chaos.

Nominally, Chi Yang City was just a city, but compared to Tianyuan State, it was equivalent to an entire kingdom.

From quite a distance away, Ye Fan slowed his pace and walked into the city with the ordinary people going in and out.

The two cultivators guarding the city gate merely glanced at Ye Fan without questioning him, as the city was too large and there were too many cultivators for them to remember every one's name.

Walking the streets of the city, Ye Fan quickly found out the latest news about Chi Yang City without having to ask around. Many passersby were discussing the murder of Lou Mangong.

The Lou Family had dispatched scouts everywhere, searching for any suspicious clues.

However—

They would never dream that the murderer of Lou Mangong was swaggering into the city at that very moment.

Ye Fan didn't care about these news. He had handled the scene very well, and even if the Lou Family had extraordinary abilities, finding out he was the killer would be like looking for a needle in the ocean without any clues.

After drinking a few cups of wine and eating something at a tavern in the city, Ye Fan gave the waiter a scattered Low Grade Spirit Stone and asked him for directions to the Treasure Pavilion's branch in Chi Yang City.

After settling the bill, Ye Fan didn't linger and directly headed to the Treasure Pavilion branch located in Chi Yang City.

As he walked, Ye Fan marveled at how the Treasure Pavilion was indeed a powerful force that could contend with the Emperor Clans and the Holy Lands, having branches in every major city on the Tianxuan Continent. It could be said that where there was a city, there was a branch of the Treasure Pavilion.

He sought out the Treasure Pavilion branch to inquire about the progress in collecting the herbs needed to refine the Soul Gathering Pill, and to check the Treasure Pavilion's capability in procuring such items.

He carried a VIP Card that Ya Ling had given him, which allowed him access to the Treasure Pavilion's branches in every city to check the status of herb collection — this pass was specially arranged for him by Miss Ya Ling.

The Treasure Pavilion was situated in the most bustling area of Chi Yang City, quite a distance from the small tavern.

Within the city, Ye Fan naturally did not want to overly display his cultivation, walking only slightly faster than an ordinary person.

By the time he reached the Treasure Pavilion branch in Chi Yang City, the sky had already darkened.

The Treasure Pavilion's branch in Chi Yang City was luxuriously and grandly decorated, its opulence evident even from the outside.

Hoo!

Just as Ye Fan was about to step inside, a sedan suddenly appeared, carried swiftly by four strong men. A luxurious, gold-embroidered sedan burst out from the left side of the road.

Bang!

Unable to brake in time, the lead sedan bearer collided violently with Ye Fan, nearly knocking him flying.

Hmm?

Even with Ye Fan's powerful body, he felt slightly stifled in his chest, greatly shocked that an ordinary sedan bearer had such cultivation.

With a thought, Ye Fan used his divine consciousness to scan the four sedan bearers and was astonished to discover that they were all early-stage Holy Embryo Realm cultivators!

And this seemingly luxurious sedan was not ordinary but a top-grade Spiritual Artifact of the Holy Embryo Realm.

What kind of person needed four early-stage Holy Embryo Realm cultivators to carry a sedan? Who in the world sat inside this sedan?

Ye Fan was shocked and used his divine consciousness to scan it, discovering that inside sat a young girl, who was only in the early-stage of the Holy Embryo Realm.

This discovery left Ye Fan in disbelief, simultaneously realizing that the person inside the sedan did not rely on her own power to command these four early-stage Holy Embryo Realm cultivators, but rather, an influential force behind her.

“Are you blind?”

After colliding with Ye Fan, the coachman spat out harsh words, “Or courting death?”

Without a reply, Ye Fan silently stepped aside.

Though he was struck hard, Ye Fan ultimately chose to endure without getting angry on the spot, as he had faintly guessed the identity of the somewhat dangerously beautiful girl inside the sedan.

Sure enough, once the sedan stopped, a girl in red stepped out, her willow-like eyebrows raised, jade-like face filled with killing intent, her whole body exuding a chilling aura.

After stepping down from the sedan chair, the girl didn’t spare a glance at Ye Fan, as if he were an insignificant ant.

This was not surprising. The girl was younger than Ye Fan, yet she was already a cultivator at the early-stage of the Holy Embryo Realm. Ye Fan, who appeared to be twenty-three or twenty-four years old, was still at the True Essence Realm. They were not on the same level at all, so it was normal for the girl to ignore him.

As she passed by Ye Fan, the girl did not pause for a moment and with an air of arrogance, she walked into the Treasure Pavilion, leaving behind a trail of astonished exclamations.

“This must be the Lou Family’s pearl, Lady Lou Manyue! She is absolutely beautiful, like a fairy descending to the mortal world from the heavens.”

“Isn’t Lady Lou Manyue less than nineteen years old? Yet she has already formed the Holy Embryo and become a mighty figure in the Holy Embryo Realm. Truly, comparing people just makes you exasperated with jealousy!”

“Hehe, not only does Lady Lou Manyue possess beauty surpassing the Heavenly Immortals, but her strength also stands out among her peers. She is the leading figure of the younger generation in the entire Lou Family, naturally powerful.”

“I heard that Lady Lou Manyue is already betrothed to the Qing Family’s unrivaled genius, Qing Zi. The two families are now discussing marriage proposals. With such a strong alliance, it’s hard for the Lou Family not to rise rapidly.”

“Indeed, I have also heard that the Qing Family’s unparalleled genius Qing Zi’s sister, Qing Lian, is the number one genius in the entire Southern Domain. She is already betrothed to the Emperor Clan Ling Family’s genius and is cultivating in the Secret Realm of the Ling Family’s ancestral land. Once she emerges, it’s sure to cause a sensation across the entire Southern Domain!”

Listening to the discussions among the ordinary people and cultivators around him, Ye Fan immediately confirmed the judgment he had in his mind. He had previously suspected that in Chi Yang City, such a background could only belong to the Lou Family.

Now that it was confirmed through others' discussions, Ye Fan had no more doubts. He hadn't expected that Lou Mangong would have such a beautiful sister.

Having just arrived in Chi Yang City, Ye Fan did not get involved in the conversations of these people. Instead, he waited until Lou Manyue entered the Treasure Pavilion before he slowly walked into the Treasure Pavilion himself.

"Dear customer, may I assist you with anything?"

As soon as Ye Fan walked in, a cultivator at the True Essence Realm immediately approached, respectfully inquiring if he needed assistance.

This was something Ye Fan greatly appreciated. They say the customer is king, but how many truly treat customers as kings?

It's no wonder that the Treasure Pavilion can open branches in every city across the Tianxuan Continent. Not only do they have strong capabilities and a vast influence, but most importantly, they treat every customer with utmost courtesy, never showing a disdainful attitude and never looking down on people with 'dog eyes.'

Ye Fan smiled slightly and directly took out the VIP Card given to him by Yaling, holding it up in front of the Treasure Pavilion employee.

Upon seeing the VIP Card, the person's attitude immediately became much more cautious. After verifying the authenticity of the card, they respectfully led Ye Fan to a VIP room.

"Hello, I am the head of the Treasure Pavilion Chi Yang City branch. May I assist you with anything?"

Upon hearing that a VIP Card holder had arrived, the head of the Chi Yang City branch of the Treasure Pavilion quickly came over to inquire what Ye Fan needed help with.

At this moment, the Lou Family's gifted daughter was also in another VIP room but had been set aside. True VIP Card holders are few and far between, and each customer must be treated with the utmost care, which is the rule of the Treasure Pavilion.

Although the Lou Family is powerful and wealthy and also has a VIP Card gifted by the Treasure Pavilion, the card did not belong to Lou Manyue, and she had not brought a VIP Card with her.

"It's like this: back in Tianyuan City, I had previously requested Sister Yaling to help collect some medicinal herbs for me. Today, passing by this place, I wanted to ask how the collection is coming along."

Ye Fan didn't hesitate, explaining his purpose straightforwardly.

The head of the Treasure Pavilion branch in Chi Yang City was a very shrewd and plump individual, who looked quite affluent, resembling more a businessman.

After listening to Ye Fan's words, the head immediately summoned his assistant to inquire about the collection status of the medicinal herbs Ye Fan had listed.

Reportedly, the types of medicinal herbs Ye Fan had listed were numerous and mostly obscure, with only a few less rare auxiliary herbs collected so far.

"Honored guest, the herbs you need are really too rare. We need more time. Collecting these items mostly relies on luck."

The plump head said with some helplessness. He was quite frustrated because, theoretically, there should be no herb that the Treasure Pavilion couldn't obtain. However, some of the herbs on Ye Fan's list were unheard of, even for him, making it quite challenging.

"There's no rush. I understand that collecting them all isn't easy. You don't need to hurry—if you come across them, gather them; if not, there's nothing to be done."

Ye Fan was very understanding. As he said this, he took advantage of the head's gratefulness to subtly shift the topic, "Earlier at the entrance, I was nearly knocked over by a coolie carrying a sedan chair. I heard that it was the Lou Family's pearl, Lady Lou Manyue inside. Is she here to buy some rare treasures as well?"

This was where Ye Fan's cleverness showed. He knew the Treasure Pavilion maintained its professional ethics, and if he directly asked what Lou Manyue was doing there, the head would certainly not tell him.

But asking this way, the head would not guard against him and would surely reveal some useful information.

Chapter 1280: Gathering Information

“No, Lady Lou Manyue is here to investigate information. I’m sure you’ve heard, the direct lineage genius of the Lou Family, Lady Lou Manyue’s brother Lou Mangong, was killed by someone. Now the entire Lou Family is investigating this matter, hoping to find the culprit as soon as possible.”

The person in charge of the Treasure Pavilion was indeed unguarded and revealed a lot of useful information to Ye Fan in conversation.

Ye Fan had already thought of this; as a direct lineage member of the Lou Family and the future hope of the Lou Family, it’s impossible not to have a soul lamp.

“I quite admire the murderer, as they were incredibly clean with their hands, leaving no clues for the Lou Family. So with no other choice, Lou Manyue had to come to the Treasure Pavilion to investigate some information.”

“How come? Isn’t your Treasure Pavilion just for auctioning some valuable treasure medicines and spiritual artifacts? You also sell information?”

Ye Fan was greatly surprised. It was the first time he heard that the Treasure Pavilion, aside from auctioning treasures, also sold information, which is quite a lucrative business.

“Of course. Our Treasure Pavilion’s influence spans the entire Tianxuan Continent. There’s almost no information we can’t find out. As long as you can afford the price, our Treasure Pavilion can inquire about anyone’s information for you, even if we can’t find out everything, there will still be some clues.”

The plump person in charge of the Treasure Pavilion was quite proud, and he was telling the truth. With the vast energy of the Treasure Pavilion, as long as the person is still alive, there's almost nothing they can't find out.

After hearing his words, Ye Fan's heart stirred, and he said, "Can I entrust your establishment to investigate two people's information for me?"

"Of course you can, but let me say this first: the Treasure Pavilion doesn't work for free. To get the information, you have to be able to pay the right price!"

Although Ye Fan is a VIP, the Treasure Pavilion has its rules. The plump person in charge was a typical businessman, stating the terms clearly upfront.

Ye Fan smiled and said, "Naturally, don't worry, as long as you can find the information I want, I can afford the spirit stones."

"Very well, tell me, whose information would you like to discover?"

The plump person in charge asked, while being curious about what kind of strong background Ye Fan might have.

He got no answer to that. In his view, Ye Fan's strength was average, and his attire didn't suggest he was a descendant of a major power.

“I want to investigate the whereabouts and latest news of two people.”

As he spoke, Ye Fan described Chen Daozang’s appearance, build, and so on to the plump person in charge.

Ye Fan always believed that with Chen Daozang’s cunning and deep scheming, it was absolutely impossible for him to be dead. Perhaps in the not-too-distant future, he might meet him again; the only uncertainty was what level of cultivation Chen Daozang would have reached by then.

“Got it, once there’s any information, I’ll notify you immediately.”

As Ye Fan spoke, the person in charge noted it down, creating a record to prepare to report this task to the headquarters of the Treasure Pavilion, mobilizing the full power of the Treasure Pavilion to investigate this person named Chen Daozang.

“The second person is a woman...”

Afterward, Ye Fan described some details about his mother Ling Yun to the person in charge. The main reason for wanting to investigate his mother and Chen Daozang was to know his mother’s current situation.

A mother and son’s bond runs deep. From childhood to adulthood, Ye Fan had never met his mother, and this longing in his heart had been buried for too long.

“Wha...what? You want to investigate someone from the Emperor Clan Ling Family?”

The plump person in charge was astonished, his small eyes wide with surprise. Never did he expect that Ye Fan would investigate someone from the Emperor Clan, which was simply unbelievable.

“Yes!”

Ye Fan nodded but said nothing more.

The person in charge suppressed his shock and gave Ye Fan a deep look, but asked no more questions, as it was the rule; they were only responsible for providing information, not inquiring more from the customers.

“Regarding the Chen Daozang you mentioned before, we currently have no information, but we do have some about Ling Yun. Though they’re old stories, would you like to hear them?”

The person in charge quickly calmed down. Even though the Emperor Clan was strong, the Treasure Pavilion wasn’t to be underestimated either. As long as it wasn’t targeting the Emperor Clan, just probing some information wasn’t a problem.

“Tell me!”

Ye Fan was particularly concerned about his mother's information, even if it was outdated, he still wanted to know.

"More than twenty years ago, Ling Yun, as an outstanding genius of the Ling Family, had the hope of stepping onto the Emperor Road. But for some unknown reason, she was hunted by her own brother. After a fierce battle, Ling Yun disappeared carrying the Ling Family's treasured Emperor Weapon, the Nine Heavens Mysterious Crown, and was never heard from again."

The plump person in charge took a breath and continued, "At that time, this incident shook the entire Tianxuan Continent. After all, the significance of an Emperor Weapon is immeasurable. During that period, whether they had Emperor Weapons or not, sects, families, and holy lands all participated in the search for Ling Yun. Our Treasure Pavilion was no exception."

"The allure of an Emperor Weapon is simply too strong. Owning an Emperor Weapon can possibly elevate a sect that isn't very powerful to a significant force that can stand alongside holy lands and the Emperor Clan, so many sects secretly participated in the search and competition for Emperor Weapons."

"However, everyone came up empty-handed. Some say Ling Yun entered a space passage to another unknown world, while others say she was lost in space turbulence and perished. In any case, since then, Ling Yun has had no news, up until now."

"I see..."

Ye Fan was quite disappointed. These were all old news that he already knew from Elder Xuan.

What he wanted to know was about his mother Ling Yun's current situation.

Seeing Ye Fan looking somewhat disappointed, the chubby official hurriedly said, "I'm sorry, because we only know so much about Ling Yun's information, and it's not really a secret. Since you are our distinguished guest, this information is a complimentary gift, no charge."

"It's fine."

Ye Fan bitterly smiled, not because he cared about whether he had to pay Spirit Stones, but because the news the official provided was basically what he already knew, which meant it was pointless to say.

The only gain was that he hadn't expected there were so many people, apart from the Ling Family members, who were involved in chasing down his mother. It seemed the allure of the Emperor Weapon was truly too strong.

"Rest assured, as our distinguished guest, we will do our utmost to investigate your matters. I believe there will be results soon."

The chubby official assured repeatedly, as long as Chen Daozang was still alive, they would definitely be able to investigate it. Under intentional investigation, there was no information the Treasure Pavilion couldn't uncover.

Regarding his promise, Ye Fan could only choose to believe, because he had no other way. If he investigated it himself, who knew when he would find out.

“Oh, by the way, we may not have gotten some of the Treasure Medicines you commissioned us to find for refining Elixirs, but we did find some clues.”

As the chubby official was leaving, he suddenly seemed to remember something and turned back to Ye Fan, saying, “I also looked at the list you provided. Although you scrambled the order of the Elixir recipe, from the required materials, it’s definitely for refining something extraordinary. Several main ingredients might be in the Mist Sea.”

“Mist Sea? What does that mean?”

Ye Fan’s eyes narrowed instantly. When Elder Xuan had previously told him about some matters of the Xuan Realm, he had talked about the Mist Sea, knowing that the Mist Sea was a Forbidden Land.

“It’s like this...”

The chubby official began to explain.

According to the official’s account, Ye Fan gained a new understanding of the Mist Sea.

The Mist Sea is at the southernmost tip of Qing Province, lying between the Infinite Sea and Qing Province, and it is a very special place.

Previously, the Mist Sea was an absolute life Forbidden Land, shrouded in mist all year round. Even cultivators with extraordinary sight couldn't see far.

There were many peculiarities within the mist, fraught with danger. Previously, many people attempted to explore, not believing in the peril, but no one returned alive to tell what exactly was inside.

However, for some unknown reason, recently, the mist of the Mist Sea has partially dispersed, faintly revealing some scenes inside.

This news quickly spread, and many powerful figures from major forces came, hoping to find out the mystery.

The Mist Sea has swallowed countless lives over the years, including some exceptionally powerful cultivators. Everyone believes there are tremendous opportunities inside.

But before the mist fully disappears, no one dares to risk their life. Everyone is waiting, hoping for a suitable timing to enter and seek opportunities and treasures.

For tens of thousands of years, the mist of the Mist Sea had never dispersed before. According to people's speculations, there might be Divine Medicine inside.

Due to the vast scope of the Mist Sea, this time when the mist disperses, certainly many people will enter. Everyone is waiting for a suitable time to go in.

The chubby official told Ye Fan that perhaps inside the Mist Sea, there are the main materials he needs for refining Elixirs and suggested he try his luck there.

After hearing the official's introduction, Ye Fan's heart stirred. For Liu Li, this risk was worth taking.

In an instant, Ye Fan decided to try his luck; maybe he could find the main ingredient for refining the Soul Gathering Pill, or even if not, it would not be a wasted trip.

"By the way, if you plan to go, you can join a team. Our Treasure Pavilion has dispatched five geniuses from the Southern Domain to the Mist Sea this time, and the leader is an old acquaintance of yours."

"Old acquaintance?"

Ye Fan was astonished. He had always been in Tianyuan State, and apart from people from the Xuanwu Sect, the people he knew were few and far between.

"The Tianyuan State manager of the Treasure Pavilion, Miss Yaling!" The official revealed the mystery.

It's her?

Ye Fan's heart jolted, but then he understood.

At the same time, he couldn't help but give the official a curious look.

Because, when the official mentioned Yaling earlier, his tone was exceptionally respectful!