

My Crown 2011

Chapter 2011: Submission

Zhao He flew into a rage, and he struck out a wave of spiritual energy toward Qiao Mu like a venomous snake.

Mo Lian was furious. He flew up and landed beside Qiao Mu. With a flick of his sleeve, the spiritual energy Zhao He shot over ricocheted back the way it came.

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Zhao He was simply gobsmacked!

He simply didn't expect that a young man's effortless strike could completely dispel his own.

In other words, his decades of cultivation simply couldn't last one move against this young man?

Impossible!

It must be that he had overly underestimated the enemy earlier.

Zhao He raised his hand and roared toward the forty plus level-seven spiritual cultivators behind him, "Stop them!"

His subordinates swiftly surrounded the group from Apex Academy.

A raging blaze started burning in between Zhao He's palms. He twisted his body in the air and then struck toward Qiao Mu's head with both palms blazing with fire.

Humph! An abnormal light flitted across Crown Prince Mo's eyes.

A single black flame sprouted from his fingertip.

At that moment, Zhao He suddenly discovered in shock that the flames that were originally blazing in his palms were starting to extinguish bit by bit, until his spiritual fire disappeared.

Zhao He was unaware that this was due to an instinctual fear all fire spirits in this world possessed toward sacred fire.

Once sacred fire took the stage, no one could best it.

A tremendous force approached Zhao He.

The tremendous force hit before Zhao He could even shout, and he uncontrollably flew out at abnormal speed.

Miss Qiao had no opportunity to make a move from beginning to end. She silently looked up at Mo Lian and muttered in her mind: *Zhao Li had his dad to stand up for him, but she had her hubby to do the same!*

Who didn't have a relative or friend? The little fellow inwardly rolled her eyes.

The black flame Mo Lian produced had already set Zhao He's outer garment ablaze.

The black flames were like a sinister dragon that entwined Zhao He's body tightly.

In his alarm, Zhao He discovered that the fire spirit in his body had become nonexistent.

He was afraid to hesitate any longer, hastily ripped away his outer garment and throwing it on the floor.

It only took a moment for that black flame to burn that brocade outer garment to a crisp.

Zhao He gazed at Mo Lian in bewilderment.

If he didn't activate his defensive barrier first before attacking the little lady, perhaps it would be him who was burnt to a crisp right now.

Zhao He shuddered and involuntarily stepped backwards.

"You! You? Who are you!" Impossible, according to his intelligence, this little lady, who killed his treasured son, was simply a lowly ant who had ascended to the Shuntian Prefecture from the Lower Star Domain. She had only been in Shuntian Prefecture for half a year.

Yet he felt an instinctual fear from that man beside her?

Zhao He was extremely cognizant that he couldn't see through that young man's cultivation.

How was this man so strong?

Did he really hail from the Lower Star Domain?

What crushed Zhao He the most was that those people from Apex Academy had joined hands to finish off half of the forty plus spiritual cultivators he had brought.

The remaining twenty or so level-seven spiritual cultivators were unwilling to continue battling, and they hastily retreated back beside Zhao He.

"Cough. Cough, cough." Zhao He clutched his chest as he stared at Qiao Mu and company in stupefaction. "You all are?"

Chapter 2012: Dispose of Them

It was hard to believe that not only were these lowly ants from the Lower Star Domain arrogant, they could even cripple so many of his level-seven spiritual cultivators all at once!

What kind of strength was this?

Zhao He glanced toward the people from Apex Academy with lingering fear.

He was unaware that a good many venerable spirit realm and venerable immortal realm experts had mixed in among this group from Apex Academy.

If not because these experts feared that Heavenly Law would come to seek trouble and thus defended as appropriate, it was impossible for this remaining half of Zhao He's subordinates to still be standing.

If the Little Despot and them got serious, it would be no use at all even if Zhao He brought hundreds or thousands of grand spiritual cultivators with him.

In the face of absolute strength, Zhao He could only submit.

As long as he still wanted to live, he had to lower his head while he could.

However, Zhao He could not calm down when he thought of Zhao Li, his only son.

No! He couldn't abandon his son like this.

He could not let Zhao Li die unjustly like this. He had to get justice from that expressionless girl in front of him!

Even, even if he couldn't get justice. He, he would make her pay!

Before Zhao Li could continue pestering them, Mo Lian stated coldly, "Dispose of them."

"Yes!" Four to five hidden guards immediately appeared from behind. Under Tung's lead, they immobilized the panic-stricken Zhao He with their spiritual energy and dragged along Zhao He's disciples before vanishing from everybody's sight.

Miss Qiao blinked her eyes and swung Mo Lian's wrist. "Who is he? How come I've never seen him before."

"His name is Tung. Since the emperor sent him, I'm using him for now and we'll see." He still lacked manpower at the moment, so he would have to slowly replenish when they returned to the Divine Province.

Qiao Mu nodded. "Oh."

"Qiaoqiao, don't worry." Mo Lian stroked her cheek. "You can leave these miscellaneous people to me."

Qiao Mu couldn't care less about dealing with Zhao He. Since Crown Prince Mo was taking charge for her, Miss Qiao naturally... was glad for the leisure.

"Lian, that person called Tung was sent by the Divine Province Emperor?"

"Mhm." Mo Lian nodded.

"Is he reliable?"

"I still don't know for now." Mo Lian shook his head. "But at present, he does listen to orders and hasn't caused me any trouble."

Qiao Mu responded with an "oh." "Okay then."

The interrupted competition resumed its tranquility after Zhao He and his group got towed away.

It was only tranquil on the surface though. As for everybody's terrified gazes when they looked at Mo Lian, Qiao Mu couldn't care less about what they thought.

"We will proceed with the first component of the finals in the afternoon."

“You can return to your inns to rest until noon.”

Everyone: ...

Doesn't your competition have too tight of a schedule!

Are you itching to use even the time spent for sleep and meals too?

They had to fight so many battles in a short few days against such strong opponents at such a rapid pace!

Many of them had long been unable to bear it. Thus, no one bickered when they heard that they could only rest for half the day. They directly hurried back to their inns with their team.

“You’ve got to be kidding.” Zhou Danjin complained indignantly. “This year’s competition is simply an awful mess with a foul atmosphere! Who is coming up with these lousy ideas all day! It’s all a bundle of tricks!”

The little fatty and the others placated Mentor Zhou. Afterwards, they returned to Anping Inn with the mentors.

Qiao Mu was indifferent about it.

Chapter 2013: Soul-Gathering Bell

She could rest, or she could not rest... It was the same either way.

She actually wasn’t tired at all, so it didn’t matter to her whether she rested.

Zhou Danjin had brought the students back to Anping Inn to rest, planning to also eat lunch together.

However, after returning to the inn, Mo Lian pulled Qiao Mu back to their rooms to sleep.

Qiao Mu expressed that she was not the least bit sleepy right now. Even though it had been noisy all last night, she had been able to nap intermittently while leaning against Mo Lian.

“Hubby is sleepy!” Mo Lian held her petite hand and stomped up the stairs.

They ditched the group who were impatient to be fed. The latter gritted their teeth as they watched them go.

“Waiter! Serve a bit of whatever you have to eat!” After exasperatedly watching the young couple leave, Qi Xuanxuan could only shift to calling the inn’s waiter.

—My Qiao’s section break—

Forty-five thousand kilometers away from the Divine Province’s border city.

Inside the encampment of the Aurora Desert’s Pangu Tribe.

A woman’s painful moans could be heard.

Princess Jing finished applying the pupils on a drawing of a flying hawk with a dab of her brush. Only then did she look up at the maidservant beside her. "What's wrong, the third young lady still hasn't recovered yet?"

Xinlan bowed toward her respectfully. "The third young lady naturally requires a bit of time after getting reborn from the ashes."

"Tsk." Princess Jing clicked her tongue and tossed her brush into the washing cup. She responded dryly, "Her? Getting reborn from the ashes? Don't joke around, Xinlan. She is only a buffoon making a fool of herself."

Xinlan lowered her head and did not comment further.

Jing Linyao did not press further either. She lifted the flap of the yurt and walked out with large strides. "Come with me to see."

Her yurt was located some distance away from the yurt of the third young lady, Jing Minyao.

While walking over slowly, Jing Linyao just so happened to encounter Wang Limeng, who was hobbling in her direction while carrying a food box.

Wang Limeng immediately bit her lip when she saw Jing Linyao, concealing the hatred in her eyes.

She put on a smiling face and nodded toward Jing Linyao. She said, "Princess, have you come to visit your third sister?"

Jing Linyao nodded without speaking as she stepped into Jing Minyao's yurt.

At a glance, she could see that Jing Minyao had gotten so emaciated that it was like she was reduced to a skeleton. The latter was lying on the bed and staring venomously at her.

"You have come to make fun of me?" Jing Minyao's voice was unbelievably raspy.

She wanted to give her bed a hard smack, but she didn't even have the strength to do that at present.

Jing Linyao suppressed the smile in her eyes as she looked at this sister of hers who was so stupid that she did not pose a threat. She stated faintly, "Third Sister, Eldest Sister advises you not to get angry so much. It was not easy for this soul-gathering bell to piece together your soul and hence allow you the chance to open your eyes again. You should be cherishing this miracle."

"You!" Jing Minyao shook from fury. "You! If you hadn't schemed against me, h-how would I have ended up in such a miserable state?"

Jing Linyao covered her mouth as she chuckled. "Third Sister, you shouldn't be saying that. Eldest Sister has come to see how you are recovering. How come you are snapping at whomever you can?"

"Get out of here!" Jing Minyao struggled to throw an empty porcelain plate at her.

Yet because she was unable to muster a hint of strength, she ended up knocking her head on the bed.

Jing Linyao's eyes flickered.

Chapter 2014: An Old Blossoming White Lotus

With a faint smile on her lips, Jing Linyao turned to say to Madam Jing, "Madam should accompany Youngest Sister more when you have the time and urge her to mellow this temper of hers."

"The people outside are not our own family. As her eldest sister, I can accommodate and yield to her on all matters, but how about outsiders? Such as that crown prince consort, would she let off Youngest Sister?"

"Madam does not understand how to discipline Youngest Sister." Jing Linyao curled her lips into a sneer. "After leaving the tribe, there naturally will be people to help you discipline her. Do you not agree?"

Madam Jing was so incensed that her pretty face flushed red.

"The Chief has arrived!" This announcement cut off the conversation inside the yurt.

Jing Minyao hit the bed angrily and shouted toward her dad, the chief, who was striding inside quickly.

"Daddy, Eldest Sister, Eldest Sister is bullying me and my mom again!"

The chief of the Pangu Tribe, Jing You, was over seventy, but he still had a vigorous body. He walked swiftly, leaving behind a breeze in his wake.

Upon entering, he couldn't resist wrinkling his brows at his eldest daughter, Jing Linyao. "Why are you here?"

Jing Linyao scoffed inwardly, but she showed an agreeable smile on the surface. "Father, Youngest Sister has finally woken up after the Soul-Gathering Bell spent more than ten days gathering Youngest Sister's soul. However, her body is still extremely frail. As her eldest sister, I naturally have to come visit."

"However, Youngest Sister has always harbored a misunderstanding toward me." Jing Minyao said with a smile, "I did not say anything much. I only told Madam that she should properly discipline Youngest Sister! Yet Youngest Sister actually says that I am bullying her? Father, this matter should be considered a lesson to learn from! If Minmin continues to be so overly arrogant, she will encounter someone she shouldn't offend again like this time. It'll be too late to do anything then."

"You shut up!" Wang Limeng yelled furiously.

This woman was cursing her daughter again and again. Did she want her Minmin to die another time?

Jing Linyao looked guilelessly at Madam Jing, Wang Limeng. She then smiled as she turned to look at the chief, Jing Tou, who was looking at her meaningfully with profound eyes.

"If there isn't anything, you can go back first," Chief Jing ordered coldly. There was no fatherly warmth in his gaze toward Princess Jing.

Jing Linyao nodded obediently and bowed to Chief Jing. "Daughter will be excusing herself first."

"My lord." Just as Jing Linyao stepped out of the yurt, she could hear Madam Jing sob heart-renderingly, "Look at her Miss High and Mighty attitude! She clearly doesn't respect me at all!"

“Dad! Jing Linyao harmed me, it’s Jing Linyao that woman who harmed me! Dad, I want to kill her, I want to kill... ugh, cough, cough, cough. Cough, cough, cough!!” Jing Minyao’s body started spasming violently all over.

This freaked out her mother, Madam Jing. She hastily rushed up to hug her daughter and wailed, “Minmin, Minmin ah! You must not get agitated! Did you not hear what our tribe’s witch doctor say? In the 15 days after using the soul-gathering bell, you have to maintain a calm mood! You must not get overly emotional! Otherwise, even if the soul-gathering is successful, your brain will suffer from after-effects!”

“I cannot calm down my emotions!” Jing Minyao screeched, “Dad, kill Jing Minyao for me! Kill her! She was the one who harmed me, it was her! It must have been her who let out the news about Crown Prince Mo’s consort. It was her who lured me step by step to provoke that b*tch!”

“AH, AHHH!!” Jing Minyao screamed on her bed with a contorted expression.

Chapter 2015: One Last Chance

Madam Jing hastily pressed down her body in panic. “Daughter, daughter! Don’t fuss around like this anymore! If you do this, you’ll only be harming yourself in the end!”

“Mom! Mom! It hurts so much, it hurts!”

“Minmin, where does it hurt?”

“Mom, my whole body hurts. It hurts, it hurts!”

Madam Jing pressed down her body and soothed while wiping her tears, “Minmin, endure it for a bit longer. This soul-gathering bell is like this. After the soul-gathering is successful, you will not be able to recover completely at once. There needs to be a recuperating period! You must not throw another fit!”

Jing Minyao’s whole body spasmed, and her expression was contorted.

Chief Jing sighed at this. He turned around and had two maidservants come forward to help Madam Jing press down Jing Minyao’s limbs.

Jing Linyao couldn’t help but smile faintly upon hearing all of this. She then turned around to leave.

There was nothing else to eavesdrop on after this. It would naturally be the same dramatics as usual, with Madam Jing complaining about Princess Jing.

Jing Linyao curled her lips and leisurely played with her fingers as she slowly made her way back to her yurt.

If she could be toppled that easily with that woman’s pillow talk, she wouldn’t be Jing Linyao, the entire Jing Clan’s only Princess Jing!

Chief Jing’s expression was still foul when he walked out from his youngest daughter’s yurt.

He walked reticently for a distance with a sullen expression, with a elderly servant carrying a large brocade box following behind him.

“Jing Gu.”

“This humble one is present.”

“You have to keep watch over the soul-gathering bell. There is only one chance left for it to gather a soul.” It would be a lie if Chief Jing’s heart did not ache over having to use one of the soul-gathering bell’s chances for his youngest daughter for no reason.

“Yes, Chief.”

“Also, dispatch people to thoroughly investigate the background of that Divine Province’s crown prince consort.”

How could a lowly ant from the Lower Star Domain kill his daughter Minmin?

“Yes!”

Chief Jing sneered. “The Divine Province’s crown prince consort? It is certain that the emperor will not acknowledge a woman from the Lower Star Domain. Ha, the Divine Province’s crown prince truly is a willful person to actually have married in the Lower Star Domain.”

If this news were to get back to the Divine Province, it would definitely shock the entire empire...

—My Lian’s section break—

The next day during morning court, the Ultramarine Province Emperor jubilantly made an announcement to his officials.

The Fourth Highness of the Ultramarine Province had gotten chosen by the demon emperor’s inheritance when he entered the imperial ancestral temple. He was about to inherit the demon emperor’s bloodline and all its associated cultivation techniques.

Upon hearing this, the officials all beamed as they congratulated the emperor for having his wishes come true.

The Ultramarine Province Emperor laughed heartily.

Indeed, in the thousand years since the founding emperor inherited the demon emperor’s bloodline, all the subsequent generations of sovereigns expectantly longed for their posterity to be able to inherit the demon emperor’s bloodline. However, things turned out contrary to their wishes every time to no avail.

How could the Ultramarine Province Emperor not be delighted after having this wish come true?

“We plan to confer the title of the Chen Prince, and bestow the territory of Huachen south of the Ultramarine Province to him.”

“Your Majesty is wise.”

“Even though His Highness the Chen Prince is young, he will have a limitless future after inheriting the demon emperor’s bloodline. No matter if it be for the empire or the common people, Your Majesty’s

action is praiseworthy! This official believes that His Highness the Chen Prince will certainly be an unparalleled talent that brings peace and stability to the empire.”

Rong Li walked up and prostrated while saying, “Imperial Father, since Fourth Brother is still in closed-door cultivation at present, please allow this son to take charge of his moving arrangements.”

Chapter 2016: His Beloved (1)

The second prince and third prince also quickly stepped forward and prostrated while saying in unison, “This son is also willing to assist.”

The Ultramarine Province Emperor gazed at his three sons in gratification. He said with a delighted nod, “Since you are all willing, the moving arrangements will be delegated to you.”

“Understood.”

“Yes.” His three sons received this order.

Without minding what they were all thinking on the inside, they did look rather normal on the surface. All of their faces showed their joy of “being happy for their younger brother” and “feeling proud of their younger brother.”

However, it was unknown whether or not they were bleeding deep inside their hearts.

After all, that territory of Huachen south of the Ultramarine Province was a truly fertile land!

With this vassal territory, Little Fourth Duan had suddenly shot up to become one of the wealthiest people in the Ultramarine Province.

Just counting the taxes from the territory in the future was enough to make their hands spasm...

“Your Highness.” An imperial censor walked forward and braced himself to point out, “Your Majesty has already conferred His Fourth Highness as the Chen Prince. According to ancestral rules, even if he does not immediately move to his vassal territory, he should move out of the palace into his own estate. If His Highness the Chen Prince is to also remain inside the Taiji Palace, would it not be improper?”

The Ultramarine Province Emperor waved his hand and declared, “Little Fourth has not been back for long, so let him stay inside the palace for a while.”

After advising to this point, there was naturally no one else who was going to challenge the Ultramarine Province Emperor anymore.

The emperor was in high spirits right now. His son actually had such prospects to be inheriting the demon emperor’s bloodline after coming back. This wasn’t a joke at all!

All the officials were silently musing: *His Highness the Chen Prince is going to have a meteoric rise!*

It had to be known that the second prince and third prince were already over 30, but not one of them had been conferred with a title!

Little Fourth Duan's young age was really nothing to sneeze at in the Upper Three Provinces where people possessed lengthy lifespans.

The emperor was so happy today that the officials felt that even if they were to report several pieces of rather bad news, the emperor wouldn't overly excoriate them due to his good mood.

Therefore, this morning court sessions ended harmoniously.

When morning court got dismissed, the second prince and the third prince caught up to the crown prince Rong Li after exiting the deliberation hall. They inquired with a smile, "Eldest Brother, since Imperial Father has given the order, we had better handle the moving arrangements as early as possible."

Rong Li swept them a faint glance and replied with a nod, "Let's go."

The three of them called for carriages to take them to Nanqiao Palace.

The servants inside the hall had already received news that the emperor had personally ordered to move their master's lodgings, so they had long packed up their master's belongings and had been waiting.

Rong Li surveyed the area and questioned with a nod, "Which place have you yet not tidied? You can all move everything over this afternoon."

The junior eunuch replied with an awkward expression, "We servants dare not recklessly enter Master's study."

Rong Li responded with an "mhm." He slowly walked toward the study and ordered lightly, "Since it is not convenient to tidy, then bring along everything in the study, including the table and chairs! This will avoid leaving anything important behind."

Everybody rejoiced at the crown prince's pointer, and they immediately went to move the items inside the study.

When they went to move that large wooden desk, they found that even four to five people were unable to hoist it, so they went to find more helpers.

When they got to the door, the large desk scraped against the door, and the movers quickly steadied it.

A hidden drawer suddenly fell out from the bottom of the desk with a thud, and a scroll rolled out from within...

Chapter 2017: His Beloved (2)

Rong Li was surprised to see that rolled up scroll. He gestured a personal junior eunuch with his gaze to pick it up.

The junior eunuch immediately understood and bent over to pick up the scroll. After undoing the brocade ribbon tying the scroll, he very slowly unrolled it before everyone's eyes.

The background was a vast expanse of misty, jade green rolling waters.

A girl who was as uncorrupted as fine jade stood expressionlessly underneath a blossoming peach tree and was just staring aloofly at the viewer.

It was just as if... she was about to walk out from the drawing.

Rong Li and the two princes behind him got mesmerized for a moment.

They had never seen such an aloof and indomitable young girl. Her eyes were drawn so vividly that they became lifelike, as if they were truly staring at you. It involuntarily made one want to approach.

The junior eunuch holding the drawing reached out to the drawing to touch the girl's cheek, as if seemingly possessed.

Suddenly, they saw two emerald glacial stars shoot straight for his brows.

"Ah!" That eunuch shrieked and widened his eyes in terror.

It was only an instant that his eyes got hit by those two green flashes of light.

The scroll dropped to the floor as the eunuch promptly clutched his face and screeched abnormally. He rolled on the ground while screaming.

The servants moving the furniture all freaked out. They were afraid to approach the scroll that had unfurled on the floor. It was as if they were looking at a demoness from the way they stared at that drawing of the young girl who was so pretty that she seemed ethereal.

"Who permitted you to touch Master's drawing?" A pure white figure suddenly landed beside the eunuch. He promptly threw that junior eunuch out the door with a palm strike.

When Rong Li focused his gaze, he saw a tall and unworldly man dressed in white suddenly appear inside the study. His slanted fox eyes was brimming with anger.

He stretched out his hand and sucked the scroll into his palm.

After brushing off the nonexistent dust on the scroll, the man gently rolled up the scroll and put it inside a brocade box. He then swept a cold look at the people present. "Are you people going to scam out of here yourselves, or should I toss you all out?"

The second prince was furious and couldn't resist shouting, "Who are you? Why are you speaking to us this way! Are you aware of our identities? Even if Fourth Brother himself was here, he would not speak to us in this manner!"

Boom!

Just after raising a hue and cry, the second prince felt himself flying out the window. He hit the ground without even being able to resist.

"The true form of the seven-tailed heavenly fox sacred beast?" The third prince gazed in shock at the seven long tails that suddenly appeared behind the man in white. He dumbfoundedly looked up at the other party in terror.

Heavens, what kind of background did this Fourth Brother have?

How come he was able to form a contract with a seven-tailed heavenly fox when he lived in the Lower Star Domain for most of his life?

Rong Li's eyes also showed some deep contemplation. He suppressed his envy before cupping his hands toward the man in white. "Apologies, Your Excellency. We brothers were rash in dealing with this matter. However, we truly did not have any other intention. We are only carrying out Imperial Father's order..."

The seven-tailed heavenly fox raised his hand to stop him from continuing. "Immediately leave this place. Do not disturb Master."

Rong Li was extremely frustrated, but he could not do anything about the seven-tailed heavenly fox.

Chapter 2018: His Beloved (3)

After bowing to the seven-tailed heavenly fox with cupped hands, Rong Li turned around and sent the third prince a look, and the latter helped up the groaning second prince after going out the door. Their entourage then headed out of Nanqiao Palace.

The seven-tailed heavenly fox glanced at their back coldly before looking down at the brocade box in his hand. Afterwards, he spun around and vanished from the study.

Soon, his figure appeared inside the imperial ancestral temple. He looked up at his master who was enveloped in a purple light while encased inside the purple crystal ball.

The seven-tailed heavenly fox raised up the brocade box and quickly placated, "Master, the drawing is safe, and I have already brought it back. Please calm down and clear your mind while you cultivate. Careful of succumbing to vital energy deviation!"

After hearing this, the person who had originally been struggling inside the purple light slowly eased up.

The seven-tailed heavenly fox shook his head helplessly. He looked down and opened the brocade box, taking the scroll out. After slowly unrolling it, he gently sighed at the expressionless little stoic in the drawing.

Meanwhile, the crown prince of the Ultramarine Province and his entourage had fled from Nanqiao Palace in a panic.

They were also hoisting a eunuch behind them.

This eunuch was precisely Rong Li's personal eunuch. Right now, his entire body had turned a greenish black. His groans had also slowly turned quiet, and he was reduced to a corpse.

The two eunuchs carrying him paled from shock. However, they did not dare to abandon him recklessly, so they stumbled along as they carried that junior eunuch the whole way out of Nanqiao Palace after their masters.

“Cough, cough. Cough!” The second prince could not stop coughing violently, and his eyes were about to spew fire. “That bastard, he actually! Actually!”

“Put poison in the drawing?” The third prince had also caught a glimpse of the junior eunuch’s corpse, and he felt a chill in his heart.

Rong Li couldn’t help smiling bitterly. “Looks like we have grossly underestimated this new younger brother’s methods and schemes.”

Look at his venomous intentions, killing whoever touched the drawing. This kind of deadly poison was also seldom seen too.

“What kind of gimmick is that?” The second prince clutched his throbbingly painful chest as he questioned in agitation.

He simply had no idea what had happened when he got sent flying from one of the seven-tailed heavenly fox’s tails. There was absolutely nothing to compare about the gap in their strength!

This gave him the inexplicable feeling that in front of this fourth brother, his strength and cultivation were so trashy that it couldn’t be any worse!

“There should be some mechanism embedded inside this drawing. Any outside force will trigger the mechanism inside the hidden layer.”

However, this mechanism was assembled too skillfully. The fact that it would shoot out from the girl’s eyes in the drawing completely caught them off guard.

It had to be known that everybody’s attention was attracted to that girl’s chilly eyes the moment they saw the drawing. They were practically unable to tear their gazes away.

Comprehension flitted across Rong Li’s eyes. “He was originally surnamed Duan, from Sikong Planet’s concealed weapon patrician family, the Duan Clan.”

“Duan Clan? The one associated with that Duan Clan from the Divine Province?”

“Correct. The Divine Province’s Duan Clan should be his maternal clan’s main family.”

“This d*mned little bastard has such vicious methods.” Upon recalling the humiliation from earlier, the second prince was fuming. “Eldest Brother, who do you think that girl in the drawing is? For him to actually hide her away in the desk’s concealed drawer like treasure? And even tamper with the drawing to prevent people from touching it?”

Rong Li hummed and widened his lips into a smile. “I am guessing that this is probably Fourth Brother’s beloved one.”

“Eldest Brother, d-do you still remember what the girl in the drawing looks like?”

“I remember more or less, but... I reckon that there will not be anyone who can draw the same aura.”

Chapter 2019: Charmingly Lifelike

The drawing Duan Yue created was too lifelike!

When the girl in the drawing stared at you with her eyes that were akin to ice beads, they could truly feel a cold nip in the air.

This little lady was still young, and her features were still developing. Once she matured, she would most likely astound the world with her beauty...

The servants left first while carrying the junior eunuch's corpse.

The crown prince, Rong Li, still felt wretched.

He had lost a quick-witted personal eunuch for nothing on this trip. This caused his dissatisfaction toward Duan Yue to spike to another level.

This Duan Yue's temper was too unfathomable.

After returning to the crown prince's palace, they requested for the imperial physician to come and examine the second prince's injuries.

The crown prince also called over several painters. Afterwards, he picked up one of the dozen or so portraits of a young girl they produced from the table. However, he still felt like it didn't communicate the right mood after scrutinizing it over. It was only fifty, no, forty percent similar to the portrait they had seen earlier.

"This looks completely different!" The third prince smacked that drawing angrily with his palm.

The painters cowered and frantically knelt down to ask for forgiveness. They feared to even take a deep breath.

The crown prince waved his hand and said, "About similar is fine! These painters haven't seen that portrait personally after all. It is already quite alright that they can achieve a forty percent likeness. Alright, you all are dismissed."

The painters all gave the crown prince, Rong Li, endlessly thankful gazes. They hastily bowed several more times before shuttling out the door.

"Humph, a group of mediocre talents." The third prince nitpicked with a frown. "They only know to boast about how remarkable their drawing skills are in front of Imperial Father, yet none of them can do the job when requiring them to perform on the spot."

Rong Li waved his hand and said. "Forget it! Don't make them do what they are unable to."

"Fourth Brother's drawing was crafted too exquisitely. He used extreme attention to reproduce that girl's chilly aura. How could this be something a mere painter can draw?"

"Humph!" The third prince harrumphed in displeasure. He got more and more revolted the longer he scrutinized the drawing. "Eldest Brother, if we use this portrait to search, will we be able to find the person?"

"I am not sure." Rong Li shook his head. "But if you start investigating from the Sikong Planet Fourth Brother lived on, I reckon that you will be able to find this girl."

“That is good then.” The third prince chuckled with a flicker in his eyes. “I can’t believe Fourth Brother. If he can’t forget this girl, then bring her back to his estate and make her a concubine!”

“Forget it. As his third brother, I will be a good person to the end. I will help him find this girl and show her to Imperial Father.”

A faint smile flitted across Rong Li’s eyes, but he did not say anything else.

Since the third prince was so inclined, it wouldn’t do for him to stop the third prince. After all, as the eldest brother, it would be unsuitable for him to obstruct his younger brothers’ interests!

Rong Li nodded and advised with a smile, “Third Brother should make sure not to go overboard.”

“Of course.” The third prince nodded repeatedly with a smile, “After all, this is Fourth Brother’s beloved one! He has even hidden away her portrait, refusing to let other people so much as touch it. If Fourth Brother comes seeking my life because the real person got hurt here or there, whatever should I do.”

Rong Li did not say anything else and beckoned for the servants to serve dinner.

After busying about for the whole day, he had long gotten fatigued. His body seemed to be deteriorating by the day...

This empire that spanned ten thousand miles, and this life of flourishing splendor.

How could he allow himself to personally give this up...?

No one could snatch anything away from his hands!

Chapter 2020: Blow Them Away?

In contrast to the fighting and killing from the previous days, today’s competition was truly too leisurely.

A spiritual measuring stone had long been set out on center stage.

The members of the remaining 30 teams lined up orderly and walked past the spiritual measuring stone one by one.

After they smacked the spiritual measuring stone with their palm and held still for two seconds, the left side of the spiritual measuring stone would show horizontal lines corresponding to their cultivation level.

A single horizontal line naturally referred to the level-one spiritual realm, while ten lines would mean a level-10 grand spiritual cultivator.

It was simple and straightforward! It didn’t require any brain cells, only needing the person to walk up and gauge their cultivation.

If talking about cultivation, Qiao Mu naturally did not have the highest out of these people.

The testing had already gone for more than two hours. At present, the person with the highest cultivation was a student from Shuntian Prefecture’s Moonlight Academy.

When they discovered after the measurement that this person was already a level-11 grand spiritual cultivator, everybody sighed with emotion.

This young man only looked to be in his early 30s. To people in the Six Prefectures, he was truly a young man.

“Jiaqing Academy, Li Nanshen.” When the referee announced this name, everybody tensed up, their fingers involuntarily curling up.

Everybody looked vigilantly at Li Nanshen, who was striding forward quickly.

Qiao Mu turned around and saw Li Nanshen nod toward her amiably.

Qiao Mu thus also nodded at him in return before turning to look at the spiritual measuring stone.

This spiritual measuring stone was gleaming with a raven black light. It was inscribed with three crooked characters: spiritual measuring stone.

Li Nanshen walked up and hit the spiritual measuring stone with his palm.

When the entire spiritual measuring stone exploded with a powerful light, even the people in the back rows couldn't help standing up agitatedly from their seats.

They remembered that Li Nanshen had already crossed into the ranks of level-10 grand spiritual cultivators during the last competition.

Would he also today...?

Hum hum. One horizontal line after another appeared on the spiritual measuring stone.

Everybody carefully counted downwards, and they discovered that 12 horizontal lines had appeared on the spiritual measuring stone.

Twelve!

Everybody froze, and several people in the front rows had jumped up. They hollered, “Level-12 grand spiritual cultivator!”

Oh my heavens!

This senior Li Nanshen from Jiaqing Academy actually had a rise in cultivation!

The level-10 grand spiritual cultivator from three years ago had advanced to a level-12 grand spiritual cultivator today!

This pace was too freaky.

He was able to increase his cultivation by two levels in three years?

What exactly did he eat while growing up?

Whose cultivation rose like this? For people like them with average natural endowments, they would spend their lifetime in low-leveled cultivation states.

Even if their cultivation did rise, it would happen over five to eight years. Wasn't Li Nanshen's speed at increasing cultivation too exaggerated?

This was a spiritual cultivator's level advancement, not some minor mystic cultivator advancing a level in the Lower Star Domain!

Everybody silently lampooned before gazing at everybody else with bright eyes.

“Apex Academy, Duanmu Qing.”

The referee specially glanced at the people from Apex Academy.

It could not be denied that this group of students from Apex Academy was like a dark horse to them.

Could this group shine radiantly again this time during this test of cultivation?

Everybody had great expectations!

Especially...

Everybody's gazes landed on the expressionless little stoic.

This little stoic was so strong. Would her testing results blow them all away!

For some reason, they were actually looking forward to it!