

## Necropolis Immortal

### *Chapter 3: Aurum Openia Pill*

“Damn, that was a nice bit of sleep!” Lu Yun indulged in an extreme stretch. Still wreathed in the fog of sleep, he blearily scrambled up to brush his teeth and wash his face. “Wait!”

Startled into full wakefulness, he looked vacantly around him.

“It was all real! I made it to the world of immortals!” He came back to his senses. “It wasn’t a dream.”

“...right!” The events of last night crashed back into him. “Enneawyrn Coffinbearers! The feng shui here is a tangible existence!”

He trembled with horror. “I’ve gotta get out of here, or I’m deader than a doornail!”

He could unravel that feng shui layout, but one that existed in the physical world was beyond his understanding. An additional minute spent here was one closer to death.

He stumbled his way out the room.

“Milord, you’re awake!” Wanfeng was walking toward him with a tray of food, and broke into trot when she saw him exit. She’d been the one to help him back when he’d fainted on the Mooncatcher Tower the night before.

“Come come come, we need to leave as soon as possible!” Lu Yun grabbed Wanfeng’s hand and tore off in the direction of the main door.

“Leave? Where?” Wanfeng looked blankly at her master.

“Anywhere but here!” Anxiety roughened Lu Yun’s voice.

“Your Excellency, you’re not going anywhere other than here.” A wizened voice sounded at this moment, quickly followed by an old man with a shock of white hair. He’d appeared next to Lu Yun and Wanfeng at some point in time, smiling merrily at them.

“Where would we go to find you if you left with the governor’s seal?”

Lu Yun felt like he’d crashed into a wall of air the next instant. The strong recoil sent him tumbling to the ground on his butt.

“Who are you?” Grimacing with pain, he rubbed his smarting posterior.

“You don’t know me?” The old man blinked.

“I can consider getting to know you if you have a pretty daughter,” Lu Yun declared haughtily, scrambling up.

“Milord, he’s the grand steward of House Ge, Ge Long,” whispered Wanfeng.

“The grand steward of House Ge?” Lu Yun frowned. “What’s the grand steward of House Ge doing in my place?”

“Why, I’m here to protect Your Excellency, of course,” Ge Long jeered. “You have so many enemies, Your Excellency. It wouldn’t do for you to accidentally be beaten to death. I may not have a daughter, but I have a granddaughter. Would you like to see her, Your Excellency?”

Lu Yun quickly reacted when he noted Ge Long’s narrowed eyes and sinister tone.

He still had half a year left in his post, but he’d offended so many people that his enemies had sent people to keep him under watch. Or rather, they’d gone one step further and grounded him so that he wouldn’t get away.

They would move in for the kill as soon as he was relieved of his position.

“Hmph!” Lu Yun snorted loftily. He couldn’t be bothered with further argument and left with a flourish.

“He’s so ugly that his granddaughter wouldn’t be any better. Was that unseen wall of air just now the work of a cultivator?” Rather than return to his room, Lu Yun made his way up the Mooncatcher Tower again with Wanfeng’s help.

“Ge Long is a cultivator of the qi transformation realm. He formed that wall out of true qi just now. But seeing that he didn’t harm milord, Wanfeng didn’t make a move,” the maid explained carefully, fearful that Lu Yun would berate her.

“You’re stronger than him?” Lu Yun’s eyes gleamed.

“This servant can deploy combat arts and has refined my golden core. I’m in the core realm.” The girl arched her neck proudly. But something occurred to her the next second and she cautiously ventured, “Milord, you don’t blame me for not taking action just now, do you?”

The old Lu Yun hadn’t treated Wanfeng that well, feeding her a daily diet of beatings and curses. She was a foster daughter, taken in by Lu Yun’s father when her original family discarded her. If it hadn’t been for the old governor, Wanfeng would’ve died of starvation long ago.

Though she knew that House Lu hadn't taken her in out of the goodness of their hearts, she was still very grateful to the governor's family. She never breathed a word of complaint, even when her master whipped a criss-cross pattern across her body.

Of course, Lu Yun didn't know any of this.

"Qi transformation? Golden core?" He hadn't paid attention to anything else she said. "Tell me more about this cultivation business."

"Alright!" Wanfeng agreed happily. Since the governor hadn't been able to cultivate before, he'd never paid any heed to matters of cultivation.

"There are three major realms on the path of cultivation, with nine levels total.

"Qi, core, and spirit are the three realms. Each one is further divided into three smaller levels.

"In the qi realm, there are the qi application, qi condensation, and qi transformation levels.

"In the core realm, you form a golden core, then a life core, and finally an origin core.

"The spirit realm has the nascent spirit, refined spirit, and transformed spirit levels.

"After that, the cultivator is an immortal. But I've never seen one, so I don't know what realms they have."

Lu Yun nodded. "Can I really not cultivate?"

Wanfeng's expression dimmed. "You can't. The old lord once sought out an immortal to change your constitution, but the mighty one failed."

"Alright then." Lu Yun twisted his lips into a half smile.

"But I heard the old lord say that the immortal mentioned the Aurum Openia Pill can change your constitution, letting you cultivate like everyone else." The last bit of trivia suddenly popped into Wanfeng's mind.

"The Aurum Openia Pill?" Lu Yun's eyes widened.

"But its recipe was lost a long time ago. The pills left in the immortal world are treasures from long ago. Eating one means there's one less in the world. That's why one pill could be traded for an entire Dusk Province." Wanfeng smiled wryly.

"That's just money, isn't it?" He looked outside the city walls again—there was a large immortal's tomb out there!

Though there were signs of partial excavation, it remained whole overall. Its feng shui hadn't fragmented, a sign that previous raiders had only tapped into the outskirts, but hadn't yet found the core of the tomb.

Aurum Openia was so precious because its recipe had been lost. If he found something in that tomb that had also been lost to the passage of time, he might be able to trade for a pill.

"Wanfeng, you can take care of that Ge Long, right? Are there others in the manor that have me under surveillance?" Lu Yun recalled that his maid had just said she was stronger than the House Ge steward.

"Mm," Wanfeng nodded. "I secretly broke through to the core realm two days ago. No one knows, apart from Grand Steward Xue.

"As for those surveilling milord, apart from Ge Long, there's also Gongsun You of House Gongsun and Feng Liancheng of House Feng. Ge Long and Gongsun You are no match for me, but Feng Liancheng is also in the core realm. I've just broken through, so I don't think I'll be able to beat him," Wanfeng said with some frustration.

"It's enough that you can take two of them on!" A smirk crossed Lu Yun's face. "Let that Ge Long follow us. We're leaving town and setting course for Mount Carmine Dusk. Let's broaden our worldview with an immortal's tomb!"

His blood boiled at the thought of exploring a tomb built for an immortal.

"Your Excellency, where are you going now?" As if agreed on beforehand, Ge Long appeared to block their way once more when the two of them made it to the manor doors.

"I'm bored in the manor. I'm going out for a spin around town," responded Lu Yun nonchalantly.

Ge Long frowned. "That won't do. Your Excellency can't go anywhere during these six months."

"Did His Majesty the Celestial Emperor make that rule?" Lu Yun sniffed coldly.

"No." Ge Long paused when he heard the question and shook his head. "The aristocratic families of Dusk drafted it."

"Hahahahaha!" Lu Yun threw his head back in laughter. "The aristocratic families of Dusk drafted it? Are the noble houses looking to rebel?"

"That's complete nonsense!" Ge Long's expression shifted.

“Nonsense?” Lu Yun smiled sardonically. “There’s half a year left to the deadline and His Majesty has yet to strip me of my position, but the aristocracy you speak of dares put the governor of Dusk under house arrest? What is this, if not rebellion?”

The steward’s expression flickered rapidly. True, Lu Yun was still the governor during this half year. His enemies had yet to make a move, because they were concerned about the reprisal.

“Wanfeng, make preparations for me to bathe and burn incense so that I can petition the emperor. I must report that the Dusk aristocracy seeks to rebel. Perhaps in his delight after putting down the rebellion, His Majesty will bequeath me an Aurum Openia Pill.”

Wanfeng’s eyes lit up hopefully when she heard this. “You don’t have to go to that trouble, milord. You have a command token to deploy the mighty Dusk army, so you don’t need to trouble the celestial emperor.”

It was Lu Yun’s turn to have anticipation color his look.

“Hold!” Cold sweat beaded Ge Long’s face. With Lu Yun’s lawless and godless nature, he really might deploy the province’s army and exterminate all of Dusk’s cultivation clans.

“Where might Your Excellency be going?” The steward’s eyes shifted in rapid thought and smiled in the end. “Your Excellency has many enemies and will likely be mobbed to death if you leave just like this. Why not have this old servant accompany and protect you?”

It’s one thing if he only stays in the city, but if he leaves it... heh. I’ll be able to beat him to death myself!

Nothing was off the table when it came to the depths of Ge Long’s fury. His granddaughter had died at Lu Yun’s hands!

1. The straight translation of this pill’s name is the Nine Orifices/Openings Golden Pill. Frankly, that sounded a bit appalling to me, and for such a magical pill too. Aurum is the Latin word for golden, and Openia is the Old English word for ‘to open’. -penia is also a medical suffix for a deficiency in something, so it seemed quite apt here that those who lack the ability to cultivate would take this pill.