

# Tales of Herding Gods

## Chapter 5: Li River's Five Elders

A voice containing strong qi echoed throughout the area. Even though the voice came from afar, it felt as if it were right beside them, causing Qin Mu's ears to buzz and vibrate.

He looked in the direction that the voice had come from and saw a few figures standing atop a cliff of a mountain about two miles away. Qin Mu couldn't see any of their faces clearly but knew that they probably weren't ordinary people since one of them was able to project his voice across such a distance.

"Devil? Who's a devil? I'm just an ordinary person by the river, and this little elk is just a calf that I'm raising..." Granny Si slung her basket on her arm and smiled. Then she whispered, "Mu'er, run!"

The urgency in Granny Si's voice startled Qin Mu. He tried to say something, but couldn't. He didn't want to leave because he was worried that Granny might be in danger.

"You're just an ordinary person by the river? Projecting your voice to us so clearly, and with such strong qi, no ordinary old woman could do that." An old yet vibrant voice echoed from the cliff, then laughed coldly. "There's no way that we, the Li River's Five Elders, could be mistaken about the Heavenly Devil Creation Technique. A skill that's constantly changing, stripping the skin to make clothing... You still want to explain when we've clearly seen such a sinister skill?"

"You must have frequently transform humans into livestock using the Heavenly Devil Creation Technique, then drag them to the market for slaughter, huh?" Another elder on the cliff solemnly shouted. "Many of the seniors of our righteous sect have even been transformed into livestock and forced to graze on grass for eternity! Having seen your methods, there's no way you could trick us!"

"An elk is also a living being. For you to use its skin and soul to create such an evil thing..." another elder said in a sorrowful voice. "God knows how many more innocent lives will be lost if we don't kill you here and now. Who else should we kill if not you?"

Granny Si spun around to Qin Mu and removed the needle in between his brows, softly saying, "These old blokes aren't a threat. However, if you stay by granny's side, granny will be distracted trying to protect you, so run quickly! Run back to the village!"

Qin Mu no longer hesitated and turned back to flee, following the path of the river beside them. He originally thought that it would be awkward to move after turning into

an elk, but after he started running, he realized that he had been wrong. Rather than feeling awkward, he felt as if he had always been an elk and ran faster than ever before.

“The little devil is trying to escape? Won’t it be disastrous if we let you escape? Li River’s Five Disciples, it’s time for your training. Your target is that elk below us. Eliminate him and bring me his head!”

At the same time, voices belonging to both girls and boys crisply sounded off. “Understood!”

In a flash, five figures jumped off the cliff and ran down its side. Swift as a speeding horse, they reached the bottom of the cliff in an instant. At the bottom of the cliff was a deep pool that served as the stopping point of a raging waterfall that flowed down the mountain. Instead of hitting the water with a splash, however, the five of them lightly stepped onto the surface of the water and started running after Qin Mu.

Granny Si’s heart sank. “Spirit Bodies! And the levels of their Spirit Embryo Divine Treasures definitely aren’t weak. Mu’er’s speed can’t contend with theirs, they’ll definitely catch up to him!”

Just as Granny Si was about to move to stop them, four figures came flying through the sky and landed around her. Only one person remained atop the cliff of the mountain. He stood there proudly, clearly not coming down anytime soon.

“What are Li River’s Five Elders doing here in the Great Ruins?” Granny Si rolled her eyes and snickered as four of the elders surrounded her. “Considering how dangerous the Great Ruins are, aren’t you scared that your famous selves might die here?”

Of the four elders around her, the one with the black beard coldly replied, “We heard that some filthy disgraces were hiding in the Great Ruins... demons and devils that couldn’t live outside and came here for refuge. Therefore we, the five elders, brought our disciples here to subdue them.”

“It still ain’t confirmed who’s the devil or the demon... or who’ll be subduing who.” Granny Si held her basket in the crook of one arm and brandished her pair of scissors in her free hand. Looking as if she had bad eyesight, she chuckled. “I haven’t exercised these old bones for quite some time. Lucky for me, my abilities haven’t completely wilted. Could it be that you geezers want me to turn you into clothing?”

“How dare you be so arrogant, you demon? Are you even qualified to be arrogant in front of us?” Four of Li River’s Five Elders shouted.

They sprang into motion, staggering their strikes as they attacked Granny Si.

At the very same moment, Qin Mu, who was desperately running toward Disabled Elderly Village, saw flashes of lightning. Pure white bolts of lightning lit up the area,

bathing the foothills and the entire mountain in light several times brighter than the sun! Following the flashes of light, a thunderous rumbling washed over him from behind.

Qin Mu turned back for a brief moment to look but only saw waves of wind exploding outward from Granny Si's location. The sudden storm lifted the earth, rocks, and even boulders that weighed thousands of pounds, throwing them outward at extremely high speeds!

"Granny will be fine..." Qin Mu said despite his sinking heart, continuing on his way.

Suddenly, the sound of wet footsteps rang out from the river beside him. He looked over and saw a young boy and girl dashing across the water!

Both were rushing across the surface of the river, yet their bodies didn't sink into the water. The speed at which their feet hit the water, moving up and down, was extremely fast, much faster than Qin Mu could sprint. Before the river's water could even splash against the soles of their feet, the boy and the girl had already moved on, vanishing like the wind!

"These two have already reached the level of riding the waves that Grandpa Cripple said I'm currently unable to reach. They're much stronger than me!"

The two of them soon surpassed Qin Mu while running across the center of the river. Once they did, they angled themselves so they moved toward the river bank as they ran, clearly planning to intercept him from the front.

Qin Mu glanced behind him and saw another person on his tail. To his left, another two people were passing between the mountain ridges, their figures leaping up from the dense forest from time to time to run through the treetops. However, they couldn't keep that up for very long and had returned to the ground to catch their breath.

In spite of that, they too quickly surpassed Qin Mu and rushed ahead of him.

"I can't let them cut me off! I need to get ahead of them and reach the village. I need to get Grandpa Ma and the rest to save granny!"

Gritting his teeth, Qin Mu avoided the river bank and dashed into the forest.

He definitely would've been caught if he continued to run along the bank of the river. The two people at the center of the river were way too fast. The two dashing through the forest were slightly slower, so going into the forest was his only option.

"Little devil! You and that elk-murdering she-devil can forget about escaping!"

As Qin Mu dashed into the forest, one of the two boys in that area, sped up and passed the other. However, he was still a step too late and allowed Qin Mu in his elk form to gallop past him.

“Don’t worry, he won’t escape!”

The pair in the lead, the boy, and girl who had run atop the river, wore indifferent expressions. With a flip of her sleeves, the girl laughed gently, suddenly increasing her speed and leaping through the treetops as if she were flying. The boy, on the other hand, calmly commanded the other three to chase Qin Mu and outflank him.

Regardless of how much Qin Mu frantically sprinted, he couldn’t shake the five people on his tail. In addition to that, he was forced to run farther and farther away from Disabled Elderly Village, venturing deep into the Great Ruins.

Having lived in Disabled Elderly Village for fourteen to fifteen years, the farthest he had ever gone from the village was only three or four miles. Now that he had gone way past that, the surroundings started to become more and more unfamiliar. At the same time, it became progressively desolate without a path in sight.

As Qin Mu continued running, a valley came into view up ahead. Amidst the peach blossom trees that populated the valley, he could see a herd of elks. He quickly dashed over to them and blended in.

Whoosh—!

A sweet scent swept through the area as the girl landed on the ground, her sleeves fluttering. Looking at the herd of elks before her, she frowned.

“Where’s the devil brat, senior sister?” One of the youths who was around Qin Mu’s age asked as they landed one by one.

The girl pouted her lips and said, “He has blended into this elk herd.”

“Then let’s slaughter all of these elks!”

The youths rushed into the elk herd, brandishing swords and knives as they mercilessly slaughtered the elks. Even though the elks were fast, they were still slower than the youths.

All five of them possessed Spirit Bodies and were decently strong, full-fledged martial arts practitioners. The elks fled in every direction, but it was still impossible for them to escape the bloodbath. Soon enough, the elks were being slaughtered one by one.

Suddenly, a human voice resounded from the chaotic herd of elks.

“Didn’t you say that elks were also living beings?” He asked. “Granny killed a single elk, but all of you are slaughtering an entire herd. Why do you claim that we’re the ones following the path of the devil?”

“Over there!”

The girl’s eyes sparkled as she gathered her qi and brandished her longsword. Qi of the White Tiger spread from her to the longsword and it radiated a brilliant gold. The sword flew from her hand and shot towards Qin Mu who was galloping alongside the elk herd.

Qin Mu twisted, changing directions to dodge the incoming sword, but it unexpectedly mirrored the change in direction and continued flying towards him.

“What kind of technique is this?”

Confusion filled Qin Mu’s mind. “Could it be a divine art? It... doesn’t look like it. Grandpa Butcher said that a divine art can only be achieved when one’s martial path has been cultivated to the extreme. This girl’s martial path is significantly inferior to Grandpa Butcher’s...”

As the sword went in for the kill, Qin Mu changed directions while sticking as close to the ground as possible, barely dodging the attack. The instant he dodged the attack, he caught a glimpse of a fine thread attached to the handle of the sword. One end of the thread was connected to the sword while the other end of the thread was in the girl’s hand.

This thread was as fine as silk, making it especially difficult to notice.