

Chapter 581 - Accepting a Master

Duoge still wanted to say something when an unprecedented feeling assaulted his heart. Many matters of the past surged over like a tsunami—his long-gone home, his dead parents. These matters of the past he originally never cared about suddenly became clear. They pierced his heart and sorrow swelled up controllably. Tears fell like rain.

Li Qingshan rubbed his head. Just cry. Pain will always surpass everything that has been indoctrinated into you and the senseless numbness. Even wild beasts know sorrow.

Duoge was able to turn back from completely demonifying this time all thanks to the profound wonders of the Demon Suppression Statuary. Li Qingshan's assistance and his own comprehension had both been vital, immediately freeing him from the demon heart and allowing him to feel the many emotions of regular people.

He had gone through an intense battle and experienced a wave of emotions he had never felt before. After crying bitterly, Duoge slowly fell asleep.

Li Qingshan looked back, gazing at the doorway underneath the Demon Suppression statue. He experienced an urge to venture on and go to the next floor. He now possessed the Traitorous Demon sword and the Demon Suppression Tower. His strength had increased drastically.

Xiao An grabbed his sleeve and shook her head gently. Li Qingshan nodded. If he ventured down any further, true Demon Commanders would definitely appear. Troublesome situations would arise even from the slightest negligence.

"Come down. Come down. I'll give you the greatest power there is!"

At this moment, a voice suddenly rang out in his head. It was extremely imposing and had a strange buzz to it, enough for people to do its bidding involuntarily.

Li Qingshan was momentarily dazed before returning to his senses immediately. "Who are you? Where are you?"

"I'm on the very bottom. As long as you come, I'll give you the greatest power there is so that you can run about freely and do whatever you want."

Li Qingshan could not help but laugh. "Hah. You better wait until you can run about freely and do whatever you want yourself before you tell me these things. Compared to being a prisoner, I think I'd be better off sticking with the jailors."

Even when the Unraging monk wanted to take him as his disciple, he had declined, let alone risking his life to look for a prisoner. Do you really think I'm an idiot?

"How dare you speak to me like that!? Do you know who I am!?" The voice flew into a rage immediately.

Li Qingshan's head buzzed. The strange buzz suddenly became louder, like several dozen steel saws being used on his head. It was unbearably painful. His expression changed, but he continued to mock. "I don't care who you are. You piece of trash, if you're so capable, why don't you come and kill me?"

Each floor of the Demon Suppression hall was like a space of its own. The voice could reach here from the bottom floor, so the owner of the voice definitely possessed extraordinary strength. And, he was suppressed on the bottom floor, so he was definitely a vicious demon even among an entire generation. He definitely was not someone Li Qingshan could deal with right now. However, since he was suppressed, what was there to be afraid of? By the time you break out five centuries later, would you believe me if I say I can kill you with a flick of my finger?

The voice immediately fell quiet. Suddenly, the ground beneath him began to shake. The entire Demon Suppression hall rumbled as if a vicious beast was breaking free from its suppression.

Surely not today, right? How'd I manage to come here on the exact day he emerges!?! Li Qingshan was stunned.

At this moment, a huge, fat monk with a smile stretching from ear to ear walked over with his sleeves drifting in the air, holding a lamb leg in one hand and a gourd of alcohol in the other.

He wore a pair of shabby straw sandals. With each step he took, the shaking of the Demon Suppression hall reduced by a little. When he arrived before Li Qingshan, the Demon Suppression hall had settled down completely. He was the Unraging monk.

The Unraging monk was quite tall and large, but he only reached up to Li Qingshan's waist after the latter demonified. However, as he walked over, Li Qingshan only felt like a mountain was being pushed towards him.

The Unraging monk chuckled. "My good disciple, why don't you formally acknowledge me as your master?"

Li Qingshan was taken aback. "Didn't I say I didn't want to become a monk?"

"You have a destiny with the bud- bah, we have a destiny together!" The Unraging monk extended his hand and pressed it against Li Qingshan's shoulder, revealing a mysterious smile.

Due to the difference between their heights, the Unraging monk originally needed to leap up if he wanted to reach Li Qingshan's shoulder. In the eyes of bystanders, it seemed like Li Qingshan had reverted to human form out of his own free will and allowed the Unragin Monk to touch him.

However, when Li Qingshan glanced at the chubby hand on his shoulder, he understood exactly what had happened. When the hand extended over, an incomparably tremendous yet extremely familiar power suppressed all of his demonic nature and demon qi.

Suddenly, he understood what the Unraging monk meant by "we have a destiny together". This was the power of suppressing demons from the Demon Suppression Statuary! And, it was clearly much more powerful and pure than his own. Perhaps the Unraging monk had completely comprehended the Demon Suppression Statuary already!

As it turned out, the Unraging monk was actually the first person who had managed to practice the Demon Suppression Statuary in the Chan Monastery of Deva-Nāga.

Li Qingshan could not help but study this plump, amicable face oozing with smiles. Who would have thought in the Chan Monastery of Deva-Nāga, the Unraging monk who was equivalent to a Monk King actually possessed such an intense demonic nature inside.

He did not know, but over a century ago, the Unraging monk was known for being easily angered and killing ruthlessly. Only when his personality changed drastically later on did he become easygoing and beaming with smiles like right now. However, Li Qingshan could vaguely guess that the Unraging monk might be even more dangerous than the Dauntless monk.

Li Qingshan cursed inside, Sure enough, if they aren't bald, they aren't vicious, and if they're aren't vicious, they aren't bald. Monks are all up to no good. Afterwards, he deliberated and said, "Master, I'm going home to get married very soon, so I really can't afford to be converted into a monk. Please just spare me!"

No matter how powerful that voice earlier was, it was still suppressed beneath the Demon Suppression hall, making it equivalent to a caged beast. However, the beast right before him was standing outside its cage, with a claw placed on his shoulder.

"You are the first one to learn the Demon Suppression Statuary in the Chan Monastery of Deva-Nāga. The Demon Suppression Statuary is a supreme cultivation method of the Chan Monastery of Deva-Nāga, a secret method that is not taught to outsiders. My senior brother said you intruded upon the inner courtyard, but that's just an excuse. He won't do anything to you at the end of the day. However, now that it involves this cultivation method, do you think he'll still spare you even if I spare you?"

"This..."

"If you don't agree, then all we can do is cripple your demon heart and take the Demon Suppression Statuary away from you. Everything you've gained from this trip will be reduced to nothing."

"Then you better do it, master. That woman is deeply in love with me. I cannot afford to let her down." Li Qingshan exhaled deeply.

"Hmm? I didn't expect you to be the infatuated type given how heartless you seemed." The Unraging monk shot him a glance and clicked his tongue in wonder.

"You're the infatuated type. Your whole family is the infatuated type. I'm a heartless, real man," as Li Qingshan said that, he felt like he was becoming closer to a demon for some reason. Was it because of the demon heart he had condensed?

"Forget it, you don't need to be a monk." the Unraging monk waved his hand.

"Thank you for your generosity, master!" Li Qingshan clasped his hands.

"But you still have to acknowledge me as your master!"

"Huh?"

"Secular disciples are not forbidden from marriage. Eating meat and drinking alcohol are no problems either. You don't have anything to complain about now, do you?"

The Unraging monk scratched his bald head and smiled bitterly. With his status and cultivation, there were enough people who wanted him as their master to line up all the way from the Chan Monastery of Deva-Nāga to South Hub city. He went out of his way to accept this kid as his disciple, yet he still found all sorts of excuses to turn him down.

“Could I ask one more question?” Li Qingshan said sternly.

“Ask away!”

“Will there be any benefits?”

“What benefits do you want?” The Unraging monk chuckled. Li Qingshan felt his shoulder tighten. The Unraging monk’s voice erupted in Li Qingshan’s head. “If you don’t agree right now, would you believe me if I say I’ll wipe you off the face of this world?”

“My great master, please accept a bow from your disciple!”

Li Qingshan was not unreasonable. It was not like he had to remain in the Chan Monastery of Deva-Nāga as a monk anyway, and he would have a powerful figure who had undergone the third heavenly tribulation as a master, so why not?

But monk, oh monk, you better not regret it in the future after forcing me to become your disciple today.

The Unraging monk smiled. “Very good. From today onwards, you are my first disciple. You can inherit my legacy in the future.”

Li Qingshan snickered and said nothing.

The Unraging monk touched Duoge’s face gently, and Duoge woke up. He spotted a huge, round face like the full moon and leapt in fright inside. Right before him was the most terrifying existence among humans—a monk!

It was rumoured that humans were extremely foolish and lowly already, while monks were at the top of the list. Their revered leaders had actually done something as unbelievably foolish as cutting off their own flesh to feed hawks, and if anyone refused to be as foolish as them, they would beat up and kill them.

Out of fright, Duoge hid behind Li Qingshan in a hurry. Although he had broken free from the restraint that his demon heart had over his mind, certain inherent beliefs could not be changed so easily.

The Unraging monk asked with a smile, “Do you want to leave the Demon Suppression hall?”

“I do!”

Duoge said immediately. After breaking free from the demon heart’s restraint, he immediately sensed how unfortunate it was to be trapped in here, forced to fight and kill his own clansmen. Even if there was only a shred of opportunity of leaving this place, he would go for it.

“As you accept me as your master, you can leave here.”

The Unraging monk said. This little demonfolk had managed to recover from absolute demonification. Although he had not changed yet, he had already gained some comprehension over the Demon Suppression Statuary. If he received some further guidance, then perhaps he was the most optimal choice to practise the Demon Suppression Statuary as someone born as a demon.

Duoge immediately began to hesitate. For him to accept a monk as his master was like a devoted buddhist monk accepting a demonfolk as a master. It was very difficult to accept.

This was also evidence of him breaking free from the demon heart's restraint. He had developed a conscious will and judgement. In the past, he probably would have agreed eagerly as long as there were benefits, without any regard for whether it was right or wrong.

"Just accept him as your master!"

Li Qingshan extended his hand and grabbed Duoge by the back of his neck, lifting him out and placing him before him. He had already reached this point. There was nothing else he could say.

"Venerable!"

Duoge turned around in surprise, glancing at Li Qingshan before glancing at the smiling Unraging monk. He dropped to his knees and performed a few solid bows. He thought, Since even the venerable has mentioned it, there's obviously a great reason to do so. The venerable will never harm me!

Despite demonifying and going crazy, many of the memories still remained intact. He knew Li Qingshan had saved him again, and a strange feeling he had never experienced before filled his heart. That was gratitude and trust, emotions that demonfolk did not possess.

"I only have the two of you as disciples under me. In the future, you should help each other as junior and senior brothers... Forget it, it's all some nonsense. Do you have any alcohol cups?"

Li Qingshan took out a few alcohol cups. The Unraging monk filled three of them before picking up one for himself. He chuckled. "Come, a toast from your master!" With that, he downed it all.

Even Li Qingshan found this rite of accepting a master rather strange, but having a guy like him as a master might not be a bad thing!

Chapter 582 - Farewell

The Unraging monk brought the three of them outside the Demon Suppression hall. Li Qingshan felt his entire body loosen. Even his breathing became much smoother. It simply felt repressive inside the Demon Suppression hall.

The vegetation was lush and verdant, illuminated by the setting sun. Who knew how much time had passed already.

"Amitābha. One Will, come with me!"

The Dauntless monk brought his palms together and uttered the buddha's name quietly. His robes touched the ground as he stared at Xiao An with a pair of cold and wise eyes. No matter what she meant to the Chan Monastery of Deva-Nāga, he would not let this opportunity to guide her slip by.

He believed there would be one day when she could understand the true essence of the boundless sea of bitterness and the great path of benevolence.

“Yes, abbot.” Xiao An brought her palms together too and returned the bow.

“Once you become an inner courtyard disciple of the Chan Monastery of Deva-Nāga, you cannot hold onto any secular thoughts or desires anymore. Until the day you possess the right to learn the Chant of Deva-Nāga, you cannot leave the mountain or see anyone outside of the courtyard. Can you do this?”

Xiao An turned her head towards Li Qingshan. By “outside of the courtyard”, it was obviously referring to him. In other words, as long as she had not undergone the second heavenly tribulation, she could not see Li Qingshan again.

Li Qingshan considered the request silently. Although he was reluctant inside, he still nodded. She was only a single step away from the second heavenly tribulation. Once she broke through, that would mean a whole new world unfurling around them again. Before that, focusing on cultivation was not necessarily a bad thing.

Xiao An said gently, “I can do it.”

“Then we’ll go to the grand hall right now and formally hold your ceremony for joining the sect before the buddhas. I will carry out the tonsure personally.”

Out of the past disciples of the Chan Monastery of Deva-Nāga, probably no one had ever received such honour when they joined the monastery. However, Xiao An frowned slightly after hearing that.

Li Qingshan interrupted him and asked, “Abbot, I noticed that not all head monks of the monastery were bald.” That was including Xiao An’s master in name. He had a head of messy hair.

“One Will, are you a head monk?” the Dauntless monk asked Xiao An without even looking at Li Qingshan.

“I’m not,” replied Xiao An.

In other words, the head monks had all reached an extremely high realm with their cultivation and comprehension of the buddhist dharma, so whether they were bald or not no longer mattered. And, upon reaching the Unraging monk’s level, even if he drank alcohol and ate meat, all he had to say was “the buddha passes through my belly, but alcohol and meat remain in my heart” and no one could do anything about him. If regular disciples dared to be so unruly, even lighter consequences would involve being sent to the Disciplinary courtyard and punished, while heavier consequences would be having their cultivations crippled and getting expelled from the sect.

Li Qingshan wanted to say more, but the Unraging monk patted his shoulder with a smile. “What are you panicking for? It’s not like you can’t regrow it if you don’t have hair!” He earned a glance from the Dauntless monk, but all he did was laugh.

Upon thinking about it, it made perfect sense. With Xiao An’s ability, growing her hair was a matter of a few seconds. There was no need for him to argue over this.

The Dauntless monk said, “Junior brother, accepting a disciple is a major matter. Do you want to come to the grand hall with me?”

With the Unraging monk making an exception and accepting disciples, not only was this a major matter of the Chan Monastery of Deva-Nāga, but it was even a major matter of the entire Green province. Every single cultivator who had undergone the third heavenly tribulation, whether they were human or daemon, whether they were ascetic or secular, bore great weight in this world. Their names were echoed tens of thousand kilometers away. Every single word they uttered and action they took would affect the overall situation, let alone something as major as accepting disciples.

The Unraging monk raised his head and glanced at the golden hall at the top of Great Buddha mountain. He smiled. "There's no need for that for an outcast like me. My two disciples probably don't like things like that either. Not to mention that we've already performed our rite."

That was what the Dauntless monk would have preferred too. The Unraging monk's two disciples both possessed great potential, but one of them was a demon, while the other was a so-called "secular disciple" who refused to become a monk. If this were made public, the reputation of the monastery would not benefit at all.

"Let's go." The Dauntless monk turned around, and Xiao An followed closely behind.

Li Qingshan accompanied Xiao An along the way, while the Dauntless monk walked at the front. He stepped over a tall door threshold and suddenly said, "Please stop right there." Any further was the inner courtyards of the monastery, and Li Qingshan was only a secular disciple.

All Li Qingshan could do was stop, watching as Xiao An stepped over the threshold. Then she turned around, and their eyes met. They opened their mouths, wanting to say something.

The sun was setting right now, so the residual glow of the sun landed on Xiao An, which made her seem even more beautiful and gorgeous. She seemed like someone who did not belong to this world. Li Qingshan stood facing away from the sun as the rays of light outlined his tall, large figure.

The Dauntless monk shifted his gaze, and the great, vermillion gate closed loudly, blocking their gazes from each other.

The only colour before Xiao An had vanished. The world had become a half-transparent pale-white. Emptiness was form. From today onwards, she would only be accompanied by buddha statues and the sounds of morning bells and evening drums. She did not hate a life like that, but she would much rather be by his side.

Li Qingshan extended his hand and clenched his fist. He experienced an urge to punch down the gate and pull her back out. The gate was not tough, but no one had ever been bold enough to do that throughout history, as this was the gate to the Chan Monastery of Deva-Nāga, representing stern and undefiable authority.

He was not afraid of authority. He believed that only strength could resolve everything. He believed that as long as he constantly became stronger, there would be a day when he could see her whenever he wanted, with no one able to stop him.

He stood there for a while longer, only to hear the chanting at the top of the mountain rise up to the clouds. He heard the Dauntless monk's dignified voice ringing out from the distance, announcing to the

world that they had accepted her into the monastery. The Chan Monastery of Deva-Nāga had finally embraced her, giving her the greatest honour.

The cultivation community of the entire Green province would know that the Chan Monastery of Deva-Nāga had accepted a disciple, and they treated her like treasure.

Li Qingshan stood in front of the gate alone, listening along for a while before scratching his head and turning around to leave.

He returned to the Demon Suppression hall again. The Unraging monk sat on the grey rock cheerfully as he held an object between his fingers. It glistened under the sunlight, actually a demon heart, and the quality was so high that even Lietu's demon heart paled in comparison.

Duoge sat in front of the rock with his head raised, gazing at the demon heart in a daze like a child who wanted candy.

The Unraging monk said, "Call me master ten thousand times, and I'll give it to you."

Duoge immediately said, "Mastermastermaster..."

The Unraging monk chuckled loudly. He was extremely happy.

Li Qingshan was speechless. These actions of his did not resemble an eminent monk of buddhism at all. Li Qingshan walked over and clasped his hands. "Master, I've come to bid farewell."

Although he had already taken the Unraging monk as his master, he had far too many secrets on him, so it would be best if he used this opportunity to get away. And, he had no interest in the buddhist dharma, so the Unraging monk was unable to teach him anyway.

"I knew you'd refuse to stick around, my damned disciple. Fortunately, I have a good disciple here. Look at how willingly he calls me master." The Unraging monk smiled as he rubbed Duoge's head.

Li Qingshan thought, If there were benefits, I'd probably call you master a little more willingly too.

"Since you have no interest in staying, then go!"

Li Qingshan never expected the Unraging monk to agree so easily. He said in a hurry, "Thank you, master." He turned around and left, but before he had even taken a few steps, he heard the Unraging monk tell Duoge, "You've seen the statues in the great hall, right? Let me explain the true meaning behind the Demon Suppression Statuary to you then. Only by suppressing that demon heart of yours can you truly understand how it feels to be a person."

Li Qingshan made his way back silently and sat down beside Duoge. He had sensed a long time ago that the Unraging monk had received the true legacy of the Demon Suppression Statuary, and with his cultivation, he must have seen all nine statues already. Coupled with his cultivation and comprehension over all these years, his understanding of the Demon Suppression Statuary must have surpassed what he learnt from browsing through them quickly and skimming the surface.

"Hmm? Damned disciple, why'd you come back?" the Unraging monk asked with a smile.

"You can just call me by my name."

“Forget it, damned disciple. Since you want to hear it too, just listen along then. You can’t say I haven’t shown a sense of honour towards you as your master.”

Li Qingshan rolled his eyes. What is he on about? A sense of honour is the thing that holds master and disciple together? Do you think we’re roaming the jianghu? Whatever. As long as I can learn something.

But after waiting for a while, the Unraging monk only smiled silently. Li Qingshan asked in confusion, “Master?”

The Unraging monk pointed at Duoge with a smile. As it turned out, Duoge had yet to finish up with calling him master ten thousand times! Finally, when Duoge finished up, the Unraging monk slowly stowed the demon heart away under Duoge’s eager gaze and said kindly.

“You’re still too young right now, so I’ll hold onto it for you. I’ll give it to you in the future!”

Duoge pouted, but he dared not say anything. He just felt that monks were not as foolish as they were rumored to be.

Li Qingshan vaguely remembered how all the red envelope money he had received in his past life had vanished like that. He could not help but say, “Master truly is a good monk with a strong sense of honour!”

Duoge had realised this “big monk” right before him was anything but easy to deal with a long time ago. Hearing Li Qingshan describe him as “good”, he panicked inside, Isn’t that a curse word? The venerable is standing up for me, but it’ll be bad if he angers this monk. He said in a hurry.

“The venerable is wrong. Master is a bad monk. He’s bad through and through, the worst monk in the world. Master is a great demon among monks!”

He tried to suck up to the Unraging monk a little and save Li Qingshan’s hide.

Li Qingshan was taken aback before bursting out with laughter uncontrollably.

The Unraging monk’s expression was a little strange. He saw how hard Duoge tried to come off as sincere, so he scratched his big, shiny head. “About this...”

Li Qingshan rubbed Duoge’s head. “Oh you. There’s no need to call me venerable anymore. Just senior brother will do.”

“S- senior brother.”

“Let me tell you. While what you said earlier was not exactly wrong, the people of this world all like to hear themselves being praised as ‘good’.”

“Ah!”

“Damned disciple, what do you mean by not exactly wrong? What’s so bad about your master?” The Unraging monk feigned anger.

Duoge only interpreted that as the Unraging monk actually losing his temper. He panicked inside again and swiveled his eyes in thought. He sure had responded fast as he said loudly, “Master is a good monk! Master’s entire family are good monks!”

That did sound a lot more sincere than before.

“Pft!” Li Qingshan opened his mouth, revealing his white teeth. He could not help but burst out in laughter again.

“Damned disciple, if you do so much as let out another sound of laughter, I’ll seal your mouth off!”

Li Qingshan stopped laughing and thought, Even a powerful dragon is unable to crush a snake in its local habitat. I won’t be stooping to the same level as a monk like you.

The Unraging monk said, “Stop chattering. Do you know who created the Demon Suppression Statuary?”

They finally approached the main topic. Li Qingshan sat seriously and shook his head, expressing that he did not know.

The Demon Suppression Statuary was obviously nowhere close to the Nine Transformations of the Demonic and Divine or the Path of White Bone and Great Beauty, but who knew how many times more powerful it was compared to cultivation methods like the Arts of the Boundless Ocean. In this world, it could be regarded as a cultivation at the very peak. Just what kind of person was the creator of this cultivation method?

Chapter 583 - A String of Prayer Beads

The Unraging monk paused. “I don’t know either.”

Fucking hell! Li Qingshan cursed inside.

The Unraging monk continued with a smile, “Actually, who created a cultivation method isn’t important. What is important is what the cultivation method can bring us. Damned disciple, you’ve already reached the sixth statue with the Demon Suppression Statuary. You can freely use the Chains of Demon Suppression and the Demon Suppression Tower, but can you be regarded as having grasped it completely?”

“I’ve only grasped twenty or thirty percent of it,” said Li Qingshan.

Even the Arts of the Boundless Ocean required him to constantly cultivate and comprehend in order to break through, let alone the Demon Suppression Statuary that was more profound. All he had done was take advantage of the intensity of his demonic nature and how he did not have to worry about his demonic nature running out of control.

“At least you know your limitations somewhat. You might have me as your master, but you probably have no interest in listening to actual buddhist classics, so let’s just talk about the profound wonders of the Demon Suppression Statuary instead!”

“Yes, master!”

Li Qingshan brought his palms together and lowered his head, answering politely. No matter how proud he was usually, he was receiving careful guidance for free, so he had to accept it with a modest mindset. He listened along closely.

Duoge copied Li Qingshan and brought his palms together in a hurry. “Yes, master.”

The Unraging monk smiled. "A century ago, your master I was once known as the 'Raging Monk'. I could not stand any of the injustices of the world. Whenever I saw the kind-hearted being harassed, I would only ever be relieved if I killed the perpetrator, regardless of their identity or cultivation. During the several years I spent travelling outside, who knew how many lives I had claimed. The rage within me blazed fiercely, and my mind became lost, severely breaking the precept of anger. Before I knew it, I had already entered the demonic path..."

The Unraging monk sat on the rock, telling them patiently what he had gone through in the past, including why he had been punished to stand guard over the Demon Suppression hall and what led to him learning the Demon Suppression Statuary.

Li Qingshan listened along quietly, sighing over the Unraging monk's journey before gaining much enlightenment from his experiences with comprehending the Demon Suppression Statuary. Before he knew it, the sun had set, and the sky had become covered with stars.

The days cycled through, and before he knew it, a month had passed.

Before the Demon Suppression hall, the vegetation stood lush and verdant. The scenery remained the same.

Under the sunlight, Li Qingshan laid on top of the grey stone tablet in front of the Demon Suppression hall, sleeping away. There was an array of alcohol jars of various sizes around him, and the heavy fragrance of alcohol still lingered in the air.

He stretched and woke up, rubbing his face. "I didn't think I'd actually lose to that old monk with drinking. He must have used his powers secretly and cheated, taking advantage of the fact that my cultivation is not as high as his."

The thunks of a wooden fish rang out beside him. Looking over, he saw the Unraging monk sitting in the shade of the mountain on a tall meadow, striking the wooden fish with one hand while holding prayer beads in the other.

Li Qingshan rolled over, leaning on his side as he asked in wonder, "Master, you chant scriptures too?"

"I, your master, am a monk, so I obviously have to chant scriptures."

Li Qingshan smiled. "Doesn't the buddha pass through your belly, but alcohol and meat remain in your heart?"

The Unraging monk opened his eyes and smiled. "Today, your master is holding a banquet in his heart, inviting the buddha to dine on meat and alcohol. I need to chant a little to play my role as a host."

Li Qingshan laughed aloud. His laughter echoed through the valley, startling a few birds.

"If I were the buddha, I'd wipe you off the face of the world with a palm strike right now, master."

"And that's why you're not the buddha." The Unraging monk smiled. His smile contained an indescribable sense of buddhist truth, which made Li Qingshan remember that this big, smiling monk was a great master who had undergone three heavenly tribulations.

Li Qingshan asked, "Junior brother hasn't come out yet?"

The Unraging monk said, "Soon. He has already made it to the fourth floor. He's basically at his limit now."

"Master, why don't you just teach us the entire Demon Suppression Statuary, and that'll be that?"

Recently, Li Qingshan had been listening day and night to the Unraging monk explain the true essence of the Demon Suppression Statuary. He felt like he had benefited tremendously, and he gained some recognition for this easygoing and fearless master of his. However, he also became more curious about the next part of the Demon Suppression Statuary.

The Unraging monk said, "If you want to learn the whole thing, then you'll have to kill your way down floor by floor. The Demon Suppression Statuary cannot be inherited through other methods. It cannot be passed on using words."

"I'm very confused. If the first statue of the Demon Suppression Statuary is on the top floor, then only the weaker demonfolk have an opportunity to see it. Their demonic nature will never be strong enough, so even if they do comprehend it, they'll never really achieve anything great. Meanwhile, the stronger demonfolk are all suppressed at the very bottom. Wouldn't they never get the opportunity to learn the Demon Suppression Statuary?"

"Once you make it to the lowest floor of the Demon Suppression Statuary, you'll understand."

"Don't worry, that day will come sooner or later."

"That's good if you have that confidence. However, before you undergo the third heavenly tribulation, I won't permit you entering the ninth floor of the Demon Suppression hall."

"Just what is suppressed down there?"

"When you see him in the future, you'll know."

"Alright then. No matter who he is, I'll butcher him sooner or later."

Li Qingshan rested his head on his arms and gazed at the sky. It had already been a month since he last saw Xiao An. He felt rather empty inside. Only when he remembered she was right round the corner did he find some peace.

Actually, the Unraging monk had basically explained everything he needed to explain regarding the Demon Suppression Statuary during the past few days. What came next was Li Qingshan's gradual comprehension, but he did not choose to do this immediately.

Having left for so long, the power of the Water God Seal had already declined by quite a bit, and without the assistance of the Water God Seal, the spirit turtle's suppression immediately became unstable. The Demon Suppression Statuary had only managed to achieve a supplementary function.

It was about time for him to return, and if he remained here, he would probably only give himself away. And, he still had many entanglements in the Clear River prefecture that he could not get away from so easily.

If it were not for these reasons, he was willing to remain in the valley, keeping watch over the glistening peak of Great Buddha mountain quietly until the day she returned.

Right as his thoughts wandered, the Unraging monk said, "He's back!"

Before long, Duoge flew out of the Demon Suppression hall. He had clearly become much stronger as his violet eyes shone brightly. After receiving the Unraging monk's advice and guidance, he entered the Demon Suppression hall and properly learnt the first three forms of the Demon Suppression Statuary.

"Master! Senior brother!" Duoge said excitedly. Because he had suppressed his demon heart, his mannerisms now resembled a regular child's more.

"Well done. Have a drink!" Li Qingshan rolled over and tossed a pot of alcohol over.

Duoge caught the pot and drank it all. Looking at the pots and jars littered on the ground, he said unhappily, "Master and senior brother have drunk so much alcohol behind my back!"

"Who told you to come out so slowly? If you had been a little later, you wouldn't even have been able to see me."

Duoge was mildly surprised. "You're leaving, senior brother?"

Li Qingshan said, "I've basically learnt everything I need to learn. If I don't go home and spend some time with my wife, am I supposed to stay here and spend time with monks?"

"Spending time with monks is pretty good too!"

Duoge said reluctantly. During this period, he had experienced human warmth he had never experienced before. He understood the warm feelings that people held for one another. He was no longer that little demonfolk who did not even feel sorrow over the death of his father.

"You're still young!" Li Qingshan chuckled and bowed towards the Unraging monk. "Master, junior brother has finally come out. I still have many matters and attachments to the secular world that I have yet to deal with, so I will be bidding farewell to master. If you have anything else you need to tell me, please tell me now, master!"

"Both of you come over." The Unraging monk shooed Li Qingshan off the grey rock and sat down on it himself. He held his wrist and did not assume any special pose, waiting for the two of them to gather before him.

"Having accepted you as my disciples, I should give you a gift, but the time was just not right in the past. Now that my damned disciple is going to be leaving, I can't stop him either, so I have something for both of you."

Li Qingshan's interest was piqued. Finally time for gifts. With master's cultivation, surely the gift would not be shabby, but there's no need to call me a damned disciple at a time like this!

"Duoge, you've been the most well-behaved, way better than this damned disciple, so I'll give you yours first!"

Li Qingshan pursed his lips and snorted, but when he saw the Unraging monk's gift, he could not help but become stunned.

The Unraging monk took out a great string of prayer beads. There were a hundred and eight in total, and each one was a different colour, varying in size. However, they all glistened brightly, shining with various colours.

If they were merely regular gemstones, then so be it. The issue was every single prayer bead was a demon heart. The demon heart that the Unraging monk had originally used to tease Duoge was among them too.

They were not a hundred and eight prayer beads, but the demon hearts of a hundred and eight Demon Commanders. In the cultivation world, they were basically equivalent to a hundred and eight golden cores.

Duoge was completely dazzled, thrown into a trance. He even forgot to speak.

“During the century I’ve watched over the Demon Suppression hall, I’ve happened to assemble this string of prayer beads, so I’ll give it to you today. Duoge, as a demonfolk, your demon heart has already merged with your body. It cannot be removed. If you wish to continue on the path of cultivation, then the best way would be to practise the Demon Suppression Statuary.”

“You can wear this string of prayer beads. The power and demonic nature within them will influence you. Hopefully you can guard your conscience without becoming misled by your demonic nature. These are not a hundred and eight demon hearts, but a hundred and eight bodhi, a hundred and eight enlightenments. Afflictions, or kleshas, are bodhi.”

The Unraging monk hung the string of demon heart prayer beads around Duoge’s neck gently. Duoge gulped, holding back his urge to just eat them as he lowered his head.

“Thank you, master.”

Li Qingshan already knew that the seal over the Demon Suppression hall was not absolute. Instead, it was connected to a certain world of demons. Every once in a while, it would draw in many demonfolk, which was why it could serve as the trial grounds for the Chan Monastery of Deva-Nāga.

Having guarded the Demon Suppression hall for all these years, it was not strange at all for him to have accumulated so many demon hearts. With this string of prayer beads, not only would Duoge have the opportunity to learn the entire Demon Suppression Statuary, but his personal cultivation would probably increase rapidly too. This was truly an extremely rare and precious opportunity.

Li Qingshan could not help but become eager. Just what might his gift be?

He was not eager for demon hearts. Due to the demon heart condensed from the demonic nature of the tiger demon and the ox demon being too pure, it instead could not allow for the existence of other demon hearts. Even if he received demon hearts, all he could do was feed them to the Traitorous Demon sword. Not to mention that the string of demon hearts should have been everything his master possessed.

Might it be the renowned Great Dragon pill of the Chan Monastery of Deva-Nāga?

It was rumored that the Great Dragon pills could purge a myriad of poisons and heal all wounds, not just wounds of the body, but wounds of the soul too. It could even eliminate inner demons, allowing the

consumer's cultivation to progress rapidly. It was known as the "ultimate pellet" that could cure everything in the cultivation world.

That was how he thought, only to see the Unraging monk pull out another string of prayer beads from his sleeve.

Chapter 584 - Secular Disciple

The sunlight was unable to reach the entrance of the Demon Suppression hall. A string of prayer beads sat quietly in the Unraging monk's large, thick hand, drawing Li Qingshan's attention.

There were only eighteen prayer beads, and they were worn on the wrist. They seemed to be made out of wood and were perfectly round, all the same size. Only a single prayer bead was relatively large. They did not shine at all and did not seem special, no different from regular prayer beads.

However, Li Qingshan was not worried. Just like how a wise head would keep a closed mouth, powerful arcane artifacts and treasures were probably the same. The Unraging monk seemed like he wore these prayer beads often, so they must have been extraordinary. As the first disciple, the treatment he received could not be any worse than Duoge's, right?

And, the Unraging monk's behaviour left Li Qingshan even more convinced about this. He glanced at the prayer beads in his hand reluctantly before saying.

"Damned disciple, give me your hand."

Li Qingshan extended his hand and the Unraging monk personally slipped the prayer beads onto Li Qingshan's wrist.

Li Qingshan was secretly confused. He was unable to sense any pulses of spiritual energy like this. He tried extending his soul sense into it, and he did not find anything special either. However, since his master treasured it so much, there must have been something else to it!

The Unraging monk said, "This string of prayer beads by itself is not some powerful arcane artifact, but they have been handed down to me by my master in person, so they hold great significance. In particular, after entering my possession, I wore it all the time, touched and wore it down by me every single day. They are soaked with my blood and sweat, so do take good care of them and do not lose them."

Isn't the difference in treatment a little too great!? Li Qingshan glanced at the demon heart prayer beads around Duoge's neck again, tempted to pluck them from him and throw them viciously at the Unraging monk's smiling face. Bald ass, are you looking down on me? Apart from blood and sweat, there's probably pork grease, lamb grease, and beef grease too! I saw you eating and drinking with this on with my own eyes!

Li Qingshan fantasised viciously. Of course, he could not actually do that. Li Qingshan casually clasped his hands. "Thank you for your generous gift, master. I'll be taking my leave now." The prayer beads on his wrist only felt more greasy now. He was tempted to take them off immediately.

If the Unraging monk had just given Li Qingshan a string of prayer beads as something to remember him by, then Li Qingshan would have been perfectly fine with it. However, he had specially given Duoge an

invaluable string of demon heart prayer beads, only to turn around and give him a regular thing like that. He could not help but feel disappointed, and he found it unfair. We're both your disciples. You're clearly just looking down on me.

The Unraging monk did not seem to sense Li Qingshan's displeasure. He chuckled. "Before you go, you should pay a visit to the Courtyard of Secular Affairs and collect a set of uniforms for secular disciples and register yourself!"

"Yes," Li Qingshan replied lazily.

"Don't run amok under your master's name outside. If I find out, I won't spare you!"

"Alright." Li Qingshan became a little impatient. Do I look like the type who likes to strut around under borrowed authority?

"Whenever inner courtyard disciples leave the mountain, they can have a line of the Chant of Deva-Nāga embedded in them, which they can use to save their lives at times. However, you're just a secular disciple, so you don't have that right."

Li Qingshan shot a glance at him. Since I don't have the right, why'd you mention it in the first place? He said, "Understood, I'm going!" and turned around, making his way out of the valley, only to hear the Unraging monk say.

"So, if you encounter any danger, you can mention my dharma name. It should earn you some respect. If it's useless, then crush the largest prayer bead on the string, and I'll rush over immediately and defend you."

Li Qingshan stopped and looked back suddenly, only to see the Unraging monk sitting there, smiling away just like before. He waved his hand. "Go, damned disciple!"

The Unraging monk did not merely have some respect. In the Green province, even if Li Qingshan provoked the lord of the Green province, the Dragon King of Ink Sea, the Unraging monk had the right to speak up for him. As for figures one level lower, they would have to show Li Qingshan quite the courtesy and consideration once they heard the Unraging monk's name.

The prayer beads were basically equivalent to a life-saving talisman. Li Qingshan glanced at the prayer beads on his wrist. His actions earlier did seem a little narrow-minded. He turned around and bowed deeply. "Yes, master. I'll be going now."

Li Qingshan left the valley and remembered what the Unraging monk had told him to do. He climbed up Great Buddha mountain again and arrived before the monastery, only to see an acolyte monk sweeping the leaves. He went up and asked, "Young sir, may I ask where the Courtyard of Secular Affairs is?"

The acolyte monk pointed at the foot of the mountain, "There. It's all down there. The main hall is on this side of the mountain."

Li Qingshan had noticed the large swathe of structures on the foot of Great Buddha mountain a long time ago. They layered upon each other row upon row, all resplendent and magnificent in design, basically wrapping around the entire mountain. It was like the hem of the great buddha's clothes that touched the ground. It would only stop near special places like the Demon Suppression hall.

As it turned out, these all belonged to the Courtyard of Secular Affairs, but in terms of area, none of the courtyards on Great Buddha mountain was anywhere close to it.

Not only did the Courtyard of Secular Affairs take up the greatest area in the monastery, but it was also the courtyard with the most monks. There were numerous responsibilities they undertook, and one of them was receiving the pilgrims who had come from far and wide, providing them with lodgings and food. It would be impossible to accommodate them all without so many buildings.

Li Qingshan strolled through the monastery, looking around as he went. He became even more amazed by the scale of the Chan Monastery of Deva-Nāga. Regular ancient temples were all a single monastery hidden within many mountains, but the structures of the Chan Monastery of Deva-Nāga stretched over the entirety of Great Buddha mountain. Even the scale of the prefectural city of Clear River was no match for it.

Finally, he arrived outside the main hall of the Courtyard of Secular Affairs. The flow of people around him gradually decreased, no longer as noisy as the other places of the courtyard. Instead, this place seemed extremely quiet, littered with ancient cypress trees as the twitter of birds rang out time to time.

Li Qingshan strolled in. No one stopped him. He could make out a few voices from the distance, so he followed the quiet path and arrived before the hall. He saw a man and woman talking quietly.

“Senior brother Wang, what gift have you brought for senior brother Yong this time? Could you enlighten us about what you’ve chosen?”

The female cultivator asked. She seemed like she was already in her forties or fifties, and upon considering the many methods cultivators possessed to retain their youth, she must not have been young. She remained at Foundation Establishment, so she was basically unable to break through again in the remainder of her life.

“It’s merely a small gift. It’s not worth mentioning.” As for senior brother Wang, he seemed even older. His face was like the bark of a pine tree, and he carried a sword on his back.

Both of them were at Foundation Establishment. They seemed to be dressed in monk robes, but the style was slightly different from actual monk robes. They also wore prayer beads on their wrists.

Li Qingshan did not hide his aura, so before he had even approached them, they had looked over.

“Sir, where have you come from? Is there anything you’re looking for here?” Senior brother Wang noticed Li Qingshan’s extraordinary bearing and composure. And, he was young, yet he had already reached mid Foundation Establishment, so senior brother Wang dared not brush him aside, asking politely.

Li Qingshan strode over and clasped his hands. “I’ve come to register myself as a secular disciple. What brings you here?”

“We’re secular disciples of the Chan Monastery of Deva-Nāga. May I ask what your age is, sir?” Senior brother Wang asked curiously.

“I’m fortunate enough to be in my twenties.”

“You’re not even thirty yet! Sir, you can be regarded as a genius. Even if you want to become an inner courtyard disciple, there won’t be any issues at all. Why do you want to become a secular disciple instead?”

Senior brother Wang was surprised. Originally, he thought Li Qingshan was skilled in retaining a youthful appearance and was actually forty or fifty already. He never expected him to be so young, reaching mid Foundation Establishment when he was in his twenties. He could definitely be regarded as a genius, but what was a genius like him becoming a secular disciple for?

The Chan Monastery of Deva-Nāga had a great number of secular disciples. Most of them lacked sufficient talent, so they had no right to become an inner courtyard disciple. However, they had spent enough time to become Foundation Establishment cultivators, so they could register for the identity of secular disciple and take it easy under the shade of the great tree that the Chan Monastery of Deva-Nāga was. Even if they could not learn the greatest cultivation method of the Chan Monastery of Deva-Nāga, even cultivation methods one level down surpassed those core disciples of regular sects received.

There were countless Foundation Establishment cultivators in the world, but there were truly only a handful who could reach Foundation Establishment in their twenties and thirties, particularly with independent cultivators. After all, they lacked the support of sects and clans. Most people made it to Foundation Establishment by taking their time.

“The abbot originally wanted me to become a monk, except I still have ties to the secular world, so I refused. But they also refused to let me go, so all I could do was become a secular disciple,” Li Qingshan said helplessly.

“The abbot? Ah! You mean the Dauntless abbot?”

The female cultivator cried out before stifling her voice in a hurry. She gazed at Li Qingshan in disbelief. She was taken aback by how he mentioned the Dauntless monk without the slightest hint of respect.

“Yeah. Who else is there otherwise?”

Li Qingshan spoke like he was stating a basic fact. Li Qingshan was able to remain unpressured before the Dauntless monk because he basically could clash with any second heavenly tribulation cultivator already with his actual cultivation, and he was confident he would constantly improve. There would be a day when he could stand with the Dauntless monk and everyone else on equal footing; he might even surpass them, so he had no mental weakness either.

However, in the eyes of regular Foundation Establishment cultivators, the abbot of the Chan Monastery of Deva-Nāga, the Dauntless monk, a Monk King conferred by the Great Xia empire, was basically like a god. If they could earn even a glance from someone like that, that was something worth boasting about.

Not to mention that the Dauntless monk had personally suggested accepting him into the inner courtyard. That was basically infinite glory, yet he actually turned him down, and his reason was something along the lines of “some ties to the secular world”. What a waste of such a great opportunity. The two of them basically wished they could take his place.

Fellow Wang remembered something and asked, “Sir, are you perhaps Li Qingshan from the Ruyi commandery?”

“I am. You know me?”

Li Qingshan had stayed in the back of the mountain for over a month, but little did he know the news of the Chan Monastery of Deva-Nāga’s most glorious reception of Xiao An, followed by the Dauntless monk personally carrying out tonsure for her, had already spread through the cultivation world of the Green province.

At the same time, Xiao An’s dharma name, One Will, boomed through the province. She had already earned the title of the greatest disciple of the monastery. Even now, the impact she caused still lingered about. The matter of Li Qingshan turning down the Dauntless monk publically in the grand hall before being sent into the Demon Suppression hall for punishment obviously did not stay as a secret from these secular disciples.

“I’ve heard many things about you. I’ve heard many things about you,” senior brother Wang repeated as the female cultivator said, “We’ll be seniors and juniors in the future, so there’s no need to be so polite. I’ll just shamelessly call myself ‘senior sister’ then.”

“Sure!” Li Qingshan conversed with them a little longer. Right when he was about to enter the main hall, senior brother Wang said in a hurry, “You can’t go in right now!”

Chapter 585 - Who Are You Supposed to Be

“Why?”

Senior brother Wang said, “Senior brother Eternal Faith has currently granted permission for another senior brother to see him. We’ll have to wait until that senior brother comes out. You can go ahead of us.”

“There’s no need for that. We can stick with the rules. Though, I do wonder who this senior brother Eternal Faith is, considering how much respect he demands for himself. He even needs to ‘grant permission’ for others to see him.”

“Since you want to become a secular disciple, junior brother, then you have to know about this. Senior brother Eternal Faith is the first disciple under the head monk of the Courtyard of Secular Affairs, the Distant Enlightenment Chan Master. He’s basically our first senior brother too. Normally, the Distant Enlightenment Chan Master spends his time studying the buddhist dharma, so senior brother Eternal Faith handles the matters of the Courtyard of Secular Affairs.”

“Heh, that sure is impressive.”

Seeing how Li Qingshan was unconvinced, senior brother Wang stifled his voice. “You better not underestimate senior brother Eternal Faith. Our merits, rewards, and punishments all depend on senior brother Eternal Faith. As a mighty Monk King, even if you verbally offend the Dauntless abbot, junior brother, he won’t stoop to your level, but...”

He stopped right there. Li Qingshan laughed and also stifled his voice. “I get it. It’s easy to win approval from the king of hell, but his lackeys are another matter. It’s often like that. If he doesn’t provoke me, then there’s no reason for me to provoke him either.”

As it seems, this senior brother Eternal Faith isn't a particularly open-minded person. I'll be a little more careful when I talk later. I might not be afraid of him, but avoiding trouble altogether would be for the best. I still have to consider his influence considering we're beneath Great Buddha mountain.

Seeing how Li Qingshan accepted his advice, senior brother Wang was rather "satisfied". He stroked his beard and said, "Young man, remember to keep your edge hidden. You possess great talent, but if you don't know how to deal with people, you'll suffer greatly."

When Li Qingshan heard how he tried to advise him like his experienced elder, he found it rather funny, but it was out of kind intentions after all, so he did not talk back, simply smiling silently.

From all that, Senior brother Wang entered a talkative mood. "Have you brought a gift with you this time?"

Li Qingshan was surprised. "What gift? For who?"

"For senior brother Eternal Faith, obviously." Senior brother Wang's expression seemed to say, "How are you so bad at understanding what's going on?" He also seemed like he was extremely pained, like he was looking at a junior who did not live up to expectations.

The secular disciples of the Chan Monastery of Deva-Nāga were scattered across the Green province, but they were not necessarily allowed to wander about freely. Frequently, they would receive some missions, such as constructing temples or collecting various resources. When they completed these missions, they would earn merit, which they could use to exchange for benefits like cultivation methods in the Chan Monastery of Deva-Nāga. Many of the times, whether a mission had been completed and whether it had been completed well was completely up to Eternal Faith to decide.

Although they were secular disciples, they were still under the Chan Monastery of Deva-Nāga, so they had to know at least a little about the buddhist classics, and they could not act recklessly or outrageously. As a result, every once in a while, the secular disciples from various places would pay a visit to the Chan Monastery of Deva-Nāga, and the monks of the Courtyard of Secular Affairs would test their understanding of buddhism and their behaviour. If they could not pass, it would be very troublesome. There was even the chance for them to lose their identities as secular disciples.

As a result, Eternal Faith's authority became even greater. Among the secular disciples, there were plenty of people who had absolutely no interest in buddhist scriptures like Li Qingshan. All they needed was a gift to ensure that they passed. As time went on, it became a standard practice.

When secular disciples returned from outside, they would always bring some gifts when they paid a visit to this senior brother Eternal Faith. They were not necessarily precious, but the thing was there were many secular disciples. It was about accumulation in terms of quantity.

"But my master didn't tell me anything about that!"

Li Qingshan raised an eyebrow and smiled faintly. He was the mighty first disciple of the Unraging monk, yet he still had to give gifts to some first senior brother of the Courtyard of Secular Affairs? That was basically a joke!

"Who's your master?"

The female cultivator interrupted their conversation with a question. The real reason why they became secular disciples was because there was no one in the Chan Monastery of Deva-Nāga willing to accept them as their disciple. Otherwise, joining any other courtyard would be far better than remaining in the Courtyard of Secular Affairs.

“You’ll have to think about that yourself! And, not every senior necessarily knows about the conventions involved. Thankfully, you ran into me. Otherwise, you’ll suffer if you went inside unprepared.”

Senior brother Wang patted Li Qingshan’s shoulder with sincere advice. He thought that Li Qingshan had only taken on his master when he was merely a Qi Practitioner. Otherwise, if he had a reputed master to study under, why would he become a secular disciple of the monastery?

“Buddhist disciples also accept bribes?”

From what was implied, if Li Qingshan did not give any gifts, things would even be made difficult for him. He could not help but raise his voice as he was rather surprised.

Senior brother Wang said in fright, “You can’t run your tongue carelessly like that. This is a friendship between seniors and juniors. How can you call it bribery?”

“Who out there is making a fuss in the pure land of buddhist cultivation?”

A middle-aged monk walked out of the hall, raising his eyebrows that spread out and faded away towards the end. He stared straight at Li Qingshan with a hint of annoyance.

Li Qingshan stared straight back at him. This must be that senior brother Eternal Faith. His appearance was nothing special. His head was so smooth that it shone brilliantly, and he was slightly plump, standing there with a bulging belly. He truly did have some prestige about him. Standing nearby behind him was a small, skinny male. He must have been the fellow that entered ahead of senior brother Wang.

“Senior brother Eternal Faith!” Senior brother Wang and the middle-aged female cultivator brought their palms together and bowed in a hurry.

Eternal Faith did not return the gesture. He directly questioned Li Qingshan, “Who are you? How dare you intrude upon our Courtyard of Secular Affairs?” He thought to himself, You bastard, this is your first time here, so if you don’t know the rules and you haven’t brought a gift, so be it, but how dare you say I’m accepting bribes? You really have no idea what I can do to you. I’ll show you what’s what.

Li Qingshan clasped his hands. “I’m Li Qingshan. I’ve come to become a secular disciple.”

“Secular disciple? Is what you’re doing right now supposed to be a buddhist greeting? Secular disciple isn’t a status you can earn just because you want to!”

Eternal Faith’s face changed. As an inner courtyard disciple of the monastery, he had obviously heard about Li Qingshan before.

This kid is unruly and rude. He’s even bold enough to defy the abbot’s orders. He well and truly deserves being sent into the Demon Suppression hall. Look at him, after some punishment, he has still ended up running over, all crestfallen, to become a secular disciple. Now that he has run into me, I better kill some times with him and make him learn what is called respecting your seniors.

“It’s exactly as senior brother says. With how rude and impolite he seems, you can tell with a single glance that he comes from some backwater place. How can he possess the right to become our senior or junior brother?” The small, skinny man behind Eternal Faith chimed in with a flattering expression.

“Kid, why don’t you apologise to first senior brother Eternal Faith quickly?” Senior brother Wang urged loudly, and the female cultivator shot glances at Li Qingshan too.

“Fucking bullsh*t!”

Li Qingshan’s face twisted, revealing his teeth. An aura of malice radiated from him naturally, making everyone present leap in fright. Their auras were all suppressed, and they felt like the surroundings had darkened.

His bellow was like a tiger’s roar through the mountainous forests. The chirps and twitters of insects and birds immediately fell silent. The surrounding silence was frightening.

Normally, the tiger demon and ox demon were both suppressed by the spirit turtle, but ever since he condensed a demon heart, they seemed to find a path to leak out. He practised the Demon Suppression Statuary, but right from the first form, it had been “Remorselessness of the Demon Heart”. He had never even considered repressing and restraining his demonic nature, so now that he was set off, he obviously showed his true colours.

“W- what a fierce and crude rule-breaker! How dare you bellow in the Chan Monastery of Deva-Nāga!”

Eternal Faith pointed at Li Qingshan, experiencing humiliation-turned-anger from being stunned by a person whose cultivation was not even as great as his. He became even more astounded. He had also undergone trials in the Demon Suppression hall before. None of those demonfolk or even Demon Generals could make him feel so pressured.

Li Qingshan took a step forward. Originally, he wanted to mention the Unraging monk’s name, but upon further thought, Master has specially reminded me not to use his reputation. I haven’t even left the mountain, just going from the back of the mountain to the front of the mountain, and I’ll be breaking this vow. That would be rather inappropriate. This person doesn’t want me to become a secular disciple, which is perfect. I’ll just not be one then.

As a result, he smiled. “Do you really think I want to become this nuisance of a secular disciple? I’m not going to stoop to the same level as a little man like you who accepts bribes.” He directly turned around and left. The most important part was establishing his relationship with the Unraging monk as master and disciple anyway. Whether he became a secular disciple truly made no difference.

“Who did you say is a little man?”

Eternal Faith barked. As the primary disciple of the Courtyard of Secular Affairs, he was normally surrounded by secular disciples trying to get on his good side. Never did anyone insult him right in the face. Originally, he wanted to spend his time and make things difficult for Li Qingshan, but he never anticipated Li Qingshan to not care about the identity of a secular disciple at all, leaving as soon as he mentioned it, giving him no opportunity to vent his anger.

Li Qingshan could not even be bothered with answering him. Senior brother Wang opened his mouth to speak, but he was afraid of offending Eternal Faith, so he shut his mouth again in the end. He thought,

This kid is far too rash. He's actually bold enough to offend senior brother Eternal Faith right under Great Buddha mountain. Does he really think the Chan Monastery of Deva-Nāga is easy to harass and step over like a group of vegetarians? No wait, the Chan Monastery of Deva-Nāga is vegetarian.

TL: "Do you really think we're vegetarian?" in Chinese basically means "Do you really think you can just walk all over us?" or "Do you really think we're easy nuts to crack?" I would normally go with the other translations, but clearly there is also the connection of monks being vegetarians here.

"Stop right there!"

Eternal Faith raised his hand, and a wooden fish flew out from his sleeve, swelling up in the wind until it reached the size of a carriage, hurtling towards Li Qingshan.

Sure enough, Li Qingshan stopped and turned around. As he gazed at the incoming wooden fish, he asked without being fazed at all, "What else do you have to say?" The wooden fish was about to strike him.

"Be careful!" The female cultivator cried out.

It'll be bad if I end up crushing him to death! Eternal Faith thought.

With a boom, the wooden fish smashed beside Li Qingshan, kicking soil into the air and immediately creating a great pit in the ground.

"You've smashed a great hole in this tranquil land of buddhism, great master." Li Qingshan was fearless as he smiled scornfully.

Eternal Faith thought quickly, If he wants to leave, I really have no excuse to make him stay. If I strike with brute force, I probably won't be able to explain myself to master. Oh right, I almost forgot the reason why he was sent into the Demon Suppression hall.

Eternal Faith said confidently, "Since you're not a secular disciple, how dare you intrude upon our Courtyard of Secular Affairs? You've already broken the rules of our Chan Monastery of Deva-Nāga, and it's a repeat offence! You must be punished!"

Most of the responsibilities of the Courtyard of Secular Affairs dealt with receiving believers and secular disciples, which was why Li Qingshan had managed to make his way all the way to the hall smoothly, but if a person was determined to punish someone, they could always find a way to do so.

Li Qingshan, does that sound familiar? Don't tell me you want to pay another visit to the Demon Suppression hall? Eternal Faith thought complacently. You can say I'm borrowing the Dauntless abbot's wisdom a little.

He immediately managed to piss off Li Qingshan with that. Li Qingshan had been thrown into the Demon Suppression hall for no good reason. Although it was a blessing in disguise in the end, and he benefited quite a lot, he still felt rather unhappy about this, but he had to yield considering he was in their territory.

Now that someone had dared to use this to threaten him, it was basically bearding the lion in its den, provoking the tiger right in his face.

“Who are you supposed to be? You even have the balls to copy the Dauntless monk?” Li Qingshan sneered and strode towards Eternal Faith, radiating with vicious might.

Eternal Faith had originally been brimming with confidence in subduing him, but when the pair of eyes shining with dark-red light glanced at him, he immediately became rather frantic inside. He ordered, “Juniors, capture this rule-breaker!”

Chapter 586 - Save Me!

The three of them were stunned. They never expected the situation to fall apart like this, where they were about to start fighting over the slightest disagreement.

Even though they dared not offend senior brother Eternal Faith, the person on the other side seemed like a tough nut to crack as well. He was already a genius, and it was rumoured he had an extremely close relationship with “One Will”. Even the small, skinny man who had been echoing Eternal Faith earlier refused to take action carelessly, afraid he would be dragged into some kind of trouble.

As they hesitated, Li Qingshan had already arrived before the steps, his large, tall figure going straight for Eternal Faith.

“Damned rascal, eat my A Blow and a Shout!”

Eternal Faith was overcome with both alarm and anger. The wooden fish mallet suddenly turned into a huge club that resembled a wooden beam, swinging down towards Li Qingshan’s head.

Li Qingshan felt his head ring as if he had been struck. His mind blanked out. He actually felt like he was unable to block this blow.

This strike definitely was not as simple as swinging an arcane artifact. Instead, it was one of the secret techniques of the Chan Monastery of Deva-Nāga called “A Blow and a Shout”. It was used with blunt weapons. Before the huge club had even hit him, the attack had already struck.

At the same time, wind whistled behind his head. The wooden fish that struck the ground flew back up, and a crack suddenly ran through the centre, opening its huge mouth and trying to swallow Li Qingshan like a huge beast. It emitted a great force of suction.

The wooden fish mallet and the wooden fish were both arcane artifacts, forming a set. They were extremely powerful, which only demonstrated the heritage of the Chan Monastery of Deva-Nāga and Eternal Faith’s wealth. This strike alone was basically enough to vanquish all regular Foundation Establishment cultivators.

This kid is just at mid Foundation Establishment. How can I be frightened by him?

The three secular disciples on the side let out a sigh of relief instead. With how impressive senior brother Eternal Faith was, he obviously did not require their unnecessary assistance. Senior brother Wang thought, This kid is bound to suffer for completely ignoring the advice of his elders. Now that senior brother Eternal Faith is going to be teaching him a lesson, he well and truly deserves it.

Caught in a pincer attack, Li Qingshan was unable to dodge. He brought his hands together and performed a series of seals. A thin veil of water rose up—Veil of the Water Curtain.

This kid can actually endure my A Blow and a Shout! Hmph, and he uses techniques pretty quickly too, but does he really think he can block attacks from an arcane artifact with a measly defensive technique? Eternal Faith sneered.

The wooden fish opened its mouth and sucked hard, pulling viciously on the water veil as the wooden fish mallet struck it heavily. However, the pliability and toughness of the water veil was beyond imagination. No matter how it twisted and flexed, it could not be ripped apart. The wooden fish mallet produced ripples on the surface, but the water veil completely absorbed and nullified its tremendous force that could split mountains and destroy boulders.

“How can a technique be so powerful!?”

Eternal Faith was not the only one astounded. The eyes of the three secular disciples on the side widened too.

When Li Qingshan fought, he rarely used techniques. Now that he used one today, it was unusually effective. Having reached the peak of the fourth layer of the spirit turtle, he seemed to possess the spirit turtle’s bloodline. A casually-cast water element technique was like the handiwork of a god, and he had the amplification from the Water God Seal as well.

After blocking Eternal Faith’s two arcane artifacts, Li Qingshan simply pushed his hand forward, and faint-blue water spiritual qi cascaded and accumulated, like a great wave constantly growing taller before becoming a tsunami in the end.

Ocean Wielding—The Tsunami Form.

He struck the wooden fish mallet with a palm strike.

With a great bang, the wooden fish mallet broke free from Eternal Faith’s control and smashed through the roof of the great hall, hurtling away into the distance.

As the force behind Li Qingshan’s palm strike rang out, he circulated the Arts of the Boundless Ocean, and the spiritual qi in his body rose like the tide, continuously and endlessly. A wave crashed down before the last had even subsided, sending the palm strike towards Eternal Faith.

Eternal Faith retreated in a hurry. He had actually used his body to send an arcane artifact flying! Did he practise both qi and the body!? Eternal Faith could vaguely sense he had potentially bitten off more than he could chew today. Sure enough, a rule-breaker who dared to make a ruckus in the grand hall truly was rather capable.

However, his courage immediately swelled up again. This was the Chan Monastery of Deva-Nāga’s Great Buddha mountain. How could they allow any outsiders to run amok? And, this was all that he was capable of.

Clang!

When Li Qingshan struck Eternal Faith, the sound that rang out was like the great boom of a bell. A huge, golden bell appeared around Eternal Faith. Li Qingshan’s hand pressed against it, but he was unable to destroy it.

Right as Li Qingshan thought how he truly was rather capable, living up to his status as an inner courtyard disciple of the Chan Monastery of Deva-Nāga, he shifted his gaze and noticed that Eternal Faith's robes glowed with a gentle golden light. A palm print also appeared there, and he came to an understanding. As it turned out, his robes were also an arcane artifact.

Fortunately, I was cautious and wore this set of Protective Robes of the Golden Bell!

Eternal Faith rejoiced inside. Throughout all these years, he had been handling the various matters of the Courtyard of Secular Affairs. As such, he had not even visited the Demon Suppression hall in quite some time. He did not have any opportunity to fight, so Li Qingshan's sudden palm strike had almost caught him off-guard.

The Courtyard of Secular Affairs held an extremely special position in the Chan Monastery of Deva-Nāga. Most of the time, only those disciples with insufficient talent and were unenthusiastic about buddhism would join the Courtyard of Secular Affairs. And, the courtyard was burdened with the various affairs of the secular world, so their true strength could be regarded as the weakest among the courtyards.

If he had been a disciple of some other courtyard, he would not have been pushed into such a miserable position by Li Qingshan even without so many arcane artifacts. He could have relied on his personal cultivation.

Li Qingshan smiled. "Looks like a bald ass like you has accepted quite a lot of bribes over the years."

"Cut the nonsense!"

Eternal Faith bellowed out. Golden light flowed out of his body and another golden avatar appeared. With the golden bell on the outside and the golden avatar on the inside, he could truly be considered as impervious. He was undefeatable. Standing before the hall, he stared at Li Qingshan like he was saying, "What can you do about me?"

Li Qingshan withdrew his hand and pulled back. He could kill Daemon Commanders as a Daemon General, but with his identity as a Foundation Establishment cultivator, he definitely was not any Golden Core cultivator's opponent. Covered in arcane artifacts, he truly did find Eternal Faith rather troublesome to deal with.

Of course, if there was enough room for a proper battle, Li Qingshan was confident he would still emerge victoriously in the end. However, this was Great Buddha mountain, and he could see figures flickering between the cypress trees. The other secular disciples had all noticed the disturbance and gathered over. They asked, "Senior brother, what's wrong?"

Eternal Faith retrieved the two arcane artifacts and solemnly struck the wooden fish with the wooden fish mallet a few times. He pointed the wooden fish mallet at Li Qingshan and said, "This person has slandered me as someone who takes bribes, making a ruckus in the pure land of buddhist cultivation and intruding upon our Courtyard of Secular Affairs. When I spoke up to point out his misdeeds, he actually responded violently, trying to harm me. Although our Chan Monastery of Deva-Nāga embraces benevolence, we cannot allow this wrong-doer be. Juniors, let's capture him together and send him to the Disciplinary courtyard."

The monks all agreed loudly, surrounding Li Qingshan. They flickered with golden light and conjured golden avatars; they were all Foundation Establishment cultivators. Basically every single one of them possessed an arcane artifact.

Faced with the attacks of so many arcane artifacts, he would struggle to hold them off no matter how powerful his techniques were. If he were a regular Foundation Establishment cultivator, he probably would have been crushed to pieces immediately.

Eternal Faith smiled. Victory was within his grasp. He said to Li Qingshan, "If you give up and let yourself be captured, you can still live. Otherwise, we might have to defile this pure land of buddhism with blood."

Li Qingshan laughed aloud and scorned Eternal Faith. "You said you wanted to punish me? Even if you have another thousand people, it'll be useless."

Eternal Faith shook his head. "You still talk wildly despite the predicament you're in. Your madness is only lamentable!"

"If you don't believe me, then you're welcome to try me!"

Li Qingshan kicked up a splash beneath his feet, leaping into the air with his arms stretched out; he was like a vicious tiger lunging over for the kill.

Eternal Faith's heart skipped a beat, and he became a little more timid, but how could he retreat in front of so many juniors? He was protected by the golden avatar and the golden bell anyway, so there was nothing Li Qingshan could do to him. He ordered, "Do it!"

At the same time, he struck the wooden fish in his hand again and again. The thumps seemed to strike Li Qingshan's heart, directly attacking his soul. Now this was the most powerful way to use this set of arcane artifacts. At the same time, the monks all lunged over together. They probably could take down Li Qingshan in an instant.

Li Qingshan smiled. With how powerful his soul was, he completely ignored the thumpings of the wooden fish. The most powerful way to use the arcane artifacts instead became the most useless against him. He crossed his arms.

With a jangle, black chains criss-crossed together. Eternal Faith's expression changed. The sounds of the chains seemed to ring out from the depths of his heart. Wielding the wooden fish mallet with his golden avatar, he swung it at Li Qingshan's forehead.

However, from the corner of his eye, he spotted the shock on the other monks' faces, all gazing above his head as they called out, "Be careful, senior brother!"

A nine-layered tower appeared above Eternal Faith's head. It was shaped like a buddhist pagoda, but it possessed a dignified power that could suppress all, descending from above.

Boom!

The Demon Suppression Tower enveloped both Li Qingshan and Eternal Faith, and half of the front of the Courtyard of Secular Affairs' great hall collapsed. Cracks emanated outwards on the ground.

The last sight that the monks saw was Eternal Faith's wooden fish mallet looming over Li Qingshan's head, about to strike him, except Li Qingshan's lips had curled into a confident smile.

A monk raised his hands and drew everyone's attention. "Don't worry, everyone. With senior brother Eternal Faith's cultivation and all his arcane artifacts, why would he be afraid of this rascal? It'll just be a moment before he captures the rascal."

"Help me! Ahhh!"

As soon as he finished speaking, Eternal Faith's fearful calls and shrieks rang out from the Demon Suppression Tower.

The monk's expression changed, and he yelled, "Everyone, rescue senior brother from there!"

Over a dozen arcane artifacts flew up together, smashing into the Demon Suppression Tower heavily. The monks were brimming with confidence. With such a powerful attack, they could even tear apart a small mountain, but the end result left them stunned.

The Demon Suppression Tower stood firmly on the ground, without budging at all. They had not even left a mark on the tower's surface.

What arcane artifact was this!? It was actually so tough!

In the Demon Suppression Tower, Eternal Faith's miserable cries rose and fell constantly.

Someone else came up with another idea. "Dig a tunnel under the tower and rescue senior brother like that."

A group of people immediately got to work. In the blink of an eye, they had excavated a tunnel and arrived beneath the tower, but they only found a black bottom as tough as the tower itself. They immediately became powerless.

"Quick, go call the head monk!"

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Suppressed in the Demon Suppression Tower, Eternal Faith noticed that the golden bell and golden avatar were still around him, so he came to his senses and called out, "Li Qingshan, do you think these evil tricks will work? I'm protected by the golden bell and golden avatar. What can you do to me? Li Qingshan? You..."

Eternal Faith shrieked out in shock. Demon qi curled around Li Qingshan as his figure erupted. His sturdy body became covered in a layer of keratin like he had equipped a set of armour. He seemed to have put on a helmet too, which only revealed his eyes that shone with dazzling, red light.

Eternal Faith backed away. "Save me!"

Chapter 587 - Eye of the Sword

Eternal Faith leaned against the ice-cold walls of the tower. Although his robes and golden avatar protected him, he did not feel safe at all as he watched Li Qingshan's red eyes that radiated with malice grow closer and closer. He was like a mortal trapped in a cage with a vicious tiger.

Thunk!

Li Qingshan punched out vigorously, his fist piercing through the air and slamming into the golden bell. The golden bell contorted and changed in shape, sinking in deeply. Its golden light scattered strand by strand.

“Ahh!”

Eternal Faith cried out. The imprint of a punch appeared on his robes, and it showed no signs of fading away. His Protective Robes of the Golden Bell were an arcane artifact for heaven’s sake!

Although it was only an inferior arcane artifact, it should not be fragile to the point where it would sustain so much damage from a single punch. If that punch had downright landed on him, would he still be alive?

Li Qingshan glanced at his fist. From his expression, it seemed like he was rather dissatisfied with the power of the punch.

Although his strength had increased drastically after demonifying, the destructive power was still nowhere close to the true power of the ox demon and tiger demon. Otherwise, a casual punch would have been enough to reduce Eternal Faith’s robes to dust.

However, he was currently right below Great Buddha mountain. Even though he was in the Demon Suppression Tower, he refused to use his powers as a daemon carelessly. Who knew whether the Dauntless monk and his junior brother were currently watching or not.

If he could not tear apart Eternal Faith’s defence quickly, then the powerful figures of the monastery would probably arrive to support him. By then, he would not be able to teach him a fierce lesson anymore.

Suddenly, he was hit with a gust of wind to the face. The wooden fish opened its mouth again and tried to swallow Li Qingshan, while the wooden fish mallet quietly circled around him and flew towards the back of his head. It remained the same size as a regular wooden fish mallet, so it was extremely easy for the attack to succeed if he were careless.

Li Qingshan leapt up, avoiding the lunge from the wooden fish and reaching backwards without even looking back. He caught the wooden fish mallet before quickly falling down and landing heavily on the wooden fish.

The two arcane artifacts trembled desperately, but they were unable to break free from his restraint.

After demonifying, these two arcane artifacts alone were unable to pose any threat to him anymore. Li Qingshan smiled and drew a strange sword from his hundred treasures pouch, the Traitorous Demon sword.

The eyeball on the hilt swiveled, and its pupils locked onto Eternal Faith firmly. Eternal Faith shivered inside, actually feeling like he had been completely seen through.

Within Li Qingshan’s field of vision, a different sight immediately appeared.

He felt like his gaze had passed through the golden bell, the golden avatar, and even his skin, flesh, and bones, seeing something that was even more fundamental. He saw the demonic nature in Eternal Faith's heart, a clump of swirling, black mist.

Everyone had a demonic nature. Although Eternal Faith was a buddhist disciple, he was greedy and easily angered. His demonic nature was even heavier than regular people's. Afterwards, Li Qingshan pulled back his gaze and stopped on Eternal Faith's golden bell.

The strange eyeball on the hilt of the Traitorous Demon sword trembled. Suddenly, Li Qingshan saw a thin, black line on the bell, but he was unable to see anything with his naked eye, nor did he find anything with his soul sense.

What's that?

Li Qingshan thought. He swung the Traitorous Demon sword and tried slashing along the black line.

The sword passed by with a flash. Eternal Faith was about to mock Li Qingshan's futile efforts before suddenly shivering. His robes had been cut open silently, revealing his chest and belly and the pale white fat on there.

The glow dispersed, and the golden bell vanished. The robes had lost their protective function.

How is that possible!? My Protective Robes of the Golden Bell! That must be a coincidence! Eternal Faith's eyes widened. He struggled to believe that a protective arcane artifact could be destroyed silently like that.

Li Qingshan gazed at the Traitorous Demon sword in his hand and said in praise, "Good sword!" As it turned out, the black line was where the gap in the robes existed. He was rather taken aback with joy. Ever since he obtained this sword, he had never properly studied it. He never expected it to have such a special ability.

The Traitorous Demon sword was originally called "Evil Eye". Its strongest aspect was not how sharp its edge was or its toughness. Instead, it could use its "eye" to see many things that were invisible to the naked eye, such as the flaws and gaps that had always existed in items.

Lietu had managed to kill a powerful Demon General and take his demon heart in a single slash through this exact ability.

However, the true strength of an ability like that could not be unleashed without a suitable demon heart serving as the iris. Afterwards, when Lietu merged with the sword, he had used his own demon heart as the iris, but his mind was clouded. He was trapped in the Demon Suppression Tower, caught in a close-ranged battle to the death with the crazy Duoge, which completely prevented him from unleashing the power of the sword.

After that, he died, and the Traitorous Demon sword ended up in Li Qingshan's hands. Originally, making the Traitorous Demon sword yield was not easy. When regular demonfolk obtained the sword, they would have to spend day and night interacting with it and refining it. It would take them a few months at the very least before they could unleash this power.

However, Li Qingshan's demonic nature was far too pure and powerful, and he did not fear the special characteristic of the Traitorous Demon sword at all, even bequeathing it with the name of "Traitorous Demon". As a result, the Traitorous Demon sword seemed to run into the perfect master and was willing to be used. Even before Li Qingshan could carefully study it, it offered up its powers actively.

Just like how every person had their faults, Eternal Faith's Protective Robes of the Golden Bell were not as flawless as they seemed. It had flaws.

Especially after blocking a direct palm strike and a punch from Li Qingshan, the "flaw" became even more obvious, but it was still invisible to the naked eye. However, as Li Qingshan had the Traitorous Demon sword in hand, he could see these flaws.

It was like a clash between two armies, where one side possessed a natural fortress that could hold out against all. If the other side were to launch a direct attack, then perhaps even an army of a hundred thousand would struggle to emerge victoriously. However, as long as they had a guide and a narrow, secret path into the natural fortress, they only needed to send a group of elite, and they would be able to triumph over their enemies.

The Traitorous Demon sword served as the guide here.

"Li Qingshan, don't come over here! This is the Chan Monastery of Deva-Nāga! You can't kill me!"

Eternal Faith put on a tough front despite his lack of confidence inside. He pushed his powers desperately, and the golden avatar shone even brighter. He grumbled inside, So this Li Qingshan's real identity is a demonfolk. Since I've seen his true identity, he definitely won't let me escape. He wants to silence me with death. If I had known this earlier, why would I have said so much just to redeem my pride?

He wanted to redeem his pride not only because of low tolerance, but also because he believed he possessed an advantage and thought Li Qingshan was a sitting duck, someone he could do whatever he wanted to. Never did he think he could force him into such dire straits even when surrounded by so many people.

Li Qingshan smiled indifferently and closed his eyes, sending his soul sense into the Traitorous Demon sword. The evil eye on the hilt let out rings of light.

Afterwards, he "saw" the golden light on Eternal Faith dim. On his golden avatar, splotches of black appeared. They were all weaker points of the golden avatar. There were even a few black specks that were particularly dark.

Openings!

Li Qingshan took a step forward. The Traitorous Demon sword pressed forward, passing through the air and stabbing into one of the black specks.

Li Qingshan opened his eyes again, only to see the golden avatar glistening with golden light. There were no black splotches or black specks at all. However, cracks had appeared on the golden avatar where his sword had made contact with it.

Li Qingshan smiled and drove all of his strength and spiritual qi into the strike. The tip of the sword plunged in.

Clang!

With a sound like metal had been ripped open, the indestructible golden avatar of buddhism shattered and dispersed. Eternal Faith was like a hermit crab that had just lost its shell. Disbelief filled his face, no longer possessing a hint of unruly arrogance.

Eternal Faith urged the wooden fish as hard as he could as he reached into his hundred treasures pouch frantically. He still had many powerful talismans in his possession, enough to turn the tables. However, as soon as his fingers touched his hundred treasures pouch, the icy-cold edge of a sword pressed against his neck.

He never expected Li Qingshan to tear through his two layers of defence so quickly and easily such that he had not even prepared mentally for it. There were many techniques and items he had not used. This was the result of not fighting in a long time.

“If you move again, say bye bye to your head!” Li Qingshan said.

Eternal Faith felt a prick of pain on his neck and warm fluid flowed down. He immediately became too frightened to move again. As he gazed at the dark-red pupils, his face contorted. He seemed like he wanted to cry, yet also laugh. He was certain Li Qingshan was trying to silence him, so he wanted to say something flattering and beg for his life. He normally heard things like that all the time, yet he was completely unable to utter any of them now.

With a jangle, Chains of Demon Suppression draped down, tying up Eternal Faith like a christmas present and hoisting him into the air. Eternal Faith feigned composure. “If you kill me, you won’t be able to escape death either!”

“If you don’t want to piss me off to the point that I actually kill you, you better shut up!”

Eternal Faith dared not utter another word, but hope rose up in his heart. He really is afraid of killing me. He thought viciously inside, Once I get out, you better watch how I deal with you!

“Hmph, do you really think I don’t know what you’re thinking? You’re a little man who takes bribes. That’s what you do, yet I’m forbidden to say you are? I originally planned on ignoring you, yet you sure were proactive with coming after me, refusing to let me go. You even dared to do some imitations, playing those games of trying to frame me verbally. Why don’t you check yourself? There’s a saying from my hometown: Don’t take my discretion as a reason for you to walk all over me. Have you heard of it before!?”

Eternal Faith was obviously too afraid to answer.

Li Qingshan took out a whip from his hundred treasures pouch. It was only a high grade spiritual artifact, and he had even forgotten where or who he had obtained it from. Coupled with how he was not skilled with whips, he originally thought he would never use it, but he never expected an opportunity would present itself today.

Grasping the handle, he shook it forcefully and circled it over his head before lashing out viciously. With a crack, a bloody mark immediately appeared on Eternal Faith. His body trembled as he let out a squeal like a pig about to be butchered.

Although he had been restrained, his spiritual qi still protected him, so he should not have been so miserable. However, Li Qingshan's whip possessed the power of demon suppression. Eternal Faith had demons in his heart, so he was unable to avoid punishment.

Eternal Faith began cursing again, and Li Qingshan let out a laugh. He swung the whip around, making it dance like a dragon as he whipped Eternal Faith viciously, feeling great joy inside. He could sense that the monks outside were attacking the Demon Suppression Tower, but he did not care at all.

The special characteristic of the Demon Suppression Tower was that the stronger the demonic nature of those being suppressed was, the sturdier it would become. Eternal Faith was a little man, but his demonic nature was not exactly heavy. However, Li Qingshan's demonic nature was far too strong, so as he stood inside, the Demon Suppression Tower became extremely sturdy, more sturdy than it had ever been.

He felt another tremor from below his feet, and he ignored it again. If the senior who created the Demon Suppression Statuary did not even have a tower footing when he came up with the Demon Suppression Tower, and they could simply burrow in through the earth, then what the fuck was he on about with demon suppression?

"Amitābha, what is going on here?"

Outside the Demon Suppression Tower, an old monk suddenly appeared without any sign at all. His hair and beard were all grey, and he seemed very gentle and solemn. He was the head monk of the Courtyard of Secular Affairs, the Distant Enlightenment Chan Master.

Chapter 588 - Return

"Master is here!" "The head monk is here!"

The monks made a ruckus. Some called him master, while others called him head monk. Combined with Eternal Faith's shrieks from the Demon Suppression Tower, the situation was a mess.

Distant Enlightenment frowned and gave off an invisible aura and pressure. The surroundings immediately settled down.

"Eternal Benevolence, tell me what is going on."

A middle-aged monk with an honest and tolerant appearance stepped forward. "Master, I've only just arrived too. Apparently senior brother Eternal Faith became caught in a dispute with someone called Li Qingshan, and he ordered us to capture him. That Li Qingshan summoned this tower in response, which enveloped both of them."

The Eternal Benevolence monk was famous for his honesty in the Courtyard of Secular Affairs, so Distant Enlightenment trusted his word the most. He described what he saw and heard. He did not listen to what Eternal Faith had said to describe Li Qingshan as a wrong-doer.

Li Qingshan!

Distant Enlightenment's heart skipped a beat. When One Will first entered the Chan Monastery of Deva-Nāga, he was also at the grand hall. This stubborn man left quite an impression on me. Afterwards, One Will returned, and the abbot personally carried out tonsure for her, yet Li Qingshan was nowhere to be seen. I thought he was still imprisoned in the Demon Suppression hall, but it looks like he has already come out. I wonder why he has come to my Courtyard of Secular Affairs and why he is fighting with Eternal Faith.

Listening to Eternal Faith's shrieks, Distant Enlightenment was mildly angered. How dare he beat up his disciple right in his face. He was looking down on his Courtyard of Secular Affairs a little too much. With a wave of his hand, Eternal Faith originally thought the tower would fly away, but he never expected it to not even budge.

Distant Enlightenment was surprised. What kind of technique was this? How was it so sturdy?

At first glance, he found it oozing with demon qi, so it seemed like a technique of the Demon race, yet it happened to possess a buddhist solemnity that completely contrasted against that, making it majestic and inviolable. He had never even heard of something like this before.

He parted his hands and clenched his fists. His body glistened with golden light, conjuring the avatar of a guardian king that stood over ten meters tall. It spread its muscly arms and hugged the Demon Suppression Tower firmly, pulling it upwards.

The force from the guardian king was anything but little. The Demon Suppression Tower shuddered before being lifted up bit by bit.

Li Qingshan stowed the whip away and let out a snort, immediately crossing his legs and sitting down. His demon heart produced rings of dark-red light as he surged with demon qi, rushing into the air as if it wanted to smash through the Demon Suppression Tower.

However, the more he stirred his demon heart and released his demonic nature, the larger the Demon Suppression Tower became. At the same time, he practised the Demon Suppression Statuary, and the Demon Suppression Tower grew another few meters taller.

Distant Enlightenment refused to give up. The two of them were locked in stalemate for a while longer before a boom occurred. The Demon Suppression Tower struck the ground firmly.

The monks cried out in alarm. Originally, they thought that Li Qingshan was as good as captured now that Distant Enlightenment had stepped in, but they never expected that even upon using his guardian king's avatar, Distant Enlightenment still could not shake the strange tower.

Distant Enlightenment dispersed his golden avatar helplessly. He did possess other powerful techniques and he was confident he could get through the tower, but if he did that, the disturbance would be far too great. Facing trouble in their own sect would do no good to the monastery's reputation.

This Li Qingshan is actually so capable. With his cultivation at the first heavenly tribulation, he can actually contend with my golden avatar. He's not someone who I can afford to underestimate.

"Sir Li, please come out. You are more than welcome to tell this lowly monk just how my disciple has offended you. This lowly monk can handle the matter impartially."

“You monks all abuse your superior advantages to harass a lone man like me. If I were to come out, wouldn’t I still be harassed by you?” Li Qingshan’s voice rang out from the tower. All of the monks became angered.

“Harass you? This seems to contrast a little from what this lowly monk is seeing.”

“Emptiness is form. You can’t just look at the surface for anything. Doesn’t the master understand a principle like this?”

“Amitābha, this lowly monk has learnt a lesson. May I ask just how my disciple has harassed you? If he really is in the wrong, this lowly monk is willing to apologise for his misdeeds.”

“Master, you’re quite cultured. You’re much better than this horrible disciple of yours. Forget it. Since you want to know, I’ll tell you.”

As a result, Li Qingshan told him how he wanted to become a secular disciple, how he heard secular disciples needed to give gifts, and how he angered Eternal Faith just by saying, “buddhist disciples also accept bribes.” followed by how Eternal Faith made things difficult for him. He simply described everything like that, without embellishing the truth at all.

Seeing how straightforward he was, Distant Enlightenment already began to believe him a little. He had caught wind of Eternal Faith accepting “gifts” a long time ago, but he focused on cultivation, so he did not pay any heed to such a small matter. He never thought it would actually lead to something like this today, but he was still not entirely convinced.

“How can this lowly monk just believe your side of the story?”

“My side of the story? Hmph, it wasn’t only the two of us back then. You’re more than welcome to ask secular disciple senior brother Wang and check whether I’ve told even a single lie.”

Ever since the monks had rushed over, senior brother Wang and the other two secular disciples retreated to one side and watched on to see how everything would unfold.

Hearing Li Qingshan mention him, senior brother Wang was alarmed inside, cursing Li Qingshan for repaying his kindness with enmity, wanting to drag him down too. He stood forward reluctantly and bowed towards Distant Enlightenment. “Greetings, head monk.”

“Feel free to tell me everything. There’s no need to worry about anything, nor are you allowed to hide anything. The monastery has plenty of methods to discern lies and verify truths.”

As a result, all senior brother Wang could say was, “The situation earlier was basically as L- Li Qingshan described. It has only been a form of etiquette as disciples of the same courtyard between senior brother Eternal Faith and us. There was nothing to do with bribes. Li Qingshan had misspoken beforehand, which was why senior brother Eternal Faith lost his temper. Please give us your wise judgement, head monk.”

Although he refused to lie before Distant Enlightenment, he was still biased towards Eternal Faith as he spoke. Li Qingshan irritated him; he thought, Even if there really had been bribery, what’s it got to do with you?

Distant Enlightenment's eyebrows became even more furrowed. If that were the case, Eternal Faith had truly gone too far.

"Sir Li, I've already understood the entire story now. You can come out!"

"Just understanding is not enough. Tell me how you plan on handling this."

"My disciple has behaved inappropriately and broken the rules of the monastery. I will personally take him to the Disciplinary courtyard for punishment, and I will apologise to you. It is my Courtyard of Secular Affairs' honour to have you as a secular disciple." Distant Enlightenment sighed and bowed slightly.

Li Qingshan secretly praised, Now this old monk has got the bearing. It was not like he was someone who refused to let bygones be bygones, so he immediately withdrew his demonic nature and recovered his human form before waving his hand and dispersing the Demon Suppression Tower.

Eternal Faith was already on his last gasp from the whipping. He was a bloody mess. He did not even have the strength to shriek out anymore. With a thought, Li Qingshan removed the Chains of Demon Suppression, and he fell to the ground heavily.

"Senior brother Eternal Faith!" the monks all cried out and glared at Li Qingshan.

Although Eternal Faith was a standard little man in Li Qingshan's dictionary, he was skilled at handling the affairs of the courtyard and had always been very generous. He did not always keep all the gifts he received for himself, treating everyone equally instead, which was why he had managed to rally all the disciples earlier. The disciples of the Courtyard of Secular Affairs all admired him. Even when their cultivations exceeded his, they would not contend for his position of first senior brother.

With a wave of his hand, Distant Enlightenment swept Eternal Faith to his side. Golden light sprinkled over him, and Eternal Faith's wounds immediately recovered. He gradually opened his eyes and called out, "Master!"

"Sigh, Eternal Faith, you've always been so sharp and intelligent, so why have you done something so stupid today?"

"The master truly has handled everything impartially. You have my admiration. As for becoming a secular disciple, it's fine even if I don't become one."

Li Qingshan clasped his hands before striding out of the Courtyard of Secular Affairs.

Eternal Faith gazed at Li Qingshan's figure. Resentment filled his eyes. Never had he experienced so much humiliation before, and it had occurred in front of so many junior brothers and his master. Suddenly, he raised his voice and called out in a rather shrill manner.

"Don't let him go! He's a demonfolk!"

"What! Eternal Faith, you cannot speak nonsense like that!"

Distant Enlightenment became alarmed. He immediately used his soul sense to carefully check Li Qingshan, but under the Demon Suppression Statuary, Li Qingshan did not even give off a hint of demon qi.

Eternal Faith said angrily, "I personally saw him demonify. Otherwise, how could he have gotten through my robes and golden avatar so easily with his strength? If I am lying, I am willing to enter Avīci and endure eternal suffering."

Distant Enlightenment's face changed. For a buddhist disciple to swear such a solemn vow, it basically could not be false. Demonfolk were the hated enemies of buddhism. If Li Qingshan was a demon, then he had to capture him regardless of whether he was in the right or the wrong. He would either be killed on the spot or sent into the Demon Suppression hall.

However, Li Qingshan ignored all of it, continuing on his way out. Distant Enlightenment called out sternly, "Please hold on, sir Li!"

"What else do you want to ask, master?" Li Qingshan only felt his wrist tighten, having been grabbed firmly by Distant Enlightenment. If he did not mention the Unraging monk's name today, he probably could not get out of this situation. He sighed inside, Master, oh master, you can't blame me for this.

"There are a few matters that require sir Li to resolve. May I ask which sect or school the technique of the tower that sir Li used earlier belongs to?"

Li Qingshan said, "Orthodox buddhism, obviously!" And, it was even the supreme cultivation method of the Chan Monastery of Deva-Nāga.

"I practised buddhism since young, and it has already been over three centuries since then, so why have I never heard of such a powerful buddhist technique? I instead found it radiating with demon qi, like it's a demonic technique used by demonfolk?"

Li Qingshan smiled. "You're only listening to one side of the story again, master. I'll also swear that if I am a demonfolk, I am willing to enter Avīci and endure eternal suffering."

Distant Enlightenment began to hesitate. He glanced past Li Qingshan's wrist, and his gaze suddenly froze. He asked, "Hmm? Where did you get this string of prayer beads from!?"

The string of prayer beads seemed like nothing special, but Distant Enlightenment remembered very clearly that it was something that never left the senior at the back of the mountain, so why was it in Li Qingshan's possession?"

Li Qingshan said, "Someone gave it to me."

"Impossible!"

Distant Enlightenment knew exactly how significant the string of prayer beads were to the senior. They could basically be treated as an item of inheriting his legacy. He would never give it away so easily.

"If it wasn't given to me, am I supposed to have stolen it?"

Distant Enlightenment thought, That's even more impossible. Just how many people are there in the world who can steal from that senior? If that senior really gave it to him willingly, then...

Li Qingshan hintingly said, "Master, do you think I came to the Courtyard of Secular Affairs to become a secular disciple because I had nothing better to do?"

Distant Enlightenment slowly let go and brought his palms together. "This lowly monk understands. Please continue on your way, sir!"

Li Qingshan also brought his hands together and bowed. "Thank you, master!" He strode off in the direction of the Clear River prefecture.

"Master!" Eternal Faith called out, utterly refusing to accept this.

Distant Enlightenment slowly turned around, hinting at him to say no more. He gazed at Li Qingshan's figure as he gradually travelled into the distance. Whether this child is a human or a demon completely depends on that person's judgement!

Chapter 589 - The New Marquis of Ruyi

Li Qingshan left the vicinity of Great Buddha mountain and immediately took off on a cloud, rising high into the sky. He gazed back at Great Buddha mountain in the distance. He seemed to see Xiao An's figure atop the mountain, but it also seemed like there was nothing there at all.

He sucked in a deep breath and let out a great bellow, "Until we see each other again!"

His voice echoed through the mountains. The many pilgrims below all raised their heads and looked at the horizon. They had no idea what was going on.

Li Qingshan laughed a few more times before turning around and taking off without hesitation. He travelled at full speed along the way, without stopping at all, returning to the Ruyi commandery in a day and night. He reported back to Gu Yanying first. He did not even visit the Hawkwolf Guard, instead going directly to where she cultivated before calling out.

"Commander Gu, your subordinate Li Qingshan seeks an audience with you."

Before long, a door opened in the formation. Li Qingshan flew over the small lake, crossed over the boundless stretch of lotus flowers, and arrived in the Waterside Pavilion of Listening Wind. Gu Yanying was already waiting for him on the terrace, smiling from afar. "Your trip has taken quite the time."

Li Qingshan arrived on the terrace. He could not help himself as his heart skipped a beat. Gu Yanying stood in the breeze with her clothes whiter than snow, charming and graceful. Her charm could not be rivaled by any regular woman.

However, when he remembered their previous conversation, he immediately dismissed his thoughts. He had always been able to pick up or let go of his emotions at a whim. He had never been a passionately-devoted person like Hua Chengzan. Coupled with how he had already agreed with her last time, it was even less likely for him to change. He said relaxedly, "I ran into some small problems that took some time."

Gu Yanying took note of his facial expression and the tone of his voice. She could not help but smile. She stopped worrying. He truly was a courageous and resolute man.

"Looks like you've benefited quite a lot."

Li Qingshan ruminated over everything for a while before smiling. "You can say that I've gained more than I've lost. So how's it? Do you need my help now?"

“There’s no hurry. It’s still not time yet.” Gu Yanying struck the palm of her hand gently with her folding fan, clearly knowing exactly what she was doing.

Li Qingshan said, “Then I’ll have to ask you for your help first. I want you to assist me with something small.”

“Go on.”

“You can say that I’ve been through quite a lot of battles, whether big or small, so I’ve accumulated many spoils. However, how I should handle these spoils and convert them into my own strength is quite a problem. Do you have any ideas?”

During his clash with Eternal Faith, Li Qingshan discovered that his identity as a human was still too weak. If he had not learnt the Demon Suppression Statuary, Eternal Faith would have been able to make things very awkward for him with merely a few arcane artifacts despite being extremely horrible in battle.

Demonification and the Traitorous Demon sword were both his trump cards. He did not want to use them unless he had to. As a result, he wanted to have a few powerful arcane artifacts at his disposal. Actually, he already possessed plenty of arcane artifacts, but he could not use any of them freely. He felt like he was guarding a mountain of gold, but he was unable to mine it.

“That’s not a problem. Actually, even if you hadn’t mentioned it, I wanted to discuss it with you anyway. If you can properly make use of the many resources from underground, the benefits they can bring will be far greater than you’ve imagined.”

“That would obviously be for the best.”

Li Qingshan smiled. Matters that posed great problems to him were extremely easy to handle for Gu Yanying. With her network of connections, she obviously possessed ways to deal with these “spoils”. However, that was also the only reason a foundation existed for their cooperation.

Li Qingshan took out a portion of his spoils. Just the arcane artifacts among them numbered five. He had found them all from the hundred treasures pouches of the Golden Core cultivators from the battle at Burial Mound mountain. Plenty of them were personal weapons of those cultivators, who made a name for themselves with them. Once one or two of them entered the market, it would immediately lead to an investigation.

Apart from that, there were also many miscellaneous items like pills and cultivation methods. Together, they were worth quite the sum as well.

“Sure enough, your spoils are plentiful. However, that shouldn’t be all, right? Since you want to exchange them, you might as well take them all out! Little bro Qingshan, it’s not like your older sister I covet these items of yours,” Gu Yanying said.

Even Golden Core cultivators could become green with greed when they saw these items, but they were not worth her attention.

Li Qingshan was convinced. “You don’t even know what I want. Deals and transactions still depend on whether the price is appropriate or not.”

Gu Yanying opened her folding fan and waved it gently. "I'll just guarantee your satisfaction then."

Li Qingshan studied her for a while. "Fine then! Here, take it all."

In one go, he took out all the spoils he had accumulated, which included a vast array of items such as cultivation methods, formations, arcane artifacts, spiritual artifacts, pills, and talismans. There was everything a person could imagine. Li Qingshan only kept a few violet talismans to protect himself in the future.

Gu Yanying looked through them quickly and roughly estimated their value. As she went through them, she would make a few comments about some arcane artifacts or cultivation methods. Afterwards, she accepted everything and put them all away in her hundred treasures pouch.

Li Qingshan asked, "So where are my things?"

Gu Yanying said, "It's not like I carry those items around on me. Let's go pay a visit to the Arsenal of Arms!"

"The Arsenal of Arms? Surely you don't plan on having me shop around and then purchase everything that catches my fancy for me!"

In the past, Li Qingshan's first proper weapon came from the Arsenal of Arms. After entering the world of cultivation, he dealt with them a few more times. He knew that the Arsenal of Arms had an extremely large range of influence. They basically undertook all the transactions involving artifacts throughout the entire Ruyi commandery. If he wanted to look for a few suitable arcane artifacts, the Arsenal of Arms would obviously be the best choice. However, if he purchased from there, the price would be much higher.

Gu Yanying said, "That won't be necessary."

The two of them left the Waterside Pavilion of Listening Wind and arrived in the Ruyi commandery together.

As the very core of the entire Ruyi commandery, the commandery city of Ruyi was much more extensive than the prefectural city of Clear River. The city spanned dozens of kilometers, layered with buildings of differing designs that towered into the clouds. Most of them were made from wood and stone, which gave them an antique flavour, but various strange colours filled the city too, which did not make it resemble an ancient city.

The city was so advanced and convenient that probably even modern cities pale in comparison. Li Qingshan could clearly see wooden compartments that resembled trams sliding down the streets, stopping from time to time to let go and let on groups of people. Clearly, it was the handiwork of the school of Mohism.

It was around dusk right now, so the lights were being lit up for the evening. However, what lit up were not candles, but glimmering specks of light like spherical balls of lightning that appeared from thin air. The specks of light scattered across the criss-crossing streets, extending in all directions.

In the blink of an eye, the commandery city of Ruyi became submerged in a sea of stars. It was magnificent.

Clearly, it was the formation that enveloped the entire commandery city coming into effect. The mortals who lived here all seemed like they had already grown accustomed to it.

However, it did leave Li Qingshan who was in the sky amazed. Suddenly, he noticed that the entire city was decorated with lanterns and streamers as if they were celebrating something. He asked, "What festival is it right now?"

Gu Yanying said, "Oh right, you still don't know. The new Marquis of Ruyi has already taken office. You'll be able to see him tonight."

"Tonight?"

"There's a banquet in the Marquis of Ruyi's estate tonight. You can come along with me."

"Why would I go?"

"This prince from the imperial family of the Dragon province cannot be compared with Jiang Fu. You should consider it!" Gu Yanying finished speaking and flew down.

Li Qingshan considered it for a moment before flying down too. "I might as well then."

No matter who became the Marquis of Ruyi, he would definitely be the greatest thorn in their backside. Knowing thyself and knowing thy enemy makes you undefeatable in battle.

Chapter 590 - Five Arcane Artifacts

The two of them arrived before a building that stood over a hundred meters tall. Li Qingshan raised his head and followed the building up, only to see it shaped like a sword, pointing straight at the sky. A silvery-blue light flowed through the entire building, displaying three large words, the Arsenal of Arms.

Gu Yanying walked in, and Li Qingshan followed closely behind. As soon as he stepped through the door, before he could even look around, an attendant received them. The attendant was surprised at first when he first saw Gu Yanying before showing respect.

"Ma'am, you've come to check on us!"

Loud greetings immediately rang out from all the floors. Almost a hundred cultivators made their way down, all saying, "Greetings from your subordinates, ma'am!"

Originally, Li Qingshan thought this was because of Gu Yanying's identity as the White Hawk commander, but he noticed something was amiss as soon as he heard how they referred to themselves. They were not Hawkwolf guards, so why did they call themselves "subordinates"? And, this did not seem like they were receiving an esteemed guest.

Gu Yanying relieved him of his confusion. "Don't you know that the Arsenal of Arms is my business? If you want any arcane artifact, pick away. There's nowhere in the Ruyi commandery with more arcane artifacts than here."

"You really do know how to make money, and you sure are extravagant."

Li Qingshan could not help but remember how Hua Chengzan would always call her "boss Gu" whenever he mentioned her. Now, he finally understood the reason why.

“You can all go back to what you’re doing. Old Wu, take commander Li to the storeroom above for a look!”

Gu Yanying dismissed everyone with a wave of her hand before giving an order to an honest-looking Foundation Establishment cultivator who seemed to be in his forties or fifties. He was the shopkeeper of this Arsenal of Arms store, and he was in charge of receiving guests.

Old Wu could not help but study Li Qingshan. How could he let an outsider into an important place like the store room? Even if he received important guests, he would only invite them to a private room.

However, since the order came directly from Gu Yanying, he refused to defy her. “Yes, ma’am!”

Under old Wu’s lead, they arrived on the top floor. They passed through who knew how many alarm systems and formations and opened several gates before reaching the treasury of the Arsenal of Arms.

With what I’m capable of, getting through these formations on the outside is nothing difficult, but who knows what those gates are made of. They’ve been imbued with great power. I’d probably struggle to get through them even with the Traitorous Demon sword in hand.

Suddenly, there was a flash right before his eyes. A wave of light surged into his face, almost dazzling his eyes. He squinted, only to see countless spiritual artifacts glowing brightly. They varied in size, forming a dazzling array that filled his eyes, occupying the entire store room.

Shopkeeper Wu closed the gate and stood straight. “Ma’am, we’re here.”

Gu Yanying said, “Let’s take a look at the arcane artifacts inside.”

“That... might not be appropriate.” Shopkeeper Wu hesitated and glanced at Li Qingshan.

“Stop faltering around! Go!”

Gu Yanying urged with a smile. Her voice was very gentle, like he was an old friend and not a subordinate.

“Yes.”

With no other choice, shopkeeper Wu arrived before the eastern wall. He formed a seal and muttered a chant. Another gate opened on the clean, smooth wall, and he turned around. “Please!”

Finally, Li Qingshan arrived in the true treasury of the Arsenal of Arms. Looking around, there were almost a hundred different items, placed in individual display cases. There were common blades, swords, and armour among them, as well as various wondrous items hidden behind films of light, obscuring their glow.

However, Li Qingshan knew that every single one of them was an extremely precious arcane artifact, and they were worth far more than the countless spiritual artifacts outside combined.

Old Wu offered up a jade slip, and Li Qingshan sent his soul sense into it. Inside the jade slip was information regarding all of these arcane artifacts. Regular customers probably could only purchase these arcane artifacts through this jade slip and could not directly enter this room to pick and choose among the actual items.

Gu Yanying glanced around. She made her way over to a display case and extended her hand in. Her fair hand passed through the film of light slowly. By the time she drew them out again, she was already holding a set of almost-transparent gloves. They shone with lacy rings of light. They were a low grade arcane artifact.

“Come, try this on.”

“That’s a fantastic choice, ma’am. The ‘Gentle Wave gloves’ don’t require any special introduction. All they do is make water element techniques and battle skills a lot faster and a lot stronger when used. They’re perfect for this fellow to use,” shopkeeper Wu introduced with great expertise.

In a battle to the death, being even a split second faster might be the difference between life and death, let alone “a lot”.

Li Qingshan put on the gloves, and their glow became withdrawn. He discovered that the gloves were so light that he felt like he was wearing nothing. He could even make out his fingerprints clearly. They were like the blue waves of a lake, coloured when looked at from afar, but colourless when scooped up in the hands.

He held his hands. Even his sense of touch had not been affected at all. Just how functional would something so light and handy be?

He parted his hands again and silently circulated his spiritual qi. The moment the thought occurred to him, a tiny water swirl had appeared. The entire process had been free and smooth as if it had not taken him any additional effort at all.

Li Qingshan beamed with joy inside. If he possessed this, then he could definitely multiply the strength of Ocean Wielding. It suited him even more than the Heavy Water sword. If he had been wearing these gloves when he clashed with Eternal Faith, he was rather confident he could smash through his robes with a single punch.

Old Wu was secretly amazed too. The water swirl was only the size of a thumb, but it whistled like a tornado. The power it contained could probably pierce through rock, and he was merely testing it out. If he used the technique seriously, just how powerful would that be?

“Alright, this’ll be one!”

Li Qingshan said firmly before simply keeping the gloves on his hand, without taking them off. He continued choosing.

He was constantly amazed. He felt every single arcane artifact was so special and powerful, and basically the introduction for every single one of them was very long, providing various kinds of information regarding the arcane artifact.

He had always liked fighting and been skilled at fighting. Whenever he got to an arcane artifact, he would basically imagine the battle skill that could unleash the greatest strength of the arcane artifact automatically, so he took even longer.

“You’re too slow. If you continue like this, you’ll miss out on the banquet. You better just leave it to me!” Gu Yanying waited for a while before stowing her folding fan away and extending her hand.

Li Qingshan only felt a gentle breeze and the jade slip was in her hands. He smiled helplessly.

Gu Yanying began browsing through the arcane artifacts seriously. Although these arcane artifacts all belonged to her, she did not understand every single one of them. However, she was still much faster than Li Qingshan. Before long, she had chosen a jade pendant, a waistband, a set of soft armour, and a pair of shoes. All of them were obviously arcane artifacts, and they each possessed their own strange powers.

Li Qingshan obviously did not question her insight and understanding. All he could do was accept them. As he looked at the side of her beautiful face that thought seriously, he could not help but develop some other feelings again. He felt like he had been taken out by a wealthy girlfriend to choose a set of fitting and expensive clothes so that he could attend a luxurious soirée.

Li Qingshan smiled self-deprecatingly. You still won't give up, will you? He set these thoughts aside and put on everything Gu Yanying had chosen. He acquired a brand-new look, now possessing an impressive bearing.

"Commander Li, your attire truly is very elegant!"

Shopkeeper Wu managed to infer Li Qingshan's name and identity from their conversation, so he praised in a hurry, but he thought inside, Anyone who wears five arcane artifacts will be extraordinarily elegant. Though, whether he can unleash their powers is quite the question.

"That should be enough," Gu Yanying studied Li Qingshan and said in thought.

Li Qingshan smiled. He also felt extremely satisfied inside. As long as he could refine all of these arcane artifacts, his strength would increase by severalfold, and he would have made up for his disadvantage of being too weak as a human cultivator. It would no longer be so awkward in many situations that were inappropriate for him to use his powers as a daemon. The next time he entered the Demon Suppression hall, he was bold enough to attempt the seventh floor now.

"Can I choose a few more?"

Gu Yanying smiled. "It's fine even if I give you all the arcane artifacts here, but you've basically reached your limit already by wielding five arcane artifacts. If you have any more, the arcane artifacts will conflict with one another, and it will be detrimental to their usage."

If it were not for the arcane artifacts all belonging to the water element and Li Qingshan's god-like talent of controlling water from the spirit turtle, simultaneously wielding three arcane artifacts was basically the limit.

Having accepted bribes for all these years, Eternal Faith definitely had more than three arcane artifacts in his possession, but he only used three when he faced Li Qingshan.

Shopkeeper Wu was dumfounded. Although Gu Yanying had always been a generous person, this level of generosity was unheard of. Just what had this person done to receive such good graces from her?

"Alright, I'll have you hold onto it then. We'll see once I think of anything else I need! Hmm, is this an alchemy cauldron?"

Li Qingshan's gaze drifted around; he spotted a pure-white cauldron that seemed to be carved out of white jade in the display case at the very top of the wall.

"That's right. The cauldron is called the Jade Melting cauldron. It's only a mid grade arcane artifact, but it's worth the most among the arcane artifacts here," Shopkeeper Wu said.

Originally, smithing and alchemy cauldrons that rarely came about were the easiest to sell, but due to being simply too expensive, many cultivators could only give up on it regretfully after seeing it.

"I also want this Jade Melting cauldron."

Li Qingshan's eyes lit up as he spoke up immediately. Ever since Ru Xin had given him the Water God Seal, he had always wanted to find a suitable gift to return the gesture. This Jade Melting cauldron was basically perfect.

Gu Yanying said, "I didn't know you also knew alchemy."

"I have a friend who's skilled in this aspect."

Gu Yanying smiled. "A beauty from the school of Medicine, Ru Xin, right? You sure are a passionate person."

"You already know the answer to that question, but I only treat her as a close friend, that's all," said Li Qingshan. With Gu Yanying's identity, even investigating the past three generations of his family was no issue, so there was nothing strange about her knowing Ru Xin.

"From your tone, you sound like you're going to give this to her?" Gu Yanying leapt up gently and grabbed the Jade Melting cauldron. It fitted within one hand, and it was propped up by three long, curved legs. It was covered with a pattern of clouds, and it seemed detailed and delicate in design.

"Exactly."

"Are you aware that this alchemy cauldron is worth even more than the five arcane artifacts on you combined?"

Li Qingshan asked, "And what about it?"

"You better refine your arcane artifacts quickly. There's probably going to be a bitter battle tonight." Gu Yanying casually tossed the Jade Melting cauldron to Li Qingshan and made her way out of the storeroom.

Li Qingshan was surprised. "A bitter battle?"