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## *Chapter 13: The bamboo forest under the moon, a bead of snow*

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Around 300 years ago, an incredible genius appeared in the Gu Yue Clan. He was very talented and had already cultivated to the point of a Rank five Gu Master at a young age, and even had the possibility of going further. He was famous throughout Qing Mao Mountain, had a bright future and was the pinnacle of hope and responsibility in the clan's eyes.

In the history of the Gu Yue clan, everyone spoke of him the most – the fourth clan head.

Unfortunately he sacrificed himself to protect his people and fought the equally powerful Rank five Gu Master, the demonic Flower Wine Monk. Even though he defeated the Flower Wine Monk after a fierce battle, he let the devil get on his knees and beg for mercy.

In the end he was careless and got caught by the Flower Wine Monk's sneak attack. The fourth head angrily executed the Flower Wine Monk, but due to his own heavy injuries he died an untimely death.

This tragic incident had long since circulated until today, becoming a popular story among the Gu Yue clan. However Fang Yuan knew that this story was not to be believed, because it had a very large loophole.

In his previous life, a month later from now, a drunken Gu Master who had been rejected by his lover lay down outside the village, so drunk he was like a fish. In the end because of the overflowing smell of wine, it ended up attracting a Liquor worm.

The Gu Master chased after the Liquor worm and found the remains of the Flower Wine Monk in a secret underground cave, also finding the Flower Wine Monk's inheritance. This Gu Master quickly hurried back to the clan and told them of the matter, causing a huge stir.

As the storm gradually subsided he also gained benefit from it – He obtained the Liquor worm, his cultivation increased, the girl friend who once abandoned him went back to his side and he became the talk of the village for a while.

When stories are passed down generation by generation, it is normal to change along the way. But in Fang Yuan's memories, the story of the Gu Master discovering the treasure seemed quite authentic, yet he had a feeling that the story was hiding other truths.

"I was not aware of it at first, but in these few days while I searched and analyzed on the side, I feel that something feels out of place." The night grew dark, and as Fang Yuan walked in the bamboo forest that grew around the village, he reviewed through the clues he had so far in his head.

"If I put myself in his shoes and think about it, when I discover the Flower Wine Monk's treasure why would I not take it all for myself, but go and notify the clan instead? Don't even mention sense of clan honor, everyone has greed in their hearts. What is it that would make that Gu Master betray the greediness in his heart, even going as far as to be willing to abandon all interest and profit, and report this finding to the clan's top brass?"

The truth is always hidden inside the fog of history. Fang Yuan racked his brains but he could not get the result. After all the clues he had were too few. The only two clues he had could easily be true or false, so it could not be fully relied upon.

Fang Yuan could not help but think of himself. "No matter what, after buying this jar of green bamboo wine I only have 2 primeval stones left on me. If I can't find the treasure then I'll be in grave trouble. Today shall be considered the final gamble, it's all or nothing!"

However he didn't have enough primeval stones to refine a Gu worm in the first place. So why not invest it in this wine and increase the chances of success?

If it were in the case of other people, most of them would probably play it safe and save up the primeval stones. But in the case of Fang Yuan, the efficiency of doing so was too low. He would rather take the risk and gamble.

You see, the people of the Demonic Faction love to take risks.

Right now, the night grew thicker, the spring moon shaped like a bow. Clouds obscured the moonlight, as if coating the crescent moon with a thin sheet of gossamer.

Because it just finished raining continuously for three days and three nights, the turbid energy between the mountains had been washed away clean, leaving behind the purest of freshness. This fresh air was pure like a piece of white paper, and was more effective in spreading the wine aroma around. That was the first reason why Fang Yuan was full of confidence tonight.

The previous seven days of searching was not without gain. At least it proved that the Flower Wine Monk did not die in those places. This was the second reason for Fang Yuan's confidence.

In the bamboo forest the grass was luxuriant, the white flowers endless and the green spear bamboo straight like a pencil, the forest resembling a clump of jade rods.

Fang Yuan opened the jar seal, releasing a thick wine aroma instantly. Green bamboo wine could be said as the Gu Yue Village's number one wine. This was the third reason for Fang Yuan's confidence tonight.

"With these three big reasons gathering together, if I want to succeed it has to be tonight!" Fang Yuan cheered in his heart as he slowly tilted the wine jar, pouring a small stream of wine, dripping it onto a stone. If those bunch of hunters saw this sight, they would have probably become insanely distressed. This wine is worth 2 whole primeval stones after all...

But Fang Yuan was indifferent.

The fragrant aroma quickly spread out into the night. The breeze was gentle, the faint aroma floating about and contaminating the bamboo forest. Fang Yuan stood at his spot, smelling the aroma. He waited for a while, yet he did not see any movement.

All he heard was a nightingale crying in the near distance, its sound like a string of bells. His gaze was silent. He did not feel surprised, and he moved away, walking to a spot a few hundred meters away.

In this place he did the same, pouring out a few drips of wine and waiting at the spot.

He did the same thing over and over again, moving away to a few other different locations, dripping wine a few times. After all that the green bamboo wine in the jar was only left with a bit.

"This is the last time," Fang Yuan sighed. He tipped the wine jar over, the bottom facing the sky. All the remaining wine left in the jar flowed out. The

wine sprinkled over the grass, letting the green grass sway about. The wild flowers were stained with wine, slightly lowering their heads.

Fang Yuan stood with the last shred of hope in his bosom, and gazed around.

Right now the night was already very deep. A thick cloud had obscured the moonlight. The dark shadows were like a curtain, covering the bamboo grove. It was deadly silent all around, each strand of green spear bamboo standing alone, leaving a trail of lines that were straight up and down in Fang Yuan's pupils.

He quietly stood at the spot, listening to his own clear breathing. Then he felt the small hope that he carried in his chest, slowly dissipating away, becoming nothing.

"It failed after all." His heart muttered, "Today I had three great advantages gathered together, yet I still failed, not even seeing the shadow of the Liquor worm. This means that in future the rate of success will be lower. Right now I only have two primeval stones left, and I still need to refine the Moonlight Gu. I can't risk it anymore."

The end result of taking a risk was often unsatisfactory. But when the result was ideal, the profit would be impressive. Fang Yuan liked taking risks, but he was not a gambling addict, and he was not someone who was bent on gambling back what he lost. He had his own limit, he was clear about his own capabilities.

Right now, the five hundred years of life experience was telling him, it was time to stop.

Sometimes life was like this. Often it was that there was that one goal that seemed so perfect, filled with temptation. It seemed so near yet with so

many twists and turns, the goal was constantly unfulfilled. It made people restless, thinking about it night and day.

"This is the helplessness of life, but it's also the charm of living," Fang Yuan laughed bitterly, turning to walk away.

It was at this moment.

A gust of wind blew, like a gentle arm, lightly brushing away the clouds in the night sky. The clouds floated away to reveal the hidden moon. The crescent shaped moon hanging in the sky was like a white jade lamp, pouring moonlight that was clear as water down onto the earth. The moonlight spilled over the bamboo forest, spilled onto the mountain rock, bathing onto the rivers and streams in the mountain, shedding onto Fang Yuan's body.

Fang Yuan was dressed in plain clothing; under the gentle touch of the moonlight, his young face became fairer. The darkness seemed to fade away in a flash, and taking its place was a field of snowy frost flowers. As if it was infected by the moonlight, the nightingale began to sing once more, but this time it was not just one, but many. Scattered among the bamboo grove, they all tweeted in response.

At the same time, a type of insect that inhabited huge mountains, the Dragonpill crickets that were active under moonlight started singing a rustling song of life. They were critters that only came out in the night. Their bodies emitted faint red light; at this moment they jumped out in droves, each of their bodies flashing with the brilliance of a red agate.

At first glance, Fang Yuan thought that these Dragonpill crickets were like jets of crimson water bouncing about, landing on the green grass and wild flowers, prancing under the moonlight in the bamboo grove.

The bamboo forest was like a conscious pond, under the moonlight the green jade colors of the spear bamboo flashed in the brilliance of light and smooth jade. The enchanting sight of the dense trees and bright flowers in spring, Mother Nature was showing Fang Yuan her immense beauty at this moment.

Fang Yuan unconsciously stopped in his footsteps, feeling as if he was in a heavenly land. He was already about to depart, but at this moment he subconsciously looked around.

The clump of wild flowers and grass that he had poured the last dredges of wine over trembled gently in the wind, remaining empty. Fang Yuan laughed at himself and took back his line of sight.

However.

Unexpectedly in the process of turning away, he saw a dot of white snow.

This bead of snow was glued to a spear bamboo pole not far away. Under the moonlight it was like a suspended round pearl.

Fang Yuan's two pupils expanded fiercely, his body trembling slightly. His heart dropped and started pumping faster each second.

It was the Liquor worm!