

Chapter 52 - The Might of a Spiritual Artifact

The Dragon's Gate sect was arrogant and overbearing, but in the eyes of the people right now, Li Qingshan was ten times more arrogant and overbearing than them. He had tried to determine the fates of two major organisations of the jianghu that had resided around Qingyang in a single sentence.

However, there was no longer any anger on Yang Anzhi's face anymore. He had recovered the calmness and rationality that belonged to a swordsman. With his instincts, he had discerned Li Qingshan as one of the few, powerful enemies he would have in his life.

However, he had absolute confidence in himself. His agile, graceful movement technique was the bane of Li Qingshan's tough, external martial arts, just like how Li Qingshan was the bane of Liu Hong's iron fists. No matter how much strength he had, it would all be useless if he could not land a blow. Li Qingshan could block the swords of regular disciples, but he could not block the sword of a mighty second-rate master like him.

Li Qingshan recognised this as well, and he could clearly sense that Yang Anzhi's sword was not like the fine, steel swords wielded by the regular disciples. Against an opponent like that, it was impossible for him to flee. He could only confront them head-on.

As the two of them faced off against one another, the restaurant suddenly felt quiet. The killing aura was suffocating.

Clang!

Yang Anzhi drew his sword from his sheathe. It shone coldly as it swept towards Li Qingshan.

Li Qingshan's eyes narrowed. The sword actually possessed a dim glow as well, just like the knife he had purchased today.

People had names and so did swords. This was a renowned sword that everyone knew about within Qingyang city.

The Soaring Dragon sword, the treasured swords passed down through the Dragon's Gate sect. Only the sect master had the right to wield it. People with nicknames were powerful, and swords with names were sharp! Even in the hands of ordinary people, this sword could cut through steel like clay. If it ended up in the hands of an actual swordsman, it would be a true tool for killing.

"It's a spiritual artifact!" Returning to before the banquet, the black ox said as he stared at Li Qingshan's knife.

"What's a spiritual artifact?" Li Qingshan played around with the knife. "Have I really found treasure?" He had seen many novels written like this in his past life, casually strolling through the market, finding a supreme artifact of the gods and from then on, becoming unstoppable.

The black ox sneered, shattering his imagination. "This thing has barely been embedded with a layer of spiritual qi. It's not even a low grade spiritual artifact. It was probably created as practice by some weapon forging apprentice. However, at your level, you can consider it as a treasure!" The black ox's sneer grew heavier and heavier.

This weapon could only be used as a throwing knife. Whether it be to cultivators or ordinary practitioners of martial arts, it was a piece of trash that could not provide any help at all.

Li Qingshan stowed the knife away carefully. This was the first, err, spiritual artifact he had obtained. It held great sentimental value. After all, it was something rare, wasn't it?

However, he had never thought that in the blink of an eye, he would see another. Moreover, it was in the hands of his enemy.

The shopkeeper of the Arsenal of Arms was among the aristocrats. As the other aristocrats fled frantically, he gazed at the Soaring Dragon sword in infatuation.

If this sword belonged to the Arsenal Of Arms, he would never sell it even if Li Qingshan offered up all of his silver and knelt on the ground to beg him.

The sword arrived. Just as everyone thought Li Qingshan would just charge straight into it like an unstoppable beast like earlier, he instead rolled on the ground and avoided the edge of the sword, arriving at a corner of the restaurant.

Yang Anzhi's reactions were even faster. With a twist of his wrist, the sword became like a shadow, pursuing Li Qingshan closely. It was just a few feet away, such that the coldness of the sword sent chills through Li Qingshan's body.

The aristocrats all fled and screamed when the two approached. They had thought they would be used as meat shields.

Li Qingshan was not enough of a scoundrel to do that. He reached out and grabbed a square table, wielding it as a weapon.

The huge table seemed weightless in his hand. He kicked up quite the gale, making the candles waver.

Yang Anzhi ignored this completely. Wherever the sword flashed, the table was cut to pieces like jello. In the blink of an eye, only a table leg remained in Li Qingshan's hands.

As if he were at his wit's end, Li Qingshan threw the table leg viciously. Perhaps he was frantic, as he had even missed with it, and it flew past Yang Anzhi's head.

Yang Anzhi's sword seemed unstoppable, while Li Qingshan's back was pressed against the wall, unable to retreat or dodge.

The restaurant suddenly plunged into darkness. The table leg that Li Qingshan had thrown snuffed out the final candle.

"You want to escape? It's too late!" Yang Anzhi yelled out, but he failed to see the smile appear on Li Qingshan's face when the darkness descended; there was no panic.

Bang! Li Qingshan brought his hands together. In the hair's breadth between his hands, he had caught the Soaring Dragon sword.

Yang Anzhi sneered. I possess the momentum from lunging forward, so you better stop dreaming about trapping my sword with your strength! The sword suddenly darted forward, rubbing against Li Qingshan's palms. It actually produced the ear-splitting sound of scraping of metal.

When the tip of the sword was only three inches away from Li Qingshan's throat, Yang Anzhi's expression suddenly changed. A chilling wind attacked the back of his head, which made him feel life-threatening danger that he had not experienced for several years now.

That's impossible! That was his first thought.

Although he could not see, his senses still remained. Someone had approached him from behind, so how had he failed to sense it? Just how great of a movement technique was that? Or was it a hidden weapon?

If the lanterns were still lit within the restaurant, everyone would be able to see a knife stab towards the back of Yang Anzhi's head. It really was like a hidden weapon. However, if there were people present who had awakened their eyes like Li Qingshan, they would see the knife being grasped in Xiao An's pure-white, little hand, fitting snugly.

Ever since Xiao An began practising the Path of White Bone and Great Beauty, he had refined himself in fresh blood everyday, so he no longer feared vitality at such a level. He could approach masters of martial arts now, but he still lacked a suitable weapon.

If he continued to use a normal hunting blade, it would only bounce away from Yang Anzhi's body due to his protective inner force even when he did not practise external martial arts. Xiao An would struggle to deliver any fatal wounds.

But it was different now. The spiritual artifact knife in Xiao An's hand was not a piece of a trash, but an extraordinary weapon for assassination.

Li Qingshan used himself as bait just to draw Yang Anzhi here. He had never prepared this beforehand with Xiao An. He had not even spoken to him about this. There was only great trust, and Xiao An did not disappoint him. Their cooperation was seamless.

Yang Anzhi was impressive as well. With just a hair's breadth left, he lowered his head and dodged. The knife basically shaved his scalp. He was surprised, but he did not panic. He only continued to push. Once he killed Li Qingshan, he could handle the assassin behind him with composure.

The knife suddenly twisted and stabbed down.

It's not a hidden weapon!

Yang Anzhi's head was immediately thrown into disorder, as even now, he had not detected the presence of any person behind him. A cold sensation rose up in his heart. Without caring anymore, he tried to pull back his sword and block.

Li Qingshan's palms gripped the blade of the sword firmly as he snickered. It's easy for you to stab, but the one that'll get run through first will definitely be your head. You want to pull back now? Don't even think about it!

A person never parts with their sword. This was probably a lesson every swordsman had gone through, let alone the fact that the sword in question now was a treasured sword passed down through the generations.

The sword remained in Li Qingshan's hands, but the person flew away with an extremely graceful movement technique. However, the person was no longer graceful anymore. He was dishevelled, in an utter mess.

This had all happened within a single instant. From when Yang Anzhi swung his sword, to forcing Li Qingshan to the wall, and then to the assassination attempt from behind, only a few seconds had passed.

The aristocrats were still panicking, yet to return to their senses. Only Liu Hong sniffed with his nose. He had discovered the scent of blood. He was shocked. Was Yang Anzhi injured? How did this kid injure him?

In the final moment, Yang Anzhi had abandoned his sword decisively, but he had paid a severe price. Xiao An dragged the knife through his back, leaving behind a wound that was over a foot in length. Blood flowed out rapidly.

Li Qingshan felt some admiration for his decisiveness. This was the first time he had experienced those emotions mentioned in the books. Even for arch nemeses who would do everything to claim each others' lives, they would still feel shock for the skills displayed by their opponent in battle.

However, he obviously would not let himself be entangled with these emotions or anything related to the morality of the situation. Since they were enemies through and through, they were supposed to do everything they could to kill each other.

The restaurant was dark, with slight glimmers of firelight filtering through the windows. Yang Anzhi widened his eyes as he did his best to adapt to the darkness. A dark figure appeared, lunging over with a gust of wind and giving off a slight, sanguine smell.