

The two Pill Stream Sect disciples' hair flew about wildly, and their robes whipped about. Their faces were ashen, and even their skin seemed to be pressed down from the force. They were terrified to the extreme as the wild wind battered them, turning them into rowboats in a hurricane as the mountain-toppling, sea-draining force inundated them, sending them staggering stagger back, blood spraying out of their mouths.

The female disciple was trembling violently, blood oozing out her eyes, ears, and nose. As she lurched away from Bai Xiaochun, it quickly became apparent that she couldn't endure the force that was pushing against her. She let out a bloodcurdling scream as first her eyes exploded, then her head, and then her entire body! She instantly transformed into a haze of blood that was swept away by the wind. "No!!" screamed the male disciple. Blood began to pour out of his mouth, and he was shaking violently. His world began to turn black, and he let out an agonized shriek. Never in his darkest nightmares could he have imagined that he would provoke... someone as indescribably heaven-defying as this. The energy and pressure felt like something from an elder in his sect. It was something that a Qi Condensation disciple should never have to endure, something that not even the most powerful Chosen he knew, Fang Lin, could stand up to! "It was wrong. The information the sect gave us was totally wrong!! Don't kill me! I...." The blood-soaked male disciple was breaking down mentally, and began to plead and weep. He didn't want to die, and could hardly bear the terror he felt. However, before he could finish speaking, Bai Xiaochun stepped forward and grabbed him by the throat. "My Sect Nephew Zhou didn't want to die," he growled. "And you know what? I didn't want to kill anyone, either." Bai Xiaochun was not the type of person to be friends with just anybody. His heart belonged to the Spirit Stream Sect. It didn't matter how that had come to be; to him, the Spirit Stream Sect was home! He tightened his grip, and a cracking sound could be heard as the Pill Stream Sect disciple's neck was crushed. His eyes bulged, and his legs twitched a few times. Then he was dead! Things gradually went quiet. Bai Xiaochun released his grip and then walked back to Zhou Youdao's corpse. He sighed. "Zhou Youdao," he said softly, "allow me to bring you back to the sect." With that, he put Zhou Youdao's corpse into his bag of holding, taking his Dao bottle but leaving his bag of holding untouched. As for the people from the Pill Stream Sect, he searched them thoroughly. Before leaving, he put the contents of the four Dao bottles he had collected into his own. Altogether, they hadn't even collected half as much as he had on his own. At long last, he had a chance to see what the Pill Stream Sect disciples' jade slips said about him. "Bai Xiaochun from the Spirit Stream Sect. A genius in the Dao of medicine, suspected to be the so-called little turtle of the sect. Unknown techniques, unclear battle prowess. Sometimes weak, sometimes strong, has a large collection of magical objects. Took first place in the sect's Chosen battles, likely due to negligence on the part of Ghostfang. If you encounter him, worry about his Dao of medicine, not his battle prowess. Attack him two-to-one." Bai Xiaochun wasn't sure where the Pill Stream Sect got their information, but now he was even more curious about what the information from the Profound Stream Sect and the Blood Stream Sect said. With that, he left. Four hours later, an expressionless young man approached the scene. It was none other than Fang Lin from the Pill Stream Sect. Eyes glittering, he looked around the area to determine what had occurred. Before long, he was standing in the spot where Bai Xiaochun had let out that powerful roar. He closed his eyes

as if he were seeking enlightenment. Soon, his expression flickered, and his eyes snapped open. "So strong! Who did this...? Song Que? Ghostfang? Nine-Isles?" Fang Lin took a deep breath as the desire to fight rose up in his heart. Looking around, he identified the path Bai Xiaochun had taken when he left, and then picked a different direction, unwilling to make contact at the moment. Four hours later, another person appeared. He was a tall, burly man surrounded by flame lightning. After looking around, his eyes began to shine, and he started panting. "It wasn't Song Que, nor was it Nine-Isles. Could it have been Ghostfang? Dammit. I don't want to provoke any one of those three!" This man was none other than Lei Shan. After looking around, he hesitated, unable to determine exactly which direction the terrifying figure responsible for the scene had taken. Gritting his teeth, he randomly picked a direction, which just so happened to be the same direction Bai Xiaochun had taken. Time sped by. Over the following three days, quite a few people passed by the area. Some picked up on the clues, others didn't. On evening of the third day, Song Que approached. Although the traces of the battle were mostly gone by that time, he could sense that there was something odd about the area. Squatting down, he put his right hand onto the surface of the ground. A moment later, his eyes shone brightly. "Such energy.... This was neither Nine-Isles nor Fang Lin. Not Ghostfang either. In that case, it must have been... Bai Xiaochun!" Narrowing his eyes, he turned and sped off into the distance. Around that same time, Bai Xiaochun was also speeding along through the world of the sword. Whenever he encountered an earthstring banebeast, he would kill it and collect its earthstring energy. More gray liquid was building up in his Dao bottle, but he was still quite a ways away from being able to form the earthstring capture crystal. In the current area, the banebeasts provided a lot more earthstring energy than those from further back, but unfortunately, they were harder to find. Much of his time was wasted traveling to and fro. Apparently, the earthstring banebeasts were partly illusory and partly corporeal, making it possible for them to merge into the air itself. They were very difficult to track down, and sometimes even randomly disappeared in the middle of a fight. Were it not for Bai Xiaochun's exceptional senses, he might not even have been able to detect them. They would only materialize if you got very close to their hiding spot. Otherwise, they would remain hidden. "I need to figure out a better method. The best way would be to get a bunch of earthstring banebeast in the same area. My current method is too slow. Even attacking disciples from other sects wouldn't be fast enough." Even as he pondered the matter, he suddenly stopped in place. A whooshing sound could then be heard as a scaled hand reached out as if to grab him. When it grabbed nothing but air, it began to pull back, but before it could, Bai Xiaochun reached out and grabbed it. Then, he jerked his hand back, and a thunderous crash rang out like that of a giant mirror shattering. At the same time, a three-meter-tall ape-like earthstring banebeast was dragged out of thin air. It had no hair, only black scales, and as Bai Xiaochun dragged it out, it let out a powerful roar. Its eyes shone with ferocity, but very little intelligence. Almost immediately, it attempted to pounce on Bai Xiaochun, whose eyes flickered as he extended his left hand and grabbed the ape by the neck. Instead of crushing it, though, he pulled it a bit closer and began to examine it closely. Soon, his eyes began to shine with a strange light. "If I could concoct a spirit medicine that could attract these banebeasts... that would definitely solve the problem. Then I could form that earthstring capture crystal even faster. At the very least... it would be faster than trying to kill and rob other disciples." Having reached this point in his train of thought, Bai Xiaochun made his way off to the distance, eyes glittering, ape in tow. His destination was a valley up ahead, where he found a secluded place to hide and study the banebeast. His powerful gaze left the thing shivering, as though by merely looking at it he could see everything about its internal structure. Of course, the truth was he couldn't do that. At the moment, this banebeast was simply a subject for research, much the way some of the snakes had been to him years ago in 10,000 Snakes Valley. If he wanted to make a spirit medicine that would specifically target this kind of beast, then he obviously would need to study them on many levels. Eyes burning with passion, he reached into his bag of holding and pulled out a flying sword. Soon after, he was slicing open the banebeast's chest. The next day, his eyes were bloodshot as he left the valley. "There isn't much difference between them and ordinary beasts. They have the same organs, and even have blood.... However, as soon as they die, all of that vanishes and transforms into earthstring energy. "Another strange thing is that the earthstring banebeasts don't have any food inside their stomachs.... Is it that they don't need to eat food?" With that, he captured another banebeast to perform further experiments. A few days later, more and more

disciples were showing up in the area, which could be considered to be the middle section of the sword world. Some of them attacked other disciples to steal their Dao bottles, others went after the banebeasts. By this time, Bai Xiaochun had studied more than ten different banebeasts, and his eyes were more bloodshot than ever. His hair was disheveled, and he almost looked as if he had gone mad. "Poor eyesight, and a bad sense of smell, and yet they seem very perceptive.... How do they merge into the air? How are they formed from earthstring energy? And why do they attack cultivators?" Bai Xiaochun was now fully immersed in the Dao of medicine by this point. Continuing to mutter questions to himself, he confirmed that the banebeasts would always take the initiative to attack him, and did so with bloodthirsty ferocity. "Wait a second...." His heart began to pound as he realized that he might be onto something. Looking up suddenly, he hurried forward to find a banebeast to confirm his new theory. Before long, a nine-meter-long earthstring bear appeared in front of him. It was covered with black scales, and was currently being besieged by five disciples in long, blood-red robes. Obviously, they were Blood Stream Sect disciples. Their killing intent was raging, and they didn't seem to care about anything except the kill. They didn't even care when one of their fellow disciples was suddenly killed. Bai Xiaochun's eyes glittered as he transformed into a beam of light that shot toward the area. Even as the four Blood Stream Sect disciples were preparing to launch another salvo, a blur appeared and someone reached out and grabbed the huge bear. The Blood Stream Sect disciples' eyes went wide. None of them immediately recognized Bai Xiaochun, but they could tell that he was wearing the clothing of the Spirit Stream Sect. Soon, cold smiles appeared on their faces, as well as derision. During their fight with the bear, they had come to realize that it had certain special qualities, including a terrifying fleshly body power.