

Chapter 513 An Ambush

Chen Hao from his back. The group consisted of several well-dressed foreigners and people from China. An elderly man in a Chinese attire from the group smiled at Chen Hao and asked the latter to show him the metal tablet.

The old man—who sold the metal tablet to Chen Hao—was worried of getting robbed after obtaining so much money, thus he dared not stay any longer and left in haste.

“Sure, of course!” Chen Hao did not reject his request. He passed the metal tablet to the elderly man. When the elderly man in the Chinese attire touched the metal tablet, his expression changed abruptly.

“Mr. Shen, what did you see?” the leading foreigner asked.

“This metal tablet is extraordinary. There’s an immense spiritual energy lingering on it. It’s magical!” Mr. Shen was stunned by the aura and his hands were still trembling from excitement.

The foreigner was very pleased to hear that. He turned toward Chen Hao and

asked, "How much did you pay for it? I'm willing to pay you 50 times more than the price you paid for the metal tablet!"

Chen Hao gazed at Mr. Shen. It's unbelievable that this old man can sense the spiritual energy on the metal tablet and know it's magical! But, Chen Hao would not be bothered about the amount of money offered by the foreigner, whether it was 50 times or 5,000 times.

"Thanks! But, I do not wish to resell it!"
Chen Hao took the metal tablet from Mr. Shen.

The foreigner frowned and looked at a well-dressed young man beside him, who seemed to be about twenty-six years old. He shook his head and smiled. "Excuse me, Mister. I'm Lu Zhongxuan. I'm the organizer of this event and also the Young Master of the Lu Family. My advice to you is to sell the metal tablet, take the money and you don't have to worry about expenses anymore for the rest of your life!" Lu Zhongxuan suggested with a faint smile on his face.

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“Young man, are you... sure?” The old man looked at Chen Hao in disbelief with his bulging eyes.

Chen Hao smiled and nodded. He asked for the old man’s account number and credited five million into the latter’s account with a brief phone call of no more than 5 minutes.

“T-T-Thank you, young man!” The old man smiled happily.

He never dreamt that he could sell his metal tablet at a high price of five million.

On the other hand, Chen Hao bought the metal tablet at such a high price because he could sense an unusual spiritual energy surrounding it. The energy was almost the same as the one emitted from the Sun Totem that he first saw about six months ago. So, Chen Hao was certain that the item was magical.

“My dear friend, I’m wondering if you could be so kind as to allow me to have a look at that metal tablet of yours.” At the same time, a group of people walked toward

“Thanks again, but I’m not selling it!” Chen Hao kept the metal tablet, nodded at Lu Zhongxuan, and got ready to leave.

“Eh?” A white-haired elderly man who stood behind Lu Zhongxuan suddenly stepped forward and blocked Chen Hao’s way. The man had a pair of small and stone-cold eyes. He narrowed his eyes, which looked like the eyes of cobra. Chen Hao studied him and noticed the elderly man was surrounded by an unusual aura—he had Inner Energy! It seemed that the Lu Family had some incredible background which enabled them to survive in Long Jiang Province for so many years.

“Young Master Lu, what’s the meaning of this?” Chen Hao turned to look at Lu Zhongxuan, while the latter simply looked away.

Smack!

Suddenly, the elderly man grabbed Chen Hao’s wrist with his hand, all the while exerting his Inner Energy.

“We’re offering 50 times the price you paid.

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“Shouldn’t you be content with our offer?” the man asked emotionlessly. As soon as he finished his sentence, an invisible energy flowed into Chen Hao’s body.

Such a weak Qi!

Chen Hao thought to himself in disdain.

He then waved his hand lightly, directly incapacitating the elderly man’s Inner Energy.

Unable to balance himself due to the sudden disruption of Inner Energy flow, the elderly man staggered a few steps backward; he goggled at Chen Hao in total shock.

“I said I don’t want to sell it! Why won’t you leave me alone?” Chen Hao left quickly after he finished his sentence.

“Mr. Shen, are you sure that thing is a magical item? It definitely doesn’t look like one to me!” The foreigner frowned.

Mr. Shen took out a compass. “According to the compass, the thing that leads us

here is the metal tablet. Now, the pointer of the compass is still pointing in the direction of the metal tablet. This shows that I was right about the metal tablet!”

“If Mr. Shen is right, then, by hook or by crook, we need to get our hands on the metal tablet!” Lu Zhongxuan announced with his hands behind his back.

Then, he noticed the surprised elderly man beside him. “Uncle Kang, what’s wrong?”

“Why?” Meng Kang murmured while staring at his own hands, completely dazed.

“What do you mean, why?”

“Just now, I used Inner Energy to grasp his wrist tightly. But, why was my Inner Energy dissipated so suddenly?” Meng Kang kept thinking about the strange sensation he experienced just now, totally puzzled by it.

“Perhaps you were overthinking about it?” Meng Kang was a mysterious guest invited by Lu Zhongxuan’s father. So, he treated the elderly man with great respect.

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“No... The young man, he did something!” Meng Kang turned around and looked at Chen Hao’s back with his cold eyes.

Meanwhile, after Chen Hao left, he came directly to a place beside the moat outside.

He took out the black metal tablet and broke it with his internal energy.

Bang!

The metal tablet was shattered into pieces and a quaint dagger appeared before Chen Hao’s eyes.

“I’ve guessed correctly. There’s something hidden within it!”

The dagger had a dark shine around it; its edge was sharp and there were some mysterious designs carved on its surface. Since it was a magic tool, it was surrounded by an immense spiritual energy.

When Chen Hao held it in his hands, he was greatly affected by the dagger. He

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could feel an involuntary quiver from deep within his heart.

Chen Hao saw a huge rock standing a hundred meter away from the moat. He twisted his wrist fiercely and the dagger was shot out of his hand at a high speed.

Whoosh!

With a strange whistle, the dagger hit the rock after it flew through the air.

Boom!

The rock broke into pieces while dirt particles and shattered stones exploded and scattered in every direction.

The black dagger flew back into Chen Hao's hand at a high speed.

The dagger, however, was intact and without a scratch. Chen Hao was ecstatic. "I've found a true piece of treasure!"

When Chen Hao was about to leave, the bushes beside the moat rustled and eight shadowy figures moved closer toward

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Chen Hao slowly. Finally, they cornered Chen Hao and glared at him coldly. "Hey punk, where's the metal tablet? Hand it over if you want to live!" A bald man stepped forward and warned Chen Hao.

"I told you guys before. I won't sell it. Why do you guys have to force me to do something that I don't want to do? Won't it be nice if you guys leave me alone and we can just part ways nicely?" Chen Hao advised.

"Punk, you are dreaming, aren't you? Mr. Shen had confirmed that the metal tablet is a magical item. So, it's the metal tablet that we want, not you. Don't you understand? You'll be free if you just give us what we want! But, you refuse to sell us the item when we offer you money earlier. Well, I guess you won't be so lucky now!" the bald man remarked coldly.

"It will be great if we can settle this in peace. I don't want to kill anyone again during this period of time." Chen Hao was in a dilemma.

During this short period of time, Chen Hao

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had been living a normal life. His sanity was recovering rapidly at a stable pace.

He finally managed to return to his good old plain and carefree life.

Chen Hao cherished those normal days even though he knew that those days probably would not last long.

“Hahaha!” The eight men burst into laughter when they heard those words come out of Chen Hao’s mouth.

“Is the guy a retard? He doesn't want to kill anyone?”

“For all my life, I’ve seen people wet their pants when they’re about to die but I’ve never seen a person who has gone completely stupid out of fear of death!”

“The eight of us had carried out many missions when we worked as mercenaries back then but we’d never seen anything like this before!”

All the eight men laughed raucously.

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“I’m not joking. I’m dead serious. Let me go and everyone will be safe. That will be good.” Chen Hao took a deep breath and pleaded.

“Ha! Enough nonsense! Kill him, take the metal tablet, then we’ll have our mission accomplished!”

The bald man waved his hand; suddenly, his face became twisted with sadism.

Apparently, the eight men were used to killing people. Their eyes filled with a murderous look as they advanced toward Chen Hao...



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“Punk, looks like you are tired of living and wish to die. Well then—die!” As he spoke, one of the men pulled out a dagger and made a stabbing movement toward Chen Hao’s chest.

Bang! The dagger stopped on the surface of Chen Hao’s chest but did not sink into his flesh.

“What?” The man was dumbfounded.

“It’s your fault. All of you were asking for it!” Infuriated, Chen Hao swung his palm at the man’s head. Pop! The man’s head was distorted and blood came out of his eyes. The impact sent the man flying dozens of meters away from Chen Hao. Finally, the man dropped on to the ground as a lifeless pile of flesh.

“He’s a practitioner of the martial arts!” The bald man was also surprised. Then, he waved his hand and commanded, “All of us take on him together! Kill him!”

The remaining six men charged at Chen Hao together. However, they were no match for Chen Hao, who was very quick

and slick in his moves. Each and every strike he made was fatal. Within seconds, the six men laid dead on the ground; their corpses were brutally mutilated.

“Eh?” The bald man was the last survivor in the combat. He broke out in a cold sweat as he stood staring at the devilish Chen Hao, completely stupefied by Chen Hao’s actions. He was so petrified that he could not move his legs when he saw the bestial Chen Hao marching menacingly toward him with his red demonic eyes.

“I told you guys to work things out with me nicely and peacefully, didn’t I? Why do you have to force me to do this?” Chen Hao demanded as he stood in front of the bald man.

“Y-Yes... I’m sorry... I dare not... force you again... Misunderstandings... All these are misunderstandings!”

“I told you to stop before this, but still, you commanded your men to attack. You really went too far!” Chen Hao carefully brushed some dirt off the bald man’s shoulder.

“Thank you. I’m sorry. I won’t do it again. I didn’t know—ah!”

The bald man was shaking like a leaf. He thought Chen Hao would let him go, but the next moment, his limbs were torn apart, leaving a piercing loud shriek of pain echoing through the air above the moat.

Chen Hao then directed his gaze behind a tree. “I know you’re hiding there. Come out!” Chen Hao barked.

The bushes rustled as a white-haired elderly man came out slowly. It was Meng Kang; his face was pale.

“It’s unbelievable that you, Mister, have mastered such a great and powerful technique at such a young age. My name is Meng Kang. Forgive me, Mister, for I’ve looked down upon you. But Mister, I’m not with those men.”

Meng Kang had been following Chen Hao all these times. Therefore, he witnessed several great techniques performed by Chen Hao, including how the latter shattered the metal tablet with his bare

hands and destroyed the rock by simply throwing his dagger. He was amazed by Chen Hao's cultivation base. No wonder he can incapacitate my Inner Energy easily. His cultivation base is so powerful!

The reasons Meng Kang followed Chen Hao was to help Lu Zhongxuan get the metal tablet and to figure out Chen Hao's actual strength. But after Meng Kang saw Chen Hao's techniques, he hid behind a tree quietly and dared not leave nor move, because he was intimidated by Chen Hao's strength; not to mention that Chen Hao already knew he was there!

"You came for the metal tablet too?" Chen Hao asked flatly.

"Mister, I dare not lie. In fact, yes, I am. I've come for the metal tablet. But after having witnessed what you're capable of, I dare not have any thoughts of taking the metal tablet from you again!" It was unbelievable that an elderly man in his nineties like Meng Kang would treat Chen Hao with such respect. The fact was that Meng Kang had just attained Inner Energy and become an Inner Energy practitioner

recently. His strength now was about the same level as that of Chen Hao when the latter first trained in Inner Energy cultivation six months ago. Chen Hao, on the other hand, knew Meng Kang's strength.

Meng Kang was relieved to see Chen Hao's red demonic eyes had finally returned to normal and the murderous aura surrounding him had subsided.

"It must have been difficult for you to finally be able to cultivate Inner Energy after so many years of training. I do not wish to kill you. Just leave and warn the others to stop pursuing me and the metal tablet," Chen Hao advised after he regained his composure.

"Of course, Mister, I'll follow your advice. Thank you for sparing my life. There's something I don't understand..." Meng Kang's eyes filled with excitement and hope.

"What do you want to know?" Chen Hao wondered.

“I’ve dedicated my entire life to the research and practice of martial arts. I’d only become an Inner Energy practitioner seven years ago. I’m hoping one day I will be able to enter the Celestial Rankings of China and to spread the teachings of the School of Ancient Fighting Styles around the world. But, it’s rather difficult to get into the ranking. Excuse me, Mister, may I ask you, what is your rank?”

“The Celestial Rankings of China? I’m not sure what that is.” Chen Hao said calmly after returning to his normal self.

“Every Inner Energy practitioner will be rated on the Celestial Rankings of China according to their strength. It’s a ranking list controlled by the four largest Hidden Tribes of China. Why Mister, based on your cultivation base, I thought you are aware of the ranking. It’s hard to believe that you don’t know anything about it! Perhaps you are not from the four Hidden Tribes?” Meng Kang asked in surprise.

“The four Hidden Tribes?”

“Yes. They consist of four families, namely

the Yuwen Family, the Nangong Family, the Mo Family and the Fang Family. I thought you are an expert from one of the four Hidden Tribes!”

“I only heard of the Mo Family.” Chen Hao raised his eyebrow.

The Hidden Tribes were extremely mysterious and they seldom contacted people from the outer world. Besides, they took pride in themselves for possessing a sacred lineage which ordinary people did not possess. Therefore, most of them looked down on people from the outer world. Although these people were not in the public eye, members of their families were widely distributed around the world and were involved in various industries. Moreover, most of the families had legacies and histories extending over 1,000 years. Chen Hao had the opportunity to witness their power and influence when the Mo Family appeared a year ago.

“People on the ranking are all elite practitioners. About 80% of them are members of the four Hidden Tribes. We, the Meng Family of the School of Ancient

Fighting Styles—since my great-grandparents passed away—had never managed to produce any Inner Energy practitioner until my generation! I'd say it's rather disappointing!" Meng Kang said with a bitter smile on his face.

"So, exactly how strong is the most powerful martial arts expert from the four families?" Chen Hao asked again.

"Nobody knows. But rumor has it that each of the four families has a martial arts grandmaster who enters the ranking. Even members of the four Hidden Tribes can never be certain of the truth of the rumor. So, it remains just as a rumor. Oh yes, Mister, how may I address you? Based on your strength, I'd say you must be one of the top 50 in the ranking," Meng Kang said politely.

As he said that, Meng Kang carefully took out an old scroll from his pocket; the scroll recorded the names of top 100 strongest elite practitioners in the ranking.

"How is it possible that my name will be recorded in the scroll when I don't even

know about the rankings?" Chen Hao glanced at the scroll and said half-heartedly.

"Wait!" Chen Hao pointed at the empty 'No. 1' spot on the scroll. "Why is the 'No. 1' spot being left empty? It seems like the name was removed on purpose."

"Oh Mister, you don't know about it. That's because the man who ranked first in the listing is extremely mysterious. I heard about him from my father. The man had become invincible at a young age. Later on, he challenged various experts from the four Hidden Tribes one by one, all on his own. All the experts were no match for the man. However, the man's track is hard to trace. A lot of people want to find out about his background, but to no avail. Well, like my father said before, no man in the world will dare to claim the 'No. 1' spot as long as he is still alive. Since then, it has become a custom to leave the 'No. 1' spot in the ranking empty!" Meng Kang explained to Chen Hao. Obviously, he was very obsessed with the Celestial Rankings.

"I see." Chen Hao nodded.

Chapter 514 The Celestial Rankings of China

“Mister, being able to meet you today is indeed a great honor for me and the Meng Family. It’s almost noon now, Mister. Would you be kind enough to accept my invitation for lunch?” Meng Kang wished to befriend Chen Hao.

“Sure! I’ll come over as soon as I tell my friend about it.” Chen Hao nodded. He thought Meng Kang would be able to tell him more about information he wanted to know, as the latter seemed to be knowledgeable. So, Chen Hao agreed to have lunch with Meng Kang.



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