

### Chapter 32 - Uncompromising

Grandpa Zang showed much admiration. Many of the mountain villages were the same as the Ginseng King village, especially the hunting villages. After all, hunting people was much easier than hunting beasts. Coming across a lone traveller, taking them out with a single arrow and taking their things was simply too easy.

Ever since Huang Binghu became the leader of the Drawn Reins village, he restrained the villagers strictly, so this had never happened.

On the mountain path, the black ox said to Li Qingshan, "With how you gave away the spiritual wine, there are at least two people who managed to tell you possess the spiritual ginseng."

Li Qingshan said, "I know!"

"It's very likely for them to turn against you such that you will remain in the Drawn Reins village forever."

"I know that as well." As a person of two lives, Li Qingshan was not an ignorant teenager. He did know about the many dark sides to human nature.

"However, I'm willing to take that risk. Living in the world, if you always have to be careful, untrusting of others, untrusting of yourself, what's the point to it all even if you achieve supreme abilities?"

He already possessed some estimate of his personal strength. He was confident that even in the worst-case scenario, he could kill his way out. And, he believed that his strength could act as a deterrent to others.

I receive them so enthusiastically while I silently press against my sword. Would you call that being mature?

Li Qingshan sighed slightly inside. He gently rubbed the wooden tablet with the two words, 'south' and 'An', carved into it. At least, there was still a person, er, ghost he could wholeheartedly trust and believe in.

He travelled along the rugged mountain path slowly. The maple trees along the way were as vibrant as fire, ranging from red, orange, yellow, and green. It was beautiful.

Li Qingshan produced his reed flute again and began playing it. The clear flute sound rang through the autumn mountains.

"You still can't find it?" The young man regarded as 'young master' by all the swordsmen asked rather anxiously. He had led a group of people to search Bailao peak for many days now. He even expanded the range, but he did not even catch a glimpse of the spiritual ginseng.

"Young master, we've already trampled the Ginseng King village. The spiritual ginseng definitely isn't in there. They said that the Drawn Reins village must have it. Should we trample the Drawn Reins village as well?" a swordsman asked.

“Hmph, they have a huge grievance with the Drawn Reins village, so of course they would say that. Do they really think that I don’t know? The Drawn Reins village pulled back their men on the day of the Mid-Autumn Festival before going to the north to hold their autumn hunt. The Drawn Reins village can’t be compared to the bumpkins from the Ginseng King village. In the past, Huang Binghu had made a name for himself in the jianghu with his archery. Unless we have to, it’s best if we don’t provoke him.”

Not a single person from the jianghu dared to take bows or crossbows lightly. Even first-rate masters would suffer in the face of a wave of arrows.

“Wise be the young master. It looks like we can only wait until the next full moon.”

The young master felt rather proud of himself as well. Suddenly, he heard something. “What’s that sound?”

“Seems like a flute.”

“A flute? The closest places to here are only the Ginseng King village and the Drawn Reins village. Let’s go take a look.”

The black ox suddenly stopped. Li Qingshan also saw them using his superior senses. There were over a dozen people, stepping on treetops and boulders lightly as they made their way over from the distance. Every single one of them carried a treasured sword. They were extremely elegant.

“Are those movement techniques?” Li Qingshan sighed in surprise before immediately thinking of the person that Xiao An had mentioned, causing him to raise his vigilance. However, he should have been quite far away from Bailao peak.

The young master arrived before Li Qingshan first, and his subordinates all praised loudly, “Impressive movement technique, young master!”

Li Qingshan saw the young master. He had red lips and white teeth, quite a handsome appearance. After being praised by his subordinates, he smiled arrogantly. If it were not for the calluses on his sword-wielding hand, he would seem like the son of a noble.

He studied the young master, but the young master did not study him, only glancing at him slightly. “You’re from the Drawn Reins village?”

Li Qingshan said, “I am. May I ask who you are, sir?”

“Do you really think you have the right to ask for our young master’s name?” A tall, skinny swordsman with an unhealthy complexion saw how Li Qingshan was seated so boldly on the ox and drew his sword in a flash, launching a straight stab at his face. “Get off there!” He purposefully wanted to frighten him off the ox so that he could make a fool of himself.

Li Qingshan’s face turned frosty. He moved to the side slowly and waited for the swordsman to overextend. He grasped the timing and his eyes shone, quickly extending a hand and grabbing the blade of the sword.

The tall, skinny swordsman sneered inside, You actually grabbed my sword? This is a sword forged from fine steel that the sect gave me. I just need to twist it, and I can chop your hand off.”

However, when he twisted the sword, not only did nothing go to plan, but the fine, steel sword even became twisted like a rope. The blade of the sword remained stuck in Li Qingshan's hands without the slightest movement. The strength of his entire arm could not even match a few fingers from Li Qingshan.

Li Qingshan was infuriated. They had no ill feelings at all, yet from the slightest disagreement, this person wanted to disable him for life. These jianghu people were just too vicious.

With a clang, the sword snapped. The tall, skinny swordsman's face darkened and paled. A little-known nobody had actually broken his sword, so how was he supposed to hold back his anger? He grabbed his broken sword and tried to rush Li Qingshan.

The young master scolded, "Chi Da, get back here. Your skills are poor, so stop embarrassing our Dragon's Gate sword sect."

"Yes, I am useless. I will seek punishment from the disciplinary hall when we return." The tall, skinny swordsman by the name of Chi Da was afraid of refusing, so he backed away. However, he glanced at Li Qingshan extremely viciously.

The young master was rather interested. "I never thought that I would come across a master of external martial arts so deep in the mountains. You do have the right to learn my name. Listen up, I am Yang Jun of the Dragon's Gate sword sect."

Li Qingshan shook his head. "Never heard of it."

"You ignorant countryman. The swords of our Dragon's Gate sword sect can't just be broken by anyone. I won't make it difficult for you. You just need to leave your hand behind!"

"Then which hand do you want, may I ask?" Li Qingshan was furious. He was tempted to cut down Yang Jun on the spot. Originally, he believed that even if practitioners of martial arts did not have a strong sense of justice, they would be somewhat cultured at the very least. However, looking at it now, he was completely wrong.

The good and evil of human nature was all up to a single thought. Once a person possessed the power to be able to play with the lives of others in their hands, just how many people could retain their so-called nature and not take whatever they wanted, doing whatever they wanted?

However, this group of people could not be compared to the ginseng foragers who knew some martial arts. They were actual practitioners of martial arts. The Ox Demon Forges its Hide could block punches, but it could not block fine steel swords embedded with inner force. And, they all possessed movements techniques, so even fleeing would be difficult.

Yang Jun said, "But seeing how young you are, you have quite the aptitude to be able to practise your external martial arts to such a level. If I disable you just like this, it would be quite a pity. Why don't you serve me instead?"

That was his true objective, as most practitioners of external martial arts were honest and frank. They did not think as much as practitioners of internal martial arts, so they were quite literally people who had muscles for brains. As a result, many jianghu masters had practitioners of external martial arts as their retainer.

He had always wanted to be like the nobles and recruit a person like this. He took a liking towards Li Qingshan as soon as he saw him. Wasn't this exactly what he wanted? He wanted to deal a psychological blow to him right now. All he needed to do in the future would be give him some slight benefits, and he would be able to raise a loyal hound.

"Young master, you mustn't!" Chi Da tried to dissuade him in a hurry. If the kid really did become the young master's retainer, his status would only rise.

Yang Jun shot him a glance, and he immediately shut up.

Another swordsman said, "Why don't you quickly agree? Our Dragon's Gate sword sect reigns over Qingyang city. Even becoming a menial disciple is difficult. The young master has now chosen to promote you, and you can achieve instant glory as a result."

"I, Li Qingshan, will never serve as a retainer for anyone!" Li Qingshan stressed each word. He came from another world. He possessed the same feelings of love and hatred as the people of this world, but there was one difference. He pledged no loyalty. He would not pledge himself to anybody, no matter how kind-hearted, noble, righteous, or terrifyingly powerful they were.

He might pursue someone and befriend that person, but he would never pledge his loyalty to them, let alone a wastrel like Yang Jun. He did not have much experience in roaming through the jianghu, but he could tell that Yang Jun's martial arts were nothing extraordinary out of these people. It was only because of his identity as the young master that he had a retinue around him.