

Nobel Ruler 261

Chapter 261: Danger Lurking Everywhere

The heavenly doctor competition's duration was the same as the Xuan Master competition, and they both lasted for a day.

But to the spectators, the heavenly doctor competition was much more interesting.

For the Xuan Master competition, every Xuan Master had to solve the Xuan formations on the chessboards in front of them, and this would take several hours.

Most people did not understand Xuan formations, so the competition would be more boring for them.

However, the heavenly doctor competition was different. Every competitor had a cauldron in front of them, and they would extract the different herbs in the cauldron before merging them together—which was also the competition's highlight.

During this process, many people could directly differentiate the weak and strong heavenly doctors in the competition. Hence, most of the spectators would watch on with much interest.

But these people did not include Chu Liuyue.

Out of all the competitors, only five people chose the 'advanced' formula. This also meant that barely a few of them had the ability to produce pills.

Also, these five people might not actually be able to produce the pill.

There was no need to mention the remaining competitors. Heavenly doctors were about the same if they couldn't produce pills.

Some people were not able to produce pills for their entire lives, so they could only be a physician forever. They could not truly step into the heavenly doctor world.

Upon taking a closer look at the ingredients they were using, Chu Liuyue could already roughly guess the three medical formulas.

This made the competition even more boring.

Tuan Zi sat on her shoulders, and its head kept drooping as if it were sleeping.

Chu Liuyue hugged Tuan Zi in her arms, and it comfortably huddled into a ball as it drifted to sleep.

"Hey, Liuyue, your blood ferret is amazing! Where did you get it?" Curiosity filled Si Yang's face. "Many people went to buy blood ferrets these few days, and there aren't enough blood ferrets in the entire Imperial City! But I think none of those blood ferrets can compare to yours!"

As the weakest third-grade fiend, blood ferrets were not in high demand. At most, some aristocratic children would buy them as pets.

But blood ferrets were very hard to find, and they were very expensive. It was not worth it to buy them. Hence, very few people bought them as pets.

Tuan Zi became famous from one battle, and it instantly made blood ferrets popular.

Chu Liuyue raised her brows, and her palm lightly touched Tuan Zi's tail. *The small little ball is really cute. When looking at Tuan Zi like this, it really isn't different from other blood ferrets. However, Tuan Zi is the most special one!*

"I picked it up at Wan Ling Mountain."

"What?" Si Yang was stunned. *She didn't spend any money and found such a treasure?*

"Your luck is too good!" His entire face contorted. "Why don't these good things happen to me?"

Chu Liuyue looked at him coldly. "You didn't get surrounded and attacked by fiends. Your luck is pretty good."

Si Yang was speechless.

"Liuyue, Liuyue?" A familiar voice was suddenly heard from the side while the two of them were talking.

Chu Liuyue turned around to take a look and saw that Zuo Rong was beside them. "Mr. Zuo Rong, how can I help you?"

Zuo Rong gestured for her to come over.

Chu Liuyue stood up and walked to Zuo Rong.

Seeing that not many people were paying attention to them, Zuo Rong lowered his voice and asked, "Liuyue, are you really not participating in the heavenly doctor competition?"

Seeing Zuo Rong's careful and expectant behavior, Chu Liuyue could not help but laugh. "You came here to look for me because of this? I didn't sign up for the competition, so I won't join it."

It was most likely that Zuo Rong had high hopes for her because she gave that formula to Heavenly Pharmacy previously.

It is a pity that she isn't interested in it.

Looking at Chu Liuyue's nonchalant appearance, it seemed like she had really made up her mind. Zuo Rong could not help but feel regret. "If you join..."

He believed that Chu Liuyue's talent as a heavenly doctor was definitely outstanding. However, she had always maintained a low profile regarding this.

He tried to convince her for a while longer, but he could only give up when he saw that Chu Liuyue really had no interest in it. "... Okay then! Since you don't want to join, others can't force you. If you still need any more herbs later on, just go to Heavenly Pharmacy and take them."

Chu Liuyue thanked him with a smile, but she thought in her heart: *Though I can take ordinary herbs from Heavenly Pharmacy, it is more convenient to take the special herbs from Zhen Bao Pavilion.*

She turned around after Zuo Rong left, planning to return to her seat. However, she suddenly froze.

Chu Liuyue had just felt a very dangerous gaze sweep past her. She immediately became alert as her gaze quickly darted across her surroundings. However, the harsh and dangerous aura quickly disappeared.

She looked around for quite a while but did not detect any strange happenings.

“Liuyue, what’s the matter with you?” Zuo Rong saw how Chu Liuyue turned around to leave but had suddenly stopped there. *Did this girl suddenly change her mind?*

Chu Liuyue turned around and smiled at him. “Nothing much.”

Then, she returned to her seat. Her expression looked normal from the start till the end.

This insignificant event also did not attract anyone’s attention.

But Chu Liuyue’s body was still tense even after she sat down on her seat. Her gaze also gradually became cold.

My intuition should not be wrong. That frightening murderous intent indeed was directed at me! Chu Liuyue estimated that the other party must be very strong! For someone to exude such a suffocating suppression... That person must be a stage-six warrior at least! But who could it be?

Even though she had offended quite a few people during this period, one had to know that a stage-six warrior had never appeared in the entire Country Yao Chen before!

Chu Liuyue slowly caressed Tuan Zi as a thought flashed across her mind. *Hang on! I forgot that I had a hidden enemy—the one that poisoned Liao Zhongshu!*

Chu Liuyue never knew when she had offended such a mysterious and formidable person.

The other party had set a lot of traps in secret and was waiting for Chu Liuyue to fall into them before completely killing her.

Perhaps... the mastermind came to this Qing Jiao Competition? Upon thinking of this, Chu Liuyue's gaze could not help but shift toward Chu Xianmin.

Chu Xianmin did not sit beside Rong Jin; she was sitting in Tian Lu Academy's area instead. Even though she had already married the Crown Prince and was serving Rong Jin personally, she had no right to sit beside Rong Jin on such an occasion since she was a concubine.

Chu Xianmin seemed to notice something and looked up.

Their eyes met.

Chu Xianmin could not help but shiver. For some reason, she always felt that Chu Liuyue's pair of eyes could see through everything.

Chu Xianmin almost touched her neck instinctively. The wound left by the dagger had already formed a scab, and it was very rough to the touch. Every single moment, it reminded her of how horrifying Chu Liuyue was.

She anxiously shifted her gaze.

Chu Liuyue squinted her eyes. *Considering Chu Xianmin's reaction, there seems to be something amiss...*

Chu Liuyue pretended to look at her surroundings casually, but she made no discovery.

At this point, a low boom was heard from the arena.

Poof!

Chapter 262: Absolutely Regret

Chu Liuyue looked over.

A young man stood there with a pale face, and the fire within the cauldron before him was completely extinguished, leaving behind black ash only.

The previous sound came from there—it turned out that he failed in producing his pill.

Looking at his clothes, he was from Tai Yan Academy.

At the side, the judge reminded him, “You still have one last chance.”

The young man then recovered his senses and mechanically nodded his head. He hurriedly cleaned the cauldron, picked up the second set of ingredients, and tried for the second time.

But perhaps the first failure had made him nervous, which caused his hand that was holding the herbs to tremble.

The judges secretly shook their heads.

The crowd watching the scene also sighed, but they had seen such situations many times.

The competition was already very intense. The first pill production failure was an even larger impact.

Many students—who weren’t mentally strong enough—would quickly lose confidence after the first failure, causing them to fail for the second time as well.

As expected, the young man was dazed, and he put in the herbs in the wrong order after a short while. When he realized it, he started to extract the herbs carelessly.

This movement caused him to lose control of the fire in the cauldron, and it was extinguished once again.

The set of herbs—which had yet to finish being extracted—was wasted just like that.

The judges looked like they expected it, and they shook their heads.

“Number 37 is eliminated!”

When the young man heard this, his entire body trembled. He looked very defeated as he weakly walked off the arena.

“He’s the first person to be eliminated from this year’s heavenly doctor competition, right?”

“I didn’t expect for his second attempt to be worse than the first! At least he had extracted all the ingredients previously; there was only a problem during the merging of the ingredients.”

“Perhaps he’s too nervous... Even I’m very nervous just by watching them, let alone the competitors.”

“I think he’s not talented enough! Look at Situ Xingchen. She has always been calm since the start of the competition. Even though this is her first time participating in the Qing Jiao Competition, her extraction methods are much smoother than the rest!”

“She’s Country Xing Luo’s most beloved eldest princess after all. She truly lives up to her name...”

...

Situ Xingchen was bent on taking first place this time, so she chose the most difficult formula from the start without hesitation.

This resulted in her having many more herbs beside her.

When the other people—who chose the ‘intermediate’ and ‘beginner’ formulas—had already started to merge the ingredients, she was still calmly handling her herbs.

Gradually, more people were eliminated.

When Situ Xingchen heard those sounds, she was not affected at all. She would sometimes look up, but she would only glance at the progress of the people who had chosen the ‘advanced’ formula as well.

She did not even care about the others.

...

As time gradually ticked past, more and more people were eliminated. Only half of them were left by noon.

Chu Liuyue had always been waiting for that person to appear, but the other party no longer acted after that first glance.

Chu Liuyue felt regret in her heart, but she did not give up as she waited alertly. *Since the other party came here, he definitely has tricks up his sleeves. There are many people at the Qing Jiao Competition's venue, so it isn't easy for him to do anything here. Perhaps after the competition...*

....

Emperor Jiawen looked at the competition arena, smiled, and said, "Situ Xingchen is indeed outstanding. When I saw her a few years ago, she was still a small girl. Now, she's matured beautifully."

She excelled both in terms of appearance and talent.

The Empress looked at Emperor Jiawen and felt that he really liked Situ Xingchen. She then smiled and supported him. "You're right, Your Majesty. A girl like Situ Xingchen is really a rare find. I heard that she isn't engaged yet, right?"

Emperor Jiawen laughed out loud. "That's right! Her father really dotes on her, and he can't bear to marry her off. He keeps saying that he wants her to stay by his side for a few more years, but..."

But when both of them were communicating through mail, Situ Xingchen's father—Country Xing Luo's Emperor Jing Kang, Situ You—had once mentioned a marriage alliance.

The target of this marriage alliance was the Crown Prince, Rong Jin!

Not many people knew about this, and it seemed like Situ You had casually mentioned this. But as the Emperor, his words were rules, so how could he possibly joke about this?

Emperor Jiawen knew very clearly that Situ You was testing his attitude. He was naturally very satisfied with Situ Xingchen, but he did not know why Situ You would suggest this.

In Country Xing Luo, Situ Xingchen could also pick a husband that she was satisfied with. Why would they want to form a marriage alliance? And they even chose Rong Jin?

The Empress naturally did not know what Emperor Jiawen was thinking. When His Majesty casually mentioned it to her before, she did not take it to heart.

But after thinking about it, she felt that Situ Xingchen was a very good choice! She was better than Chu Liuyue at least.

As long as His Majesty granted them the marriage, Rong Jin could not reject it—especially when the other party was Country Xing Luo's eldest princess!

She jokingly said, "I wonder who will be so blessed to marry this eldest princess."

Emperor Jiawen was in deep thought.

Rong Jin secretly knitted his brows. Actually, he was interested when he heard the news from his mother previously. But that was before he angered his father.

During this period of time, he had encountered consecutive setbacks. He felt like he had lost all hope. However, it seemed like his father did not completely reject the idea.

But... he had already decided that Chu Liuyue would be his Crown Princess! If it were the previous him, he would be elated to have a marriage alliance with Situ Xingchen.

Who wouldn't want to marry such a perfect Crown Princess? However, his heart was filled with Chu Liuyue now, and he did not want to change to someone else.

He coughed and pretended to speak to Rong Qi casually, who was beside him. "I heard Chu Liuyue took first place for two competitions?"

Rong Qi was stunned. *Didn't Big Brother always hate Chu Liuyue? Why did he suddenly bring her up now?*

His brain turned, and he suddenly remembered that there were rumors about how the Crown Prince had changed his attitude toward Chu Liuyue. Rong Jin had even invited her in public. However, he was rejected by Chu Liuyue.

According to my understanding of Rong Jin, he shouldn't want to have anything to do with Chu Liuyue... Rong Qi nodded. "I think so. I didn't come the past few days, so I'm not too sure about what happened. But... Brother, why did you suddenly talk about her? I thought you..."

Rong Jin smiled. "She sort of saved me previously, and I haven't had the chance to thank her yet."

Rong Qi felt very strange and thought that Rong Jin's expression was weird when he talked about Chu Liuyue.

When Emperor Jiawen heard this, he turned around to look at Rong Jin. *Rong Jin is actually speaking for Chu Liuyue? It seems like the things that happened during this period has indeed made him change.*

“Liuyue is indeed very good.”

Rong Jin nodded and bitterly laughed. “You’re right, Father. I was dumb before, and I missed her. Now, I...”

Chapter 263: Produced a Pill!

“It’s good that you think this way. It’s not too late for you to go over and thank her when you feel better,” interrupted the Empress suddenly.

Even though she was smiling, she glanced at Rong Jin with much warning.

Rong Jin’s lips moved, but he finally swallowed his remaining words. *Now that Father has changed his view toward me, it might be better if I talk about it when the situation is better.*

Emperor Jiawen looked at Rong Jin with much meaning. From his understanding of his son, the past Rong Jin wouldn’t admit he was wrong in front of everyone else, even if he was saved by Chu Liuyue.

His change in attitude is strange. I wonder what he’s planning.

“Mm, I heard that Chu Xianmin has personally been taking care of you for the past few days?”

Rong Jin carelessly nodded.

Emperor Jiawen smiled. “This kid is not bad too, and she’s genuine towards you. Wait for a while longer, and you can upgrade—”

“Your Majesty, the Gu family and the Chu family are still in a tense situation,” reminded the Empress softly.

Emperor Jiawen paused and then remembered that Chu Xianmin’s mother—Lu Yao—had done many ‘good deeds’ recently. Not only did she secretly take the Chu family’s money, but she had even instigated the Gu family’s madam to cause a scene at Tian Lu Academy.

If it weren’t because the Gu family thought of the Lu family and Crown Prince Mansion, Lu Yao might not have left the Gu family alive. Even if so, she was still harshly taught a lesson.

With this kind of marital home and parents, Chu Xianmin’s reputation was affected as well. It really was not a good time to upgrade her status.

Emperor Jiawen swallowed his remaining words. “... Just treat her well.”

“I will.” Rong Jin agreed on the surface, but he did not care about it in his heart.

Father can say this so easily because he hasn’t seen Chu Xianmin’s face. I also want to treat Chu Xianmin better, but every time I look at her, I inevitably think about the horrifyingly ugly face I saw that night. I can’t like her a single bit.

Besides, the Chu family's situation has changed. Lu Yao and Chu Yan aren't in favorable positions either. It is already very kind of me not to find fault with the troubles Chu Xianmin brought to me. How can I possibly still treat them well?

...

Ding!

A crisp sound was heard from the competition venue. This sound would only be made when someone successfully refined medicine!

The crowd hurriedly looked over and discovered that it came from He Yang—who was the first person to choose a formula.

Due to his nervousness and emotional state, He Yang's forehead was covered in sweat, and his face was red.

At this moment, he carefully placed the bowl of medicine he made into the jade box he prepared at the side.

An intense herbal fragrance permeated the air.

"It looks like his refinement was very successful! I think his bowl of medicine is pretty effective!"

"I heard that he broke through and became a stage-three heavenly doctor last year. If he progresses by another step, he'll become a true heavenly doctor!"

“Hah, as long as he can’t produce a pill, he will never become a true heavenly doctor! He might not even pass this obstacle. You need to know that some people will forever be stuck as a stage-three physician.”

“That’s easy for you to say! There are only a handful of true heavenly doctors in Country Yao Chen. It’s already not bad for someone to become a stage-three physician. How can you ask for everyone to become a true heavenly doctor? In this arena, perhaps not even three of them have the ability to produce pills! It’s hard to say who will succeed in the end!”

The young man carefully passed the jade box to the three heavenly doctors seated at the side. These three judges came from the three academies, respectively, so that the judgment was fair.

The person in the middle was Tian Lu Academy’s Elder Feng Yi. On his left and right were Nan Feng Academy’s Elder Cheng Lixue and Tai Yan Academy’s Elder Mo Cang, respectively.

Elder Feng Yi opened the jade box, took a look, and said, “Stage three, middle-grade.”

He Yang’s smile stiffened. He was a stage-three physician, so the medicine he produced was a stage-three one as well.

But even physicians in the same stage would have varying standards.

He Yang originally thought that his medicine was a stage-three, superior-grade product. Hence, he was disappointed with Elder Feng Yi’s judgment.

He took a deep breath in and looked at the other two elders. However, the remaining two gave the same judgment after looking at the medicine.

Seeing that the judges were about to record the results, He Yang hurriedly said, "Three elders, please take another look at it! Is my medicine really considered middle grade only?"

Elder Feng Yi smiled and shook his head. "Are you doubting the three of us?"

"I wouldn't dare! But—" He Yang immediately looked down. *But if they really conclude that it is middle-grade medicine, I definitely won't get a good ranking!*

"Actually, you should know very clearly what grade your medicine is. Even though you successfully refined the medicine according to the formula, you weren't clean in handling the ingredients, and there's some residue inside, which affects the medicine's effectiveness. You should be able to see the impure color, right?"

He Yang's face flushed red, and he did not dare to rebut any further. He could only softly and hurriedly say, "Thank you for the enlightenment, Elders."

Then, he quickly left.

The trio looked at each other and smiled. They were all experienced heavenly doctors and could tell the grade of the medicine with one look and one sniff. How could they possibly judge wrongly?

"I'm afraid that we'll need to wait for a while before stage-three, superior-grade medicine shows up." Elder Cheng Lixue stroked his beard.

Elder Mo Cang chuckled. “Haha, if there’s anyone who can produce a pill here, I’ll be more than willing to wait on!”

Elder Cheng Lixue and Elder Feng Yi exchanged glances.

Who can’t tell that he is secretly praising Situ Xingchen? Judging by his tone, it seems like he is certain that Situ Xingchen can produce a pill!

Buzz!

At this point, a commotion was heard from the competition venue.

The crowd hurriedly looked over and realized that the noise came from the cauldron in front of a young man.

“Is he... producing a pill?” asked Elder Cheng Lixue in surprise.

This young man was from Nan Feng Academy like him, so he was naturally happy to see him produce a pill.

Elder Feng Yi stared at the young man for a while and did not say anything.

However, Elder Mo Cang poured cold water on Elder Cheng Lixue. “He’s producing a pill already? Isn’t he too anxious? If anything happens...”

Cheng Lixue knitted his brows in frustration. “Mo Cang, I have never said anything bad about your Tai Yan Academy’s students.”

Mo Cang shrugged his shoulders. “Can’t you tell? The fire in his cauldron can’t be sustained for much longer.”

Cheng Lixue was shocked. When he looked over, he indeed discovered that this was the case.

The young man’s face quickly turned pale, and his body slightly trembled as if he had reached his limits.

The smile on his face gradually turned cold.

As expected, the fire in the cauldron completely extinguished after a short while. Even the herbs that were merging into a pill became ashes!

Chapter 264: I’ll Compensate You for It!

Only five people chose the ‘advanced’ formula.

Now that the first one who tried to produce the pill had failed directly, they were instantly left with four people.

The main point was that he had previously used too much energy. Hence, he didn’t have enough remaining strength to try again, even though he had a second set of ingredients beside him.

Thus, he had completely lost his chance of obtaining a rank! He would be like the people who were eliminated due to failure; he would not have an eventual ranking.

This kind of result was cruel but also inevitable. From the moment he chose the 'advanced' formula, he should've been prepared for this.

Cheng Lixue's face immediately darkened.

Out of the five people in the arena, Nan Feng Academy had two, Tai Yan Academy had two, and Tian Lu Academy only had one person.

They originally had an advantage, but they only had one person left after this—just like Tian Lu Academy.

The most important point was that they didn't know if the last one could make it!

Mo Cang's eyes were filled with unconcealable delight. "You see! What did I say just now? The worst thing you can have when refining medicine is an anxious mindset. If you're not stable enough, you'll never succeed! Of course, the most important thing is also your talent and capabilities!"

"Enough! You can say this when your academy's students produce pills!" Cheng Lixue interrupted Mo Cang in frustration.

Mo Cang grunted and did not argue with him. *We'll see who's the embarrassed one when the results come out later!*

Elder Feng Yi did not talk much to the two of them and only looked at the competing students with a smile.

Anyway, Tian Lu Academy had taken two out of three first places in this year's Qing Jiao Competition. Hence, it did not matter much if they didn't take first place in the heavenly doctor competition.

Chu Liuyue's outstanding performance in the previous few days had reduced quite a bit of his stress.

That young man did not continue trying and left the arena defeatedly.

Situ Xingchen briefly glanced at him from the corner of her eyes and retracted her gaze. *Now, there are only three people left against me.*

...

"Brother Zhongyan, more than half of the competition is over, and it will end in a while. It looks like Elder Ye isn't coming?" asked Cheng Han on purpose.

Sun Zhongyan knitted his brows. *On the first day, I already told Cheng Han that Elder Ye was in seclusion. Why is he still asking?*

"Uncle-Master has always been carefree and is only interested in refining medicine after so many years. I believe everyone knows this, right?"

Cheng Han laughed out loud. "Brother Zhongyan, don't misunderstand. I just feel that it's a pity."

Sun Zhongyan instinctively felt that Cheng Han would not say anything nice, so Sun Zhongyan did not reply to him.

However, Cheng Han was very confident today, and he was determined to show himself off. Naturally, he would not stop at that.

"On one hand, I've always respected Elder Ye, but it's a pity that I've only seen him a few times after so many years. On the other hand, Elder Ye is very strong, and he's outstanding in terms of medicine refining. However, he has nobody to continue his legacy, even until now... Isn't this very much a pity?"

Cheng Han squinted his eyes as if he were recalling something. "Ten years ago, I had an agreement with Elder Ye to let our disciples battle in the future, but now..."

Sun Zhongyan sneered. *Agreement? That was just a joke!*

Ten years ago, Cheng Han had broken through and became a stage-five heavenly doctor. Cheng Han thought that he was strong enough, so he specifically came over to Tian Lu Academy and challenged Elder Ye.

At that time, Elder Ye had already been famous for quite some time. Let alone in Country Yao Chen, nobody in the neighboring countries was his match.

Cheng Han came over, brimming with confidence, but he lost badly and returned defeatedly.

The so-called 'agreement' to have their disciples battle was just said to ease Cheng Han out of the situation back then. How dare he have the cheek to mention it?

Cheng Han was very delighted.

Ye Zhiting was indeed very formidable as a heavenly doctor. Even now, Cheng Han knew that there was a high chance he was not Ye Zhiting's match.

However, Ye Zhiting had never taken a disciple!

As long as Xingchen takes first place at the Qing Jiao Competition in Country Yao Chen's Imperial City, trampling on all those other people under her feet, it will help avenge me from a certain angle.

"Who said Uncle-Master doesn't have a disciple?" interrupted Sun Zhongyan as he smiled nonchalantly.

Cheng Han was stunned. "Oh? Elder Ye has a disciple? Why didn't I hear of this earlier? Is it someone in the competition?"

As he spoke, he rapidly scanned the competition venue. Cheng Han remembered that the only person from Tian Lu Academy who chose the 'advanced' formula was another heavenly doctor's disciple...

As for the others, their standards were even lower, and Cheng Han could not find an extraordinary one up till now.

Since when was Ye Zhiting's taste so bad?

Sun Zhongyan was nonchalant. "Uncle-Master's disciple didn't compete today."

Cheng Han found it weirder and laughed strangely. "Why is that so? Could it be that Elder Ye's disciple doesn't care about the Qing Jiao Competition? Or... do they not even have the right to compete?"

One had to, at least, be a stage-two heavenly doctor to sign up for the heavenly doctor competition.

Sun Zhongyan was so angry that he laughed. *Does this Cheng Han really think that he's formidable just because he has Situ Xingchen as his disciple? I wonder what his reaction would be if he knew that Uncle-Master's disciple is Chu Liuyue, who had taken first place in the earlier competitions!*

"You don't have to worry about this, Brother Cheng Han."

Cheng Han laughed but felt even more delighted. *If they really are talented, why won't they compete? I think that they most likely aren't worthy enough!*

...

Listening to the debate and the hidden enmity between the two of them, Chu Liuyue could not help but curve her lips. *Cheng Han is too over-confident. Situ Xingchen is talented as a heavenly doctor, but her talent is limited. Even if she is considered amazing here, she's nothing at the Tianling Dynasty.*

At this point, Situ Xingchen also attempted to produce the pill.

Weng! Weng!

The sound of her producing the pill was clearly much louder than that of the young man before.

Chu Liuyue looked up.

The fire within the cauldron in front of Situ Xingchen gradually formed the outline of a pill.

The crowd was excited.

Situ Xingchen stared at it closely, and her heart was in her throat. *I must be stable... I must make it through this last stage!*

The process of producing a pill used up a lot of energy, and her face turned pale within a short amount of time.

The fire in the cauldron seemed to be unstable, but it still burned on shakily.

Suddenly—

Chu Liuyue's gaze focused!

A familiar and dangerous aura suddenly came to her.

The next moment, she abruptly stood up and rushed to the competition venue.

She was very fast and reached the edge in the blink of an eye.

"Liuyue, what are you doing?"

Everyone was shocked when they saw that Chu Liuyue suddenly appeared, but they did not even have the time to stop her.

Chu Liuyue flung her wrist out, and a dagger flew out.

Deng!

The dagger deeply pierced the cauldron in front of a young man. The intense impact caused the cauldron to flip over.

Situ Xingchen was not far away from the young man. When she saw Chu Liuyue rushing over, Situ Xingchen's heart skipped a beat, and she lost control of the fire in the cauldron.

Hong!

Situ Xingchen lost control, and the fire in the square cauldron started burning wildly. The pill that had already formed its outline suddenly broke into pieces.

Situ Xingchen was stunned for a moment, and she finally could not hold herself back. “Chu Liuyue, what are you doing?!”

Chu Liuyue ignored her and rushed toward the young man. *Just now he was holding—*

“Chu Liuyue!” Situ Xingchen suddenly exploded and quickly stopped Chu Liuyue. She hollered, “We’re in the middle of a competition, and I was producing a pill. Yet, you suddenly charged over and ruined my pill! What are you trying to do?”

Chu Liuyue looked at her coldly. “You better not stop me. As for your ruined pill, I’ll just compensate you.”

Chapter 265: Explanation!

Chu Liuyue then hurriedly walked past Situ Xingchen and rushed to the young man. “Hand over that thing!”

The young man was frightened by Chu Liuyue’s actions and moved backward. “What do you want? I don’t know what you’re talking about!”

He pointed at the flipped over cauldron beside him and yelled, “You ruined my pill!”

This young man—Yang Jianqing—was the other student from Tai Yan Academy who chose to produce a pill.

Not long after Situ Xingchen started forming her pill, he had also reached the same step.

When Chu Liuyue's dagger flew over, the pill's outline could already vaguely be seen in the cauldron.

Now that it was suddenly ruined, Yang Jianqing furiously glared at Chu Liuyue after he recovered his senses.

Chu Liuyue squinted her eyes. "You know very clearly what I want. Do you want to give it to me yourself, or must I take action?"

Yang Jianqing's heart could not help but tremble due to the petrifying suppression emanating from Chu Liuyue's body.

Chu Liuyue looked like she was a young girl in her teens, but she faintly had an aura that did not allow anyone to disobey her.

Yang Jianqing could not help but feel guilty as the black, gem-like eyes kept staring at him. He looked away, and his voice became softer as he said, "I-I don't understand what you're saying! Chu Liuyue, we were competing just fine, yet you rushed over at this time! I want to ask you: what are you doing?!"

Chu Liuyue's gaze turned cold, and she was about to go forward.

At this point, the spectators finally recovered their senses.

Cheng Han was the first to harshly shout, "Chu Liuyue! How dare you? What kind of place do you think this is? How can you do whatever you want?"

Chu Liuyue sneered and turned around. "Director Cheng Han, if it isn't because your students did something wrong, I won't suddenly come to the arena."

"What are you talking about?" Cheng Han knitted his brows, and his blood boiled. "Are you hinting that Yang Jianqing has a problem?"

Chu Liuyue shrugged. "No, I'm explicitly saying it."

Cheng Han was stumped, and he was so angry that his entire body shook. *Who exactly is Chu Liuyue? How dare she openly question our Tai Yan Academy? Not only did she ruin our students' pills, but she even defamed us in this manner!*

He knew he could not argue against Chu Liuyue. Besides, given his current status, it was inappropriate if he debated with Chu Liuyue in public.

He swiftly looked at Sun Zhongyan and boomed, "Sun Zhongyan! Is this the kind of student your academy brings out? She is too gutsy and does whatever she wants! Can she really disregard everyone else just because she took first place in two competitions?"

Sun Zhongyan was also shocked by Chu Liuyue's actions. However, he always had a good impression of Chu Liuyue, so he still felt that there was a reason behind her actions, even if she acted too impulsively.

“Liuyue has always been sensible. There must be a reason behind her actions. It won’t be too late for you to find fault with her when she gives us a clear explanation. Right, Brother Cheng Han?”

Cheng Han clenched his teeth. *Sun Zhongyan is really protective of this Chu Liuyue!*

“Sun Zhongyan, Chu Liuyue ruined the last competition of this year’s Qing Jiao Competition. How can you still act as if nothing happened when she has caused so much trouble?”

Sun Zhongyan glanced at the competition venue, coughed, and reminded him, “Brother Cheng Han, can’t the competition continue? Liuyue only went up and flipped over Yang Jianqing’s cauldron to stop him from producing the pill. The others aren’t affected at all—Oh, right, there’s still Situ Xingchen.”

Cheng Han was stunned. He realized that this was indeed the case after he turned around to take a closer look.

Other than Yang Jianqing and Situ Xingchen, the others really weren’t affected!

On the one hand, the competition venue was huge, and each student occupied a big area to refine their medicine conveniently. Hence, there was a lot of space between each student.

On the other hand, Yang Jianqing and Situ Xingchen were both Tai Yan Academy’s students, and they were neighbors. So even though Situ Xingchen was largely affected by the commotion, the others—who were further away—were spared of this trouble.

Cheng Han's lips moved, and he felt embarrassed and furious. "Therefore, this further proves that Chu Liuyue did it on purpose! If not, why didn't she interrupt the many other people in the competition except for my academy's students? She even targeted the two that were producing pills!"

Sun Zhongyan laughed. "Brother Cheng Han, Liuyue obviously went for Yang Jianqing. Everyone could see this, and Liuyue herself has admitted to it. As for Situ Xingchen... Honestly speaking, isn't it more of her own fault that her pill was ruined?"

"Nan Feng Academy's Qi Yunfeng was also producing a pill, and he's beside Yang Jianqing. The distance between the two of them is the same as the distance between Yang Jianqing and Situ Xingchen. Isn't Qi Yunfeng doing just fine?"

Fu Yunshan stroked his beard in a smug manner. "Yunfeng has always been stable."

Fu Yunshan was still quite worried when he saw Situ Xingchen and Yang Jianqing producing pills consecutively. However, he did not expect Chu Liuyue to come out of nowhere and affect the two people!

Now that the two academies were at each other's throat, he naturally just stood at the side and watched the commotion, even adding oil to the fire.

"Just now, I did see that the fire in Situ Xingchen's cauldron wasn't very stable. It seems like her situation was similar to my academy's student before. Lixue, what do you think?"

Cheng Lixue was just feeling pity that his academy had lost a student that could fight for a good ranking. When he heard Fu Yunshan, he immediately understood what happened. "That's right. The pill-producing process uses up a lot of energy. If one doesn't have the capabilities to sustain it, the fire in the cauldron will extinguish at any time, causing the student to fail. From what I think... Situ Xingchen's pill... perhaps might not have..."

“Cheng Lixue! Don’t talk nonsense! Xingchen was clearly about to produce her pill earlier! If it weren’t for Chu Liuyue interrupting her, why would Xingchen fail?” retorted Cheng Han immediately, and his face turned green. *He’s clearly doubting Situ Xingchen’s abilities!*

Cheng Lixue chuckled. “Director Cheng Han, I’m not spouting nonsense. As a heavenly doctor, won’t you know this very clearly? She was about to produce her pill, but she hasn’t done it yet. Nobody will know the results until the last minute.”

It’ll be great if we can take this opportunity to kick out Situ Xingchen and Yang Jianqing!

Cheng Han knew what Nan Feng Academy intended to do, and he did not want to argue with them any longer. Instead, he looked at Sun Zhongyan. “No matter what, Chu Liuyue must give an explanation for this. If not, it’s fine if we don’t participate in this Qing Jiao Competition!”

With this sentence, the crowd was silenced. They did not expect Cheng Han to threaten them in such a manner.

Upon thinking about it more, it was understandable.

Tai Yan Academy did not take first place for the warrior competition or the Xuan Master competition, so the heavenly doctor competition was their only hope.

If Yang Jianqing and Situ Xingchen really didn’t get a good ranking because of this, they would’ve utterly lost.

Sun Zhongyan looked at Chu Liuyue hesitantly.

Chu Liuyue gave him an assuring gaze. "Director Cheng Han, please listen carefully since you want an explanation."

Chu Liuyue raised her hand and pointed at Yang Jianqing. Her gaze was cold and sharp, and her every word struck one's ears like thunder. "He has Red Blood Gu with him!"

Chapter 266: Her Identity!

The entire square fell into dead silence once she said this.

Most people did not even know what Red Blood Gu was, so they were all dazed. But all those that had an understanding of Red Blood Gu were frightened and too shocked to say anything.

Yang Jianqing's eyes widened! *I was clearly very discreet about it. How can Chu Liuyue tell?*

Cheng Han was also shocked when he heard it and immediately said, "Impossible!"

Red Blood Gu is a very sinister item! How can Yang Jianqing possibly have it?

Chu Liuyue's lips curved up coldly. "You will know if it's possible or not when you see it yourself, right?"

Chu Liuyue then looked at Yang Jianqing again. "Are you still going to deny it?"

Yang Jianqing was determined and planned to deny it to the end. "I don't have it! I don't have that sort of thing with me! Why would I need to admit it? Don't defame me!"

Chu Liuyue almost burst out laughing. "Do you think I'd take action if I'm not absolutely confident?"

Yang Jianqing was stumped.

Chu Liuyue picked up her dagger and played with it in her hands. "If you're smart, you better hand the thing over right now and clearly explain it to me instead of affecting the competition here. If not..."

She paused and looked up slightly.

A chill was sent down Yang Jianqing's spine.

Even though Chu Liuyue did not continue speaking, her gaze was enough.

Yang Jianqing didn't know what he had to face later on, but he very clearly knew that Chu Liuyue's methods weren't something he could handle.

He forcefully suppressed the panic in his heart and said, "I'll go down and let you check!" Yang Jianqing then walked off the arena.

Chu Liuyue raised her brows and followed him.

When the two of them walked down the arena, the judges were already there and stood beside them alertly.

The competition in the arena continued, but many people's gazes turned toward them.

The atmosphere was stiff.

Emperor Jiawen slightly knitted his brows. "Elder Sun, what's Red Blood Gu?"

This question was something that the crowd wanted to ask.

Sun Zhongyan patiently explained, "...So, even though this poison is very hard to find, it's merciless. Once someone makes contact with it, the person will definitely die!"

Emperor Jiawen's face became increasingly stern.

Chu Liuyue laughed lightly and continued, "Your Majesty, there's something else that Elder Sun forgot to say. If Red Blood Gu is placed into the fire within the cauldron, its toxicity will increase by several-fold, and it'll spread through the air. Once one breathes it in, it can even be life-threatening, even if the inhaled amount is very small."

This stunned Emperor Jiawen, and the crowd's faces changed.

"Is this true?"

Chu Liuyue nodded. "If you don't believe me, you can ask the other heavenly doctors present."

Emperor Jiawen looked at Cheng Lixue and the rest and indeed saw that their faces drastically changed after they heard the words 'Red Blood Gu.' Even if he did not ask them, he knew that Chu Liuyue was not lying.

"So you're saying that Yang Jianqing... planned to do this just now?" Emperor Jiawen anxiously questioned as he leaned forward.

Chu Liuyue glanced at Yang Jianqing. Seeing his anxious appearance, she moved her lips. "That's right."

The crowd went crazy.

If Yang Jianqing really did this, everyone present would be affected!

Just thinking about it caused fear to spread!

Seeing that the matter was developing in an uncontrollable direction, Cheng Han was very anxious. He went forward and angrily yelled, "Chu Liuyue! Don't spout nonsense! If Yang Jianqing really tried to do this, why are you the only one who noticed it? Are your abilities stronger than the other heavenly doctors present?"

This sentence made sense, and quite a few people looked at Chu Liuyue suspiciously.

Chu Liuyue retorted, “Director Cheng Han, may I know if you’ve seen Red Blood Gu before?”

Cheng Han was dazed and flung his sleeves. “Of course, I haven’t seen such despicable items!”

Chu Liuyue smiled. “I’ve seen it before.”

Chu Xianmin—who was in the crowd—clutched her sleeves tightly, and her entire body became tense. Ever since she heard Chu Liuyue say ‘Red Blood Gu,’ she felt very uneasy. She was afraid that Chu Liuyue would drag her into the mess.

Upon hearing this, Chu Xianmin was so nervous that she couldn’t even breathe. *If Chu Liuyue really exposes me, I’m... finished!*

“To be honest, someone in our academy is poisoned with Red Blood Gu.”

Chu Xianmin looked down, and her joints turned white.

“His name is Liao Zhongshu. A while back, he was poisoned with this for some reason, and he was on the brink of death. The academy’s teachers can prove this.”

Zuo Rong boomed, “That’s right. Liao Zhongshu is indeed poisoned with Red Blood Gum, and he can’t get out of bed even till this day.”

It was as if Cheng Han heard a joke. “Oh? Didn’t you say that someone poisoned with Red Blood Gu would die without a doubt and that they can’t even last for more than a few days? How can someone

from your academy survive until now after being poisoned with Red Blood Gu? Did you see wrongly, or... are you in cahoots to trick people?"

Zuo Rong and the other teachers' faces darkened.

"Director Cheng Han! Are you doubting us? If you don't believe us, you can visit our academy and see if Liao Zhongshu is poisoned with Red Blood Gu. As a heavenly doctor, you should be able to tell this, right?"

Cheng Han was speechless.

"We need to thank Chu Liuyue for helping Liao Zhongshu survive till now. If she didn't produce the medical formula to stop Liao Zhongshu's poison temporarily, he wouldn't have made it."

To Zuo Rong, Chu Liuyue being able to produce the shocking formula already proved many things. Thus, he was very confident in Chu Liuyue's words.

"Haha! What a joke!" Cheng Han was originally still nervous, but he could not help but laugh when he heard this. "Red Blood Gu is very poisonous. There are barely a few heavenly doctors present who have seen Red Blood Gu, let alone have the formula for the antidote."

"Who is Chu Liuyue? How can you make her sound so amazing? I admit that she is talented as a Xuan Master and a warrior, but don't you think it's ridiculous if you say that she can suppress the Red Blood Gu's poison? She—"

Sun Zhongyan also laughed and calmly interrupted Cheng Han. "She's Uncle-Master's disciple."

Chapter 267: Search Body?

Dead silence.

Not only Cheng Han, but the entire crowd was stunned.

Elder Ye only had one Uncle-Master—Tian Lu Academy's current director, a fifth-grade heavenly doctor—Ye Zhiting!

“W-what did you say?” Cheng Han's tongue seemed as though it was twisted, and he spoke hesitantly and in disbelief.

Sun Zhongyan smiled nonchalantly. “I said that Uncle-Master only has one disciple in his entire life, and it's Liuyue! However, Uncle-Master has always been low-key, so not many people know about this. But Uncle-Master has already personally left Liuyue's name on the academy's registry, so this is an indisputable fact.”

Cheng Han couldn't speak for quite a while. *If Sun Zhongyan dared to announce this in public, it must be true!*

Even Tian Lu Academy's students were filled with shock.

“Did I hear wrongly? Chu Liuyue is actually the director's disciple?”

“Elder Sun said it himself, so how can this be false? I was still wondering why I couldn't find out who Chu Liuyue's mentor was. It turned out to be...”

“Oh my god... Didn’t Director say that it was very troublesome to have a disciple? Why did he suddenly become Chu Liuyue’s mentor?”

“The director rarely ever appears, so very few people know about this. I just want to know if Chu Liuyue’s talent as a heavenly doctor is also so...” The person didn’t finish his sentence, but everyone knew what he was about to say. They also saw the same gaze in each other’s eyes.

Even Mu Hongyu and the rest were dazed for quite a while, and they had strange expressions.

“Cen Hu, did you know about this?”

“I didn’t know. Hongyu, y-you don’t know too?”

“... I think everyone doesn’t know.”

Gu Mingfeng recalled what happened in Wan Ling Mountain and laughed at himself. “We’re really slow. She said she had a vague understanding of heavenly doctors, and we all believed her.”

They didn’t think anything was wrong back then, but it felt amiss now that they recalled it.

Chu Liuyue was too well-versed in this area. How can that be a ‘vague understanding?’

Mu Hongyu's eyes gradually lit up. "I have a feeling that the leg we're hugging is even thicker than we thought!"

...

Fu Yunshan could not help but ask, "D-doesn't Chu Liuyue specialize as a Xuan Master?"

Sun Zhongyan nodded. "Of course. When she entered the academy, she mainly focused on Xuan Master cultivation, but this doesn't clash with her being Uncle-Master's disciple. After all, she took first place in the warrior competition, right?"

Fu Yunshan opened his mouth, but he felt that Sun Zhongyan made sense. *B-but... why does it seem like there's something wrong? How can there be such a person—who has a heavenly doctor as her mentor and specializes in Xuan Master cultivation—still beat the other warriors? This is ridiculous!*

The other people's reactions were similar to Fu Yunshan's.

It wasn't that they had not seen talented people before. In actual fact, everyone that could enter these three academies all had enviable talent. However, they instantly lost their glamour when compared to Chu Liuyue.

Emperor Jiawen could not help but ask, "Elder Sun, when did Elder Ye take Chu Liuyue as his disciple? Why didn't I hear about this at all?"

Even though Tian Lu Academy was independent of the royal family, and even Emperor Jiawen had to respect the academy, the matter of Elder Ye taking in a disciple was very important. Thus, Emperor Jiawen felt uncomfortable when he only found out about this at this moment.

The most important thing was that his disciple was Chu Liuyue—who was once known as a good-for-nothing!

Sun Zhongyan looked down and explained, “Your Majesty, Chu Liuyue already knew Uncle-Master before she entered Tian Lu Academy, and they had become mentor-disciple then.”

The crowd was even more shocked.

Did Chu Liuyue recover her Yuan meridian and become a genius because of Elder Ye? If it is so, everything can be explained!

But Emperor Jiawen didn’t ask any further as he looked at Chu Liuyue with a complicated gaze. After some time, he said, “Liuyue, you’re really... very outstanding now...”

Who would’ve expected Chu Liuyue to become like this at the start? She’s a genius, and she’s not an ordinary one!

The Chu Xianmin back then was probably not even half as capable as the current Chu Liuyue!

Emperor Jiawen couldn’t help but recall Rong Jin’s gaze when Rong Jin talked about Chu Liuyue.

Of course, he could guess what Rong Jin was thinking.

Rong Jin's decision to dissolve his marriage agreement with Chu Liuyue would probably be one that he regretted the most! However, this incident was already over, and it wasn't suitable to bring it up again.

Chu Liuyue bent her knees and bowed. "Thank you for the praise, Your Majesty."

Emperor Jiawen shook his head and smiled. "No, you deserve it."

The Empress watched on in frustration; from the start till now, she never liked Chu Liuyue. In the past, it was because Chu Liuyue was useless and wasn't worthy of Rong Jin.

Even though Chu Liuyue has become a genius now, her personality... Looking at how Chu Liuyue treats the Chu family, everyone knows that she is very harsh! If I really let Rong Jin re-marry Chu Liuyue, he won't have good days ahead!

I must stop him!

...

Cheng Han took a lot of effort to accept this, but he still felt very uncomfortable. He felt like something was stuck in his heart, which made him feel aggrieved and angry. "B-but why did Chu Liuyue not participate in the heavenly doctor competition?"

Chu Liuyue lazily said, "Because I don't want to."

The crowd was speechless.

All these years, many students looked forward to the Qing Jiao Competition, and even more so to the heavenly doctor competition.

However, this did not equate to much to Chu Liuyue.

Cheng Han sneered and said, "You don't want to? Could it be because you don't have the right to?"

Once Cheng Han said this, he noticed that the crowd was giving him strange gazes, and he instantly regretted it.

What kind of person was Ye Zhiting? He was one of the most outstanding heavenly doctors in the past few decades!

Someone that he liked definitely wouldn't be ordinary!

Cheng Han was actually openly doubting Chu Liuyue... That was akin to doubting Ye Zhiting!

The point was that Cheng Han wasn't even Ye Zhiting's match, so his words were even more laughable.

Chu Liuyue waved her hand without a care. "I'll give my own answer to this later, but it's better if we solve Yang Jianqing's problem first. Now, nobody will doubt what I said earlier, right?"

Cheng Han decisively went all in. “Okay! If you can produce the evidence, you can do whatever you like!”

“Thank you, Director Cheng Han. I hope you’ll remember your words later.” Chu Liuyue followed his words and finally looked toward Yang Jianqing—who was drenched in cold sweat.

Yang Jianqing suddenly opened his arms, clenched his teeth, and said, “You can check me however you like! I said I don’t have it!”

Chu Liuyue’s gaze swept past his hands—sparkling clean.

As if Yang Jianqing was afraid that Chu Liuyue wouldn’t believe him and as if he wanted to prove his innocence, Yang Jianqing actually took off his clothes and loudly proclaimed, “I don’t have anywhere else that I can hide the item! Is this clear enough for you?”

As he was too anxious, he tore his clothes in a hurry. In addition to his blushing face and messy hair, he looked even more disdainful.

Chu Liuyue paused, and her lips slowly curved up. “Did I say that I wanted to search your body?”

Chapter 268: Interrogation

Yang Jianqing was immediately stunned. “Y-you tricked me?!”

His face contorted, and he looked like he was about to go all out against Chu Liuyue. *I’m thoroughly humiliated by ending up in this state in front of so many people, yet Chu Liuyue nonchalantly said that?*

“I just asked you to hand over the Red Blood Gu. I didn’t say that I wanted to search your body, nor did I get you to strip.”

“You!” Yang Jianqing was so angry that he almost spat out blood.

With much difficulty, he found his last bit of rationality and screamed, “No matter what, I’ve already proved to everyone that I don’t have Red Blood Gu! I definitely won’t let the matter of you defaming me slide!”

In a seemingly smiling manner, Chu Liuyue said, “Just because you don’t have it on your body, does it prove that you didn’t bring it?”

Yang Jianqing was dazed. “What do you mean?”

Chu Liuyue raised her finger and pointed at the cauldron that was flipped over on the competition venue. “We’ll know very soon if you’re related to Red Blood Gu.”

She then went straight for the cauldron.

Yang Jianqing’s heart sank. “No!”

Without thinking, he ran to Chu Liuyue and stopped her.

Chu Liuyue raised her brows. “Why can’t I do it? I just wanted to check the cauldron. If you didn’t do anything, why are you so nervous?”

Chu Liuyue pointed out what Yang Jianqing was worried about, and he instantly became more anxious. He wanted to stop Chu Liuyue again, but the surrounding people were looking at him with suspicious gazes.

Yang Jianqing then noticed that doing so would make him look even weirder.

His legs trembled; he didn’t dare to move backward, nor move forward, as he muttered, “No... No...”

Seeing his reaction, the crowd also realized that something was amiss.

Cheng Han felt very uneasy. *This scene looks too familiar! When Chu Liuyue exposed Heng Jingchuo back then, it was also like this!*

Chu Liuyue glanced at Yang Jianqing in a mocking manner. *He wants to stop me by relying on himself?*

Her legs moved, and her figure shook as she quietly walked around Yang Jianqing. She very quickly went toward the competition venue.

In the blink of an eye, she was already beside the cauldron.

Then, she bent down with a dagger in her hands and lightly scraped the side of the cauldron.

A ball of bright, red powder appeared on her shiny dagger.

Under the sunlight, the powder glowed in an eerie manner.

Yang Jianqing's face turned as white as a sheet. *My actions were exceedingly discreet previously, and even the numerous heavenly doctors present didn't discover it. How did Chu Liuyue find out about this?*

"This is Red Blood Gu." Chu Liuyue carefully inspected the bright, red powder on the dagger. "If I'm not wrong, you conveniently added this in when you were putting red root in to refine it, right? When red root burns in the cauldron, it will quickly become red powder, and it's hard to differentiate it from Red Blood Gu when they're mixed together. Besides, under high temperatures, the powder will automatically scatter on the insides of the cauldron. Therefore, one won't be able to see it from the outside."

"If it burns for a sufficient amount of time—for example, when you have finished producing a pill... This period of time is enough to burn Red Blood Gu completely and allow it to diffuse into the air."

Chu Liuyue spoke very calmly, seeming as if she was saying something unimportant. However, her words caused turmoil in everyone's hearts.

"Yang Jianqing, is Liuyue speaking the truth?!" questioned Sun Zhongyan sternly.

If this was true, it meant that Yang Jianqing was prepared to kill everyone present! The severity of the situation far surpassed what happened with Heng Jingchuo previously.

Yang Jianqing's lips trembled, and he spat out a sentence with much difficulty. "T-that isn't Red Blood Gu..."

"It isn't? Then, why don't you give it a try yourself?" suggested Chu Liuyue.

Yang Jianqing immediately moved backward. "No!"

"Hm? Didn't you say that this wasn't Red Blood Gu? Why are you so afraid? It's just nice that many people present haven't seen this thing before, so why don't you expand everyone's horizons?"

As Chu Liuyue spoke, her eyes became sharp as she flung the dagger out.

Choo!

The dagger drew a straight line across the air and directly flew toward Yang Jianqing.

Yang Jianqing immediately wanted to dodge, but how could he be Chu Liuyue's match?

Before he could run far, the dagger already pierced his shin directly.

"Ahh!" Yang Jianqing moaned in pain, staggered backward, and collapsed on the floor.

Blood was flowing out of his shin.

“Chu Liuyue, how dare you?!” Cheng Han was about to take action, but he was calmly stopped by Sun Zhongyan.

“Brother Cheng Han, didn’t Yang Jianqing already say that it’s not Red Blood Gu? Why are you so worried? Don’t worry, Liuyue knows what to do. The wound on his shin won’t threaten his life. Our academy will provide the herbs to treat his wound. If it’s really not Red Blood Gu, I’ll personally apologize.”

Cheng Han had no other way to refute since Sun Zhongyan had already said all of this.

“Quickly take a look at his leg!” Someone cried out.

Cheng Han looked over, and he was frightened.

Yang Jianqing’s shin quickly swelled up, and the blood that flowed out of the wound became a strange black color gradually.

Cheng Han quickly became dispirited. *If there was nothing wrong with that thing and it was purely a dagger that cut through his shin, this situation wouldn’t have happened!*

Sun Zhongyan sneered. “Brother Cheng Han, as a heavenly doctor, you should know clearer than me if this is Red Blood Gu, right?”

Cheng Han couldn’t say anything, and he felt like his skin was harshly pulled down and trampled on.

Yang Jianqing's entire body shook crazily, and he was petrified.

Chu Liuyue's dagger was stained with too much Red Blood Gu! All that Red Blood Gu is currently infiltrating my body! It is also quickly spreading from the wound to the rest of my body!

Hugging his leg, Yang Jianqing finally couldn't pretend any longer as he fearfully begged, "No! I don't want to die! Director! Elders! Please save me! I don't want to die!"

At this point, who wouldn't understand what happened?

Yang Jianqing ran to Tai Yan Academy's side with tears and mucus running all over his face. His entire body was stained with blood, and he looked horrible.

"Stop him!" screamed Cheng Han shrilly.

The judges immediately took action. They lashed out a rope, and it trapped Yang Jianqing.

Chu Liuyue walked toward Yang Jianqing.

"Liuyue, be careful!" reminded Sun Zhongyan.

Chu Liuyue didn't stop in her tracks. "Elder Sun, don't worry. There are just some things that I have to ask him."

As she spoke, she had already arrived in front of Yang Jianqing. She looked down at him from above and uttered every word clearly. “Who sent you here?”

Yang Jianqing groaned, but he didn’t dare to look at her. He also didn’t speak.

Chu Liuyue inched in closer, and her voice was so soft that nobody could hear her. “If you’re willing to say it, I can give you the antidote.”

Yang Jianqing was stunned.

“If not, how do you think Liao Zhongshu survived till now?” said Chu Liuyue lightly.

Struggle flashed across Yang Jianqing’s eyes.

Chu Liuyue’s interest was piqued. *Yang Jianqing clearly knows more than Chu Xianmin! If he’s willing to speak—*

Yang Jianqing opened his mouth as if he was planning to speak, but he suddenly spat out blood.

Chu Liuyue knew that something was amiss, and she immediately moved backward.

A horrifying force suddenly emanated from Yang Jianqing’s body.

Hong!

Chapter 269: Chu Liuyue's Compensation

A ball of fire suddenly appeared on Yang Jianqing's body.

Following this terrifying boom, his entire body also exploded.

The fire quickly swallowed the spurting meat and blood.

Chu Liuyue immediately flung out a crystal barrier to block the horrifying force outside of her body.

Things had happened too quickly, and when everyone finally recovered their senses, Yang Jianqing's corpse was already covered by the fire completely.

He didn't even leave behind a complete corpse!

"Damn it!" cursed Chu Liuyue under her breath.

She was already worried that this would happen earlier, so she specifically came forward to ask him. Yet—

The last bit of fire quickly vanished.

Other than a small burn mark on the floor, there was nothing else left there.

Quite a few people gasped.

In less than an hour, not only was Yang Jianqing exposed for using Red Blood Gu, his body had even exploded. He had died, without leaving his corpse behind!

This had completely proven his crime, and there was nobody left to defend him.

Chu Liuyue surveyed her surroundings.

The cold and hidden aura didn't appear again. However, she had a feeling that Yang Jianqing was related to that person!

No matter if it was Yang Jianqing bringing the Red Blood Gu today or his explosion at the end, they were all controlled by that person.

She had clearly seen that Yang Jianqing didn't want to die.

If she had a bit more time, she might've actually heard something useful from him. However, the other party was too strong and didn't leave behind any chances. The other party directly ended Yang Jianqing's life.

The square fell into an eerie silence for an extended period of time.

After a while, Sun Zhongyan said, "It's our negligence which caused so many accidents to happen during this Qing Jiao Competition. But Director Cheng Han, shouldn't you give us an explanation?"

"First, it was Heng Jingchuo; then, it was Yang Jianqing. What exactly is going on? If the Red Blood Gu wasn't discovered, everyone here would've been implicated! Can you bear this responsibility, Director Cheng Han?"

There were at least 10,000 people in the square, and many were strong people and geniuses from the three academies!

Country Yao Chen's royal family was also here!

If an accident had happened... the consequences were unthinkable!

"I-I..." Cheng Han was also panicking.

One Heng Jingchuo wasn't enough, so a Yang Jianqing came too!

Cheng Han really couldn't defend himself no matter what he tried. "I really don't know!"

Fu Yunshan laughed in a perfunctory manner. "You're the director. Do you think that this will end just because you said 'I don't know' after all that has happened?"

Cheng Han was stumped. *I think I have something against Country Yao Chen! Every time I come over, nothing good happens!*

Cheng Han took a deep breath and bowed toward Emperor Jiawen. “Your Majesty, please forgive me. I won’t absolve my responsibility for this issue. I’ll investigate this and Heng Jingchuo’s matter after the Qing Jiao Competition ends. If I find any problems, I definitely won’t let this slide.”

Emperor Jiawen also minded this matter a lot. But since Cheng Han had already said this, it wasn’t good for the Emperor to continue forcing him. Thus, he could only raise his hand. “I know your character, Director Cheng Han, and you definitely won’t let your students do such a thing. Now that the Qing Jiao Competition hasn’t ended, we should wait till everything finishes before we discuss how to investigate the issue together.”

Now that the person with the highest status had spoken, others naturally wouldn’t harp on the same issue.

Sun Zhongyan looked at Cheng Han with deep meaning. “Your Majesty is kind, but we can’t just let this matter slide. Director Cheng Han, we’re waiting for you to give us a satisfying answer.”

Fu Yunshan supported Sun Zhongyan and said, “That’s right! We have enough time and patience.”

The implications of this matter are too great! We can’t just sit around and ignore it. If we do, we won’t even know when we’ll die!

Cheng Han felt very wronged, but he could only agree.

...

“Since this matter has ended, then let’s talk about my issue.” Situ Xingchen—who had always been quiet at the side—finally spoke.

At this point, she looked at Chu Liuyue with a different gaze. *I didn’t expect Chu Liuyue to be Ye Zhiting’s disciple... Mentor has always felt regret after losing to Ye Zhiting, and he has mentioned this several times over the years.*

She obviously knew how powerful Ye Zhiting was, so this incident made her feel even more uncomfortable.

I really don’t understand. How did Chu Liuyue get chosen by Ye Zhiting?

Chu Liuyue met Situ Xingchen’s gaze, and she magnanimously said, “Okay! Even though I wasn’t targeting you when I took action and I can ensure that the force didn’t affect you at all, since your pill-producing process was interrupted, I’ll compensate for it.”

Situ Xingchen’s expression became strange. “Compensate? How are you going to compensate for the pill that I was about to finish producing?”

Chu Liuyue raised her chin. “Don’t you still have a set of herbs?”

Situ Xingchen’s face changed. “You want me to refine the medicine again?”

Not to mention that there wasn't enough time, but she didn't have that much strength left, even if there was time!

When she was producing the pill earlier, she had already felt her energy being exhausted. Thus, she definitely couldn't try again!

Chu Liuyue blinked. "No. I said I'll compensate you, so I naturally will do it."

"W-what?" Situ Xingchen did not understand what she meant.

Chu Liuyue explained, "I mean that I'll represent you and refine the medicine for the second time. After I produce the pill, it'll be considered as your result. What do you think of that?"

At this point, even the others outside of the competition venue had a strange expression, let alone Situ Xingchen.

Chu Liuyue's suggestion seems right, yet... it feels wrong?

Situ Xingchen was so angry that she laughed. "This is the compensation that you were talking about?"

Chu Liuyue nodded. "Yeah! Why, do you think that it isn't enough?"

Situ Xingchen was literally speechless. *How much confidence does Chu Liuyue have in herself that she thinks she can use this method to 'compensate' me? Since I was four, I started memorizing medical formulas. After many years of hard work and cultivation, I can only forcefully produce pills now.*

Chu Liuyue shouldn't have been Ye Zhiting's disciple for long, and she might not even be a stage-two physician! How can someone of this standard represent me and help me refine the medicine? What a joke!

Situ Xingchen suppressed her overflowing mockery and criticisms as she calmly said, "So you mean that, no matter what kind of medicine you produce, it'll be my result? Then, may I ask what your heavenly doctor cultivation level is?"

Chu Liuyue could hear Situ Xingchen's nonchalance and disregard for her as she smiled and said, "I can't really say my cultivation level, but you'll find out later. This is the only solution I have. If you don't agree to this, I don't have any other ways."

Situ Xingchen sneered in her heart. "Sure!"

I really want to see how Chu Liuyue will have the cheek to say that the trash she produces is my result!

Chapter 270: They Got It Easy!

Chu Liuyue walked to the competition venue and stood at Situ Xingchen's position.

Situ Xingchen failed to produce a pill, so only specks of black and gray were left in the cauldron.

Chu Liuyue took a look at the formula before cleaning the cauldron.

Situ Xingchen watched her coldly.

Numerous eyes from the square were focused on Chu Liuyue.

Curious, doubtful, excited.

“Isn’t Chu Liuyue too confident in herself? She really dared to go up there herself?!”

“She’s Elder Ye’s disciple! I’m sure she’s capable, right?”

“I thought someone said that, even though she passed all three assessments to get into Tian Lu Academy, she was the worst at the heavenly doctor assessment?”

“It’ll be too embarrassing if she can’t produce anything...”

Everyone partook in heated discussions.

Chu Liuyue pretended not to hear them as she placed her thin white hand over the cauldron.

A bright, red fire then appeared in the cauldron.

Chu Liuyue casually picked up a herb from the side. It was a fist-sized, orange fruit —sky cashew. When Chu Liuyue put it into the fire, the fire started to envelop it rapidly.

The sky cashew quickly decreased in size.

Situ Xingchen was standing nearer, so she saw everything more clearly.

Contempt popped up in Situ Xingchen's heart when she saw Chu Liuyue putting the sky cashew into the cauldron to refine it first.

Sky cashews were very soft and delicate, especially the mature ones—their appearance might even be destroyed by a light poke.

All the medicinal effectiveness in this item was within its juice, so one had to be extremely meticulous to extract the juice when they were refining this ingredient.

The most important point was that, once the sky cashew's juice had flown out and made contact with the air, its medicinal effectiveness would quickly dissipate.

Thus, heavenly doctors would usually refine sky cashews last. They could then use the sky cashew's medicinal effectiveness to the greatest extent.

Chu Liuyue went onto the competition venue and actually extracted the sky cashew first!

It seems like she's really ignorant.

I really wonder how Ye Zhiting taught his only disciple.

Chu Liuyue's actions had clearly attracted the other heavenly doctors' attention.

Elder Mo Cang couldn't help but laugh. "She's really Elder Ye's disciple. She's so innovative and actually placed the sky cashew in first. Even I won't have such courage!"

Elder Feng Yi looked calm and lightly said, "This is just the beginning. It's not too late to comment when the results come out."

"Haha! You're right; there's only one set of ingredients here, so the competition will naturally end if the sky cashew is ruined here!" Elder Mo Cang's words were brimming with sarcasm. *I was still thinking about how incredible Ye Zhiting's disciple would be. However, I didn't expect her not to know the basics!*

Elder Feng Yi glanced at him. "At the very least, Liuyue won't purposely put Red Blood Gu in the cauldron. Even if she fails, she will fail legitimately."

Elder Mo Cang was stumped. His face darkened, and he kept quiet.

Cheng Lixue did not even care about both of them as he nervously watched the scene.

Nan Feng Academy was only left with one person now —Leng Chuan—and he was currently producing his pill!

Only Situ Xingchen was left on Tai Yan Academy's side, and she was even represented by Chu Liuyue. Therefore, there wasn't much hope there.

Tian Lu Academy's Ji Zixing was the slowest amongst them. He only started his attempt to produce a pill at this point, so his capabilities were limited.

As long as Leng Chuan succeeded, he could basically take first place!

...

Zuo Rong and the rest were also watching nervously.

"Why did Liuyue put the sky cashew first?"

Even they didn't understand this.

If she fails because of this, then...

"Wait a minute! It's been quite a while, but why hasn't the sky cashew broken yet?" muttered Zuo Rong with furrowed brows.

According to the sky cashew's traits, it would automatically break open after it was placed in the fire. However, the sky cashew in Chu Liuyue's cauldron was still in good condition until now!

Even though its skin was rough, and it had become a small ball, it was still whole!

Suddenly, a thought popped up in Zuo Rong's mind. "I-is Liuyue planning to refine the sky cashew like this?"

The surrounding few heavenly doctor teachers looked at him weirdly since they clearly didn't understand what he meant.

Zuo Rong suppressed his inner excitement and said, "I mean that she seems to be planning to refine the juice inside the sky cashew before extracting it!"

A teacher at the side immediately retorted, "How is that possible? A mature sky cashew is very fragile, and it can't handle fire at all! If you can keep controlling the fire to a certain extent, then you can refine it without breaking it! However, this has a high demand for one's control, so it's—" *Impossible*.

At this point, the few of them suddenly kept silent because Chu Liuyue was truly doing this!

The perfect and unharmed sky cashew was the best evidence!

Zuo Rong couldn't help but look at Chu Liuyue. However, he saw that she looked very calm and had already started putting in the second ingredient.

The sky cashew was quietly floating in the fireball.

Chu Liuyue is indeed thinking of this! Zuo Rong swallowed a mouthful of saliva with much difficulty. Even I might not be able to do this since this demands too much of one's talent as a heavenly doctor!

Refining sky cashews was not something difficult, but one required sharp control and power to refine it so precisely!

Even though Zuo Rong's cultivation level was higher than Chu Liuyue, and he was more capable than her, he believed that he might not be able to do it as well as Chu Liuyue.

"This... is probably the heavenly doctor's spirit that Director had mentioned before..." muttered someone softly.

This kind of talent could only be a gift from heaven, and it couldn't even be begged for.

"I finally know why Director was willing to accept her as his disciple." Zuo Rong laughed bitterly. "This girl is even stronger than what I imagined..."

He thought that he had already thought of Chu Liuyue highly enough, but he didn't expect himself to still underestimate her.

No wonder she's so calm. Even though she just started cultivating as a heavenly doctor, her future achievements are destined to surpass all of us for certain!

"Situ Xingchen is pretty talented, but it's a pity when she's compared to Liuyue..."

“Haha, this is a good thing! That Cheng Han is always very proud, and he became even more so after he accepted Situ Xingchen as his disciple! Just think about it; he always looked super confident every time he talked about Situ Xingchen and the heavenly doctor competition these few days. Isn't it precisely because he felt that nobody could compare to Situ Xingchen's talent?”

“I wonder if Liuyue can produce pills... She hasn't started cultivating for long, right? Even though she's very talented, she can't do it if she doesn't have sufficient resources...”

Hearing the few of them talk, Zuo Rong could not help but smile delightfully. “Hehe, so what? If we can tell this, I don't believe Cheng Han won't know this too! They have it easy with Liuyue representing Situ Xingchen to refine the medicine.”