

Heavenly Star 71

Chapter 71: Literary Competition - A Dream Remembering the Past Part 2

Am I going to give this to him...but this is such a personal object. If I offer it for him to use, people might think...

Still undecided, she felt the demons and gods take hold of her once more, and her voice came out in a low whisper, "I... I have one."

All the gazes darted to Hua Shuirou's direction, most of them amazed yet puzzled. Because for a woman to allow the use of her flute, it could have no other meaning.

Could it be that this young lady of the Hua family was actually...

Ye Wuchen's mouth twitched upward over so slightly, then stepped forward to stand in front of Hua Shuirou. Hua Shuirou was already holding out a short bluish-green flute in her hands, the jade material sparkling delicately in her small white hands.

As Ye Wuchen approached, a heady spinning sensation hits her, causing Hua Shuirou to lower her head, hands trembling as she held up the flute. Ye Wuchen takes it with a smile, his hand lightly brushing against her smooth palm. Hua Shuirou quickly withdraws her hand as if shocked by a current. She kept her hands tightly together between her knees, her face red as this was the first time somebody touched her hands aside from her relatives. She would have a restless night, berating herself for allowing something so improper.

"I am eternally grateful to receive this from such a beautiful woman." Ye Wuchen said smiling as he returned to the stage. As he admired the flute in his hand he said softly, "Green jade is pure and limpid, as gentle and smooth as a woman's skin and able to keep the fragrance of a woman's lips. Forgive me for being rough with it."

His teasing words left the entire audience dumbfounded, Hua Shuirou let out a small squeak, burying her head deep in her chest, ashamed and wishing for a way to escape.

Lin Xiao's expression changed again and again, ultimately his forced smile had completely disappeared. The one whom he cherished and is engaged to had given a man her own flute in front of everybody... furthermore to the same man who had beaten him in every competition so far. This was the equivalent of stabbing a sharp blade through his heart, causing him to snarl loudly in order to vent out his pain.

"A short flute, are you sure?" Long Yin asked.

Long and short flutes, although played similarly, with regard to quality, the short flute is inferior. It would also be difficult for someone accustomed to a long flute to adapt to a short flute, and vice versa.

Ye Wuchen nodded and smiled. "This tune... Is for myself."

Playing for himself—Lin Xiao had dedicated the tone to his deceased mother. One played with a long flute, the other a short flute. By paying for his deceased mother, his filial piety had influenced people to some degree. Playing for oneself seemed relatively dull in comparison. Whether it was in the opinion of the audience or the type of flute, Ye Wuchen was clearly at a disadvantage.

Ye Wuchen lightly pressed the flute to his lips, a pleasing scent slowly entered his nostrils. Hua Shuirou covered her face, heat emanated from her in an alarming degree. That is also where she puts her lips, now it's... she couldn't think further. For her who had never been out of her chambers, aside from her own father she has never spent time with another man. She has never broached these topics of love it has become too much for her heart to bear. For her, this kind of "intimate" touch can only be done between a married couple.

Tonight, she would not be able to sleep peacefully.

The audience waited for a while, yet no sound could be heard. Ye Wuchen only stood there silently like a statue. Eventually, he closed his eyes. In an instant, the people felt a change in the energy surrounding him. For the duration of the silence, a faint depressing emotion generated from the bottom of their hearts. It grew more and more heavy, until the feeling burdened them like heavy iron weights to the point where it was becoming difficult to breathe.

Intense sorrow, much too difficult to bear...

A small sound echoed, feather light, as light as the breeze slowly blowing past. Yet as every note passed through ears, hearts and lips grew quiet...even the whole world was wrapped in silence. No other sound could be heard, only the lingering vestiges of a note long since passed.

And yet another brief note sounded, moving the hearts of all who heard, leaving them trembling in this one peaceful moment.

The tempo gradually accelerated, as did the feeling in their hearts, speeding up until the notes became a heartbreaking melancholic tune. The sound is still very light, as if the touch of a cool breeze will break it, but rang clear all the same. It does not resonate in their ears but in the deepest part of their hearts, it stopped their breaths for fear of disturbing the melody.

A bright and beautiful day, but a weak and miserable wind. A small plant sprouted from the earth. It appears to have accumulated so much happiness, so many hopes. In the middle of warmth, the plant gradually grow, showing off to the world its life and vitality, but the wind... still as miserable as it was. From time to time, the plant would quietly tremble in the center of this wind.

One day, black clouds covered the sky, pitch black and dense containing terrible amounts of pressure, pressed down making it hard to breathe. Finally, a clap of thunder sounded, malevolent lightning slashed through the curtain of clouds, a downpour of heavy rain, a devastating wind blew, heartlessly ravaging the soft and immature plant. Hitting it relentlessly, it did not collapse, still unyieldingly facing the sky, standing its body upright. No matter how the wind howled, how pitiless the rain was, it still clenched tight its jaws because it would not fall.

The people's hearts clenched tightly, aching.

After a night of wind and rain, it became incomparably weak, but it did not fall. Still facing the sky, reveling in its hard won victory.

However, it was a short respite. It continued to mature and grow, until one day, the violent rainstorm returned. It used all its strength to prop up its young and tender body, supporting itself, resisting still...

The corners of Ye Wuchen's eyes grew slightly wet, but that was of no consequence. In a distant memory, a vague childhood memory, he saw his three-year-old self trying to gnash his teeth shut. He exerted too much effort, his gums bled, face distorted, his body trembling violently. That is the kind of suffering he had experienced, the pain that he alone had endured, more painful than being pricked by a thousand knives, ten thousand...But this pain he would endure quietly, he could not let mother know, could not let mother worry, could not fall himself...Because this is the hope that he had been waiting for for a very long time.

Mother...Who are you? Where are you right now? Why am I yearning for you so? But the yearning brings warmth to my heart, the warmth that has caused me to weep.

And where is that hope now? Why am I unable to find it no matter how hard I try?

And to the me at that time, why do you have to endure that kind of pain every month, is it the same kind of pain I had half month ago ---- No! They are not the same, they are different, the pain from the past is much, much deeper.

What kind of past did I have?

Who am I?

Chapter 72: Literary Competition - A Dream Remembering the Past Part 3

Rain stormed heavily, again and again, more and more violent. Each time, the sprout feels like dying, but it stood up again—stubbornly—in the end. It would look up to the sky and howl with laughter, mocking God for being unable to take its life.

Dripping...

The sound of teardrops falling; when did it start? Tears have been falling, forming small streams and flowing with the music. The melancholic tones caused all those who heard it to tremble heavily, inside at first then gradually transforming into several sharp daggers, stabbing mercilessly into the deepest part of their hearts. The pain it caused penetrated to their very soul that even it trembled from the pain.

To have experienced the same kind of desperation and courage of the young and tender soul, of not giving up. Their hearts, more in tune now, resounded strongly with it. If they were to ask themselves, would they be able to bear that pain? They might have chosen death over all the torment, to free themselves from pain. But that young and tender soul endured it again and again, maturing with steadfast tenacity and without thoughts of sharing the burden. Watching his suffering, they began to feel ashamed, the pain they have experienced was nothing as compared to the pain he had endured. And now he was tougher and stronger for it, driving deeper into their shame.

Eventually there came an end to all the pain... Because suddenly it went to sleep, sound and steady. In the middle of the darkness and silence, it lied dormant, for a year... two years.... ten years.

Barely a minute later, the flute played its note. The moment the jade flute left his lips, sorrow flashed through his eyes, but it disappeared in the blink of an eye. In the next second, his face was already full of smiles.

Incomparable silence invaded the scene, even the wind seemed to hide his existence, neither a whistle or blow to be heard. He made no comment on the atmosphere but only stood still, looking at faces filled with tears. Among them, young men and women alike, high-ranking military officials, children, old men with canes, even Hua Zhentian and Emperor Long Yin.

Clap! Clap! Clap! Clap!

Ringed applause broke through the desperate and sorrowful air, and even Long Yin joined in. The applause had rapidly grown in its intensity, mimicking the crashing of waves. Mixed in the uproar were the sound of young women sobbing. Inviting dismay among the imperial bodyguards of the Tian Long Imperial Institute, as well as causing passer-bys to come to a stop and investigate the ruckus.

The applause from the Heavenly Star Continent were unlike those from the modern era of China which were of little value. Only during the moment where their emotions have reached their highest points would they deign to give applause since they use it as a means to release their own emotions. The intensity of their emotions would need to be...like the time that Tian Long Nation had defeated the Gale Nation. Ye Wuchen's astonishing painting skill and Lin Xiao's magnificent flute playing did not even garner such applause. Just this one time, they dedicated that applause to the tune from Ye Wuchen's flute.

Numerous people attempted to stop their tears but were unable and multitudes more clapped their hands while sobbing quietly. They were able to genuinely feel the so-called tune that could touch hearts. However short, this had already caused them to feel desperate and heart wrenching sorrow.

Wang Wenshu fell on Ye Wei in an embrace, her tears made a large wet spot on his chest, she spoke in between tears, "My pitiful Chen-er...his heart must have suffered a great deal. I have failed to be a good mother. In the future... what should I do to make it up to my child..."

Ye Wei slowly patted her back without a word, only lifting his head trying to blink the water away from his eyes. In the battlefield, he'd been seriously injured numerous times and had his fair share of near death experiences, yet he survived. He had never shed any tears before, even as he watched his comrades fall in front of him. At those times, his heart had felt like it was being cut apart by a knife, but still he did not cry. Ten years ago his mother, the one whom he depended on all his life had died due to sickness. He knelt on the ground for five days without eating or drinking until finally collapsing, from the beginning until the end, he still did not cry. He was the staunch son of the Ye family. He has only ever shed blood throughout his life, never tears.

But today, no matter how hard he tried to restrain himself, drop after drop poured from his eyes and slowly rolled down his face. His heart ached. He never knew how painful heartache could be. Nevertheless the source of his pain was actually from the sound played from a flute, rather than from the person who played the flute. If he had not experienced it first hand, he would never have met with this kind of heartbreaking sorrow.

Chen-er... What have you been through?

Hua Shuirou covered her face, tears falling like raindrops on a pear blossom, even her handkerchief was completely soaked. Looking through her tear stained eyes at the man who held her flute, she had an urge to dash to his side and give him a hug. Even Hua Zhentian beside her was rubbing his eyes,

mumbling to himself, "This tune is really quite demonic, really demonic... Fuck it, even I cannot withstand it. I'm losing my mind, it's similar to the time I lost my wife."

In the corner, a trembling body voiced, "Chen-er... Can you tell your grandpa... what is this tune called?"

In the entire area, the only one who remained composed was Ye Wuchen. He answered while smiling. "This performance was impromptu. I have yet to think of a name. Though, it doesn't matter if it has no name, because after playing, I have already forgotten its notes."

For such an astonishing tune to have actually been spontaneous...This really is a very amazing talent. Only the highest of artistic attainments could make it possible. They were surprised once more, surprised in the most extreme way. Perhaps if they combined all the surprises they have ever had before, they still could not compare to that which they experienced today. The original intention of coming here was to enjoy some competitions, to find some entertainment. But the witnesses today unexpectedly experienced one surprise after another. They worried that this might just be a dream, considering the events still seemed so unreal; that once they woke up, everything would disappear.

Some people from far off places sighed endlessly as they did not attach much excitement in Tian Long City, but as it turns out, coming to Tian Long City was a very wise decision .

"No! This tune actually described the history of Heavenly Star as it has never been done before. Even though you have forgotten, your grandpa has remembered by heart each exact note. Grandpa believes that everybody here will carry the tune in their hearts for as long as they live. Although it is impossible for anyone to come close to your performance, it will surely leave mark for the generations to come. Every flute lover will come to know of its existence as the highest peak of the flute. Chen-er, please do grandpa a favor. If this tune will have no name, it will be one of my greatest regrets in life." Wang Bo became more and more excited as he spoke, ending in a desperate plea. As Long Yin's teacher, he was of the mind that his pool of knowledge was as wide as the ocean, but today, his heart had been opened to how vast oceans really are by just one person, by his daughter's son—Ye Wuchen.

"If that's the case, then let's name it A Dream Remembering the Past" Ye Wuchen said. He did not lie, as after he played the last note, he had already completely forgotten the entire tune. If this was just a dream, then what use was it to trouble one's mind. Since it is the past, then let it remain past. He himself at that time was just like that small plant which almost died young and prematurely during the violent wind and rainstorm. Today, he swore that he will become a boundless tree proudly overseeing the whole world.

Forget it... forget that indistinct past, forget the vague memories, forget the pain. When the day comes that he had sufficient strength, that lost memory of the past will reappear in front of his eyes once more.

Chapter 73: To Bestow Marriage

"A Dream Remembering the Past...Wonderful! That's a great name!" Wang Bo exclaimed loudly in admiration, then hurriedly got up. Facing the emperor, he clasped his hands together. "Your Majesty, please excuse this old man, I have need to go ahead. If I do not take note of this tune, I will become restless."

After speaking, he hurriedly stepped out without waiting for the emperor's response. This old man's footsteps indicated him speeding past everything and his attendant became extremely frightened by his actions.

After bidding farewell to Wang Bo, Long Yin turned around and carefully observed Ye Wuchen. He sighed and sadly remarked, "I just realized today, that I've been living a meaningless life. Before leaving the palace today, I did not know what a true painting or a true flute song was. Wuchen, you really are... a magnificent talent!"

"Your Majesty, you are overestimating me. All of this was made possible under the guidance of my teacher. Without him, there will be no Wuchen." Ye Wuchen answered. He carefully placed the jade flute inside his sleeve with absolutely no intention to return it to Hua Shuirou.

Hua Zhentian had witnessed the action and suddenly gave him a bull-like stare. He then spoke to his daughter, "My beloved daughter, do you still want that flute back? The young fellow even dares to take ownership of one of my daughter's possessions. Let's see if I don't...a few moments ago my tears almost fell. That oppressive feeling in my heart makes me want to violently beat this kid up."

"No, daddy... don't ask me, don't talk to me..." Hua Shuirou covered her tear-stained face, shaking her head in dismay. She was feeling...like a complete failure. That's right, a complete failure. She had done something unforgivable, something she wouldn't even dare to think of. Moreover, every incident involved that person.

Hua Zhentian scratched his head. "Okay, I won't say any more."

"Hoho! If not for your own natural talent... even a teacher with heavenly skills would not be able to produce such an outstanding disciple." he then turned to face Lin Xiao, "Lin Xiao, your artistic attainment with the flute was really an eye-opener and you did not over exaggerate your skills. But the winner for this stage is still Wuchen, do you not agree?"

In middle of A Dream Remembering the Past Lin Xiao felt like he had been startled into losing his soul. There and then he was certain of yet another defeat. Even the very idea of having the best and most unbeatable flute playing... even that was crushed.

His face paled at remembering what he had said before. Flute was the other half of his life, this was a fact. Now that he lost, does it mean that he must abandon this other half of his life?

"You must have absolute self-confidence else you wouldn't make light of your life and bet it on this irrelevant competition, more so on a bet that has no payback. Only a fool can do such things..." thinking of what Ye Wuchen had said to him previously, his heart trembled. From the very beginning, the only thing that he had prided himself with—his incomparable skill with a flute—was nothing but a joke. That self-confident statement that he had made was yet another slap to his face.

What kind of person is he....

Those currently looking at him...were few, a small number, most of them had expressions of pity, comfort, and compassion. His own father and grandfather were looking at him full of disbelief, as if they were the same as he, unable to believe with their own eyes that someone like this person existed.

Before, he was an eye-catching star, everywhere he went his light shined radiantly, catching people's attention. Now, he was still a star, one even brighter than before, but Wuchen was a sun, whose light superseded his own. When standing side by side, his own light shamefully appeared dimmer.

Why was this not a dream?

Since I, Lin Xiao, exists, why should there be a Ye Wuchen?

"I'm convinced! Convinced and ready to concede. I, Lin Xiao, in my twenty years of existence, have been convinced by a person for the first time. From now on, "Tian Long's Number One Outstanding Talent" and "Tian Long Number One Gifted Scholar" - both these titles no longer belong to me, instead, they now belong to you—Ye Wuchen."

The moment he turned around to face Ye Wuchen, his facial expression was serene, even showing a faint smile. Ye Wuchen slightly raised his brows, thinking to himself, 'Self-restraint is not a bad thing to have. But in comparison, what I admire even more is your patience.'

"Haha! Lin Xiao, although you lost, you are still considered a rare and outstanding talent of Tian Long Nation as well as the entire Heavenly Star Continent. And your high degree of forbearance is also rare. You are still the pride of my Tian Long Nation." Long Yin praised, then his face stopped smiling to look serious before he continued, "But, as I heard a while ago, if you are defeated by Wuchen, you will stop using the flute from then on. I will not allow it! Such extraordinary talent should not be wiped out by a single statement. Not only will I decline it, but everyone from Tian Long will also not approve. So, I command you to continue as usual, keeping the flute by your side and playing everyday. If you do not obey, I will punish you!"

Lin Xiao's expression went stiff, then his whole body trembled as his emotions stirred. All of a sudden he kneeled and kowtowed at the emperor. "Lin Xiao thanks Your Majesty for your grace! Lin Xiao will certainly bear in mind every word from Your Majesty!"

"Haha, okay, get up. This is not a palace, don't just kneel everywhere."

Lin Xiao got up, his face showed nothing but happiness. Ye Wuchen smiled discreetly and thought to himself, 'If I were the emperor, I would surely do the same. If I weren't able to make use of such an opportunity, then it would be useless being an emperor.'

Long Yin then turned to face Ye Wuchen again, still smiling. "Wuchen, your performance today really surprised me! At the same time, I'm really glad. If not for the competition today, or the appearance of this person called Leng Ya from the Gale Nation, I might not have known that my Tian Long Nation had someone like you. I won't let this kind of talent slip by. I bestow you the title of Third Rank Marquis. Tomorrow there will be a morning assembly in Tian Long Ceremonial Court. You must attend!"

These words from Long Yin dropped as heavy thunder...Third Rank Marquis at his young age? Perhaps the emperor has gone insane!

Even Ye Wuchen's father, Ye Wei, who performed outstanding military service and was well-known by everybody as a powerful general, was simply a fifth rank marquis. Although the order of feudal nobility was just an empty title for people in Tian Long Nation, holding no actual power, it still symbolized honor and the emperor's special favor. Anywhere they go, they would carry the reputation. This third rank

noble position caused princes and dukes to work hard all their lives just to earn it. This marquis position can only be earned by being a close relative of the emperor's.

"Your Majesty, this might seem a little inappropriate." A person dared to speak out. Everybody looked at the direction of the voice. It was actually the Minister of Literary Education's Yu Wenli.

"What is inappropriate?" Long Yin said slightly annoyed.

Yu Wenli answered, "Master Ye has a wonderful talent, and he is also a descendant of the God of Sword. Based on my judgement, he is fit to be bestowed the title of First Rank Minister. But Ye Wuchen he is still very young and has not made any previous accomplishments for our Tian Long Nation. His father, General Ye is already a fifth rank imperial marquis, if this kind of announcement reached the public, it might cause some criticism as well as some unfavorable statements against the royal family."

People nodded in agreement. Ye Wuchen's talent had really convinced the people that he was as close to a celestial being as possible. But to appoint a position to him based only on his talents; his lack of experience and contribution would cause some criticism. Long Yin laughed out loud. "If I am to betroth my beloved daughter Princess Fei Huang to Wuchen and let her get married by the age of 16, would anyone have any objections?"

Upon saying these words, the entire crowd went silent. The Lin family turned green, while the Ye family was overjoyed.

Chapter 74: I Am Not a Nobleman

"This..." Yu Wenli got distracted at first, but then responded immediately, facing Ye Wuchen while cupping his fist on the other hand, "Young Master Ye, General Ye, Old General Ye... congratulations! Such huge favors have never been seen in Tian Long Nation since its inception. It shall truly cause much envy from all!"

To betroth a princess... such a huge matter was decided by Long Yin in just one statement in this particular occasion, and it didn't even involve either the opinion of Princess Fei Huan or the decision of Ye Wuchen. If he gets married with a princess, then he will become a part of the royal family - to bestow the title of Third Rank Marquis cannot be unusual in this case. Who can ever object this time around? This time even a fool would be able to see that the Emperor has given Ye Wuchen excessive favor, who would dare to object?

"This old servant thanks Your Majesty for your excessive grace!" Ye Nu yelled excitedly.

"This humble servant thanks Your Majesty for the generosity towards Chen-er; Ye family will be indebted to the kindness of Your Majesty! It will be forever engraved in our hearts!" Ye Wei also had the same degree of excitement. In those days, even with both his father's accomplishment and his own ability combined were not sufficient enough to make the late Emperor betroth him to a princess, and yet his son was able to easily earn such a favor. What else could possibly cause them to be discontented.

Ye Nu and Ye Wei were preparing to strike by leaving their seats and performing the kneeling rites, but Long Yin waves his hand dismissively and said, "Exempted. Wuchen must be the unique outstanding talent bestowed upon the Tian Long Nation by the heavens, how could I possibly treat him badly. Wuchen, are you pleased with my rewards?"

“Wuchen is extremely pleased, I thank Your Majesty for your profound kindness!” Ye Wuchen answered patiently without any arrogance. However, deep inside he thought scornfully: What can I do if I am not pleased, he already made the decision before asking me, isn't it too late for me to have a choice? Would you take it back? That Princess Fei Huang... could it be the same as that Long Huang-er which I unfortunately bumped into that day on the main street?

“Hoho, great. Lin Xiao plans to let you take the title ‘Tian Long’s Number One Gifted Scholar’ and ‘Tian Long’s Number One Outstanding Talent’, will you accept these?”

“I can't accept them!” Ye Wuchen answered without the slightest amount of hesitation.

“Oh?” this answer was out of everybody's expectation, Long Yin asked in doubt, “Why is that so? Don't tell me that within the Tian Long Nation, there's someone who could surpass your youthful talent?”

“Because Wuchen does not need these kinds of titles. If Wuchen were number one in Tian Long, then even if there's no such title, Wuchen would still be Tian Long's Number One. If Wuchen were not the number one in Tian Long, even if there were a title, he would still not be Tian Long's number one. The true number one should rely solely on his own abilities, and he is not someone to be named out for. Besides, there's no number one in this world. The so-called number one is just someone who had surpassed the previous person on the top. If one day there exists a person to whom nobody would ever be able to surpass, then that means our Tian Long Nation has reached an era of deterioration.”

Long Yin's look went sluggish, people were one by one caught up in their own contemplation. Suddenly, Long Yin said flatly, “Good, what you said is quite right. The true number one didn't arise from a mere title. If nobody will be able to surpass the current number one, then my Tian Long Nation might actually be headed towards deterioration because a nation cannot forever keep its best but rather lose them to someone better each time!”

Not keep the best, but to get better and better... how could it be so similar to a recurring phrase from deep within my memory?

“I will agree not to give you these kinds of titles, but I believe, from this day forward, numerous people will certainly call you this way out of their own volition. I will not be able to control their mouths, Hoho!” said Long Yin, smiling while he caressed his beard.

“Wuchen thanks Your Majesty again for your grace. However, please forgive Wuchen for making another request.”

“Oh? What request, it won't hurt telling.” Long Yin said nonchalantly.

Ye Wuchen looked at the direction of Leng Ya, who had been sitting in a corner as still as a cold statue, then said, “Now Wuchen had luckily surpassed Master Lin, and is also considered to have given brother Leng Yan his freedom. Just in time, Wuchen had returned home not long ago. Our courtyard needs a protector, and this person has rather extraordinary capabilities, with an age similar to mine, knowledge on assassination as well as capability in hiding and tracking. He would definitely be suitable for that duty, if you would kindly please give us your permission, Your Majesty.”

“Okay...” Long Yin nodded slowly, “Based on this statement that I've made, if you defeated Lin Xiao, then I would let this person go and treat him as though he never existed. Now he has earned his

freedom, and he was probably not a person from the Tian Long Nation. Whether to let him stay or not, I will just let it be and shall not interrupt. You persuade him on your own, if he agrees then that is good, if not...”

“Wuchen will not force him.” Ye Wuchen said seriously, but deep inside he sneered, “This Leng Ya has really caused some restrained fear from you? You still have the intentions to kill him, and not to mention, it must be because of his dreadful air and the Shattering Wind Blade in his hands.”

Ye Wuchen and Long Yin were able to see that the current Leng Ya was like a wolf that had just come out of his lair. With the vicious nature of a wolf yet physically without its sharp claws and scary teeth, he even doesn't have patience or the ability to cover himself up. If there comes a day that he truly became hungry, he would be every enemy's worst nightmare.

This kind of conclusion was not difficult to obtain... because of the air of death that his breath exuded.

This kind of person... if he were truly uncontrollable then he might as well be eliminated as soon as possible.

Up to this moment, the whole stage finally closed its curtain to signify the end of the competition. As Long Yin's usual practice, he insipidly announced the outstanding talent that he had selected for this event, after which he returned to the palace. Of course, among the names that he had mentioned were Lin Xiao's, but it hadn't contained Ye Wuchen's name because. After all, he had only set his foot during the last part of the event, making the closing part of the competition much more interesting.

The moment Long Yin left, the people eventually began to stir up some rebellious acts without much elegance. The entire Ye family were surrounded by numerous people - receiving unending words of both flattery and praise. Ye Wuchen had already expected such things would happen, and prior to the departure of Long Yin, he had been hiding in a corner together with Ning Xue, after which he had already escaped.

“Master Ye.”

Upon hearing this voice, Ye Wuchen turned around, it was actually Lin Xiao, the one who had been observing his every move.

“Master Lin, what can I do for you?”

“Master Ye are you interested in the young lady of the Hua family?” Lin Xiao asked.

Ye Wuchen laughed and said, “That's right. Because of young lady Hua's beauty, that all the men of Tian Long Nation was interested in her was of no surprise. I like her, and that is normal.”

“But, young lady Hua is already engaged to me, and after all these years, no one has yet to dare mention any marriage proposal to the Hua family.” Lin Xiao said knitting his brows.

“Oh, if I'm not mistaken, Master Lin, you had mentioned this before: Beautiful girls, gentlemen's desire, young lady Hua has not yet entered the gates of the Lin family, so any other man could have the opportunity to seek after her. Could it be that you have already forgotten your own words?” Ye Wuchen said, beaming with a smile.

Lin Xiao's face went stiff, he shook his head and said: "Master Ye, I know I'm unable to persuade you, but you must know that a nobleman never takes away what another person loves..."

"You are a nobleman, but I am not. To be a nobleman is very tiring, one cannot do anything unrestrained, and one has to restrict one's own words and actions each time, taking control of one's own bearing, sometimes even having to endure humiliations. Why should I choose to be a nobleman? Whether or not young lady Hua is your one true love I don't care, I only know that..." Ye Wuchen paused, then said these words, giving a slight pause upon mentioning each word: "I... desire... to... pursue... her!"

Chapter 75: You are Still Very Inexperienced

"You... you have gone too far!" Lin Xiao finally got angry, even a clay buddha had its limits. If he could still hold back his anger... that really means his shrewdness has reached higher planes, or that he was not man enough.

"Master Lin do you really have no confidence in yourself?" Ye Wuchen asked laughingly.

"No confidence? Hmph! I, Lin Xiao, have a six year engagement with Hua Shuirou. The people of Tian Long know of it, having been confirmed and approved by the Emperor as well as General Hua. She will enter my family and become Lin Xiao's wife." Lin Xiao said heavily.

"Oh, since you already have such confidence in marrying Hua Shuirou, you don't have to personally approach me about it. You can completely treat me as someone with wishful thinking who is not worth your attention, or deem it as a big joke. Isn't that more interesting? Master Lin, you cannot say yes to one thing and actually mean another thing, other people may look down upon you." Ye Wuchen pondered.

Lin Xiao's face became gloomy, unable to answer. If another person had done the same, he would have done as Ye Wuchen had said, ignore it... but as the offender is Ye Wuchen, the threat he brings is not small. Even now, standing beside him as his defeated opponent, he has that unscalable feeling of heaviness and frustration.

He gritted his teeth and spoke no further, turning around to leave.

When his shadow disappeared past the corner, the frivolous smile on Ye Wuchen's face suddenly disappeared, replaced by his usual indifferent expression. In front of others, he was used to wearing a mask, though it was uncomfortable and he preferred his natural self. He asked in a low voice, "Xue-er, he and I held no grudges in the past, moreover he is a true nobleman. Did I treat him too badly?"

Ning Xue lightly shook her head. "I am unsure. I only know that everything you did was right and you have your own reasons. You shouldn't feel guilty."

Ye Wuchen crouched down, touching her face and smiled. "I'm not guilty, just somewhat troubled because there's nothing between us. The only problem is his position and my identity right now. Our families are destined to be enemies, and I've merely chosen him to be my first stepping stone."

Ning Xue nodded as if she understood, then tightly gripped Ye Wuchen's hands and carefully said, "Brother... do you really like that beautiful sister? Because brother, you are always stealing glances at her, and... and..."

“Yes, I’m somewhat fond of her. An engrossing woman, I won’t let her slip away so easily. She is destined to belong solely to me.” Ye Wuchen said smiling.

“Then...When brother has that pretty sister, will you still have me?” Ning Xue said nervously, her crystal-like eyes unexpectedly began to moisten.

“Foolish girl,” Ye Wuchen touched her little face, laughing, speaking more gently now. “Even if I hate the entire world, I would never abandon my Xue-er. Don’t ask that same foolish question again.”

“Then will it mean that I can still help bathe brother and hug brother while I sleep?”

“If Xue-er is willing, then it would forever be possible.”

Ning Xue eventually turned her tears into laughter, embracing Wuchen’s neck and smiled happily. “I know brother is the best... I was really scared, scared that once brother has that pretty sister, you would start to ignore me.”

“Do you still remember what I told you about such women who are the roots of trouble? They will all be part of my collection. They might be some significant persons or people who need protection. And you, you are the other half of my life.

Ye Wuchen hugged her, then quietly listened to the noises outside which had gradually settled down. The crowd in the plaza were beginning to slowly disperse. He was waiting for someone, and if that person was ignoring him or didn’t have initiative to show himself, then he severely misjudged that person.

Without disappointment, a cold face appeared in the corner, that which belongs to Leng Ya, slowly approaching him. Before he came any closer, Ye Wuchen said flatly, “You don’t have to be thankful, I’m only using you.”

Leng Ya stopped his steps and replied coldly, “I’m here to tell you not to expect any thanks, furthermore, don’t presume that I will be your courtyard bodyguard. Stop meddling in other people’s business!”

After speaking, he turned around, stamping cold and hard as he left.

Ye Wuchen shook his head disappointedly, mumbling, “Originally, I planned to heal your mother’s eyes, but since you didn’t appreciate my kindness, then forget it.”

Leng Ya’s footsteps suddenly stopped, then suddenly like a frantic cheetah dashed back to stand in front of him, both eyes gazing at him like blades, saying each word harshly. “What did you say?”

“Your name is Leng Ya?” Ye Wuchen dodged the question and leisurely asked instead, not even worried about being refused an answer.

“Yes.”

“What is your real name?”

“Leng Ya!”

“Do you need money?”

“.....”

Ye Wuchen looked straight at him. “Shortage of money is not a shameful matter, if you have no money, what will you and your mother eat, wear, and where would you stay?! What would you use to treat your sick mother? This is not something to be embarrassed about. You have already revealed your identity in this competition, that makes it difficult for you to set foot on Tian Long City in the future. Since you are not a citizen of Tian Long Nation, you might not know of the animosity between the people of Tian Long and Gale Nation. When the time comes, what else could you do except to steal and to rob? If you serve my family, at least I can guarantee you and you mother’s safety, as well as heal her illness so that she does not suffer any more hardships. Don’t tell me that for the sake of ridiculous dignity, you would ignore your own mother’s safety? Even resort to foul acts!?”

Leng Ya was immersed in silence and refused to talk. After a long while he said coldly, “If you can really heal my mother’s eyes, then in a year’s time, I’ll do whatever you want!”

“Your mother’s eyes in exchange for a year of service. How about her life?”

Leng Ya startled upon hearing these words, then his eyes showed extreme violence, overflowing with murder.

Ye Wuchen laughed coldly, “Put away your murderous spirit. Even though I’m not a good person, I’m unlikely to use despicable methods like using your mother to threaten you. Let me ask you, if I don’t step forward to help you, what would happen to you?”

“.....”

“Worst case, they will interrogate you about your past and then immediately execute you; best case, you will be imprisoned for life, and they will surely investigate your mother as well. Knowing the emperor’s methods, do you still think you can escape? On the other hand, even if you are released after one or two months of imprisonment, during that time, you will not be available, and your mother will have nobody to rely on. What could she depend on to be able to live?”

Leng Ya’s whole body shook, in an instant he broke into a cold sweat. He tightly clenched his fists as he slightly trembled.

“You are still very inexperienced. You have acceptable skills and explosive strength so you handle matters rudely and impetuously, disregarding the consequences. Excluding the incident today, it’s a mistake on your part, bringing your mother here in Tian Long Nation. If you want to leave the Gale Nation, you may be able to go to the Kui Shui Nation or Cang Lan Nation, just don’t come here to the Tian Long Nation! The hostility between Tian Long Nation and Gale Nation is not something that can be eliminated in the matter of ten years or eight years.”

“.....”

Chapter 76: Ten Years of Loyalty

Ye Wuchen continued, “Originally, the best choice you have is to leave Tian Long Nation together with your mother right away. But it’s too late now, you must be aware. Because of that Shattering Wind Blade of yours, the Emperor isn’t likely to give up, rather it gave rise to his murderous intentions. In a short matter of time, you will be secretly captured and interrogated. Because you own the God of War

Feng Chaoyang's Shattering Wind Blade, you must be related to him. If you are one his relatives, you are suitable to use to blackmail Feng Chaoyang or even become a bargaining chip against the Gale Nation. And if you are not, you will simply be put to death, because your imposing manner is unrestrained. Not having high cultivation, but having a terrifying murderous spirit frightens the Emperor. If you are fully developed but are of no use to him, then he will eliminate you as early as possible, else he will not be able to eat or rest in peace."

Leng Ya kept silent, but was sweating all over. After hearing these words from Ye Wuchen, he then realized his nasty situation.

What he said was right, I'm too inexperienced...

"Well, do you agree to join the Ye family?" Ye Wuchen asked.

"Agreed!"

"Okay, but you do not have the final say on the circumstances. What I want... is ten years! I'll have your ten years of loyalty to compensate for the favor I've given you and your mother. In exchange, your mother will be safe. Do you agree?" Ye Wuchen asked calmly.

"I...am.... willing!"

Almost using the strength of his whole body, Leng Ya forced out those words from the gaps between his gritted teeth.

"Very well." Ye Wuchen nodded in satisfaction, "Your domineering nature, your untouchable ego, and your unrestrainable manner makes me wonder what prominent status you must have held before. You are definitely not the kind of person who is willing to be confined inside a house. This time you responded with difficulty, mostly because of your mother. However, in time, you will find out that you have not made the wrong decision. There will come a day that you'll be qualified to stand behind my back and accept this lifelong honor!"

Leng Ya lifted his head, gazing with the eyes of a hungry eagle observing its prey. At this moment, the man's domineering nature and imposing manner stirred him violently. He had never thought that a man younger than him could have caused him so much emotion and pressure.

"Go ahead and tell me your current residence, tomorrow I shall send people to bring you over. Don't worry, although the emperor might be closely tracking your whereabouts, he likely gave no orders to secretly eliminate you. The matters that he needs to attend to right now..." Ye Wuchen let out a cold smile, "are quite a few."

By the time Leng Ya left, people in the public square finally dispersed. Ye Wuchen carried Ning Xue out of the Imperial Institute discreetly, then promptly hired a palanquin. On the roadside was finally where he felt at ease.

It's really difficult for a well known person to go out, especially someone who had just recently become so.

At this time, Lin Kuang and Lin Zhan were already on their way home, both carrying ugly expressions, and not making any remarks. Ye Wuchen not only amazed the world with brilliant feats, but also

insulted the entire Lin family from top to the bottom. Several of those humiliations had been provoking, as if telling them they “got what he deserved”. Every time he argued, he was left speechless and needed to hold back anger and shame. Right now, he recalled everything calmly, only to realize that, from the beginning, the entire Lin family had been led by the nose by Ye Wuchen. Every word and every reaction had been anticipated by him beforehand... after which he struck back tenfold.

After thinking about this, they both glanced at each other and shivered all over.

“That dreadful scheme... no wonder he had endured patiently for the entirety of sixteen years.” Lin Kuang sighed.

He couldn’t believe that Ye Wuchen had been a loser for sixteen years, then became an incomparable genius within a year after he was lost. He believed resolutely that the previous sixteen years had been a ruse so that people would ignore him, developing himself rapidly during that time.

“Grandpa, Father!”

“Your child has brought you humiliation.” Lin Xiao ran up to their backs, showing a sad face.

“Victory and defeat is a common place in a military family, Xiao-er. Don’t blame it on yourself, it’s because of...Haaaah.” Lin Zhan sighed heavily, although he was also astonished by the talents of Ye Wuchen, he refused to say any words to praise the opponent. Today his brilliant feats amazed the world, and the rewards received from the emperor had made all the people shift their attention to Ye family, forming a crowd around them as the Emperor left. And the Lin family aside from their “allies”, were not paid any attention, totally desolate in a corner.

All because of Ye Wuchen.

“Grandpa, Father, in a week Shuirou of the Hua family will turn sixteen. According to the arrangement years ago, there should be a formal engagement party before we get married the following day. I hope we can make a public announcement on this, for the whole city to know. It will be best if we can make them discuss it as often as possible.” Lin Xiao said seriously. This act will not only place pressure on the Hua family, but also make Ye family unable to put a step forward. If the whole city was made aware, should the Hua family back out, they will be despised throughout Tian Long City.

“Xiao-er, are you afraid?” Lin Kuang said furrowing his brows.

“Yes. Right now, I’m very afraid because the pressure he poses is quite huge. Furthermore, Hua Shuirou’s actions today indicated that she is somehow starting to like Ye Wuchen. Or else, based on her character, she wouldn’t have done such actions.” Lin Xiao said painfully.

“A real man of character will not be tossed out by a woman. Furthermore, he will be a tire because of a woman!” Lin Kuang said.

“However, this also relates to a man’s dignity! I, Lin Xiao, have been glorious for half a lifetime, I have no intention of becoming a laughingstock. Moreover, having Hua Shuirou is equivalent of having the entire Hua family. If the Ye family makes their move, and should they succeed... Grandpa, Father, will you be willing to let such a thing happen? And... I’m already deeply in love with her, if I lost her, I will suffer for the rest of my life” said Lin Xiao, his face miserable.

This was the first time Lin Kuang and Lin Zhan had seen such painful and alarmed expressions on the face of Lin Xiao, who they had been really proud of. Although he always remained calm, the shock he received today was indeed too much. For a person who had been used to standing high above others, who was used to flattery and admiration, he often could confidently say that he didn't care about fame or being lonely. However, once he was bested by another, he lost his head out of fear and tried with all his might to regain his previous place. This is similar to those children of families who were used to their ordinary life, but if there came a day wherein they were no longer wealthy, they would tend to expend all their efforts to climb upwards to seek riches and honor. It's because when one already holds a position, one would often boast shamelessly.

And if a woman who originally belonged to him got snatched away by another person before the marriage, then that would be more painful than killing him.

"What you said is right, even if you didn't mention it, your grandpa and I will surely do so tomorrow. Let's continue the discussion at home."

Chapter 77: The So-Called Method of Anointing One's Head with the Purest Powers Part 1

Tian Long's weather remained fair as the carriage of Ye Wuchen leisurely returned to the house of Ye, upon entering the door, the new arrivals were watched attentively by more than ten pairs of eyes at the same time. This included the guard who normally gazed fixedly and even the hidden guard, all of them used their peripheral vision to observe him, their gazes extremely bewildered, as if this were their first time meeting the young master.

"... Did it really spread that fast!? Don't tell me that the news moves faster than me?" Ye Wuchen muttered quietly to himself.

The rumors regarding the young master of Ye has been spreading throughout the Tian Long City at a surprising speed... against Lin Xiao in a martial skills competition and two literary skills competition, all resulting to victory! Included among these is the victory over the Hua family's master through Wuchen's wisdom, and craftily winning over the president of the Imperial Institute with a god-like, astonishing painting Twin Lotus Flower on One Stalk as well as an impromptu tune of A Dream Remembering the Past causing thousands of people to spill their tears. Moreover, he is also a descendant of the God of Sword, and even the Emperor respected him as an incomparable genius, bestowing him with the position of Third Rank Marquis on the spot and then betrothing him to Princess Fei Huang... these surprising rumors had arrived in succession. If an ordinary person were to speak of it, it would only be treated as complete nonsense, but the ones to spread these matters... It can be said that if they were to stamp their feet, they could cause a part of the earth to shake; if they were the ones to make such claims, how could other people not believe them?

"Young master, master has instructed us to inform you to please immediately proceed to the meeting hall once you have arrived." Seeing him back, the old servant promptly greeted him in welcome.

"Oh, got it." Ye Wuchen nodded, then headed towards the direction of the meeting hall. The many pairs of eyes followed him along with his every move. In the past, although they were servants of Ye family, they slightly despised and loathed this young master who was once an extremely weak person, but now roams aimlessly after returning home and relied on his power to bully other young masters. This time though, their gazes only held shock and disbelief.

Inside the bright and spacious meeting hall, the entire Ye family was present, including Ye Wuyun with smiles on his face. Once Ye Wuchen entered, Ye Nu who had been laughing very loudly stopped short, then said in a low voice, "Chen-er, why don't you come in, then answer us truthfully!"

Ye Wuchen sat on the chair beside Wang Wenshu, placing Ning Xue on his lap, his right hand inserted into her small mouth, fiddling with her tongue when he said innocently, "I didn't cause any shame to Ye family... What do you hold me accountable for?"

His obvious favor and excessive actions towards Ning Xue was not surprising to Ye family anymore; they were already used to it. Wang Wenshu said smiling, "Dad, we just ask Chen-er directly, don't just scare him."

Ye Nu laughed out loud upon hearing this, while still laughing he said, "This young fellow had tricked the entire Lin family enough to choke them. It doesn't surprise me, though I'm pretty satisfied. I have confronted them for so many years, yet never have I felt this kind of satisfaction. Hahahaha... But!"

Ye Nu switched his facial expression, furrowing his brows and asked, "Chen-er, please tell us the truth, where did your martial skills and talents come from? Other people would have thought that you had faked your illness for sixteen years, then amazed the world with a single brilliant feat. However, the Ye family won't deny that a year ago you were still a person without even the strength to truss a chicken, and your talent had been below that of a ten year old kid. Then you mentioned that you just regained your consciousness a month ago, don't tell me that you learned all those things within a month? I don't believe it, even if the God of Sword had magical abilities, it would still be impossible to train you up to this level!! If it weren't for our reconciliation prior to that, I would even doubt that you were my son Chen-er!"

Ye Wei nodded accordingly, fixing his gaze at Ye Wuchen and asked, "Not just a month, even a year would still be very unimaginable. Aside from these, are there any other secrets that we ought to know?"

Ye Wuchen wanted to say something, but then hesitated, his face troubled.

Judging by Ye Wuchen's awkward expression, Wang Wenshu promptly rebuked Ye Wei, "Look at you, father and son, but still doubting Chen-er. This only affirms that Chen-er is a heaven blessed genius, only needing a month's time and he can already..."

"Heaven blessed geniuses also have their limitations," Ye Nu waved his hand interrupting Wang Wenshu; "Originally, Lin Xiao of Lin family was publicly known as a heaven blessed genius himself. Does it mean that his twenty years of achievements can't be compared with Chen-er's one month? That's absolutely impossible!"

"Actually, your guess is right." Ye Wuchen finally opened his mouth, "Teacher employed a very peculiar method. However, this method is universally shocking, the old man had requested of me not to tell others, but... Hmm, telling my family should not cause any trouble."

"Okay!" Ye Nu nodded and said firmly, "Tell us then, or else my heart will not be at ease."

"Actually, teacher used a method called 'Anointing One's Head with the Purest Powers, a legendary ability to directly pass a portion of his cultivation onto me; hence, here I am today.'" Ye Wuchen

shamelessly told them about a power he had seen before in some martial arts novel, his forefinger still lightly stirring inside Ning Xue's mouth, feeling her subconsciously sucking.

"Anointing One's Head with Purest Powers!?" totally beyond expectations of Ye Wuchen, Ye Nu and Ye Wei showed no doubt, but actually exclaimed at the name.

Could this kind of thing really exist in this world?

"Have you heard of it before?" Ye Wuchen asked astounded.

"Haven't heard of anointing one's head with the purest powers, but instead I've heard of another one called Anointing One's Head with the Power of the Heaven and Earth. Even though these two have different names, they are quite similar. Its purposes are very close to each other... So that's the way it is, I somehow understand." said Ye Wei upon realization, from the words "anointing the head", he already had an idea.

"Anointing One's Head with the Power of the Heaven and Earth, is a magical power used by the clans of the Southern Empire and the Northern Empire. This power enabled the clan leaders of the Southern Empire and the Northern Empire to instill their entire cultivation and powers into their descendants, before they finally die without any powers remaining. This is one of the reasons why the clans the Southern Empire and the Northern Empire flourished for a very long time with no one daring to provoke them.

Indeed it's real... Ye Wuchen thought.

"Would they have also suffered some form of damage, else, the clans of the Southern Empire and the Northern Empire would really become stronger and stronger without any limitations?" Ye Wuchen asked.

"That's right, there were indeed damages, but the magnitude of the damage was not known to us. Yet, in every generation of the clans of the Southern Empire and the Northern Empire, they had matchless powers, of this there is no doubt."

"Matchless powers? Their powers are... God-level?" Ye Wuchen's brows furrowed, "But among the four God-level masters of the Heavenly Star Continent, there was no mention of them."

Chapter 78: The So-Called Method of Anointing One's Head with the Purest Powers Part 2

"It's because the clan of the Southern Empire and the Northern Empire never meddled with the affairs of the mundane world that no one has experienced their real powers. It's not enough to estimate the level of their real powers. In addition, they are rather colossal beings that are alien to us, perhaps the ranking in our secular world doesn't apply to them. However, those who really know the presence of these colossal beings know that they most certainly possess God-level powers, or maybe that their powers are stronger than the current four masters of Heavenly Star." Ye Wei continued.

"Oh? So you mean to say that when the Royal Family of Tian Long had saved the clan leader of the Southern Empire during their time of crisis by removing the poison from his body and dispatching three heaven-level protectors along with numerous Royal Masters to assist in defeating the Northern Empire, it was not considered as provoking these "colossal beings" of the Northern Empire? If there comes a day

when the leader of Northern Empire, who had been hidden for many years, decides to take revenge, will the Royal Family of Tian Long be in danger?" Ye Wuchen said, hardly avoiding the delicate subject.

Ye Nu nodded, caressing his beard, "Chen-er what you said is right; this act would mean that the leader of the Southern Empire owe our Tian Long Royal Family a huge favor, but at the same time it has provoked a dreadful enemy. The leader of the Southern Empire had agreed to protect the Tian Long Royal Family should they become the target of the Northern Empire. However, attacking a city is easier than protecting it. Although the power of the Southern Empire is not inferior, if the Northern Empire attacked in secret, based on their frightening powers, they would be able to bring disaster to the Royal Family of Tian Long before the Southern Empire would notice. Hah... Let's not talk about it further, the Emperor must already have a plan to deal with it so we don't need to worry. Chen-er, what you've mentioned about the power to Anoint One's Head with the Purest Powers, is it similar to Anointing One's Head with the Power of Heaven and Earth?"

"That's right. Although they are not completely the same, they are much alike. For the power of Anointing Head with the Purest Powers, my teacher can only use it once every ten years, to pass on to me a part of his cultivation, talents and skills. The same as Anointing Head with the Powers of Heaven and Earth. The difference is, after teacher has used the power of Anointing One's Head with the Purest Powers, it doesn't affect his cultivation, but rather he becomes weak for a period of ten days. These ten days are the most dangerous moments of his life because that's the time he will be the same as an ordinary person. I would have to wait ten days until teacher's power has fully recovered before I could leave.

When Ye Wuchen tells lies he was just like any other ordinary person with no unusual reactions. While stroking Ning Xue's hair, it suddenly reminded him of when he was small. His mom must have always told him not to tell lies... but in this strange world, he told lies everyday... a new home, a new identity. He was tired... so tired. How long must he wait until his body and heart completely adapts to this world and this home.

"So that's the way it is! Now I finally understand. No wonder you could advance to this stage within such a very short span of time, no wonder! No wonder!" everything became clear to Ye Nu, all the doubt in his heart vanished at once, his face full of appreciation and gratification. He never doubted what Ye Wuchen said. Aside from this method, there was no other way to transform an almost useless person into a powerful and skillful genius just within a month.

"We owe such a huge favor to the God of Sword. How can we of the Ye family repay him!?" Ye Nu sighed. Indeed, they will be unable repay this huge favor, even if they tried, they still would not have the opportunity to do so. The only thing that they can do now is to supervise and encourage the future development of Ye Wuchen, so as not to disappoint the God of Sword's efforts in "training" him.

"Chen-er, if you see your teacher next time, you must thank him on your mother's behalf." Wang Wenshu said smiling. After today, who would dare badmouth her son. The surprises that Ye Wuchen brought to her today had revealed themselves in succession, almost making her faint from the excitement. Until now, she still has not recovered from these surprises, still having the vague sense of dreaming. But upon thinking upon the mournful tune of A Dream Remembering the Past, her nose suddenly turned sour and her tears threatened to fall. She can hear that his heart had suffered an

enormous pain. When passed on to a mother's heart, the pain that her son has felt multiplies a hundred fold.

"Chen-er, what about the flame from the old man Lin? How could it not hurt you?" Ye Nu asked.

"That old man Lin really had bad luck. Teacher let me eat something very strange, saying water or fire could not harm me within three months." Ye Wuchen said admiring inwardly. Ye Ning Xue gently played with his finger, turning a deaf ear. She did not care whether brother lied or not, nor of his reasons.

"Unharmful by water and fire?" Ye Nu was surprised, "is there such a thing!"

"Look at you two, calling him 'old man Lin', show him some respect." Wang Wenshu said laughing.

Ye Nu then realized his loose tongue and was about to let out a laugh, but suddenly his face went still, then he loudly asked, "Chen-er, what about your invitation? I remember of all the invitations sent here, there was none for you."

"Oh? How do you know I have an invitation?" Ye Wuchen asked with a doubting face, at the same time, he shot a glance at Ye Wuyun. Ye Wuyun did not avoid his gaze but instead looked at him face to face. Recalling what Ye Wuchen had said before he left their home along with his composed behavior at the institute, there was no doubt that he had stolen Ye Wuyun's invitation.

"Yun-er told me." Ye Nu blurted out with no intention of hiding it.

"Nobody gave me an invitation, so I obtained one myself." Ye Wuchen took out a gold gilded invitation from his pocket, he then threw the invitation at Ye Nu and said plainly, "The Ye Family have forgotten me, but my friend did not. This was given to me by brother Long Zhengyang."

"Long Zhengyang? The crown prince?" Ye Nu responded right away, then he remembered that when they found Ye Wuchen; Long Zhengyang had said that he and Ye Wuchen were friends.

"That's right, me and brother Long are good friends, we call ourselves brothers. No use to calling him the crown prince." Ye Wuchen said, then somehow shaking his head in disappointment, "It's really strange in the Ye Family. The adopted son has invitation, but the real son doesn't. Needing a friend's help just to be able to obtain one. When adopted son had lost the invitation, he corrupts the story by saying the real son had stolen his invitation. Upon reaching the ears of the elders, they doubt their real son over their adopted son, very funny. Who is really your own flesh and blood?"

Ye Wuchen stood up, carrying Ning Xue then left without saying any more.

"Chen-er!" Wang Wenshu rushed to stand up, yelling nervously, "It's my fault you didn't receive an invitation, because I thought you didn't like that kind of place, so I... but I didn't doubt you."

Ye Nu also stood, feeling guilty, then sighed, "You can blame it on grandpa, grandpa shouldn't have doubted you."

The invitation in his hands really had the name "Ye Wuchen" on it, but had no traces of alteration or smears, too impossible to be a fake.

Chapter 79: Number One Mercenary Tao Baibai

“But...” Ye Wuyun panicked and was about to say something when he was stopped short by Ye Wuchen’s cold voice, “Ye Wuyun, I know you’ve been resentful after I came back to the Ye Family. If I had died at that time, you might have become the master of the entire Ye Family, but here I am, so your beautiful dream has been suddenly smashed to pieces. The next time you want to play this kind of game please put more effort into it and use your brain. Your methods this time... pfft!”

Without a sound, Ye Wuchen suddenly extended his right hand outwards, grabbing the empty air. The invitation in Ye Nu’s hand seemed to grow wings and flew into Ye Wuchen’s hands. He raised both his hands, and the invitation scattered into pieces. He waved his hands again, collecting all the pieces of papers in his hands, then without stopping, he turned to leave. While turning, the corner of his mouth lifted a bit... Ye Wuyun, you are just a flailing clown; a toy, not even fit to be my match. You dare to fight against me!?

He believed Ye Nu would not approach Long Zhengyang to verify the authenticity of his own statement, or else he would not be Ye Nu.

“Chen-er!” first time seeing Ye Wuchen angry, Wang Wenshu’s heart was stricken. She rushed to follow after him, without sparing Ye Wuyun a glance.

Only Ye Nu, Ye Wei, and Ye WuYun remained in the hall. In the strange silence lingered a suffocating tension. Ye Wuyun panicked momentarily, then said in a rush, “Adoptive father, grandpa, this matter wasn’t as brother Wuchen had said...”

“Yun-er, you go ahead. Your invitation might have been lost somewhere.” Ye Nu said waving his hand.

“Okay.” Ye Wuyun responded sadly, then turned around and left.

After Wuyun had left, Ye Nu pondered for a moment, then asked, “Do you think what Chen-er said is true?”

“Unlikely.” Ye Wei shook his head, furrowed his brows and said, “If Yun-er really had those intentions, he wouldn’t have used this low level trick. What I really think is that Chen-er’s last statement was aimed at Yun-er, but perhaps he is also hinting something to us?”

“Oh?” Ye Nu’s face puzzled.

Ye Wei went silent without a reply, trying hard to search for an answer in his brain as the memory of the conversation they had a while ago flashed past him.

“Chen-er... Chen-er, mother didn’t doubt you, I have not been a good mother...”

Wang WenShu nervously chased after Ye Wuchen, steps becoming quicker and quicker. Ye Wuchen eventually stopped, turned and smiled. “I know... it’s really nothing. I am just a little tired from today so I wanted to go back early to rest.”

Wang Wenshu’s nervous heart finally settled but she still spoke with some regret, “You are right. Being tormented the whole morning, you must be very tired. You go ahead and rest. I will let Xiao Lu bring you some food later at lunch.”

“Yes!” Ye Wuchen responded with a smile.

Upon returning to his small courtyard, Ye Qi and Ye Ba welcomed him from afar, boot-licking words followed in advance, like the water from the Yellow River dashing through the area...

“Young Master! We’ve heard what happened today... We already knew that Young Master was truly a dragon among a thousand miles of people, but just a quiet one. You were preparing to amaze the world in just one single act, even the supernatural beings are now scared of you, and the entire Tian Long City trembles upon hearing your name! Even though the Young Master of Lin is pretty good, he is nothing in front of you. If Young Master were the sun, then he is just a tiny, unremarkable star. If Young Master were a fresh flower, then he is just a small blade of grass... ah, no! Not even grass, he is simply a pile of cow dung...”

All the way from the courtyard gate, he arrived in front of a table and sat down, flattery from the two of them continued without end, causing Ye Wuchen to sigh. If they used their flattery elsewhere, they might be able to attain an honorable position in the government. He waved his hand, “That’s enough, let’s just call it a day. Go and serve me some tea.”

His voice had just barely dropped, Ye Qi and Ye Ba had not even moved one bit, while Xiao Lu had already carried in two cups of tea gracefully walking towards them.

“Young Master, young lady Ning Xue, please have some tea.”

Placing them down, she retreated with gentle steps, then her two eyes directly observing Ye Wuchen, both filled with splendor, making Ye Wuchen wonder whether her eyes were embedded with precious stones. After a long while, he could not take it anymore; hence, he let out a fake cough and said, “Xiao Lu, go wash the clothes that I’ve worn yesterday.”

“Young Master, I’ve already finished washing them.” Xiao Lu slightly bent her waist as she replied.

“... then go to mother’s place to get my lunch. Tell her I’m hungry.” Ye Wuchen immediately changing his excuse.

“Yes.” Xiao Lu turned around, departing in small quick steps.

Ye Wuchen finally heaved a sigh of relief, holding up the teacup, he tested the temperature, then lightly touched the corner of Ning Xue’s lips, letting her drink little by little.

“Ye Qi, how far is the black forest in the east side of the city from the city gate?” Ye Wuchen asked while lowering his head.

“Exactly twenty kilometers.” Ye Qi answered.

“How about the distance from the Devil’s Trap Pagoda to the west side border of the black forest?” Ye Wuchen asked.

“That is... approximately ten kilometers. Young Master, are you planning to...” Ye Qi asked in a very careful and nervous tone.

“I’m just asking.”

After helping Ning Xue drink, Ye Wuchen grabbed the other cup and took a sip, then exhaled. He lifted his head, his brain continuously switching over different possibilities like flashes of lightning.

“Ye Ba, prepare some sulfur, charcoal, and niter for me. It’s better if you have some kerosene as well. Are you able to obtain those things?” Ye Wuchen suddenly asked.

Ye Ba got distracted, then responded, “Yes, yes. Although difficult, I can find them within Tian Long City.”

“Then go, now. If you need silver then proceed to the accounts office, tell them it’s upon my request.”

Ye Ba left, muttered to himself why he needed such strange things. Aside from niter, these were used to light fire, right? Why would he need these if he’s already using magic lights?

While hugging Ning Xue, Ye Wuchen lifted the teacup and slowly sipped. Subconsciously narrowing both eyes in thought. Ye Qi is aware that he is thinking about something, and did not dare to disturb him, so he respectfully stood waiting in a corner.

“Ye Qi, who is the number one mercenary in Tian Long Nation?” Ye Wuchen asked.

“Number one mercenary?” stroking his head, Ye Qi pondered for a moment, then his eyes lit up. “I remember Xiao San and Xiao Si make mention of the best mercenary in Tian Long, his name is Tao Baibai.”

Pffft!...

Ye Wuchen spurted out a mouthful of tea, wetting Ning Xue’s clothes. He immediately put down his teacup to wipe off the traces of water. Cursing endlessly deep inside... this is the second time. Apparently, it is better that I do not drink tea while talking to this Ye Qi.

“This... this is such an odd name.” Ye Qi said embarrassed. He muttered secretly inside, it may be odd, but he should not have reacted this way, exactly like last time. Do not tell me that the Young Master is overly sensitive to other people’s names?

“Oh, it’s actually a bit odd.” Ye Wuchen said calmly.

Number one mercenary, Tao Baibai! This is such a flashy name. With this title, China would not have called it anything other than “flashy”.

“Does he have a special move called the ‘Dodon Ray’?” Ye Wuchen probed. After asking, even he thought it was a silly question.

Chapter 80: Run for Life

“Dodon Ray? I really don’t know. I have only heard of his name. We servants cannot truly understand these kinds of people.” Ye Qi said.

“Okay, I understand. You may leave. Do not enter without my permission.” Ye Wuchen waved his hand.

“Yes!” Ye Qi withdrew respectfully.

Ye Wuchen’s hand summoned a thin layer of bright light, his palm reached for the spots on Ning Xue’s clothes that were still damp and steamed them dry in a flash. He stood up and said, “Xue-er, let’s do a jigsaw puzzle.”

Ye Wuchen sprinkled equal sized fragments of the invitation on top of the bed. The two of them lay on the bed, laughing as they played with the fragments, and quickly joining the pieces together into its original shape.

Ye Wuchen curved the corner of his mouth, concentrating in thought. He gathered his powers into his hands, his fingertips releasing faint colorless rays of light. Little by little he drew lines across the small cracks between each fragment. Running his finger through the spaces, the fragments quickly merged together all at once, joining perfectly and transforming back into its original shape.

In no time at all, the paper with “Ye Wuchen” printed on the back was left in his hand. It was flawless, with no trace of tears, and it was impossible to imagine it had been tampered with.

“Brother, you are very awesome. How did you do it?” Ning Xue clapped her hands asking excitedly.

“My powers can even heal wounds, this is quite easy.” Ye Wuchen said laughing, “Remember the time we went out hunting? My clothes had been torn over and over but after, you couldn’t find any marks. Your brother Da Niu even kept saying that there was something wrong with his eyesight.”

“Oh! Hee hee!”

“And now, let’s change the name back.”

He used his power to wipe off the word “Chen”, then used a brush to write down “Yun” from what he remembered. Pressing against the paper, the ink was dried completely with no evidence of having been written just recently. Soon after he bade Ning Xue to wait where she sat, while he climbed the roofs like a thief.

He placed the invitation under Ye Wuyun’s bed sheet, then quietly returned to the roof. Sneering to himself, ‘This is just a small game, since you were trying to trap me, let’s lay the perfect trap. I’ll make you unable to defend yourself, so you will feel that you are not being framed, since that is definitely not my style.

Halfway back to his room, he heard an unfamiliar clear and bright voice coming from the main hall. His heart stirred. A visitor?

He thought for a moment and then moved closer, bending an ear to listen.

“... General Ye, Madame Ye, actually I came here this time because of some concerns.”

“Oh? Superior Ji, there should be no harm in telling us.”

“I have heard that your son is still unmarried at his age, and my daughter has just turned sixteen this year, the exact time to choose a husband. Since she saw the elegant manner of your good son yesterday, and had hidden affections for him, so.... Ah, no, no, no. My daughter has absolutely no intention to fight with Princess Fei Huang over the position of the first wife, my daughter is willing to enter Ye family as his concubine... Ehem! Ehem! I mean, your good son and Princess Fei Huang’s marriage is still three years away, your son is after all, a man of valor. While there is still no lady to accompany him at his bedside, and my daughter is educated, well-balanced, clever, has an outstanding beauty.....”

Ye Wuchen went speechless upon hearing those words, willing to be a concubine just to be married to him!? Judging by his manner of speech, he must be some high government official. Have this old man and his daughter gone insane?

“This... we would need to ask Chen-er for his opinion regarding this matter.” Came Wang Wenshu’s voice, he could imagine her facial expression at this moment.

“Superior Shangguan has arrived!”

“Hahahaha! Long time no see General Ye, it’s my fault, my fault. Oh? Superior Ji, you are also here!” sounded the rough voice of a man.

After a series of courtesy words, the man, Superior Shangguan, yelled in a loud voice, “I, Shangguan, am a rough man. I don’t speak in a roundabout way. My daughter personally witnessed your son’s good manner. After which, she proclaimed that in this life she will not marry any other except your son. She’s afraid that some other may take the initiative before her, so here I am. Oh, my daughter had just turned fifteen, although her temperament... is not that good, her appearance is one in a hundred and well-known! The people who have come to propose to her have worn out our doorstep...”

“Superior Liu has arrived!”

“Oh General Ye, long time no see. To be quite honest, I came here to propose marriage on behalf of my daughter. My daughter just turned sixteen this year...”

“Superior Zhuge has arrived!”

“Hahahaha! Brother Ye, for our friendship’s sake, I’ll just get straight to the point. My daughter Meng-er requested that I bring this letter and an embroidered heart handkerchief for your good son. Judging from this, my daughter must have affections towards your son. Why don’t we become relatives by marriage, that will form a great bond between both our families....”

“Superior Cheng has arrived!”

.....

“Superior Liu has arrived!”

.....

“Superior Ou Yang has arrived!”

“Superior Lu has arrived!”

“Superior Huang has arrived!”

“Superior Wu has arrived!”

“Superior Xia has arrived!”

.....

Ye Wuchen's brows had beaded with sweat initially, but by this point he was sweating profusely, almost falling off the roof. When Wang Wenshu commanded a servant to go and call him, he hurriedly dashed straight in the direction of his own courtyard.

Back in his room, he picked up Ning Xue and was prepared to escape when coincidentally Xiao Lu happened to come in carrying their lunch, and said in a gentle voice, "Young Master, a moment ago I just happened to come across the Young Mistress and she asked that you head to her place if you have free time."

As if hearing a voice from heaven, he wished he could hug and kiss Xiao Lu. He promptly carried Ning Xue and dashed out like the wind, but came dashing back with a serious face, "Xiao Lu, tell Ye Qi and Ye Ba or anyone looking for me that I'm not here. Tell them I went out for a walk and will be back by evening. Did you hear what I said? Tell the same to Madame and Master too!"

"Ah.... yes!"

Ye Wuchen resumed dashing out like wind, his speed stunning Xiao Lu.

Ye Shuiyao's courtyard was just as peaceful as before. For Ye Wuchen, no other place was safer. Because no one in the Ye family would set foot in this courtyard unless they had business, no one will know that he was hiding here. Ye Wuchen walked to the study. Without knocking, he pushed the door open and headed inside.

A familiar, elegant fragrance hit him in the face. Ye Wuchen was enchanted as he breathed it in. The beautiful woman inside the room did not make a sound. Aside from Ye Wuchen, no one would enter without knocking.

"Receiving a summons from big sister, your brother was overwhelmed by such favor. Could it be possible that big sister missed me?"

Ye Shuiyao turned around to look at him, then turned back, her voice clear and cold. "Come here and teach me how to paint."

Placing Ning Xue on a chair, he secretly made a hushing gesture and proceeded to quietly stand beside Ye Shuiyao. Ye Shuiyao's body obviously went stiff from his approach, but immediately recovered, placing on a new sheet of painting paper.

"Teach me how to paint that Twin Lotus Flowers on One Stalk."