

Nobel Ruler 151

Chapter 151: Lonely and Unwanted

Two days later, the teachers and students returned to the academy, but they had lost their initial excitement and happiness.

This time, the chaos in Wan Ling Mountain had caused many injuries and deaths. They were already very thankful to come back alive, let alone care about anything else.

The news quickly spread around the Imperial City and created a huge uproar.

...

Peach Garden.

The elders and teachers were gathered together, and the atmosphere in the meeting room was stiff.

After a long while, Elder Sun sighed. "Uncle-Master is cultivating in seclusion these days. I'll report to him personally and punish myself when he comes out."

The crowd looked at each other and started to advise him otherwise. "Elder Sun, this was an accident. You can't blame yourself..."

“Yeah. Wan Ling Mountain has always been quiet for the past decades, and it’s not the first few times we’ve gone there to hunt for fiends. Nobody would’ve expected that this time... Elder Sun, more people would’ve been injured or dead if you didn’t ask us to evacuate in time. You shouldn’t blame yourself any further.”

Elder Sun waved his hands, indicating that they did not need to talk any further. “Wrong means wrong. I have to fix the situation. Did you tabulate the injury and death count?”

Wen Yan immediately said, “I’ve settled it. Not including the number of minor injuries, 57 people have serious injuries, and 14 people are... dead.”

Elder Sun slowly clenched his fists. “Why are there so many? I thought only ten died at first?”

“Yes, only ten people died at first, but... Yeqing found the corpses of the two missing people near the foot of the mountain.”

“What about the other two?”

Wen Yan looked at Elder Sun’s expression carefully and lowered his voice. “... The other two are Chu Liuyue and Gu Mingzhu.”

How could they survive after the mountain collapsed? They were also swallowed by the black flying python’s black hole!

Thus, they were also included in the death count.

Elder Sun was dazed when he heard the two names and kept quiet for a while. "Inform their family members of the news. Also, our academy will be fully responsible for this incident, so do your best in terms of compensation."

"Yes."

...

Gu family.

Pak!

A crisp slap broke the room's silence.

Gu Mingfeng's head turned to the side, and his face instantly swelled up.

"How did you take care of your elder sister? Why is everyone okay, but she is dead? Gu Mingfeng, you better clearly explain yourself today. If not, don't think of leaving this house!"

The Gu family head, Gu Wenhui, was furious. He felt that one slap was not enough, so he slapped Gu Mingfeng one more time.

Gu Mingfeng's face was clearly marked with palm prints. He expressionlessly glanced at Gu Wenhui before looking down.

Gu Wenhui was his so-called father. However, Gu Wenhui only had Gu Mingzhu in his eyes. To him, Gu Mingfeng was just an irritating obstacle.

“I didn’t team with her. I don’t know how she died.”

“How dare you lie?” Gu Wenhui was beyond furious as he kicked Gu Mingfeng’s chest and hollered, “She used her black Xuan formation crystal, but she didn’t survive. Who else but you knew that she had this trump card? You already hate her normally. Didn’t you steal her item and push her to her death this time? Why do I have such a b*stardly son like you?”

The numbing feeling in Gu Mingfeng’s chest caused his face to turn pale.

Gu Wenhui used all his strength in the kick. If it weren’t because Gu Wenhui was a Xuan Master and wasn’t too physically strong, this kick might have taken Gu Mingfeng’s life.

“I don’t know how she died,” repeated Gu Mingfeng mechanically. “Besides, even Elder Sun couldn’t save her. Father, do you really think a black Xuan formation crystal could do the trick?”

Gu Wenhui was so furious that he laughed. “Great! Great! You even know how to talk back to me now! Your wings have hardened. Why didn’t you die instead?”

Why didn’t you die instead? Gu Mingfeng’s eyelids harshly twitched, and he felt that a part of his heart was completely crushed. *Hah... I should’ve known earlier. What am I? I’m just a despicable stain in Gu Wenhui’s heart. This so-called father of mine is very willing to exchange my life for Gu Mingzhu’s.*

What is his disdain for me based on? Is it just because my mother had a lowly background? Or is it because I’m the product of Gu Wenhui’s drunk actions?

Gu Mingfeng wiped away the blood on his mouth and slowly stood up. His gentle face was expressionless, but his entire body was cold to the point that it emanated a terrifying aura.

Gu Wenhui was even angrier when he saw Gu Mingfeng like this. "Get lost! The Gu family doesn't have someone like you!"

Gu Mingfeng looked up. "Since you're chasing me out, I'll listen to you. From now on, I won't take another step into the Gu family, and I won't get in your way."

Then, Gu Mingfeng directly turned around to leave.

Gu Wenhui slammed the table.

...

When Chu Ning heard the news, he was discussing important matters with Emperor Jiawen in the palace.

Since this situation was serious, Tian Lu Academy had sent someone over to report the news.

When Chu Ning heard the news, it was as though lightning had struck him. He wasn't able to recover his senses for a very long time.

When Emperor Jiawen saw Chu Ning's behavior, he could only sigh and allow Chu Ning to go home and rest for a few days.

Chu Ning did not know how he walked out of the palace. He also didn't know where he went.

His surroundings seemed to be a blur, and there was only himself left between heaven and earth. He had never felt his feet so heavy before, and every step he took was exhausting, even painstakingly difficult. However, he did not dare to stop. He was afraid that the pain and hopelessness would overwhelm him once he did.

As Chu Ning dazedly walked through the streets, someone quickly walked past him and accidentally bumped into him.

"Aish! Do you not know how to walk?" That person cursed at him, but he immediately knew that he had offended someone important when he saw Chu Ning's clothes. Thus, he kept quiet and left.

When he left, he still said something to the people around him.

"... Yeah! Who would've expected Tian Lu Academy to have so many injured and dead people? I heard that more than ten people had died!"

"It's really such a pity! All of them are rare talents!"

"Sigh, I heard that Chu Liuyue—who just entered the academy—also died. She was a super rare talent!"

“What’s the point? She’s dead, and she’ll never come back alive again...”

Chu Ning forced himself to stand up. He then lowered his head and continued to walk forward.

Someone blocked his path.

Chu Ning slowly raised his head and took quite a while before he recognized the person in front of him.

It was Chu Yan. His face was filled with curiosity and pity when he enunciated every word carefully as he said, “Big Brother, I heard that Chu Liuyue is dead. Aiyo, what should a lonely and unwanted elderly person like you do in the future?”

Chapter 152: Come Home

When Chu Yan heard the news, he immediately rushed over to find Chu Ning and indeed saw him in a dejected state. The anger he had held in could finally be released.

“Even though you’re not part of the Chu family anymore, you’re still my biological eldest brother no matter what. Something happened to Chu Liuyue, so I’m very worried for you as your younger brother. Big Brother, the dead can’t be resurrected. My condolences... to you.”

Chu Yan put on a devastated expression, but the delight and arrogance in his eyes were about to spill out.

Every single one of Chu Yan’s words were like a sword that harshly stabbed Chu Ning’s heart. It was as if they were about to tear his heart apart. Chu Ning used all the strength in his body to stabilize himself, and he stared at Chu Yan with a deadly gaze. “Are you done talking?”

A stage-five warrior's suppression could not be underestimated. Chu Ning's gaze made Chu Yan subconsciously shudder and fearful. However, Chu Yan was in too good of a mood to care about this.

"Aiyo. Big Brother, why are you angry? You can't blame me for this. I was just too worried, so I came over to comfort you. Remember when Chu Liuyue entered Tian Lu Academy by passing all three examinations, and you booked the entire Phoenix Restaurant to celebrate the joyous occasion? How lively it was! Back then, who would've thought this day would come, right?" said Chu Yan as he purposely sighed.

"At first, I thought my Minmin wasn't as outstanding and was a lot weaker than Chu Liuyue. However, I didn't expect Minmin to avoid so much danger just because she was especially cautious due to the fact that her body just recovered. Big Brother, you see, it's really true that blessings and misfortunes come together. Sometimes, when a person is in the limelight, at any point, they might just—"

"Get lost!" hollered Chu Ning as he harshly kicked Chu Yan aside.

Chu Yan was not prepared at all, and the kick landed squarely on him. In addition to his weaker capabilities compared to that of Chu Ning, Chu Ning's fierce kick had directly broken a few of his bones.

Chu Yan landed on the floor, and he was in so much pain that his face turned as white as a sheet.

Chu Ning's face was dark and scary as he quickly approached Chu Yan.

Chu Yan was struggling to get up.

However, Chu Ning's leg had already mercilessly stepped on his wrist before he could stand up.

Kacha!

The sound of bone cracking was crisp.

"Ah!" Chu Yan yelled out in pain and almost fainted.

Chu Ning directly lifted Chu Yan up by his collar and punched him square on the face. He could not tolerate this mouth or this person a single bit!

The people at the side had already recognized the two of them. At first, they did not dare to stop the fight. However, someone carefully stopped Chu Ning when they saw his eyes turn red as he crazily beat up Chu Yan—who had fainted—as if Chu Ning was determined to kill him.

"Lord Chu Ning, Lord Chu Ning, stop fighting. He'll die if you continue..."

Chu Ning did not care at all as he smashed Chu Yan's head against the floor.

It'll be better if he dies! If he dies, the Chu family can come collect his corpse! When Chu Ning thought of this, he stopped in his actions as an idea flashed across his mind.

Yue'er... Eunuch Min reported that Wan Ling Mountain had collapsed and that Yue'er's body was nowhere to be found. However, I must see her body, dead or alive. Even if it means combing the entire Wan Ling Mountain, I'll still go!

Chu Ning threw Chu Yan on the floor and turned around to leave.

...

Upon hearing the news that Chu Ning was here, Elder Sun personally went up to welcome him. He was shocked to see the bloodstained Chu Ning. “Lord Chu Ning, what happened to you?”

Chu Ning stared at him. “Elder Sun, I have a request. I want to go to Wan Ling Mountain and find Yue’er. I heard that you’re the last person that saw her, so could you tell me the general location? I want to start looking for her from there.”

How could Elder Sun not know what Chu Ning was thinking?

But...

“Lord Chu Ning, we’re all saddened by Liuyue’s situation. I understand that you want to find her, but she was swallowed by the black flying python’s black hole—which is its killer move...”

Chu Ning’s face became increasingly pale as his body shook; he almost collapsed to the ground. He knew what a black flying python was. Once someone was sucked into the black hole, it would be very hard to find the person’s corpse.

Elder Sun hurriedly helped Chu Ning up and closed his eyes. “... So, even if you go, it’ll be to no avail... Our academy is fully responsible for this—”

“Please, tell me the location. I’ll go and look for her,” said Chu Ning calmly as he pushed Elder Sun’s hands away.

“Lord—” Elder Sun wanted to advise Chu Ning otherwise, but he could not do it when he saw Chu Ning’s expression. He took a deep breath and finally said, “Lord Chu Ning, I’m not going to hide it from you. When we brought the students back to the academy, I felt very uneasy and went back to Wan Ling Mountain to check one more time.”

Chu Ning was taken aback.

Elder Sun paused, terrified when he recalled the scene he saw.

“... The entire Wan Ling Mountain was washed out by blood. All the fiends were completely killed. The rivers that came from the mountain were saturated with blood, and countless fiends’ corpses floated on them. That scene really was... like a mortal hell!”

The originally lively and energetic Wan Ling Mountain became dead silent. Only the bloody smell in the sky made people fearful.

Elder Sun guessed that it was 80% likely that this was done by the advanced fiend. He still looked for an entire round, but he did not find the other party’s traces.

In such a situation, it was hard to find a person’s traces before they died, let alone finding Chu Liuyue.

Chu Ning looked defeated and was silent for a very long time. In the end, he still stubbornly insisted, “I must make this trip. I must go, whether or not I can find her. My Yue’er is most afraid of being alone... I’ll bring her...”

He stiffly turned around. The moment Chu Ning took a step away, he spat out blood, collapsed to the ground, and fainted.

“... Home...”

Chapter 153: Visitation

Elder Sun got someone to send Chu Ning home and take care of him in case of any accidents. He could understand Chu Ning’s feelings, but he did not know what would happen if they let Chu Ning leave alone.

How could his heart not ache? He had thought very highly of Chu Liuyue and even wanted her to take her as his disciple. If not for Uncle-Master Ye, Elder Sun actually might have become her mentor.

Elder Sun also felt miserable, having helplessly watched a star student fall before his eyes.

After sending Chu Ning away, Elder Sun locked himself in his room for a long time.

...

The half-dead Chu Yan was sent back to the Chu family, but it did not cause much commotion. Instead, many Chu family members were there to laugh at them.

Ever since Chu Liuyue came and took away a rather large sum of the Chu family's assets, almost everyone hated Chu Yan and Lu Yao to their cores. The two of them abused their positions to embezzle funds and make trouble. Thanks to them, the Chu family was almost bankrupt.

If they hadn't intended to make the couple pay them back, they would have chased them out of the family already.

Besides, Chu Xianmin was just a concubine at Crown Prince Mansion. There was not much she could do, so they had nothing to be afraid of.

Who would possibly respect them now?

First Elder simply laughed coldly when the servants reported the news to him. "He was tired of living and decided to go taunt Chu Ning. There's nothing we can do!"

Everyone in the Chu family was secretly happy that Chu Liuyue was dead, but only Chu Yan was brainless enough to go straight to Chu Ning.

No matter what, Chu Ning was a stage-five martial artist. He was not to be trifled with. Only brainless people would provoke him!

"First Elder, as the Imperial guards' Commander-in-Chief, Chu Ning beat up Third Master. That's rather inappropriate. Should we make a complaint to His Majesty?"

First Elder tugged at the corners of his mouth. "Chu Yan is stupid, and you're following suit! Chu Liuyue just died, and Chu Ning is grieving. How could His Majesty possibly pursue the matter? Besides, Chu Yan provoked him first. So many people were present and heard everything he said. Even if we made the complaint, we're in the wrong. Rather than do that, it's better to pretend it never happened."

"First Elder is wise! However, it's such a pity to let Chu Ning off just like this..."

It would be great if we could bring him down now!

First Elder laughed coldly. "Chu Ning will collapse without us doing anything. Chu Liuyue was his only hope. Now that she's dead, he will be crushed. The trauma from back then was enough to keep him depressed for a decade. He only survived because of Chu Liuyue. Now that she's dead, he has lost all hope. He's as good as dead."

With only Chu Ning left, we have all the time to deal with him.

"Such a pity... Chu Liuyue died out there so easily... It was too easy on her..." First Elder muttered. He could only vent his hatred if he had gotten rid of Chu Liuyue personally!

"Did you hear anything from the Crown Prince's side? Why has His Majesty been so cold to him recently?" First Elder changed the topic after a while.

"The palace has kept it quiet. We haven't managed to get any information despite all our efforts. However, there's one strange thing. The Crown Prince was urgently summoned to the palace on the night of his marriage to Third Missy. Nobody knows what they talked about, but the Crown Prince has not left his residence since he returned. The Third Prince also entered the palace before that..."

"This has something to do with the Third Prince?"

“We’re not sure, but the Third Prince is being kept here in the Imperial City by His Majesty. He has not returned to the Northwest Army. However, I’m sure he won’t sit around and wait for his doom.”

First Elder knitted his brows tightly. *I sent out a calling card the other day, but it was turned down. It is quite clear that the Crown Prince’s situation is much worse than we had imagined.*

He had a feeling that the Crown Prince was in a precarious position.

The Chu family had been on good terms with the Crown Prince. They were in the same camp, so it was impossible for them to ally themselves with another prince. Thus, they had to find a way to break through the situation before them!

...

Mu Hongyu was unconscious for one day and one night. After she woke up, she sat on her bed dazedly. It was as though all her strength and life had been sucked out of her. Her mind was blank, but it also kept replaying everything that had happened on Wan Ling Mountain.

All the events replayed in her mind clearly, and she felt miserable.

If we had stopped Liuyue back then, would things be different? We were careless! No matter how strong she was, Liuyue was a student just like us! She even entered the academy half a year later than we did... How could we actually let her face a seventh-grade fiend alone?

That's a legendary existence! Even the elders of the academy might not be its match, not to mention Liuyue...

Mu Hongyu dazedly thought all this as tears streamed down her face. She then slapped herself hard.

Pak!

The sharp noise was especially audible in the quiet room.

The burning sensation on her face was nothing compared to her self-reproach and guilt!

“Wu—” The golden mane bear cub felt the deep sadness emanating from Mu Hongyu. It stumbled over and whined as it hugged her arm.

Mu Hongyu buried her head in her arms and sobbed silently.

A knock came from the door at this point.

Mu Hongyu looked up hurriedly. She wiped away her tears and dragged her sore and tired body to the door. “Who is it?”

Her expression then turned cold when she saw the person at the door. Without any hesitation, she closed the door.

Even though the person at the door was wearing a veil and only revealed a pair of eyes, Mu Hongyu immediately knew that it was Chu Xianmin!

“Hey... hang on!” Chu Xianmin pulled the door and stopped Mu Hongyu’s actions. “I came to visit because I heard that you’re injured. Why are you so eager to close the door?” Chu Xianmin spoke as she eyed Mu Hongyu’s face.

Mu Hongyu was aggravated, and she coldly said, “You’re not welcome here. Hurry up and leave. There’s nothing in it for you if you anger me!”

Chu Xianmin smiled. “You couldn’t even beat me at your peak, not to mention now. There’s no meaning in such a threat.”

“What do you want!?” Mu Hongyu had lost her patience.

Chu Xianmin closed in as viciousness flashed across her eyes. She smirked. “Chu Liuyue is dead. I heard that she was close to you, so I came to visit. Judging by your current state, she must have died a horrible death, right?”

Chapter 154: Replacement

“You!” Upon hearing this, Mu Hongyu’s anger was piqued, and she swung her hand towards Chu Xianmin’s face!

Chu Xianmin did not back down. She grabbed Mu Hongyu’s and shoved her hard.

Mu Hongyu fell back uncontrollably. Several of her wounds ripped open, and blood flowed out, leaving stains on her clothes.

She had been severely injured and was at her weakest now. She definitely wasn't Chu Xianmin's match.

Chu Xianmin stepped through the door and looked down at her mockingly. "Are you angry? What's there to be angry about? Was anything I said untrue? I heard Chu Liuyue died in the hands of the black flying python. The entire mountain collapsed! I'm assuming her body hasn't been found either?"

Mu Hongyu felt something churning in her chest, and black shadows flashed before her eyes. "You... get out!"

Chu Xianmin laughed. "I'm visiting you out of goodwill, but you're so unappreciative. However, don't worry. I won't let things go so easily after Chu Liuyue did this to me. It's such a pity that I didn't get to see how she died or get rid of her myself. However, you shall pay for it then since you're close to her. I'll make sure to do it slowly."

With that, Chu Xianmin turned to leave.

The golden mane bear cub suddenly caught up with Chu Xianmin and bit down onto her leg tightly.

"Ah!" Chu Xianmin cried out in pain as she looked down. She was stunned and angry to see that it was the golden mane bear cub. "Get lost!"

The cub was flung away and fell to the ground. It trembled but spat out a piece of bloodied flesh from its mouth. It had bitten off an entire piece of flesh from Chu Xianmin's calf!

Chu Xianmin's face was pale from the pain. Her heart trembled as she looked at her bloody calf. *I finally recovered, but that little beast attacked me! Such a deep wound is bound to leave a scar!*

"You're tired of living!" Chu Xianmin pulled out her sword from her waist and slashed in the direction of the golden mane bear cub.

The cub looked up at her as all its fur stood up on end, its eyes full of enmity.

As the sword arrived, the golden mane bear cub charged towards Chu Xianmin.

The sword grazed the cub's back. However, the golden mane bear cub was a fourth-grade fiend by birth. It was very strong and evaded quickly, so the sword only cut some of its brown fur. It did not even draw any blood!

Bang!

The golden mane bear cub charged into Chu Xianmin's abdomen and knocked her down to the ground.

The back of Chu Xianmin's head heavily landed on the ground, making her head ring. Chu Xianmin was driven mad with anger. She sent the golden mane bear cub flying with a kick before she struggled up and thrust her sword at the golden mane bear cub's abdomen.

"Congcong!" Mu Hongyu cried out as she lunged over.

The tip of Chu Xianmin's sword was at Mu Hongyu's back.

Tsing!

A flying rock hit the sword with precision, knocking Chu Xianmin's sword away.

It missed Mu Hongyu narrowly.

Chu Xianmin looked back angrily. "Who dares..."

The instant she spoke, she was silenced as if there was something in her throat.

It was Mr. Wen Yan!

He hurried over and helped Mu Hongyu up. He only glared at Chu Xianmin sternly when he had ensured that Mu Hongyu was okay. "Chu Xianmin, what are you doing?!"

He was going to check on Mu Hongyu's recovery, but he saw Chu Xianmin standing at the door with her sword when he approached from afar. When he got close, he clearly saw Chu Xianmin attacking Mu Hongyu!

"This is the academy! Are you crazy? You actually have the nerve to attack your classmates!?"

Damn it! The door wasn't closed. Mr. Wen Yan must have seen everything! Chu Xianmin tried to defend herself. "Mr. Wen Yan, listen to me. It's not what you think. I just wanted to visit Mu Hongyu, but her fiend attacked me first! I just retaliated out of self-defense!"

Wen Yan did not believe a word she said. "Enough of that! Since when were you this close to Mu Hongyu?!"

Chu Xianmin bit her lip and said, "Wen Yan, everything I said is true! Look if you don't believe it! This is an injury the fiend left on me!" Chu Xianmin pointed to her calf.

Wen Yan looked over with a frown and saw that her calf was indeed missing a chunk of flesh.

He looked over at Mu Hongyu and the golden mane bear cub.

The cub was still highly alert and staring at Chu Xianmin intently.

Wen Yan shook his head disappointedly. "Fiends are really sensitive, especially the young ones. It's very wary of you because it had sensed your enmity. Mu Hongyu is its master. Do you really want me to keep asking?"

Chu Xianmin panicked. "Mr. Wen Yan—"

Wen Yan cut her off impatiently. "That's enough. You're injured too, so we'll call it quits, and I won't pursue this. Hurry back! Don't let something like this happen again."

“... Yes.” Chu Xianmin knew that there was no point in arguing. She had no choice but to take it lying down as she hobbled away.

Wen Yan stared at her back and sighed after a long pause. *Chu Xianmin used to be smart and hardworking. How did she turn into who she is today?*

Mu Hongyu hugged the golden mane bear cub in her arms and gently patted before it recovered and lay in her arms comfortably.

Wen Yan turned around, but he did not know what to say when he saw Mu Hongyu’s dazed and broken appearance. In the end, he pulled out a letter from his sleeve. “Hongyu, your father—Prince Ping Jiang—has sent a letter.”

...

Chu Xianmin returned to her residence and dressed her wound, but her anger grew when she thought about it.

Chu Liuyue ruined me when she was still alive. She disfigured me and forced me to marry the Crown Prince as a concubine. Even now, I am looked down on! Even though Chu Liuyue is dead, things have not changed! I cannot take this lying down.

As she thought this, she got up and headed for Peach Garden.

...

Inside Peach Garden, Ling Zhu was dealing with the compensation for dead and injured students when he heard that Chu Xianmin had arrived. He set the documents down and headed to the courtyard where Chu Xianmin was. "Xianmin, what brings you here?"

Ling Zhu used to admire Chu Xianmin. Even though he had sensed that she had changed since she returned, he did not pay much attention to it.

Changes were normal after everything that Chu Xianmin had been through.

Chu Xianmin looked towards the inside quietly. "Teacher Ling Zhu, is Elder Sun here? I have something I would like to report."

Ling Zhu shook his head. "Elder Sun is busy, so I doubt he'll have the time to see you. You can just talk to me, and I'll relay it to Elder Sun."

Chu Xianmin hesitated but spoke anyway. "... Teacher Ling Zhu, the envoy of the Tianling Dynasty is going to be here soon, right?"

Ling Zhu paused, and his expression turned more serious. "En, why are you asking about this?"

Chu Xianmin paused as if she were a little hesitant. "... Sister's accident happened too suddenly. However, it doesn't seem appropriate to go back on our word at the last minute. I was wondering if Elder Sun intends to send a replacement?"

Chapter 155: Help

Ling Zhu did not expect Chu Xianmin to rush here this soon after Chu Liuyue's death to say that.

Even if Chu Liuyue has broken off her ties with the Chu family, they share the same blood. How could Chu Xianmin possibly say something like this with a straight face? She is capitalizing on Chu Liuyue's death.

Ling Zhu's expression was a little stiff. "Xianmin, you wanted to speak to Elder Sun about this?"

Chu Xianmin noticed that his expression was not right. She looked down and feigned sadness. "Teacher Ling Zhu, I know now is not the right time for this, but the dead can't come back to life. As the living, we have to move on with our lives. The Tianling Dynasty is such a powerful existence. If we don't take this seriously..."

"This is not something you should be worried about. You should go back and go get some rest." When Ling Zhu looked at Chu Xianmin's sad demeanor, he felt sick. *If Chu Xianmin truly cared about Chu Liuyue, she never would've done something like this. If she has the nerve to say it, is there a need to put on such pretenses?*

Chu Xianmin did not notice his gaze. She hesitantly asked, "Then, this matter..."

Ling Zhu looked away. "I'll discuss the matter with Elder Sun when he's free."

Chu Xianmin only felt more at ease when she heard this. "Okay. I'll head back first then. Thank you."

After Chu Xianmin finished her sentence, she turned and walked away. After she left Peach Garden, Chu Xianmin's face broke into a wide smile underneath the veil.

Since Chu Liuyue is dead, the academy has to find someone to replace her. Since I placed second in the warrior assessment, I am the perfect fit. Tianling Dynasty... that is an existence that only existed in legends. If I can get on good terms with the envoy this time, then... I will have nothing to fear in the future.

Everyone looked down on her now. Even the servants at Crown Prince Mansion were disrespectful towards her.

When I make my comeback, I shall see how those people will react!

...

Ling Zhu sighed as he watched Chu Xianmin disappear. He then rubbed his temples. Other than anger, there was also confusion in his heart. *When did Chu Xianmin... become like this? Or was I wrong about her right from the start?*

...

Chu Xianmin wanted to go back and have a good rest after settling the matter. However, she was brought home by a message from the Chu family before she returned to her residence. They said that Chu Yan had been beaten up by Chu Ning, that he was half-dead, and Lu Yao wanted her home immediately.

Chu Xianmin was stunned. She asked her teachers for a day off and rushed home.

When she arrived at the door of the Chu family, emotions welled up in her. For an instant, she did not feel like entering. Ever since she married the Crown Prince, she had not returned.

Chu Xianmin had thrown away all her pride in her sad wedding. She had thought of returning after her days at Crown Prince Mansion were more bearable, but the Crown Prince had locked himself in his study and refused to see anyone.

As she hesitated, the servants at the front door had seen her.

One person mockingly said, "Oh, it's the Third Missy! I was wondering who it was. You don't look so well! Has your time at Crown Prince Mansion been unpleasant?"

Chu Xianmin felt embarrassed, but not entering would make it seem like she was scared. Thus, she took a deep breath and walked right in without saying a word or making eye contact.

After she left, the servants looked at each other and burst out laughing.

Chu Xianmin dug her nails into her palm and repressed her anger. On her way, all the passing servants made comments and jokes. They clearly had no regard for her.

When Chu Xianmin finally arrived at Chu Yan and Lu Yao's residence, her nails had already cut her palm.

Lu Yao—who was standing outside the door—hurried over when she saw her daughter. "Minmin, you have to see your father!"

Chu Xianmin took a deep breath and walked in. "How is Father dong?"

Lu Yao wiped the corner of her eyes. "It's all that Chu Ning's fault! He actually beat up your father in public! If he had not received treatment in time, he might have..."

Chu Xianmin walked in and saw that Chu Yan was still unconscious. He was bruised. Every part of his body was also swollen. There was barely a clean spot. It was not hard to imagine how much force Chu Ning had used.

"Why is Father injured so badly? Didn't anyone send for a doctor?"

Lu Yao sighed. "Ever since Chu Liuyue caused a ruckus last time, your father's and my standing in the family has fallen to rock bottom. We've become a thorn in everyone's eyes. They couldn't be happier to see your father get beaten up, so why would they get help? Most of our money has also been taken away by them. What we have left is not enough to call for a good doctor... Hence, we've been dragging it out... Minmin, I called you back because I was hoping you would have a way."

Chu Xianmin was frustrated when she heard that. *The treatment I received was partly because of this!?*

"What can I do? I'm also in a tough situation, so how can I help you? The Crown Prince has been staying in his study for the whole time. I don't even get to see him, much less get help from him!"

Lu Yao panicked. "What do we do then? Are we just going to watch your father suffer?"

Chu Xianmin paused for a while before she spoke. "It's fine. Don't worry for now. I'll find a way to get some money to you so that you can get a better doctor for Father. I'll work on the Crown Prince. Things will get better after the people from the Tianling Dynasty come. We just have to hang on till then!"

Lu Yao was confused. "What?... Where are you coming from?"

Chu Xianmin touched her veil. "Chu Liuyue is dead. I'll take her place to meet the envoy of the Tianling Dynasty. As long as we meet, I'll have a chance to change!"

Lu Yao's eyes lit up. *Why did I not think of that!?*

...

Chu Xianmin then returned to Crown Prince Mansion; it was already night. She headed straight for the study and requested an audience with the Crown Prince.

She was rejected without surprise. However, Chu Xianmin was rather insistent this time. "Your Highness, I know that you've been troubled recently, so I'm here to help. Please, meet me once. If you think the idea is bad, I won't disturb you again."

She quietly waited after speaking.

After a while, she heard Rong Jin's voice. "Let her in."

Chapter 156: Go Home

Chu Mansion.

Chu Ning did not regain consciousness until the next morning. After opening his eyes, it took him a while to re-orientate himself. *That's not right! I was at Tian Lu Academy, talking about how I would head to Wan Ling Mountain to look for Yue'er. How did I get home?*

He struggled to get up and toppled the teacup next to his bed.

After hearing the noise, the person waiting outside hurried in. "Lord Chu Ning, you're awake?"

Chu Ning blankly stared at the man who entered. "You are?"

"I'm a teacher from Tian Lu Academy, Xin Shi. Elder Sun asked me to send you back. Now that you're awake, I can return with peace of mind now."

Due to standing guard outside for a night, Xin Shi looked a little haggard. However, his eyes were sincere. "You fainted because you were too agitated yesterday. It's nothing grave. You'll be fine after resting for a day or two."

Chu Ning only returned to his senses then. "Thank you."

Xin Shi shook his head. "Don't worry about it. We're all worried about your health. Please, take care. Since you're fine, can I head off first?"

Chu Ning nodded.

Xin Shi put his mind at ease when he saw that Chu Ning seemed much calmer. He left some words of comfort before he left.

From inside his room, Chu Ning heard the door open and close. His eyes were empty; they were like bottomless pits. After a while, Chu Ning finally stood up, taking heavy and stiff strides outward.

Shortly after Xin Shi left, he heard footsteps coming from behind him. He turned and saw that it was Chu Ning.

Chu Ning's face was expressionless, and he gave off a cold and hopeless aura.

Xin Shi hurried over. "Lord Chu Ning, why are you out here? You have to rest, considering your current state."

Chu Ning pushed Xin Shi's hand away and stiffly said, "I have to go find Yue'er. I've been delayed one night, and this can't wait. I have to hurry over."

Xin Shi did not know what to do. *Considering Chu Ning's current state, people might believe me if I say that Chu Ning has gone crazy. How can I possibly let Chu Ning go to Wan Ling Mountain alone when he's like this?*

Xin Shi tried to pull Chu Ning back a few times but failed. He could only run in front of Chu Ning and block his path. "Please, listen to me! Chu Ning, no matter what you want to do, you have to take care of yourself! What if something happens to you in your current state?"

Chu Ning walked around him and pressed on stubbornly. "I've got to go. I have to go..."

At this point, a young girl's bright voice came from behind Chu Ning. "Father, where are you going?"

Chu Ning trembled. *This is a voice that I'm very familiar with! However... Am I imagining things because of how much I miss her?*

"Father?"

Chu Ning wanted more than anything to turn and look behind him, but his body was stiff.

Xin Shi looked up and saw a young girl coming from around the corner.

The young girl with a smile on her face was slender and pretty. Her eyes were bright and reflective, seeming to outshine everything around her.

Who else can this be besides the dead Chu Liuyue?! Xin Shi froze and opened his mouth. He could not help but raise his finger to point at her."Y-yo-you're Chu Liuyue?!"

"Don't you recognize me, Teacher Xin Shi?" Chu Liuyue stared at him strangely. *Although I don't deal with him much, he should recognize me...*

Xin Shi pinched himself hard. It hurt, but his heart was filled with joy!

"It's you! It's really you!" Xin Shi patted Chu Ning's arm agitatedly. "Lord Chu Ning, look! Liuyue really is back! Look!"

Chu Ning's ears rang.

Chu Liuyue finally sensed that something was amiss and hurried forward. "Father, what's wrong?"

Xin Shi hurriedly explained the situation. "Don't you know? Everyone thinks that you are... Lord Chu Ning insisted on going to Wan Ling Mountain to look for you! I didn't expect you to come back! This is great!

Chu Liuyue suddenly realized what happened. Then again, given the situation, no one would have expected her to return alive.

The place Father wanted to head to was Wan Ling Mountain! Even when everyone thought that I was dead, Father still thought of going to look for me... Emotions welled up in Chu Liuyue, and she was filled with guilt. She reached out and hugged Chu Ning's arms. "Father, Yue'er is back!"

Her touch seemed to bring life back into Chu Ning. The stiff and cold aura around Chu Ning instantly faded as warmth spread across his body.

It was only then that Chu Ning could move. He slowly turned and finally saw the face that he thought he would never see again.

Chu Liuyue was stunned by the way Chu Ning looked. In just a few days, the originally clean and dashing Chu Ning looked totally different.

His face was covered in stubble, and there were dark circles under his eyes. His eyes were also bloodshot as a sense of despair came from between his eyes. It was like he had become the walking dead.

Tears welled up in her eyes. "Father, I'm sorry I came back this late."

Chu Ning stared at her without blinking. He gripped Chu Liuyue's hand tightly as if afraid she would disappear. "Yue'er... Yue'er... my Yue'er..."

Chu Ning's cries broke her heart.

She forced her tears back. "Father, let's go home first."

"Right, right! Go home!" Chu Ning finally came back to life. "Let's go home!"

Xin Shi, who was by their side, was ecstatic. "Lord Chu Ning, Chu Liuyue, you both should go home first. I'll head back to the academy and tell Elder Sun and the others the news! They've been worried sick!"

With that, he turned and left.

Xin Shi really admired Chu Liuyue. Since he had seen Chu Liuyue return safely, his joy could not be hidden.

Back at the academy, many were intrigued by the joy written all over Xin Shi's face.

Xin Shi bumped into Bai Chen along the way.

“Xin Shi, didn’t Elder Sun send you to look after Lord Chu Ning? Since you’re back, does it mean that he’s better?” Bai Chen asked curiously.

Xin Shi chuckled. “But of course! He’s not just feeling better; he’s all healed! Where is Elder Sun? I have something I need to tell him immediately!”

Bai Chen felt like Xin Shi’s behavior was rather strange. “Really? Lord Chu Ning was still heartbroken yesterday, yet he’s all better today? Elder Sun is still busy, so what important matter do you have to tell him?”

Xin Shi patted Bai Chen’s chest. “Haha! I won’t keep it from you since the entire Imperial City will find out about this sooner or later. Chu Liuyue is back, and she’s alive!”

Chu Xianmin—who had just walked in from outside—froze in her steps as she looked up in disbelief!

Chapter 157: Pay in Blood

Bai Chen was shocked. “What did you say?”

“I said that Chu Liuyue is not dead! She’s still alive, and she’s back in the Imperial City! She’s at home with Lord Chu Ning right now!” Xin Shi repeated himself loudly. “Elder Sun has been feeling really guilty about this, so I’ll let him know of the good news now!”

After saying that, Xin Shi left with a smile on his face.

Bai Chen stopped him hurriedly and asked in disbelief, "Is it true? Elder Sun said that Little Liuyue had been swallowed by the black flying python's black hole. In theory, there's no way she should have survived. How did that happen?"

"Sigh, I'm curious too! However, she stood right before me, so I had no choice but to believe it! Bai Chen, if you don't believe me, take a look for yourself! The father and daughter are finally reunited, and I think we should wait until she has taken care of her father and returned to the academy. I'll talk to you later; I'll go see Elder Sun first!"

Xin Shi hurried away after he spoke.

Bai Chen hesitated for a while but decided not to interrupt the father-daughter duo at this time. He had seen Chu Ning's appearance yesterday. The father-daughter duo probably had a lot to talk about. It was better for him to wait here peacefully.

"Hey, Xin Shi, wait for me! I'll come too!" Bai Chen called after Xin Shi as he ran after him. He wanted to hear about the matter in detail.

*Even after the two left, Chu Xianmin was still stunned. **Chu Liuyue is still alive? How can that be possible?! Elder Sun said that she died in the hands of the black flying python, so how can she be back now?! This is ridiculous!***

The news sounds like a hoax, but Teacher Xin Shi has no reason to lie. He is clearly rather certain, considering how he is acting! However, if Chu Liuyue has returned, what is going to happen to me?! Chu Xianmin's face turned a little pale at this thought.

She had finally managed to get an audience with the Crown Prince yesterday. She told him that she could replace Chu Liuyue and meet Tianling Dynasty's envoy. She told him that, as long as she received this opportunity, she had a chance of changing his situation.

Even though she did not know what had happened, she assumed that His Majesty had punished the Crown Prince. If she wanted to help the Crown Prince, someone with enough weight had to speak on his behalf.

The Crown Prince had clearly thought of this too. His attitude towards her turned for the better. Not only did he move her to Wutong Garden—which was much closer to his residence—but he even gifted her a number of things.

The people in Crown Prince Mansion were pretty pragmatic. When she left the residence this morning, they were a lot more eager and respectful.

She had just sent a doctor to go see her father. She thought that everything had changed for the better.

But now...

Chu Xianmin forced herself to move forward. However, she found that her legs were soft after taking one step.

She dropped to the floor.

...

News of Chu Liuyue returning from Wan Ling Mountain alive spread across the academy and the Imperial City.

The news made waves.

Some people were stunned, some were happy, and some were upset. There were a variety of reactions. Many were curious, but Chu Liuyue stayed at home to take care of Chu Ning. She did not even leave home.

Her heart ached for Chu Ning, who had become this haggard because of her. She put everything else aside and took good care of him, taking the chance to recuperate as well.

...

Chu Liuyue's return set Chu Ning's mind at ease, but others were stunned.

The Chu family residence.

After the doctor—which Chu Xianmin had sent—left, Chu Yan regained consciousness, only to see Lu Yao's somber expression.

He was about to get up but found that he was unable to move. It was only then that he recalled Chu Ning beating him up. He immediately became depressed and angry. "What are you looking all somber about?"

The couple's lives in the last few days had been miserable. Chu Liuyue's fiasco had exposed their misdeeds, especially Lu Yao's years of fund embezzlement. The other members of the Chu family did not easily let her off after they found that she had harmed their interests.

Now that they had lost the Crown Prince's backing, their behavior became bolder.

Lu Yao was stripped of her money management rights, and all the shops under Chu Yan's name were taken back. Their titles were only in name, and they no longer had any status in the family.

Even the people who used to butter them up had changed sides. Nobody had come to visit Chu Ning after he got beaten up!

Lu Yao looked at him and frowned. "Do you know that Chu Liuyue is still alive?"

Chu Yan paused. "What nonsense are you talking about?"

"She returned yesterday morning! The entire Imperial City now knows that she didn't die at Wan Ling Mountain!"

Lu Yao knew how bad the situation was for them. All of Chu Xianmin's plans were for naught!

"No, we can't sit around like this..." Lu Yao got up and paced around in the room when a thought flashed across her mind! *Hang on! If Chu Liuyue came back, then what about Gu Mingzhu?*

She hurried to one side and began writing a letter.

Chu Yan did not understand. "What are you doing?"

Lu Yao did not even look up as she said, "Writing a letter to the Gu family's Madam."

"You still have the time to think about such things in a time like this?" Chu Yan was upset.

However, Lu Yao smiled. "It's the perfect time to do this. Rumor had it that Chu Liuyue died together with Gu Mingzhu. However, don't you think there's a problem since Chu Liuyue is back, but there is news of Gu Mingzhu?"

Chu Yan paused but quickly understood. "You're saying..."

A vicious smile appeared on Lu Yao's face. "So what if she has come back alive? Many people in Imperial City want her dead!"

The letter was sent to the Gu family that night.

...

The next day, Chu Liuyue returned to the academy after seeing that Chu Ning had recovered significantly. However, she was stopped at the academy's gates.

"Chu Liuyue! Stop right there!"

Chu Liuyue turned and saw a woman in her thirties walk over with people.

The woman was in white, and her eyes—filled with anger and pain—were red. She got agitated when she saw Chu Liuyue's face. "Pay for my daughter's life!" she cried out sharply.

Chapter 158: Justice

That shrill voice pierced Chu Liuyue's ears, making her knit her brows. "Who are you?"

When the woman heard that, she rushed forward as if she was greatly agitated and slapped Chu Liuyue's face. "How dare you have the cheek to ask who I am? I'm going to kill you!"

Chu Liuyue moved her legs and avoided the woman's attack.

That woman did not stand properly and almost landed on the ground headfirst. Luckily, the people behind her helped her up swiftly.

"Madam, you must be careful!"

The woman's blood boiled as she pointed at Chu Liuyue and hollered, "Go! Capture her!"

"Yes!" When the few people heard her command, they immediately went forward and surrounded Chu Liuyue, preparing to take action.

Chu Liuyue's expression did not change, but her voice was much colder. In a tone that was not angry but very authoritative, she said, "This is Tian Lu Academy. I would like to see who has the guts to stir up trouble here."

This sentence successfully made the few people stop in their tracks. They also became uneasy.

That's right! No matter what, this is Tian Lu Academy's entrance. If we really do anything unreasonable here, Tian Lu Academy will not let us off.

However, that woman seemed to ignore Chu Liuyue's words. Her voice became even higher and louder. "What are you waiting for? Take her down immediately! Who will dare stop the Gu family from taking someone away?"

Gu family? Chu Liuyue's mind whirred, and she then remembered this woman's identity—the first wife of the Gu family head—Gu Yunfei—and the Gu family's mistress, Yue Zhenling.

The original owner had only seen this woman once several years ago. Thus, Chu Liuyue only found her familiar and did not recall anything else. However, Yue Zhenling's arrogance and the way she talked about the Gu family made it easy for anyone to guess her identity.

Chu Liuyue then understood her initial sentence. That was because Yue Zhenling was Gu Mingzhu's biological mother. "So you're Madam Gu. I don't think I have anything to do with your Gu family, and I didn't do anything to offend you. May I know what made you come here and ask your men to capture me?"

Yue Zhenling was so angry that she laughed. She looked at Chu Liuyue with eyes filled with hatred. "How dare you ask? You very clearly know what you did!"

Chu Liuyue's expression did not change. "I really don't know what you're talking about. Why don't you explain it to me first?"

Yue Zhenling was so furious that her body trembled. "You!"

"What's the matter? Why is there a ruckus early in the morning?" When the two parties were about to start a fight, someone quickly walked over from the academy entrance.

Chu Liuyue turned back and greeted, "Teacher Bai Chen."

When Bai Chen saw Chu Liuyue, his heart skipped a beat. Even though he had heard the news the day before, he was still exceptionally emotional when he saw her in person. "Little Liuyue! It really is you!"

He swiftly walked towards Chu Liuyue and carefully sized her up. "A-are you really okay?"

Chu Liuyue's lips curved up slightly. "Yeah, I'm fine. Don't worry about me."

"That's great! It's good that you're back; it's very good that you're back!" Bai Chen's inner emotions were in turmoil, and he had a lot to say. However, only this sentence came out of his mouth.

When he heard that somebody seemed to be quarreling outside the academy's gates, he hurried over to take a look. However, he did not expect it to be Chu Liuyue.

After being anxious for a whole night, he finally relaxed. When he calmed down a little, he surveyed his surroundings, and his facial expression changed. *These people seem to want to attack Little Liuyue...*

His gaze finally landed on Yue Zhenling. "Madam Gu, why are you here?"

Yue Zhenling took a deep breath in and suppressed the anger in her heart. She then coldly said, "Teacher Bai Chen, this is between the Gu family and Chu Liuyue. You better stay out of it."

Bai Chen was amused. "Madam Gu, what do you mean by that? Little Liuyue is a student of Tian Lu Academy, yet we don't even have the right to ask for the reason when you want to take her away?"

Yue Zhenling was not a fool and could immediately tell that Bai Chen was on Chu Liuyue's side.

Though the Gu family had a distinguished status, Tian Lu Academy was not one to be trifled with. If Bai Chen was determined to protect Chu Liuyue, she really could not do anything to take her away forcefully.

"Why don't you ask Chu Liuyue instead?"

Bai Chen looked at Chu Liuyue with a questioning gaze.

Chu Liuyue shrugged her shoulders. "I don't know what's going on either. I was just walking to the academy when Madam Gu suddenly commanded her men to capture me without saying anything. She says that she wants me to pay for her daughter's life."

When Bai Chen heard this, he suddenly understood something and looked at Yue Zhenling suspiciously. "Madam Gu, are you saying that... Liuyue harmed your daughter, Gu Mingzhu?"

“That’s right!” When she heard her daughter’s name, the emotions Yue Zhenling forcefully suppressed earlier were triggered once again, and her tears kept falling. “It’s her! She killed my only daughter!”

Bai Chen’s expression became amused. “Madam Gu, you can’t randomly blame a person. I understand that you’re devastated about losing your daughter, but the situation at Wan Ling Mountain was chaotic, and even we don’t know what exactly happened. How are you so sure that Little Liuyue killed your daughter?”

“Of course, I’m certain! I heard that Mingzhu and Liuyue were trapped on the same mountain and were surrounded by the black flying python and countless fiends. In that situation, why is only Mingzhu dead? How did Chu Liuyue come back in one piece? She must have done something!” Yue Zhenling agitatedly yelled with much certainty as if she had personally witnessed everything.

Bai Chen heard her words and did not care about them; he even felt that it was a joke. “So... because Little Liuyue came back alive alone, you’re certain that she harmed Gu Mingzhu and pushed her to her death?”

Yue Zhenling sneered. “Isn’t this evidence enough? If not, why don’t you let her explain what exactly happened and how she escaped alone?”

If Chu Liuyue was also dead, Yue Zhenling would have nothing to say and could only admit that it was Chu Xianmin’s bad luck. However, Chu Liuyue was standing here in one piece, whereas her daughter’s corpse was nowhere to be found.

How could her heart possibly be appeased?

Bai Chen was speechless. “Do you have any evidence for your claims? If not, you’re defaming and slandering her.”

Yue Zhenling was taken aback and did not know what to say at that moment, showing that she was clearly guilty.

Chu Liuyue gently rubbed her brows and lightly said, “There’s no evidence or witnesses, yet you determined that I’m guilty just based on your own imagination. You even want to take me away? Madam Gu, isn’t this too unreasonable?”

Yue Zhenling was stumped by the duo’s words, and her originally red face turned white. However, she was pretty experienced and quickly defended herself. “Then you should clearly explain what the exact situation back then was like. Also, explain why only you managed to come back alive. If you had a way to survive, why didn’t you help Mingzhu?”

Chapter 159: Teach

Why didn’t I help her? Chu Liuyue sneered in her heart and wanted to ask why she should’ve helped Gu Mingzhu. Chu Liuyue was not related to Gu Mingzhu, and Gu Mingzhu had even sold her out to the black flying python to save herself.

I did not even calculate this debt, so why does the Gu family have the cheek to ask me to compensate for Gu Mingzhu’s life?

Chu Liuyue lightly said, “The situation was very dangerous back then, and it was already very hard for me to survive. How can I still care for other people? Madam Gu, don’t forget that it was a black flying python. Do you think I’m its match?”

Yue Zhenling was stumped. “T-then, how did you escape? Who knows if you used my daughter’s life to exchange for yours? Yes, it must be so!” When Yue Zhenling said this, her voice suddenly went higher as if she was certain that Chu Liuyue had used despicable means to survive.

Chu Liuyue was so angry that she laughed.

The saying went ‘like father like son.’ Yue Zhenling and her daughter, Gu Mingzhu, really thought the same way.

If the person at the scene were Yue Zhenling instead, she would probably make the same decision as Gu Mingzhu and use other people’s lives to exchange for her own.

“Madam Gu, I’ve already explained it clearly. I was lucky to survive, but you don’t believe me. What else do you want me to say? You only believe in your own imagination. Since that’s the case, I can’t stop you. However, if you can’t produce evidence, I’m not leaving with you. I still have something on, so I’ll take my leave.”

Then, Chu Liuyue turned around to leave.

“You can’t go!” Yue Zhenling went forward and tried to grab Chu Liuyue’s sleeves, but Chu Liuyue easily avoided her.

Chu Liuyue’s patience was running out. “Madam Gu, I’m not that patient.” Her tone was calm, but a harsh cold light flashed across her black eyes.

For some reason, Madam Gu was suddenly afraid, and she did not dare to hold Chu Liuyue back.

Chu Liuyue turned around and walked to the academy.

Bai Chen walked to Yue Zhenling and sighed before saying some comforting words. "Madam Gu, I know Mingzhu's incident has greatly impacted you. As teachers, we're also very sad. However, even so, you can't randomly accuse someone else, right? Besides, we all know Little Liuyue's character very clearly, and she would never do something like that. So, I think you should go back home and rest today."

Yue Zhenling refused. "Teacher Bai Chen, you're just bent on protecting Chu Liuyue, right? How exactly did she brainwash you to believe her in this manner? Think about it, if she didn't use some tricks in that situation, how could she possibly escape?"

Bai Chen's face turned cold. "Madam Gu, do you mean that all the teachers and elders in Tian Lu Academy are protecting Chu Liuyue?"

Yue Zhenling thought that this was possible, but she did not dare to say it aloud. She glared at Chu Liuyue with resentment. *Lu Yao is right. This Chu Liuyue really is a cunning and poisonous snake!*

"Hah, I don't know what kind of person Chu Liuyue is, but I know that she could even betray the Chu family that brought her up. She even stirred chaos in their family after she left. Who knows what she could do to other people? Chu Liuyue, if you don't give me a satisfying explanation, I'll never leave."

Yue Zhenling's legs then gave way, and she collapsed on the floor. She loudly cried, "Mingzhu! My pitiful daughter! You've died a terrible death! Other people harmed you, but I can't do anything about it! I'm so useless. Your mother is so useless!"

When her few subordinates saw Yue Zhenling on the floor, they immediately knelt down and cried in unison, "Second Missy, you were harmed by a despicable person!"

Is she planning to cry in front of Tian Lu Academy? Chu Liuyue's eyelids twitched. She knitted her brows and turned around. This is ridiculous. No matter what, Yue Zhenling is the Gu family's Mistress and has a distinguished status. How can she do something like this? No matter how depressed and furious she is, doing this is akin to tarnishing the Gu family's reputation. Why didn't she consider that at all?

When Yue Zhenling saw Chu Liuyue give a reaction, she thought that Chu Liuyue was scared and instantly cried even louder. Her miserable shrills could be heard from miles away.

Very quickly, many people gathered around to watch the commotion.

Some people started pointing at Chu Liuyue and looked very nosy.

Bai Chen had never seen such a scene and was shocked. When he recovered his senses, he was furious. *Their cries will defame Chu Liuyue; they have also disregarded Tian Lu Academy completely!*

He knitted his brows and said, "Madam Gu, this commotion isn't very suitable, right?"

Yue Zhenling pretended like she did not hear him and continued crying,

"You..." Bai Chen's temper exploded, and he became anxious.

Chu Liuyue hurriedly held him back. "Teacher Bai Chen, don't."

The first person who acted in this situation would be in the wrong.

Bai Chen was beyond frustrated. "Am I supposed to let her cause a commotion here then? What about your reputation?"

The surrounding audience had generally understood what happened and began discussing the situation softly.

"I knew that this person's status was different. It turns out she's Madam Gu! It's no wonder she dares to go against Tian Lu Academy!"

"That can't be... Tian Lu Academy isn't one to be trifled with."

"Don't you know? Gu Mingzhu is Madam Gu's only daughter, and her status in the Gu family was only secure because of Gu Mingzhu. Now that Gu Mingzhu is dead, many people are eyeing her position. She's in a perilous situation, so how can she not hate Chu Liuyue? You can't blame her for causing a scene."

"No wonder! According to her, it seems like Chu Liuyue caused Gu Mingzhu's death?"

"I find it weird as well. Think about it, why did only Chu Liuyue survive in such a dangerous situation? Gu Mingzhu was the Gu family's most doted on Second Missy. She must've had a trump card on her, yet she died. However, Chu Liuyue..."

"Actually, I wanted to say that this Chu Liuyue is a little sinister. When the Chu family was bad to her, she severed ties with them. The Chu family's days then became miserable. I heard that Gu Mingzhu wasn't on good terms with her, and she died after being trapped with her. What happened in between... it's really hard to say..."

Upon hearing the discussions, Bai Chen was beyond furious, and he looked at Chu Liuyue. However, not only was she calm, but even her lips had curled into a smile.

“Aiya! Little Liuyue, how can you smile at this moment?! If these people continue babbling, you’ll really become responsible for Gu Mingzhu’s death! Don’t you know that the majority wins?”

Chu Liuyue hugged her arms and lightly smiled. “Teacher Bai Chen, someone purposely arranged such a show for us. Won’t it be a waste if we don’t admire it properly?”

Bai Chen was stunned. “Y-you mean that these people...”

“I don’t believe Madam Gu would do such a despicable thing, considering her distinguished status,” said Chu Liuyue calmly as she walked to Yue Zhenling. “Madam Gu, who taught you this?”

Yue Zhenling’s cries suddenly stopped.

Chapter 160: She Did It!

She guiltily avoided Chu Liuyue’s gaze and purposely raised her voice. “What are you saying? Nobody taught me anything! I just want to seek justice from you! I-if you don’t explain what happened to Gu Mingzhu clearly, I won’t leave!”

Chu Liuyue gently replied with an “Oh.”

“Madam Gu, you can choose not to say it, but you need to think if it’s worth risking your reputation as the Gu family’s Mistress for a moment of impulsiveness.

Yue Zhenling really could not cry anymore. “What are you trying to say? What do you mean if it’s worth it?”

Chu Liuyue sighed. *I really don’t know how Yue Zhenling kept her position all these years. It is useless to advise a person who is so easily manipulated and triggered.*

She lightly said, “You insist on saying that I caused Gu Mingzhu’s death, but you can’t produce any evidence. If word gets out, it won’t be good for me. However, it also won’t be good for you, Madam Gu. After all, you’re defaming me right now.”

“Who is defaming you? You did something against your conscience, and you’re just unwilling to admit it!” Yue Zhenling was certain that Chu Liuyue had something to do with Gu Mingzhu’s death, so she would not listen to reason now.

She sneered. “Chu Liuyue, are you very happy now? Yes, you got into Tian Lu Academy and became a so-called genius. An average person really will not dare to trifle with you. Even the Chu family was played by you, and they’re almost going to split apart.”

“However, who knows how you attained everything you have today? In the earlier years, you were clearly someone without a Yuan meridian. Therefore, your current so-called ‘genius’ title definitely has way more secrets behind it! If you’re really honest, do you dare to explain it in front of so many people?”

Her explosion of words silenced the crowd.

Countless pairs of eyes stared at Chu Liuyue with curiosity and excitement; the crowd obviously wanted to know the answer as well.

Upon hearing Yue Zhenling's words, Chu Liuyue relaxed her brows. *As expected... it had to do with the Chu family... Only those few people hate me to the core.*

Chu Liuyue could already guess the general situation without asking. It was just a brainless scheme. The person behind Yue Zhenling had spent so much effort to try and teach Chu Liuyue a lesson. They even went as far as manipulating Yue Zhenling into bringing the Gu family over to cause a commotion.

Chu Liuyue lightly said, "Madam Gu, you're standing up for other people, but you don't even know that you're being used."

Yue Zhenling ignored her and sneered. "What, you can't say anything? Let me tell you, even if this reaches the Emperor's ears, I won't let you off easily. Only your death can repay my daughter's life."

It seemed like she really wanted Chu Liuyue to die.

"Madam Gu, isn't it too unreasonable for you to demand one of my Tian Lu Academy student's lives?" An old voice boomed, immediately suppressing Yue Zhenling and the others' cries.

Chu Liuyue looked at the incoming person weirdly. "Elder Sun? Why are you here?"

Elder Sun looked at her and tried his hardest to maintain his composure. However, his eyes could not help but look elated. "I heard that you came back, so I came out to take a look. I didn't expect to hear people crying from afar. It turns out that someone is causing trouble for you."

Chu Liuyue coughed in embarrassment. "Sorry for disturbing you."

"It's not a disturbance. Even if it was, it's other people's fault, not yours," said Elder Sun as he looked at Yue Zhenling. When he saw her on the floor without regard for her image, his face darkened. "Madam Gu, what are you doing?"

Yue Zhenling was frightened. She did not expect Elder Sun to come out as well. Even though she was fuming, she knew that Elder Sun held a very high position in Tian Lu Academy. Hence, she really did not dare lose her temper in front of him.

Therefore, she hurriedly stood up and said, "Elder Sun, you came at the right time! Mingzhu is also part of the academy, but she died so miserably outside. Even her corpse..."

Her tears fell once again as she continued, "It's all Chu Liuyue's fault! She caused Mingzhu's death! This sinister person doesn't deserve to stay in Tian Lu Academy!"

Elder Sun's brows knitted even more tightly. "Liuyue caused Mingzhu's death? Where did you hear this from? Why don't I know about it?"

"Elder Sun, did you know that both of them were trapped on the same mountain? Mingzhu is dead, but Chu Liuyue came back alive. Don't you think there's a problem? I—"

Elder Sun grimly glanced at her and mercilessly interrupted her words. "Of course, I know about this. I was at the foot of the mountain and saw everything clearly."

Yue Zhenling was taken aback, but elation immediately filled her afterward. "That's great! That means you saw everything that happened, right? Chu Liuyue caused Mingzhu's death, right? Chu Liuyue, don't you want evidence? Elder Sun is here. His words will be the evidence."

As one of the more important elders in Tian Lu Academy, Elder Sun had an extraordinary status and normally wouldn't side with anyone.

Nobody would doubt if his words were true.

Chu Liuyue was also surprised. "Elder Sun, you were there too?"

Elder Sun nodded. "Back then, the two of you were trapped on the mountain, so I told the others to leave first before I went up alone to save you. However, when I reached the foot of the mountain, I realized it was surrounded by countless fiends. I had no way of climbing up, let alone do anything else."

Chu Liuyue understood what happened, and her heart felt warm. "I see."

She did not actually expect him to do such things. Elder Sun had really done his best to try and save them.

"You don't have to blame yourself. The situation back then was dire, and you also might've been in danger if you forcefully barged up the mountain."

Elder Sun sighed. "It's precisely because I saw the two of you being swallowed by the black hole that I thought... I didn't expect that you could come back alive."

He was actually very curious as to how Chu Liuyue escaped, but now was not the time to ask about it.

He stepped forward and looked at Yue Zhenling. He then said, "Madam Gu, you should apologize to Liuyue."

Yue Zhenling was dazed. "What?"

Elder Sun enunciated his words properly as he stated, "Apologize because the person who betrayed their classmate and used someone else's life to exchange for their own was not Chu Liuyue, but... Gu Mingzhu!"