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## *Chapter 7: Gu Master has 9 ranks, Flower Wine leaves behind treasure*

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Soon a week passed.

“Humans are above all creatures, Gu are the essence of heaven and earth. In this world there are thousands of species, countless number of Gu. They live everywhere around us – In the soil, in the bushes, even on the bodies of wild beasts.”

“As humans continue to propagate and grow, the scholars of the past gradually uncovered the mysteries of the Gu. Those who have opened the aperture, using their own primeval essence to feed, refine and manipulate these Gu – people who have achieved these various purposes are what we call Gu Masters.”

“And all of you have successfully opened your aperture in the Awakening Ceremony 7 days ago. With the coagulation of the primeval sea, right now you are all Rank one Gu Masters.”

In the village academy, the academy elder talked with confidence and composure. In front of him were 57 students, seated and listening attentively.

The mystery and strength of a Gu Master had been deeply rooted in the hearts of the youths a long time ago. Thus everything that the elder taught and said, the students were very interested in.

At this moment a young teen raised his hand. With the elder's permission he stood up and asked, "Elder sir, I've known this since I was small. There are Rank one Gu Masters, Rank two and so on, can you explain in more detail to us?"

The Gu Yue teacher nodded and waved his hand to ask the young man to sit down. "Gu Masters have 9 ranks, from bottom to the top – Rank one, Rank two, Rank three all the way up to Rank nine. Every rank is considered a big realm, and it is divided into 4 small realms – initial stage, middle stage, upper stage and peak stage. You have all just become Gu Masters, so all of you are Rank one initial stage."

"If you all work hard in your cultivation, your cultivation base will naturally advance to rank two, even rank three. Of course, the higher your talent the bigger your chance of promoting."

"For D grade talent, the primeval sea takes up about 2-3 layers of the aperture, the highest promotion reachable is Rank one to Rank two. For C grade talent, the primeval sea is 4-5 layers of the aperture. Usually the progress stops at Rank two, but with luck a small percentage of people can advance to Rank 3 initial stage. B grade talents have a primeval sea that takes up 6-7 layers of the aperture, they are able to cultivate to Rank 3, even as far as Rank 4. As for A grade talent, the primeval sea is plenty; it takes up 8-9 layers of the aperture. This kind of talent in a person is naturally the most gifted and the most suitable for a Gu Master's cultivation, being able to reach Rank 5."

"As for Gu Masters who are Rank 6 and above, they are all legends. I am not clear about the specifics either. In the Gu Yue clan, there has never been the appearance of a Rank 6 Gu Master, but Rank 4 and Rank 5 Gu Masters we have had before."

The teenagers' ears all pricked up, their eyes shining brightly as they listened.

Many of them couldn't help but look at Gu Yue Fang Zheng who was sitting rigidly at the first row. He was an A grade talent after all. Their eyes were filled with feelings of envy and jealousy. At the same time there were some who stared at the corner at the last row of the classroom.

Leaning against the window at the corner was Gu Yue Fang Yuan, who was bent over the desk sleeping soundly.

"Look, he's still sleeping," someone whispered.

"He's been sleeping continuously for a week, yet he's still not awake?" Someone cut in.

"There's more. I heard that he was up all night, wandering about at the edge of the village."

"There's been people who've seen it more than once, apparently he holds a wine-jar at night, dead drunk outside. Luckily these few years the village surroundings have been cleared clean, so it's safer." The fellow schoolmates whisper here and there, letting all kinds of small gossip spreading around quickly.

"Ah well, the blow was just too big. Someone hailed as a genius for so many years unexpectedly ending up to be a C-grade talent in the end, hehe."

"If only it was just the case. Of all the people his own little brother was pronounced an A grade, right now being the center of attention, enjoying the best treatment. The younger brother soars up to the sky, while the older brother falls to the ground, tut tut..."

As the discussion amongst the students got louder and louder, the academy elder's brow deepened into a frown. In the whole classroom all the teenagers were sitting respectfully, showing liveliness. This made Fang Yuan who was sleeping on his table stand out so much that it hurt the eyes.

"It's already been a week, yet he's still so dispirited. Hmph, initially I must have been mistaken by him, how could someone like this be a genius!" The elder thought disgruntledly. He had spoken many times to Fang Yuan regarding this matter, but to no effect – Fang Yuan still did whatever he liked. He would sleep through every class, making the elder in charge of teaching have a very frustrated headache.

"Forget it, he's just a C grade. If he can't even withstand this sort of blow, fostering him with that kind of temperament will just end up wasting the clan's resources, nothing good will come out of it." The elder's heart was filled with disappointment towards Fang Yuan.

Fang Yuan was just a C grade, compared to his younger brother Fang Zheng who was an A grade talent, now this was someone worth the clan spending an amount of effort on raising!

While the academy elder thought about all this, he was also replying to the latest question. "In the clan history, there has been many strong masters. For Rank five masters there were two. One of them is the first generation clan head, our ancestor. He was the one who established Gu Yue Village. Another one was the fourth clan head. He had remarkable talent, and managed to cultivate all the way to the realm of a Rank five Gu Master. If it wasn't for that despicable shameless demon Flower Wine Monk's sneak attack, he might have been able to achieve Rank six, but who knows..."

As he said this he heaved a deep sigh. Below the platform, the youths starting shouting in a rage.

"It's all because of that Flower Wine Monk, he was too sinister and cunning!"

"What a pity that our fourth clan leader was softhearted and benevolent, and died at a young age."

"If only I was born a few hundred years earlier! If I saw that demon I would have torn off his ugly face."

The fourth clan head and the Flower Wine Monk's story is something that the entire Gu Yue clan knows.

The Flower Wine Monk was also a Rank five Gu Master, famous among the Demon faction in his time for his many years as a big flower thief. A few hundred years ago he travelled to Qing Mao Mountain. He attempted to commit crimes in Gu Yue Village, but was found out by the fourth generation clan leader in the end. After a earthshakingly huge battle, the Flower Wine monk was beaten to the point he had to beg for mercy on his knees. The fourth clan head was merciful and kind, intending to spare his life. Yet the Flower Wink Monk suddenly launched a sneak attack, successfully inflicting heavy wounds on the fourth clan head. The clan head flew into a rage, killing the Flower Wine Monk on the spot. However his heavy injuries were not curable and thus, he died.

Therefore in the hearts of the Gu Yue clansmen, the fourth generation clan head was a great hero who sacrificed his life for the village.

"Flower Wine Monk huh..." Awoken by the classroom's noisy chatter, Fang Yuan opened his sleepy eyes.

He stretched his body and thought with resentment in his heart, this Flower Wine Monk, where did he die? Why is it that I still can't find his legacy after searching around the entire village?

In his memories, there was a Gu Master from the clan who was brokenhearted and started drinking a lot. About two months later from now, the man was heavily drunk as he lay down outside the village. His heavy wine aroma unknowingly attracted a Liquor worm.

The Gu Master was ecstatic, fully intent on catching it. The Liquor worm hurriedly fled, and as the Gu Master was in hot pursuit after it, he followed the Liquor worm's trail and discovered an underground hole entrance and went in.

The Liquor worm was a very precious and expensive type of Gu. The half drunk Gu Master decided to risk it and enter the hole, finding himself in a secret underground cave. After that he discovered the bones of the Flower Wine Monk and the inheritance he left behind.

When the Gu Master returned to the village, he reported his discoveries and immediately caused a big stir among the entire clan. Later on that Gu Master benefitted much from it, his cultivation base suddenly becoming outstanding. His lover who had once abandoned him before was attracted to him again, and he became the talk of the clan for a while.

"Sadly I only heard bits and pieces about this piece of news, so I don't know where the accurate location is. It wasn't like I knew I would be reborn again to this day. Flower Wine Monk, where in the world did you die off to?"

These few days he had been buying a lot of wine, wandering around the village as soon as night arrived. He wanted to use the aroma of liquor to attract the Liquor worm. Unfortunately he never saw the Liquor worm appear, making him feel very disappointed.

"If I could find that Liquor worm and refine it into my vital Gu, that would be so much better than the clan's Moonlight Gu. In the blink of an eye its

already April, there's not much time left." Fang Yuan heaved a sigh and gazed out of the window.

Under the blue sky and white clouds, verdant mountains stretched into the distance. In the vicinity was a bamboo grove. This was Qing Mao Mountain's unique spear bamboo, each bamboo stick as straight as a line, the ends of the bamboo exceptionally sharp like the tip of a spear.

Not too far away, the woods were already turning green. The tender shoots sprouted in a sea of yellow green color. Every now and then, beautiful and colorful sparrows would perch on the branches. The wind of spring blew, wrapping up the freshness of the mountains and rivers, and dispersing it into the world.

Without knowing it, the class was almost over. The academy elder finally informed, "This week I have taught you all how to contemplate and check your own aperture's primeval sea, and how to meditate and shift around the primeval essence inside your body. Now is the time for you all to refine your vital Gu. After this class ends, you will all go to the academy's Gu room and pick a Guworm. After choosing your Gu, please go home and focus on refining it. When you have finally refined your Gu, then you can come back to the academy and continue attending class. At the same time, this is your first assessment. Whoever can finish this assessment first will be rewarded a generous sum of 20 primeval stones."