

Chapter 19 - The Might of the Ox Demon

Time passed swiftly, and in the blink of an eye, autumn had arrived. The maple leaves in the mountains gradually reddened as the golden ears of rice swelled up bit by bit.

An ox cart slowly rolled through the path between the fields. No one controlled the black ox that pulled a cart covered in a thick layer of hides. Atop the hides was a young man with a piece of straw in his mouth, resting on his arms leisurely as he looked at the sky. Tied to his waist was a blade and a wooden tablet. He was Li Qingshan.

Currently, he was heading to Cypress Stream town more than five kilometres away with over a thousand taels of silver on him. In such a remote mountain hamlet, trying to spend money was really difficult.

If he wanted to make purchases, he could only go to larger towns or cities. Qingyang city had an abundance of goods, but it was simply too far away, and it definitely would not be cheap.

He could only fall back on his second choice and go to the town. At a set time every month, the town would hold a large-scale gathering. When that happened, the people of the nearby villages would all go to the town for the market and buy, sell, or exchange items. This was the best time to buy ginseng. He had gathered quite a number of beast hides as well, so he could use this opportunity to get them off his hands.

Originally, Li Qingshan did not want the black ox to pull the cart anymore, but the black ox did not mind continuing being an ordinary beast of burden.

When he arrived at Cypress Stream village, the sun had only just risen. The small town was bustling with people shuffling about. Many small pedlars called out loudly to sell their goods. It was an extremely lively sight.

Li Qingshan found an empty place and spread out the hides on the cloth canvas he had prepared beforehand. He did not copy others by calling out; instead, he simply sat by the side and meditated. He did not let this opportunity to cultivate pass by.

The sliver of weak qi in his body had already become much larger. He was like a child who just loved playing around, constantly controlling the sliver of true qi to move through his body.

He did not move, but this was extremely exhausting. Li Qingshan would open his eyes from time to time to answer customers who had come to ask for the price.

He possessed a tremendous sum on him, and he did not have any plans to make a lot of money from the hides. He only wanted to get rid of them as quickly as possible so that he could buy ginseng. As a result, the price was extremely cheap.

Although he was resistant to bargaining, business was still extremely successful. It was almost winter, and Li Qingshan himself had first-hand experience of the agony of biting, cold winds. There was not a single normal person who did not want a set of leather shoes or a coat, so a great group of people gathered around him before long.

“Move! Move!” A few young men with hunting knives and bows and arrows on their backs parted the crowd with hostility. They surrounded Li Qingshan’s canvas, casting a shadow over him.

Li Qingshan opened his eyes. “What do you require of me?” His insight was no longer the same as before. He could tell with a single glance that these people were difficult to deal with.

Although all of them were young and none of them seemed particularly vicious, they all possessed a vigorous aura of murder. If patch-haired Liu was only a mangy dog that barked about, they would be vicious watch dogs. Any single one of them could easily kill patch-haired Liu.

A short, valiant man with a short beard asked, “Where did you get your hides from?”

His companions extended their hands and played around the hides and discovered that it really was just like the rumours. The hides did not have any arrow holes or any other traces of damage. They were rare hides of superior quality, but they were being sold for even less than regular hides.

“If you want it, then buy it. If you don’t want it, then leave. Don’t block the sunlight.” Li Qingshan could not be bothered to make up a lie and answer for these strangers. He shut his eyes again and continued to cultivate.

The people in the surroundings had already backed away, but they did not leave. Instead, more and more people gathered over. There were various discussions, but all of it was clearly audible.

“Aren’t they hunters from the Drawn Reins village?” “He’s actually bold enough to look down on people from the Drawn Reins village. How many lives does he think he has?”

Drawn Reins village! Li Qingshan’s heart skipped a beat. Even with how he lived under a rock, this place still reverberated through his ears like thunder. This was one of the villages near Cypress Stream town. It was located extremely deeply within the myriad mountains. The people that dwelled there were all hunters of several generations. No wonder they possessed such an aura.

Compared to a village that mainly focused on agriculture like Crouching Ox village, the people of Drawn Reins village were much fiercer. They would face off against wild beasts within the mountains every day. They even practised martial arts that had been passed down by their ancestors. Not only were they beyond the government of Qingyang city’s control, but they never even paid taxes either.

There had once been people from Qingyang city who had tried to launch a punitive expedition against the village. However, before they could even reach it, they fell for countless traps and ambushes. By the time they arrived at the village after much difficulty, they had already lost half of their men, and their morale was at an absolute low. The leading general could only draw in his reins before the village and flee back to Qingyang city in dejection.

As a result, the original name of the village had been forgotten by people, being changed to ‘Drawn Reins village’.

As a result, it was obvious just how proud the people from there would be for being part of a village that could repel an army. If a half-grown teenager wanted to stand against them, it would be utterly hopeless without a doubt.

The short young man said furiously, “You can’t sell these hides here!”

“How come?” Li Qingshan opened his eyes; light seemed to flash through them.

It made the young men think of the beasts in the mountains. The shining eyes in the dark made them raise their guards instinctively, but they were not afraid. They were hunters who fought against such wild beasts. At the same time, they saw how Li Qingshan was dressed as a farmer, so they looked down on him even more. “Because I don’t want you to!” He extended a hand and tried to flip over Li Qingshan’s canvas.

A large, coarse hand clamped down on the young man’s hand like a metal lock, actually causing him some pain.

The young man was surprised. This guy is strong. However, his reaction was not delayed at all, and he directly threw a punch with his left hand at Li Qingshan’s face.

His companions showed no intentions of interfering, only watching on from one side. They seemed extremely confident, and they even smiled with contempt.

Speaking of which, this was the first time Li Qingshan had actually fought against someone. Patch-haired Liu was unable to put up any resistance at all when he was drunk, while the witch had died when the Ghost Mist backfired.

The punch pierced through the air, giving him no time to think. However, he had not been cultivating all these days for nothing. Li Qingshan twisted his head to one side instinctively, stamped with his right foot, and twisted his body forwards.

Using his spine as his core, the muscles throughout his body pulsed, and his shoulder slammed towards the young man with tremendous force.

A shoulder slam was an extremely common move among fist styles. The Ox Demon’s Fist of Great Strength included it as well. He also fused the three forms into it when he used this move.

The Ox Demon Stamps its Hooves consolidated his footing and allowed him to draw strength from the ground. The Ox Demon Forges its Hide toughened his body such that he was immovable. The Ox Demon Butts its Horns allowed him to use his body as a horn to butt his opponent. He completed all of this in one stroke.

The black ox was crouching on the ground behind and nodded in satisfaction.

However, the young man paled in fright. He felt like he had been struck by a charging bull. His chest ached as he was thrown away, falling into the crowd. He felt like all of his bones had become dislocated.

The discussions within the surrounding crowd were silenced, while the young man’s companions were stunned. They attacked him furiously.

Li Qingshan grew stern. Fighting a single opponent and taking on many at the same time were two completely different matters altogether. Unless the difference in strength was tremendous, it was difficult to take down several people with just two hands. Once a bull became encircled by a group of vicious hunting dogs, the only fate that awaited it was being ripped to pieces and dying.

In the face of danger, the sliver of true qi in his body became active. It flowed into Li Qingshan's eyes, which he placed all of his focus on. He only felt their movements suddenly slow down, becoming so slow that even their angry expressions became clearly visible.