

Chen Yanran fumed when she didn't get the answer she wanted. All she felt like doing was to tear Han Jingru apart. The maid carefully approached her and informed, "Ms. Chen, Mr. Chen will be home tomorrow, so please don't let this matter spoil your mood."

Chen Yanran wanted to calm herself down, but her heart was still in turmoil.

As the eldest daughter of the Chen family, she was frustrated that she could barely handle a piece of trash like Han Jingru, who was staying in their mansion.

"Ms. Chen, do you want to wait for your brother to return and get him to test Han Jingru?" the maid proposed.

Chen Yanran had a brother whose name was Chen Tiexin, and he was a Second Stage fighter. Despite not being exceptionally strong, he was extremely protective of Chen Yanran. All these years, he was the main reason why Huang Xiaoyong had failed to get his way with his sister.

Chen Tiexin was initially very much against Chen Yanran's marriage. However, when he realized that using that piece of trash could stop Huang Xiaoyong's harassment, he had no choice but to bow to reality.

To him, Han Jingru was someone dispensable. He could easily be kicked out of the Chen residence anytime.

After giving it some thought, Chen Yanran nodded. "I like your idea. With Tiexin's skills, he should be able to test Han Jingru out."

The next day, the Chen residence was decorated to the nines. When Han Jingru saw how busy everyone was, he thought they were celebrating the new year.

"What's going on? What are all of you busy with?" Han Jingru grabbed one of the servants and asked.

The servant shot an impatient glance at him and said, "Let go of me. This has nothing to do with you, so why do you care?"

Han Jingru shrugged his shoulders helplessly. He recalled the time when he was at the Han Residence. The servants there were equally rude to him. But little did he expect the same to happen in Xenos.

“Hey bro, I’m just curious. Why don’t you just let me in on it? Or else I’m not going to let go,” Han Jingru badgered.

As the servant was in a hurry, he had no choice but to answer, “Today, Mr. Yuanhai and Mr. Tiexin will be coming home. The whole household is busy preparing for their return.”

As Han Jingru had gotten his answer, he let the servant go.

Han Jingru was well aware of who the Chen family members were. Chen Yanran’s father was Chen Yuanhai, while her brother was Chen Tiexin.

In recent years, Chen Yuanhai’s energy was focused on looking for a grandmaster to help Chen Tiexin increase his strength. As for all the

other trivial matters of the Chen family, he had left them to Chen Yanran to manage.

Unfortunately, after so many years of searching, Chen Tiexin failed to find a master to learn from. In fact, he didn't even meet anyone powerful at all.

Despite their setbacks, Chen Yuanhai didn't give up. One had to be really strong and powerful to stand out in the Imperial Court of Xenos. Having a rich family alone wouldn't help matters at all.

Chen Yuanhai was an extremely ambitious man. He didn't want the Chen family to be stuck forever in a small place like Longyun City. Instead, he hoped that one of his family members could be a great general at the Imperial Court.

Meanwhile, Chen Yanran was waiting at the entrance since early in the morning. After a long wait, a horse-drawn carriage finally arrived, and Chen Yanran ran toward it in anticipation.

A middle-aged man with masculine features and a beard alighted the carriage, and he was Chen

Tiexin.

“Tiexin, you’re finally back,” Chen Yanran greeted girlishly as she circled her hands around Chen Tiexin’s arm.

Chen Tiexin’s face lit up as he replied, “I have only left for half a year, and you’re already missing me to this extent?”

“Of course,” Chen Yanran pouted as she replied matter-of-factly.

Only in front of Chen Tiexin would Chen Yanran act like a girl. At that moment, she was undeniably charming.

“Alright, let’s head home first,” Chen Tiexin suggested.

“Tiexin, he is already awake,” Chen Yanran told him.

Chen Tiexin frowned as he obviously knew who Chen Yanran was talking about.

“Didn’t you say he would never wake up? Did he do anything to you?” Chen Tiexin asked with a solemn expression. If Han Jingru had done something to her, he would definitely tear him apart.

“Of course not, but a lot has happened recently. Let me tell you all about it,” Chen Yanran explained.

Chen Tiexin nodded.

At that moment, a jealous voice rang out from behind them. “Someone is only interested in her brother but has forgotten all about her father. It’s so sad being old.”

Chen Yanran stuck out her tongue mischievously as she hurried to Chen Yuanhai’s side and reassured him, “Dad, how can you say that I have forgotten about you? I have been waiting for you every day and wishing for you to return home soon.”

“If not for that sweet-talking mouth of yours, I would not have forgiven you today.” Chen

Yuanhai burst into hearty laughter.

As the three of them entered the Chen residence, Chen Yanran related all that had happened recently to Chen Yuanhai and Chen Tiexin.

Both of them were curious about the Fourth Stage fighter's mysterious disappearance and the fact that more than ten Second Stage fighters vanished into thin air.

A Second Stage fighter was considered common in Longyun City, and even Chen Tiexin had that kind of strength. But a Fourth Stage fighter was really rare.

“Yanran, do you mean that all these people's disappearance has something to do with Han Jingru?” Chen Tiexin asked.

“Although I don't really believe it, these two incidents are undeniably connected to him. Therefore, there has to be a secret behind this,” Chen Yanran explained. She couldn't say for sure that Han Jingru killed all those men and besides, she didn't believe it anyway. But since he was

somehow involved, there must be more to the incidents than met the eye.

“After being in a coma for such a long time, it would be impossible for him to match the skills of a Fourth Stage fighter, let alone kill him.”

Chen Yuanhai furrowed his eyebrows as he felt that Chen Yanran’s speculation was just too farfetched.

“Dad, there’s only one way to prove it.” Just as she spoke, she looked at Chen Tiexin.

Chen Tiexin realized immediately what she meant and asked, “Do you want me to test his skills?”

“Precisely,” Chen Yanran quipped.

“Where is he? I’ll look for him at once,” Chen Tiexin replied.

“Tiexin, don’t be rash. In order to get a valid result, we have to test him when he least expects it. If you challenge him directly, he might still hide his true strength,” Chen Yanran explained.



Chen Tiexin nodded in agreement. “You’re right. We must catch him off guard so that he will reveal his skills by reflex. In that case, let us try tomorrow.”

“Did you manage to achieve anything during the trip?” Chen Yanran asked.

Chen Tiexin and his father both sighed in resignation. Not only did they fail to achieve their objective, but they also didn’t encounter any powerful fighters.

Chen Yuanhai wanted to look for a Seventh Stage fighter to be Chen Tiexin’s master but finding one was close to impossible.

“Not yet, but I’m not giving up,” Chen Tiexin declared.

“Tiexin, don’t fret. There isn’t any for now because the time isn’t right yet. I believe you will definitely be able to find your ideal master,” Chen Yanran encouraged him.

The next morning, at the governor's residence.

When Huang Xiaoyong opened his eyes, he was both in shock and awe.

Looking at his Unique Weapon, he saw four Burning Stars around them. It was a sign that he was now a Fourth Stage fighter.

In Xenos, everyone had their own Unique Weapon. Their stage would also be indicated by the number of Burning Stars they had on their Unique Weapon.

Huang Xiaoyong's Unique Weapon was a claymore. He had it ever since he was very young. Although his stage wasn't high, he was already proficient in wielding it as if it was an extension of his body.

"I ascended two stages in a night," Huang Xiaoyong mumbled to himself in disbelief.

Three years ago, after he achieved the Second Stage, he stopped progressing. It was a threshold that countless others couldn't cross either.

All the Second Stage fighters who were under the governor's command had also reached the peak of their capabilities. Therefore, Huang Xiaoyong thought that he would forever remain in the Second Stage.

However, little did he expect to ascend two stages in one night. He was astounded that something so mysterious had actually occurred to him.

Suddenly, he dropped to his knees.

“Master, I, Huang Xiaoyong, will follow you for life.” After making his declaration, Huang Xiaoyong kowtowed to seal his oath.

Despite being taken in as a disciple by Han Jingru the day before, Huang Xiaoyong still had his doubts. Until he managed to gain some concrete benefit, he was just going to pay lip service to Han Jingru as his master. After all, he didn't even know what stage Han Jingru was at, so he wasn't prepared to put all his trust in him.

But now, Huang Xiaoyong experienced firsthand how powerful Han Jingru was.

A single red fruit allowed him to ascend two stages. That alone demonstrated Han Jingru's unimaginable capability.

Someone like that was definitely worth Huang Xiaoyong's idolization.

Meanwhile, at the Chen residence.

The moment Han Jingru woke up, he sneezed inexplicably, as if someone was talking behind his back.

“Huang Xiaoyong is now where I need him to be. Next, I'll have him help me find Yingying,” Han Jingru mumbled to himself. He was sure that after one night, the power of the red fruit would manifest itself. Huang Xiaoyong would no longer doubt him after ascending two stages.

After washing up, Han Jingru left the house. However, he felt that someone was following him from the shadows.

*I'm still in the Chen residence compound, so why is there someone following me?*

Han Jingru, who was frowning just a moment ago, quickly eased his vigilance. With his smarts, he knew that Chen Yanran must have sent someone to test him.

After all, Chen Yanran didn't receive the answer she wanted the day before and given her character, she wasn't going to give up easily.

At that moment, the man suddenly attacked. Han Jingru suppressed the urge to defend himself and continued walking forward, pretending to be oblivious of the impending danger.

Suddenly, Han Jingru felt a forceful blow from behind, which sent him flying. In midair, he even spewed blood out of his mouth.

Chen Tiexin sneered as he walked up to Han Jingru. Looking down at him in a condescending manner, he scoffed, "To think that my sister assumed that you were a formidable fighter. You're barely vigilant at all. I think you truly are a piece of trash."

Han Jingru gritted his teeth and pretended to be

angry. “Who are you? Why did you hit me?”

Chen Tiexin knelt down and grabbed Han Jingru’s hair, forcing him to look up. Then, he asserted, “Remember my name. I’m Chen Tiexin, Chen Yanran’s brother. As to what gave me the right to hit you? Do I even need a reason to hit trash like you?”

Having said that, Chen Tiexin let go of Han Jingru’s hair and left.

Han Jingru spat out the blood in his mouth as his injury was just an act. There was no way a punch from a Second Stage fighter could harm him.

However, Han Jingru had achieved his objective. At that moment, Chen Tiexin was convinced that Han Jingru was someone useless.

Wiping the blood off the corner of his mouth, Han Jingru stood up and continued walking.

Meanwhile, Huang Xiaoyong’s men were still keeping an eye on him. The moment Han Jingru left the Chen residence, Huang Xiaoyong got

wind of it and hurried out quickly.

As Han Jingru headed for the outskirts, Huang Xiaoyong left the city via a different city gate. Both of them met somewhere devoid of people.

The moment they saw each other, Huang Xiaoyong dropped to his knees and prostrated in front of Han Jingru. In a sincere tone, he greeted, “Master.”

“You don’t have to be so formal next time. On your feet,” Han Jingru remarked.

“Thank you, Master.” Huang Xiaoyong walked behind Han Jingru. All the hatred he felt for him previously had now turned into admiration.

To ascend two stages overnight was simply unheard of. However, Huang Xiaoyong managed to achieve it. Therefore, he deeply understood how powerful Han Jingru was.

“How do you feel? Have you leveled up to a new stage?” Han Jingru asked.

“Master, I ascended two stages overnight. I am currently in the Fourth Stage,” Huang Xiaoyong reported excitedly.

The effects of the red fruit were really impressive as it enabled Huang Xiaoyong to ascend two stages. Furthermore, this was just the beginning. Huang Xiaoyong’s progress through the different stages would be accelerated by the red fruit.

“Although the result is below my expectations, it’s still good enough. A Fourth Stage fighter is already among the best fighters in Longyun City,” Han Jingru remarked casually.

“That’s right. It’s really rare to find one in Longyun City. With my current capabilities, no one is a match for me here. Other than you, of course, Master,” Huang Xiaoyong agreed.

Han Jingru was always puzzled as to how the stages were represented in Xenos. However, it was likely common knowledge in Xenos itself. Therefore he was worried that asking such a question would raise suspicion about his identity.



But now that Huang Xiaoyong was fiercely loyal to him, he figured that it wouldn't be a problem to ask him.

“I've been in meditation for many years and have lost touch with the world. Please explain to me how the stages manifest themselves. I have long forgotten about it,” Han Jingru questioned.

Although Huang Xiaoyong found his question strange, he didn't think too much about it. He took out his own claymore and explained, “Master, every warrior has their own Unique Weapon, and one's stage is reflected on it.”

While he was speaking, there were four blue Burning Stars circling around the claymore.

“What happens if the Unique Weapon is destroyed?” Han Jingru inquired.

“If one's Unique Weapon is destroyed, one would lose all strength and become a cripple. However, destroying Unique Weapons is widely frowned upon in Xenos, so it's rarely done,” Huang Xiaoyong explained.

Han Jingru nodded. It seemed to him there was still a lot he didn't understand about Xenos, and he made it a point to find out more gradually.

“What if you don't have a Unique Weapon?” Han Jingru continued asking.



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Stunned briefly, Huang Xiaoyong burst into laughter. “Master, are you kidding me? How can a warrior not have a Unique Weapon?”

“Is it really impossible?” Han Jingru reconfirmed as he didn’t have one. Perhaps it was because he wasn’t from Xenos, or maybe he had different training methods from the people here.

“Master,” Huang Xiaoyong’s heart suddenly raced as he asked, “Don’t tell me you do not have a Unique Weapon? I have heard of something like that before. Once one has reached the Pinnacle Stage, one no longer needs the Unique Weapon.”

Huang Xiaoyong’s eyes were filled with fear. *If Master doesn’t have a Unique Weapon, does it mean that he has reached the Pinnacle Stage?*

It was the ultimate stage achievable, and legend had it that there were only three Pinnacle Masters in Xenos.

When Huang Xiaoyong managed to meet a Seventh Stage fighter in the past, he was already

beyond impressed.

As Han Jingru didn't have a Unique Weapon, he didn't know what stage he was at. However, he believed that his current strength definitely wasn't on par with a Pinnacle Master.

“Anyway, can you help me find a talented artist?” Han Jingru changed the topic. However, Huang Xiaoyong already saw Han Jingru as a Pinnacle Master.

“Of course,” Huang Xiaoyong agreed without any hesitation. No matter what Han Jingru's requests were, he would do his best to fulfill them. To him, Han Jingru was now a Pinnacle Master. As a disciple of one, Huang Xiaoyong felt that it was his duty to do his master's bidding.

“Good, bring him here tomorrow and get him to bring his painting tools,” Han Jingru instructed.

“Sure,” Huang Xiaoyong acknowledged.

“If there are no other matters, I'll take my leave

first. Remember, do not let anyone know about our meetup,” Han Jingru reminded.

Huang Xiaoyong nodded obediently. He would definitely keep their secret from everyone, including his father.

Huang Xiaoyong knew that his future was now in Han Jingru’s hands as Han Jingru was going to be a key factor in his career prospects going forward. Therefore, he definitely wouldn’t do anything to upset Han Jingru.

As he watched Han Jingru walk away, Huang Xiaoyong mumbled to himself emotionally, “I never expected that I would have the honor of becoming a disciple of a Pinnacle Master. Father, I know you hope that I would become governor one day, but that means nothing to me anymore. If I follow Master, I will be able to enter the Imperial Court one day.”

Meanwhile, at the Chen residence, Chen Tiexin went to see Chen Yanran right after testing Han Jingru and related the whole incident to her. His view of the matter was firm. He insisted that Han

Jingru was a piece of trash and that Chen Yanran's assumptions were wrong.

There was no way someone who got grievously hurt from a single punch could kill more than ten Second Stage fighters and a Fourth Stage fighter.

Chen Yanran frowned in response. Although she too thought the chances were low, she still didn't have any other explanation for the fighters' disappearance.

"If Han Jingru isn't as strong as he claimed to be, then how did all those men disappear without a trace?" Chen Yanran questioned.

Chen Tiexin didn't like racking his brains to analyze such matters, so he replied, "Yanran, why do you need to dwell upon it so much? Perhaps he just got lucky."

However, Chen Yanran couldn't accept such a straightforward answer. *Even if he was lucky, it still doesn't explain what happened. Furthermore, where's the evidence to show that he was even lucky at all?*

“Tiexin, The Hunting is just around the corner. Will you be participating?” Chen Yanran asked.

“Of course, The Hunting is the reason we returned early this time. Besides, I can also prove myself by becoming a Beastmaster,” Chen Tiexin explained.

Huang Xiaoyong nodded. A Beastmaster was also highly sought after by the Imperial Court. If Chen Tiexin couldn’t find a powerful master, becoming a Beastmaster was his alternative route into the Imperial Court.

“I want to enter Han Jingru in that competition,” Chen Yanran suggested.

“Do you still think that he is hiding his strength?” Chen Tiexin couldn’t help but roll his eyes. Although he understood why Chen Yanran wanted to do that, he felt that it was a waste of time. *It’s obvious that Han Jingru is weak, so why go through all the hassle?*

“Other than testing him, I have another objective—to get him killed,” Chen Yanran explained.

After pondering on her statement, Chen Tiexin understood immediately. He replied with a smile, “Yanran, you don’t have to go through so much trouble. I can kill him anytime you want.”

Chen Yanran shook her head and declined, “Tiexin, I know you are strong, and killing him will be easy for you. But I need him to die at The Hunting so that I have a reason to mourn him for three years.”

“Fine, as long as it makes you happy. However, don’t let that piece of trash wander freely around the residence. I don’t want to see him,” Chen Tiexin instructed.

Huang Xiaoyong nodded as she too felt the same. Just the sight of Han Jingru alone was more than enough to get on her nerves.

The next day, Han Jingru and Huang Xiaoyong met at the same spot. This time, Huang Xiaoyong came together with an old man.

“Master, this man is Longyun City’s best painter. If you have any requests, just instruct him



accordingly,” Huang Xiaoyong told Han Jingru.

The old man kept his head low and didn't look up at Han Jingru. However, he was surprised by the fact that Huang Xiaoyong called Han Jingru master. Despite his shock, he remained calm and collected.

After all, he was a smart man. He knew that he had to mind his own business if he wanted to live.

Han Jingru nodded and instructed the old man, “Sir, I want you to help me draw someone. I will describe her features to you. Would that work?”

“As long as you describe her accurately, I will not disappoint you,” the old man replied.

Following that, Han Jingru and the old man got to work.

After having spent so much time with Jiang Yingying, Han Jingru had her features seared into his mind. Therefore he could accurately describe what she looked like, including all her unique

physical characteristics.

As the old man was very skilled, he managed to finish the portrait in an hour. Han Jingru was impressed with the result as it closely resembled Jiang Yingying.

When he was done, the old man asked Han Jingru, “Sir, what do you think of my work?”

Han Jingru held up the painting to scrutinize it. Although it wasn’t as clear as a photograph, it was still a job well done, considering that it was a painting. He replied, “It’s wonderful! I’m really satisfied. I didn’t expect your painting to be so lifelike.”

The old man remarked with a smile, “I’m glad that you’re satisfied. It looks like I’ll live to see another day.”

Huang Xiaoyong shot Han Jingru a glance. The old man had to die if their secret was to be kept. However, Han Jingru shook his head.

Han Jingru couldn't bring himself to do something as despicable as killing someone who helped him.

“Sir, please keep what happened here a secret,” Han Jingru told the old man.

Nodding, the old man replied, “Naturally so. I have not looked at your face from the beginning just to save my own skin. Thank you for sparing my life.”

“Go, I'll get Huang Xiaoyong to send the payment to your home,” Han Jingru instructed.

The old man bowed respectfully before leaving.

Since Han Jingru decided not to kill the old man, Huang Xiaoyong did not interfere any further. Looking at the painting in Han Jingru's hand, he couldn't help but ask, “Master, the lady in the portrait is gorgeous. Is she your dream girl?”

Han Jingru glared at Huang Xiaoyong and explained, “This is the sister whom I've lost. Take this painting and command your men to

help me find her.”

“I see. No wonder she looks like a beauty. Don’t worry. I will definitely find her for you,” Huang Xiaoyong promised.

Although he was adept at flattery, such methods didn’t work on Han Jingru. Instead, Han Jingru quipped, “Results come from effort and not just from talking about it.”

“As long as she is in Longyun City, I will definitely find her. However, in the event she isn’t, there’s nothing much I can do,” Huang Xiaoyong elaborated. Within the city, he could marshal his subordinates for the search. But his influence did not extend beyond that.

“Keep this portrait safe and find other painters to copy it. If we can’t find her in Longyun City, I will likely need to leave here soon,” Han Jingru told him.

Han Jingru’s purpose of staying in Longyun City was to understand Xenos better. But only staying in one area would limit his ability to get a

comprehensive understanding. Moreover, if Jiang Yingying wasn't in the city, there was no point in him staying there any longer.

When he heard that Han Jingru wanted to leave Longyun City, Huang Xiaoyong began to panic and suggested, "Master, I want to be at your service for the rest of my life."

Han Jingru chuckled before replying, "Don't worry, when I leave, I'll take you with me."

Han Jingru was aware that Huang Xiaoyong knew Xenos a lot better than he did and would be useful as a tour guide. Therefore, he would definitely not leave Huang Xiaoyong behind when he left.

"Thank you, Master, thank you," Huang Xiaoyong replied with a smile.

"By the way, will you be participating in The Hunting in a few days?" Han Jingru asked.

"Yes, it's a festival that every warrior looks forward to. The fastest route to join the Imperial

Court is to tame a familiar and become a Beastmaster,” Huang Xiaoyong explained.

“Is a Beastmaster someone powerful?” Han Jingru asked curiously.

“Beastmasters are very rare in Xenos. Therefore, the Imperial Court regards them highly, but it isn’t because they are particularly powerful. It’s just that they are few and far between. Scarcity makes them valuable,” Huang Xiaoyong continued.

Han Jingru nodded. As he subconsciously rubbed his arm, he wondered what rank was the Ruby-eyed Python he had tamed. Based on his understanding of the matter, he figured he could consider himself a Beastmaster.

“What’s the most powerful familiar?” Han Jingru asked out of curiosity.

“Master, this year’s event will be held at the Longyan Mountains. The familiars there are generally lower-ranked. I heard the most powerful ones are no more than three-star

familiars. To find really powerful ones, you have to head to the Dark Forest, which is located where the three nations intersect. I heard that there are nine-star familiars there,” Huang Xiaoyong explained.

After hearing Huang Xiaoyong’s elaboration, Han Jingru had a general idea of how the familiars were ranked. They were categorized by the stars they had, and he wondered how many stars the little white snake on his arm had.

“Which nine-star familiar have you heard of?” Han Jingru was curious.

“Legend has it that someone tamed a Ruby-eyed Python. It isn’t just a nine-star familiar. In fact, it’s the strongest of them all,” Huang Xiaoyong added.

Han Jingru was stunned to hear that the Ruby-eyed Python was a nine-star familiar.

*Is the little guy on my arm that powerful?*

“Do you mean that the Ruby-eyed Python is the

strongest of them all?” Han Jingru asked.

“The legends tell of ten-star familiars, but that is only a myth since no one has seen them before. Master, if you really want to know, you just have to visit the Dark Forest. However, the three nations do not have any diplomatic relations with each other, so no one is allowed to trespass. If warriors of the other nations discover a trespasser, a big battle will ensue. However, with your strength, I don’t think it’s something you should be worried about,” Huang Xiaoyong added with a chuckle.

“Enough, stop being so obsequious. Quickly head back and get the portrait copied. After that, we will start the search at once,” Han Jingru ordered.

Huang Xiaoyong nodded and left with the portrait.

When Huang Xiaoyong had gone off far enough, Han Jingru brought up his sleeves. The little white snake appeared and hissed at him arrogantly.



“Are you really a nine-star familiar?” Han Jingru asked curiously as there was no indication that the little guy was so powerful. Other than sleeping the whole day, there wasn’t anything special about it.

The snake bared its fangs at him as if to show Han Jingru how intimidating it was.

Han Jingru tapped his finger on its head and quipped, “Stop being so fierce. Are you trying to frighten me?”

The snake looked aggrieved as it stopped baring its fangs and retracted its hissing tongue.

Han Jingru pulled his sleeve down and mumbled to himself, “Looks like I must visit the Dark Forest when I get the chance. However, Xenos really is a strange place. The three nations do not have any diplomatic relations, and one can’t travel between each of them. In that case, I wonder what happened during the war in the past.”

With the questions whirling in his mind, Han

Jingru returned to the Chen residence. However, he bumped into Chen Tiexin who was on his way out.

When Chen Tiexin saw Han Jingru, he stared at him with contempt and berated, “Hey, you piece of trash, from now on, you should just stay in your room and not wander around. The sight of you alone makes my eyes sore. If you’re not willing to comply, don’t blame me for treating you harshly.”

Han Jingru responded with a faint smile. *How does he have the audacity to be bad-tempered when he’s so incompetent? Despite just being a Second Stage fighter, he acts with such insolence.*

As both of them walked past each other, Han Jingru didn’t say a word, which infuriated Chen Tiexin further. Just when he wanted to teach Han Jingru a lesson, Chen Yanran appeared.

“Where did you go? Did I give you permission to roam around the Chen residence?” Chen Yanran admonished Han Jingru.

“In that case, why don’t I move out?” Han Jingru retorted.

Chen Yanran was well aware that she still needed Han Jingru as her shield. If he were to move out, tongues might start to wag. The last thing she wanted was malicious rumors about her spreading.

“From today onward, you are not allowed to go anywhere. You’re to be confined to your room. When The Hunting begins, you will be part of my security detail,” Chen Yanran ordered.

“Am I supposed to be your bodyguard or martyr?” Han Jingru asked with a smirk.



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*Bodyguard?*

*Martyr?*

Chen Yanran's expression darkened as she replied, "I don't know what you're talking about."

Han Jingru's lips curled into a smirk, but he said nothing.

Feeling guilty upon seeing his expression, Chen Yanran quickly turned to leave.

The look on Han Jingru's face seemed as though he had seen through her, and an uneasy feeling rose within her. She was the one who was supposed to have Han Jingru eating out of her hand. But now, she felt as if he was aware of her intentions all along but chose not to retaliate.

*Why?*

*Has he already guessed that he would die at The Hunting?*

*If he did, then why isn't he thinking of a way to escape?*

“Yanran, are you alright?” Chen Tiexin asked when he saw Chen Yanran’s troubled expression.

She shook her head. Although she wasn’t sure if her intuition were accurate, she couldn’t shake the sense of dread she felt. *But how can a piece of trash like Han Jingru make me feel threatened?*

“It’s nothing. Anyway, we still need to make preparations for The Hunting,” Chen Yanran added.

Chen Tiexin nodded. As someone who endeavored to join the Imperial Court, he always took his tasks seriously, be it searching for a master or participating in The Hunting. On the one hand, he was considered to be persistent in his quest for power and influence.

On the other hand, he was blindly following his unrealistic ambition. By the standards of the Imperial Court, his capabilities were as good as useless. Despite that, he was not aware of where

he stood and continued hoping to realize his unachievable dreams.

At the governor's residence.

When Huang Houyi saw that his son was busy getting artists to copy a lady's portrait, he was filled with rage.

He had hoped that Huang Xiaoyong would make something of himself, but he was expending all his energy on women instead.

Before this, it was Chen Yanran, and now the girl in the painting. Hence, it was only natural that Huang Houyi was furious.

“Huang Xiaoyong, you don't deserve to be my son for being such a useless bum. Don't you have other pursuits other than women?” Huang Houyi yelled angrily at his son.

Huang Xiaoyong knew that his father had misunderstood him, but he didn't know how to explain himself. After all, he was sworn to secrecy by Han Jingru.

“Dad, you have got it wrong. I’m not someone like that. My heart is still loyal to Chen Yanran, so how can I fall for someone else?” Huang Xiaoyong explained.

Huang Houyi sneered, “Loyal? What’s the use of being loyal to a woman? Are you going to spend your whole life pursuing her?”

In his rage, Huang Houyi ordered all the painters to get out of the governor’s residence, or else he would kill all of them.

Threatened, all the painters put down their brushes as no one wanted to die over something like that.

However, Huang Xiaoyong started to panic. The lady in the painting was Han Jingru’s sister, and he was just executing Han Jingru’s orders to find her. *If Dad kicks everyone out, who will copy the paintings?*

“Dad, this is something really important to me. Can you just let it be?” Huang Xiaoyong pleaded.

Upon hearing that, Huang Houyi gave him a frosty glare. It was a crucial time for him to free himself from being a political puppet. However, instead of helping, Huang Xiaoyong was wasting time on meaningless pursuits. Hence, he was not going to let Huang Xiaoyong have his way anymore.

“Huang Xiaoyong, let me warn you. From now onward, if you continue wasting your life on such matters, I will kick you out of the house,” Huang Houyi threatened.

When he saw that there was no room for discussion, Huang Xiaoyong became more desperate. *If Dad forbids me from searching for the girl in the painting, what am I going to tell Master?*

“Dad, please come with me. I want to show you something. Once you see it, you will understand why I’m doing this,” Huang Xiaoyong persuaded.

“Don’t try your luck. No matter what you say, I will not agree with your absurdity,” Huang Houyi declared.



Huang Xiaoyong insisted confidently, "Once you see it, you will support what I'm doing. If you don't believe it, just come with me."

When he finished, Huang Xiaoyong headed toward the backyard.

He couldn't divulge Han Jingru's identity. But to prevent Huang Houyi from restricting his activities, he could only show Huang Houyi his current strength and the reason why he was doing it.

Initially, Huang Houyi couldn't be bothered with his son's pleas, but he noticed the latter's newfound confidence. This made him curious about Huang Xiaoyong's secret that managed to change his attitude.

When they were in the backyard with no one around, Huang Houyi asked, "If you want to show off, this is your only chance. But if you can't convince me, you will need my permission for everything going forward."

Huang Xiaoyong unsheathed his claymore and

said smugly, “Dad, this is not just showing off. This should come as an absolute shock to you.”

*Shock?*

Huang Houyi sneered, but his contemptuous smile froze immediately.

Above Huang Xiaoyong’s claymore, there were four Burning Stars that symbolized his Fourth Stage rank. Huang Houyi gaped when he saw it.

As Huang Xiaoyong’s Dad, he was well aware of his son’s capabilities. Huang Xiaoyong was at the Second Stage for many years. To ascend to the next stage alone was impossible for him unless someone powerful guided him.

However, Huang Xiaoyong already reached the Fourth Stage.

It was something unimaginable for Huang Houyi.

“F-Fourth Stage!” Huang Houyi’s eyes widened in utter shock. “How is that possible? How are you at the Fourth Stage?”

Huang Xiaoyong smiled smugly when he saw the expected reaction from his father. After all, to ascend two stages overnight was something unfathomable to anyone.

“Dad, do you believe that I progressed from the Second Stage to the Fourth Stage in one night?” Huang Xiaoyong asked with a smile.

Huang Houyi gulped. *In one night?*

If he had heard it from someone else, Huang Houyi would have treated it as a joke because it was something impossible.

However, the truth lay before his eyes. He had no choice but to be convinced that Huang Xiaoyong had reached the Fourth Stage.

Huang Houyi approached Huang Xiaoyong excitedly and asked, “How did you do it? How did you ascend two stages in a night? Did you encounter a miracle?”

“You could say so because it does seem like it,” Huang Xiaoyong replied.

“What happened? Tell me quickly and stop keeping me in suspense.” Huang Houyi was so thrilled that he almost spurted profanities. He couldn’t wait to find out what had happened.



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Wait! I Have Something to Say!



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“Dad, calm down. I’ll tell you. Actually, the reason I was able to ascend to the Fourth Stage was because of my master.” When Huang Xiaoyong mentioned Han Jingru, he was filled with pride. He was evidently proud to be his disciple, and his loyalty had gone beyond what words could describe.

“Master?” Huang Houyi looked at Huang Xiaoyong curiously. As the governor, he was well aware of what was going on in the city. But he had not heard of the existence of such a powerful fighter.

Huang Houyi surmised that Huang Xiaoyong’s master had to be at the Sixth Stage or above to help him ascend two stages. But, given how small Longyun City was, he didn’t believe such a person existed here.

“Who is your master? Is he in Longyun City?” Huang Houyi asked.

Huang Xiaoyong knew he had to stop there. All he could only tell his father was that he had a master and that his ascension was related to his

master. However, he couldn't divulge his master's identity. That was Han Jingru's warning to him. No matter how gutsy he was, Huang Xiaoyong didn't dare to go against Han Jingru.

“Dad, stop asking about his identity. Master has instructed me not to mention him to anyone as he keeps a very low profile,” Huang Xiaoyong explained.

*Low profile?*

*Does someone who is at least a Sixth Stage fighter need to keep a low profile?*

Huang Houyi tried to find flaws in Huang Xiaoyong's explanation, but with the four Burning Stars shining brightly in front of him, Huang Houyi had no reason to doubt him.

“Now that you have a master, you no longer care about me, don't you?” Huang Houyi was upset.

“Of course not. But since my master is unwilling to reveal his identity, I dare not divulge it. In the event that I upset him, killing all of us would be

as easy as flicking his finger,” Huang Xiaoyong warned.

“I’m a governor. How dare he kill me on a whim?” Huang Houyi’s words were unconvincing because if Huang Xiaoyong’s master was at least a Sixth Stage fighter, killing a governor would be extremely easy. Furthermore, the Imperial Court wouldn’t even bat an eyelid.

When comparing a Sixth Stage fighter to a city governor, the former was a lot more valuable to the Imperial Court.

“Dad, not that I’m underestimating your position, but a governor is nothing to him. Even the high-level leaders at the Imperial Court have to show him respect,” Huang Xiaoyong elaborated.

“Bullsh\*t,” Huang Houyi retorted in contempt.

“Dad, what is the position of a Pinnacle Master at the Imperial Court?” Huang Xiaoyong asked with a smile.

“He would have the highest rank there. Even the

Emperor has to go and see him personally.”  
Huang Houyi was well aware of how respected Pinnacle Masters were since even the Emperor dared not disrespect them.

Having said that, Huang Houyi was stunned. He then looked at the smug expression Huang Xiaoyong had on his face.

Then, he had a sudden epiphany as if he were struck by lightning.

*Pinnacle Master!*

*Could it be that Huang Xiaoyong's master is a Pinnacle Master? That's just unbelievable!*

*There's no way someone so powerful would appear in Longyun City.*

Huang Houyi's felt his knees buckle, and he collapsed onto the ground.

Despite being a governor, his reaction was no different than a coward now.



“A-Are you saying that your master i-is a Pinnacle Master?” Huang Houyi widened his eyes as he stared at Huang Xiaoyong in disbelief.

In truth, Huang Xiaoyong had no actual idea what stage Han Jingru was at. But given the questions Han Jingru asked, Huang Xiaoyong speculated that he was likely a Pinnacle Master, especially since he mentioned that he did not have a Unique Weapon.

Based on his knowledge, only a Pinnacle Master did not have a Unique Weapon.

“He is a warrior who doesn’t have a Unique Weapon. So what stage do you think he is at?” Huang Xiaoyong smiled as he threw the question back at his father.

*Boom!*

Huang Houyi could feel a shockwave reverberate through his mind again.

He was obviously aware of what it meant to not have a Unique Weapon. The revelation caused his

heart to race.

Although Huang Houyi was the governor, he had never really met anyone of real significance in his life, let alone Pinnacle Masters who belong at the top of the political hierarchy.

However, now that Huang Xiaoyong became a disciple of a Pinnacle Master, it brought great honor to the family.

“Son, you have to seize this opportunity and serve the Pinnacle Master to the best of your abilities. He is your ticket to the Imperial Court,” Huang Houyi reminded.

Huang Xiaoyong let out a faint smile and retorted, “Dad, I’m already his disciple. Does it still matter if I enter the Imperial Court?”

Realizing the truth in his words, Huang Houyi nodded repeatedly.

Pinnacle Masters were independent of the Imperial Court, but the officials there have to treat them with respect. Therefore, from Huang

Xiaoyong's perspective, entering the Imperial Court was no longer important.

“Didn't you say that I was obsessed with women just now? In truth, the lady in the painting is my master's sister. The reason I had her portrait copied was that he instructed me to look for her,” Huang Xiaoyong explained.

“The lady in the painting is young and pretty. Your master doesn't seem to be an old man.” In Xenos' history, all the Pinnacle Masters only achieved their status when they were in their advanced years. Therefore, Huang Houyi had the impression that Huang Xiaoyong's master was an old man.

However, given that he had such a young sister, it could only mean that the master wasn't as old as he thought.

“Dad, you can try your luck, but I won't tell you anything else. If I upset my master, all my future prospects will be destroyed by you,” Huang Xiaoyong explained.

Huang Houyi nodded in resignation. Despite being extremely curious, he wasn't going to risk angering the Pinnacle Master.

If one crossed the Imperial Court, one would at most be dismembered. But if one offended a Pinnacle Master, the consequences would be worse than death.

“Alright, alright, my lips are sealed. But can I at least reveal the stage you are in?” Huang Houyi asked in a tentative manner. Recently, the Three Major Families wanted to take over his position. If they knew that Huang Xiaoyong was a Fourth Stage fighter, the Three Major Families would automatically be deterred. To Huang Houyi, it was an easy solution to his problem.

Huang Xiaoyong furrowed his eyebrows as he gave it some thought. Announcing his stage to the public would shock a lot of people, but Han Jingru would unlikely be affected. After all, other than his father, no one else knew that his ascension was related to Han Jingru.

Besides, Huang Xiaoyong understood why his

father needed to do that. As Huang Houyi's son, it was his duty to resolve his father's predicament.

"Fine, but don't mention my master," Huang Xiaoyong reminded.

"Alright, alright, don't worry. Other than your stage, I will not bring up anything else," Huang Houyi assured him.



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Wait! I Have Something to Say!



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“What?”

At the Wang family’s residence, there came a great roar of consternation from the head of the family.

A look of utter disbelief sprawled across the face of the Wang family patriarch.

To hear that Huang Xiaoyong had reached the Fourth Stage was a huge blow to him.

Just when he wanted to overthrow Huang Houyi as the governor in this pivotal period, then came this piece of shocking news that caused him to fall into despair.

“Are you sure about that? How did Huang Xiaoyong ascend to the Fourth Stage?”

In the meantime, a similar situation happened in the Xie family’s residence.

The patriarch of the Xie family was breathing rapidly when he heard of the sudden news. He did not want to believe it, but he knew it was not

a joke for Huang Houyi to send out such a message.

“How could this be? Huang Xiaoyong was in the Second Stage, so how could he ascend to the Fourth Stage in such a short time?” The head of Xie’s family asked his servant.

“Sir, our spy at the governor’s residence told me that Huang Xiaoyong’s Unique Weapon is a claymore, and that indicates he’s at the Fourth Stage. As to how he managed to do so, I have no information on that.” The servant replied.

The patriarch took several deep breaths. If Huang Xiaoyong was really that powerful, then overthrowing Huang Houyi would be just wishful thinking.

The Three Major Families began to doubt whether them working together could still pose a threat to Huang Houyi. Huang Xiaoyong reaching the Fourth Stage had certainly caused wariness and fearfulness in them. If Huang Xiaoyong were to attack them, none of them would be able to fight back.

The head of Xie's family nearly grounded his teeth flat. He said, "We have devised the plan for so long. Is it going to end in naught?"

The patriarch then collapsed weakly on the bed before he could say anything else.

Meanwhile, at the Chen residence.

Chen Yanran was walking in a hurried, frantic pace.

In a few quick strides, she came to Chen Tiexin's door. She knocked on the door and shouted, "Tiexin, are you in there?"

"Yes." The brother's deep voice came from the room.

Chen Yanran pushed the door open and went in. When she saw the expression on her brother's face, she knew he must have heard the news about Huang Xiaoyong.

"Tiexin, I believe you've heard of the news?"  
Chen Yanran asked.



Chen Tiexin gritted his teeth, and he looked extremely annoyed. He had spent years seeking a Grandmaster and had even traveled thousands of miles for it, but his efforts were to no avail. He could not simply accept the fact that Huang Xiaoyong had attained the Fourth Stage.

What did the son of the governor do to deserve such good luck?

“Huang Xiaoyong must have found himself a powerful Master. Otherwise, he wouldn’t be able to ascend to the Fourth Stage at such a terrifying speed,” Chen Tiexin said.

Chen Yanran thought so too. That was because Huang Xiaoyong had been stagnant in the Second Stage for several years. It was a difficult obstacle for any cultivator to overcome unless they were guided.

But Chen Yanran couldn’t figure out who was that powerful man in Longyun City to help Huang Xiaoyong break through two Stages in such a short period of time.

“Tiexin, do you think his Master is still in Longyun City? Who could it be? I wonder which stage he himself is in.” Chen Yanran wondered.

Chen Tiexin took a deep breath. If that powerful person was still in Longyun City, then he was going to find out who and where he was. As for which Stage that capable man was in, he had no idea.

“Yanran, mobilize everyone in the residence to find this person. We have to find him at all cost,” Chen Tiexin said.

Chen Yanran knew that he was very anxious, but they must not act recklessly. That powerful person had deliberately kept his identity a secret, so it would be useless to search for him.

And even if they were lucky enough to find him, they might need to be prepared to face his wrath. By then, the consequences were just unpredictable.

“Tiexin, don’t worry. We need to think things over and form a strategic plan,” Yanran said.

Chen Tiexin angrily swept off the teapot and cups from the table. With a furious look on his face, he roared, “How do you expect me to accept the fact that I’m still stuck in the Second Stage when Huang Xiaoyong is already in the Fourth Stage?”

Chen Yanran saw how irate her brother was, but there’s nothing she could do.

“Tiexin, don’t worry. It’s probably not your time yet. I believe that you are more talented than Huang Xiaoyong. Once that powerful Master knows about your existence, he will definitely take you in as his disciple too,” Chen Yanran said.

The thick-skinned Chen Tiexin believed what she had said, but he still expressed his concern and said, “I’m afraid this powerful Master has left Longyun City before he could even meet me.”

“This won’t happen,” Chen Yanran said decisively.

“Why not?” Chen Tiexin questioned her in puzzlement. He didn’t understand why Chen

Yanran could be so sure.

“The Hunting event is coming up. I have a hunch that he’s in Longyun City because of that event. He won’t leave until the event is over,” Chen Yanran explained.

Chen Tiexin calmed down a little after hearing her explanation as he thought she made sense. There was no way that powerful Master had appeared in Longyun City without a reason. Something in here must have attracted him.

And wasn’t The Hunting the most happening event upcoming in Longyun City?

“It seems that I need to perform well at the event to catch his attention,” Chen Tiexin said.

Seeing that her brother had calmed down, Chen Yanran nodded and said, “That’s why you mustn’t be hasty now. You’ve got to prepare well for The Hunting. The more anxious you are, the more chaotic it will become.”

“Thank you for reminding me. Otherwise, I

might have acted recklessly and lost everything,” Chen Tiexin said with a smile.

“Well, you should get some rest. I’m going to prepare for The Hunting,” Chen Yanran said.

After leaving Chen Tiexin’s room, she did not return to her own room. Instead, she went to the place where Han Jingru lived.

Han Jingru and Huang Xiaoyong had both left Longyun City and went to the outskirts together earlier on. No one knew what happened during that period. But instinctively, Chen Yanran knew something must have happened between both men.

Of course, she didn’t think Han Jingru was Huang Xiaoyong’s Master. She only wanted to inquire more about the latter from her husband.

“Are you planning to spend the night here?” Han Jingru looked a little surprised when he saw Chen Yanran entering his room at such a late hour. Although the two of them were husband and wife in name, there was nothing between them.

Most importantly, Han Jingru felt nothing towards Chen Yanran. It would be the most heinous thing in the world for him to be unfaithful to Su Yimo.

Chen Yanran smiled coldly and said, “Don’t even think about putting your hands on me.”

Han Jingru patted his chest with relief and said, “I’m glad to hear that.”

Chen Yanran’s expression turned stony, then she gritted her teeth and said, “What do you mean?”



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Wait! I Have Something to Say!



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Chen Yanran had always thumbed her nose at Han Jingru, so why should he think highly of her?

Although Chen Yanran had garnered many followers in Longyun City, her beauty was only appreciated by others. To him, she was just a woman who had nothing to do with him.

Han Jingru shrugged as if nothing had happened and said, “Nothing. Why are you here? Just shoot whatever you have to say.”

Chen Yanran fixed a fiery gaze onto him. She had met a lot of men and all of them were smitten with her beauty. However, there was no sign of a desire for her in Han Jingru’s clear eyes.

She was puzzled. Could it be this man was unsusceptible to a beauty like her?

Or could it be that he’s not a man at all? *Don’t tell me he’s into men...*

She walked up to Han Jingru and deliberately thrust her chest.

“Han Jingru, stop pretending to be a gentleman in front of me. You men are all birds of a feather. Are you not tempted when a beautiful woman stands in front of you?” Chen Yanran said with a charming smile.

“Are you seducing me?” Han Jingru raised his eyebrows and scanned her from head to toe before saying, “You are good-looking, but I really don’t have any interest in you.”

Of all the women he had met, none could be compared to Qi Bingying in terms of beauty and sexiness. Since he was able to control himself in front of Qi Bingying, Chen Yanran meant nothing to him.

He remembered the countless times that Qi Bingying had thrown herself at him. She had even deliberately gotten him drunk, and they both fell asleep together.

Chen Yanran gritted her teeth. She wanted so badly to find a flaw in him and the evidence that he had been lying. But no matter how hard she tried to seduce him, she eventually found out that



Han Jingru was like no other man. He did not show any sign of lust for her, and there was no way he could feign it so well.

“Is there something wrong with your manhood?” Chen Yanran sneered. The only explanation she could think of was that his ‘thing’ had some unmentionable illness. That’s why he could remain unmoved in front of her.

“What are you here for? If you are here to test your charm on me, that’s not necessary,” Han Jingru said indifferently. No matter what Chen Yanran thought of him, it did not matter to him at all. He did not want to be involved with this woman. Now that Huang Xiaoyong had become his disciple, the Chen family was no longer as important as before to Han Jingru.

“I want to know what happened between you and Huang Xiaoyong at the outskirts. How much do you know about him ascending two Stages at once?” Chen Yanran appeared frosty as she had suffered a huge blow to her self-esteem. Her beauty had always been her leverage on men, but it was ineffective on Han Jingru. That enraged

her.

“Huang Xiaoyong and I met up?” Nonchalantly, Han Jingru put on a smiling face. “You should know better than anyone how much he hates me. If we were to meet up, he would definitely kill me. How would I know about him ascending two Stages at once?”

Han Jingru was notified the moment the news went viral in Longyun City, but it did not matter to him. After all, the news had no other information other than Huang Xiaoyong made it to the Forth Stage. Perhaps this disciple of his couldn't help it and revealed the secret to his father. As a result, the older man made it public.

Standing from Huang's family point of view, Han Jingru was aware that the Three Major Families were working together to overthrow Huang Houyi. To strike back, the governor must reveal Huang Xiaoyong's strength to create fear in the Three Major Families.

After all, in a place like Longyun City, being someone at the Fourth Stage was enough to instill

the rest with disquietude.

“Nonsense.” Chen Yanran did not believe a word at all and said, “How was it possible that the both of you did not meet up after leaving the city together? Besides, ten Second Stage fighters whom Huang Xiaoyong had brought along with him simply vanished into thin air. What secrets are you guys hiding? As long as you are willing to tell me how did Huang Xiaoyong ascend two Stages at once, I will promise you anything you want.”

Han Jingru frowned. *Anything?* That was a significant word for her to use. He did not understand why Chen Yanran would do that. Why was this piece of news so important to her?

“Do you want to ascend to the next stage too?”  
Han Jingru was baffled.

“Not me. It’s my brother.” Chen Yanran said.

Han Jingru smiled and said, “Looks like you have a strong bond with your brother. You are even willing to do anything for his sake. Aren’t you

afraid that I will make an outrageous request?"

"As long as you are willing to tell me, I will satisfy your request." As she spoke, she pulled down her clothes to reveal her fair shoulders.

Without glancing at her, Han Jingru casually lay back on his bed. "I'm sorry, but I'm not interested in you. I have no idea what did Huang Xiaoyong do to ascend the stages, so I'm afraid I'll have to disappoint you."

Han Jingru knew Chen Tiexin had been seeking a Grandmaster for many years but to no avail. In his point of view, Chen Tiexin was a complete fool.

No Grandmaster would recruit just anyone as their disciples. Even if there was, it would be an opportunity come by with luck.

Just then, Chen Yanran's face contorted into an ugly scowl. She had lowered her dignity in front of Han Jingru today, but she did not expect him to treat her like trash. Who did he think he was to treat her like this?

“Han Jingru, this is the Chen residence. Believe it or not, one order from me and you’ll be dead by tomorrow morning,” Chen Yanran said through gritted teeth.

Han Jingru turned sideways, with his back facing her. He said, “You want to kill me? Bring it on. But I don’t think now is the right timing for you.”

Chen Yanran took a deep breath. *He actually knows that I want to kill him.*

For some inexplicable reason, Chen Yanran laughed all of a sudden. A devilish smile spread across her face while she said, “You know what? There would be a day you come begging me on your knees.”

Finished speaking, she left the room.

Han Jingru sighed in exasperation. Her personality was very similar to that of Mi Xiaoxing. Both of them were extremely confident with their beauty, thinking that they would be able to bewitch any man. It was just unfortunate for them to meet someone so upright like Han

Jingru.

“Is it worth it to sell your body for that loser brother of yours? What a joke.” Han Jingru mumbled to himself.

In Han Jingru’s eyes, Chen Tiexin would never be able to break through his Stage. That was because he had always hoped to seek shortcuts from a Grandmaster throughout the years. With that kind of mentality, he would always be stuck at the Second Stage.



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Wait! I Have Something to Say!



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“Triple the dosage, Ms. Chen? Did I hear it wrongly?”

In Chen Yanran’s room, her maidservant stared at her in bewilderment.

But Chen Yanran looked calm and replied, “Is that not enough?”

The maid was speechless. Chen Yanran had ordered her to slip an aphrodisiac drug into Han Jingru’s dinner. As if it was not enough, she even wanted her to triple the dosage.

“Ms. Chen, if you don’t mind me asking, why do you want to spike him with an aphrodisiac?” The maid asked in puzzlement.

“You talk too much,” Chen Yanran said dully.

The maid quickly lowered her head, not daring to speak another word.

“Follow my instructions and triple the dosage,” Chen Yanran repeated.

Now that Ms. Chen had already given the order, the maid dared not disobey. She could only walk straight to the kitchen.

As instructed, she measured the dosage and tripled it.

As she slipped the drug into the food, the maid could imagine Han Jingru's bloodshot eyes that were filled with lust. He would be no different from a beast in heat.

Finished preparing, the servant sent the food to Han Jingru's room. The man wolfed down the meal as he did not expect Chen Yanran to come up with such a dirty trick. Soon enough, he had his fill of the food, unaware that he had been drugged with a triple dosage of aphrodisiac.

Not long after, Han Jingru suddenly felt that his heart was racing and his entire body became hotter than usual. His mind filled with lustful thoughts uncontrollably.

Ever since he came to the second world, he had not had sex with a woman for a long time. But he



had always been good at controlling his desires, so what he was feeling now was completely abnormal.

Taking a deep breath, Han Jingru started pondering the strange event. *Why am I having this strong lustful desire all of a sudden?*

And this desire grew stronger by the minute. He even felt that he was about to lose control.

At that moment, Chen Yanran's voice came from outside the door.

"I told you before, there would be a day you come begging me on your knees."

In an instant, Han Jingru came to the realization that Chen Yanran was behind this. There must be something strange in the meal he had just now.

He pushed open the door and bellowed furiously, "Chen Yanran, what on earth are you trying to do?!"

After he opened the door, Han Jingru saw that

Chen Yanran was not alone. There were many guards behind her. Judging from the number, at least half of the guards in the residence were summoned to her side. It was obvious that she had premeditated the whole thing.

“As I said, I want you to kneel before me,” Chen Yanran said coldly.

“You vicious woman. How could you use such a dirty trick?” Han Jingru gritted his teeth.

Chen Yanran smiled faintly and said, “It’s only natural for me to play dirty against someone like you. Beg me. Get on your knees and beg me. I can help you.”

“You want to know how Huang Xiaoyong ascended two Stages at once, am I right?” Han Jingru mocked her.

“That’s right,” Chen Yanran said with a smile. In her opinion, she had Han Jingru in the palm of her hand. All he could do now was to compromise.

“To tell you the truth, I do know how he did that,” Han Jingru said.

When Chen Yanran heard that, she grew excited and said, “Quick, tell me how he did it.”

It was very important for Chen Yanran to know how did Huang Xiaoyong achieve that. Only then she’ll be able to figure out how to help Chen Tiexin to break through from his Stage.

“Hah!” Han Jingru said with a big grin, “Trying to make me compromise with this trick? You have underestimated me.”

As soon as he finished speaking, Han Jingru slammed the door.

Chen Yanran stood there, seemingly not in a hurry at all. She knew that now was not the time for the drug to reach its maximal efficacy, and she believed that very soon Han Jingru would come out and beg her. Moreover, he would even take the initiative to tell her the secret.

“Han Jingru, I’ll wait here. I don’t believe that

you will be able to stand it,” Chen Yanran said.

The maid standing next to Chen Yanran lowered her head and dared not speak. It would be impossible for Ms. Chen to present herself to Han Jingru to remedy the drug effect. Deep in her heart, she knew that she would most likely be sacrificed afterward.

As a maid, she had no control over her own destiny. She could only do whatever was ordered by Ms. Chen.

“Go and change into a nice dress, preferably something thin and see-through,” Right then, Chen Yanran told her.

The maid was thunderstruck.

What had to come would come eventually.

“Yes, Ms. Chen.”

After a while, the maid returned, dressing in red organza. Even the guards couldn't help to steal a glance at her graceful and lithe figure.

Chen Yanran nodded in satisfaction and said, “Go on in. Make sure he tells you the answer I want to hear.”

“Yes, Ms. Chen.” The maid nodded before walking towards the room.

She felt uneasy as she pushed the door open. The poor thing could not contain the trepidation she felt within her. Despite being a virgin, she was tasked to seduce a man. This was her destiny as a maid, and she could not disobey Ms. Chen.

“Han Jingru, Ms. Chen wants you to get on your knees and tell her what she wants to know,” The maid said to Han Jingru.

Han Jingru sat cross-legged on the bed with his eyes shut tightly. Beads of sweat could be seen forming on his forehead.

For an ordinary person, three times the usual dosage was far too much one could bear. If it were not for Han Jingru’s strong willpower, he would have been foaming at mouth by now.

Han Jingru gritted his teeth and said, “Get lost.”

“This medicine comes from the best pharmacist in Longyun City. You don’t have any other choice,” the maid kindly reminded him.

Han Jingru was close to losing control. Although the drug had not reached its maximal efficacy, it was already hard for him to hold himself together. However, he was definitely unwilling to compromise or to kneel before Chen Yanran in this state.

“Tell her, the Chen family will have to bear the consequences for what happened today. All of you will be exterminated,” Han Jingru said coldly.

Exterminated!

The maid trembled with fright. Lifting her head, she could see Han Jingru’s bloodshot eyes, and he had a terrifying look on his face. Undoubtedly, she was scared out of her wits.

In her heart, Han Jingru was a loser. But at that

moment, he struck terror into her heart, and there was no way for her to suppress that fear in her.

“Han Jingru, why do you have to go against Ms. Chen? Whom do you think you are to do so?”  
The maid summoned her courage and asked.

Han Jingru gave a devilish smile and said, “I should be the one asking her that. Get out, or I will kill you.”

Seeing the murderous gleam in Han Jingru’s eyes, as though he was about to kill someone, the maid quickly rushed out of the room in fright.

“Ms. Chen, h-he wants to kill me.” The maid walked up to Chen Yanran in fear, her body shaking uncontrollably.



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Chen Yanran went pale upon hearing what Han Jingru said in the room.

*He said the death of the entire Chen family was inevitable!*

At that moment, she had a strong urge to kill Han Jingru as she felt an inexplicably dangerous aura emanating from him.

*If Han Jingru's words would eventually come true, then now would be my best chance at killing him! No... I can't kill him just yet... No one else knows how Huang Xiaoyong ascended by two Stages! For the sake of my brother, I must get Han Jingru to tell me the truth!*

Chen Yanran took a look at her maid. *She's dressed seductively and all, but her face just isn't pretty enough... Looks like I'll have to do this myself, then...*

She then took a deep breath and walked towards the room.

“What are you doing, Ms. Chen?” The maid



asked in shock.

Chen Yanran ignored her and went straight into the room.

*I may not be experienced, but I know for sure what would happen to me if Han Jingru loses control over himself. Even so, I'm not afraid of him... If this will help Chen Tiexin ascend and bring glory to the Chen family, it's worth it...*

Chen Yanran stood in front of him and said, "I can help remove the effects of this drug for you, Han Jingru. All I ask in return is for you to tell me something."

Han Jingru kept his eyes shut as the drug's effects were so strong that he would lose control at the sight of a woman.

"I suggest you get the hell out of my sight, Chen Yanran!" He ordered coldly.

"Your blood vessels will erupt, and you will die here bleeding out of all your orifices. Is that what you want?" Chen Yanran asked.

Han Jingru knew she wasn't exaggerating as he could feel his blood surging about, but the thought of Su Yimo and Han Xiang kept him from acting out his impulses.

"You must really underestimate me if you think this drug will kill me," he said.

Chen Yanran began undressing, and he felt his heart beat even faster as the rustling of her clothes filled his ears.

"I dare you to open your eyes and look at me," she teased him.

Han Jingru could only keep his eyes closed as blood began dripping out of his nose.

Suddenly, Chen Tiexin came bursting into the room.

He had rushed over as soon as he heard about Chen Yanran's plans from his servants, and let out a sigh of relief when he saw that he had arrived in the nick of time.

“What the hell are you doing, Yanran?” Chen Tiexin questioned her sternly.

“He knows how Huang Xiaoyong ascended by two Stages! I need him to tell me the secret!”  
Chen Yanran explained.

Chen Tiexin felt his heart ache when he heard that. *I can't believe she's going this far for me... No, I won't let her do this!*

He grabbed Chen Yanran by the hand and said, “If this is what it takes to find out, then I'd rather not know it. Now, come on, we're leaving.”

She tried to break free of his grip, but he was too strong for her. “He'll die if I just leave him like this!”

Chen Tiexin shot Han Jingru a disdainful look and snorted. “No one's gonna miss a piece of trash like him anyway!”

With that, he dragged her forcefully out of the room.

“Don’t do anything stupid like this ever again, got it? I can take care of things myself. Besides, did you really think he knows Huang Xiaoyong’s secret?”

*Han Jingru clearly said it himself earlier! He knows how Huang Xiaoyong ascended!*

She saw how stubborn Chen Tiexin was and knew it was useless to try and change his mind.

However, Han Jingru had other secrets that Chen Yanran was interested in, so she didn’t want to let him die just yet. “I know what I did was wrong, and I won’t do it again, but he...”

“Forget about him! Fate will decide if he lives or dies!” Chen Tiexin cut her off.

Chen Yanran had given him three times the usual dosage, so there was no way for him to survive it without a proper release.

Han Jingru was at his limits by the time they left.

“What the hell are you waiting for, little guy?”

Help me out here!” He muttered through clenched teeth.

The little white snake slithered out of his arm and gave him a helpless look.

“F\*\*king bite me if you have to! Just do something!” Han Jingru was running out of ideas.

The Ruby-eyed Python opened its mouth and revealed its fangs containing the venom feared by even the strongest of in Xenos.

The snake then bit into his arm and quickly let go after releasing some of its venom.

A dark purple discoloration formed at his fingertips and spread rapidly across his entire arm.

Although the venom from the Ruby-eyed Python was able to suppress the effects of the aphrodisiac, Han Jingru was in a lot more pain than he was before.

He spent the entire night writhing about on the

ground drenched in sweat, and it was already morning by the time the pain subsided.

Chen Yanran had woken up at dawn and wondered if Han Jingru was still alive. She quickly summoned her maid and said, “Go check on Han Jingru. Have someone take care of the body if he’s dead.”

Despite what she said, Chen Yanran was actually hoping for him to be alive as there were still secrets that she needed him to tell her.

“Yes, .”

The maid went over as told.

She felt a little nervous as she stood outside the room, still shaken up by the trauma from last night.

The maid opened the door and was shocked to see Han Jingru lying motionless on the floor.

*Is he dead? He’s gotta be dead, right?*

She thought to herself as she took a deep breath and approached him to check if he was still breathing.

“Don’t worry, I’m still alive.” Han Jingru said all of a sudden.

That caught her off guard, and the maid jumped backward in shock.

“You wouldn’t have to suffer like this if you’d just submitted to Ms. Chen!” The maid shouted.

Han Jingru smirked at her. “I submit to no one!”

The maid clenched her teeth in frustration. *What a stubborn guy! How dare he go against Ms. Chen in the Chen residence?*



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