

## My Crown 33

### Chapter 33: Golden Talisman Jade Tome

The gold light was more radiant than the rays of the sun. The first light arc appeared to shatter, dividing into two arcs, then four arcs, and so on.

The twirling light sent Qiao Mu's mind spinning, and she wanted to struggle awake a few times; however, it was as though there was a bundle of energy pressing down on her, and she could not open her eyes no matter what.

These arcs of light nearly made her throw up, and her brain turned muddled and started uncontrollably twitching in pain.

Sometime later, the different arcs of golden light gradually merged together and transformed into a golden book that was half a human tall.

Qiao Mu was completely dumbfounded and stared foolishly at it for a moment. She could not tell whether she was dreaming or truly experiencing this.

Then, the golden light slowly dissipated, and one by one, carved golden characters in a semi-cursive font slid onto the cover of the book. It read: "Golden Talisman Jade Tome"?

Qiao Mu surprisingly managed to comprehend those four large, flamboyant characters with a fleeting glimpse. *"Golden Talisman Jade Tome? I can't possibly still be dreaming about this bizarre situation, right?"*

The golden book turned a page by itself and rows of small characters appeared one after another, their appearance just as swift as their disappearance. Thankfully, Qiao Mu had more superior eyesight than most people and was capable of reading 10 lines at a glance.

The small characters read: "At the dawn of all living things, there were two energies—yin and yang. They intertwined and melded with each other, permeating heaven and earth. If they were obstructed from each other, then malicious energy would generate. At the beginning of the universe, there already existed the magnificent powers of the gods."

"The Golden Talisman Jade Tome was born concurrently with the universe and utilized the powers of the gods as its guide. It recorded every known omnipotent talisman method in heaven and earth. As an offense, its attack could kill anything in the world and provoke yin and yang to clash together. With a flick of a finger, you can destroy a city and suck the life out of all living things. As a defense, it could stabilize your godly conscious and automatically trigger a guard around your godly spirit, nullifying all living things, and give life to what had withered, cleansing all that it touched like the showers of spring."

*"Heh, what a good dream this is! This so-called Golden Talisman Jade Tome is described like it's real! Why doesn't it just bluntly say it's unrivaled in both offense and defense!"*

What were the magnificent powers of the gods? What in the world was godly conscious? Or godly spirit? Were there such peculiar things in this world? This was her first time hearing such baffling words one after another.

This lousy book did not even know how to plausibly fabricate tales. If it were only catalyzing mystic energy and protecting her mystic conscious, she would still find it somewhat believable.

She was someone who had lived two lives. It was not that she had not seen any formidable talisman masters in her previous life, but the few talisman masters that existed in the world were all elderly people who were several hundred years old.

The sole talisman patrician family in Sikong Planet resided far away in Guanlan City, and the talisman masters within that family clan did not easily present themselves to the world. Also, talisman techniques were passed down generation after generation and were taught step-by-step, so talisman practitioners were rarer than mystic cultivators.

Although the art of talismans was fairly magical, she had never seen a talisman practitioner turn someone into ash with a flick of his fingers! If it was not done right, the talisman practitioner might have just thrown two talisman papers, but the mystic cultivator would have already sidled up and killed him in a flash...

*“Where did the ability to destroy cities and suck the life out of all living things with a flick of a finger come from? Are you sure you aren’t joking?”*

The child scoffed and tried to force herself to wake up from the rocking golden light.

However, the result was a bit saddening.

The immense pressure that emanated from the Golden Talisman Jade Tome caused her to be unable to move a single centimeter, let alone open her eyes.

Just what was this d\*mn book doing!

Our dear Qiao Mu was incredibly angered and had no choice but to focus all of her attention on the book. After the rows of small characters on the Golden Talisman Jade Tome swiftly disappeared, another page turned.

Beginner-level talisman method?

Why was this dream so real? It truly recorded the mind techniques and finger gestures for the talisman method?

Qiao Mu was slightly dumbfounded, the fog in her head further intensifying.

### **Chapter 34: Really Want to Kill It**

When she wanted to examine it more meticulously, the golden tome abruptly flew in front of her eyes.

The golden tome suddenly disintegrated into powder, and the layers of golden powder twirled in a circle, reforming into 12 jade slips. It flashed past in a streak of light and entered her conscious.

Qiao Mu shot up into a sitting position on the bed with a swoosh. Her head felt like it had been viciously trampled by a herd of elephants, the pain sending her figure shaking.

Qiao Mu subconsciously rubbed her head and hastily sat in a lotus position with a frown. Her hands pressed down gently, and her breathing slowed. She condensed a strand of mystic energy into mystic conscious and cautiously delved into her conscious, wanting to investigate the situation.

However, one look and the child could not help but startle.

Besides the level-12 ferule that she stored in here, her conscious used to be empty and had only a few strands of incredibly pitiful milk-colored mystic conscious that floated everywhere inside like a specter.

However, what in the world was going on with the new addition of the 12 rolled up jade slips? She was certain that she did not store this into her conscious herself.

So, in other words, when she was paralyzed on the bed earlier, it was not a dream? There really was a strange object that brazenly stampeded into her conscious?

How bizarre!

Qiao Mu combed through the events from start to end and still could not comprehend where the Golden Talisman Jade Tome came from!

She was merely searching for homework at home and then flopped onto the bed to rest for a bit. Yet, she managed to receive a talisman inheritance so inexplicably?

Ever since she was reborn, everything seemed to have turned odd! First, her mystic energy woke up a lot earlier than in her previous life. Then, her inner world was different from her previous life's and even contained some baffling items.

Now, even her conscious was not right! How could her conscious imprudently absorb that Golden Talisman Jade Tome?

If this caused her conscious to be harmed, then she really had nowhere to go grieve about it.

Hold on, shouldn't the focus be the origin of the Golden Talisman Jade Tome? How in the world did this thing suddenly barrel into her conscious?

Qiao Mu opened her eyes with her emotions in a tangle. Before she could think about it for more than three minutes, her whole body fell back and collapsed onto the bed.

Perhaps due to this strange object suddenly flying into her conscious, she felt like her head was still aching!

She really wanted to sleep...

...

"Qiaoqiao, hey, Qiaoqiao! Hurry and get up, come on!" Qiao Mu dazedly opened her eyes and discovered her mother's magnified face.

"My goodness! Just how tired were you, child? You have been sleeping since yesterday evening. Hurry and get up. If you don't leave now, you will be late to school." Wei Ziqin gently shook her dazed daughter, both amused and exasperated.

Qiao Mu took a deep breath and sluggishly got off the bed. Then, her tiny fist heavily beat the frame of the bed.

*Dong!*

Hearing this, Wei Ziqin, who was just about to leave the room, automatically turned around to ask, "What's wrong, Qiaoqiao?"

Qiao Mu scratched her slightly rigid face. Inwardly, however, she was nearly pulling her hair out from rage. *"F\*ck me, only my apparition can turn out like this! Whose apparition would intentionally stir up trouble in your inner world for you instead of devotedly cultivating inside your conscious the whole night?"*

That eccentric apparition had obtained a pen embedded with gold beads from who knows where and had been ceaselessly drawing undecipherable scribbles in her inner world all night long.

Hence, her mind still felt like it had been trampled by a herd of elephants and was in immense pain!

### **Chapter 35: A Friendly Complimentary Gift**

Qiao Mu condensed a strand of mystic conscious and swiftly checked her conscious. Then, she immediately jumped off the bed with a push from her hands.

This loony apparition had decisively returned to dwelling inside her conscious, but she continued to tirelessly use that gold-beaded pen to work on her indecipherable scribbles.

She moved ceaselessly like someone with ADHD, draining poor Qiao Mu's mystic energy. *"Couldn't she peacefully stay inside my conscious and devote herself to silently cultivating mystic conscious like in my previous life?"*

*"Why did she have to draw indecipherable scribbles over there?"* Qiao Mu clutched her face. She will naturally go and learn how to draw talismans when she had free time, but an apparition of the mystic conscious' job was to cultivate mystic conscious!

Was this apparition ill? Why was she wasting her time drawing talismans the whole day instead of obediently cultivating mystic conscious? Qiao Mu really wanted to beat her to death...

Qiao Mu stepped outside and with a swish of her fingers, three strands of faint white light flashed past.

After the white light faded away, three thin pieces of talismans placidly laid in her palm. Learning the talisman method from Golden Talisman Jade Tome really was not a dream. At the very least, her apparition was currently drawing talismans without rest like a madwoman.

Speaking of which, these three talismans were quite strange. They dropped from the first jade slip and were probably something similar to a demonstration talisman. It was a friendly complimentary gift from the ancient Golden Talisman Jade Tome.

The first talisman was a speed talisman. It could allow someone to become three times faster for five minutes—a necessary item for escaping.

The second talisman was a strength talisman. It did not increase mystic energy, but it raised a person's normal strength instead. It could quintuple someone's strength for five minutes, so toppling a mountain or killing a cow with a single punch would become as easy as a breeze.

The final talisman was a bit comical. It was called a repetition talisman, and as its name denoted, it would cause someone to repetitively do the same thing without rest for five minutes.

*"This talisman..."* Qiao Mu turned it over in her hands and examined it, faint amusement twinkling in her eyes. *"It's quite interesting."*

These three talismans were all beginner-level talismans. Beginner-level and intermediate-level talismans did not need to be activated with mystic energy, and their utilizations were quite simple as well. A person used it by ripping it, so normal people could also use it.

If it was an advanced-level talisman, then it could only be used by infusing mystic energy inside of it. The more powerful the talisman, the more mystic energy consumed when it was activated. The majority of normal people without mystic energy could merely look at it, and they could not activate an advanced-level talisman at all.

Advanced-level talisman practitioners were extremely rare existences. That talisman patrician family from Guanlan City have only had three advanced-level talisman practitioners in the last 500 years. Of course, every one of them was world-shaking characters.

Qiao Mu stuffed the three talismans into her pocket before departing and heading for Tiny Herb School with a grievous expression on her face.

There were a total of 20-something children in the village. The oldest was 15 years old while the youngest was 5 years old, and they were all squeezed into Tiny Herb School by the villagers.

There were only two teachers in the school. The children over 10 were taught by Master Cen while those under 10 were taught by Master Jiang.

Tiny Herb School was located in the west side of the village, and there was a shortcut overgrown with dry grass that led directly to Hulan Mountain. Qiao Mu planned to see if she could find an opportunity to sneak up to the mountain and scout around.

With a sack slung over her shoulder, the child had just arrived in front of Tiny Herb School when she saw two porters carrying a wicker rattan chair and walking toward her.

A nine-year-old pudgy child sat on top of the rattan chair. One of his chubby legs was propped on the other knee while both hands each held a drumstick, which he was cheerfully eating.

Two similarly aged lackeys were eagerly following the rattan chair with several sacks slung over their shoulders. They were holding up an umbrella and fanning the child while obsequiously asking, "Young Master Xiao Tao, are you hot?"

"Young Master Xiao Tao, do you want some water?"

"Qiao! Mu!" the young master on the rattan chair suddenly shouted.

### **Chapter 36: A Talisman Practitioner's Tactics**

Startled, Qiao Mu turned to look at the pudgy child who suddenly sat straight up on the rattan chair.

The pudgy child's eyes were nearly squeezed together. When he stared at Qiao Mu, he tried his hardest to widen his eyes, but they merely separated a few hair's breadths from each other.

Qiao Mu narrowed her cool eyes, and fragmented memories flashed through her mind. Three days ago, it was this pudgy child who caused her to roll down the hill in front of the school.

It was not until Qiao Mu saw the pudgy Zhou Tao's face that she recalled how she was frequently bullied by this prodigal rascal in the village in her previous life.

Although they were all trivial matters, when the old enmities added with the new acrimonies, it was enough to fill a basket.

She originally intended to ignore this little tyrant, but who knew she would be stopped by this brat?

The prodigal Zhou Tao hastened the two porters carrying the rattan chair and had them place him down in front of Qiao Mu. He tossed the chicken bone in his right hand away and bit off a piece of the drumstick in his left hand before shouting, "Wimp, you dare to still come here! If it weren't for you backing out at the last minute that day, we could have gone up the mountain to explore!"

Qiao Mu sent him a cold glare before walking around the pudgy child to enter the school and heading straight for her classroom.

Master Jiang had not arrived yet, so the 13 to 14 children under 10 were currently fooling around inside the classroom. When they saw Qiao Mu enter, they all simultaneously paused, and their eyes shot toward her.

Qiao Mu paused and looked around. Her brows slightly knitted together as she failed to recall where she used to sit. This segment of her childhood memory was simply too long ago for her.

Qiao Mu walked forward before picking the low table furthest in the back and sitting down. Then, she flung her sack onto the desk.

Zhou Tao's rattan chair stopped in front of the classroom, and with his face full of disbelief, Zhou Tao angrily stormed toward Qiao Mu. "Qiao Mu, you coward, I was speaking to you, didn't you hear me?"

Had this darn girl gone mad? She actually dared to use such an icy gaze to look at him earlier, and now, she was completely ignoring him when he was speaking!

*"You are screwed!"* The pudgy child maliciously glowered at her before turning toward their thrill-seeking classmates who were watching from the sidelines with enjoyment. He waved his meaty little hand and angrily shouted, "Everyone, attack her! Help me discipline this darn arrogant girl well! Show her who is in charge of this village!"

Qiao Mu calmly and secretly took out the repetition talisman from her sleeve, then she looked at the pudgy child with a sneer, "The teacher is coming."

“What rubbish is the teacher!” The pudgy child took a large bite out of the drumstick in his right hand before haughtily lifting his chin towards the sky and pompously exclaiming, “In this village, our family is the wealthiest! Even that old geezer, the village chief, will give face to my dad! Whoever has the most money has the final say! Do you think the teacher can save you! A lousy worm like you dares to look at me with such an arrogant expression? Attack! Beat this darn cowardly girl to death!”

However, what he did not know was that before he said this, Qiao Mu had flung a beginner-level talisman onto his plump belly and ripped it apart through the air with a strand of energy from her fingers.

The repetition talisman stuck onto the clothes above the pudgy child’s belly. How would the pudgy child know though? He was currently spiritedly commanding his fellow students to go up and beat her!

Unexpectedly, an angry shout came from outside the window. “What are you all doing?! Stop!”

Master Jiang furiously charged inside. Seeing his group of disappointing students, he zealously waved the rattan ruler in his hand. “Return to your seats.”

Someone pulled the pudgy child to his seat, and with a face of dissatisfaction, he turned his head to aggressively glare at Qiao Mu.

To his surprise, she actually returned a rigid and icy smile to him. That glimpse of a smile was like a bucket of cold water that directly splashed onto the bottom of his heart.

### **Chapter 37: Please Spare Me!**

Her piercing gaze—like that of a devil who had descended—caused the pudgy child to cowardly shrink back. When he looked back again, the little girl was expressionless and without a trace of her frightening aura.

For some reason, the pudgy child had a dawning feeling that when the little girl quietly sat in the back row of the classroom, she looked like she did not belong to this world, unbelievably ephemeral.

He rubbed his eyes and furiously turned his head. When he looked up and saw Master Jiang’s livid face, he grew silent.

The teacher slowly became engrossed in his poems and literature, his mood turning pleasant. The students below him were fairly peaceful and recited the poems and essays with the teacher, their heads swaying along.

However, this peaceful atmosphere did not last more than three minutes.

A faint sneer turned up on Qiao Mu’s lips as she inwardly counted down: “*Five... four... three... two... one!*”

**Bang!** The pudgy child slapped the table and stood up, the loud noise startling his fellow classmates and halting their recitation.

Master Jiang, who was drunk on his poems and literature, opened his eyes and was stunned as he looked at the chubby child who had the nerve to be impudent during his lesson.

*Thump thump thump thump thump!* The pudgy child aggressively charged in front of Qiao Mu. He grasped a handful of air with his right hand, bit off from it, and then stuck his nose high in the air as he disdainfully stated, "What rubbish is the teacher..."

Everyone watched the insolently speaking pudgy child, dumbfounded. They all wondered whether the pudgy child was a fool. Say, if the teacher was absent, it was okay to want to look impressive and run your mouth off, but the teacher was sitting right there, yet you actually... repeated the disrespectful words that you previously said without omitting a syllable!

The young kids all reverently looked at the "heroic" pudgy child!

Before the teacher could fly into a rage, the two stupefied lackeys hastily called "Young Master Tao, Young Master Tao" and pulled Zhou Tao back to his seat.

Master Jiang took a deep breath. In consideration of how the pudgy child's plump dad provided the money to renovate Tiny Herb School, today, the teacher would swallow his... anger?

*Bang!* The pudgy child robotically slapped the table and stood up again, valiantly marching to the front of Qiao Mu with large thumps. "What rubbish is the teacher!!!"

"Pft..." This time, the children could not hold it in anymore and burst out laughing. Why did they feel like today's Fatty Zhou was especially comical? Hahahahaha!

Regardless of how dim the pudgy child was, he finally realized there was something wrong with his body. This feeling of his body not being under his own control was truly terrifying.

Seeing Master Jiang's livid expression, which looked as if it had a layer of black paint over it, the pudgy child slapped the table and courageously stood up for the third time...

The pudgy child had charged to the front of Qiao Mu and started shouting again, but his face had become contorted, fear pervading his slitted eyes and tear tracks shamefully running out of his eyes.

Who could put a stop to this? This was too horrifying! Why couldn't he control any of his actions and words?

Master Jiang could not withstand this anymore and abruptly stood up, raising his rattan ruler and slapping it toward the pudgy child's butt.

*"How dare you slap the desk and stand up three times! How dare you brazenly insult your teacher! You worthless thing, you will truly anger me to death..."*

A perfectly good lesson ended up with chickens flying everywhere and the pudgy child fainting. The talisman that was originally pasted onto the pudgy child's clothing also fell on the ground as the time limit concluded, and it turned into two normal pieces of paper, unnoticeable.

Qiao Mu bent over to pick it up and scrunched it into a ball as a plan rose in her mind. *"I will draw at least 8 or 10 of these when I get home tonight! They are vital to tricking someone!"*



## Chapter 38: Evil Spirits Being a Menace

The next day, our dear Qiao Mu went to the classroom wearing two dark circles under her eyes, mumbling under her breath the entire trip. When she returned home yesterday, she wasted a lot of time solely on soliciting Brother Xiao Hu, Second Uncle's son, to go to the town and help her buy talisman papers.

After snatching the talisman pen from her apparition and badgering her apparition to go cultivate mystic conscious, Qiao Mu had a sleepless night. She sneakily drew talismans inside the woodshed the whole night and had failed two-thirds of the third talisman she had attempted.

In the end, Qiao Mu drew three speed talismans, three strength talismans, and four repetition talismans, and she felt like her whole day's worth of energy had been drained completely.

Therefore, Qiao Mu sat in the back of the classroom with one hand supporting her chin, dozing off.

Suddenly, a commotion was heard outside of the door, and two bootlicking calls of "Young Master Xiao Tao" made Qiao Mu realize that the little tyrant, Zhou Tao, had arrived.

He was tormented so miserably yesterday but still dared to come today, so his courage must be commended. Qiao Mu shifted her hand to support her forehead and slightly turned her head, peering at the little tyrant from the corner of her eyes. What she saw startled her.

The little tyrant's appearance today...

He was wearing a broad and loose-fitting sapphire-blue robe made of silk with a pair of black boots with a broad base. What was different from yesterday was the gigantic jade tablet in the shape of a square-holed coin hanging down his chest, a strong nouveau-riche aura assaulting the onlookers' senses.

The round jade tablet heavily hung down his neck, dangled down to his abdomen, and had large "protective talisman" characters written on it. It looked like it was a jade protective talisman that his rich dad purchased extravagantly.

Speaking of which, to be able to carve the complicated runes onto a jade stone required not only the support of mystic energy but also for the caster itself to be an advanced-level talisman practitioner. Based on her knowledge from her previous life, there was only one person in the entire Sikong Planet who could carve runes onto jade stones.

That person was a member of the talisman patrician family located far away in Guanlan City. It turned out this pudgy child's rich dad was quite capable.

However, when Qiao Mu carefully examined it, a faint smile involuntarily rose on her lips.

She could not feel a single trace of talisman energy from this protective talisman that was as large as the child's face. Furthermore, the messy counterfeit runes that were crookedly carved on the surface were nothing but fragmented characters that someone intentionally carved distortedly to make it incomprehensible.

In other words, the pudgy child's dad was probably scammed into spending a large sum of money to buy a fake protective talisman. Since there was not any talisman energy embedded into the jade pendant, it was basically a mere decoration and could not even be considered the cheapest beginner-level talisman.

Pft, it caused her to be shocked for no reason. It was nothing but a joke in the end.

Qiao Mu pursed her lips with disinterest and was about to look away when her gaze suddenly paused and landed behind the pudgy child.

There was a Daoist priest holding a peach-wood sword intended to ward off evil spirits and reciting a series of words with conviction. His peach-wood sword suddenly pointed at the direction of the livid Master Jiang and shouted "Tch! I order all the evil monsters in the vicinity to disperse and the evil spirits to quickly surrender!"

"Hahahaha..." the children all broke into laughter and tumbled everywhere, rolling into a ball.

*Swish swish swish swish.* The Daoist priest brandished his sword and performed a sword dance, causing Qiao Mu to laugh her head off.

This mumble jumble of a "sword dance" was truly... absurd beyond belief! Zhou Tao's portly dad was swindled again and found a fake Daoist priest from who knows where.

"Small demon, show thyself immediately!" A talisman paper was pinched between two of the Daoist priest's fingers, and with a downward motion, the paper combusted in a bowl of clear water. This self-combustion technique immediately stunned this crowd of ignorant children from the village.

The Daoist priest swallowed a mouthful of the "talisman water" before spitting it all onto the peach-wood sword, but when he histrionically walked forward, he suddenly stepped on something and promptly slipped, face-planting onto the ground with a thump.

The Daoist priest's eyes bulged out of his sockets, but it was too late to catch himself, and the impact nearly knocked his nose crooked.

### **Chapter 39: Escaping in a Panic**

This turn of events was like stabbing a hornet's nest, and the whole classroom was filled with the children's guffaws.

The Daoist priest stood up, his face burning. Meeting his tiny employer, Zhou Tao's, doubtful gaze, he immediately straightened his expression and shouted while lunging toward Master Jiang, "You evil creature, where did you flee to?"

*Swish, swish, swish.* The Daoist priest charged to the front of Master Jiang and started waving his peach-wood sword up and down, his body dancing with it. He looked like he was putting a lot of effort into it, as though he was truly fighting some invisible evil creature.

Master Jiang's face was flushed with anger. He moved left and right to dodge the priest's peach-wood sword and was about to admonish the priest.

However, the priest did not keep his cool for more than three seconds and fell onto the ground face first again. This time, his head was spinning, and two tracks of blood flowed down his nostrils.

The Daoist priest was both anxious and angry, and he jumped up with a roar. His peach-wood sword clattered onto the ground, and an ill-boding feeling washed over him. His head felt like it was being pulled by a gravitational force and heavily fell down again.

Then, this turned into a cycle, and the children watched as the Daoist priest miserably got up and fell down over and over again, shock entering their system.

The past and present had frighteningly similar points!

The children all discovered, didn't this scene of endlessly repeating an unlucky event over and over again happen to Little Fatty Zhou yesterday?

*Bang! Bang! Bang!* After the Daoist priest fell over and over again, his forehead was completely red from knocking his head on the ground. What added to his sorry figure was the blood dripping from his nose, flowing everywhere on his face.

A few minutes later, the tragic Daoist priest discovered that his head had finally stopped answering the call of gravity, but the last trace of his confidence had already wilted from the torture.

He shakily stood up. His bloody face with his violently protruded eyes painted him in a very terrifying light.

His originally dazed eyes slowly came into focus, and the Daoist priest released a blood-curdling screech before deliriously staggering out of the classroom, his peach-wood sword forgotten after being tossed onto the ground.

The pudgy child's face was pale from fright. He tightly clutched the face-sized protective talisman in front of his chest and chased after the Daoist priest who was a short distance away. Heaving, he yelled, "Venerable One, Venerable One, why are you running away? Venerable One, Venerable One, come back here! Don't forget you accepted 100 taels of silver from my dad..."

"Too ferocious, too ferocious! The demons here are truly too ferocious! Little child, you better hurry and run! This poor Daoist won't take that 100 taels of silver!" The Daoist priest scampered away while wailing like a ghost and howling like a wolf, leaving behind a group of children looking at each other blankly.

The veins were bulging on Master Jiang's forehead from how angry he was. For two consecutive days, Little Fatty Zhou had sent the whole classroom into a state of upheaval. How could he still have the mood to teach the lesson? He furiously flicked his sleeves and had the brats scam immediately!

Qiao Mu scratched her nose, and the wheels in her mind turned. It was currently still 7am. Since the teacher canceled the class, why doesn't she... go up the mountain and search for the secret paradise?

Since she had planned ahead, Qiao Mu had been carrying rope, a trowel, a gourd for carrying water, and other tools for climbing up a mountain with her when she went to the school the past two days, so she did not need to make a trip home.

She dawdled around until she was the last one out of the classroom. Upon seeing that no one was around, she meandered to the shortcut overrun with dried grass behind the school and nimbly started climbing up.

This shortcut was more precipitous and deserted than the mountain path that she introduced to the people from the Heavenly Dao Sect. She had not traversed it in her previous life, so she had no idea where it led to inside Hulan Mountain.

Qiao Mu slightly looked up and narrowed her eyes as she stared at the withered forest saturated in the sun.

#### **Chapter 40: A Knight in Shining Armor Saving A Damsel in Distress (1)**

Hulan Mountain completely encircled Qiaotou Village, so it encompassed quite an enormous area.

Qiao Mu faintly recalled that the paradise that was discovered in her previous life was located deep in the east side of the mountain, but the exact location still required further investigation.

However, what she lacked the most right now was time. Moreover, if she wanted to search the mountain by herself, it was not too realistic.

Qiao Mu gently sighed. A treasure mystic realm depended on fate, whether she obtained it or not was at the mercy of heaven's will.

One Hour Later:

A small, lithe figure swiftly swept over the withered forest, infrequently stopping to look behind her.

Suddenly, Qiao Mu paused and dashed behind a dead tree. She held her breath for a few seconds before carefully poking her head out and inspecting the glade in front of her.

From her angle, she could see five burly men in cyan robes sitting in a circle in the small sand-covered glade.

They all had an incredibly muscular physique, their arms equaling the width of several of Qiao Mu's thighs, and their breathing was very slow and even. She could tell they were not ordinary people at first glance.

The Hulan Mountain had been abandoned for so many years. Living things were very rare in the mountain, and people normally would not go up the mountain. Hence, it was very strange for these people to show up here for no reason.

Qiao Mu cautiously hid behind the tree, and after observing for a while, she saw one of the strong men took a bamboo tube filled with water and got up, walking forward.

"Drink!" the strong man commanded with a low shout, handing the bamboo tube to a person tied to a tree.

The person had a slim figure with a purple robe loosely hanging from his body and a white satin belt tied around his waist. His head was hanging down askew as he leaned against the trunk of the tree. The person's pitch-black, silk-like hair softly draped down in ripples, completely covering his face.

The strong man's voice did not elicit any reaction from the person. He even distastefully shifted his head to the side and distanced himself from the bamboo tube completely.

A pair of red silk peony shoes gently treaded on the sandy ground, accompanied by a waft of intense fragrance.

Qiao Mu hurriedly covered her mouth and nose, the stinky fragrance nearly caused her to sneeze.

"Mister Duan..."

Qiao Mu slightly trembled. Heavens, why did this woman's voice sound like a chick whose neck was pinched? It was so shrill that it nearly pierced her eardrums.

"Mister Duan, you haven't drunk a single sip of water in two days. How will your body last if you continue in this manner! Come, let me feed you two sips," the woman continued in her pinched dainty voice, strutting forward with mincing steps and her hips gently swaying back and forth. She leaned forward, about to lift that person's chin up.

"Ptui." The person tied to the tree suddenly lifted his chin and slightly opened his mouth while dodging the woman's fingers. At the same time, the woman hastily grabbed one of the strong men near her and placed him in front of her.

"Hic..." The strong man released a smothered groan before crashing to the ground with a bang.

Qiao Mu stared and found a slender nail inserted into the strong man's throat, and his whole neck was dyed red from the blood.

The woman angrily stomped her feet before daintily saying, "Mister Duan, why did you act so cruelly?"

The other four strong men who were sitting and eating dried food all curled their fingers and clutched the bag of dried food in their hands upon witnessing their companion's death.

Inside, they rejoiced over the fact that they were thankfully not the ones who had approached him. As expected, they could not go too near this dangerous character.

Originally, they were a group of 10-20 brothers, but more than half of them had died at the hands of this person's concealed weapons, his viciousness apparent. If, to control him, they did not have special drugs that only allowed him to act up in near range, then perhaps they would all be dead already.