

Noble Ruler 1061

Chapter 1061: Big Baby's Biological Father?

Rumors had it that Officer Yan Qing was His Grace's sword. He had a cold heart and a cold face, and he was swift and decisive. Even if he was killing thousands of people and going through many deathly battles, his cruel and heartless expression didn't change.

But today, it was the first time he knew what 'fear' meant.

Chu Liuyue was clearly smiling in front of him, but Yan Qing felt a chill run down his spine. His instincts told him that he had said something wrongly. Besides, it wasn't a minor mistake but a ridiculously major one.

He struggled to say, "N-no. It's because His Highness has some things to discuss with that person. It's not because of anything—"

"Oh." Chu Liuyue nodded. "Oh, then it does seem like it's very important... But it's fine if he doesn't come. The contest to choose the princess consort will happen soon. I believe he must be very busy."

Yan Qing felt that there was no use if he tried to add anything, so he hopelessly shut his eyes. "Ms. Liuyue, take it as I'm begging you. Please go up with me first! If His Highness doesn't see you later, he'll be anxious again—"

“I’m from outside the God Residence Realm. Today, I had to rely on my connection with Grotto-Heaven Cliff’s Lin family to come to the Sky-Cloud Empire. I naturally need to journey with them, so how can I just leave like this?” Chu Liuyue directly rejected him without thinking. *He can refuse to come because he doesn’t want to, yet I must go just because he wants me to? How can there be such a good thing in the world?*

“Besides, why can’t I see him? In another four hours, the birthday banquet will begin. Won’t I see him then?”

“But... It’s hard on you if you stay here...” Yan Qing wanted to convince her further, but he swallowed his remaining words when he saw Chu Liuyue’s seemingly smiling expression. Due to this, he changed his tone. “T-then, I’ll listen to you for everything. If you have any issues, do let me know.”

Chu Liuyue waved her hands. “Okay. Since we’ve talked it out, I know what to do. Let’s go!”

...

Even though Chu Liuyue urged him to leave, Yan Qing still respectfully sent her back to where she was previously.

When the duo reached the entrance, the crowd in the room—who heard the commotion—looked over.

“Uh... I-I’ll leave first.” Then, Yan Qing left after seeing Chu Liuyue nod. But after taking a step, he turned back to glance at Hu Yang and instructed, “You must take good care of Ms. Dugu and the rest.”

Hu Yang hurriedly said, “I understand! Don’t worry, Officer Yan Qing!”

Yan Qing then nodded.

As he couldn't successfully invite Chu Liuyue over, he left with a heavy heart.

On the other hand, Chu Liuyue looked relaxed as she directly walked to the chair at the side and sat down as if nothing had happened.

This difference was shocking to the crowd.

"Ms. Dugu, are you satisfied with this area?" asked Hu Yang carefully.

Actually, he was already very polite to Lin Tianfeng and the rest, but he was even more respectful in front of Chu Liuyue. *Although Officer Yan Qing said to properly take care of these people when he left, who can't tell that he specifically meant Dugu Yue? Even a ghost wouldn't believe that there is nothing between them!*

Chu Liuyue surveyed her surroundings, smiled, and said, "It's quite nice."

To Hu Yang, Yan Qing, and the rest, this place might be insufficient. But in actual fact, it was much more extravagant and elegant than most of the palaces she had seen before. It also wasn't a superficial extravagance. Instead, it was an elegance that came from the bones of a deep-seated traditional aristocratic family.

It's no wonder Rong Xiu is so rich... With such a huge family business, what else does he need to worry about?

Hu Yang had a better impression of Chu Liuyue. *It's fine if she didn't know of Officer Yan Qing's identity earlier. But now that she knows, she actually doesn't plan to use this connection to gain benefits for herself. Her attitude is also as approachable as before. How rare.*

His smile was even more genuine. "That's good, that's good! I'll be staying right beside you. If there's anything, you can just directly instruct me."

Then, he cupped his fists toward Chu Liuyue, Lin Tianfeng, and the rest before leaving.

The remaining few people all looked at Chu Liuyue with different expressions.

Chu Liuyue looked up slightly and saw them. She then smiled and asked, "Why is everyone looking at me like this?"

Why? What do you think?!

"Ms. Dugu, I didn't expect you and Officer Yan Qing to have such fate!" The few ladies' thoughts were purer and simpler. They didn't care about much and directly asked, "How do you know each other?"

Chu Liuyue sipped on a cup of tea and slowly said, "It was some twist of fate. There's nothing much to say."

Should I say that I know him because of his master?

Hearing her ambiguous answer, the few ladies exchanged glances in disappointment. *T-this is akin to not saying anything!*

“Alright, it’s getting late. His Grace’s birthday banquet is about to begin; you should go down and prepare,” said Lin Tianfeng suddenly.

With his reminder, the few ladies then recovered their senses. *Oh right! The most important thing that we came here to do is to join the contest for the position of princess consort! All the elegant women that the divisions have meticulously picked out will be shown together! At that time, we naturally have to fight for the limelight.*

Even though they knew they didn’t have much hope of being chosen, they still had to dress up meticulously in case they humiliated Grotto-Heaven Cliff.

The few ladies excused themselves and left together.

Lin Mo said to the remaining two elders, “Let’s also go first.”

Lou Ruhai knitted his brows slightly and glanced at Chu Liuyue.

Detecting his gaze, Chu Liuyue turned around.

The two of them stared at each other briefly.

Lou Ruhai was the first to avert his gaze before he sneered, whipped his sleeves, and left first.

Lin Mo coughed awkwardly and advised Chu Liuyue, “Ms. Dugu, don’t worry. Ruhai is a little hot-tempered; he isn’t targeting you. Please don’t mind him.”

Even if he did have any thoughts beforehand, all of them should’ve disappeared when he realized that Dugu Yue actually knew Officer Yan Qing.

Chu Liuyue’s eyes curved up like a crescent moon. “Thank you for your concern, Elder Lin Mo. I know all of this.”

Very quickly, only Chu Liuyue, Big Baby, and the Lin father-son duo were left in the room.

Lin Tianfeng shot Chu Liuyue a complicated gaze and was hesitant with his words.

“Master Lin, if you have anything you want to ask, please do,” said Chu Liuyue directly.

Lin Tianfeng paused. “Ms. Dugu, I don’t have any intentions of offending you, but I do find this issue rather strange. Uh... You and that Officer Yan Qing...”

As he said this, he glanced at Big Baby—who was so quiet that it seemed like he didn’t exist—and hesitation surfaced on his face.

“Master Lin, you can just say it directly. Big Baby can hear whatever I can hear.”

Hearing her say this, Lin Tianfeng clenched his teeth. “Actually, I want to ask... Is Officer Yan Qing the one you mentioned before, Ms. Dugu? Is he also... Big Baby’s biological—”

Kacha!

Big Baby sliced the table beside him in half!

Chapter 1062: It’s Here!

“Ahem!”

Chu Liuyue never thought that Lin Tianfeng’s thinking would be so off, and she almost forgot to breathe. Hearing this sound, she knew that it was bad, so she hurriedly grabbed Big Baby’s hand. “Big Baby!”

The soft hand covering his slightly cold hand calmed Dugu Mobao down instantly, and he glanced at Lin Tianfeng extremely coldly. A cold gleam rapidly flashed across that pair of sinister-looking purple eyes.

Lin Tianfeng’s heart suddenly went cold as if a chill directly rose to the top of his head from the bottom of his feet.

However, Chu Liuyue immediately covered Dugu Mobao’s face as she glanced at the latter fearfully. *Sir, are you really not afraid of exposing your identity?!*

Dugu Mobao's eyes glowed. *He's courting death!*

Chu Liuyue closed her eyes. *He didn't even do it on purpose! It'll be fine when I explain to them clearly later! Look at the way you're watching him. Other than arousing suspicion, what else can it do?*

I can kill him. Dugu Mobao didn't speak, but his expression was ever so serious. *As long as I want to, Lin Tianfeng definitely won't be able to leave this place alive!*

Chu Liuyue was speechless. *A grandmaster is indeed a grandmaster. Lin Tianfeng is Grotto-Heaven Cliff's Master after all, and he himself is a strong warrior that has completely stepped into the Apotheosis Realm. But to Dugu Mobao, it is far from being sufficient.*

Chu Liuyue knew him too well. If he said he could use his gaze to kill Lin Tianfeng, he definitely could do it!

Chu Liuyue closed her eyes and rapidly leaned toward him. She warned him in an extremely soft voice, "If you don't cooperate with me, I'll beat your buttocks in public!"

Dugu Mobao suddenly looked up, and Chu Liuyue pressed on his shoulders.

Dugu Mobao was speechless.

"Hehe, Master Lin, don't mind him. This child is more sensitive and mature, so it's inevitable that he'll be agitated when he hears such things... It's all because of me; I didn't think this through." While Chu Liuyue controlled Dugu Mobao, she explained. "Also, uh... You've really misunderstood. Officer... Yan Qing and I aren't like that."

However, Lin Tianfeng only half-believed her words. *If it's not like that, what else can it be? That Officer Yan Qing is famous for being a cold-faced King of Hell! If they've really only met a few times, why would he behave in such a manner? Besides...*

His gaze landed on the table smashed by Dugu Mobao, and his heart still had lingering fear. *How is this strength that a three-year-old child can have? I also clearly felt a sinisterly cold murderous intent earlier!*

"Father, I'm quite tired," said Lin Zhifei suddenly.

Lin Tianfeng's attention was immediately diverted. "You're tired? That's true, that's true. We've traveled for so long, and your body isn't that strong for now... You should rest first; I won't disturb you further."

Then, he glanced at Chu Liuyue with a questioning look.

Lin Zhifei said, "Ms. Dugu, please stay. I wish to discuss with you the treatment after this."

Lin Tianfeng then realized that his son was chasing him out, so he didn't speak any further and left after some instructions.

After he left, the room fell silent again.

Chu Liuyue then let Dugu Mobao go.

Dugu Mobao's temper was already gone as he stood at the side with a cold face and didn't take any further action.

"My father offended you just now. Ms. Dugu, please forgive him," said Lin Zhifei.

Chu Liuyue waved her hand in response. "It's okay. Master Lin is also worried about me—I understand. But Officer Yan Qing and I..."

Chu Liuyue couldn't help but smile bitterly. *I never would've thought that things would develop in such a direction.*

"Fourth Young Master, you wouldn't think so too, right?"

Lin Zhifei shook his head. "I believe your words, Ms. Dugu. He... isn't the person you're looking for."

"Oh? Fourth Young Master, why are you so sure?" Chu Liuyue glanced at him strangely. *Thinking about what happened earlier, it is indeed pretty easy for others to misunderstand. However, Lin Zhifei's tone sounds very certain.*

Lin Zhifei smiled slightly. "Instincts."

The atmosphere between the two was indeed unusual. They aren't ordinary friends that have only met each other a few times, but they also aren't like what Father guessed. The reason why I'm so sure is mainly due to her. When she saw that Officer Yan Qing, her eyes didn't light up. It was completely different when she talked about that person back then. Hence, she is definitely looking for someone else.

Chu Liuyue's red lips curled up slightly. *Lin Zhifei is much smarter and more sensitive than Lin Tianfeng.*

“Actually, Ms. Dugu, you can just ask Officer Yan Qing to help you if you're really looking for that person. His status in the Sky-Cloud Empire isn't low. If he's willing to help you, you can save a lot of energy.” Lin Zhifei had no plans of asking what happened between Chu Liuyue and Yan Qing and still brought the conversation back to the original topic.

Chu Liuyue held her chin and looked like she was deep in thought. After a moment, she laughed. “That's not necessary. His Grace's banquet is about to start soon. By that time, everyone should appear there. I believe I should be able to find him.”

It's his birthday banquet and his contest to choose his princess consort. He will definitely be there, right?

...

Four hours passed very quickly.

Chu Liuyue was circulating her aura in her room when she suddenly heard a loud clock outside!

Dong—

This sound spread far and wide and landed in everyone's ears clearly!

Chu Liuyue's eyes flew open, and they sparkled like the stars in the sky!

She looked outside through the windows. *The birthday banquet is about to start!*

Chapter 1063: Tongshen Palace

Knock, knock.

Hu Yang's voice came from outside the door. "Ms. Dugu, we should go."

"I'm coming," answered Chu Liuyue as she turned and gazed at Dugu Mobao. "Big Baby, shall we go?"

Dugu Mobao was currently sitting opposite her. When he heard this, he didn't move at all, but his small back view exuded cold air.

Chu Liuyue coughed and walked over.

From the side view, Dugu Mobao was crossing his arms with his eyes closed. His thick lashes were also curled up slightly. Though his face was ice-cold, his skin was still flushed, and he looked adorable and cute.

After they came back, Dugu Mobao had maintained this posture for four whole hours and didn't even move.

Chu Liuyue secretly admired his determination and also complained about how hard it was to coax this grandmaster at the same time. However, it was quite hard for one to get angry when they saw him like this.

Chu Liuyue's heart tingled, and she softened her voice. "I promise I'll clear everything up when we go over today, okay? Don't you want to make things clear in front of everyone? Hm?"

Dugu Mobao finally opened his eyes. His sinisterly purple eyes seemed to be as clear and clean as a gem. "Really?"

"Really!" Chu Liuyue raised her brows. "I can't watch on as my fiancé becomes someone else's husband, right?"

"Then, what do you want to do?" Dugu Mobao squinted his eyes and sized her up. *With her current ordinary appearance, she won't achieve much even if she goes.*

Chu Liuyue couldn't help but ruffle his hair, and her lips curled up slightly. "Don't ask about this first. I have my own plans!"

...

When Chu Liuyue walked out, Lin Tianfeng and the rest were already waiting in the yard.

The few ladies meticulously dressed themselves up and looked even prettier than before.

“Ms. Dugu, why didn’t you change?” one of the women asked curiously.

Chu Liuyue lightly laughed. “Why should I change?”

“Uh... This is His Grace’s birthday banquet...” muttered that woman. *Even if Dugu Yue isn’t participating in the contest to be the princess consort, she should dress herself up for such a grand event, right?*

But Chu Liuyue seemed like she didn’t care about her appearance, so the others couldn’t say more.

“Hmph! With her ordinary looks, so what if she changes into extravagant clothes?” Ear-piercing mockery came from behind.

Chu Liuyue and the rest looked over.

A group of people walked over from the main hall. The person at the front was a burly middle-aged man.

The person beside him was a soldier in black armor, and the Sky-Cloud Empire’s totem was engraved on his left chest area. He had the same outfit as Hu Yang, so they clearly had the same status.

Behind the duo were a few elders and those women.

Without a doubt, those people had also dressed themselves up intricately. From their hair to their fingernails, every area was done meticulously.

The previous sentence was said by that woman who went against Chu Liuyue at the start. She pushed her loose strands of hair behind her ears and lightly snorted. "It's better if some people know their own limits."

Chu Liuyue raised her brows. *I never said that I wanted to participate in this contest for the position of princess consort, yet the other party didn't let me go. They are clearly still upset about my previous laughter and feel that Grotto-Heaven Cliff is easy to bully, so they dared to be this unruly and bold. Without mentioning whether the person is good-looking or not, her fiery and petty personality is irritating.*

Before Chu Liuyue could retort, Hu Yang stepped forward, glared at that woman, and said, "Ms. Han Zishu, please mind your words!"

Han Zishu glanced at Hu Yang in shock. *What's going on? This Hu Yang actually dared to talk to me like that in front of so many people? His attitude was clearly very humble before!*

Cold Mountain Gully Master Han Quan also knitted his brows, but he quickly recovered his composure. "Haha! Officer Hu Yang, don't blame her. My daughter has always been straightforward. If she offended you, I hope you'll forgive her."

Hu Yang said lightly, "Everyone knows if she's straightforward or if she's intentionally mocking someone. Master Han, this is the Sky-Cloud Empire after all, not Cold Mountain Gully. If your daughter can't restrain her temper, then... I'm afraid she won't be to His Grace's liking."

"You—" Upon hearing this, Han Zishu was so angry that her face flushed white. "How dare you curse me?!"

Hu Yang lightly snorted. “Don’t overthink it. I was just reminding you. It’s up to you if you want to listen to it.”

At this point, even Han Quan’s expression turned ugly.

I was originally just teasing her casually, yet Hu Yang is so insensitive and so arrogant to us openly!

“Hu Yang, everyone who comes is a guest. What are you doing?” The soldier standing beside Han Quan knitted his brows and spoke with a commanding tone. “Apologise to Master Han and Big Missy Han quickly!”

However, Hu Yang snorted and ignored them as he looked toward Lin Tianfeng and the rest. “Master Lin, Ms. Dugu, this way please—”

Then, they really left directly, leaving the people from Cold Mountain Gully behind.

...

“W-why did he suddenly become so arrogant?!” asked Han Quan furiously. “Officer Chen Ting, he didn’t behave this way when he saw you earlier!”

Chen Ting also furrowed his brows tightly. *Even though Hu Yang and I are at the same level, I have some connections to the superiors. Hence, I have a better time than Hu Yang. When we normally see each other, Hu Yang is always polite. For some reason, he is so stubborn today!*

“Hmph, does he really think that those few people from Grotto-Heaven Cliff have the chance of being chosen by His Grace?” Han Zishu was so angry that she laughed.

When Chen Ting heard this, he immediately said, “How can that be? Grotto-Heaven Cliff is the weakest amongst all the divisions. His Grace won’t even take another glance at them, let alone others?”

“Forget it! Since they’re so arrogant, let them carry on! There are many chances to get back at them in the future!” boomed Han Quan. “Let’s go quickly. We can’t ever be late for His Grace’s birthday banquet!”

...

The birthday banquet was held on the main island’s highest mountain—Suming Peak.

“Suming Peak is the holiest and most solemn place in the Sky-Cloud Empire. It is heavily guarded, and they’re very strict on who comes and goes to that place. Other than the clan leader, His Grace, and the respected elders, everyone else needs permission if they want to go to Suming Peak.”

While Hu Yang brought them along, he explained, “There are two main palaces on Suming Peak. Did you see the one mid-hill? That’s Tongshen Palace, which is also the venue for today’s event. Tongshen Palace is spacious, and its structure is complicated. Everyone, you must follow me closely and don’t walk off when we go in later.”

The few of them followed his gaze and looked over. As expected, they saw a magnificent palace mid-hill.

At this point, they could already faintly see many people coming in and out of the square before the palace. It was very lively.

“What’s the building at the top?” Chu Liuyue suddenly gazed at the palace at the top and asked.

The sun shone down, and its light wrapped around the black palace as if giving it a glow of holy light, making it look high and mighty!

Chapter 1064: Meeting

Hu Yang’s expression instantly became solemn and respectful.

“That’s Jishen Palace; His Grace lives there. That place is even more heavily guarded and distinguished than Tongshen Palace. You can’t go in there! Other than His Grace and his confidants, nobody is allowed to enter it casually!”

Chu Liuyue squinted her eyes slightly. *As expected... So that’s where Rong Xiu lives and where he has been all these years...*

“Actually, that’s the clan leader’s place. But now that the clan leader is in seclusion, everything that goes on in the clan is handled by His Grace. Therefore...”

Hu Yang didn’t continue, but everyone understood what he meant: His Grace was currently the most distinguished existence in the Sky-Cloud Empire!

The crowd looked at the black palace, and their expressions were solemn. Even if they were a distance away, they could still feel the endless suppression exuding from that area!

Chu Liuyue suddenly giggled. “I see. Then, His Grace usually must be very busy, right?”

Hu Yang’s heart skipped a beat as he hurriedly surveyed his surroundings. After confirming that nobody else saw them, he heaved a sigh of relief and glanced at Chu Liuyue with a complicated gaze. He then said, “Ms. Dugu, we’re reaching Tongshen Palace soon. Please try not to say such words in the future, in case you attract trouble.”

Seeing his nervous look, Chu Liuyue laughed. “I know.”

Then, all of them continued to walk forward.

...

After about 15 minutes or so, Hu Yang finally stopped.

At this point, they were on one of the peaks beside Suming Peak, and their position was almost the same as Tongshen Palace.

Hu Yang took out his white jade plaque and inserted a wave of force into it. The plaque then glowed brightly!

“Grotto-Heaven Cliff’s Master Lin is here!”

Very quickly, a ray of silver light flew out from Tongshen Palace! At that moment, it was like a silver river descending—it was dazzling!

Under the sky that had already become dark, it was especially charming!

At the same time, a similar ray of light also flew out from Hu Yang's white jade plaque and intersected with it. Of course, compared to the one that flew out from Tongshen Palace, Hu Yang's light ray lacked in many areas.

The person in charge of receiving them was very clearly stronger than Hu Yang!

Hu Yang jumped up first and put away his plaque. "Everyone, please—"

...

Other than their group of people, there were many brilliant light rays that formed bridges around Suming Peak, allowing people to enter. Obviously, these people were also coming to attend the banquet.

The closer they got, the more clearly Chu Liuyue could feel the suppression from Tongshen Palace.

She looked up.

In front of Tongshen Palace was a giant square made of white jade stone. Beside the square, there was a black clock quietly floating near the cliff.

The clock sound should've come from here previously.

Many soldiers in black armor were standing neatly around the square.

Even though there were many people coming back and forth, it was very organized. It was clear that no matter what background these people had, they would all become obedient and abide by the rules when they came here.

At first glance, all of them were in lavish clothes, and it was very grand.

The group of them finally landed on the ground.

“Welcome, Master Lin!” The moment the few of them landed, someone immediately came forward to greet them. This person looked like he was younger than thirty, and he was wearing black armor. His face was slim, and his eyes were energetic, looking very experienced.

Even though his clothes were the same as Hu Yang’s, his surrounding aura was much stronger. Even the previous Chen Ting couldn’t be compared with him.

It was no wonder he could stay here and work.

Chu Liuyue was thinking about something when the other party suddenly gazed at her. “This should be Ms. Dugu, right?”

Chu Liuyue was dazed for a moment and immediately understood. *It seems like Yan Qing should’ve told them about me beforehand.*

She smiled and nodded. "Yes."

A smile surfaced on that man's face. "It's great that you're here. We've already allocated seats for you. Please, head in—"

Then, he turned around and led the way.

Lin Tianfeng and the rest couldn't help but glance at Chu Liuyue. However, Chu Liuyue looked calm as she raised her brows and followed him in.

...

The interior of Tongshen Palace was sparkling gold and looked magnificent.

Inside the palace, the throne was carved from black stone and looked extremely formidable.

Below, many white jade tables were arranged neatly. It split from the middle into two sides, and the crowd would sit on either side.

All the seats seemed to have been allocated in advance as all the tables were written with the respective division's name.

After every table were a number of seats, clearly for the people that came with the respective division.

At this moment, more than half of the seats in the palace were filled.

The crowd was either exchanging pleasantries or having private conversations. The scene was very lively but with some restraint as it wasn't noisy.

Many people looked outside the palace from time to time. They were clearly waiting for the most important person of the night.

Lin Tianfeng and the rest's arrival didn't cause much of a commotion.

Many people just took a glance to the side and retracted their gazes. *Grotto-Heaven Cliff? Nothing much.*

Hence, with that soldier leading Chu Liuyue and the rest, they discreetly arrived at their table.

"Master Lin, this is Grotto-Heaven Cliff's seat. Everyone, please take a seat."

However, Lin Tianfeng didn't move as he glanced at the man suspiciously. "Here?"

Did he get it wrong? This is the first row!

One had to know that those who could sit in the first row in such a scenario were the top few divisions! A clan like Grotto-Heaven Cliff would usually sit in the last row, in a very ordinary corner.

And now—this seat is too obvious?! Even if we take Officer Yan Qing into consideration, such a move seems rather inappropriate!

Even Hu Yang was shocked as he hurriedly asked, “Are you sure it’s here?”

“Of course, I’m sure.” That man laughed. “Everyone, don’t worry. We won’t get such a matter wrong.”

Lin Tianfeng instinctively glanced at Chu Liuyue. *T-this position should be because of her...*

“Since they arranged it, let’s just sit down,” said Chu Liuyue as she naturally walked over.

Lin Tianfeng could only nod, and he sat down with the remaining few people gingerly.

Once the few of them sat down, the palace quickly fell silent.

Everyone looked over and had various expressions. It was clear that everyone had found something amiss.

Lin Tianfeng coughed as he shot Chu Liuyue a questioning look. Then, he lowered his voice. “...Ms. Dugu, what exactly do you and Officer Yan Qing—”

“His Grace is here!” A thunderous announcement suddenly sounded!

Chu Liuyue's heart tingled as she looked up.

A man appeared outside the palace! He was wearing a black robe, and he stood tall and upright, looking very charming.

All the light in the palace shone on his face, reflecting the most handsome appearance in the world.

Before he stood still, he looked toward the crowd in the palace as if he were looking for something.

As if they had a telepathic connection, he stared straight in Chu Liuyue's direction.

A ripple flashed across that pair of deep and clean phoenix-like eyes; they were like the spring wind melting the snow, filled with longing and smiles.

Chu Liuyue's heart seemed to be touched by something soft. Her lips moved slightly as if she wanted to call him directly.

Right at this moment, a woman's voice sounded. "Your Highness, why are you walking so quickly? I can't catch up with you.."

Chapter 1065: Don't Misunderstand; I Just Didn't See You

Following this, a slim woman slowly walked in.

The sky outside was already dark.

She was decked in a white dress with a turquoise jade belt around her thin waist. Her hair was tied up neatly, and she walked slowly. Her eyes were especially pure and charming, looking as gentle as water, yet her red lips curled up playfully.

Such an appearance could be considered superior, but she seemed rather dull compared to the man in front.

The crowd first saw Rong Xiu's deity-like appearance, so they weren't as shocked when they saw others now. But compared to most of the women in the palace, she was clearly better.

Seeing the incoming person, Chu Liuyue squinted her star-like eyes and smiled playfully. *This person seems to be the rumored... Big Missy Jiang?*

As if he didn't hear her, Rong Xiu moved his long legs and walked toward the palace.

Jiang Zhiyuan was dazed and hurriedly went forward. *Earlier, I was discussing with Rong Xiu about the academy. Later, Yan Qing went, came back, and said something to Rong Xiu. Afterward, he was quite distracted. If it weren't because the incident was related to the academy, he would've stood up to leave long ago. It was only now—when the banquet was about to begin—that he rushed over directly.*

He looks as though he's very worried that he'd be late, but that is the strangest part. As His Grace, even if Rong Xiu made these people wait here for hours, they wouldn't dare to say anything. Besides, he has always done things at his own pace. He would never behave in such a manner... No matter what, he seems like he's in a hurry to do something.

Before Jiang Zhiyuan could ask clearly, she hurriedly followed him over. She almost instinctively followed Rong Xiu's gaze and looked toward the palace.

It was a pity that there were way too many people in the palace, so she couldn't even clearly see who Rong Xiu was looking at.

The crowd in the palace finally seemed to react as they hurriedly stood up and bowed. "Greetings, Your Grace!"

Some of the clan leaders or masters had seen Rong Xiu before, so they weren't too stunned now. But for many of the women that came with them, it was their first time seeing the legendary His Grace.

Quite a few people directly flushed red as they dazedly watched the man walking in.

Distinguished!

Disdainful!

There had long been rumors about His Grace being outstandingly talented, formidable, decisive, and sharp! Hence, many people's first impression was respect and fear when they talked about him. But now that they saw him personally, they realized how unparalleled and distinguished His Grace was.

With his deity-like and sinister-like appearance, it was enough to make countless girls fall head over heels for him. Besides, he even had a high status and held great power.

How many women wouldn't be tempted by such a man?

Then, under countless gazes, Rong Xiu suddenly moved his feet and walked toward a certain seat.

Thus, everyone's gazes followed them.

"Hiss... Why do I feel like His Grace is walking toward us?!" A lady sitting beside Chu Liuyue had her face turn red as she widened her eyes and softly muttered.

"How is that possible?! Who is His Grace? Why would he—wait a minute! It seems like he's really coming over!"

"He seems to be looking at someone! Is he looking at us?"

The remaining two ladies were excited as well.

Only Chu Liuyue looked down and relaxingly poured herself a cup of wine.

"Master Lin." Rong Xiu walked to Lin Tianfeng and lightly spoke.

“Y-your Highness?!” At this point, Lin Tianfeng was also stunned as he hurriedly stood up. “Grotto-Heaven Cliff’s Lin Tianfeng greets His Grace!”

Lin Tianfeng was also a legendary warrior himself. As the clan’s master, his usual aura wasn’t weak at all. But standing in front of Rong Xiu, he instantly became minute and weak as his aura was lacking compared to the latter.

Standing nearby, Lin Tianfeng didn’t even dare to look directly at the man before him.

The distinguished aura that one would only have when one stayed in such a high position for a long time couldn’t be compared at all!

Rong Xiu stood with one hand behind his back and smiled slightly. “Master Lin, you brought so many people with you through such a long journey. It must be tiring, right?”

The man’s voice was low and melodious, yet the palace fell into a deadly silence.

Almost everyone looked dazed. W-what did His Grace just say? He actually asked Lin Tianfeng if it was tiring? Out of all the divisions, which one hasn’t come here from far away? Which of us aren’t tired? Why did he only ask Lin Tianfeng?!

All these years, Grotto-Heaven Cliff has been ranked lowly out of all these divisions. In such an event, they usually don’t even have the chance to go forward. What is happening today? Not only are they arranged to sit in the first row, but His Grace has even personally come to ask after him? What kind of honor is this?!

“Thank you for your concern, Your Highness. I-it’s not tiring for us.” Lin Tianfeng was also confused. He was dazed for a moment before he recovered his senses and hurriedly replied, “It’s our absolute honor to come and join His Grace’s birthday banquet!”

This sentence wasn’t an exaggeration. Out of all the divisions, there really weren’t many people who had the right to come to the Sky-Cloud Empire.

It wasn’t that Lin Tianfeng hadn’t come before, but he basically stood in the corner and belonged to the forgotten, transparent existences. There was never once a time where he was in the limelight like today.

His Grace even took the initiative to come over and ask after him.

This all happened too suddenly. Even if Lin Tianfeng was one that had experienced all sorts of big storms, he was also nervous and anxious.

“Master Lin, don’t be nervous. I’m just casually asking; I don’t have any other intentions.” Rong Xiu’s thin lips curled up slightly as he turned his gaze, which landed on the few people behind Lin Tianfeng. “These few should’ve accompanied Master Lin over, right?”

Lin Tianfeng hurriedly turned around and glanced at the few of them.

The few people who hadn’t recovered their senses before this stood up gradually to bow. “Greetings, Your Grace!”

Perhaps she was too nervous, but one of the ladies even moved the table in front of her.

Chu Liuyue had just finished pouring her wine. Before she could even pick up the cup, most of the wine was spilled.

Rong Xiu raised his saber-like eyebrows. "These few ladies are also from Grotto-Heaven Cliff?"

Lin Tianfeng was shocked. He immediately nodded and hurriedly said, "These three are, but Ms. Dugu isn't."

Interest flashed across Rong Xiu's eyes. "Ms... Dugu?"

Lin Tianfeng instinctively turned around, but he saw that while all the others were standing and bowing, only Chu Liuyue was still seated down.

She didn't even raise her head as she poured wine for herself.

Lin Tianfeng's eyelids harshly twitched. *What time is it? She actually has the time to drink wine?! Does she know that the person before her is His Grace!*

"Ms. Dugu, you don't seem too happy to see me?"

Chu Liuyue then looked up and smiled slightly. Her pair of star-like eyes was even more intoxicating than the cup of wine in her hands that reflected the fiery light as she smiled and said, "Your Grace, don't misunderstand.. I just didn't see you just now."

Chapter 1066: Who Offended Whom?

Gasps could be heard within the palace. *Where did this woman come from? Why is she so arrogant to the point she dares to talk to His Grace in this manner?*

Just when everyone held their breaths in and were waiting for His Grace to rage, he suddenly nodded and seriously asked, "Then, do you see me now?"

His voice was as per usual. Not only was he not angry at all, but he even had a rare form of patience.

The crowd was confused. *Your Highness?! Can you wake up!?! What are you doing?!*

Chu Liuyue lightly swirled her wine around, tilted her head, and sized him up in detail. Then, she slowly nodded. "Yup."

Mm. After being separated for so long, we finally see each other. However, I didn't expect us to see each other in such a place with such identities.

At this point, Rong Xiu was quite different from before.

In the past, he always wore white clothes and looked deity-like. But now, he had changed into a black robe and instantly looked more intimidating and formidable.

Chu Liuyue only saw such a him once—it was on that day when she first heard him being addressed as ‘His Grace.’ It was also from then that Chu Liuyue gradually realized that Rong Xiu was definitely not like he seemed. She had expected Rong Xiu’s background to be unusual, but she never expected it to be this shocking.

“Your Highness is indeed distinguished and handsome enough to make many people fall for you,” said Chu Liuyue in a seemingly smiling manner.

“Your Highness, you two... know each other?” Behind them, Jiang Zhiyuan couldn’t help but speak. Her gaze darted back and forth between the duo while a strange discomfort overwhelmed her. *Rong Xiu’s behavior is indeed amiss. All these years, he has never gotten close to women and was even too lazy to talk to them. No matter if it were the Sky-Cloud Empire’s people or the people from the divisions, they’ve tried to convince him to get married countless times. However, he never agreed.*

This time, it was probably because he couldn’t delay it any longer, so he agreed to hold this contest to choose the princess consort.

Even though the event was grand, Jiang Zhiyuan knew very clearly that it was impossible for Rong Xiu to choose multiple partners. Even his attitude toward her showed even more frustration than before. *But now... he actually said such things to another woman? The key is that this woman looks ordinary, and her status seems lowly. What exactly... is His Highness thinking?*

Rong Xiu’s voice was nonchalant, but he didn’t deny it. “Of course, we know each other.”

She’s my wife, my Princess Consort, my fiancée. How can I not know her?!

“I had the honor of meeting His Grace a few times before,” said Chu Liuyue with a smile.

Rong Xiu's brows jumped. *This sentence... Isn't she making it clear that she doesn't want to be related to me?*

"Your Highness, this is your birthday banquet and the contest to choose your princess consort. Don't waste time with me here. You should begin quickly!" urged Chu Liuyue.

Rong Xiu was stumped, but he temporarily couldn't say anything in front of all these people. "Then... Ms. Dugu, please help yourself. Just treat this as your own home."

He then gave Chu Liuyue a deep look before turning around to walk to the seat above.

"Hey, Your Highness—" Jiang Zhiyuan looked at Rong Xiu and then at Chu Liuyue. *Wh-what exactly is going on?!*

"Zhiyuan, quickly come back." At this moment, Jiang Hetian suddenly spoke and waved toward Jiang Zhiyuan. *In front of so many people, it doesn't look good for her to stand there alone. Besides, anyone with eyes can tell that Rong Xiu treats her very coldly. After he came in, he didn't even glance at her.*

Jiang Hetian doted on his daughter, and he could only call her back hurriedly.

Jiang Zhiyuan pressed her lips against each other and walked toward her father before sitting behind him.

That was the first position in the top row on the left—this showed how high Fairy Water Mound's status was!

After Rong Xiu left, Lin Tianfeng finally let out the breath he was holding in. He hurriedly turned to look at Chu Liuyue with furrowed brows and a complicated gaze as if he had many things to say. However, he didn't know where to begin.

"Ms. Dugu, you... Why didn't you tell us earlier than you know His Grace!?" Lin Tianfeng spat out this sentence with much difficulty.

Chu Liuyue blinked. "You didn't ask either!"

Lin Tianfeng was confused. *I would only ask such a question if my brain had problems, right?! Who would've thought that an ordinary woman from outside the God Residence Realm would know the high and mighty His Grace? Huh? Who would!*

"No wonder..." At the side, Lin Zhifei suddenly understood something. *It's no wonder Yan Qing treated her with that attitude. Previously, I felt that Yan Qing's polite and even subtly obedient attitude toward her wasn't normal. Now, I finally understand why. The person she knows is His Grace!*

Lin Zhifei suddenly recalled that she had once asked in the Lin family if His Grace was called Rong Xiu.

At that time, Lin Tianfeng still told her not to address His Grace by his name casually.

At that time, he also thought that she was ignorant because she had just arrived in the area, so she casually called out His Grace's name.

Thinking about it now... It was simply because she thought of His Grace as her equal from the very beginning! Hence, her tone was so calm and carefree!

“Oh my god! Ms. Dugu, you actually know His Grace?! No wonder he came to talk to us just now!” The ladies beside her exclaimed, and their faces were filled with envy.

Chu Liuyue slightly smiled and said, “Yeah, I previously didn’t know his identity either. Thus, I didn’t talk about it.”

“I see!” The few ladies didn’t doubt her as they nodded continuously.

“I knew it was weird for us to sit in the first row. It must be because His Grace knew that you were coming earlier on, so he purposely arranged it for us, right?!”

“Yeah! So this means that the two of you are very close, right?”

“T-then, what kind of girl does His Grace like? Do you know?”

Chu Liuyue picked up her wine and finished it in one shot.

The fiery burn entered her stomach through her teeth, and it burned until half her body became warm.

She held her chin with one hand, and her thin, white fingers gently knocked against her chin. “Hm... The girl he likes... Won’t we know when the contest begins?”

Hearing her nonchalant tone, Lin Tianfeng felt grateful, and his head ached.

He was grateful that they treated Dugu Yue decently during this period and that they didn't offend her. What made his head ache was that she didn't even notice how shocking her relationship with His Grace was and what it meant!

The key is that she didn't seem worried that she would offend His Grace at all. Just listen to what she said just now! Even if I had ten guts, I wouldn't dare to say it! However, she said it all! She doesn't plan to give His Grace any face at all! Without a choice, Lin Tianfeng could only lower his voice. "Ms. Dugu, we're all very grateful to have been able to enjoy your benefits today. But in the future, I hope you'll be more careful. D-don't say such words again in case you offend His Grace!"

Chu Liuyue raised her brows. *Hm? Who offended whom now?*

Chapter 1067: Dugu Yue

"Your Highness, a-are you okay?" After Rong Xiu walked over, Yu Mo—who was serving by the side—couldn't help but ask. It's too scary! The previous scene was too terrifying! Ms. Liuyue's actions were extreme! In front of so many people, she didn't leave any face for His Highness! But His Highness couldn't bear to do anything to her, so he could only be ridiculed.

On the other end, Yan Qing was expressionless. When he heard this, he couldn't help sneering in his heart. *Who can he blame for the sin he committed himself?! In the beginning, I had long advised His Highness to speak about it earlier, but he refused. Great, now she has directly come to the door! Then? He said he'd fetch her personally, but he didn't in the end. It would be earth-shattering if that person wasn't angry!*

Rong Xiu looked calm. "Just go according to the procedure."

Yu Mo hurriedly acknowledged the order. “Yes!”

Seeing that His Highness really didn't have any other plans, Yu Mo was anxious as he used his elbow to nudge Yan Qing. *Hey, didn't His Highness tell you to fetch Ms. Liuyue over previously? Why did she still come with the Lin family in the end? Look at how angry that person is now! If you did it well, why would His Highness end up in this situation?!*

Yan Qing laughed coldly. *So what if I went? I directly went down on one knee to beg her sincerely, yet that person was unmoved. At the end of the day, isn't it because His Highness is in the wrong first? Even if I went there and let her unleash her temper, how can I reduce that person's anger on my own? His Highness can't even do it, let alone me! At the end of the day, His Highness should suffer all of this!*

Seeing how calm His Highness was and how Yan Qing wasn't doing anything, Yu Mo scratched his head and felt his head ache. After much thinking, he couldn't conjure up any solution, so he could only sigh deeply in his heart. *Sigh! Oh well! Why should I care so much!?? Since His Highness isn't anxious, there must be a solution to it, right?*

Then, Yu Mo collected his thoughts and started busying himself with the banquet.

...

Rong Xiu came earlier than expected. After he came in, there were some other divisions that gradually arrived.

Due to his presence, the atmosphere in the hall was clearly more solemn than before. Even if he had already told the crowd to be at ease, everyone didn't really dare to be casual!

This was especially so for the ladies. All of them fought to be the best and the elegant one as they obeyed the standard for their every action and every word spoken, terrified that they would make a mistake and incur that person's wrath.

Afterward, the people from Cold Mountain Gully came.

After they came in, the row of people first saw Rong Xiu sitting above. They then realized that they had come late, so they hurriedly kneeled down.

Rong Xiu nonchalantly let them sit down.

However, the faces of Han Quan and the rest were still white. They knew very clearly that they wouldn't have much of a chance after making such a huge mistake.

Only Han Zishu and the rest couldn't react after a long while as they only cared about staring at Rong Xiu sitting above.

He sat in a formidably handsome manner—it was very normal for such a person to charm others.

It was only until Rong Xiu looked over with coldness in his eyes and the overwhelming suppression attacked them did they finally wake up!

"If you don't want your eyes, just say it," said Rong Xiu coldly.

Han Zishu and the rest then hurriedly lowered their heads to beg for mercy.

This scene made the crowd in the palace feel very conflicted. *In the beginning, Dugu Yue said she didn't see him, but he wanted her to see him. Now that the few women from Cold Mountain Gully stared at him until they were in a daze, he wanted to dig their eyeballs out. It's not that His Grace hasn't done such things before, but with that earlier incident as a comparison, this incident is too strange. Why is the difference between humans so huge?!*

After much convincing, the people from Cold Mountain Gully finally obtained mercy as they sat in a corner helplessly. At this moment, they saw that Lin Tianfeng and the rest were actually sitting in the first row!

Han Zishu was stunned and was about to speak when Han Quan pulled her from the side. *We can't even take care of ourselves! How can we talk about others?*

Besides, although Han Zishu and the rest might not know, Han Quan and Chen Ting knew the pros and cons.

Lin Tianfeng and the rest safely sitting there stated too many problems! Even if they wanted to cause trouble for them, they had to understand the situation clearly first!

Hence, the few of them could only suffer their grievances.

"Hmph, I want to see how arrogant they can become now! Ms. Dugu, it's all because of you this time! If not, we'd be bullied by them again!"

The few women from Grotto-Heaven Cliff felt relieved over this.

“Everyone now knows that you and His Grace know each other. In the future, I bet nobody will dare to offend you!”

Upon hearing this, Chu Liuyue laughed as her gaze swept across Lou Ruhai, who had been quiet the entire while. “I hope so.”

...

After everyone arrived, the banquet officially started.

Firstly, all the people from the divisions presented their gifts and celebrated His Grace’s birthday. Beautiful compliments fell down like raindrops.

Chu Liuyue listened until she was very sleepy.

Rong Xiu scanned his surroundings and saw her lazy and tired look. He couldn’t help but smile and interrupt Yu Mo, who was reading the gift list. “Okay, I’ll read this later. Other than my birthday, today is also the contest to choose the princess consort. It’s also time for me to choose a wife, so we’ll directly begin.”

The crowd was stunned and became thrilled. *This is the important show of the night!*

Rong Xiu waved his wrist and passed a booklet to Yan Qing. “Please read out the name list for those participating in the contest.”

“Yes!” Yan Qing respectfully opened it, and his expression froze. He then quickly looked up and glanced at Rong Xiu.

Rong Xiu was calm. “Read it.”

Yan Qing gulped a mouthful of saliva with much difficulty. “The list of the people participating in the contest for the position of princess consort is as follows: From Grotto-Heaven Cliff: Lin Miao’er, Lin Shuangshuang, Su Xiaoyan... D-Dugu Yue!”

Chapter 1068: You Want to Give, But I Don’t Want

Dugu Yue! When Lin Tianfeng and the rest heard these two words, they were instantly taken aback! *Why did her name appear on that list?!*

The lady beside Chu Liuyue couldn’t control herself and directly spilled her wine on the floor.

Bam!

The crisp sound of the wine cup breaking was heard, and it instantly averted the crowd’s gazes.

The hall fell silent.

Rong Xiu looked over and raised his sharp brows slightly. “Master Lin, what’s the matter?”

Lin Tianfeng hurriedly stood up and said, “Your Highness, uhm... Ms. Dugu isn’t on the list that Grotto-Heaven Cliff submitted! This—”

“Oh?” Rong Xiu seemed shocked as his ending tone was slightly higher. He said to Yan Qing, “Show it to me.”

Yan Qing hurriedly presented the booklet with both hands.

Rong Xiu took it and examined it closely. Then, he looked up and lightly said, “Dugu Yue’s name is clearly written on it. Master Lin, you can see for yourself if you don’t believe me.”

Lin Tianfeng was stumped. *How would I dare not to believe His Highness’s golden words? B-but this isn’t right! That name list was submitted before Dugu Yue even went to Grotto-Heaven Cliff. Besides, I clearly know that Dugu Yue brought a child along with her to look for her husband. How would I dare to add her name to the list?!*

“Uhm... There must be a mistake here...” Lin Tianfeng gulped with much difficulty as his skin was tense, and he was extremely nervous. Even if he had seen all sorts of thunderstorms, he was dazed when he faced such a scene. *The people present don’t know Dugu Yue’s background, but I know it clearly! If someone finds out about it, then—*

“Master Lin, you’re saying that the Sky-Cloud Empire people read this booklet wrong?” Rong Xiu leaned against his chair and lazily asked.

Even though his tone was relaxed, Lin Tianfeng wouldn't dare to admit it! *I'm not tired of living, so why would I accuse the Sky-Cloud Empire people of being sloppy with their work?!*

"I-I didn't mean it that way..." Lin Tianfeng's voice became much softer.

Rong Xiu laughed and threw the booklet back to Yan Qing. "Forget it. We can't make this clear in such a short time; let's leave it as it is first. It's not too late to check after this is over."

The crowd was confused. *This is the name list to choose your princess consort. How could you say that in such a relaxed manner?!*

But since Rong Xiu had already said it, the others naturally couldn't say anything else. Besides, there were many people participating in the contest for the position of princess consort. There wouldn't be too many with her and not too few without her.

This girl without any background wouldn't pose much threat.

Yan Qing held the booklet and felt that his hands were burning. He looked down and glanced at the two words 'Dugu Yue' that was clearly just added.

He was in turmoil. *It's no wonder His Highness wasn't anxious at all. It turned out that he was waiting here!*

Rong Xiu knocked his long white fingers. "Continue."

...

Yan Qing took a deep breath in and planned to continue reading. “Han—”

“Wait!” The moment Yan Qing spoke, someone suddenly interrupted him.

The crowd turned in the direction of the voice.

The person speaking wasn’t anyone else but Jiang Zhiyuan, who closely followed Rong Xiu previously. She gazed at Rong Xiu sitting above and slightly knitted her brows; disagreement could be clearly seen on her face. “Your Highness, your actions seem rather inappropriate.”

The crowd became increasingly silent.

“Zhiyuan.” At the side, Jiang Hetian knitted his brows and called her with much warning.

However, Jiang Zhiyuan ignored him. She pressed her lips against each other and continued, “Just now, Master Lin had already said that Ms. Dugu isn’t from Grotto-Heaven Cliff. Logically speaking, she has no right to be on the name list. Isn’t it inappropriate that you don’t really care about it, Your Highness?”

The crowd exchanged glances. *Jiang Zhiyuan’s words make sense. All those who can come here are the most outstanding women of the respective clans. It’s indeed weird that this Dugu Yue suddenly jumped out and ridiculously got on the name list, becoming one of the candidates.*

Rong Xiu glanced at her slightly. "Not everyone present are daughters from the main family. According to what you say, should they also be removed from the name list?"

Jiang Zhiyuan was stumped and bit her lips. "I... Your Highness, you clearly know that that's not what I meant..."

"Only you know what you mean, Big Missy Jiang. How would I know?" Rong Xiu seemed to smile, but there was no smiling intent in his eyes and face.

Everyone could clearly tell that this was distance from inside to out.

Jiang Zhiyuan was dazed, and awkwardness appeared in her eyes.

After she saw Rong Xiu today, she was originally elated. But afterward, she realized that he didn't seem to want to care about her.

She didn't take it to heart because his personality was always this cold. But now, he didn't leave any face for her at all in front of so many people.

Jiang Zhiyuan felt very aggrieved.

Just as she was about to say something, Jiang Hetian opened his mouth. "Your Highness, please forgive Zhiyuan for offending you."

He chuckled. “Your Highness, you also know that this girl had been spoiled by the clan leader since she was young, so sometimes she’ll be rather unruly with what she says. Your Highness, please forgive her. When we go back, I’ll definitely teach her a lesson!”

When he mentioned ‘clan leader,’ Rong Xiu’s gaze darkened slightly, and his thin lips curled up. “Why would I? It’s a pity that the clan leader is still in seclusion. If not, he’d definitely be very happy to see Big Missy Jiang.”

Jiang Hetian’s smile froze.

For some reason, the clan leader hadn’t come out of seclusion after entering it a few years ago. During this period of time, Rong Xiu had held the power and completely controlled the Sky-Cloud Empire!

All these years, he had been avoiding Rong Xiu, but he didn’t expect the latter to be more unreasonable and powerful than he had expected.

Jiang Hetian awkwardly laughed and didn’t say anything else.

“Father, why didn’t you let me carry on?!” Jiang Zhiyuan couldn’t help but ask.

Jiang Hetian knitted his brows. “What else do you want to say?! Can’t you tell what His Highness wants?!”

“But why?! That Dugu Yue clearly doesn’t have any right! Even Master Lin said that he didn’t put her name on the list. One sentence can solve everything. Why would His Highness go through the trouble?”

Jiang Hetian became slightly frustrated. “Why do you keep harping on this problem? Isn’t it just a Dugu Yue? Even with her, will it change the eventual outcome? Let’s not talk about others. Just based on her appearance and figure alone, she can’t compete with you at all! Is it worth it to quarrel with His Highness over such an unimportant person?”

“I...” Jiang Zhiyuan was stumped for a moment.

“As long as you perform well later, won’t that princess consort position be yours? There’s nobody else who is more suitable than you for this position,” advised Jiang Hetian.

Jiang Zhiyuan could only nod. But for some reason, she just felt uneasy when she recalled how Rong Xiu talked to that woman.

Yan Qing continued, “Han—”

“Hold on.” Another voice was heard.

Hearing this, the person who spoke this time was actually Dugu Yue! They saw that her lips curled up, and she said with a smile, “I think Big Missy Jiang is right.. Your Grace, please delete my name.”

Chapter 1069: Tell Your Fiancé to Come and Speak

Once she said this, the palace fell deadly silent.

Yan Qing's heart harshly skipped a beat as he instinctively turned around to look at his master.

On the throne, Rong Xiu's expression froze for a moment. But that moment of stiffness quickly disappeared.

However, his pair of phoenix-like eyes were gradually covered by lonely coldness, and his entire body exuded a shockingly cold aura. He smiled slightly, and his voice was extremely light. He pronounced every single word carefully: "What did you say? Say that again."

...

The atmosphere became strange.

Many people felt a dangerous and sinister aura for some reason.

The space started freezing inch by inch.

Chu Liuyue's smile didn't change. "Just now, Master Lin had already made it very clear that my name wasn't on the submitted name list. It's also no longer important why my name would appear on that list. Your Highness, it'll be more convenient for everyone if you just delete my name, right? It doesn't seem very appropriate for me to join this lively event. Don't you think so, Your Highness?"

Her gaze turned as she spoke, and she looked at Yan Qing. "There's no need to trouble His Highness for such a small matter. Officer Yan Qing can do it for you. Officer Yan Qing, please."

Yan Qing's hands holding the booklet trembled. *I was wrong. I shouldn't have gone to invite her over in His Highness's position! Not to mention that I got the cold shoulder, but it's even hard for me to remove myself from the situation! Why is my life so tough?*

Helpless, he could only say, "My status is low. I have no right to do so."

Rong Xiu's phoenix-like eyes were deep as he stared at Chu Liuyue. It was as though he wanted to eat her whole directly. "Are you sure?"

Yan Qing glanced at Chu Liuyue to beg her. *Please don't—*

"Of course, I'm sure." Chu Liuyue smiled with deeper meaning. "After all, I already have a fiancé."

...

The crowd went crazy. *So Dugu Yue already has a fiancé?! Then, does His Grace know about it? It seems like he shouldn't know about it, right? If not, he wouldn't have agreed to leave her name on that booklet. However, it is rather embarrassing for her to reject His Grace in front of everyone!*

Lin Tianfeng and the rest looked at Chu Liuyue in shock. *Fiancé?! Not husband?! Then, Big Baby—*

Just as the crowd partook in hushed discussions, Rong Xiu suddenly laughed and said, "So what?"

At that moment, almost all the voices disappeared. Countless pairs of eyes looked at Rong Xiu in overwhelming shock. *S-o w-h-a-t?! What does that mean?*

Jiang Zhiyuan's heart suddenly skipped a beat, and the uneasiness that she felt became increasingly intense.

Everyone else present realized that something was wrong one after another, and they all kept quiet.

The atmosphere was tense and almost suffocating.

Rong Xiu seemed as though he didn't realize that his sentence had stunned the crowd present. He leaned back in a relaxed position and said in a seemingly smiling manner, "As long as you ask him to stand here now and object to this, I will let this slide."

...

Cunning! Chu Liuyue secretly clenched her teeth. *I long knew that this man had a black heart, but I never expected him to be relentless when talking about himself! He even dared to say such words—how shameless!*

Chu Liuyue almost couldn't hold herself back from directly scolding him.

At the side, Dugu Mobao—who didn't move at all—couldn't help rolling his eyes when he heard this. A secret light flashed across his sinister, purple eyes. *This kid is indeed still the same as before. No, I should say that he has become even worse! He is unscrupulous to achieve his motives! He doesn't want his face in front of so many people.*

...

Lin Tianfeng was very uncomfortable. He never expected that the matter would develop to this extent.

If he couldn't tell what His Grace was thinking, he would've wasted all his years of experience! He clearly wants to let Dugu Yue participate in the contest! Without asking, I can also guess how that name appeared on the list! But the key is that Dugu Yue has already stated that she has a fiancé, yet His Grace actually said that... Even if her fiancé had a high status, could it be higher than His Highness's? Not to mention whether that man is here, would he dare to stand up when His Highness has spoken if he was?!

At this point, there seemed to be no solution to this.

Lin Tianfeng couldn't help but look at Chu Liuyue and glance at Dugu Mobao beside her. He sighed. *This child only looks like he's three or four. He's so innocent...*

He hesitated for a moment.

Just as he was thinking if he should speak up, Lin Zhifei pulled him back from the side. "Father, don't be anxious."

Lin Tianfeng was hesitant. "But... His Highness's actions are too... She's on her own. If we don't help her, then—"

Lin Zhifei shook his head. "Let's quietly observe the changes first. It won't help much even if you stand up now."

Lin Tianfeng knew that his son was speaking the truth.

Grotto-Heaven Cliff's status wasn't high. They only had such good treatment this time because of Dugu Yue.

Even the Jiang family from Fairy Water Mound can't stop His Grace from doing what he wants to do, let alone us? Finally, Lin Tianfeng only nodded. "No matter what, she saved your life. If anything happens, we... can't just sit around and ignore her."

Lin Zhifei nodded lightly, and there seemed to be secret ripples in his faint eyes. He silently glanced at Rong Xiu and Chu Liuyue before looking down. *The relationship between the duo...*

...

"What's so good about that Dugu Yue? His Grace actually likes her?" In an isolated corner in the palace, the crowd from Cold Mountain Gully had their eyes wide open and mouths agape when they saw this scene.

Han Zishu widened her eyes in disbelief. "With that appearance and background, how can she gain His Highness's favor? The key is that she even has a fiancé! What exactly can't His Highness think through properly?"

"Shh!" Han Quan still had some form of rationality left as he hurriedly stopped her. "You can't talk about His Highness!"

Han Zishu shuddered, but indignation still filled her eyes. “I just find it weird!”

This matter is too weird!

“That b*tch probably used some method to seduce His Highness! She—”

Before Han Zishu could finish her sentence, a young woman in front of her suddenly turned around.

Her makeup was intricate and appropriate; she clearly came to participate in the contest as well. But at this point, mockery filled her face as she looked at Han Zishu and the rest as though she was looking at fools. “You shouldn’t randomly say such words in case other people hear it. Ms. Dugu... knew His Highness before. If you’re not afraid of being in trouble, continue talking.”

Then, she smiled coldly and turned around. *It’s fine that they came late, but they are also brainless. These people from Cold Mountain Gully are really tired of living.*

Han Zishu and the rest looked dazed. *That Dugu Yue knows His Grace? How is that even possible?*

...

Amidst the suffocating atmosphere, Chu Liuyue was the first to react.. She squinted her eyes and suddenly smiled. “Your Highness, what if I just want to say no?”

Chapter 1070: Additional Spot

“Yue’er Girlie, why are you still so stubborn?” Right at this moment, a low and experienced voice suddenly sounded from outside.

The crowd looked outside.

An elder suddenly came forward. He had no signs of any force ripples, but the unknown strong aura around him made them secretly respect and fear him. *This is an absolutely strong warrior!*

Chu Liuyue was dazed slightly. This was because she knew this elder.

“36 Respected Elder Ming, why are you here?”

Rong Xiu was about to stand up and personally welcome him when 36 Respected Elder Ming hurriedly waved his hands. “It’s Your Grace’s birthday banquet and the contest to choose your princess consort. Of course, I must come and join in on the fun!”

At this point, the crowd gradually stood up and bowed when they saw the incoming person. “Greetings, 36 Respected Elder Ming!”

Quite a few people were secretly shocked. *This person is a strong warrior in the Sky-Cloud Empire. Even amongst the tens of respected elders, he is also considered the most capable one with the highest status. Usually, 36 Respected Elder Ming stays in seclusion and never interferes in such things. For some reason, he actually came over today?*

36 Respected Elder Ming laughed out loud. "Once I came out of seclusion, I heard about this and rushed over without stopping!"

As he spoke, his gaze landed on Ming Yao at the side.

A chill ran down Ming Yao's spine as he hurriedly bent down and bowed. "R-respected Elder, why are you out today? Yet, nobody reported to me in advance. We have failed you. I hope—"

"I heard the news after I came out and immediately rushed over. Of course, nobody will report to you." 36 Respected Elder Ming chuckled. "If I were any later, I would miss the meticulously planned banquet today, right?"

Ming Yao broke out into a cold sweat and didn't know what to say. *It seems like 36 Respected Elder Ming knows everything! Originally, I was a big reason why the contest for the position of princess consort was organized. Previously, 36 Respected Elder Ming kept reminding me not to think of such ideas, but I still took advantage of 36 Respected Elder Ming being in seclusion and secretly did it. I initially thought that everything should be settled by the time this person was out. By then, even if 36 Respected Elder Ming was unhappy, he couldn't say much since everything had been completed.*

I didn't expect him to appear so quickly! This time, I'm caught red-handed!

Just when Ming Yao thought that 36 Respected Elder Ming would sternly scold him in front of the crowd, he saw that the latter didn't talk to him further as he turned and walked in another direction.

Under the crowd's stares, he walked to Lin Tianfeng.

It was actually Lin Tianfeng's first time seeing the person in the legends. But he knew very clearly that 36 Respected Elder Ming was also here to look for Dugu Yue.

As expected, 36 Respected Elder Ming's gaze directly landed on Chu Liuyue.

Chu Liuyue knitted her brows slightly but quickly relaxed them as a look of understanding flashed across her eyes. "36... Respected Elder Ming?"

36 Respected Elder Ming instantly felt guilty when that pair of clear black eyes stared at him. He clenched his fists, brought it to his lips, and coughed. "Ahem. Girlie, how can you openly go against His Grace's words? Just take it as if you're playing a game. Anyway, it won't affect you much, right?"

The crowd was confused. Playing a game? 36 Respected Elder Ming, are your words appropriate?! Many people present have high expectations and take this matter seriously, yet you told Dugu Yue to join as if she were playing a game?

When Chu Liuyue saw 36 Respected Elder Ming's expression, her heart tingled. She half-squinted and silently glanced at Rong Xiu sitting above.

Rong Xiu undetectably nodded slightly.

Chu Liuyue's eyes sparkled. "Okay."

...

As 36 Respected Elder Ming intervened and Chu Liuyue took advantage of his situation, the matter finally proceeded on successfully.

The atmosphere was slightly strange.

Quite a few people started whispering softly. “So 36 Respected Elder Ming also knows that Dugu Yue?! Where did she come from?”

“I’m not sure... But since she came with those people from Grotto-Heaven Cliff’s Lin family... Logically speaking, she shouldn’t have a distinguished background, right?”

“That’s true, but His Grace and 36 Respected Elder Ming’s attitudes toward her seemed unusual! This woman looks so normal. I really don’t know what His Grace likes about her...”

“Hah, so what? All the distinguished women from the divisions have come today. Why would she stand a chance?”

“But speaking of which, why did only 36 Respected Elder Ming come to such an important event? Where are the other respected elders?”

“Perhaps the other respected elders have something to handle, or they’re cultivating... Didn’t you see that 36 Respected Elder Ming also hurried over after exiting his seclusion? Besides... Not all of those respected elders in the Sky-Cloud Empire respect His Grace...”

“Shh! We can’t say such things...”

The crowd partook in heated discussions.

Jiang Zhiyuan slowly clenched the corner of her clothes.

Jiang Hetian turned around to take a look at his daughter and saw her very aggrieved gaze. He sighed and comforted, "Okay, Zhiyuan. I know that you feel aggrieved, but His Grace has always been like this. Nobody can stop what he wants to do. Don't worry. With that Dugu Yue's status, she will only be a mistress even if she is chosen. She doesn't even have the right to be second consort, let alone princess consort. You don't have to worry—"

"I'm not worried about this." Jiang Zhiyuan bit her lips, and her voice was a little hoarse. "I... I'm just upset..."

He definitely likes this woman. If not, he wouldn't do this. I've known him for so long, yet he never specifically did anything for me. How can such a comparison not break my heart? What is even harder to accept is that Dugu Yue doesn't even seem to accept his passionate feelings! Rong Xiu is the most outstanding man in the world. How could her so-called fiancé be compared to him?

Jiang Hetian patted her hands. "As long as you're the one beside him, he'll always be yours for the rest of your life. Why should you mind the rest?"

This sentence finally made Jiang Zhiyuan recover her senses. She forcefully held back the tears in her eyes as she nodded and stubbornly said, "I naturally won't let other people steal whatever belongs to me!"

Jiang Hetian heaved a sigh of relief as he gradually smiled. "This is my Fairy Water Mound Jiang clan's Big Missy, my Jiang Hetian's precious daughter!"

Jiang Zhiyuan pressed her lips against each other as she looked up and glanced at Chu Liuyue opposite her. Thinking about what had just happened, she felt increasingly uncomfortable. *How can such a woman stay beside him? I better... find a way to chase her out from the very beginning!*

...

Yu Mo very quickly moved a chair over and invited 36 Respected Elder Ming to sit on the left side of Rong Xiu.

While Chu Liuyue heard the crowd discussing beside her, she glanced at that side. *Rong Xiu seems... to have not specifically prepared seats for those respected elders?*