

Noble Ruler 1291

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During the next few days, Chu Liuyue stayed at Jiuhe Peak obediently. For some reason, Big Baby never appeared again.

Chu Liuyue didn't know where he went and didn't know how she should look for him, so she simply stayed at her own place and cultivated peacefully.

Sometimes, she would study the Xuan formation Big Baby left behind. Other times, she would read Elder Wan Zheng's Physician Medicinal Guide.

Originally, Chu Liuyue thought that these two aspects would use up a lot of brainpower and energy. After all, with her current abilities, it was still rather hard for her to understand these things. However, she very quickly discovered that things were different from what she had imagined.

She didn't feel that these two things were too difficult when learning. Sometimes... she would even find it familiar for some reason. It was as if... she originally knew how to do it.

Chu Liuyue hid her thoughts very well and cultivated peacefully as usual.

Her only worry now was Tuan Zi. The one-month deadline had come, yet Tuan Zi hadn't exited yet.

She didn't know how it had been doing during this period of time. According to what the legendary three-eyed eagle said before, such a long duration should be enough to trigger Tuan Zi's bloodline power completely. The more uneasy thing is that Million Wine Mountain's opening day keeps getting pushed back.

Many students were confused by this, but most of them wouldn't find out why. After all, to them, Million Wine Mountain was just a place they could rest and relax. Even if it were closed for one month or three to five months, it wouldn't have a great impact.

However, Chu Liuyue felt something unusual about it.

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There were a few times she had tried to ask about Million Wine Mountain, but it was all to no avail. In the end, as she was afraid of arousing suspicion, she could only calm down temporarily and wait silently.

Now, no news was probably the best news...

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Before the news of Million Wine Mountain being opened came, Chu Liuyue met another person—Shang Yulin.

The moment she saw him, Chu Liuyue knew what he was here for.

"Greetings, Elder." Chu Liuyue bowed respectfully.

Shang Yulin glanced at Jiuhe Peak behind her and couldn't help but say, "Rong Xiu really thinks highly of you. Not only did he bring you to Million Wine Mountain, but he even let you stay here."

He shrugged his shoulders. "You need to know that even we don't have this right."

Chu Liuyue smiled and asked, "Did you come for that thing today?"

Shang Yulin laughed out loud. "I didn't expect you to be more direct than me! I'll be straightforward!"

"You helped me so much previously. If I still beat around the bush now, won't it be too overboard?"

Chu Liuyue's words worked very well with Shang Yulin. "Okay! We won't talk any more nonsense then. Let's go!"

Chu Liuyue was dazed. "Go? Go where?"

Shang Yulin glanced at her strangely. "To my territory, of course! You wouldn't want to show it to me here, right?"

Chu Liuyue pondered for a moment and agreed.

After all, it was a rare treasure. Besides, other than those elders in the academy, the students basically didn't know about this.

If Shang Yulin wanted to study it properly, he had to choose a safe and discreet place. It was best to go to his place.

Chu Liuyue nodded. "Elder, you're wise."

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Shang Yulin stayed at the Armory Refinement Master area.

It was the first time Chu Liuyue had come here, and she couldn't help but feel curious.

It was different from the other three areas that were crowded. In contrast, it was very cold and lonely here. If it weren't because one could feel the faint strong aura in the mountain area, Chu Liuyue would've thought that there was nobody around.

But after Chu Liuyue came here, she felt that it was very different.

The mountains in the innermost area were all bald, and most of them were burned. It seemed like they had ended up in this state because they had triggered too many bolts of lightning.

In the mountains, all sorts of rare armory refinement materials outside could be found anywhere here as if they didn't cost money. There were even some failed Yuan instruments that gathered together like a small hill.

Actually, not all of them were damaged. Some of them didn't meet the Armory Refinement Master's own standard, so they were casually thrown away.

Just based on those few at the edges, Chu Liuyue could confirm that people would definitely be willing to lose an arm and a leg for it if they were brought out. However, it was clear that they didn't have such intentions.

Chu Liuyue surveyed her surroundings and couldn't help but sigh in her heart. The Armory Refinement Master elders are indeed carefree and rich...

"Some of those Yuan instruments should be usable, right? Won't it be a pity if they are just thrown away like that?" After walking a further distance inside, Chu Liuyue couldn't help but ask this.

Shang Yulin followed her vision and looked over as he nonchalantly shook his head. "What's so good about those pieces of scrap? It's fine if they're thrown away. If they flow out, it'll be humiliating."

"...Oh." Chu Liuyue silently acknowledged it. I really don't understand the Armory Refinement Master world.

"Here—the inside is my residence." Shang Yulin pointed to the front. "When I'm back at the academy, I stay there."

Chu Liuyue took a glance and realized it was a normal-looking mountain. However, Shang Yulin's words still caused her to be curious. "You... don't stay in the academy?"

Shang Yulin nodded. "Yeah! Normally, I only stay here for about two months a year. This year's situation is rather special, and I went into seclusion to break through, so I stayed until now."

Chu Liuyue widened her eyes slightly. From what she knew, most of the academy elders lived in the academy. She hadn't seen someone like Shang Yulin, who only stayed here for two months...

As if seeing through her confusion, Shang Yulin laughed out loud. "Why are you so shocked? I'm not the academy's official elder, so I can't stay here for long."

Chu Liuyue was truly stunned this time. "Y-you're not an official elder?"

"Yeah." Shang Yulin flew forward, and Chu Liuyue followed closely behind him. "I'm from the Shang family of Mysterious Sky Residence. It's already very hard for me to have the title of 'elder' in the academy. If it were someone else from a top-tier aristocratic family, they wouldn't even be able to do this."

Such a short sentence contained too much information.

Chu Liuyue's brain worked quickly, and she rapidly understood.

Mysterious Sky Residence was the same as the Sky-Cloud Empire, and they were both top-tier clans in the God Residence Realm. Disciples with such backgrounds could study in Ling Xiao Academy, but they couldn't be elders here.

"Ever since Ling Xiao Academy was established, there was this rule. It's still the same even today. This is also the reason why the academy can maintain a neutral stance the entire time and have a balanced relationship with all the aristocratic families."

Chu Liuyue nodded thoughtfully. "You must have your merits if you can be an elder, right?"

Shang Yulin laughed out loud. "You're wrong! The reason why I could become half an elder in the academy is that... I had once saved the director's precious disciple!"

Chu Liuyue's heart harshly skipped a beat!

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"It's a long story, and I don't think you would like to hear it." Shang Yulin didn't seem to have any intentions of talking about it.

Chu Liuyue's lips moved, and she said, "After coming to the academy, I did hear quite a bit about that person."

Shang Yulin looked at her in shock and instantly smiled in understanding. "That's true. The Qing Yun Ranking has always been there, and only her name is erased. It's inevitable that there will be some news."

Unlike the mysterious behavior the elders have toward me, Shang Yulin's attitude seems much more relaxed when he talks about this. Perhaps it's because he isn't an official elder in the academy, Chu Liuyue thought to herself secretly.

"Actually, when you talk about it, she and you are pretty similar in many areas." Shang Yulin sized Chu Liuyue up. "Back when she came to the academy, she was also sent to Fengmin Mountain on the second day. When she came out later on, she kept committing mistakes. However, the director protected her, and the elders also doted on her. Hence, they always closed an eye and couldn't bear to punish her severely."

He sighed rather emotionally. "It's a pity that later on..."

His voice suddenly trailed off.

Chu Liuyue felt very complicated.

Actually, after she came to the academy, she also faintly felt that the elders were very kind and even indulged her back then. If not, how could they allow a student like her to casually open the academy barrier?

They were biased in the end.

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It was a pity she didn't remember all of this. Even when Shang Yulin talked about saving her, she had no impression of it at all.

"Forget it. Let the past be the past." Shang Yulin quickly adjusted himself and looked at Chu Liuyue expectantly. "The Chi Xiao Sword—"

Chu Liuyue slightly nodded. A thought surfaced in her mind, and she summoned it over!

She passed the sword over. "Elder, please."

Shang Yulin's breathing paused for a moment, and his eyes were as if glued onto the Chi Xiao Sword.

Agitation, passion, emotion... That was the gaze of being able to see it after so many years!

He took a deep breath in and reached out to take the sword. But after stretching his hand out halfway, he hurriedly wiped it against his shirt and took the sword carefully and sincerely.

Even though Chu Liuyue knew that he liked the Chi Xiao Sword, she didn't expect him to treat it so solemnly. This had clearly become his obsession.

Shang Yulin tightly grabbed the sword sheath and the hilt as he gathered all his focus. When he calmed down a little more, he started to take the Chi Xiao Sword out gradually.

It was bright, cold, and sharp! Just looking at it almost caused one to be hurt by the terrifying sword aura!

Shang Yulin's cheeks turned red from being too agitated, and his eyes lit up. "Supreme Yuan instrument... It indeed lives up to its name!"

His gaze carefully swept across it, including every single line on the sword sheath, the dragon head on the hilt, and the perfect sword body!

Every area was done perfectly!

On the side, Chu Liuyue saw that he couldn't conceal his excitement and felt very emotional at that moment. Perhaps this is a true Armory Refinement Master! They always have a respectful and loving attitude toward elite Yuan instruments! It's hard to imagine that someone who is carefree and cool to the outside world has such sincere and serious moments.

Shing!

Shang Yulin finally pulled the sword out!

The sword weighed a ton, and even he had to use a lot of effort to lift it up.

The strong suppression almost made him unable to breathe. However, Shang Yulin still insisted on holding it up, but his hands shook greatly.

Chu Liuyue narrowed her eyes. That's weird. It wasn't heavy when I held it, but why did it become like this in Shang Yulin's hands? Even when I first fought with Jin Lei for this item, and it had yet to recognize an owner, its weight didn't seem so exaggerated...

She thought for a while and still expressed her doubts.

Shang Yulin was caught between laughter and tears. "Silly! Previously, this Chi Xiao Sword didn't have a weapon soul, so it had a normal weight. Hence, many people could snatch it! Now that you've refined its weapon soul and even became its owner, it'll naturally be more than ten or a hundred times heavier than before!"

Finally, he couldn't take it anymore and put the Chi Xiao Sword down.

When the tip of the sword was inserted into the ground, a giant crack instantly appeared!

He breathed heavily and said, "Do you think everyone is as lucky as you?!"

Chu Liuyue immediately understood. "I see! Thank you for your guidance, Elder!"

"You, you, you—" Shang Yulin raised a hand and pointed at her. Sigh, this world is really unfair! I had thought about this Chi Xiao Sword for many years, but it was all for naught. It's hard for me to even hold

it up. Chu Yue knows nothing about this, yet he suddenly became the Chi Xiao Sword's master! There will always be someone who is better.

Meeting Chu Liuyue's pure and clean gaze, he couldn't say a single word. Forget it. What's the use of talking about this?

"There, for you!" Shang Yulin pushed the Chi Xiao Sword to Chu Liuyue.

"You're... not going to examine it in detail anymore?" Chu Liuyue was quite surprised. Previously, didn't he say that he wanted to study it closely? This seems rather fast, right?

Shang Yulin couldn't help but laugh. "I just wanted to see its structure. What did you think I was looking at? Even if I examine it for another day or month, it will never be mine! Faster! This thing is too heavy!"

He urged her.

Chu Liuyue then reached out and took the Chi Xiao Sword back.

She held it up and looked at it. "Did you say that you were looking at its structure? Is this very important?"

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"Of course, it's important!" When Shang Yulin talked about this, he immediately became energized and explained to Chu Liuyue passionately, "When refining weapons, the materials are important. If you want to produce an outstanding Yuan instrument, you need to look at your materials first and then your structure. These two aspects determine how much nourishment it can receive from the lightning bolts. You need to know that the greater the number of lightning bolts triggered, the stronger the Yuan instrument, and the better it can be used."

"Look at this Chi Xiao Sword. In all aspects, it is the best. That's the only way you can produce a supreme Yuan instrument." He sighed. "Back then, that person used up all his blood, sweat, tears, and energy to produce this Chi Xiao Sword. It's a pity that it was deeply buried in Ancient Feather Abyss for many years and didn't see the light of day. Now, it's in your hands, and you inherited it. If that person in the heavens knows about it, he would be comforted, right?"

"The higher a Yuan instrument's grade, the harder it is to understand the mysteries behind it. This is the case for the Chi Xiao Sword as well. I just stared at it for a while, and I already feel uncomfortable. I don't know if I can study it properly," said Shang Yulin very honestly.

"It's a pity you're not an Armory Refinement Master. If you were, it would be much more convenient for you since you have such a treasure with you. If you're talented enough, you might even be able to produce an even stronger Yuan instrument in the future."

His words were filled with regret.

Chu Liuyue silently listened, and an idea popped up in her mind. Armory Refinement Master... Strictly speaking, I am one, right? First of all, a true Armory Refinement Master has to trigger lightning bolts. A cultivator can only determine if they have the ability to become an Armory Refinement Master after they break through the bottleneck and become a legendary warrior. As for whether I have the potential

to become an Armory Refinement Master, I will only know after I break through to become a legendary warrior.

Shang Yulin randomly found a spot at the side and sat down cross-legged. "I'll study it for a while. You can walk around and tour the area. Oh yes, there are quite a few items at the back. If you like any of them, you can just take it."

Then, he closed his eyes as if he really planned on cultivating.

Chu Liuyue hesitated for a moment and couldn't help saying, "Elder, there's something I want to ask you about."

Shang Yulin still had his eyes closed, and he looked relaxed. "Say it."

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Chu Liuyue paused. "I caused huge trouble at Million Wine Mountain that day. May I know if it has recovered yet?"

Shang Yulin snorted and looked at her. "You're still thinking about this? Don't worry! You did cause a significant amount of damage, but we kept repairing it overnight, and it's basically as good as it was before."

"Then, why hasn't it been opened to the public yet?" Chu Liuyue added, "I thought the trouble I caused was too serious... I felt really uneasy..."

Shang Yulin didn't suspect anything else as he waved his hands. "Don't worry. Million Wine Mountain is fine. As for why it hasn't opened yet... Bo Yan has his own considerations. You don't have to worry about it."

After not being able to find out any information, Chu Liuyue could only give up.

Seeing that Shang Yulin had already started cultivating, Chu Liuyue thought for a while and swiftly decided to shop around the area.

It's rare for me to come once, so I have to take a good look. Besides, my name is on the Armory Refinement ranking, which means that I was talented in this aspect back then. Perhaps I can recall something if I look around.

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The surroundings fell silent.

There weren't many things to see on the mountain. Perhaps it was because they would usually trigger lightning when they refined weapons, but there wasn't even a place to stay on the mountains. Instead, traces of weapon refinement would be seen everywhere.

This was still the territory of Shang Yulin, who only stayed at the academy for two months a year. If it were someone else, half their mountain would probably be split open.

Unknowingly, Chu Liuyue walked to the back of the mountain.

Her eyes lit up. There are indeed quite a few good items here. Armory Refinement Masters search for all kinds of precious materials to refine Yuan instruments, but they might not actually be used. Hence, they will just be piled up here. If I randomly take one out, I might be able to sell it for quite a sum.

One had to say that Armory Refinement Masters were prouder than heavenly doctors. They weren't even worried that the items would be stolen.

Chu Liuyue walked over and picked a few interesting trinkets.

She suddenly focused her gaze.

In the small hill that was piled up with all sorts of precious stones, there seemed to be a palm-sized jade pendant packed inside. Under the sun, it shone faintly.

The jade pendant was entirely white and looked translucent and crystalline. Probably because it was a little old, so there were traces of the years on it.

It really looked very unassuming amongst these stones, but Chu Liuyue closely stared at that jade pendant as her heart beat rapidly.

She reached out, carefully took the jade pendant, and examined it closely on her palm.

This was a circular jade pendant. There was nail-sized damage at the edge of it as if someone had chipped it by accident. Upon closer inspection, that damaged edge had a few small cracks. It was as if a light knock would completely smash this jade pendant.

However, this wasn't Chu Liuyue's focus. Instead, she focused on the pattern on it!

A sword slashing a dragon's head was engraved in the middle of the jade pendant.

She was very familiar with this pattern!

Chu Liuyue's hands trembled slightly as she flipped the jade pendant over.

There was one word engraved on the back of it, and it had almost vanished from the wear and tear. But after cleaning the dust on its surface, the word could be clearly seen and recognized—Tianling!

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This belongs to the Tianling Dynasty! At this moment, Chu Liuyue was very sure of it! This pattern, these engraved words... All of it shows its background! The most important thing is that this handwriting is Ancestor's—if I haven't recognized it wrongly!

Chu Liuyue suppressed her rapidly beating heart and lightly called out, "Ancestor."

Detecting that her emotions seemed off, Shangguan Jing's voice had a hint of worry. "Yue'er, what's the matter?"

Chu Liuyue tried hard to make her voice sound calm. "There's something I would like you to verify personally. May I know if it's convenient for you to come out now?"

Shangguan Jing hesitated for a moment before coming out from the Chi Xiao Sword.

Even though it was rather inappropriate to appear here, and he might be discovered by the people in Ling Xiao Academy, he cared about Chu Liuyue even more.

Chu Liuyue handed the jade pendant over. "Ancestor, do take a look. Is this... yours?"

Shangguan Jing went forward and took a closer look. With this glance, his gaze suddenly changed!

Chu Liuyue immediately confirmed it in her heart. This belongs to Ancestor!

As expected, she heard Shangguan Jing say, "T-this is my jade pendant. Why did it appear here?"

Chu Liuyue pointed at the damage on it. "Ancestor, there are some bloodstains on this crack. Are... they yours?"

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That blood had seeped into the cracks. If one didn't take a close look, they wouldn't be able to see it. The color seemed dark and dry as if a long time had passed.

Shangguan Jing knitted his brows and stared at the jade pendant for a while before reaching out slowly.

A sense of familiarity came over, and he spoke with much difficulty, "Yes, this is my blood, and... There seems to be a part of my soul sealed in here."

Chu Liuyue raised her eyes in shock. "Really?"

Shangguan Jing's translucent hand gently swiped across the damaged jade pendant. "Yes... I used to bring this jade pendant with me everywhere. Later... Later... I don't remember what happened later."

As he finally reunited with it after such a long time, his voice was extremely low and slow as if it contained the happenings over a thousand years and a bit of bloody metallic aura. "Before seeing this jade pendant, I actually didn't recall its existence. And now, I don't even remember how exactly I lost it."

Chu Liuyue thought for a moment and guessed, "Ancestor, perhaps you purposely threw this jade pendant?"

If not, why would there be a part of his soul sealed here?

Shangguan Jing didn't talk for a long time, and one couldn't see the depths of his eyes.

Actually, he also agreed with what Chu Liuyue said. When Chu Liuyue previously refined the Chi Xiao Sword's weapon soul, he shockingly discovered that he wasn't his last bit of consciousness but a soul!

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During this period, he had been thinking about this problem. However, he still couldn't remember what happened back then.

He further confirmed his previous doubts when he saw this jade pendant. I'm indeed still alive!

Chu Liuyue looked at her ancestor with a complicated gaze. "Ancestor, do you really not remember it at all? Perhaps... it'll be useful if you merge with the soul piece within the jade pendant?"

Shangguan Jing paused for a moment before slowly nodding. "I'll try my best."

His two soul pieces had been separated for a thousand years. It wasn't that easy to merge them.

Chu Liuyue held the jade pendant in her hands tightly. "Don't worry. I'll definitely do my best to help you."

Ancestor is still alive, and he has found another part of his soul. As long as I find the other pieces of his soul, perhaps I can find the chance to help Ancestor take someone's body and help him live again! This thought made Chu Liuyue faintly emotional. "I'll ask the elder. Perhaps he knows where this jade pendant came from! If we follow this trail, it'll be a matter of time until we can find out what happened back then!"

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"The background of this jade pendant?" Shang Yulin flipped over the jade pendant in his hands and recalled with furrowed brows for a while. Eventually, he still shook his head. "I don't know either."

Disappointment flashed across Chu Liuyue's heart, but she asked persistently, "Think about it carefully. Do you really have no clues at all?"

Shang Yulin returned the jade pendant helplessly. "Chu Yue, you also saw that I have many things back there. I don't even remember when I obtained most of them, let alone their background. As for this jade pendant... I really can't think of anything."

Chu Liuyue took the jade pendant and looked down.

Actually, she had long expected this outcome. The material of this jade pendant might be considered decent to ordinary people, but it wasn't very impressive in front of Armory Refinement Masters like Shang Yulin. If not, he wouldn't have casually thrown it to the hill behind.

He might not even have taken another look at it, let alone others.

"Thank you. Then, I'll think of another way."

Seeing Chu Liuyue's persistence, Shang Yulin felt curious. "Is this jade pendant very important to you?"

Chu Liuyue held the jade pendant tightly and nodded seriously. "This... is my ancestor's item."

No wonder. Shang Yulin immediately realized something. "Since this is so, I'll return you the jade pendant from today onward. You must take good care of it from now on. Perhaps you'll be able to find some clues about it one day?"

Chu Liuyue nodded. "Thank you."

She paused and said, "If there's nothing else..."

Shang Yulin knew what she was going to say and immediately agreed. "Nobody can remain calm after finding such an item. It's better if you go back and rest first."

Chu Liuyue held the jade pendant tightly, thanked him, and left.

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On the way back, Chu Liuyue still felt rather dazed. She never thought that she would find the jade pendant Shangguan Jing had lost by just going to Shang Yulin's place.

The key point was that there was still a part of his soul in it! There was actually such a coincidence in the world! Perhaps this was fate arranged by the heavens?

Chu Liuyue was shocked and felt very lucky, with a feeling of indescribable happiness. Ancestor is very benevolent toward me. If I can help Ancestor revive, it would be for the best!

"Ancestor, do you know what you need to prepare to merge your soul pieces?" Chu Liuyue asked with uncertainty.

After a moment, Shangguan Jing boomed, "I'm afraid it's even harder than you think."

Chu Liuyue was dazed. "You're saying..."

"Back then, I had already built half my God Realm and could be considered a demigod. If you want to merge such a soul, you have to be a Physician at the very least."

If not, it would be to no avail.

"Is that so..." Shangguan Jing's words calmed Chu Liuyue down. "Then, it seems like we need a long-term plan for this. But no matter what, it's already very lucky that we could find your soul."

Shangguan Jing acknowledged it and fell silent again.

Chu Liuyue knew that he needed some time now, so she didn't speak further and didn't disturb him.

"Chu Yue!" The moment Chu Liuyue reached Qing Ming Square and was about to turn in the direction of Jiuheng Peak, she suddenly heard a familiar voice.

She turned around—it was Luo Yanming.

She smiled and greeted him.

Luo Yanming walked over and said very emotionally, "I finally saw you! Why did you not even come out during this period?"

Chu Liuyue could only find an excuse to hide. "I've been busy cultivating recently, so I haven't really been out... Why? Is something wrong? Oh yes... We previously agreed to duel."

Chu Liuyue lightly slapped her own forehead. "Look at my memory. I was busy and forgot about it!"

Luo Yanming chuckled. "So you still remember—that's great! However, I'm not looking for you today because of this."

"Oh?"

"The academy released the Mission Board today, and I planned to go over to take a look at it. Do you want to go together?"

"Mission Board?" Chu Liuyue was dazed. "What's that?"

Luo Yanming couldn't help but laugh. "It seems like you really haven't been out lately. You don't even know about such a major event. Every season, the academy will release a Mission Board. The one who successfully finishes all the missions first will receive a very substantial reward! Many people are tempted. Are you not going to take a look at it?"

Chu Liuyue was actually not very interested in this as she had enough things to be busy with. But seeing Luo Yanming's enthusiastic face, she asked, "What mission?"

Luo Yanming's eyes lit up. "I heard it's related to the Heavenly Square Cauldron!"

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Chu Liuyue was dazed for a moment and almost suspected that she had misheard something. Then, she slowly asked, "What?"

Luo Yanming thought that she didn't understand, so he explained, "The Heavenly Square Cauldron! Rumor has it that it's one of the top ten holy weapons in the God Residence Realm! Don't you know?"

Chu Liuyue's eyelids twitched. I really don't think I know... Since when did the Heavenly Square Cauldron suddenly become one of the top ten holy weapons in the God Residence Realm?! That item has been in my body for so long, but I never realized that it was any different! Oh, other than it being especially powerful and having a large storage space...

Chu Liuyue held her forehead and rubbed her temples. "Tell me what's going on in detail."

Luo Yanming said, "I can't really explain the matter in one or two sentences. If you really want to know, you can directly go to the Mission Board. Everything will be clear then!"

Chu Liuyue closed her eyes. When she opened them again, her black, gem-like eyes were as calm and dark as usual. "Where's the Mission Board?"

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Luo Yanming brought Chu Liuyue to the side of Dong Huang Clock Tower. There were already quite a few people gathered there.

Luo Yanming raised his hand. "Look! It's up there!"

Chu Liuyue looked up.

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A few lines of words shone brightly on the black board. The two words 'Mission Board' were the biggest at the top. Below were the related mission details and explanation.

This was originally where the Qing Yun Ranking's warrior list was located. Now that the Mission Board was hung here, it wasn't considered weird.

Chu Liuyue looked at it a few times and finally understood it.

There was a place in the God Residence Realm known as the Flood-Desert Northern Region. The environment there was extremely terrible, and almost nobody went there. But recently, it had become

an extremely crowded place. That was because the legendary Heavenly Square Cauldron was about to descend there!

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The Heavenly Square Cauldron had been missing since a thousand years ago, and nobody in the God Residence Realm had heard news of it ever since. It was only recently that news of the Heavenly Square Cauldron appearing again had spread far and wide.

All the aristocratic families were very tempted, and they wanted to have it as their own.

Normally, Ling Xiao Academy rarely participated in such fights. But since a treasure like the Heavenly Square Cauldron descending would greatly affect the surrounding Heaven and Earth Force, and there could possibly be other Yuan instruments appearing, there were many benefits.

Hence, after the academy elders discussed it, they decided to list it as the mission this time.

Whoever could stay in the Flood-Desert Northern Region for a month and could find a Yuan instrument related to the Heavenly Square Cauldron... It would be considered as them completing the task.

All in all, this so-called mission could more accurately be considered harsh training.

"Flood-Desert Northern Region... I heard that the place is very dangerous. Whether we'll even be able to come back will be a problem, right?"

"But that's where the Heavenly Square Cauldron is about to descend! Wealth only presents itself in danger. If you don't want to go, there will be plenty of people wanting to go!"

"That's right, and it also states that the elders will go together and try to ensure everyone's safety! As long as we feel that something is wrong, we can just try to ask for help and leave. We won't be in much danger."

"Hah, so what if it's dangerous? Being able to see the Heavenly Square Cauldron once personally would be worth it even if I died! I came to the academy to become stronger! If we're so cowardly, when can we become true warriors?"

The students gathered together and partook in heated discussions.

After listening for a while, most people were still leaning toward taking the risk. After all, the reputation of the top ten holy weapons in the God Residence Realm was indeed too appealing.

"So what do you think, Chu Yue? Are you going?" asked Luo Yanming rather nervously and expectantly.

Chu Liuyue thought for a moment before replying, "I'll go back and think about it."

Luo Yanming nodded. "We can form a team for this. Shishi, Zhuo Sheng, and I have decided to go together. If you want to go too, you can just let us know. We can go together!"

Chu Liuyue glanced at the Mission Board again before she left.

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Jiuheng Peak.

Inside the room, Chu Liuyue held her chin with one hand and furrowed her brows slightly. "Heavenly Square Cauldron... What exactly is going on?"

I clearly obtained that item accidentally when I fought with the legendary three-eyed eagle. Without talking about how it suddenly became a precious object, there is actually another Heavenly Square Cauldron descending in the so-called Flood-Desert Northern Region?

"Could there be two Heavenly Square Cauldrons in this world?"

"Of course not." The legendary three-eyed eagle's cold voice suddenly sounded. "In the entire mainland, there's only one Heavenly Square Cauldron, and it's currently with you."

"But the one at the Flood-Desert Northern Region—"

"Either someone made a mistake, or someone purposely spread rumors. Anyway, it's fake. Don't believe it." The legendary three-eyed eagle's tone was very insistent, and he was sure of it.

After listening to him, Chu Liuyue thought to herself. Some time passed before she slowly said, "This should be a trap someone set up."

"Why do you say this?" asked the legendary three-eyed eagle in return.

"If one or two people deduced it wrongly, it could still be understandable. But now that word has spread far and wide throughout the entire God Residence Realm, and even the academy elders didn't detect that something was wrong... That's rather strange."

Chu Liuyue felt that the elders had good decision-making skills, but even they believed in it without a doubt and were even prepared to bring the students over...

Clearly, someone had used some method to cause everyone to believe that the news was true.

The Heavenly Square Cauldron hadn't appeared once in a thousand years. Even if someone suspected that there was a problem with it, they couldn't produce any evidence—unless the true Heavenly Square Cauldron appeared.

And currently, it was with her.

Other than Ling Xiao Academy, this incident had even implicated quite a few top-tier aristocratic families.

Who exactly was the mastermind with such shocking abilities?

[Chapter 1296](#)

Chu Liuyue felt that she had faintly detected a huge scheme.

A gust of cold air traveled from the bottom of her feet all the way to the top of her head, causing her to feel very uncomfortable.

She poured a cup of tea for herself and moisturized her rather dry throat. How am I supposed to tell the elders about this? Just talking about it is baseless. If I can't produce evidence, nobody will believe me.

Perhaps they might even think that my brain has issues, but if I just allow them to continue... I feel very uneasy.

Chu Liuyue slowly rubbed the cup in her hands and said after a long while, "How do I prove that I have the true Heavenly Square Cauldron in my body?"

The legendary three-eyed eagle paused for a moment before saying, "You think that something that could suppress me for a thousand years is fake?"

Chu Liuyue was speechless for a moment.

"Besides, don't forget that it once suppressed a great phoenix dragon's skeleton and is currently sealing two Heaven-Wrecking Holy Seeds."

Taking out any of them was hard evidence! In this world, not more than five people could do such a thing!

Chu Liuyue sighed. "You're right. I was thinking too much."

"The Heavenly Square Cauldron is an absolute treasure; it's much stronger than your Chi Xiao Sword. So no matter what, you can't reveal this news now. If not, you'll attract all sorts of flies!" warned the legendary three-eyed eagle.

/

"I understand." Chu Liuyue finished the last bit of her tea. "I'll think of another way."

...

Tianling Dynasty, Shaoyue Palace.

It was already late at night, and the moon was hanging bright in the sky.

Octagonal crystal lanterns were hanging outside the palace. The candles burned and increased the length of one's shadow.

Shangguan You stood on the stairs before the door. He looked at the moon and sighed lowly. "I wonder how Yue'er is doing there now..."

Calculating the time, it has already been a few months. Other than a few correspondent letters in between, I haven't received any other news. As time passed, he was getting anxious.

"Your Majesty, Her Highness is now the Sky-Cloud Empire's Princess Consort and enjoys a distinguished status. Besides, that person is protecting her. You don't have to worry." Behind Shangguan You, Cen Yi was wearing a stone-colored robe. He looked calm, and his narrow eyes were nonchalant without a ripple.

"That's exactly why I'm especially worried!" Shangguan You shook his head and sighed. "I didn't expect Rong Xiu to have such a shocking status... Yue'er's identity will be questioned by many people..."

It had been a long time since he received the news, but every time he thought about it, Shangguan You would be very affected. "She's alone over there. If she gets bullied..."

In the Tianling Dynasty, Yue'er is the distinguished new empress above millions of people. But over there, all of this isn't worth a mention.

He knew too well how important background was in a place like that. If she suffers any grievances... We are miles apart, and there will be nobody to stand up for her. Even though Rong Xiu can help her, he can't take care of her all the time, right?

All parents were worried about their children.

Thinking of this, Shangguan You couldn't help but turn around. "Cen Yi, do you have any ways of going over?"

It would be better with one additional person around.

Cen Yi paused for a moment and said, "Her Highness never gave such an order."

Shangguan You felt rather helpless. The Thirteen Yue Guard only listens to Yue'er, and even I can't command them. But in the entire Tianling Dynasty, I only trust these few people.

Cen Yi said again, "We're loyal to Her Highness, and her safety is definitely our priority."

Hearing this, Shangguan You felt slightly more at ease. "That's good, that's good..."

As he spoke, he left with his hands behind his back.

After sending the former emperor out for a distance, Cen Yi returned to Shaoyue Palace again. In the end, he met Qi Han, who came back in a hurry.

"Big Brother, there's a situation."

Cen Yi squinted his eyes slightly. "Say it."

Qi Han's gaze was serious, and the scar on his face looked much more murderous. "Someone went to Country Yao Chen and seemed to be secretly investigating Her Highness. Also, the other party is very strong. We paid quite a high price to settle him, but... The other party doesn't seem like he will just stop there."

Cen Yi knitted his brows. "Have you found out who it is?"

Qi Han hesitated for a moment. "It seems like... someone from that side."

If not, I really can't think of someone else who can be so powerful. Qi Han hesitated for a moment, lowered his voice, and said, "However, there also seems to be someone protecting us."

Cen Yi wasn't surprised about this as he said, "He should be the one protecting Her Highness. Just do whatever you did previously. Also, add more manpower on Country Yao Chen's side. With that person helping, there shouldn't be much of an issue."

"Yes!"

Qi Han was about to turn around and leave when he suddenly thought of something and asked, "Big Brother, are we really going to stay here and wait the whole time?"

Her Highness has gone to the God Residence Realm for so long, and we don't know how she's doing now...

Cen Yi shook his head. "We just need to do what Her Highness instructed us."

Qi Han could only acknowledge it. After jumping around a few times, his body quickly disappeared into the night sky.

Cen Yi thought for a moment and walked in another direction.

...

Night.

After sending away the last customer, the Hundred Herbs Building was about to close when a man in a black cape appeared at the door.

The pageboy instinctively said, "We're closed for the day. Guest, please come again tomorrow!"

The man at the door had a cold voice. "I'm here to see Yue Ling."

In Xi Ling, not many people dared to call Hundred Herbs Building's general manager by his actual name.

The pageboy was taken aback and hurriedly looked up.

However, the incoming person was completely hidden with the cape, and he was even wearing a hood. One couldn't recognize his appearance at all.

The pageboy immediately felt alert. "You are—"

"Invite the important guest up," yelled Yue Ling, who was standing on the second floor.

The pageboy immediately put a smile on his face. "Please, go up—"

That man moved his foot slightly. Without even seeing how exactly he moved, he had already passed the pageboy and went up the stairs.

The pageboy turned around in shock. This...

"You are dismissed," instructed Yue Ling.

The pageboy knew in his heart that he shouldn't stay, so he acknowledged the order and quickly left.

On the second floor, Yue Ling directly guided the other party to a room.

After closing the door and the windows, the two men faced each other.

Yue Ling sat down freely, smiled, and said, "You haven't looked for me in a few years. Why did you suddenly have the urge today?"

The man opposite him took down his hood. It was Cen Yi, who had just left the palace!

Cen Yi's expression was nonchalant as he said succinctly, "I came here to work with you."

Strangeness flashed across Yue Ling's eyes. "Work? You? With me?"

Cen Yi looked at him silently. "Someone is checking on Her Highness's identity. I need to borrow your people."

Yue Ling naturally understood that he was referring to Chu Liuyue. He nonchalantly replied, "My people aren't cheap."

Cen Yi suddenly laughed. "Shouldn't it be a given for His Grace's people to do such a thing?"

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Yue Ling's expression finally changed. "When did you find out?"

Cen Yi said nonchalantly, "That's not important. The important thing is that I already know. Now, I'm asking you for the last time: are you lending your people or not?"

The two of them stared at each other, and the air froze inch by inch.

They silently faced each other. Finally, Yue Ling was the first to break the silence. "This matter is important. Of course, I'm lending you my people. Just tell me how many you need."

Cen Yi's eyes finally curved up into a satisfied smile. "Thank you."

The originally tense atmosphere between the duo silently disappeared!

After settling some details, the two of them officially started their cooperation. The entire process took less than 15 minutes.

Cen Yi stood up. "Thank you for your help. I still have something on, so I'll make a move first."

"Hold on," Yue Ling called him and still seemed very curious. "What... else do you know?"

Even Chu Liuyue didn't know that she was His Grace's person, yet the head of the Thirteen Yue Guard, Cen Yi, knew. This is too weird. Yue Ling couldn't figure it out. Cen Yi's gaze—which seemed like it could see through everything—couldn't stop him from suspecting that Cen Yi knew many secrets.

/

Cen Yi paused and looked up slightly. "More than you think."

After saying that, he turned around to leave.

Yue Ling opened his mouth, but he discovered that the person had already left.

...

Fairy Water Mound.

Inside the room, Jiang Zhiyuan looked at the letter in her hands in disbelief. She knew every single word on it, but when they joined together, she didn't understand what it meant. All the troops were destroyed... Continuously assassinated... Nobody came back alive... W-what does this mean?! The ones sent over were clearly the most outstanding subordinates in the Jiang family. How could all of them die in a small Country Yao Chen, not to mention that they didn't find out any information at all! So many people were even lost!

Due to her anger, her body trembled slightly. Then, she suddenly stood up and swiped all the items on the table to the floor!

Pilihuala!

"Zhiyuan, what exactly are you doing?!" Jiang Hetian—who had just walked to the door—was caught off-guard by the outburst and immediately hollered.

Seeing the ground filled with debris and the furious Jiang Zhiyuan, he first turned around to look at the subordinates. They very sensibly lowered their heads and left, even closing the door properly.

Jiang Hetian walked over with large strides. "What's going on? Why did you throw such a huge temper?"

As he spoke, he already noticed the letter in Jiang Zhiyuan's hands and immediately took it to read.

It was fine if he didn't read it, but now that he did, his expression instantly changed. "H-how did this happen?!"

As he was shocked, his tone became shrill.

Jiang Zhiyuan's eyes turned red as she clenched her fists tightly and clamped down on her teeth. "I told you that there's a problem! In the small Country Yao Chen, it's rare to even see a stage-nine warrior. How could anyone be our people's match? Someone must be defending against us in secret! It's most likely that b*tch's people!"

Other than her, who else can it be? Previously, I already felt that it wasn't simple, and it indeed seems like the case! If she isn't guilty, why does she need to do this?!

Jiang Hetian read the letter many times and furrowed his brows tightly. "No matter if it's her, it doesn't matter anymore. The important thing is that it proves that she's definitely not someone with no background. And from the contents of the letter, it seems like there are two parties of people protecting her in secret. The person behind these two parties is worth investigating..."

Jiang Zhiyuan clenched her teeth, suddenly looked at him, and said, "Father, we were negligent before, so we ended up in such a state. This time, we'll send more people over, and we'll choose the stronger ones! I don't believe they can still do this!"

"You still want to go?" However, Jiang Hetian disagreed with her suggestion. "Zhiyuan, we already suffered a great loss this time. If you send more people, and the same thing happens again, what should we do? You need to know that there are some people with quite a high status amongst them. How should I explain it to the family clan later on?"

He was the clan leader, and he did have power, but great power also came with great responsibility. He could randomly find a reason for the damage and hide it this time, but what if it happened again?

As this matter was extremely private, he sent the people he trusted the most. With this battle, he suddenly lost so many of them, and his heart ached as well!

"Father, what do you mean? Do you want to just give up and not investigate?" Jiang Zhiyuan was in disbelief. "We suffered such a great loss, yet you decided to just let it go?"

"I don't mean that. Zhiyuan, you can't just look at what's in front. You need to consider the big picture!" Jiang Hetian nagged at her. "They're in the light, and we're in the dark, yet we were completely destroyed this time around... This shows that the other party isn't one to be trifled with! I think we should first investigate the other party's background..."

Jiang Zhiyuan sneered. "Check their background? Wasn't the first group of people going over to do this? What happened in the end?"

Jiang Hetian was at a loss for words.

Seeing that Jiang Zhiyuan's attitude was persistent, he kept the letter and boomed, "You're not to be unruly about this. You must listen to me! After a while, we can discuss this again! Also, you've stayed at home long enough. It's time to return to the academy, right?"

When Jiang Zhiyuan heard the first half of the sentence, she still wanted to argue. But when she heard the second half, she suddenly fell silent.

She turned around, and there was her usual stubbornness and willfulness in her voice. "I don't want to go back."

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"What did you say?" Jiang Hetian's face turned cold. "No matter how angry you are, it has already been so long. Hasn't your anger disappeared? Previously, I had already asked you a few times, but you kept saying that you didn't want to go back. If you continue on like this, do you plan on never returning again in the future?!"

When he asked the last question, his voice had already become very stern.

Jiang Zhiyuan's heart trembled. She knew that he was about to truly rage, and she couldn't help but feel scared. But at the same time, the heretical fire in her heart rose. "I just don't want to go back! If you ask me again, I'll still have the same answer!"

She just had to think to know that what awaited her after she went back was definitely endless mockery and laughter!

Jiang Hetian took a deep breath in. "Zhiyuan, don't be willful. I'll still look after the things here closely. You should go back to the academy first and not let Elder Dan Qing worry about you."

Jiang Zhiyuan didn't speak and clearly rejected him.

Jiang Hetian's patience began to wear off slowly. I don't understand. In the past, my precious daughter was clearly understanding, smart, and generous. Therefore, why did she suddenly become like this in the blink of an eye?

"Zhiyuan, I'm asking you for the last time. Have you already decided that you're not going back anymore?" Jiang Hetian's tone was dark.

Jiang Zhiyuan was still scared, so she eased her attitude and couldn't help but tear up with grievances. "Father, it's not that I don't want to go back, but... They're really bullies!"

Following this, Jiang Zhiyuan cried as she told Jiang Hetian everything that happened in the academy. Of course, she had exaggerated some details in between and twisted the truth.

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Thus, when Jiang Hetian heard it, he felt that the entire world was targeting his daughter.

His heart ached. The anger that just accumulated couldn't be unleashed no matter what.

After keeping quiet for a while, he said, "Zhiyuan, I know that you feel wronged, but you managed to get into Ling Xiao Academy with much difficulty, and it's one of your strengths. If you just leave Ling Xiao Academy for good, how will they talk about you? Have you thought about that?"

Jiang Zhiyuan's expression froze.

"Someone else is already the Sky-Cloud Empire's Princess Consort. You don't have many advantages now, do you still not understand?" Seeing that Jiang Zhiyuan finally started to waver, Jiang Hetian softened his tone. "It was my fault just now. I shouldn't have gotten angry at you, but I did all of this for your own good. You know that very clearly, right? If you can get everything you had before by just going back, why do other people talking a bit about you behind your back matter?"

The final sentence eventually changed Jiang Zhiyuan's mind. She wiped her tears, and her eyes still had anger burning in them. "Father, you're right. I was too short-sighted."

"It's best that you can think through this." Jiang Hetian heaved a sigh of relief and said, "Besides, if you go back now, you can still rush to the Flood-Desert Northern Region."

"Flood-Desert Northern Region?"

"That's right. I've been busy handling the matters in the residence, and I didn't have the time to tell you about it..."

Following this, Jiang Hetian told the relevant news to Jiang Zhiyuan in detail. "...It's a pity that our Fairy Water Mound isn't a top-tier aristocratic family, and we don't have the right to go there. But as long as you return to Ling Xiao Academy, you can go with the elders!"

Jiang Hetian's eyes seemed to glow with excitement. "Zhiyuan, that's... one of the top ten holy weapons!"

It would be extremely beneficial if they could get some advantages from it!

Jiang Zhiyuan was tempted as well. After slight hesitation, she finally nodded as if she had made up her mind. "I'll go back right away!"

...

Ling Xiao Academy.

Chu Liuyue watched as the last tiny Xuan formation got slowly swallowed by the light on the large Xuan formation, and her lips curled up into a satisfied smile.

Over the past ten days, she had solved half of the Xuan formation. The further she got, the smoother her progress.

I should be able to solve it completely in no time. Even though solving the Xuan formation doesn't mean that I can unleash a Xuan formation of the same level, it is still a good start. This proves that the cultivator has the corresponding potential.

This was the case now. As a ninth-grade Xuan Master, after Chu Liuyue solved this Xuan formation, she would be a step closer to breaking through to the next level.

She closed her eyes and recalled the previous scene in her mind. After confirming that every step was correct and flawless, she stood up and walked outside.

Reaching the door, she habitually glanced to the side.

Rong Xiu hadn't returned yet.

Doubts flashed across her eyes. Dugu Mobao previously said that Rong Xiu needed another half a month before he came back. But time is almost up now, yet Rong Xiu is nowhere to be seen.

For some reason, she felt uneasy. But this feeling quickly dissipated and wasn't caught by Chu Liuyue.

"Chu Yue!" Zhuo Sheng, Luo Yanming, and Luo Shishi were already waiting for her outside the barrier.

Chu Liuyue retracted her thoughts and walked outside.

Seeing that the three of them looked ready to take action at any moment, Chu Liuyue couldn't help but laugh. "Today is just a contest to choose who can participate in the mission. Why are you so nervous?"

Zhuo Sheng couldn't help saying,

"Of course, I'm nervous! Are you not scared that you'll be eliminated at all? If you miss this chance, you might not be able to see a holy weapon for the rest of your life!"

I might not get others, but I still have a chance for this one, Chu Liuyue silently thought. "Later, we just need to showcase ourselves properly. This is much more useful than scratching your ears and heads."

Luo Yanming and Luo Shishi couldn't help but laugh. The originally tense atmosphere became much more relaxed.

Luo Shishi smiled gently and said, "Chu Yue is right. Shall we go now?"

Chu Liuyue nodded, and the four of them headed toward Dong Huang Clock Tower together.

After flying a distance, Chu Liuyue instinctively turned around and looked at Million Wine Mountain.

"Chu Yue, what are you looking at?" Zhuo Sheng followed her vision, and the corner of his lips couldn't help but twitch. "Y-you're not thinking of going to Million Wine Mountain again, right?"

This kid always gets into trouble when he goes there, causing us to have some lingering fears now.

Chu Liuyue narrowed her eyes. "Not really. I was just wondering why Million Wine Mountain hasn't opened yet after so long..."

"Oh, you're talking about this?" Zhuo Sheng instantly understood and was interested. "Actually, everyone has their own guesses! Didn't Elder Bo Yan previously say that it'll be closed for a month? It's going to be one and a half months soon, yet nothing has changed. Many people are curious..."

"Million Wine Mountain is one of the most important places in the academy. This should be the reason why the elders have so many considerations, right?" guessed Luo Shishi. "But this doesn't affect us much anyway. We don't have to care too much about it and just need to wait patiently. Perhaps it'll be opened real soon."

Chu Liuyue paused for a moment and smiled slightly. "That's true."

...

Quite a few students had gathered below Dong Huang Clock Tower. At first glance, they looked like a black patch.

Once Chu Liuyue and the rest came, the crowd instantly quietened down. Quite a few people looked over with enthusiastic gazes.

Chu Liuyue's heart skipped a beat.

[Chapter 1299](#)

Why... does the atmosphere feel so weird...

"Chu Yue, you're here!" A woman who looked like she was eighteen or nineteen years old walked to Chu Liuyue and smiled brightly.

She was wearing a bright-yellow dress matched with a hair tie of the same color. Her melon face had smooth skin, and her five features were intricate, looking very gentle and pretty. However, her eyes revealed her wit, letting people know that she wasn't as harmless and innocent as she looked on the surface.

Chu Liuyue's brows moved. "You are..."

"I'm Liao Shuiqing! I came to the academy three months earlier than you! You can just directly call me Qing Qing!" The woman in front didn't seem to be awkward because Chu Liuyue seemed unfamiliar with her. Instead, she magnanimously introduced herself in an intimate manner.

Upon seeing this, Luo Shishi couldn't help but feel a sense of annoyance, but she didn't show such feelings on her face. As the distinguished daughter of a top-tier aristocratic family, she had such teachings ingrained in her.

"I heard you're planning to go to the Flood-Desert Northern Region too? Have you formed a team? Can I be in a team with you?" As Liao Shuiqing spoke, she inched toward Chu Liuyue.

An overly intense perfume fragrance attacked Chu Liuyue's nose, causing her to lose her breath for a moment.

Recently, she was either picking herbs at Medicinal Valley or producing pills on Jiuhe Peak. She was surrounded by faintly bitter herbal fragrances every day. Now that this fragrance suddenly attacked her, she instantly felt discomfort.

She controlled her expression and silently took half a step back. Then, she smiled slightly. "Senior Sister Liao, I appreciate your kind intentions, but I already have a team."

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As she spoke, she intentionally emphasized, "They're the three people here with me today. I thought it was already very obvious, but I didn't expect you to miss it, Senior Sister Liao."

Liao Shuiqing's smile instantly froze on her face. She crossed her arms, shrugged her shoulders, and quickly took a glance behind Chu Liuyue. "Oh... I see... I thought you were going to team up with Senior Brother Rong Xiu! What, did he... not come with you today?"

So this is her goal. Chu Liuyue raised her brows slightly.

Without looking up, she knew how many pairs of eyes were staring at her at this moment. Naturally, they were all waiting for her reply.

"Senior Brother Rong Xiu doesn't plan to participate in the Mission Board this time," replied Chu Liuyue slowly.

Quite a few people instantly looked disappointed. After a moment of silence, hushed whispers could be heard. "I knew it... I said he wouldn't come..."

"Yeah! Senior Brother Rong Xiu has already left the academy for a few years. How could he possibly still participate in this activity?"

"Even if he's also interested in that thing, he could totally go as the Sky-Cloud Empire's His Grace..."

"Sigh, what a pity. I thought that even if we couldn't form a team together, it'd be fine if we went there together... It looks like there isn't such a chance now."

...

Those people silently left.

Many people retracted their sight. Clearly, without Rong Xiu backing Chu Liuyue up, the latter didn't have a high value in their eyes.

Even Liao Shuiqing couldn't hide her disappointment, but she was decent at maintaining her expression as she smiled at Chu Liuyue. In a seemingly aggrieved and whining manner, she said, "Oh, it seems like I won't have a chance to duel with you this round. Then... How about next time? Oh, I forgot to mention that I'm also a heavenly doctor. I just broke through to become a ninth-grade heavenly doctor half a year ago. I heard that you're only sixteen years old? Compared to you, Junior Brother Chu Yue, I'm really far weaker."

If it were a young man who met this passionate, optimistic, and beautiful woman, they wouldn't have much control. If other people wanted to make an appointment with a legitimate reason, how could they have the cheek to reject her?

Luo Shishi found her increasingly irritating, and there seemed to be a ball of fire burning in her chest. She couldn't help but turn around and look at Chu Liuyue. "Chu Yue, we should go over now."

Liao Shuiqing glanced at her.

Chu Liuyue nodded and replied to Liao Shuiqing politely. "Senior Sister Liao, you're too kind. We still have something on, so we'll take our leave first."

Then, she nodded slightly. Without waiting for Liao Shuiqing to say anything, she lifted her legs and walked in.

Luo Shishi, Luo Yanming, and Zhuo Sheng followed closely behind her.

After walking a distance, Zhuo Sheng couldn't help but ask, "Shishi, why do you seem so angry? Did that Liao Shuiqing offend you before?"

Luo Shishi's ears instantly turned red. "No, I just think... feel... that she has something against us. We clearly came together, yet she still asked that. She clearly did it on purpose."

Zhuo Sheng still felt that something was amiss. "It's not the first time we've met such a person. Usually, you can't be bothered to deal with them. Why—*aish*, I can't pinpoint it!"

Luo Shishi hurriedly said, "Even a clay doll has a temper. I just felt that her behavior wasn't right. You're thinking too much."

Zhuo Sheng wanted to say something further, but Luo Yanming interrupted him from the side. "I heard that the number of people in the team isn't fixed. If there are any suitable people, we can also pull them over. However, the condition is that we have to pass today's test."

The elders were going to select from all the people who wanted to go to the Flood-Desert Northern Region. Only those who passed the test could follow the academy's group. The eliminated ones could only stay in the academy.

With Luo Yanming's interjection, Zhuo Sheng really didn't ask further.

Luo Shishi couldn't help glancing at Chu Liuyue and quickly retracted her vision.

Luo Yanming saw it clearly from the side and couldn't help but shake his head in his heart. It seems like what Fourth Brother thought was right. Shishi is really interested in Chu Yue... But Chu Yue seems to be nonchalant about it... I don't know if he's really ignorant or if he's putting on a pretense.

Luo Yanming thought to himself, When there is time, I should go test the waters.

Chu Liuyue was walking at the front and was the first to be tested. The person testing her was still someone familiar—Elder Wen Xi.

Elder Wen Xi wasn't surprised to see Chu Liuyue and raised his chin. "Bring out your black jade plaque."

Chu Liuyue passed it over with two hands.

Elder Wen Xi touched it with his own green jade plaque.

Chu Liuyue saw a few lines of words appearing on her black jade plaque. It seemed to be related to her current cultivation level.

"Si—" Elder Wen Xi gasped and instantly looked up, staring at Chu Liuyue in disbelief. Since when did this kid break through to reach this cultivation level?! I actually didn't hear of it at all!

Those few lines disappeared very quickly.

Chu Liuyue couldn't help but ask, "Elder Wen Xi, do I pass?"

He's asking the obvious! Elder Wen Xi wanted to knock her head with the plaque. "Pass!"

If he doesn't pass, a whole bunch of people wouldn't be allowed to pass in the academy!

Chu Liuyue smiled. "Thank you, Elder Wen Xi."

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At this point, a small commotion came from the crowd.

Chu Liuyue looked up and saw a familiar face—Jiang Zhiyuan.

She actually returned at this time. Chu Liuyue squinted her eyes slightly.

"Zhiyuan, you're finally back!" Liang Xiaoxiao—who was originally chatting happily with a few people—seemed shocked when she saw that Jiang Zhiyuan was back. She hurriedly smiled and welcomed her. "We thought you weren't coming!"

Jiang Zhiyuan pressed her lips against each other and smiled. "I've been at home for a while. If I don't come back soon, my grades will be affected."

Liang Xiaoxiao smiled and said, "It's great that you're back! Did you see the Mission Board? Today, we're selecting the people that can go to the Flood-Desert Northern Region! If you were late by a few days, you would've missed it!"

Jiang Zhiyuan nodded. "I heard about it. It seems like we need to form teams? I remember that when the last Mission Board was released, we did it together. I didn't expect us to go so far this time."

Liang Xiaoxiao's smile instantly became a little awkward. "Um... Zhiyuan, you didn't say that you were coming previously, so I've already teamed up with other people... It's not very appropriate to kick someone out now so suddenly..."

Jiang Zhiyuan then realized something, and her expression froze.

"But don't worry. Even if we're not on the same team, we can still be together then!" Liang Xiaoxiao carefully glanced at her. "Zhiyuan, you won't be angry with me, right?"

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Jiang Zhiyuan suppressed her anger, forced a smile, and replied, "Why would I? I also know that I came back suddenly, and there's no choice if you've already formed a team. Don't worry. I can look for other people."

As she spoke, she surveyed the surroundings and walked in a direction.

There were still many people around, so Jiang Zhiyuan had to maintain her expression. But in her heart, she was already annoyed and hated Liang Xiaoxiao. She seems passionate on the surface, but her every move and action is ostracizing me. Liang Xiaoxiao clearly plans to keep her distance. Just because I lost to Lin Zhifei and accidentally said those words? Whatever the reason, I have seen through her. The past few years of friendship were worth nothing!

Liang Xiaoxiao looked at her back view and crossed her arms, her intricate, fox-like face curling up into a smile.

"Xiaoxiao, there's actually no fixed number of people in a team. It's fine if she tags along. Why..." At the side, a woman couldn't help but lean over and speak softly.

Liang Xiaoxiao raised her brows and looked at her. "Then, why don't we replace you with her? If you're willing, we'll all be fine with it."

"No, no, forget it then!" That woman shrunk her neck and hurriedly rejected her.

The other youngster laughed and said, "Actually, Xiaoxiao is doing this for our own good. Zhiyuan... is actually quite okay in other aspects, but she doesn't seem to be in good condition nowadays. What will happen if she suddenly makes a blunder and we get into trouble? We can't afford that."

Actually, his words were a stretch.

Jiang Zhiyuan was in bad condition, but that was before she left the academy. If he still brought it up now, it was clear that he was just looking for an excuse.

In actual fact, due to the previous incident, Jiang Zhiyuan's image in the academy had collapsed. Everyone felt that she was unlike what she seemed on the surface, so they weren't willing to team up with her.

Besides, with her current behavior, she probably had offended Rong Xiu long ago. Nobody wanted to take the risk and stand on opposing sides as Rong Xiu.

Even though Jiang Zhiyuan was outstanding, she wasn't the only girl in the academy. There were also quite a few daughters of aristocratic families with good backgrounds, looks, and talent. There was no need to chase after her.

Liang Xiaoxiao pushed her loose strands of hair behind her ears and turned around. "Everyone has their own fate. We should just mind our own business."

...

Jiang Zhiyuan then found quite a few people afterward, but all of them curtly rejected her using all kinds of reasons.

The smile on her face could not last as the anger in her heart grew increasingly intense. How long has it been?! I only left the academy for a short period of time, yet such a big change had occurred! In the past, they still doted on me and chased me, but now, everyone is avoiding me like poison! Even the few that I'm on the best terms with have all flung me away without hesitation!

After being rejected once again, Jiang Zhiyuan clenched her fists tightly and clenched her teeth. Her face felt hot as if someone had slapped her multiple times!

She had never felt such ostracization in Ling Xiao Academy! This situation was much worse than she had predicted!

She wanted to dig a hole and bury herself in it!

...

"I really didn't expect Jiang Zhiyuan to have such a day." Zhuo Sheng pouted. "When we first came, she was kind of in the spotlight in the academy."

"It's all because she did something wrong," said Luo Yanming faintly.

Chu Liuyue watched on for a while and retracted her gaze. Jiang Zhiyuan really can't control herself. Such a person isn't even worth worrying about.

...

Million Wine Mountain.

Elder Bo Yan and Elder Ouyang stood on the mountaintop and looked at the fountain with tightly furrowed brows.

"What exactly happened?"

After a long while, Elder Ouyang said with a deep voice. "It has been so long, but the fountain hasn't recovered at all."

Actually, they had already repaired everything in Million Wine Mountain more than half a month ago. But as they always came at night, they only discovered that something was wrong with the fountain on the last day in the afternoon.

It didn't spout water anymore.

In the past, the fountain water would continuously emerge from within and flow down during the day. But now, it stopped!

They came over to take a look every day, but the results they had were all the same!

Elder Bo Yan walked down the mountain. "Call Chu Yue to come over!"