

Crossing to the Future, it's Not Easy to Be a Man

Chapter 7: Burning Bridges?

Ling Lan's actions soothed Lan Luofeng's heaving emotions. She knew that there were representatives from the federal government and the military present as well. She would not ruin Ling Lan's inheritance ceremony due to a rash moment of anger.

Suppressing her anger, Lan Luofeng asked coldly, "What are your intentions, Uncle Ren?"

Ling Suren's eyes narrowed, but he still revealed his plan in the end. "Among the children of the Ling family, age three and below, let us select the one with the best qualities and potential to inherit."

From birth to the age of three was the critical period for cultivation and moulding. After this time frame, the effects of cultivation would be greatly diminished, and cultivation would only become less and less effective with the passage of time.

Lan Luofeng scoffed, "Do you really think that any of the Ling family children would be able to hold a candle to Ling Xiao's own child? Let me remind you that Ling Xiao was an IN mecha operator." In the Federation, genetics decided everything. Very rarely did one see cases where a commoner would suddenly show extraordinary talent or physical qualities. The transmission of quality traits had to be gradually nurtured and built up from generation to generation.

"The Ling family managed to produce Ling Xiao — we can certainly produce another," said Ling Suren, his tone iron-clad with certainty. He could speak with such confidence because he already had a child with stats very similar to Ling Xiao within his grasp. This was why he was willing to go so far as to forgo civility to obtain Ling Xiao's military benefits. The Ling family must produce another Ling Xiao to maintain their foothold on the Planet of Doha.

Although the Federation currently touted the ideology of equality on the surface, in truth, there was a distinct social strata working behind the scenes which decided which planet you could live on.

The Planet of Doha was a premium planet, and was also the capital planet of the Federation. Those who lived on Doha were either high officials with both power and authority, military bigwigs, or those supremely wealthy noble families with long histories and great influence.

The Ling family was originally a small family who could only settle on a third-rate planet. However, they had managed to move to Doha due to the efforts of Ling Xiao's father, Ling Suzheng.

Ling Suzheng had been an ace pilot, but unfortunately did not manage to become an ultimate weapon of the nation — an IN mecha operator. Still, his abilities were such that no one below the level of an IN mecha operator could rival him. On the battlefield, he had managed to cut down many of the top enemy pilots, accumulating many battle honours in his lifetime. In the end, the military had decided to reward his exploits by allowing Ling Suzheng to bring his family to live on Doha, acknowledging his role as a new war hero.

To convince Ling Suzheng to bring the entire Ling family to Doha, and not just his own nuclear family, the Ling family head and elders of that time made a vow — the Ling family would view Ling Suzheng as the legitimate heir, and all the resources of the family would be his to command. On top of that, the position of family head would also be inherited by Ling Suzheng's descendants from then on.

On his end, Ling Suzheng had felt that he needed his family's support to establish himself on Doha, and so had agreed to move the entire Ling family.

This decision of Ling Suzheng's had brought endless trouble to Ling Xiao, and now had even opened the way for the side family to try and steal Ling Lan's inheritance. If Ling Suzheng only knew how he had invited wolves in with his kind gesture, he might be turning in his grave.

After living on Doha and enjoying its benefits for several decades, the Ling family had no intention of going back to how things were before. They knew very well that in twenty years, after focused cultivation from the country, if Ling Xiao's designated inheritor could not meet the minimum requirements set by the country, the Ling family would lose everything they had gained since coming to Doha. They would have to go back to being a middle-class family, no ... perhaps even be reduced to becoming a lower-class family. This would greatly affect the Ling family income, as well as limit the romantic connections and career paths of the younger generations of the Ling family. No, they would not allow it to happen.

Ling Suren did not give Lan Luofeng any chance to speak, but instead signalled for a woman who was carrying a one year old child to step forward. He pointed at the child and said, "This is the candidate that the Ling family has chosen. If Young Master Lan's body stats exceeds his, then we shall have no objection to Young Master Lan inheriting."

He turned to glance at the military representative. "I'm sure the military also wishes for the best talent for cultivation, and would not want to blindly take someone in based on blood."

The military representative just smiled slightly and said nothing, giving no indication of their stance one way or another.

Ling Suren had not expected outright vocal support from the military anyway; all he needed was this sort of ambiguous acceptance. He once again turned to Lan Luofeng, this time with a trace of self-satisfaction in his eyes.

Lan Luofeng smiled a small mocking smile. It looked like her decision to seal Ling Lan's assessment results was just another weakness to exploit from the perspective of the Ling family. Fortunately, chamberlain Ling Qin had predicted this move from them and had already made the appropriate arrangements.

"You dare to covet Ling Xiao's military privileges?" Lan Luofeng swept her gaze around the room. Among the visitors, there were quite a few bystanders enjoying the show, but there were also some who looked genuinely concerned for her. This trial was not without its benefits — she could finally discern the true colours of some of the people around her. "Although Major General Ling Xiao is dead, his orphaned child should not be allowed to be bullied by his own family clan. I'm sure that the military would have something to say about this?"

The military representative chose to ignore what Lan Luofeng was implying, saying with a smile, "Madam Ling, please be assured. Putting Major General Ling Xiao's military benefits aside, Ling Lan will not lose out on any benefits accorded to the children of martyrs. The military will not let a hero's child be bullied."

Although what the military representative had to say sounded pretty, the connotation was that the military benefits would go to the candidate that best suited the military's purposes.

Lan Luofeng glanced at the government official, but he merely smiled without adding a word to the discussion. It seemed like he was content to just observe the proceedings without interfering.

Oh, Ling Xiao, this is the military you dedicated your life to, the country you gave your life to protect — did you ever dream that they would betray your trust and abandon your flesh and blood for their own interests? Are you regretting your choice now in the afterlife?

Lan Luofeng could not suppress the contempt she felt any longer. She said, "So this is the government. So this is the military... I finally understand."

Perhaps sensing the deep mockery behind Lan Luofeng's words, the smiles on the two representatives' faces froze.

"If that's how it is, I, Lan Luofeng, would like a promise from the government and the military. Regardless of whether my child Ling Lan inherits his father Ling Xiao's military

privileges, he shall be emancipated from the Ling family, and shall no longer be connected to the Ling family in any way.”

The two representatives looked at each other, but it was the military representative who spoke up in the end. “What do you mean?”

Lan Luofeng smiled chillingly. “If Ling Lan inherits, all the other Ling family members must immediately leave Doha and go back to where they came from... If Ling Lan does not inherit, Ling Lan and I shall leave Doha instead. No matter what the outcome, the both of us shall no longer be part of the Ling family.”

For a long while, Lan Luofeng had already intended to settle things with the Ling family. If she could clear this forever with one stroke, her efforts in securing this situation would be well worth it.

Ling Suren’s face twisted in anger. “Lan Luofeng, have you gone mad?”

“Why, Uncle Ren, are you afraid? Afraid that the child you chose will not be able to beat Ling Lan?” Lan Luofeng was all smiles as she faced Ling Suren, one of her hands lightly covering Ling Lan’s tiny chubby fingers. This was probably what a mother’s strength referred to — Lan Luofeng had never felt as steady as she was now.

Ling Suren was speechless. Although he had been full of confidence just a while back, Lan Luofeng’s aggressive manner had shaken him, and doubt started to creep into his mind. He was afraid to take the risk.

As if sensing Ling Suren’s hesitation, another Ling family elder who was standing beside him whispered, “Beware a bluff.”

Hearing this, Ling Suren centred himself. That’s right, Lan Luofeng must be bluffing out of desperation. If Ling Lan’s body stats and potential were really that impressive, why would Lan Luofeng seal away the records? After all, the higher Ling Lan’s potential, the more secure his inheritance — a smart person would never seal away those records, but would instead shout it from the rooftops to drive away other challengers.