

## My Crown 61

### Chapter 61: Freaking Let Go!

“What is this???” Ghost Saber hastily circulated his mystic energy to attempt to ward off the flames, however, the mystic energy around him was incinerated into nothing by the roaring hot flames in an instant.

Ghost Saber and the other people’s figures were instantly exposed to the fire. Before they could recover from their fear, they could smell the scorching scent of burnt flesh.

What made them fall further into terror and despair was that this burnt smell did not come from elsewhere. It was the scent of their own flesh being burned.

Ghost Saber instantly turned into a walking fire. Wearing an outfit of intense fire, he dazedly flung his arms crazily and dashed around madly, running straight into several unlucky disciples from Ghost Sect.

However, the heavenly fire that descended from the sky instantly engulfed everyone into a sea of flames. No matter how they struggled and screamed, it was to no avail.

Qiao Mu’s expression was still fairly calm as she observed from the side. She slightly looked up at the pleased Crown Prince Lian.

This punk was truly not what he seemed. He was incomparably vicious in his every strike, but he was draped with a skin that was elegantly handsome like a celestial—what an actor!

However, in consideration of how he handled these dolts, Qiao Mu felt like today’s Crown Prince was more pleasing to the eye than usual.

Anyhow, this lad had saved her life today, so she will consider them even since he previously smacked her bum and flattened her “old pride”!

With a point of his finger, Mo Lian extracted a flying hemp rope from the fire, and a smile appeared on his lips. “It turns out it’s the Spirit Binding Rope. This toy was quite useful.”

The child naturally took the rope and frankly confiscated it, stuffing it into the folds by her chest and taking it as hers.

Mo Lian could not help but smile. This child was truly adept at silently taking treasures. Every time she did something bad, her face would be stoic with a deadpan manner. It was truly adorable to look at.

He could not resist squeezing the little guy’s bony cheeks, resulting in a certain child’s displeased glare.

*Slap!* She forcefully slapped away his hand. Then, she suddenly recalled the poor youth, Duan Yue. He couldn’t have possibly been... swallowed by the sea of flames, right?

After all, that poor thing did save her just now.

Qiao Mu twisted her body and turned half a circle, her gaze browsing for traces of Duan Yue in the brilliantly red sea of flames.

However, besides where Crown Prince Lian and she stood, fire encroached every spot in the stone forest, and the visibility was very low. After searching for half a day, Qiao Mu was still unable to discover Duan Yue. Her dainty brows involuntarily furrowed.

“Don’t worry, that lad from the concealed weapons patrician family can protect himself. He escaped long ago.” Mo Lian turned her face back toward him. “Let’s go home.”

They should go home. This delay probably cost her a whole night, so her mother was likely fraught with worry.

Qiao Mu cast down her eyes and subconsciously peered into her dantian. To her surprise, she saw the Heart of Paradise that she swallowed being embraced by two intertwining branches of the sapling, its hold on it oddly tight.

Qiao Mu blink and attempted to use her mystic energy to force the sapling to ‘release’ it. Who knew the sapling would fling out several soft twigs and firmly hold the bead, unwilling to let go.

It even had a willful mind of its own! Qiao Mu angrily retracted her mystic energy. She could not comprehend why such a strange sapling would grow inside her dantian.

Was there really not a problem with this type of dantian? It won’t hinder her proper path of cultivation, right?

That would not do, she must try again. Qiao Mu held her breath and drew out a majority of the mystic energy stored in her mystic meridians before transferring it into her dantian and trying to snatch the Heart of Paradise from the sapling.

## **Chapter 62: Heart of Paradise**

After a to-and-fro tussle, it ended with the sapling unwillingly loosening its “hands.” What was more peculiar was that Qiao Mu seemed to be able to sense the sapling’s indignation. She could even see it weeping to the heavens and shaking its tree trunk in her dantian, flinging its branches to “curse the heavens and swear at the earth.”

Heh, how could this tree be such a smart ass? Was this dantian still her dantian? Should she still be in charge?

Did it gain her permission before being so cheeky and making mischief? Such abnormal behavior should be mercilessly stomped down without discussion.

“Qiaoqiao?”

Qiao Mu returned to the present and immediately shoved Mo Lian’s face away from her own face. She opened her mouth and spit out a round bead, sleek like jade.

“How do I use this?” Did those people want to steal her Heart of Paradise with twisted expressions for some ulterior motive?

Yu Xiu had just appeared with a person in his grasp after taking care of the lackeys and immediately stared at the round bead in the child's palm with astonishment on his face.

Wow! That was a shrunken version of the paradise? How did this vicious little girl refine the entire paradise and take it for herself?

Surprise also flitted through Mo Lian's eyes, but there was more amusement present. He patted the child's head. "What a lucky child."

He did not ask her about how she refined the paradise, which put the child more at ease. In truth, even if he asked, she still had no freaking idea what in the world happened.

Nonetheless, she had a faint feeling that the paradise being directly refined probably had something to do with that sapling that appeared in her dantian out of nowhere!

However, she would not tell anyone about a weird thing like having a tree in her dantian. Moreover, with her cultivation as a tiny level-three mystic cultivator, it was abnormal for her to be able to see her dantian to begin with.

Mo Lian cut straight to the chase and instructed Qiao Mu on how to imbue her mystic energy into the Heart of Paradise. The bead immediately released a brilliant light and leapt into the sky. It sketched a mirage in the sky, and the paradise started enlarging endlessly before her eyes.

In a flash, a partially transparent valley appeared in the sky. The sound of trickling water and the fragrance of peach blossoms assaulted her senses.

Most importantly, the rolling magnetite mines surrounding the valley were all inside this mini Heart of Paradise, allowing her to use it whenever she wanted.

After having lived for two lives, there were not many things that could excite Qiao Mu. However, at this moment, regardless of how mature, calm, or indifferent she was, she could not help but turn ecstatic...

Yu Xiu was flabbergasted, and his eyeballs were about to drop to the ground!

He did not expect that the paradise various patrician families secretly searched for without avail would be refined into the Heart of Paradise and seized by... a nameless village girl!

With a thought, Qiao Mu moved the several unscorched rocks into the paradise. With another thought, the rocks returned to their original spots on the ground.

Hahahahaha! This was truly a treasure!

This is great! She could finally store and withdraw items as she pleased!

Unlike that hoax of an inner world where she could not withdraw things if she had insufficient mystic conscious, this paradise merely needed a small amount of mystic energy, and she would be able to extract large items. This really could not be any more convenient.

The child immediately drew her mouth into a smile from joy. A crack appeared in her stoic façade for the first time, and an odd smile was carved onto her lips.

Crown Prince Lian, who had been wholly focused on her, looked at the child with both amusement and exasperation. This little guy's smile was so weird, as though she had never smiled before, and the curve of her lips was extremely rigid

### **Chapter 63: Life Lantern**

If the crown prince learned that the child was so happy merely because this Heart of Paradise allowed her to store and withdraw items as she pleased, he probably would not know what to say.

Her standards were too low...

Moreover, Qiao Mu still had no idea that she would have a tug of war with that strange sapling every time she wanted to take the Heart of Paradise from now on. Hence, was it really easier than using her own inner world?

Before putting away the paradise, Qiao Mu secretly tried to see if she could send herself into the paradise.

In the end, her thoughts were too glamorous, and she could not fit her physical body into the mini version of the paradise.

Qiao Mu pursed her lips and forlornly looked at the rolling magnetite mines that encircled the paradise. It wouldn't do unless she could actually extract from these magnetite mines. Since she could not physically enter the paradise, she was afraid that relying on her mystic energy alone would not be enough to move such a large amount of magnetite outside.

*Sigh.* Qiao Mu regretfully retracted the bead and swallowed it. Using her inner sight, as expected, she saw the sapling caressing the regained Heart of Paradise, looking as though it would not let go even in death.

Qiao Mu's headache intensified. Until she could figure out what this misbehaving tree was, she could not stop being worried about her dantian.

The thickness of her mystic meridians was not only vital to the quantity of her mystic energy, but later also directly impacted the speed of a person's cultivation. The dantian was even more important. It was the place that stored all the mystic energy inside a person, and the mystic energy that flowed through the mystic meridians would have to return to the dantian in the end.

Yet, such an important location was currently occupied by an unknown sapling. This... she could not be comfortable in the slightest.

Qiao Mu looked back at Mo Lian and just happened to see his finger folding back, and a fiery red object with the shape of a lampwick floated into his palm. He gently grasped it, and it dissipated into smoke.

The child curiously grabbed his hand and flipped it open to look at it. There was nothing in it.

"What was that just now?" This crown prince might look gentle, but Qiao Mu felt like his methods were extremely ruthless.

Crown Prince Lian aloofly said, "Ah, this is Ghost Saber's life lantern. In second-rate sects like the Ghost Sect, elders and guardians or worship-level people typically light an Eternal Life Lantern in their sect. The moment that the lantern ignites, these people's souls will be connected with the lantern."

Qiao Mu instantly understood and nodded. "Ghost Saber is dead now."

"Right, he is dead, so the life lantern that he lit in the sect was also extinguished!"

"Then that lampwick...?"

"That is the miniature version of the lampwick that is engraved in his soul. When a person dies, that miniature version of the lampwick will quickly capture the scene before their death and can transmit the event back to the sect."

"And you just now?" That grasp also snuffed out Ghost Saber's last trace of hope.

This was the difference between strength and the suppression of cultivation! It tragically did not allow you to even have the opportunity to tip off the sect!

Yu Xiu waited until his lord finished explaining to the village girl before walking up with a person in his hand. "My lord, this woman had a mystic weapon that dispelled fire, it's already been shattered by this subordinate."

Yu Xiu tossed the tattered sandalwood fan that was snapped in half onto the ground like garbage. Only then did Qiao Mu clearly see that the woman who he had carelessly grabbed without any pity turned out to be the left guardian of Coitus Sect, Yao Ji.

Yao Ji no longer had her previous slim, graceful, and charming appearance. She sat on the ground like a beggar, messy-haired and dirty-faced with red eyes.

#### **Chapter 64: Soul Extraction**

Her hair had been burned to the point it looked like weeds, hanging down from her head in bundles. Her lips were somewhat cracked, and she sat there dazedly with a confounded expression.

Yu Xiu walked up and kicked her before turning to Mo Lian and saying, "My lord, this woman is playing dumb!"

On the contrary, Yao Ji was not playing dumb as Yu Xiu said, she was truly shocked out of her wits.

Coitus Sect was considered an upper-tier sect, to say the least, but even she, who was a left guardian with a fairly respected position in the sect, had never seen someone who could annihilate so many people with a turn of his hand so effortlessly. It was as though they were ants that crawled around his feet.

Everyone, including the level eight mystic cultivator Ghost Saber, did not survive for more than three seconds at the hands of this youth. Fear pervaded Yao Ji's heart in seconds.

Mo Lian did not bother sparing a glance at her and merely ordered in a cold tone, "Handle it cleanly."

This trash dared to attack Xiao Qiaoqiao. She was truly an eyesore that demonstrated the saying “picking money over life.”

Mo Lian’s uttered words appeared to have triggered a certain nerve in Yao Ji. She pounced forward with a howl and loudly pleaded for mercy, but she was mercilessly kicked far away by Mo Lian.

Having received his order, Yu Xiu did not linger and belligerently drew his sword before charging toward Yao Ji.

Yao Ji watched as the sword fell on her head, and her face drained of color as she started shrilly screaming.

“Wait!” The little girl suddenly extended five fingers.

Yu Xiu’s slashing motion froze in mid-air. Mo Lian glanced at him from the corner of his eyes before waving his hand to gesture for Yu Xiu to back off. Then, he looked down at the miss in his arms and asked, “What? Do you not like the scent of blood? I can tell him to throw her further away before taking care of her.”

Yu Xiu: *“...My lord started being particular, but isn’t my lord afraid of leading Little Miss on a crooked path in front of such a little miss who was already so savage without boundaries?”*

Seeing this duo’s indifferent expression, the people unaware might even think they were discussing how nice the weather was.

Qiao Mu tilted her head. “Is there a way that can make her obey me and not dare to even think of rebelling at all.”

“Why do you want this trash?” Mo Lian distastefully pursed his lips and patted her head before saying, “If you need a helper, I can let Yu Xiu follow you.”

Yu Xiu really wanted to cry. His Highness was giving him away without any reluctance!

Qiao Mu loudly slapped the back of his hand without holding back. “Don’t touch my head!”

She was not a plush animal!

“I have a use for this woman.” Qiao Mu looked intently at Mo Lian. “Do you have a way?”

Mo Lian nodded.

Qiao Mu knew this guy would have a method, and this method was also very straightforward and nifty.

With a lift of his hand, Mo Lian sucked Yao Ji’s head into his hand and directly controlled it to extract a thread of her soul.

He did not care about how tragically the woman screamed. Within a few seconds, Mo Lian handed a transparent and weak soul thread to Qiao Mu.

“If she is disobedient, then you can squeeze this soul thread until it explodes at any time. She won’t end well then,” Mo Lian calmly stated.

Qiao Mu's eyes brightened, and she nodded and directly tossed this soul thread into her inner world. A tiny soul would not consume that much mystic conscious when she wanted to withdraw it.

In truth, if she absorbed this soul thread into her conscious, it would be more convenient for her to control it with her mystic conscious.

However, her apparition had just formed, and her conscious was scarce with mystic conscious, so in order to avoid unnecessary problems, it would be safer for her to imprison this soul in her inner world.

## **Chapter 65: A Tiny Chess Piece**

Qiao Mu finally experienced Mo Lian's modus operandi. Not only did she not find it vicious, but she also found it quite fitting to her taste. The woman in front of them had no scruples against attacking a seven-year-old child, so her current fate was simply karma.

Having a thread of her soul extracted from her, Yao Ji laid limply on the ground like a wilted flower and resentfully looked at Qiao Mu as if she wanted to bore a hole through the girl's face.

Qiao Mu did not care about her gaze in the slightest. However, Mo Lian was displeased by that old hag's gaze and sent her a slap through the air. "If you dare to look at people like this again, I will gouge your eyes out."

Yao Ji was sent rolling in the air and flopped to the ground in a heap. She spat out a mouthful of blood, mixed with a couple of teeth. The rage in her eyes was overtaken by heart-gripping terror.

The child expressionlessly said, "Come over."

Yao Ji subconsciously cowered before laboriously climbing to them. This time, she did not dare to look up at that devil.

"I know you have resentments in your heart." The child raised her eyebrows. "Do you really regret not killing me from the start?"

Yao Ji shuddered again, seeming to feel the youth in white's sword-like gaze landing on her.

Having suffered already, how could Yao Ji dare to cause trouble again? Her head drooped low as she crawled to their feet and said, "Little Master, pardon me. Yao Ji doesn't dare."

Qiao Mu dryly looked at her. "What will you say about today's events after you return to your sect?"

Yao Ji hastily responded, "Little Master, don't worry, Yao Ji won't say anything..."

Qiao Mu brusquely interrupted. "How could you be so idiotic at your age? Not saying anything, wouldn't that raise more suspicions?"

So infuriating! Why was it so troublesome to speak with idiots? Our Qiao Mu turned to look at Crown Prince Lian and blinked her eyes, gesturing him with her eyes.

Mo Lian nearly laughed out loud, and Yu Xiu could not help but roll his eyes. "*Kid, do you think His Highness lives in your stomach and will immediately understand your meaning with a single glance!*"

“After you go back, say there was a mysterious expert who vanquished you all. You managed to escape to report it after great trials. If you are acting, then act more realistically.” After saying this, Mo Lian sent the unlucky Yao Ji flying back by several meters with a flick of his sleeve.

Yao Ji mournfully screamed, and she spat out a large mouthful of blood. One of her arms also limply hung down at her side, evidently broken from the shock, and her whole face was drained of color. Added with her shaggy hair and beggar-like clothes, no one would believe it if she went out and claimed she was not a beggar!

“If you have the guts to return and seek trouble, then there is no use for your sect to exist anymore.” Mo Lian glanced at Yao Ji and waved his hand. “You will think of something to concoct when you go back.”

“Yes, I understand.” Yao Ji promptly breathed a sigh of relief and scrambled away after several kowtows.

Qiao Mu’s eyes glinted. In truth, she did not care whether these people will come back and seek revenge. Counting the days, the peace in the world would not last more than a few more days, and it was still uncertain whether this village would still be in existence at that time. What was there for her to be afraid of? She planned to make herself scarce soon anyway.

However, the fewer complications the better. She could not guess whether those two sects will send someone to come and investigate. If they follow the leads to her and learn that she obtained the Heart of Paradise and latched onto her like rabid dogs, then it would be irritating.

“Xiao Qiaoqiao, I am departing for my journey back to the capital tomorrow. Don’t go to do those dangerous things by yourself. And don’t roam outside as much when it’s a dark and windy night, alright? I will come back to visit you later.”

## **Chapter 66: Parting**

The child harrumphed.

Mo Lian poked her stoic little face with amusement. “Besides storing items, the Heart of Paradise can also absorb mystic energy from the outside world and store it. However, remember to avoid notice when you take out the Heart of Paradise, and above all else, you must be careful.”

Qiao Mu nodded and inwardly agreed. She had no desire of attracting a massacre from some sect, so she should not be so pleased as to lose her senses and must be cautious when she used it.

“The supplies that you want should be arriving the day after tomorrow. Remember to receive it.”

As expected of the high and mighty Crown Prince, he gathered supplies so quickly even in such a remote and desolate little mountain village.

Although Qiao Mu’s stoic little face did not contain any emotion, Mo Lian could sense that the little girl was very happy.

Yu Xiu silently trailed after his lord. Seeing how his lord prattled on without an end in sight, Yu Xiu glanced at Qiao Mu with mixed feelings.



When had he seen His Highness the Crown Prince carefully instruct other people like this? This vicious little girl inexplicably suited His Highness' taste.

Qiao Mu turned her head and met his eyes. Her bright and round eyes blinked, and she suddenly asked, "Um... Madam Wu, where did you send her?"

The Crown Prince acted truly fast. The woman, Wu Yanzhen, had disappeared from the village the night of the fire. The next day, her husband rallied a group of people and pilfered through the village and its surrounding areas, looking for her.

Unfortunately, even if they dug three meters into the ground, his wife still would not be recovered.

The crown prince lightly chuckled and looked at Xiao Qiaoqiao as he answered, "Don't worry, I tossed her into the magnetite mines in Black City for mining work. That place is like a black hole, you can enter but you can not leave. She won't be able to come out unless she's a corpse."

Qiao Mu's eyes glinted. She had heard of Black City before. It was fairly close to the Western Wilderness and was technically the central hub of Heavenly Dao Sect's mining.

In a bitter and cold place like that, a person had to labor and mine the entire day. She reckoned it was a hellish life for Madam Wu who had lived a pampered lifestyle until now.

"Store all of this safely." Crown Prince Lian casually stuffed an embroidered cloth pouch in her hands before carrying her and leaping up. He stepped over the raging fire and traversed through the smoky stone forest.

Qiao Mu opened the pouch and peered inside. When she saw that it was all sorts of high-grade ointments with different effects like hemostasis, painkilling, removing scars, dispelling bruises, etc., she hurriedly threw it in her pocket and cheerfully accepted it all with a smile.

Mo Lian walked toward Qiaotou Village in the air with the child, his steps no different from when he walked on flat ground. Qiao Mu sneaked a few looks at him with mixed feelings and finally spoke after pondering over it for a while. "You..."

"Hm?"

"The road to the capital is long, so be careful. If you encounter monsters that move slowly and are rotting from head to toe, you're better off distancing yourself from them."

However, with his inhuman strength, he should not come to harm even if he encountered zombies completely blind.

Mo Lian slightly raised his eyebrows. Although he did not really understand the child's meaning, he still nodded and could not resist squeezing her cheeks. "Are you worried for me, Little One?"

"Scram!" Xiao Qiaoqiao furiously kicked his white robes, adding another dark footprint on him!

"No pinching my cheeks!"

Following behind them, Yu Xiu felt his lips twitch as he looked at the duo in front of him. He could not help but find something amiss with this manner of interaction!

What was amiss?

After thinking it through long and hard, Yu Xiu slapped his thigh in realization. How could his handsome and magnificent lord who is favored by people and flowers alike keep getting trounced on by this little girl and suffer beatings so constantly!

### **Chapter 67: A Grateful Squirrel**

After Mo Lian carried Qiao Mu far off into the distance, something underneath a pile of scorched and loosened rocks and dirt jiggled and jiggled.

Suddenly, a tiny white squirrel popped out, a pair of big and clever eyes wide open on its adorable furry face.

“Squeak!” the little white squirrel pitifully called in surprise.

*“Where is Little Master? Why did Little Master disappear? Little Master! Little Master, Little Master!!!”* If someone was present, they would certainly see the tearful expression on the little white squirrel.

It jumped around in its spot for a moment and took a sniff of its surroundings. It pinpointed the direction in which Mo Lian left with Qiao Mu, and loudly squeaked before dashing out of the inflamed stone forest with a swish.

At this time, the roaring flames had already crept over the entire stone forest, but it appeared to not affect the little white squirrel at all.

The rising smoke caused the visibility to be extremely low, but it was as though the little white squirrel did not notice the surrounding flames at all and even increased its speed. It shot through the blazing stone forest as fast as lightning. Its enthusiastic squeaks serving as company to its chase after Qiao Mu, no holds barred.

*“Wait for me, Little Master!”* Since Little Master saved its life, then she was its second parent! It must follow her, it must!

How could Qiao Mu know that there was a foolishly cute squirrel chasing after her, vowing to stay beside her?

After being taken out of the stone forest by Mo Lian, Qiao Mu continuously poked his shoulder and repeated “Put me down!” over and over.

Seeing as the little one’s home was within view, Mo Lian placed her on the ground and saw that she was about to turn around and run off without a word. However, Mo Lian was already familiar with the little one’s antics, so with a grab, the child was tugged back to be before him.

Qiao Mu angrily stomped on his feet. “What?”

“Do you remember what I said to you?” Mo Lian looked at her with a smile in his eyes.

The child glanced at him and saw that although he wore a smile, his gaze was exceptionally serious. Hence, her face unconsciously darkened as well and nodded, a response of sorts.

Mo Lian poked her little nose. "Then we will see each other later. Return home now."

"Who knows whether we will meet again," the child quietly muttered. Behind her, Mo Lian raised his slim eyebrows and, with a smile on his face, watched as the little one ran far away.

*"Sigh, the little one doesn't even know how to say goodbye. It looks like I will need to slowly teach her in the future. As for whether we will meet again, we will know when we see each other."*

Mo Lian stayed in place at the end of the small road and slowly looked away as Qiao Mu disappeared into the distance.

"I heard that Third Royal Brother went to see the old man and started sobbing with apparent effects," Mo Lian lightly said as he turned around and started heading for the inn near the village's entrance. "Pack up. We will leave first thing in the morning tomorrow and go back to see what else my dear royal brother knows to do apart from throwing a tantrum."

Yu Xiu breathed a sigh of relief and furiously nodded in agreement as he trailed after the crown prince. Dear lord, they should have gone back long ago. On this trip, they witnessed a miracle, and no one ended up obtaining any benefits in the end. The whole mystic realm ended up in the child's possession!

No one would believe it if they told other people about it!

Qiao Mu sprinted home and had just stepped through the entrance, joyful from returning home, when she heard a jeering voice coming from her house saying, "Oh, look, the person herself is finally back!"

A boiling cup of tea was thrown directly at her face.

Qiao Mu's eyes turned severe, and she dodged to the side. When she looked up, she saw Elderly Lady Qiao and her cohort sitting there as if they were having a full-on interrogation.

## **Chapter 68: A Violent Treatment**

Anyone who stepped into their own home and was welcomed by a cup of boiling tea thrown at them from out of nowhere would not be able to suppress their rage.

Qiao Mu was no exception to that. Although her stoic little face remained expressionless, the fury in her eyes could not be restrained anymore, and a blast of icy air shot out of her.

When she looked up, she saw Elderly Lady Qiao sitting in the chair in the middle of the courtyard while her youngest aunt, Qiao Wenjuan, and her youngest aunt-in-law, Xu Jiao, stood on each side of her like guards, sharply watching the newcomer, Qiao Mu. Both of their eyes revealed their contempt and ridicule.

Seeing her own house occupied by Elderly Lady Qiao and her cohorts, Qiao Mu seethed with anger. Words could not describe the restless emotions that boiled within her eyes.

She expressionlessly glanced at Elderly Lady Qiao before heading to her room without sparing them another glance, unwilling to acknowledge them. Whoever wanted to talk to them could do it for her! In any case, she did not wish to waste even a word on this hag.

Her condescending attitude caused Elderly Lady Qiao to shoot up from her seat with anger. She pointed at Qiao Mu as she furiously shouted, "Stop! Kneel down!"

Elderly Lady Qiao's fingertips were trembling from how angry she was. In all the years that she had been in charge of the Qiao Clan, her sons and daughters-in-law have all been extremely respectful toward her and obeyed her every order. When had she ever seen such an insolent rascal who dared to ignore her 'royal edict' and challenge her control over the family? How preposterous!

After having her mind strained for so long, Qiao Mu uneasily returned home and was finally able to rest. Who would have known that the old woman would be waiting for her here? It truly irritated her!

Two old stocky women stepped forward with their hands on their hips as they stood side by side, blocking Qiao Mu's room doors and forcing her to stay inside the small courtyard.

Icicles nearly formed from how cold Qiao Mu's eyes were. She stared at the two old stocky women who obstructed her way like she was looking at a corpse. "Move. Otherwise, don't blame me for being impolite."

"You dare!!! Are you trying to revolt!" Elderly Lady Qiao, née <sup>1</sup> Wang, was hovering between life and death from how enraged she was, the veins on her forehead pulsing.

"Whoever prevents me from resting, then I will make them pay for it!" Hearing a cutesy childish voice saying such murderous words was truly stupefying.

"Let's see if you dare to hit... You!"

*Bang bang.* In a flash, Qiao Mu sent two kicks toward each of the old stocky women's legs. The sound of bones cracking accompanied sharp miserable screams from the two of them. It hurt so much that they were bending over.

Xu Jiao was flabbergasted for a moment before releasing a sharp screech. "You d\*mn girl, you actually dared to attack your grandmother's servants!"

"Are you deaf? I already warned you all to back off. Are my words truly that incomprehensible?" Qiao Mu sneered and packed another punch toward one of the women's stomachs, sending her scuttling back on the ground several meters away, collapsing underneath Elderly Lady Qiao's feet with an anguished howl!

The other woman's face immediately drained of color, and she continuously retreated back. She needed no further action from Qiao Mu before automatically scrambling back, throwing herself at Elderly Lady Qiao's feet and continuously bawling, "Old Matriarch, save me! Old Matriarch, save me!"

How dull! Qiao Mu's eyes emitted a cold glint as she expressionlessly swept her eyes over Elderly Lady Qiao.

Elderly Lady Qiao was startled by her icy gaze and staggered back a few steps, nearly falling over.

The people scrambled to support the old woman. Elderly Lady Qiao's chest was heaving from how angry she was, and her lips trembled as she cursed, "You, you little vermin, you dare to actually attack your elder! Quickly! Seize that little vermin for me! Beat her, mercilessly beat her! Beat her until she's dead!"

## Chapter 69: Throw A Tantrum

This time, Elderly Lady Qiao had come prepared. Not only did she bring four or five old stocky women, but she also brought two grandnephews from her parent's family who knew some middling kungfu.

The two grandnephews were around 14 to 15 years old. As soon as they heard the elderly lady's order, they impulsively charged forward. One of them reached for Qiao Mu with his arms while the other swept his legs toward Qiao Mu's legs.

However, in the eyes of Qiao Mu, such a slow speed was akin to a snail crawling. Yet, they wanted to hit her? How absurd!

Qiao Mu instantly escaped their encirclement with a dodge and retaliated with two giant slaps to their faces.

This little "vermin" was hitting them to show her!

Witnessing this scene, Elderly Lady Qiao nearly vomited blood. She felt like those giant slaps were hitting her own face, causing her pride to be flushed down the drain.

"You still won't stop?" Qiao Mu frostily looked at Elderly Lady Qiao's grandnephews. The coldness in her gaze sent the youths involuntarily shivering from the chill.

"You two aren't my match," Qiao Mu calmly stated the truth. She was truly uninterested in bullying two normal martial artists without any mystic energy. These people might have an advantage over weak and feeble commoners, but they were nothing in the face of mystic cultivators.

Elderly Lady Qiao's two grandnephews were not too dumb and did not dare to rebut Qiao Mu's words. They dejectedly returned to Elderly Lady Qiao's side.

Seeing that no one could seize Qiao Mu, Elderly Lady Qiao angrily sat down on the ground and started throwing a tantrum while wailing about how her offsprings were sinners and degenerates and so on and how she could not live on any longer...

Xu Jiao raised her handkerchief to wipe her mouth and looked away, secretly expressing her disdain for the elderly lady in her eyes.

Qiao Mu coldly glanced at the old woman putting on a wondrous show and directly circumvented her to walk to her room's door. As she pushed open the door, she turned to look at Elderly Lady Qiao derisively and frostily said, "If you can't live, then go die. An old b\*tch like you would be a mere waste of food if left alive. If you truly want to die, then please find a sturdier pillar and slam your head into it. This show of yours is a waste of energy and a waste of time AND you won't die in the end, who are you putting it on for? Your acting skills are so awful despite the fact that you have a crowd cooperating with you, it's truly a feat."

Everyone looked at her, flabbergasted! Even Elderly Lady Qiao stopped her screaming and kicking to foolishly look at this cold-faced child.

Were these venomous and acerbic words really spoken by a child?

“Qiao Mu, how can you speak to Grandmother like that!” Her father, Qiao Zhongbang’s, furious shout came from the courtyard’s entrance.

Qiao Mu coolly glanced toward him before stepping into the room and slamming the door shut with a bang in front of everyone’s faces.

“Son, Mother really can’t live on anymore.” After being broken for about three seconds, Elderly Lady Qiao resumed her tantrum after seeing Qiao Zhongbang and continued slapping her thigh and howling at the top of her lungs, tears streaking down her face and looking like she had some great bitterness.

“Qiaoqiao! Qiaoqiao has returned.” Having heard that her child had come home, Wei Ziqin had rushed back. She did not even look at her mother-in-law before bounding toward her daughter’s room.

Qiao Mu had just wiped her face when she heard her mother’s call. She quickly opened the door and was enveloped in her mother’s warm arms.

Wei Ziqin picked Qiao Mu up on the spot and both anxiously and angrily asked, “Where did you run off to for one whole day, child? You made your father and I run all over and search for you!”

“Mother, aren’t I back now?” As an adult, how could Qiao Mu be used to her mother embracing her? She swiftly wiggled a few times and slid to the ground before tugging on a corner of her mother’s clothes. “Mother, let’s go inside and talk.”

### **Chapter 70: Let Me Protect You**

How could Wei Ziqin be willing to let go of her hand? As she wiped the tears from her eyes, she said, “Child, I already asked Master Jiang, he said that classes got out very early yesterday and all the other children returned home early. Where in the world did you go?”

On her journey back, Qiao Mu had already thought of an excuse and edited out her trouble with that vixen woman and the other people. She merely said that she was nearly kidnapped after leaving the school but was thankfully rescued by a young chivalrous hero and returned home after some twists and turns.

Hearing this, Wei Ziqin found it exceptionally dangerous and hastily embraced her child, muttering her thanks for heavens’ blessing with an ashen face.

Qiao Mu comforted her for a while. Then, someone started loudly pounding on the door.

Wei Ziqin hesitated a moment before pulling Qiao Mu’s hand and said, “Your dad, he brought some people and turned the village upside down looking for you all of last night. In truth, it’s not that he doesn’t care about you.”

Qiao Mu dryly uttered a sound of agreement. Seeing her daughter’s icy face, Wei Ziqin could not help but sigh.

She could tell that in the past few days, Qiaoqiao was quite indifferent and unconcerned about her father, and she would not even him “Father.”

Ever since Xu Jiao escorted Qiaoqiao to the inn to make amends to Miss Liu, Qiaoqiao rarely looked at her father directly. Although the child did not say anything, her heart must have been hurt by her father.

“Qiaoqiao, do you blame your dad?”

*Thud thud thud thud thud.* The sound of the door shaking in its frame from strong slapping interrupted Wei Ziqin’s words.

Wei Ziqin anxiously glanced toward the door. “Qiaoqiao, you... Don’t say anything when you head out there, let Mother handle it.”

From the looks of Elderly Lady’s attitude, it appeared she would not this spare mother and daughter pair today unless a conclusion was reached.

“Mother.” Qiao Mu calmly looked at her mother. Her pitch-black eyes were very clear, and Wei Ziqin could see her own reflection in her daughter’s eyes.

“I have had a strange dream every night for the past few days.” Qiao Mu’s tone was fairly gentle and calm, as though she was detailing something unrelated to herself. “I dreamed that Younger Sis was sent to a rich family, but they did not treat her like a human. Every day, they beat her, cursed her, degraded her, subjugated her. When she was 12, Younger Sis died. She was tossed out of the estate like a pile of trash and laid in a shower of rain with rags that didn’t cover her and eyes that would not shut. This was because, in their eyes, she was nothing but trash. If she died, then she died. There was nothing unfortunate or pitiful about it.”

Wei Ziqin’s face contracted in horror, and she shot forward, clutching her daughter’s mouth. Her head furiously shook as she said, “It won’t happen. Qiaoqiao, why did you have such a horrifying dream? This is a dream—nothing but a dream! Mother has already decided that no one can take Xiao Lin’er from our side. Mother has decided. Mother has decided that no one can take my children away from me. Even your grandmother can’t decide for Mother.”

Qiao Mu tugged on her mother’s hand, and her lips stretched, trying to display a rigid smile. “I think so too. Mother, no one can presumptuously decide Xiao Lin’er’s fate for us. I will be wholly responsible for her life. Mother, this time, let Qiaoqiao protect you.”

Wei Ziqin had tears streaming down her face. She did not know why she was crying, but her chest was painfully constricted, and tears uncontrollably flowed down her face.

She was a mother. She could not be weak. If she retreated, then her young daughter would not have any way out. Wei Ziqin grasped Qiao Mu’s hand and squeezed it tightly once before standing up with a determined expression and pulling the room’s door open with a swoosh.