

Chapter 921 Heart Duet

“Hehe. How’d you like a taste of that? Did you really think I would have faced you unprepared?” the scruffy cultivator taunted.

Yang Chen gritted his teeth in annoyance.

He finally realized that even though his True Yuan was much stronger than most others, that did not mean that it was impervious to everything.

I overestimated my abilities. While I’m several stages beyond this guy, his mystical weapon blocked off my attack!

If Hongmeng’s cultivators of the Tribulation stage possessed even stronger mystical weapons, Yang Chen wouldn’t stand a chance against them!

Lin Ruoxi kept her eyes closed during her fight. So when she opened them and saw that Yang Chen was unharmed, a sigh of relief escaped her lips.

Yang Chen quickly ran over to Lin Ruoxi, only to find out that she too was safe and unharmed. He smiled and tried to comfort her. “Don’t worry, I’m here now.”

The floodgates of her bottled up emotions burst open and tears started to fall from her eyes.

She had already forgotten that she was angry with him.

“Tsk tsk, you guys are so sweet and it makes me jealous,” the scruffy cultivator said snidely.

Yang Chen calmed himself down and asked him with a serious expression, “Who are you?”

The man smirked. “That’s not important for now. What is important is that you have something I want...”

Yang Chen knew the kidnapper came for him. He squinted his eyes and asked, “What is it?”

The man kept a straight face.

“The Endless Resolve Restoration Scripture!”

Yang Chen was taken aback to hear this.

Damn it! Yet another guy looking for it. Could he be the same guy I met at the Tang Sect? It can’t be. I’m able to sense this guy’s cultivation but I failed to do so back then, he thought.

“And why should I give it to you?” Yang Chen smirked.

The kidnapper stroked his beard. “I’ll trade your wife’s life for it.”

Yang Chen’s eyes narrowed. “Do you think you can really withstand my attack? I was nowhere near using my full power. I will allow you to die a painless death if you tell me what I want to know.”

From the moment he kidnapped Lin Ruoxi, Yang Chen was already prepared to kill him.

The kidnapper cackled. “Then your wife would join me...”

“What do you mean?” Yang Chen frowned.

Lin Ruoxi stood up slowly from the corner and walked towards Yang Chen.

The scruffy cultivator said nothing even when he saw that. He said smugly, “Have you heard of the parasite curse from Nanjiang?”

The parasite curse? he tried to recall.

Yang Chen’s face darkened as he yelled furiously, “You placed a curse on my woman?!”

Lin Ruoxi was confused but she could tell that she had been poisoned inferring from their conversation. Her face paled significantly.

“I’ve used my age-old possession on her, the Heart Duet. Once the parasite enters a body, I alone can command it. I could command them to eat her heart!”

Yang Chen froze where he stood. This was more information than he could process.

Lin Ruoxi felt like puking when she heard that.

“I know you can kill me easily, so why not drag your wife along with me to hell? I’ve heard that you’re ruthless and cruel to your enemies, would you do the same to your woman?” he said smugly.

Yang Chen snapped back to his senses. He tightened his jaw and placed his arms around Lin Ruoxi.

His heart wrenched when he felt her body tremble. He could only blame himself for causing her pain once more.

Lin Ruoxi looked up into his eyes. Her heart warmed when she saw that his gaze was filled with pain and concern for her.

She shook her head and tried to comfort him. “I’m fine, it’s not as bad as he says.”

“Hehe, little girl. The only reason you’re fine is because I haven’t told them to eat your organs yet,” the scruffy cultivator said.

Lin Ruoxi raised her chin proudly. “Hmph, and why should I believe you? I don’t feel anything!”

“It’s not poison, it’s a curse...”

His lips stretched into a cruel smile.

At the next second, a painful screech was emitted out of Lin Ruoxi’s lips!

“Ah!”

It was as if something was caught in her throat. The muscles throughout her body contracted violently as she gripped her chest tightly.

With a cough, she spat out blood from her mouth!

“Ruoxi!”

Yang Chen quickly pulled her into his arms. He transferred a portion of Heaven and Earth Restoration Energy into her body.

“What did you do?!”

The scruffy cultivator said cockily, “I had the parasites munch on her organs a little. Relax, it was only to make you believe me. It’s not nearly enough to kill her.”

Yang Chen’s eyes reddened with rage but he couldn’t just kill him!

“Yang Chen... I’m scared... I don’t want to die here...” Lin Ruoxi whimpered and buried herself into Yang Chen’s body.

“You’re going to be fine, I won’t let you die.” Yang Chen continued to pour his cultivations into her body.

Suddenly, his eyes brightened when he thought of something!

Eh, what if I use the Endless Resolve Restoration Scripture to kill the parasites in her body? he thought.

As if already knowing what Yang Chen was thinking, the scruffy cultivator quickly spoke up. He snickered and said, “You better not use your True Yuan on the parasites. It will explode once it comes into contact with the True Yuan. Let me assure you, she would have a death more painful than I could ever deliver!”

Yang Chen’s face darkened as he hurriedly retreated the extra Heaven and Earth Restoration Energy.

Lin Ruoxi recovered slightly and started crying. She had never experienced something like this. No ordinary mortal would ever be prepared for something like this.

Yang Chen hugged her tightly and had her lean onto his chest. He patted her comfortingly and raised his head. “Will you remove the curse if I gave you the Endless Resolve Restoration Scripture?”

The man let out a cunning smile. “For sure. I’ve raised these babies for decades now. It would be a waste to use it on an ordinary lady. However—”

“However what?!” Yang Chen interrupted. He didn’t want Lin Ruoxi to suffer anymore!

The man slowly drawled out. “I don’t trust you. Let me restrict your abilities to prevent you from attacking me. Once I’m sure that you are of no threat, I’ll remove the curse and let you two go once I have what I want.”

Yang Chen grunted. “You think I’m a fool? You’re going to kill me because I don’t have my abilities!”

The man cackled. “What other choice do you have? It’s either that or her life. It would be an absolute shame for her to walk through the gates of hell today.”

Yang Chen’s facial expression was unreadable.

He had no idea what the man would do to restrict his abilities. Restricting the Endless Resolve Restoration Scripture wasn’t an easy task.

Yang Chen might have the space laws that he could use but it would be useless against this man who was in the Soul Forming stage.

Lin Ruoxi couldn't just watch anymore. She tugged on Yang Chen's sleeve and shook her head. "Yang Chen, don't listen to him! He's going to kill you! He's using me to kill you because he can't do it on his own! You're so strong I'm sure you can save me after killing him!"

Yang Chen smiled bitterly as he stared into her eyes. "Dear... I'm afraid that I'm going to have to let you down this time."

Chapter 922

Possession

Lin Ruoxi froze. She looked up at him and asked with a dazed expression, "What... what do you mean?"

"I can guarantee killing him in one attack but I don't want to risk your life on it. I really want to listen to you but I can't. Not this time." Yang Chen smiled bitterly.

"You..."

"I know I've hurt you many times and I probably deserve this. In fact, if I had not angered you in the first place, we would not be in this mess. It's dangerous, I know, but I will not let you die before I do."

Yang Chen's gaze was firm and resolute.

Tears pooled in Lin Ruoxi's eyes as she held onto his arms while trembling. She wanted to cry but no tears would fall.

Yang Chen sighed and held on to both of Lin Ruoxi's hands. "Don't do anything stupid after I die. You're normal so I believe he will spare you. He's only after me and the Endless Resolve Restoration Scripture. My phone has been modified to send long-range signals so you can escape. Remember not to do anything stupid..."

Lin Ruoxi shook her head. She bit her lip so hard that it started to draw blood.

Yang Chen took out his phone and pushed it into her hands.

"I don't want it!"

Lin Ruoxi threw his phone to the ground. "You've hurt me so much in the past and now you're telling me that you're going to die?! Don't you want me to forgive you? I'll hate you forever if you die now!"

"Ruoxi, don't do this..." Yang Chen's voice was filled with sorrow.

"I don't care! You said you'll bring me back to Beijing. You still owe me a wedding! Yang Chen, you bastard!"

Lin Ruoxi sobbed as she grasped onto Yang Chen's collar angrily.

Yang Chen raised his voice at her. "Enough! I have decided! Step aside or I will force you to! Don't make me raise my hands against you."

Lin Ruoxi stopped crying and stared at Yang Chen blankly. Her cries turned into quiet sobs. Fear started to creep into her heart.

She couldn't believe what Yang Chen had said to her.

"Haha! Are you two lovebirds done talking?" The man smiled smugly.

Yang Chen turned around and faced him, covering Lin Ruoxi with his body.

"Do whatever you want."

"Yes!"

The man brightened up and raised his hands. A silver dagger with golden-red carvings appeared in thin air.

It was emitting an aura so dark that they could hear the cries of wolves coming from within.

"This is an ancient artifact, the Blood Dragon's Golden Dagger. This is one of the few weapons which could harm a cultivator past the Tribulation stage. It's able to control the circulation system. If you try to cultivate while affected, the dagger would reverse the energy and kill you easily. I know your Endless Resolve Restoration Scripture can cure your heart so..."

"You want to stab this dagger through my heart so it can absorb my True Yuan and restrict me?" Yang Chen let out a cold smile.

The man lifted his brows. "What do you think?"

"How can I pass the Endless Resolve Restoration Scripture to you then?" Yang Chen frowned.

"That's easy." He took out a jade piece and threw it to Yang Chen. "This can be used to record scriptures. All you need to do is release your True Yuan into it. I'll remove the Heart Duet once I have verified its authenticity."

Yang Chen thought, There really are many artifacts in the world which I don't know of. I would surely lose if I challenged Hongmeng without a firm grasp on these artifacts.

Yang Chen couldn't tell where the man was from but he was surprised to know that he carried so many valuable artifacts with him.

Yang Chen started to formulate a plan when he heard the kidnapper's plot. "To make sure that I can focus with my divine sense, I'll transfer the Endless Resolve Restoration Scripture into the jade scroll first and pass it to you. Once you have verified it, I'll stab the dagger into my heart. When you have decided that I am weak enough, you remove the parasite. What do you think?"

"Deal!" The man was delighted to hear that.

Lin Ruoxi's face turned pale when she heard Yang Chen say that he was going to stab himself.

"Are you crazy?! He'll kill you!"

"I said shut up!" Yang Chen glared at her. "I'm trying to save you so stay out of this!"

Tears dripped down her cheeks as she stared at Yang Chen's face which was twisted in anger.

The kidnapper was delighted to see this. He was so close to success.

“Hurry up and pass the scripture to me. My parasites are not very patient...”

A hint of anger flashed through Yang Chen’s eyes but he had no choice but to comply.

It was easy to transfer the scripture. Just one thought was enough for him to make the transfer.

About ten seconds later, Yang Chen tossed the jade scroll back towards the man.

“Hold it.”

Once the kidnapper received the scroll, he immediately began to scan through it. His eyes glistened when he read the first sentence. Although he knew it was genuine, one could not be too careful when it came to situations like this

He glanced towards Yang Chen and said, “Let me pass you the dagger.”

“You better keep your promise...”

“Shut up and retract your defenses!” The man growled.

Yang Chen gritted his teeth and complied.

With a clear sound, the dagger went straight into his chest!

Three streaks of blood shot out of his chest!

Yang Chen’s face immediately lost all of its blood. If he were any weaker, the pain might have overwhelmed him!

Even so, Yang Chen’s legs gave out and he dropped into a pool of his own blood.

“Yang Chen!”

Lin Ruoxi couldn’t care less that Yang Chen had scolded her earlier. With an aching heart, she rushed over to him. But there was nothing she could do.

Yang Chen’s chest was completely stained with blood. The Heaven and Earth Restoration Scripture was trying its best to heal him but the dagger was preventing it from doing anything!

Slowly, the Heaven and Earth Restoration Energy started to disperse from his body which weakened him significantly.

The man cackled and looked at Yang Chen with a teasing smile. “I’ll read your Endless Resolve Restoration Scripture while we wait. I’ll remove the curse when I deem fit.”

Blood was dripping out of his lips and if it wasn’t for the Endless Resolve Restoration Scripture, Yang Chen would’ve been dead by now. No human would be able to withstand the structural damage he was in.

“You... you better keep your promise...”

“Hmph.” The man snickered. “Who are you to tell me what to do? You’re nothing but a wild cultivator. I’m surprised you possess such a legendary cultivation method. Your possession is what’s causing your death. Kid, I’ll let you shed a little more blood before we get to that.”

Lin Ruoxi dared not look as she tried to grab the dagger with trembling hands.

“What are you doing>!” Yang Chen tried to stop her.

“I’m pulling the dagger out! You’ll die for real if you keep bleeding! He’s lying to you! He won’t remove the curse...” Lin Ruoxi sobbed.

Yang Chen let out a small smile. “Listen to me... Don’t do it.”

Lin Ruoxi continued to sob.

After a minute, Yang Chen’s breath was slowly fading in and out.

The man looked up after he had finished reading it. The whole scripture was hard to decipher but it was filled with wonder so he assumed for it to be genuine. He snickered and said, “It seems like you held up your end of the bargain.”

“Hurry... hurry up and... remove the curse...” Yang Chen’s eyelids were on the verge of closing. His words were starting to slur together in a feeble attempt to make coherent sentences.

The man looked into his body and stroked his beard. “Not bad, your cultivation now should be around Xiantian Full Cycle at most. Alright, it’s time for me to keep my end of the bargain.”

The man started to chant something and Lin Ruoxi felt something nasty in her abdomen move around. In the next second, that unpleasant feeling flew out of her mouth!

The kidnapper raised his arms and kept the parasite. It looked very similar to a centipede.

“I kept my promise.”

Lin Ruoxi retched when she imagined the bug being in her body.

Yang Chen smiled in relief and struggled to raise his hand to pull the dagger out of his chest.

Lin Ruoxi quickly forgot her disgust and helped Yang Chen up. Yang Chen was far weaker than any man since he had lost a huge amount of blood.

“Don’t you die Yang Chen... Don’t you die on me now...”

She was no longer the cold and reserved CEO of a multinational corporate. She resembled a child begging for something in tears.

Lin Ruoxi felt his body start to grow cold and wished that it were her instead of him!

If she hadn’t kicked him out of the house or gotten angry at him, she wouldn’t have been kidnapped so easily and he wouldn’t have gotten hurt.

He told her that his disloyalty hurt her.

But wasn’t she doing the same thing? Making him sacrifice himself to save her?

Yang Chen panted and said in a low voice, “Don’t worry... I won’t die. I can’t treat myself when you’re hugging me like this...”

Her eyes brightened up and she hurriedly let go of him so that he could sit down properly.

“Treat yourself?” The man snorted. “I said I would retrieve the parasite but I didn’t say that I would let you two leave here alive. Haha!”

Chapter 923 - Wrong Answer

Wrong Answer

Lin Ruoxi’s heart dropped when she heard that. She immediately stood up and yelled at him.

“You jerk!”

“What? I didn’t promise anything.”

His eyes glinted as he raised the dagger and hammer up in the air!

Yang Chen sat on the ground cross-legged and closed his eyes. The Endless Resolve Restoration Scripture was circulating inside his body crazily as he summoned the Earth and Restoration Energy.

But the remaining effect of the dagger was still hindering his recovery!

“You can’t escape death!”

He cackled as he twisted his fingers around to summon an attack towards the both of them!

At the same time, the dagger and the hammer swayed together, emitting gold light!

In his present state, Yang Chen would not have been able to defend himself!

BOOM!

A loud resounding boom resonated from the kidnapper’s hand!

The jade scroll which he was holding on to suddenly exploded!

The heavily compressed Heaven and Earth energy exploded and blew off the kidnapper’s hand!

His whole arm dislodged from his body and was sent flying several meters into the air!

The mystical artefact lost its glow and dropped to the ground.

Lin Ruoxi widened her eyes and covered her mouth. She did not expect that to happen!

A cruel smile formed on Yang Chen’s lips but he didn’t care to look up, opting to focus on removing the dagger’s curse on his body.

The kidnapper was completely drenched in blood, having lost an arm. He was bleeding internally, evident from coughing fit and the blood that came out after it.

Unlike Yang Chen who had a tough body, the kidnapper relied too heavily on his True Yuan which meant that he was very susceptible to physical damage.

The Heaven and Earth Restoration Energy was geared mainly toward healing but that didn’t mean it lacked any offensive capabilities.

The kidnapper would have turned into dust if he wasn't protected by his True Yuan!

He mumbled in disbelief, "You... What did you do to me..."

His True Yuan was a mess. It didn't know where to begin the healing process.

Through this disruption, Yang Chen had seized the opportunity and succeeded in curing himself.

His circulation had cleared up and the Endless Resolve Restoration Scripture was completely restored to its peak!

The wound in his chest had cured completely and there was no sign of him even having sustained any damage.

"It's nothing. Like you, I didn't make any promises. I never promised to let you go once you removed her curse."

Yang Chen tugged on his blood-stained shirt. He stood up slowly and said, "You already knew how cruel and ruthless I could be. Yet you decided to provoke me. You're courting a fate worse than death."

Lin Ruoxi burst into tears when she saw that Yang Chen could stand up properly and that he seemed completely fine.

"No... it can't be... Your cultivation wasn't even at the Soul Forming stage earlier..." The kidnapper barely managed to speak.

Yang Chen walked forward and stepped on his other arm.

"Ah!"

With a deafening cry, his arm had been reduced into a pile of meat!

Lin Ruoxi turned around, afraid to witness it. Her tears had stopped flowing from shock.

"You don't even know how I cultivated my Endless Resolve Restoration Scripture and yet you want it?" Yang Chen smirked.

"What do you mean..." Beads of sweat formed on his forehead as he tried to withstand the excruciating pain.

"I've compressed some of my special True Yuan into the jade scroll alongside the scripture. Your cultivation was not strong enough to be able to detect it. So when the opportunity arrived, I just needed to detonate it."

The kidnapper was unwilling to accept his fate, but there was nothing that he could do.

He had never thought of Yang Chen's True Yuan as different from his own.

Even if his cultivation dropped to the Xiantian stage, his divine sense wouldn't be affected. Causing an explosion was a piece of cake.

Then again, the Heaven and Earth Restoration had all sorts of forms and not everyone could control it as well as Yang Chen could.

Yang Chen began to question him. "Now spill, who are you and who sent you here?"

Yang Chen had an inkling that he was somehow connected to the man he had met in the Tang Sect.

The kidnapper's face was twisted as he said, "You... Kill me now!"

Yang Chen's eyes glinted and he raised his legs to step on the man's toes!

CRACK!

The sound of cracking bones was as clear as day and his foot had turned into a pile of blood and meat!

The man yelled as he writhed under the intense pain.

Yang Chen looked behind him and was relieved to see that Lin Ruoxi had turned around. It was best if she did not witness these things.

"Are you going to tell me?"

"Why should I? I'm dying anyway..." The kidnapper tightened his jaw.

Yang Chen waved his hand and pulled the dagger over. Under his control, he cut the kidnapper at his abdomen with the dagger!

"Ahh!"

The man screeched when he felt a part of his flesh get stripped of his body!

Yang Chen's voice was cruel. "Whether you tell me or not is your choice. But I will cut off a piece of your flesh for every question you don't answer. Decide soon, you might not have much of a body when I'm done. Don't worry, I won't kill you off immediately. I'll watch your skeleton and organs twitch around as they fight to survive..."

Fear flashed through the man's eyes!

Yang Chen wasn't trying to scare him. It was the truth.

Yang Chen was extremely familiar with the human anatomy structure and cut off two pieces of his flesh easily. The kidnapper's life was still intact as his True Yuan was trying its darndest to repair him.

"You... you're insane! You'll be demonized soon and you'll never recover!" the man shouted and he sounded like he was about to lose his mind.

"Wrong answer," Yang Chen said and cut him another two times!

The dagger was so sharp that it was like dragging a knife through melted butter. It reached a point where even bones started to show!

The man was shocked and scared. "I've already failed my task and even if I don't die under your hands, I will in the hands of another so why should I let you have the satisfaction of knowing?!"

His body tightened up suddenly and following that, black blood started to flow out of his body and his flesh started to rot and stink!

Yang Chen was shocked to see this. He remembered that the man said that the Heart Duet could suppurate a body. Would that mean that he triggered it on his own body?

What kind of enemy was he facing for him to be this scared?

Yang Chen contemplated for a while with a heavy heart and decided that he had to rush the training of his women.

But as of now, he couldn't alert them so he had to handle all the stress by himself.

Yang Chen looked over and saw that the man left the hammer, dagger, and his bracelet behind.

One other thing caught his eye. It was a plain-looking medal hanging from his waist.

Chapter 924

Twenty Thirty

Yang Chen picked up the medal and inspected it. It did not look particularly interesting, save the word 'Huang' on written its front.

He used his divine sense to probe it further but was ultimately only able to tell that there was a foreign inscription on it.

Since he had no idea what it was, Yang Chen decided to keep it in the parallel space. He wasn't able to materialize things with cultivation like the kidnapper, but the space laws worked roughly the same.

After taking care of all this, only then Yang Chen walked towards Lin Ruoxi who was standing by the side.

She turned around and frowned when she saw the aftermath of their fight.

It wasn't her first time seeing Yang Chen murder someone in cold blood. But it wasn't something that she could get used to despite having witnessed it before.

Yang Chen grabbed her hands and said to her softly, "Ruoxi, you must have been so frightened. Are you feeling better now?"

Lin Ruoxi looked at him and gritted her teeth. "The thing that you said earlier... Are you telling me you planned all of this?!"

"Uhm... you can say that. He wouldn't have let you go if I was really dead." Yang Chen grinned.

"You bastard!"

Lin Ruoxi raised her leg in anger and kicked his calf with her heels.

"You almost broke my heart! Why didn't you tell me you had a plan?! Do you think it's funny to watch me cry? Is this your idea of getting even?!"

Lin Ruoxi thought she was being kind of unreasonable but it made her furious to be reminded that Yang Chen was hiding the truth from her.

Yang Chen pretended to touch his calf and tried to calm her down. "I had no choice. It had to be as convincing as possible. He would believe that I was dying if your tears were genuine. I was worried that if he found out the truth, you would be in danger..."

"What if he refused to remove the parasite? Were you prepared to die?" Lin Ruoxi questioned him with teary eyes.

Yang Chen was taken aback and he nodded his head after thinking for a while. "I told you that as long as I was alive, you would be too.."

Lin Ruoxi closed her eyes. She bit her lip and took a deep breath before saying, "Is this what you want? If I really died with you, I would have to remember that you died for me and be forever indebted to you in hell. Is it so?"

"Look at you. Why dwell in the past when we are safe now?" Yang Chen smiled.

"To you, it might be nothing. But I can't just brush past the fact that you used your life as a bargaining chip to save me..."

Lin Ruoxi's facial expression was stern.

Yang Chen was surprised to hear this. He stood still and stopped smiling seconds later. "Didn't you keep everything to yourself when Yu Lei faced trouble? You chose to keep it from me as well."

"That's because..."

"Because of what?" Yang Chen grinned.

Lin Ruoxi bit her lip. "That's because I believed that you wouldn't mind if I explained it to you after it had happened."

"That's right." Yang Chen sighed. "I might be displeased when I found out the truth myself. But I didn't hold a grudge for long because I understood your intentions. Similarly, I believe that you'll be willing to forgive me this time for my reckless decision earlier."

Lin Ruoxi lowered her head and mumbled, "Whatever you say..."

Yang Chen wanted to stroke her cheek but his hand stopped midway when he was reminded that they were both in the midst of a fight.

He wasn't sure if Lin Ruoxi had forgiven him for the incident with Xiao Zhiqing.

Lin Ruoxi realized this and her heart wrenched when she saw the hesitation in Yang Chen's eyes.

She wouldn't say she still hated him. Things had changed after the near-death experience.

Was she still mad at him? Not really.

But her pride wouldn't let her pull his hand and place it on her own face.

"Urm..." Yang Chen felt the situation turn awkward so he quickly suggested something. "Let's go back to Zhonghai. Hongyan was worried sick about you. Give her a call."

Lin Ruoxi nodded silently and picked up the phone.

Lin Ruoxi spoke to her for a bit before hanging up the phone. She looked at Yang Chen with a curious expression.

Yang Chen walked over to her and hugged her waist, pressing her soft body against his.

“I’ll do it as slow as possible. Close your eyes. You might not be able to handle the thrill.”

“Are we flying back?” Lin Ruoxi didn’t dare to imagine that they would be flying back to Zhonghai just like that.

Yang Chen shrugged. “How else did you think we were going to leave? By bus? Plane?”

Lin Ruoxi rolled her eyes and obliged.

Yang Chen slowed down as much as he could and minutes later, they were already back in the Xijiao villas.

They were both coated in dust and blood so they had to make a pit stop back home.

Lucky enough, the neighboring villas were pretty far apart so no one would see them in this state.

Yang Chen let go of Lin Ruoxi and said with a smile, “You can open your eyes now, we’re home.”

Lin Ruoxi opened her eyes in a daze and was surprised to see that they were really home.

Yang Chen wiped his hands on his pants, not knowing what to do next. Should he go in? Lin Ruoxi might still be mad at him.

Should he not go in then? Yang Chen was frustrated to know that he would have to resume their fight after saving her life. Couldn’t she just forget about Xiao Zhiqing?

Lin Ruoxi could roughly guess what he was thinking at that point. “Do you have anything that you want to say?”

Yang Chen breathed in and hesitated for a while before plastering a grin on his face. “Ruoxi, I wanted to say... that I’m going now, yeah?”

He was hoping for her to rebut his statement and ask him to stay.

Lin Ruoxi kept quiet and held onto her dress tightly, seemingly deep in thought.

Yang Chen felt slightly disappointed when she did not reply. “Then I’m leaving for real yeah?”

Lin Ruoxi stood by the door quietly.

Yang Chen was about to burst into tears. Why wouldn’t she say anything? At least let him know if she was still upset!

He felt so powerless as he turned around, thinking of where he could go.

At that time, Lin Ruoxi called after him.

“Are you leaving just like that?!”

Yang Chen turned around stiffly. "There's a limit to how ignorant I can be. I don't want to stay here knowing I would anger you further..."

"Are you an idiot?!" Lin Ruoxi called him an idiot instead of a jerk.

Yang Chen was dumbfounded and he looked at her in confusion.

Lin Ruoxi felt as though she was going crazy. She closed her eyes for a second before raising her voice at him. "Didn't you say you loved me?!"

It made Yang Chen even more confused as he stared at her flushed cheeks.

Lin Ruoxi's emotions were all over the place. She panted and yelled out, "If you really love me, why did you only beg twice?! Think about all the pain you've given me. You should have begged me twenty or thirty times! If you do that, only then I can pretend to forgive you reluctantly in a cold manner! Is that all that you can do?! You big fat liar!"

Big fat liar?

These three words rang in his ear but it only filled his heart with honey.

What had happened to him? It was weird for him to realize that he derived pleasure from her reprimanding him.

It is no wonder people say that love makes people dumb.

One step, two steps, Yang Chen rushed in front of Lin Ruoxi.

He reached out to her and pushed her against the wall.

Their faces were so close to each other.

"I'm not a liar, I'm a thief." Yang Chen smiled.

Lin Ruoxi tried to stay calm, but Yang Chen could tell that she was nervous from the look of her eyes.

"What... what thief..."

"I stole your heart."

Having said that, he kissed her lips gently.

Lin Ruoxi widened her eyes and her body trembled lightly. Still, she didn't push him away.

Yang Chen didn't go any further than that. It was a kiss to seal up their past.

After their lips separated, Yang Chen smiled in relief. "Even though someone told me that I shouldn't say 'I'm sorry' after I've told a woman that I love her, I still want to tell you that I'm sorry for a lot of things. But I promise that there will never be another Xiao Zhiqing."

Lin Ruoxi's facial expression changed from a shy one to a cold one immediately. "Don't mention her name!"

Yang Chen was taken aback and he smiled bitterly.

“Miss? Are you home?” Wang Ma’s voice could be heard from inside. She had obviously heard the commotion from outside.

Lin Ruoxi pushed Yang Chen away from her and tried to clean herself up to look less disheveled. “Yes, it’s me, open the door Wang Ma.”

Wang Ma ran to open the door and gasped when she saw the state that they were in. “What happened? Sir, why are you drenched in blood?”

“Wang Ma, relax, we’re fine. We got into an accident but we’ve settled it.” Yang Chen comforted her.

Wang Ma calmed down when she saw that they were fine for the most part. It wasn’t her first time seeing them like this. She frowned and said, “But if that’s the case, how are you guys going to meet the guest?”

“Guest? What guest?”

Yang Chen was surprised to hear that.

Wang Ma smiled helplessly. “A lady called Miss Xiao arrived five minutes ago. She’s here to meet Miss and she’s been waiting in the living room.”

Miss Xiao?!

Yang Chen was about to go crazy! The nerve of this woman! Had she not done enough damage?!

As expected, Lin Ruoxi who had just recovered, unleashed her murderous intent again. She glared at Yang Chen before turning her head. “Wang Ma, it’s okay, I’ll meet her!”

Chapter 925

Leave

Wang Ma was confused at Lin Ruoxi’s rage, but understood when she turned her head to face Yang Chen.

She sighed and realized what that meant. All she could do now was hope and pray.

When they walked into the living room, they could see Xiao Zhiqing who was seated on the couch with her legs crossed while drinking tea.

She was wearing a black sweater with leather hot pants, looking seductive and sexy.

If one did not know better, they would have thought that she was the owner of the house instead.

In contrast to her, Lin Ruoxi’s outfit was covered in dust and her hair was completely disheveled.

Xiao Zhiqing placed her cup down when she heard them enter. She turned around to greet them but was surprised to see them in such a state

Lin Ruoxi was too busy shooting icy glares at her to bother about her appearance.

“Leave,” she spat out cruelly. Her tone was light but the meaning behind it was heavy.

Xiao Zhiqing was about to smile at her but was unable to do so, frozen under Lin Ruoxi's glare.

Yang Chen looked up to the ceiling behind Lin Ruoxi and sucked in a breath in shock when he heard what Lin Ruoxi had said. But for the sake of his work, he decided not to care and feigned ignorance.

Xiao Zhiqing combed her hair and giggled. She walked over to them and cocked her head to one side. "Where did you and your husband go, President Lin? Why do you look so disheveled?"

"Leave."

Xiao Zhiqing's smile froze again. This time, it turned into a bitter smile. "Can't we just talk? I'm here on a serious matter."

Lin Ruoxi turned to Wang Ma. "Wang Ma, escort our guest out."

"Ah?"

Wang Ma didn't know what was going on but it wasn't her place to interject.

"Miss Xiao." Wang Ma smiled sheepishly. "Let me escort you out. Perhaps come back another day."

Xiao Zhiqing looked at Yang Chen with a resentful gaze.

She bit her lip and asked, "Are you kicking me out too?"

Yang Chen thought, Does she wants me to die?

"Why are you asking me? I cured your poison, I gave you money and you ruined my relationship with my wife. You should be thankful that you are still alive." Yang Chen was annoyed.

Lin Ruoxi asked in confusion, "Poison? What do you mean?"

Yang Chen didn't bother to hide the truth and told her everything about it.

Lin Ruoxi knew he was hiding something else from her but chose not to pry. "If that's what happened, you should be grateful instead of destroying our family to achieve your motives."

"You're right." Xiao Zhiqing agreed, her face filled with regret.

"I came here today to seek your forgiveness."

Having said so, Xiao Zhiqing dropped down on both her knees!

The three other occupants of the room stood there awkwardly, not knowing what to do.

"It's my fault. I was corrupted with vengeance. I wanted to destroy your marriage by using my past with Yang Chen. Miss Lin, please forgive my rashness but I really need to live on. I don't want to live fearing every second of my life. If you can't save me, no one can..."

And with that, she started sobbing like crazy. Her body was so low that it looked as if she was going to melt into the ground.

Wang Ma couldn't help but feel bad for her and she tried to help her up. "Eh, Miss Xiao, you don't need to do this. Hurry, get up..."

Xiao Zhiqing shook her head. "I'll continue to kneel until Miss Lin forgives me. I'm going to die anyway. I'd rather die kneeling here than at the hands of others."

Yang Chen couldn't think straight, shocked by the different faces shown by Xiao Zhiqing.

Lin Ruoxi might've hated the fact that Xiao Zhiqing tried to ruin Yang Chen's and her relationship, but her heart couldn't help but soften when she saw that Xiao Zhiqing was sobbing while apologizing to her.

"You said you were covered by vengeance. What did you mean?" Lin Ruoxi couldn't help but ask.

Xiao Zhiqing wiped her tears. "I actually ran away from home. My clan members and future in-laws are looking to bring me back..."

"What?!"

It was Wang Ma's turn to be shocked. "Miss Xiao, what are you saying? Why would your clan members try to kill you? The people you wish to seek revenge on can't be your family members, can they?"

"They are not my family members!"

Her eyes were red with anger and hatred. She lifted her head and shrieked, "I want to tear off their skin one by one!"

Yang Chen squinted eyes and watched Xiao Zhiqing lose her cool. This was too real to be an act.

He could roughly piece together what had happened with the information that he had from before.

He walked up to her after making up his mind. "Get up."

Xiao Zhiqing stopped crying and looked up to him helplessly. "You... Will you forgive me?"

Yang Chen said to her, "Tell me everything. Your past and your background."

Xiao Zhiqing stayed still for a while and turned to look Lin Ruoxi.

Lin Ruoxi looked towards Yang Chen with a complex gaze. She hesitated for a while before nodding her head. "I'll forgive you if you promise not to pull anything funny in the future."

Xiao Zhiqing smiled in relief. "Thank you..."

"You guys should've done this in the beginning. Sir, Miss, you two should take a shower and change into new clothes first." Wang Ma smiled.

Yang Chen smirked and wrapped his arms around Lin Ruoxi's waist. He whispered into her ear, "Dear, let's shower together."

"Let go." Lin Ruoxi's reply was short.

Yang Chen didn't dare to defy her and let go of his hands immediately. It seemed that she was not happy with his decision even though she would probably have done the same.

Lin Ruoxi turned around and told the others. "We'll talk in my study. Wang Ma, help me prepare some food, I'm hungry."

Yang Chen signaled Wang Ma to prepare more food before running up the stairs too.

Xiao Zhiqing stared at them from downstairs.

“Why, are you jealous of them?” Wang Ma smiled at Xiao Zhiqing.

That took her by surprise and she smiled along too.

“They might quarrel a lot but they’ve been married for a year now. Their experiences make it so that no other couple would have shared a connection so deep,” Wang Ma sighed. “Miss Xiao, let me give you a word of advice. Stop imagining things that will never happen. You will only hurt yourself.”

Having said that, Wang Ma proceeded to the kitchen to prepare food for them.

Xiao Zhiqing stood downstairs with a gloomy expression.

Half an hour later, Yang Chen and Lin Ruoxi called Xiao Zhiqing into the study after they were both done.

In the past, Lin Ruoxi wouldn’t have bothered to join but now that she had been caught by a cultivator, it was important for her to know these things.

Lin Ruoxi’s study was rather spacious. The floor was carpeted with cashmere. The three of them sat on the red leather chairs, facing each other.

Wang Ma left after bringing them snacks. She felt like an outsider to their conversation and had no reason to stay.

“Tell us now. Don’t exaggerate things. I might be able to pick up on that if you do.” Yang Chen picked up a green bean cake and stuffed it into his mouth.

Xiao Zhiqing took a deep breath, trying to gather where to begin. After a few seconds, she spoke up. “I’m not sure if you guys have heard of the hidden clans...”

Chapter 926 No Man’s Land

Yang Chen’s eyes brightened up but kept his face unchanged when he heard those words.

So it really is the hidden clans! he thought.

On the other hand, Lin Ruoxi was as confused as ever but chose not to ask when she turned and saw Yang Chen’s stern expression. After all, asking him to explain it later was still an option for her.

Yang Chen said to Xiao Zhiqing, “Relax. Just tell me everything and spare no detail.”

Xiao Zhiqing was slightly taken aback to see Yang Chen so serious but she nodded and began to tell her story.

Ever since the battle between the great ancient cultivators and the gods had ended, things had been particularly rough for the gods. Zeus was trapped in an formation, Athena could barely help herself, let alone the rest of the god race. The worst part was, they weren’t able to produce offspring which meant that they were on the verge of extinction.

The great ancient cultivators were no exception. They too began to die out alongside the gods.

But the stronger cultivators were an exception. They had inherited the armours from the ancestors who had ascended to become immortals which made their descendants stronger than other cultivators.

With the great ancient cultivators gone, their descendants formed the great ancient clan. They remained hidden from plain sight, only focusing on their cultivation journey to ascension, and were detached from society, causing them to become a hidden clan.

However, as time passed, most of the hidden clans began to die out.

The weaker clans chose to return to society and some clans were taken over by the stronger ones due to lack of leadership.

At last, only three hidden clans remained in China, which was the Luo clan, the Ning clan, and the Xiao clan.

These three clans survived under the harsh environment and conditions, and in the end, were able to expand. Not only did they own scriptures from ancient times, but they also possessed artifacts and medicine which could be passed down from generation to generation. In addition to that, they had really powerful elders to watch over their clans.

In contrast, Hongmeng was just a group of unaffiliated cultivators. They might be ahead of the hidden clans in numbers, but they lacked the kind of elites found in those three clans.

Plus, cultivators of the Soul Forming stage and above would be able to use the artifacts due to the presence of True Yuan, thus giving the great ancient clans an even greater advantage.

All this while, Hongmeng had been protecting the great ancient formation and also the root of China. They managed to keep a balance with the great ancient clans by not getting involved with each other.

Xiao Zhiqing came from the Xiao clan.

She was the daughter of Xiao Mozheng, the second son of the head of the Xiao clan, Xiao Mengyu.

Xiao Mozheng had two sons and Xiao Zhiqing was his only daughter.

But, Xiao Zhiqing was born with the Nine Yin Meridian.

A person born with the Nine Yin Meridian would not be able to cultivate at all. Because of the strong Yin, her body would be unable to take up any form of energy, thus the energy would then avoid her body.

Treating such a sickness required a technique lost to time.

In a hidden clan, any clan member who was unable to cultivate till the Soul Forming stage would be deemed useless. They would be treated as an outsider regardless of which family they came from, powerful or not.

Things weren't any better for Xiao Zhiqing, being a girl who was unable to cultivate. She was born into a fate worse than death.

Even so, the other characteristic of Nine Yin Meridian made them changed their opinion towards her, she was unaffected by any kind of poison!

The Nine Yin Meridian could restrict all entries of poison. The human body might show symptoms but because of the strong Yin, she would still be alive for years even after being poisoned.

Each hidden clan had different attributes. The Luo clan had lots of scriptures and strong cultivators, whereas the Ning clan had lots of artifacts and cultivators too. They might not be as elite as the Luo clan, but they were still considerably strong.

The Xiao clan, on the other hand, relied on artifacts and medicine.

Making medicine was their forte.

In the past, no one would know if their medicine was fully functional as they were not as proficient as their ancestors before them. It did not help that their recipes were not a hundred percent accurate.

So being able to test the effects of their medicine was of utmost importance.

Most of the medicine that they produced had hidden side effects which could range anywhere from internal bleeding to damaging their organs. Some side effects could even lead to damaging their cultivation progress!

The Xiao clan couldn't just kidnap someone to test the medicine. Firstly, an ordinary human couldn't bear the effects and secondly, every clan member is precious!

Therefore, the birth of Xiao Zhiqing was like a godsend!

Xiao Zhiqing might not be able to cultivate but the Nine Yin Meridian filled her body with Yin energy. If she was poisoned, she wouldn't die right away!

This made her the perfect guinea pig!

From the earliest reaches of Xiao Zhiqing's memory, she had been through countless amounts of tests. If she showed any symptoms of being poisoned, they would try to find the reason behind it and if there was none, it meant that the medicine was working fine.

"Is this why you had so much poison in your body?" Yang Chen couldn't help but frown.

Xiao Zhiqing's eyes were red. Years of torment did not mean that she was used to it.

She nodded her head and said, "They knew that if they wanted to suppress the poisons from the Nine Yin Meridian in my body, it would take up lots of time and medicinal herbs. I might suffer but I wouldn't die. Till now, I still can't believe that you were able to purge the poison out of my body which had stuck with me for almost twenty years."

"Almost twenty years?" Yang Chen was surprised to hear this. "You're not twenty years old yet?"

Xiao Zhiqing blushed. "I... Of course I'm not..."

Lin Ruoxi quickly interjected. "You're still bothered by her age?! How could her own family treat her like that? Even if they didn't want to save her, there's no reason to treat her as such!"

Xiao Zhiqing looked at her gratefully, happy to hear that Lin Ruoxi cared for her.

“Miss Lin, you might not know this but in a hidden clan, power is all that matters. For a girl like me who’s unable to cultivate, I’m lucky that I wasn’t disowned the moment they found out. In my family, not even my father would look at me...” Xiao Zhiqing snickered, her eyes filled with disdain.

Yang Chen started to understand how she got to become so cruel.

With a family like that, morals and empathy were probably non essentials.

Yang Chen couldn’t help but feel bad for her. They had lived similar lives, but she was more deeply hurt than him.

The atmosphere in the study was heavy for a while until Lin Ruoxi spoke up. “Oh ya, you haven’t mentioned this. Where are the great ancient clans located? Wouldn’t they get found out, now that the technology has improved so much?”

Xiao Zhiqing smiled and shook her head. “No one will find them. Their location is similar to that of Hongmeng, revolving around the great ancient formation. To normal people, the place would be treated as a no man’s land, but once you crack the outer formation, you’ll realize it’s a whole other world.”

“No man’s land?” Yang Chen racked through the map in his brain. “Are you saying they’re at Kekexili, north of the Kunlun Mountain?”

Xiao Zhiqing nodded. “Kekexili is what the public sees. But it is just an illusion. If one does not have the pass meant for the formation, they will never see it for what it truly is. The great ancient ancestors opened up the area and it’s actually rather vast.”

“But the distance between Kekexili and Zhonghai is so far apart. Besides, we met in Los Angeles. How did you manage to run that far? Based on what you have described, you wouldn’t have the ability to escape from home.” Yang Chen was suspicious of her.

Chapter 927

Single-Handedly

A hint of resentment flashed through her eyes. “Before that, I have to first tell you about my in-laws.”

“Your in-laws?”

“Yes, the Luo clan.” Xiao Zhiqing’s gaze started to burn with intense hatred.

Yang Chen suddenly remembered about the time they first met. Xiao Zhiqing asked him if he was sent by the Luo clan to capture her. It seemed like her story held up.

Lin Ruoxi felt worse and worse as the story progressed. She subconsciously reached for a piece of tissue paper to wipe her tears.

Xiao Zhiqing’s marriage was arranged to be with Luo Hang, the son of the Luo clan’s head, Luo Qianqiu.

Initially, it was impossible for her to marry him as their skill gap was just way too large. They were certain that he would enter into the Tribulation Passing stage and would eventually become the head of the family.

They weren't putting in this much effort just to make her Luo Hang's wife.

The Luo clan did this in order for the Xiao clan to share their ultimate test subject with them. They too had medicines that were in need of testing.

They promised the Xiao clan that she would receive a proper identity and many gifts as a dowry for her hand in marriage. But ultimately, it was all for show.

They weren't the only clans in Kekexili,. All the cultivators would be watching them, therefore they had to feign sincerity in order for them to avoid judgment.

Luo Hang was willing to marry her anyway. Xiao Zhiqing was pretty and even if she was sterile, all she needed to do was serve his desires. He could just marry another cultivator in the future if he wanted to.

Xiao Zhiqing had given up on life. She was treated worse than a peasant.

But just before the night of her wedding, someone had finally made up their mind to help her. In fact, she had always been helping her secretly when she was in Xiao clan.

She was Xiao Zhiqing's nanny.

Xiao Zhiqing's mother died young and her nanny was the one who had raised her. But her nanny was only in the initial phase of the Soul Forming stage and had no real power to help.

When she saw that Xiao Zhiqing had lost her will to live, it was the tipping point. She found an opportunity to send Xiao Zhiqing out of the array and into the neighboring province.

After giving Xiao Zhiqing some money, she returned to Xiao clan and helped her draw away the cultivators that were chasing her so that Xiao Zhiqing had time to escape.

Even though they had lived in the array, they weren't completely disconnected from the world. Xiao Zhiqing managed to escape with an identity card prepared for her by her nanny.

And this resulted in Xiao Zhiqing going to the States for her own safety.

Because of the Nine Yin Meridian, she was unable to cultivate and had to pick up other skills such as foreign languages. Regarding her hacking skills, she had figured it out on her own.

Although she had no future in cultivation, she was incredibly fast in picking up all other aspects of the world.

Because of her extraordinary ability, she became a really successful con artist in Los Angeles. A few people even became her subordinates willingly.

"I'm sure you can recall what happened after that." Xiao Zhiqing was ashamed of herself. "I know I caused a lot of trouble but I have nowhere else to turn to."

Xiao Zhiqing looked at Yang Chen. "No one else can save me except for you."

Yang Chen touched his forehead and let out a breath. "You're making things difficult for me. I don't owe you anything, yet I'm about to make a whole bunch of new enemies."

Xiao Zhiqing's face fell and she lowered her voice. "I know it's selfish but what other choice do I have?"

Tears started to pool in her eyes again.

Lin Ruoxi struggled with her thoughts for a while before turning to face Yang Chen. “Hubby, just help her. You should protect her from these rotten people. Besides, they might give up once they realize the trouble it would bring them if they tried to bring her back.”

Yang Chen smiled bitterly and stroked her face. Lin Ruoxi tried to escape his touch and puffed her cheeks.

Yang Chen sighed. “Didn’t you hear her? They have so many cultivators who are in the Tribulation Passing stage. There’s only one of me and too many of them.”

He paused halfway when something went off in his head!

Oh right! Medicine!

He quickly turned around. “Xiao Zhiqing, you said that the hidden clan has lots of medicine to help with cultivation right? On top of that, they also have scriptures and teachings right?”

Xiao Zhiqing nodded. “Yes, the reason why the other cultivators couldn’t enter the Soul Forming stage was that they lacked these medicines. The hidden clans could remain tall because of these items. It’s some of their most prized possessions.”

Yang Chen’s eyes glowed with greed.

“Hehe, I’ve no interest in protecting you nor am I interested in helping you seek revenge. But the medicines and scriptures your clan possesses are enticing rewards for helping you.” Yang Chen smiled wickedly.

Xiao Zhiqing almost fainted from his words and tried to stop him. “Don’t be stupid! Are you planning on stealing from one of the most powerful clans?! Are you crazy?! Even Hongmeng stays away from them! They have thousands of cultivators. What makes you think that the elders can be defeated so easily?!”

Lin Ruoxi placed her hand over her chest from the audacity of his words. “Don’t you dare go there! Do you think it’s funny?! It’s too risky!”

Yang Chen chuckled and waved his hands. “I’m just kidding. I like my life intact.”

Of course, that didn’t mean that he was willing to completely let it go.

Sure it was dangerous if he were to go right now, but what about a couple of years from now?

His Endless Resolve Restoration Scripture was constantly improving. Perhaps he would reconsider it after going through the next round of heavenly tribulations.

It would help a great deal with his lovers’ cultivation progress.

But unfortunately, he did not know the extent of their powers.

When Yang Chen thought of this, he was reminded of the artifacts that he had collected earlier.

With a wave of his hand, Yang Chen placed them onto the floor.

Xiao Zhiqing was shocked to see these items in his possession. "You... Why do you have these?!"

Yang Chen didn't bother to hide the truth and told her everything, from the beginning where the man kidnapped Lin Ruoxi and that he had killed him.

Only then Xiao Zhiqing knew why they were a mess earlier. They had just returned from battling a cultivator well into the Soul Forming stage.

"There are three levels in which artifacts can be classified. Lower, middle, and upper class. The higher the level, the rarer the artifacts."

Xiao Zhiqing pointed to one of the items. "This bracelet is called the Ganyuan Tiangang Bracelet. It's classified as a mid-lower tier item and was mainly used for defense. It can withstand at least three attacks from someone in the Tribulation Passing stage. As for the hammer, it's called the Exorcist's Golden Hammer. It might be classified as a lower-tier item but it is incredibly powerful among its class. The Blood Dragon's Golden Dagger is the most powerful one. Even cultivators in the Tribulation Passing stage would be scared to go against it."

Yang Chen asked curiously, "How do you know so much about this?"

Xiao Zhiqing smiled. "What I lack in practical cultivation, I make up for in theory about cultivation and their cultures."

It dawned on him that she could be quite useful to him. She could explain certain things to him that he might not understand. It might not be such a bad thing to protect her.

After convincing himself, he asked, "You haven't told me about the medal, what kind of artifact is that? Why is there the word 'Huang' word on it?"

Xiao Zhiqing frowned and looked at him. She then said, "This... is not an artifact."

Chapter 928

Told Wang Ma Secretly

"It's not?" Yang Chen asked in annoyance. "There's some sort of weird energy emanating from it. Surely it couldn't just be a piece of scrap metal."

"Of course not." Xiao Zhiqing explained, "This is akin to an identification card for the members of Hongmeng."

"Hongmeng?"

"That's right," Xiao Zhiqing said. "If this 'Huang' medal really belonged to the cultivator. You can bet that he was from Hongmeng."

It turned out that Hongmeng was located near the great ancient array, near the centre of Kekexili. The creator of the illusion also created the Gods' Island, which was made up of areas of different altitudes.

The great ancient array was located at the top. The Gods' Island were separated into four main areas from the highest to the lowest altitude—Heaven, Earth, Xuan, and Huang.

The Heaven area did not care about Hongmeng and was only focused on watching over the array. They were only concerned with keeping up their cultivations.

Whereas the Earth area consisted of the leaders of Hongmeng, but they only had more than ten elders, most of whom were in the Tribulation Passing stage.

The Xuan area consisted of the main forces with more than a hundred cultivators and most of them were in the final phase of the Soul Forming stage.

Lastly, the lowest area, Huang, contained the most number of cultivators.

They were made up of those who had joined Hongmeng for less than two centuries or those of cultivation lower than the Tribulation Passing stage.

Those in the Huang area were normally termed as Hongmeng by the Yellow Flame Iron Brigade since they were in charge of being in touch with society.

Technically, the cultivators in the Huang area weren't uniformed. The stronger ones could be in the final phase of the Soul Forming stage whereas the weaker ones could be in the initial phase of the Soul Forming stage.

For example, Ling Xuze entered Hongmeng for less than two centuries and he had not reached the Tribulation Passing stage. He was considered an upper-level cultivator in the Huang area and was therefore chosen as a representative.

Hongmeng wasn't as strict and rigid as most people might think. As long as their members did not disturb the peace and society, they were quite relaxed about the policies.

Their sole purpose was to watch over the array, making sure that cultivators in the Soul Forming stage wouldn't bother the society. They weren't there to detain them.

But everyone was aware that the Huang area was quite chaotic.

Not all of them were loyal to Hongmeng. Some of them even defected to the hidden clans in order to obtain medicines and scriptures to improve their cultivation.

Hongmeng might be a big organization but it was hard for them to share resources with thousands of cultivators.

"This was used to prove his identity and disable the illusions surrounding that area," Xiao Zhiqing said.

Yang Chen beamed. "Ah. This seems to be more useful to me than the other two. I have to take good care of this."

Having said so, Yang Chen kept all the items back into the parallel spaces.

Lin Ruoxi had been quiet the whole time but she decided to speak up then. "Don't act rashly. I'm worried that now that you've killed the cultivator, would Hongmeng treat you as their enemy now?"

"I don't think so." Xiao Zhiqing shook her head. "Hongmeng definitely wouldn't harm the mundane just to snatch something. Targeting Yang Chen was not out of the ordinary. But involving you made me suspect that this issue was more personal than business. He might have come from one of the hidden

clans. Even if Hongmeng knew that Yang Chen killed the cultivator, they would understand that the cultivator was the instigator of their fight. The elders adhere to the principles strongly which makes them better people than those from the hidden clans.”

Xiao Zhiqing words were coated with venom.

Her hatred ran deeper than the two would ever know.

Lin Ruoxi sighed in relief but frowned afterwards. “Are you saying that the hidden clans are behind all this?”

“That’s right.” Xiao Zhiqing snorted. “I wouldn’t put their greed above doing this. They must have wanted what Yang Chen had but couldn’t obtain it. Normally, a cultivator from the Huang area would only have one mystical artifact but this person had three. It would only make sense for him to be contracted by the hidden clan.”

Yang Chen contemplated for a while about the link between the cultivator and the mysterious man he had encountered in the Tang Sect. But he kept it to himself.

“I have to thank you for helping me clear up my confusion. I’ll ask you for help if I have any questions.” Yang Chen smiled.

Xiao Zhiqing brightened up and nodded her head immediately. “I’m doing my Ph.D. in Computer Science at Zhonghai University. You can find me there whenever you want.”

After saying that, she immediately retracted her words and apologized to Lin Ruoxi. “Miss Lin, I didn’t mean anything by it, I swear!”

Lin Ruoxi shook her head with a soft smile.

She didn’t really hate her now that she knew of her past. She even invited Xiao Zhiqing for dinner but she respectfully declined.

Even though Yang Chen didn’t say that he would protect her and help her seek revenge, she knew that he wouldn’t let her die.

She also knew that her request was a bit too much to ask for, so she was glad to get something out of it.

Zhenxiu returned around evening after work but Hui Lin had left for work and wouldn’t be back for a couple of months.

Yang Chen thought it was better for both of them since it would’ve been awkward between them because of what he said to Hui Lin at the Yuan’s mansion.

Wang Ma cooked a lot of dishes to soothe their nerves since Lin Ruoxi was kidnapped in the morning.

Just when they were about to have their dinner, Yang Chen’s phone started buzzing.

Yang Chen picked it up and was happy to see the caller ID.

He answered the call and asked, “Ron, is it ready?”

The person who called was an old man, Ron, who watched over Yang Chen’s house in Europe.

“Your Majesty Pluto, everything is ready. We may begin as soon as the following month,” Ron replied joyfully.

Yang Chen hummed a response and hung up his phone.

Yang Chen turned around to face Lin Ruoxi which made her blush under his stare. She then asked, “What’s wrong?”

Yang Chen took a deep breath. “We’ve been preparing for almost half a year and it’s finally finished. We’ll leave for Beijing tomorrow or the day after tomorrow.”

Lin Ruoxi was taken aback at first but she blushed and nodded when she realized what he meant by getting ready.

“Beijing? Are you guys going there to meet Aunt Guo and Brother Yang’s grandfather?” Zhenxiu asked expectantly.

Yang Chen smirked. “Do you want to go too?”

Zhenxiu looked at Wang Ma. “Wang Ma, I’ll go if you’re going. Don’t you miss Aunt Guo?”

Wang Ma stroked her head and chided. “Don’t bother them. Stay here and watch over the house with me.”

Zhenxiu stuck her tongue but didn’t say anything else.

Wang Ma turned around and told Yang Chen, “Sir, I heard from Miss that you were planning a wedding?”

Yang Chen looked at Lin Ruoxi in surprise and chuckled. “Hehe, dear, I didn’t know you were looking forward to it so much that you even told Wang Ma secretly?”

“I... I didn’t?!” Lin Ruoxi wanted to crawl under the table. “Wang Ma!”

Wang Ma laughed. “Alright, I was eavesdropping. Why are you so embarrassed about the wedding? Not to mention you’ve been married for almost two years.”

Yang Chen almost broke out in cold sweat. It took him this long to prepare the wedding. It had to be perfect.

“Sir.” Wang Ma giggled. “I might not be going to Beijing but can I attend your wedding? I know you wouldn’t hold it in China since you’ve been preparing for it for a long time. It’s been my wish to watch Miss get married.”

“Wang Ma... why are you bringing this up?” Lin Ruoxi got a bit teary-eyed.

Yang Chen smiled. “Of course you can. I have even chosen a position for you in the wedding. Don’t worry about it.”

Wang Ma smiled in relief and wiped her tears. “Miss, I think you should put your work aside for now. Nothing is more important than meeting your in-laws and holding a wedding. Why don’t you leave tomorrow?”

Chapter 929

Thoughts

Lin Ruoxi thought that Wang Ma was way too excited about it. But truthfully, she was quite excited herself.

But there was no way she was going to admit it to Yang Chen. He would tease her mercilessly.

I won't attend the wedding if he plans on giving me a ring smaller than the one he gave Qianni! Lin Ruoxi thought.

When it came to her wedding, nothing in this world would come close. Not even her own company.

It only took her one hour to take care of everything. All she did was delegate her duties to the respective department heads and assign Mo Qianni as the temporary head.

In the evening, Lin Ruoxi started to pack her luggage bag. She had to pack a rather heavy load as Yang Chen was planning to hold the wedding right after their trip to Beijing.

At the same time, Yang Chen didn't plan to hide the fact that they were holding a wedding from the other ladies. He even called each of them personally and informed them.

The wedding was and would only ever be for Lin Ruoxi. It was better for them to know now than find out later on their own.

Yang Chen would hate to see anything go wrong between them, so it was critical for him to secure Lin Ruoxi's position as his only wife.

He also asked each one of them if they wanted to attend. After all, they had every right to attend the wedding.

Also, the venue for his wedding was connected to his past. He was going to bring each one of them there eventually.

But all their answers came up the same. They refused to attend.

Instead, they were only interested in the place he was going to bring them.

Yang Chen could only smile bitterly. They had absolutely no care for his wedding but were still interested in its venue.

Taking this into consideration, Yang Chen decided to send them over after the wedding. He needed Lin Ruoxi's permission of course, and he would only send for them after their honeymoon.

Meanwhile in Beijing, Guo Xuehua had been looking forward to meeting them for days. The moment Yang Chen called her, she was so excited she volunteered to pick them up from the airport herself.

But when she told Yang Gongming, he frowned at her idea.

"They have come back to visit their elders, why would you go and pick them up?" With that, Guo Xuehua withdrew her offer.

Yang Chen found that old man to be such a stubborn person. But who was he to judge? Plus it made things slightly more interesting in the clan.

Yang Chen didn't really care about the wealth nor power of the Yang clan. He was more concerned about the influence they held over the lives of his family.

The next day, Yang Chen boarded the plane to Beijing with Lin Ruoxi. Their flight lasted for two hours.

Guo Xuehua couldn't come herself but she did ensure that they were escorted the moment they arrived at the gate.

The Yang clan was a military family so keeping a low profile was customary. Plus, Yang Chen's return wasn't really something they could brag about.

Lin Ruoxi wore a blue ruffled skirt from Bottega Veneta matched with high-heeled boots from Ferragamo. Her hair was neatly combed behind her back, which made her seem very docile and refreshing.

She had tried her best to make herself presentable as this was her first time going back to his home.

Because they were at the airport, Lin Ruoxi put on a pair of Gucci sunglasses to cover her bare but still attractive facial features.

However, nothing she did would ever be enough to hide her alluring appearance.

She tried to keep a low profile but her glamorous aura was doing the opposite, attracting gazes from the people around.

Lin Ruoxi had no choice but to link arms with Yang Chen and kept her head low the whole time.

Yang Chen shook his head and smiled bitterly. Lin Ruoxi's outfit was around forty to fifty thousand yuan. Plus, Beijing was filled with materialistic people so it was impossible for her not to garner attention.

If Yang Chen wasn't strong enough, he probably wouldn't be able to protect a rich woman like her.

Lin Ruoxi wanted nothing more than to just leave the airport. She was starting to get nervous from all the stares. But just as she passed by a shop, she immediately froze in her tracks.

"What's wrong?" Yang Chen turned around in confusion.

Lin Ruoxi raised her hand and pinched her fingers together.

She frowned and mumbled to herself, "Oh no."

"Did you forget something in the plane?" Yang Chen probed her.

Lin Ruoxi shook her head and pouted. "Hubby, don't you know what day is it today?"

"Our anniversary?" Yang Chen blinked. "But didn't we just celebrate it a while ago? Has it been another year already?"

"Of course not!" Lin Ruoxi glared at him. "It's Mom's birthday!"

"Mom?" Yang Chen was shocked. "I didn't know that! She didn't tell me!"

“Why would she have told you herself?” Lin Ruoxi chided him. “I have to get her a present. Let’s have a look at this shop. Something is better than nothing.”

Yang Chen didn’t mind and joined her in the shop.

There wasn’t anything worth buying other than overpriced souvenirs in the shop.

Lin Ruoxi frowned even harder. She was getting more anxious as time passed. “What should we do? How about we stop by at a mall on the way back?”

Yang Chen smiled when he saw how nervous she was feeling. “It’s just a gift. It doesn’t matter what we get for her. It’s the thought that counts.”

“Our wedding is also a formality. Would you tell me that it’s only the thought that counts too?” Lin Ruoxi rolled her eyes.

Yang Chen stuttered and scratched his head. He looked around and his eyes brightened when he saw something.

Yang Chen grinned as he picked up the gift to show Lin Ruoxi. “Just get this, she’ll definitely like this.”

Lin Ruoxi was suspicious of him. “Are you sure?”

“Is she your mom or my mom?”

“Of course she’s your mom.”

“Then listen to me,” Yang Chen said while walking up to the cashier.

Lin Ruoxi made a face but said nothing.

The moment they walked out of the airport, one of the Yang clan’s guards walked up to them immediately. He was dressed in a casual suit to avoid drawing attention.

They drove off to the Yang clan’s mansion which was located in the military zone.

When they reached, Lin Ruoxi held onto Yang Chen’s arms tightly with sweaty palms.

Yang Chen hugged her shoulders and comforted her. “Why are you so nervous? Haven’t you met the old man before? He’s quite nice.”

“What do you even know?” Lin Ruoxi complained. “I’m worried about you.”

“Me?” Yang Chen did not know where she was coming from. “What’s there to worry about? I’m just bringing you home. We can stay for as long as you feel comfortable. It’s not like we’re going into a dungeon.”

“What if your father is there? How are you going to talk to him?”

Yang Chen stopped in his tracks. He did not consider the possibility of him being home. Somehow Yang Chen never thought that he would see him since Yang Pojun was always at the military zone in Jiangnan.

Yang Chen contemplated for a while and said, “He is neither related nor an enemy to me. I’ll do what is necessary to account for Mom’s feelings.”

Lin Ruoxi sighed. "I was also wondering if Yang Lie would be here. I'm sure you took a lot of precautions before coming to Beijing. I just hope that things will go on smoothly."

Yang Chen's eyes flashed with an unreadable emotion but he remained silent.

About an hour later, the car had arrived in front of an ancient looking mansion.

On top of the main door, there was a plaque inscribed with the phrase 'Yang Residence'. They had finally reached their destination

Chapter 930

Easily Swayed

"Please come in, Young Master Chen and Madam. Marshal has been waiting for your arrival."

The guard opened the main door politely and invited them to enter. After doing so, he left them and resumed his normal duties.

Yang Chen was rather surprised to hear him say 'marshal'. It would seem that they took ranks very seriously here.

Ever since the turn of the century, China had not appointed any marshals. Even the Minister of Defence was only a general.

Based on his ranking, Yang Chen knew that for as long as Yang Gongming was alive, the Yang clan would hold their place as one of the big four.

The doors opened, revealing a relatively long stone path leading to the living hall.

Although there were lots of maids, the mansion still stood out as there were numerous guards posted every few meters around and within the mansion. They were all well built and were oozing with a sense of righteousness. Their eyes told stories of brutal wars full of bloodshed.

The moment Yang Chen and Lin Ruoxi walked in, they greeted them with a straight face.

It was nothing for Yang Chen but it made Lin Ruoxi nervous again. He could feel her palms becoming moist again.

Yang Chen held her hand and walked along the path. He took a glance at her and couldn't help but tease her. "My dear President Lin, why are you so nervous? Should I tell you a joke to calm your nerves?"

Lin Ruoxi bit her lip and glared at him. She took a deep breath and tried to calm her jittering nerves.

"The house looks nice. It's probably worth a lot of money. Hmm... the maids seem well trained and the soldiers look like war veterans. They could be useful in putting up a show," Yang Chen mumbled.

Lin Ruoxi wanted to choke him. She was already so nervous and he decided to talk about the mansion's real estate?!

A familiar silhouette walked towards them just when they were about to reach the living hall.

Guo Xuehua walked up to them and hugged Yang Chen excitedly.

“Son, you’re finally home. I’ve missed you so much!”

Guo Xuehua wiped her tears. She had been waiting for this moment for twenty-odd years.

“It hasn’t been that long.” Yang Chen patted her back awkwardly.

Guo Xuehua gave him a look. “You heartless child. Look at how nervous you have made Ruoxi. Her whole face is practically red!”

“Mom... I’m... I’m not...” Lin Ruoxi tried to deny it but she couldn’t even look at her mother-in-law right in the eyes.

Although they had lived together for a few months, it was her first time being officially brought home to meet her in-laws.

“Don’t try to deny it.” Guo Xuehua held her hands and smiled. “Don’t be nervous. This is now your home too. The soldiers here are retirees from the Yang’s army. They’ve been with us for generations.”

Lin Ruoxi looked at the soldiers subconsciously. She wasn’t as intimidated by them but it was still a weird sight to see.

“Let’s go. Your grandfather is waiting for you. He has already finished two pots of tea.” Guo Xuehua chuckled and motioned for them to follow her.

She led them into the main hall which was being held up by four pillars of redwood.

The furniture was arranged neatly across the floor and there was a drawing of galloping steeds on the opposite side of the wall. It was the only piece of decoration this hall had.

Yang Gongming was wearing a white shirt with black loose pants. He was drumming his fingers on the table out of boredom.

Behind him was Yan Sanniang. She was dressed in grey and was glad to see Yang Chen and Lin Ruoxi when they entered.

“Father, they are finally here.” Guo Xuehua beamed at him.

Yang Gongming nodded and looked at Yang Chen without saying a word.

Yang Chen wiped away the lazy look on his face and looked back at him.

The grandfather and grandson stared at each other in silence. No one in the room knew what they were doing, including Lin Ruoxi.

She was even afraid to breathe too loudly.

Although Yang Gongming was nice to her and even complimented her when he came to visit, they were in her house back then.

She had been watching him on the television since young. A nationwide leader and an influential icon in the government. Seeing him on screen and meeting him in real life was a completely different experience.

Moments later, Yang Gongming smiled. "You're back..."

It sounded like a question and a statement rolled into one.

Yang Chen lowered his head and chuckled. "I'm here, not I'm back..."

Yang Gongming raised his brows and turned to face Lin Ruoxi. His smile widened and he asked her gently, "Ruoxi, tell me, are you guys here or back?"

It wasn't her first time being treated as his granddaughter, but it still made her blush.

She snuck a glance towards Yang Chen and realized that he was blinking at her.

Lin Ruoxi hesitated for a while before answering, "We're... back..."

"Hey!" Yang Chen pulled her closer. "Dear, how could you not side with me?! You have to follow me! We're here to visit, not coming back!"

"What? Don't be so childish." Lin Ruoxi pushed him, "I'm embarrassed for you. Why are you acting so tough in front of your own grandfather? I thought you were thick-skinned? Why are you so shy now?"

Yang Chen's face fell. How could she betray him and sway away from him so easily?!

Yang Gongming laughed and clapped his hands. "Looks like you aren't doing so well yourself. You can't even control your wife and yet you tried to take advantage of me."

Yan Sanniang and Guo Xuehua giggled to themselves.

Yang Chen blushed and realized that no one was on his side. It was already bad enough back home.

"Daughter-in-law," Yang Gongming called.

Guo Xuehua walked forward immediately. "Father, are we starting the meal?"

"Let's do it in the backyard. Open a bottle of aged Huadiao wine too. Yang Chen might not be quick-witted but I'm older than him so I won't hold it against him," Yang Gongming teased.

Yang Chen wiped his face and mumbled something under his breath. Lin Ruoxi pinched him which stopped him from saying anything else.

Although they weren't really the nicest of people to each other, the atmosphere was surprisingly relaxed.

Lin Ruoxi thought it was rather weird too but decided that this was better than a tense one. She instead opted to survey the mansion she was in.

It was an old mansion so most of the architecture was ancient. There were many pieces of artwork that made the whole area seem like a museum.

When they came to the backyard, the dining table was already filled with a variety of dishes. Most of them were Yang Chen and Lin Ruoxi's favorite dishes. Lin Ruoxi was touched to see that there were also local Beijing glutinous rice balls on the table. Guo Xuehua must have prepared all these beforehand.

Lin Ruoxi was relieved to see that Yang Pojun and Yang Lie weren't here since Yang Chen swore that he would kill Yang Lie the next time he showed up.

Once everyone took their seats, Yang Gongming motioned for Yan Sanniang to join them. She rejected at first but eventually gave in under his pressure.

Yang Chen thought that her predicament was rather odd. Now that he had survived the first round of Nine Heavenly Lightning, Yan Sanniang's cultivation had become clear to him.

She was in the mid-phase of the Soul Forming stage but technically, for someone of her caliber, shouldn't she be in Hongmeng? Why would she be serving as an attendant to Yang Gongming instead?