

Nobel Ruler 341

Chapter 341: Numb

Jian Fengchi was silent for a moment. “The poison in the Princess Consort’s body seems to be a combination of many types, and they were given to her at different times.”

Mu Hongyu gasped. “How is that possible?” All along, she thought that the poison in her mother’s body was caused by an accident many years ago. She did not expect—

“Mother, was what he said true?” Mu Hongyu hurriedly looked at the Princess Consort.

Bitterness flashed across the Princess Consort’s eyes as she smiled miserably. “That’s right...”

Jian Fengchi added, “If I’m not wrong, your body suddenly deteriorated within these two months, right?”

The Princess Consort nodded.

“That’s it then.” Jian Fengchi stood up. “The first few poisons in your body have been hidden inside for many years, and they have long infiltrated your organs. However, they aren’t strong poisons, so they didn’t stimulate any serious consequences. But recently, someone poisoned you with another type of poison. It activated all the poison in your body, causing everything to fail and result in the current situation.”

Mu Hongyu felt as if she had been struck by lightning as she looked at Jian Fengchi dazedly. “T-then... what should we do? Can we remove these poisons?”

Jian Fengchi knitted his brows as if he was in a difficult position. “This is hard. After all, the poisons were given at different times, and they’re of different types. If you want to remove all of them, not only will you have to be clear on what type of poisons they are, but you must also avoid causing new problems when removing the poisons. A small mistake could lead everything to fail and even...”

Jian Fengchi paused. Even if he didn’t say his remaining words, the crowd knew what he meant.

Mu Hongyu was in a trance. *Does the Tianling Dynasty heavenly doctor not have a way?*

Ji Chang sighed, and he looked very aggrieved. “Young Master Jian, I’m begging you—you must think of a way! The Princess Consort and the Prince are very loving, and they have depended on each other all these years. If the Princess Consort...”

“Of course,” interrupted Jian Fengchi suddenly as his lips curved up into a sinister smile.

Ji Chang was dazed as his sorrowful expression suddenly froze. “Y-you mean...”

“This poison is hard to deal with, but I didn’t say that I can’t do it.” Jian Fengchi smiled deeply.

The crowd then understood what Jian Fengchi meant.

Chu Liuyue cursed in her heart. *He’s still the same! If he didn’t say that, it would seem like he can’t show off how capable he is!*

However, Ji Chang had clearly sensed something wrong with Jian Fengchi...

“Everyone, don’t worry. I definitely can clear all of the Princess Consort’s poisons and help her fully recover.”

Chu Liuyue’s gaze quickly darted to Ji Chang’s face before she looked down. She had previously seen looks of shock and terror flashing across his eyes when Jian Fengchi said that he could treat the Princess Consort.

Shock isn’t hard to understand, but what’s that about terror? Being able to escort the Princess Consort all the way to the Imperial City means that Prince Ping Jiang trusts him very much. Besides, judging by what Mu Hongyu called him and Wu Shan, they seem very intimate. There is no reason for him to feel fear after knowing that the Princess Consort can fully recover.

Chu Liuyue recalled Ji Chang rejecting her repeatedly when she wanted to take the Princess Consort’s pulse as if in fear. *Perhaps... he might have a guilty conscience...*

“Young Master Jian, is that true? Can you really cure my mother?” But Mu Hongyu did not detect anything amiss as her mind was filled with Jian Fengchi’s sentence.

Jian Fengchi looked at the young woman that rushed to him with a pair of dazzling, almond-like eyes. His heart tingled, and he couldn’t help but smile with deeper meaning. “Of course. I always make good on my words.”

If I can’t even solve such a small problem, it’d really be a waste of all my years.

Mu Hongyu was beyond excited as she pounced to the bed and held the Princess Consort's hand. "Mother, did you hear? You can recover!"

The Princess Consort didn't have much energy left at this point, and she could only smile at Mu Hongyu with a pale face.

Chu Liuyue said, "Hongyu, it seems like the Princess Consort wants to rest. Let's go out and talk."

Mu Hongyu hurriedly nodded. "Okay! Then... Mother, you rest here first. I'll come to see you again in a bit!"

The Princess Consort forced herself to nod. "...I still need to thank Young Master Jian and... Lieutenant Mu..."

She said that sentence with much difficulty before she closed her eyes to rest.

Chu Liuyue and the rest walked outside.

The moment Mu Hongyu got up, she saw a square handkerchief left on the Princess Consort's wrist.

She picked up the handkerchief and rushed to Jian Fengchi, who was outside the door. "Young Master Jian, your handkerchief!"

Jian Fengchi paused in his tracks and turned around to look.

Chu Liuyue's lips twitched, and she almost told Mu Hongyu to directly throw that handkerchief away.

Jian Fengchi had a habit. He was a heavenly doctor and had to take people's pulses regularly, but after he saw someone every time, he would leave a handkerchief on the person's wrist and not touch it personally—just like what he did this time.

The handkerchief's material was very valuable, but he would still throw it away after using it once.

Chu Liuyue knew him from the start and knew his habits without knowing the reason behind them.

Other than this, he had many other small habits that he was very insistent on.

Even when she was the Heavenly Princess, she felt that this man was very problematic.

Unexpectedly, Jian Fengchi stared at Mu Hongyu for a while and didn't ask her to directly throw the handkerchief away. Instead, he smiled. "Oh, I really forgot about it!"

He then walked toward Mu Hongyu.

Chu Liuyue looked at him as if she had seen a ghost. *What is he up to again?*

As if noticing something, Jian Fengchi turned his head and looked at her.

Chu Liuyue immediately looked down and continued walking outside.

Jian Fengchi squinted his eyes. *For some reason, I feel that this Chu Liuyue... despises me quite a bit. Even though she has a polite smile, I still have that feeling. And that feeling has some unknown familiarity to it.*

He suppressed his thoughts as he reached out to take the handkerchief from Mu Hongyu's hands.

Both of their hands touched for a brief moment, but he seemed not to notice it as he bowed slightly and smiled flippantly. "Thank you, Ms. Mu."

Mu Hongyu smiled brightly. "You're welcome, Young Master Jian! If you need my help in the future, just let me know!"

Jian Fengchi looked at her and raised his brows slightly. *Mm... This Mu Hongyu seems a little too innocent...*

If he touched any regular woman, they would blush even if their hearts didn't skip a beat. However, it seemed like Mu Hongyu had no reaction at all.

He then vaguely realized that the brightness in Mu Hongyu's almond-like eyes was because her mother could fully recover and not because of him.

This made him feel conflicted. *Why are these two girls so weird?*

Chu Liuyue—who had walked outside the door—waved at Mu Hongyu. “Hongyu!”

Chapter 342: Refining Pill

Mu Hongyu acknowledged it and immediately walked toward Chu Liuyue; she didn’t even glance at Jian Fengchi.

Jian Fengchi was speechless. *What is with this feeling of being ignored by everyone?*

He looked down at the handkerchief and silently held it. He then turned around, and his expression returned to normal.

The few of them had walked out, leaving Ji Chang inside.

“Little Princess, the Princess Consort is weak. I’ll stay here to take care of her,” said Ji Chang to Mu Hongyu.

Mu Hongyu thought for a while and was about to agree, but Chu Liuyue suddenly squeezed her hand.

Mu Hongyu’s mind whirred, and she suddenly realized something as she changed her words. “Um... You must be tired from taking care of Mother all this while. You should get some rest first.”

Ji Chang was dazed. “Little Princess, you don’t have to worry. I’m very healthy, but the Princess Consort... The Prince trusted Wu Shan and me with everything, so we naturally can’t relax on the job. What if—”

“With Lieutenant Mu and Young Master Jian here, there’s no need to worry about our safety. Even if something happens to the Princess Consort, they can deal with it immediately. Senior Ji Chang, you don’t have to be overly worried.” Chu Liuyue chuckled.

“But...”

“Could it be that you don’t trust the two of them?” said Chu Liuyue in a seemingly joking manner, but her gaze was filled with a questioning look.

“...I don’t dare to.” Ji Chang lowered his voice. “T-then, I’ll rest first. If anything happens, I’ll rush over immediately. Little Princess, don’t be too worried.”

Mu Hongyu nodded. “Go ahead; there’s us here.”

Ji Chang was helpless and could only turn to leave. Due to Mu Qinghe and Jian Fengchi’s suppression, he didn’t even turn around.

When his figure finally disappeared from their field of vision, Mu Hongyu couldn’t help but look at Chu Liuyue. “Liuyue, you... purposely sent Grandpa Ji Chang away just now?”

Chu Liuyue asked her back, “Did you not feel anything amiss just now?”

Mu Hongyu thought about it in detail and muttered with uncertainty, “I don’t think so... But it seems like he really didn’t want to leave... Liuyue, you might not know, but Grandpa Wu Shan and Grandpa Ji Chang

have been following my father since a very long time ago. All these years, they were the ones who secretly protected Mother and me, so I think he's just worried..."

Chu Liuyue looked at her quietly.

Mu Hongyu's voice became gradually softer, and she looked uncertain.

"Hongyu, don't tell me you didn't find it weird," said Chu Liuyue calmly.

Mu Hongyu was straightforward and didn't have many qualms, but it did not mean that she was dumb. On the contrary, she was very intelligent. However, as she was too close to Ji Chang and trusted him too much, she couldn't see it clearly.

Mu Hongyu knitted her brows. Of course, I can tell that there's something wrong. Grandpa Ji Chang seems to be extra careful when he takes care of Mother. At first, he didn't want to let Chu Liuyue take her pulse, and he didn't want to leave later...

The more important thing is that he wasn't as happy as I expected him to be when he heard that Mother could fully recover. He has followed Father and Mother for so many years and has spent a lot of effort to find a cure for Mother. Now that there's hope, his reaction is indeed strange.

"You're saying..." Mu Hongyu looked at Chu Liuyue with uncertainty.

Chu Liuyue smiled. "We'll continue observing, but you must remember that even the closest of friends and the people you trust the most can betray you. By then, you won't even know how you died."

Mu Qinghe's body suddenly froze.

Jian Fengchi glanced at Chu Liuyue. *How interesting... She could let anyone hear this, but it had to be Mu Qinghe. If I weren't sure that Chu Liuyue didn't go for plastic surgery, I might really suspect that she purposely said it for Mu Qinghe.*

"That's true." Jian Fengchi clapped as if in awe. "You know the person, but you might not know the person's heart. You can't see much from the surface, and you might even cause some misunderstandings. Ms. Mu, do you agree?"

Mu Hongyu blinked and suddenly reacted—*This Jian Fengchi seems to be talking about me?*

She coughed and felt embarrassed for her slow brain. "Ahem, that's true... Thank you, Liuyue and Young Master Jian. I'll take note of this in the future..."

Chu Liuyue glanced at Jian Fengchi and looked normal. "Young Master Jian, may I know how you are going to treat the Princess Consort? We'll definitely find all the herbs and ingredients you need."

Jian Fengchi said slowly, "Her body has quite a few poisons, so it's impossible to clear all of them in one go. Besides, her body can't withstand the effects of all the herbs. We have to make it into medicinal soup and let her drink it before she takes the antidote."

"May I know how long this will take?"

Jian Fengchi put up one finger. "A day would suffice."

Mu Hongyu was shocked. "Just one day?"

"By 'one day,' I mean that I need one day to prepare all the medicinal soup and pills, not that she will recover in a day. After she uses all of them, she still needs to drink medicinal soup for a month before she can completely remove the remaining poisons. However, that's pretty simple because you just need to find someone to refine the medicine according to my formula."

Chu Liuyue thought to herself: *As expected. When Jian Fengchi treats patients, he always solves the most crucial step and is too lazy to do the rest. He always feels that it is a waste of his talent and energy to do the rest, but it is already quite good that he is willing to do things to that step.*

"I heard that Ms. Chu is also a heavenly doctor, right? You can make pills now?" asked Jian Fengchi with much interest.

Chu Liuyue nodded. "I'm just lucky."

"You're only 14 this year, right? Oh... Even though you can't compare to... But that's still quite good. No wonder Mu Qinghe agreed to help you."

Chu Liuyue smiled humbly.

Jian Fengchi felt depressed. *This Chu Liuyue... Everything seems to be done very well, but there's no emotion in her eyes. It's as if my words will never affect her, no matter what I say.*

His eyes turned.

Mu Hongyu was currently staring into space. Her gaze was distant; she was clearly thinking about something.

Jian Fengchi lost half his interest as he lazily said to Mu Qinghe, "I'll refine the medicine here today. Help me guard."

Mu Qinghe coldly said, "Impossible."

This was because there was no need to.

Even though Jian Fengchi was mainly a heavenly doctor, his Xuan Master cultivation wasn't bad. Even if anything happened to him, he alone was more than enough to handle it.

Jian Fengchi had already expected his answer and didn't care much as he shrugged. "I'll go myself then."

After that, he walked toward another room alone.

He swept his sleeves the moment he opened the door, and a light-blue barrier appeared behind him.

His entire figure was hidden.

Jian Fengchi stepped into the room. At the same time, a fire appeared in his hand, and the handkerchief instantly disappeared!

Chapter 343: Progress

After settling Mu Hongyu's side, Chu Liuyue also planned to bid farewell.

Mu Hongyu was shocked. "You're leaving now?"

Chu Liuyue glanced at Mu Qinghe, and her lips curved up. "Time is of the essence, so I have to hurry. But don't worry; since Lieutenant Mu and Young Master Jian have already agreed to help, they will definitely see it through. If you need any herbs or ingredients, go to Zhen Bao Pavilion and look for Second Master Yan. Tell him to put everything under my bill. When I come back, I'll find him personally."

Mu Hongyu shook her head determinedly. "That can't do! You've already helped me so much; how can I use your money?"

Chu Liuyue thought for a while and did not insist. "Just tell him to do me a favor, and he'll help you to gather all the herbs you need."

It was indeed a little hard to remove all of the poisons in the Princess Consort's body, but it wasn't a problem with Jian Fengchi's capabilities. However, he might need a few special ingredients. It might not be easy to find them in the Imperial City, but Zhen Bao Pavilion definitely had some.

If Mu Hongyu went herself, Second Master Yan might not produce them. Therefore, she told Mu Hongyu to mention her name so that there would be a higher chance of Second Master Yan helping her.

Chu Liuyue did not explicitly tell Mu Hongyu about the connections in between, but Mu Hongyu was very smart and could already guess a little in her heart. She had many things to say in a short amount of time, but all the words seemed to be stuck in her throat.

In the end, she said, "Thank you, Liuyue."

Chu Liuyue nodded. *As for Jian Fengchi... Even though I don't normally deal with him and don't really like him, he is indeed someone that will make good on his words. If he says he is going to refine medicine here to help the Princess Consort, he will definitely do it.*

Mu Hongyu looked very reluctant.

Chu Liuyue initially wanted to remind her to be careful of Jian Fengchi, but she thought for a moment and realized that there was no need to.

Mu Hongyu was a metal tree, and she would only be Jian Fengchi's nemesis.

Chu Liuyue looked at Mu Qinghe, smiled, and asked, "Lieutenant Mu, are you staying here or..."

Mu Qinghe didn't say anything and directly left.

Mu Hongyu leaned in and whispered, "Liuyue, don't you think Lieutenant Mu looks a little upset?"

Chu Liuyue said lightly, "Oh, really? I didn't notice."

"Really! For some reason, his expression suddenly changed just now. Even though he didn't have much of an expression before..." Mu Hongyu knitted her brows and couldn't think of a way to describe it.

“Anyway, I just feel like he’s upset—like he had recalled something sad... I’ve never seen such a look on his face before.”

“I didn’t notice.” Chu Liuyue curled her lips into a half-smile. *If I could, I also want to chase after him and ask him what happened to his face. Does he feel terrible or embarrassed? I just said ‘betrayal,’ but what was he thinking? Did he think about ‘her’ anytime within this year?*

Chu Liuyue took a deep breath. She suddenly really wanted to know what Mu Qinghe would look like if he knew that she was ‘her.’ *And those people...*

“Liuyue? Liuyue!” Mu Hongyu suddenly felt that Chu Liuyue’s aura had become icy cold and that she was enveloped in intense loneliness and hopelessness. Mu Hongyu felt very uneasy and hurriedly called out to Chu Liuyue.

Chu Liuyue recovered her senses and saw her look of worry.

“A-are you okay?”

Chu Liuyue’s aura quickly dissipated, and she broke out into a light smile. “I’m fine.”

Those people should be the ones that aren’t okay!

...

Mu Qinghe returned to his own residence. He was in a rare daze, and his heart seemed to be stuffed with something, causing him to feel extremely uncomfortable.

He closed his eyes to calm himself down, but Chu Liuyue's words kept reverberating throughout his mind as if they were the most memorable curse.

"...In this world, even your closest friends and the people you trust the most might betray you. By then, you won't even know how you died."

The girl's clear voice kept ringing in his ears.

That's not right... That's not right! Mu Qinghe tried his best to find his rationality as he sat on the chair and habitually made tea for himself.

Every time he felt conflicted, he would always do this to calm himself down. But when he poured the tea and looked at it, he couldn't help thinking of something. *Everyone thinks that I love to drink tea, but that is not the case. It is just that brewing tea itself can calm me down. In the past...*

A scorching pain immediately caused him to recover his senses. He realized that he spilled the boiling tea water on his hands as he was in a daze.

He harshly closed his eyes and angrily swept all the tea items to the floor.

Clang!

The crisp sounds of them shattering echoed throughout the room, making it sound extra spacious.

Hong Yao—who was standing at the window—turned back to glance at Mu Qinghe before lazily burying its head in its wings.

An excruciating pain came from his heart. Mu Qinghe’s face changed as he held his chest and breathed heavily. He then held out an oval-shaped copper mirror with much difficulty.

Hong Yao didn’t move, but its body tensed up.

A glaring light flashed across the copper mirror the next moment, and an invisible suppression dominated the room.

The light gradually disappeared from the copper mirror, revealing bloody seawater.

A voice sounded from within—

“Mu Qinghe, it’s been so long. What’s the progress on the task that I’ve assigned you?”

Chapter 344: Arrival

This was a young man’s voice; it was low and nonchalant, but it chilled one’s bones.

Mu Qinghe forcefully endured the excruciating pain in his heart as he clenched his teeth and said, “Master, don’t worry. I’ll definitely do it as soon as possible.”

“You don’t have much time left.” The seawater in the copper mirror seemed to ripple as the strong bloody smell suffocated people.

“Everyone else thinks you went to find the Dijing Yuan meridian, but this reason can’t be used for long. If you can’t settle this matter as soon as possible, then... you don’t have to come back in the future, understand?”

Due to the pain, Mu Qinghe’s lips turned even paler. “...I understand.”

The bloody water gradually disappeared and was replaced by a white light. The next moment, the copper mirror returned to normal.

Then, Mu Qinghe realized that the pain in his body had lessened. He closed his eyes, put away the copper mirror, and leaned against the chair defeatedly.

Hong Yao—who was standing by the window—flew over and landed on his shoulders.

Mu Qinghe opened his eyes to look at it.

Hong Yao leaned in closer and nuzzled his face.

Mu Qinghe kept silent for a long time before whispering, “Don’t worry. It won’t be long...”

...

Chu Liuyue returned to the academy and told Ye Zhiting about her plans to go to Tai Yan Academy.

Even though Ye Zhiting was very reluctant, he knew that this was an extremely good chance, and it would be a pity for her to give it up. Hence, he finally decided to send Chu Liuyue to Tai Yan Academy personally.

If it weren't because he had to deal with Jiuyou Tower's matters in the academy, he even wanted to directly go over and accompany Chu Liuyue before bringing her back.

Ye Zhiting finally relaxed a little when Chu Liuyue repeatedly expressed that she would only be staying there for ten days and would quickly return.

The mentor-disciple duo briefly tidied up, and they went over together.

...

Tai Yan Academy, Country Xing Luo

After the Qing Jiao Competition ended, Cheng Han and the elders already brought the students back.

As they didn't achieve good results, the entire academy's atmosphere was silent and suppressed.

Other than that, since Heng Jingchuo had used Red Blood Gu during the Qing Jiao Competition, the other two academies had also sent elders to Tai Yan Academy to investigate the matter.

Everyone that interacted with Heng Jingchuo had to be investigated one by one.

Such a thing had never happened in Tai Yan Academy before, so they naturally felt humiliated and fearful.

Who knew how many other people Heng Jingchuo had poisoned when he was alive? Even if it wasn't Red Blood Gu, it could be other poisons.

Anyway, the entire academy was in a mess, and Cheng Han was overwrought. He had even left Situ Xingchen to take care of the medicinal mountain that he meticulously took care of.

The so-called medicinal mountain was one of the many hills behind Tai Yan Academy. It was known as the medicinal mountain due to the many precious herbs planted on it.

But even though this medicinal mountain was within Tai Yan Academy, Cheng Han used it alone. Hence, even the academy's elders didn't have the right to go near the mountain, let alone the students.

Situ Xingchen stayed at the medicinal mountain for two days and realized that she was missing something, so she wanted to head back to get it.

She walked down the hill, and the moment she reached the bottom, she saw a few familiar figures nearby.

They were a few young students. Even though they were all wearing the academy's uniform, Situ Xingchen could still recognize them at first glance since she was on good terms with them. It was also because they interacted more.

Situ Xingchen was about to go up and greet them when she heard her own name.

"Why haven't I seen Xingchen these two days?" asked one of the youngsters.

Situ Xingchen's lips quivered, but she heard another girl laugh before she could say anything.

"How does she have the cheek to come out now?"

Situ Xingchen's body froze as if cold water was splashed on her. Almost instinctively, she moved back two steps and hid herself behind a tree.

"Xiaoyun, you're being too mean by saying that. Xingchen didn't do anything wrong, so why would you say that about her?" That youngster seemed to be a little angry.

"Hah, I'm mean? Everyone now knows that she took first place in the Qing Jiao Competition using the pill that Chu Liuyue produced. Luckily I didn't go this time. If not, I would've been humiliated to death. I really don't know how she has the cheek to return to the academy." Another girl sneered, and her face was filled with mockery.

"That's right! I heard them say that Chu Liuyue didn't even touch her at that point. She failed to produce her pill because she wasn't capable enough, but she pushed all the responsibility to Chu Liuyue in the end. However, Chu Liuyue really managed to produce the pill and help her take first place! If it were me, I definitely wouldn't have the guts to accept it."

That youngster was so angry that his face turned red. “B-but Xingchen herself is very talented and capable. You’re talking about her here, but which one of you can compare to her?”

“Of course, we can’t compare to her, so we always listen to her. However, she humiliated the entire school this time around. Can’t we be upset with her? Zhang Ling, we know you like her, but think about it. Has she ever looked at you properly?”

The youngster was stumped.

“Situ Xingchen has very high standards. So many young, handsome, and talented men chased after her, but she didn’t like any of them.”

“Now, her reputation is ruined. I wonder if there will still be so many people who like her.”

Situ Xingchen was so angry that her entire body shivered, and her nails dug deep into her palms. *Didn’t I suffer enough grievances during this period?! I can’t believe these people would talk about me like this! I’m afraid countless people in Tai Yan Academy—and even the entire Country Xing Luo—think the same way.*

Just as she was wondering about how to deal with them, she heard one of the young girls say, “Oh, yes. Did you hear that Chu Liuyue came to our academy today?”

Chapter 345: Peep

Situ Xingchen knitted her brows.

“Yeah! I think Tian Lu Academy’s Director Elder Ye personally sent her over. She should be at the library by now, right?”

“Wasn’t she already chosen by the Tianling Dynasty envoy? Why is she still here?”

“Who knows? But since she’s here, she probably asked for permission, right? Did you hear? She lacked a Yuan meridian since a young age and was born as a good-for-nothing, but she suddenly turned into a genius a few months ago! I really wonder what kind of person that Chu Liuyue is...”

“A genius is a genius, but it’s a pity that she has a marriage agreement with Country Yao Chen’s Prince Li, who is a sickly prince...”

“I heard that Prince Li is very handsome. Perhaps some people like him for that? Haha!”

The few figures gradually disappeared, and their voices drifted off.

Situ Xingchen quietly stood at her original spot for a long while until her legs turned numb. She realized that she still couldn’t accept everything that had happened, no matter if it were the Qing Jiao Competition or Rong Xiu and Chu Liuyue’s marriage agreement.

She pondered for a long while before turning around to return to the medicinal mountain.

There were a few wooden houses halfway up the mountain—Situ Xingchen used one of them to rest.

She entered it, locked the door, and sat in front of the study table.

The strong herbal fragrance permeated her nose.

In the past, this smell could always calm her down, but now, it just reminded her of that humiliating day.

She quietly sat down for a while and took out a letter—it was from Rong Jin.

Before she left the Imperial City, Rong Jin secretly sent someone to pass her this letter. But at that point in time, all her thoughts were gathered on Rong Xiu, so she didn't open it up to read it.

Now...

Situ Xingchen stared at that letter for a while before opening it without hesitation.

The light from the setting sun shone in, elongating Situ Xingchen's shadow.

A ripple appeared in the middle of nowhere. A figure walked out from it, and it was Elder Lian Ning.

"Eldest Princess." His deep and hoarse voice sounded in the room.

Situ Xingchen then recovered her senses, looked away from the letter, and subconsciously kept it before looking at Elder Lian Ning.

Seeing that it was him, Situ Xingchen heaved a sigh of relief. However, her pair of eyes still had some tinge of shock.

Elder Lian Ning noticed that something wasn't quite right with her, and he could not help but ask, "Eldest Princess, what happened?"

His gaze swept past the letter in Situ Xingchen's hands, and he looked serious. "This is..."

"I asked you to check on Chu Liuyue earlier. What did you find out?" interrupted Situ Xingchen.

Elder Lian Ning didn't continue asking about the letter as he bowed slightly. "I found out two things: One, on the tenth of July, Chu Xianmin sent someone to kill Chu Liuyue secretly. Those people brought Chu Liuyue out of the Imperial City to kill her in the woods, but Chu Liuyue didn't die that day and had even returned to the Chu family safe and sound."

Situ Xingchen knitted her brows even more. She had also heard about Chu Xianmin's incident and felt that it was normal for her to kill Chu Liuyue secretly to become the Crown Princess. "You think there's something wrong with that?"

"Of course. Your Highness, don't forget that Chu Liuyue was still a good-for-nothing that didn't have a Yuan meridian back then. The few people that Chu Xianmin sent... According to what I've found out, one of them was even a stage-three warrior."

Situ Xingchen looked stunned.

Even though a stage-three warrior wasn't very strong, a young girl with no cultivation would definitely be unable to live.

"Chu Liuyue returned alive; then... what about the three people?"

"They died." A strange smile appeared on Elder Lian Ning's face. "Moreover, it's the type of death where you can't see their corpse—dead or alive. As the three of them had special identities and Chu Xianmin was afraid of being exposed, she purposely suppressed the matter. Thus, nobody knew that they had disappeared into thin air."

"Coincidentally, Chu Liuyue started her revolutionary change from that day on. After returning to the Chu family, she bought many herbs from Zhen Bao Pavilion. Not long later, she entered Tian Lu Academy. Everyone knows what happened after that."

Many thoughts flashed across Situ Xingchen's mind, and she hurriedly asked, "What about the second thing?"

"The second thing is also, coincidentally, related to that forest. You probably don't know, but Country Yao Chen's Fourth Princess—Rong Zhen—has disappeared."

Situ Xingchen knew who Rong Zhen was, but they didn't interact much. Hence, she didn't have a deep impression of her. "Isn't her pearl of essence destroyed, and hasn't she been recuperating in the palace ever since? Why did she suddenly go missing? Besides, I didn't hear anything about this."

Even though she had already returned to Tai Yan Academy, she didn't cut off all connections with the outside world. If Rong Zhen really disappeared, this news would definitely be spread everywhere since it was such a big incident.

“Because Rong Zhen ran out herself.” Elder Lian Ning had been secretly investigating Chu Liuyue the whole while, and he really discovered something. “That day, Chu Liuyue was forcefully brought out of Tian Lu Academy by a stage-five warrior. I hid my aura, and I followed them all the way. In the end, I realized that they went to the forest, so I didn’t follow them. But not long later, Chu Liuyue came out. Afterward, people started looking for Rong Zhen’s whereabouts secretly.”

As long as one connected the dots, it wasn’t hard to imagine what had happened that day.

Shock filled Situ Xingchen’s heart, and she said after a while, “Does this mean that Chu Liuyue killed Rong Zhen?”

Elder Lian Ning kept quiet for a while. “Not really, but I tried to look around the forest after she left. However, I didn’t find any clues. The Empress also didn’t dare to be too open about it.”

Situ Xingchen’s eyes sparkled, and she muttered, “This means that Chu Liuyue is really acting very secretly... However, there are no secrets in this world. I bet she doesn’t know that someone has already found out about what she did...”

How ridiculous! She is both rich and famous now, and she has come to our academy’s library.

“Eldest Princess, what’s your plan?” asked Elder Lian Ning. “There must be another reason for Rong Zhen to target Chu Liuyue. You...”

“Rong Zhen used to be spoiled. Even if her pearl of essence was ruined, and she became a good-for-nothing, she’s still the distinguished Fourth Princess. Who can determine her fate? Since there’s no news from Country Yao Chen’s side, Emperor Jiawen clearly doesn’t know about this. That’s his favorite

daughter. If he really finds out about it, he would be devastated..." said Situ Xingchen slowly as her face showed pity. However, her eyes were sparkling harshly and coldly.

"You're saying..."

"Elder Lian Ning, you've worked hard. Leave the rest to me." Situ Xingchen picked up a brush and paper. "I'll tell this to someone who needs to know."

Chapter 346: Library

Tai Yan Academy.

Chu Liuyue looked up and saw the five-story-tall library.

The golden words on the plaque shone brightly under the sun.

"This is the library." Elder Mo Cang stood next to Chu Liuyue. Even though he also didn't like Chu Liuyue, he was still sent over as Cheng Han did not wish to see her.

Upon seeing the two of them, the two young men in the academy's uniform bowed respectfully. "Greetings, Elder Mo Cang."

Elder Mo Cang nodded and looked at Chu Liuyue with a cold expression. "For a period of time, you can borrow and read any books that you like in the library. Follow me in."

Chu Liuyue did not mind his attitude and directly walked in.

The moment she walked in, she saw all sorts of books piled up on the shelves everywhere.

Rows of shelves were filled with books in the middle.

She quickly scanned her surroundings.

Elder Mo Cang stopped in his tracks and turned back to look at Chu Liuyue, but he didn't see the expected shock in her eyes.

He coughed and emphasized, "This is the first floor that is filled with thousands of books related to warrior cultivation."

Chu Liuyue calmly nodded.

Elder Mo Cang was even more annoyed. *The variety of books in Tai Yan Academy's library is as vast as the open sea. It is already very rare for an average family to have a few books on warrior techniques. Even aristocratic families would only have a few hundred books. However, we have tens of thousands of books here.*

But Chu Liuyue did not have any reaction after hearing that. This made Elder Mo Cang feel stifled, and he couldn't help but sneer. *She's just putting on an act!*

“I heard that Tian Lu Academy’s library has quite a few books. Even though it can’t compare to ours, they still have a few thousand books, right?” asked Elder Mo Cang in a seemingly unintentional manner.

Chu Liuyue nodded again. “Yeah, our academy doesn’t have many of the books here.”

Elder Mo Cang laughed delightedly. He was about to say something else, but Chu Liuyue continued calmly, “Mentor said: Even though the academy is big, we rather leave the spaces empty than place trash.”

Trash?! Does Chu Liuyue know what she’s saying?! Elder Mo Cang almost spat out blood. “Y-you’re saying all of this is trash?”

Chu Liuyue smiled slightly. “Please don’t misunderstand. I don’t mean that; I’m just saying that a portion of it is.”

“You!” Elder Mo Cang tried hard to suppress his anger as he hollered, “Chu Liuyue, you better be more polite! If you continue shooting your mouth, we’ll still chase you out even though you’ve taken first place in the Qing Jiao Competition!”

Chu Liuyue looked at him genuinely. “Elder Mo Cang, you’re really thinking too much. It’s not that I’m being disrespectful, but many of the books here are really not worth keeping.”

As she spoke, she walked to the side and picked up a book. “Tiger-Wolf Punch, intermediate Yellow stage. Warrior techniques are divided into Heaven, Earth, Xuan, and Yellow. Every stage is divided into advanced, intermediate, and inferior. The yellow stage is the lowest tier, and it’s just at the intermediate stage, so it’s not worth mentioning. Usually, warrior techniques of this level should be given to stage-two warriors, right?”

Chu Liuyue's lips curved up slightly. "But our academy only accepts warriors that are at least stage three, so our academy really doesn't have such books."

Elder Mo Cang was stumped.

Their academy had accepted many more students than Tian Lu Academy, so their corresponding acceptance standard wasn't as high as Tian Lu Academy's. Now, Tai Yan Academy had many stage-two warrior students.

Other than this, they loved collecting all kinds of books, so they had the most number of books amongst the three major academies. They had always been proud of this, but why did it suddenly become cheap when Chu Liuyue spoke about it?

"What do you know? Not only high-level warrior techniques are worth keeping! Our Tai Yan Academy keeps all sorts of books, and we aim to for it to be comprehensive!"

Chu Liuyue smiled and did not say a word. *If such a mere library is also considered as 'comprehensive,' I really don't know how to describe my personal study from my previous life.*

Seeing the smile on Chu Liuyue's face, Elder Mo Cang felt even more uncomfortable for some reason.

Chu Liuyue didn't say anything else, but he felt extremely embarrassed.

"This is just the first floor. You naturally won't say this when you go to the higher floors." He flung his sleeves, walked forward, and walked up the stairs.

Chu Liuyue's eyebrows rose slightly. "I hope so."

Elder Mo Cang stopped in his tracks. *I knew I shouldn't have come! This Chu Liuyue's mouth can drive one crazy! She better not be too unruly during this period of time. If not, I'll show her who's boss!*

The two of them went up to the second floor one after another.

The space here was as big as the first floor, but there were fewer books here. Instead, there were some books emitting a faint glow.

"Warrior technique books are also placed within these lights, but they're much more advanced than the ones below." Elder Mo Cang felt more confident. "There are many lone books that have been lost over the years, but it depends on your ability to open it."

Those lights were corresponding barriers. Hence, the higher the level of the items inside, the stronger the defensive barrier.

According to Chu Liuyue's ability, she might not even be able to open the warrior techniques in the Xuan stage, let alone the rest.

Chu Liuyue retorted, "You're saying that I can read all of these?"

Elder Mo Cang sneered. "As long as you can, they're all yours."

Chu Liuyue seemed to be unable to tell the mockery in his voice as she smiled genuinely. "Your academy is really generous."

Elder Mo Cang's heart skipped a beat as he felt that something was off. He couldn't figure out why after thinking for a while, so he just gave up.

He pointed upstairs. "Xuan formations are placed on the third floor, and medicine formulas are on the fourth. I still have something on, so I won't bring you around. Just help yourself."

He felt that he would be driven to death if he continued staying with Chu Liuyue.

Chu Liuyue didn't mind it at all as she looked up and asked curiously, "Then... what about the fifth floor?"

Elder Mo Cang looked much more serious. "Only directors can enter the fifth floor. Even though you can freely borrow and read the books here for a month, it doesn't include the fifth floor."

Chu Liuyue nodded in understanding.

"I believe the books on the first four floors are enough for you. As long as you abide by the rules here, we won't make it difficult for you. But if anything happens, don't blame us for being harsh."

Chu Liuyue smiled and acknowledged his words happily. "Don't worry. I won't spend much time here, so I won't waste my time on anything else."

Elder Mo Cang then relaxed and left after giving her a few reminders.

Very quickly, only Chu Liuyue was left in the library.

She stared at the light in front with one hand around her waist and another gently knocking her chin.
“Where should I start...”

Chapter 347: Flip Books

Elder Mo Cang walked out of the library and looked at the duo in charge of guarding it. “Be on high alert during this period! Other than those from the first floor, record any of the books she borrows and reads! If there’s anything wrong, you must inform me as soon as possible!”

The two of them respectfully answered, “Yes!”

Elder Mo Cang then relaxed a little and couldn’t help but turn around to take a look.

The main door was closed, and everything was peaceful.

Even though Chu Liuyue said harsh words, this is Tai Yan Academy after all. She’s a smart person, so she shouldn’t cause any trouble for herself. However, Elder Mo Cang still felt uneasy for some reason. He didn’t know where the uneasiness came from, but his heart felt as if it hung in midair. He felt like an accident would happen at any time.

He knitted his brows and felt that he had thought too much. After suppressing his worry, he turned around to leave.

But the moment he stepped forward, the two guards at the door suddenly felt something and looked at the grayish-white stone placed on the right side of the library's entrance.

At this moment, a line of words appeared on the stone. "Stepping Snow Technique—intermediate Xuan stage!"

After a moment, those words gradually combined and formed a star, which shone brightly on the stone.

"S-she started already?" asked one of them in surprise.

"How can this be? The book that was opened is an intermediate Xuan-stage warrior technique. Isn't Chu Liuyue just a stage-two warrior? How can she open a book of such a level?" The other immediately denied it.

"But... her abilities are better than a stage-four warrior! Logically speaking, she should be able to do it, right? B-but... even a stage-four warrior needs some time to open an intermediate Xuan-stage warrior technique. Elder Mo Cang just left, and Chu Liuyue just started for less than 15 minutes. How did she do it? Could it be that someone else in the library took the book?"

"According to the rules, our academy's students aren't allowed to enter the library during the period when she's here unless there are special reasons. Right now, she's the only one in the library!"

"..." The two people looked at each other and saw the shock in the other party's eyes.

If their guess was correct, it meant that... Chu Liuyue was much stronger than they had imagined!

“D-don’t worry! Even if she opens the book at high speed, she needs some time to digest the information. Didn’t such a situation happen before? Usually, those people can only read a maximum of 100-plus books when they stay here for a month. Amongst those, there’s only a few that they can really master.”

“That’s true. Let’s just record down the first book she read.” One of them took out a booklet and wrote down the words that previously appeared on the stone.

But before he finished writing, the other person suddenly gasped.

The person recording the words looked up in confusion. “What’s the matter?”

That person’s mouth was agape as his finger—which was pointing toward the stone—started trembling.

“T-that... She has already opened the second book!”

“What?!” The man in charge of recording hurriedly looked over and saw that another line of words had appeared on the stone.

“Fiery Red Attack—intermediate Xuan stage!”

It’s another intermediate Xuan-stage warrior technique! The two of them were stunned.

This had a huge impact on them, and they weren’t even certain if it was true.

“D-did I see wrongly? Is it still an intermediate Xuan-stage technique?” The man recording rubbed his eyes, and the words had already formed a second star next to the first.

In other words, these two books were of the same level, and Chu Liuyue had indeed opened the second intermediate Xuan-stage warrior technique book.

“H-how did she do this? She only read the beginning of the first book, right? Why did she open the second book?”

“Perhaps... She’s just choosing the warrior techniques she likes, so she reads through them rather quickly?”

“Possibly... Cultivators have limited time and energy, so choosing a suitable one to meticulously read up on is better than reading ten books.”

“...But even if so, she’s opening the books too quickly, right... If she continues...”

“Impossible! All the books have barriers! Every time she opens one of them, she needs to use a portion of her strength. How can she continue like this? Forget it; let’s just ignore this first and record the second book. If Elder Mo Cang discovers that we’ve missed out on anything, he won’t let us off. Therefore—”

At this point, he suddenly stopped.

The two of them exchanged another glance. *If this current situation continues, even Elder Mo Cang will break down!*

...

Inside the library, Chu Liuyue quickly read the book in her hands before putting it back and shrugging her shoulders in disappointment—it was another intermediate Xuan-stage technique.

Ever since Elder Mo Cang left, she had been staying on the second floor.

She casually chose a shelf in the middle and started reading.

What disappointed her was that she had already looked through the entire bookshelf, but the best technique was just an intermediate Xuan-stage one.

Most of the books were inferior Xuan-stage techniques.

Chu Liuyue helplessly walked toward another bookshelf.

Suddenly, she spotted a book from the corner of her eye.

She focused on it. “Advanced Yellow-stage technique?”

Chu Liuyue was really shocked. She initially thought that the books placed here were all Xuan-stage techniques, so she didn’t expect a technique of such a level to appear.

She rubbed her brows and started to feel that she was too polite in the way she spoke to Elder Mo Cang earlier.

She couldn't help but look forward to the books. This time, she truly found quite a few decent books to read and learn some new warrior techniques.

This was because advanced warrior techniques were passed down in their specific sects, which were different from Xuan formations and medical formulas.

Normally, the warrior techniques a warrior exhibited could show their experience.

Chu Liuyue was the same. Her brain had stored quite a few advanced warrior techniques, but all of them belonged to her previous life's ancestors.

Once she showcased them, someone would find something amiss. Hence, even though she decided to train in these warrior techniques secretly, she also had to choose new ones at the same time.

Although she was quite disappointed the whole way, she still had to read those books once in order not to waste them.

She had a photographic memory, so even if she quickly flipped through the books, she could remember the contents clearly.

Besides, as she had trained in advanced warrior techniques before, she could quickly understand techniques of such levels.

Chu Liuyue followed the bookshelves and read every book as if she were continuously throwing books into her mind.

Another book.

Another book.

And another book.

...

“Why is she still continuing?” The two people in charge of looking after the library outside finally broke down when they saw a galaxy of stars gradually lighting up on the grayish-white stone.

Chapter 348: A New Beginning

Chu Liuyue was only there for a few hours, and she had already read hundreds of books! They were all Xuan-stage warrior techniques.

Flustered, one of the guards said to Chu Liuyue before leaving quickly, “Y-you stay here and continue reading; I’ll go seek Elder Mo Cang for instructions.”

The remaining man couldn’t resist asking loudly, “Should I continue with the records?”

The man had been writing for the past few hours, recording the summary of the previous days.

One should know that even on the days when the library was open to the entire academy, few people would come. Even fewer would open the books for intermediate or advanced Xuan-stage warrior techniques.

Now, Chu Liuyue had read so many by herself already!

Also, if Elder Mo Cang saw his booklet, the former would be even more upset.

The man—who was about to leave—stopped, clearly irritated. “Of course, we’re going to continue!”

At the rate she was going, Chu Liuyue would finish half the number of books in the library.

They had to let Elder Mo Cang, the director, and the rest of the elders know with haste. All they could do was note all the books she had read.

The man could even imagine the director and the elders’ wrath when they heard this piece of news.

At the moment, they would do exactly as Elder Mo Cang had instructed in the hopes of minimizing the blame on themselves. No matter what, the two men were in for some hard times ahead.

The man glanced around the quiet library.

Soon, turbulence would disrupt the peace.

He watched his colleague hurriedly leave. Just as he was about to say something, he saw a line of words appear on the plaque.

Resigned, he continued with the records as he groaned inwardly. *Is Chu Liuyue even a human?*

...

Elder Mo Cang was about to lie down after he finished his duties when he heard a scurry of footsteps approaching.

“Elder Mo Cang! Elder Mo Cang, we’ve got trouble!”

He walked toward the voice with furrowed brows. “What’s the matter?”

The man was panting. “E-Elder Mo Cang. Chu Liuyue i-is...” He was so flustered he couldn’t continue.

The elder sneered. “As I expected, she really is up to no good in the library!”

The informer shook his head quickly. “N-no! She... she’s...”

“Spit it out! What did she do?”

He was taking too long, and the elder was getting impatient.

After a long silence, the man finally said, “I think it’s better if you see for yourself.”

Unease welled in Elder Mo Cang’s mind as he watched the man. *Chu Liuyue is the only one in the library. Nobody but her can cause trouble. What can she do if she isn’t reading?*

The elder decided to go and see for himself.

...

Soon, the two men arrived at the library.

Everything was in order as Mo Cang surveyed the place. He then heaved a sigh of relief. “What the hell is wrong?”

What is the fuss about?

The informer behind him pointed. “Elder Mo Cang, over there.”

The elder turned his head and froze.

The usually blank plaque shone with lines of words; it was intricately linked to the library. The plaque reflected the location of all the books in the library.

Every time a book was read, it would show on the plaque. When the reader was done reading the book, a star would appear.

Everyone could see what happened at a glance.

Elder Mo Cang had never seen so many stars on the plaque—They formed a whole line.

“Is the plaque malfunctioning?” His mind was racing as he came up with the ridiculous analysis.

However, the other man’s reply worried him.

The man in charge of the recording handed Elder Mo Cang the book and said bitterly, “Elder, these are the records of all the books that Chu Liuyue has read.”

The latter took a look at the brand-new book. He realized that the books the girl had read filled half of it.

His eye twitched uncontrollably.

He stiffly flipped through the pages as he went through the list.

Everything was recorded in detail; the ink hadn't even dried yet.

His lips moved, but no words came out. He simply held the book with shaking hands.

“Elder Mo Cang, we don't know how she did it. After you left, Chu Liuyue has been reading continuously. She's so fast that the list keeps growing longer and longer on the plaque! T-these are all the books she has read for the past two hours. Look, she has started another one!”

The man—who had been explaining calmly—suddenly exclaimed when he saw another book appear on the plaque.

The words seemed especially blinding as the elder gritted his teeth and watched.

Clang!

He tossed the book away angrily; it hit the man's chest.

“I want you to continue. Let's see how many books Chu Liuyue can read.”

The man hurriedly opened the book with trembling hands and did as instructed.

Meanwhile, Elder Mo Cang was glaring at the attic. How he wished his deadly glare would cut Chu Liuyue like a sharp blade! *Something is off! Something is definitely off. With the exception of the first*

floor, all the other floors have barriers. Chu Liuyue might be able to read a few books, but how did she do it continuously without exhausting her force? By right, it should've been depleted. Even if she can open those books, how did she finish them within such a short period of time?

“Elder Mo Cang, please don’t worry yourself. Chu Liuyue must’ve picked the ones she was interested in and discarded the rest. It’s just a bluff; she probably didn’t learn anything at all.”

Those words seemed to soothe the elder’s feathers.

In fact, he thought of this too. It was the only logical explanation.

“Humph! She’s taking on more than she can handle!” said Elder Mo Cang hatefully.

“Elder is right. Chu Liuyue is just a teenager. After winning first place at the Qing Jiao Competition, she became arrogant. She has nothing to gain by doing this. Perhaps she can’t decide which book she wants to read!”

As soon as he finished speaking, another dazzling star appeared on the plaque.

The three men watched in shock and exclaimed, “She found an Earth-stage warrior technique book?”

Chapter 349: Jingshen Finger

Inferior Earth-stage—Jingshen Finger. This line of words etched itself on the stone plaque.

It was indeed one of the Earth-stage warrior techniques.

“T-This... It’s...” The man in charge of the recording stared at Elder Mo Cang, dumbfounded.

According to the academy’s regulations, they had to record Earth-stage warrior techniques separately when someone read it. On top of that, they had to inform the director and all the elders.

Wrath welled in Elder Mo Cang’s heart like hot lava. With nowhere to vent his anger, he barked at the two men, “Record it down! Quickly!”

“Y-yes!” The man in charge of the recording took out another booklet immediately. His hands shook as he wrote.

The man standing behind the elder began to panic. He stayed silent and held his breath to minimize his presence.

Anyone could tell that Elder Mo Cang was on the verge of lashing out. Whoever was in his sight was in danger of incurring his wrath.

Suddenly, Elder Mo Cang looked up at the second floor of the library. *Although the collection in the library is vast, there are only a handful of Earth-stage warrior technique books, which are also well-hidden. How did she find them?*

The elder wanted to storm upstairs and chase Chu Liuyue out of the library, but he couldn’t.

All Chu Liuyue did was read and nothing else. She might be reading at breakneck speed, but they couldn't find fault with that.

They could only wait and see.

If the situation persisted, they just had to wait for her to come out once her time was up.

"Elder Mo Cang, it's not a bad thing for Chu Liuyue to start reading an Earth-stage warrior technique book. See, she has been reading the same book for a while, and she hasn't opened another. I think she's studying it in detail. According to the agreement, she can only read the books in the library. Since she can't take the books out, she's likely to spend more time on this one," explained the man doing the records seriously.

The elder's expression became solemn. *This thought had crossed my mind, but she is reading an Earth-stage warrior technique book.*

He felt indignant that Chu Liuyue had found it so effortlessly. When one of their students won first place at the Qing Jiao Competition last year, he didn't find any Earth-stage warrior technique books!

"Stay here! I will inform the director right away!"

"Yes, sir!"

...

It was dark when Elder Mo Cang arrived at Cheng Han's residence.

The former could see light seeping out of the windows. As he stood at the door, he could hear voices coming from several people.

The conversation stopped when he knocked.

Cheng Han opened the door himself.

The candlelight shone on the director's frame; he didn't look pleased to see the elder. "Mo Cang, what are you doing here? What's wrong?"

The elder peered into the house and saw two men—they were investigators sent by the other two academies to look into Heng Jingchuo's and Yang Jianqing's matters.

The discussion didn't seem to go well for the three men.

Elder Mo Cang said quickly, "Director, I have to inform you about something immediately. It's urgent."

Cheng Han had the perfect excuse! He racked his brains on how to dismiss the other two men.

He looked at Mo Cang and hinted. "Is it urgent?"

The elder understood his meaning instantly and nodded without hesitation.

Cheng Han turned and looked at the two men in his house. "Gentlemen, I'm sorry, but that's all the time I have for today."

They knew, without a doubt, that Cheng Han was evading them. However, they had no choice except to leave.

Once they were gone, Cheng Han finally sighed with relief as he invited Mo Cang into his residence.

The elder asked tentatively, "Director, things didn't go as smoothly as you thought?"

Cheng Han was beyond frustrated. "Yang Jianqing and Heng Jingchuo are already dead! How am I supposed to search for clues when we can't even find their corpses? The investigators are here, yet they couldn't find anything. They even have the gall to accuse me of harboring the culprit!"

Cheng Han felt aggrieved. Everyone knew about the investigators' presence, and it was a major incident. He couldn't just send the two men packing without a valid reason.

The director massaged his temple. "Let's not talk about this anymore. Tell me, why have you come?"

The long walk had diminished Elder Mo Cang's wrath and turned it into unease and frustration. On his way here, he came up with a speech to break the news to Cheng Han.

Chu Liuyue had caused the director and Tai Yan Academy a great deal of embarrassment. This matter was the last straw.

After careful deliberation, Mo Cang decided to come clean to the director. “Chu Liuyue is currently reading an Earth-stage warrior technique book in the library.”

Cheng Han’s face froze instantly.

His reaction was within Mo Cang’s expectations. “Director, please don’t worry yourself about this.”

“Which book was it?” Cheng Han was anxious to know.

Mo Cang took a moment to recall the title. “I think... it’s Jingshen Finger. The inferior—”

Bang!

Cheng Han stood up so abruptly that he toppled his chair. He then grabbed Mo Cang at the collar. “What did you say?”

The elder repeated his words with much difficulty. “The... inferior book. Fortunately, she has stopped browsing the rest and is concentrating on this one.”

Hong!

Cheng Han pushed him away with a shove.

Mo Cang staggered and hit the wall.

The tremendous impact almost dislocated the elder's shoulder. Nevertheless, he showed no sign of displeasure.

After he rubbed his shoulder, he saw Cheng Han stride away furiously.

"Director!" Stunned, Mo Cang followed quickly.

As he ran, he recalled the director's earlier reaction. *Cheng Han seems to take this matter very seriously. Chu Liuyue's perusal of an Earth-stage warrior technique book shouldn't warrant such a huge reaction from him.*

The elder frowned and ran after the director.

...

Chu Liuyue sat cross-legged in the library.

A book floated in mid-air before her, the pages flipping slowly.

Her eyes were trained on the lines of words and the drawings while she memorized the book.

Jingshen Finger—although it was inferior Earth-stage, the book was considered a treasure in this library.

It touched on the technicalities of fingering.

Nobody could master this skill in a short time. Chu Liuyue planned to memorize the book before she started practicing it when she had more time.

For an ordinary warrior, one might have to read the book 100 times in order to understand the content before they started practicing.

But Chu Liuyue was different. She had read various warrior technique books that were far more advanced than this one. It shouldn't take her long to finish.

Suddenly, she sensed something amiss when she was one-third into the book—the contents of Jingshen Finger were more complicated and obscure than the other books that she had read.

Chapter 350: Secrets

Chu Liuyue started over, uncertain of what she had just read.

The technicalities in Jingshen Finger were more precise than the other finger techniques she had mastered.

Initially, she didn't feel it, but that feeling became more intense toward the end.

Chu Liuyue could imagine how formidable the skill was when one mastered it fully.

Her heart pounded, and blood raced through her body. *If my guess is correct, Jingshen Finger belongs to the advanced level of the Earth stage. Even in the Tianling Dynasty, one seldom encounters an advanced Earth-stage book.*

Chu Liuyue never expected to see such a treasure in the unassuming library of Tai Yan Academy. Alas, her excitement was short-lived as another question occurred to her: *If Jingshen Finger is as powerful as advanced Earth-stage warrior techniques, why is it deemed as a lower-level technique? Moreover, people in Tai Yan Academy don't seem to know its true power; otherwise, they wouldn't have placed it on the second floor of the library.*

With that in mind, Chu Liuyue continued reading.

When there was just one-third of the book left, she finally knew why—the book was incomplete. On the surface, the book seemed intact, with no missing pages. But if one were to read its content carefully, they would notice something amiss.

Since Chu Liuyue had the foundation of many Earth-stage warrior techniques, it didn't take her long to realize it was incomplete.

Frowning, she continued.

When she was finished reading, she knew why it had been deemed a lower-level technique—parts of the Jingshen Finger's technicalities were missing.

One could still cultivate according to the instructions and master the skill, but one couldn't unleash its full potential. Should one recover the missing parts, one could supplement it and increase its power.

Although it was rare to find inferior Earth-stage warrior techniques, it wasn't comparable to those of the advanced level.

Now that she had the chance to obtain Earth-stage warrior techniques, she wouldn't give it up just like that.

Chu Liuyue read the whole book again to ensure that she had memorized it to the smallest detail. She then got up and searched for other books in the hope of finding the missing parts of Jingshen Finger.

...

Meanwhile, outside the library.

The darkness engulfed the entire sky.

Everywhere was quiet when Cheng Han arrived in a hurry. The only light emitting from the library was dazzling.

Cheng Han could feel panic welling inside him. He was walking so fast he was almost running.

The two guards at the library saw him from afar, and they speedily ran out to greet him respectfully.
“Good evening, Director!”

Cheng Han ignored them, but the stone plaque caught his attention.

Its usual empty space was dazzling. A large patch of bright stars filled the space, and one of the stars was exceptionally bright.

None of the stars could compare to this one.

Dizziness overwhelmed him, and he staggered for balance.

The two guards knew something was wrong and asked cautiously, “Director, are you alright?”

After a long silence, Cheng Han finally suppressed his emotions and calmed down with a hand on his head.

When he turned around to face the two men, the panic in his eyes was gone. “How many books has Chu Liuyue read?”

“Please don’t worry, Director. Ever since she went in, we have recorded all the books that she read. They’re listed in these two books. Please, have a look.” One man handed him the records.

Cheng Han took the books.

It was obvious that one was used to record the ordinary books, while the other was used specifically for Earth-stage warrior technique books.

He scanned through the contents in both record books. At the moment, he wasn't interested in the ordinary one.

It didn't matter that every page was filled with a record. None of those brought the feeling of anxiety like the single record in the second book did.

His expression was rigid. Devoid of all emotions, he almost seemed inhuman—it was nerve-wracking.

“Director, Chu Liuyue’s speed was astonishing when she started. However, she didn’t move on to another book since she found that Earth-stage warrior technique book.” The other man took a quick peek at Cheng Han as he tried to defuse the tense atmosphere.

He was shocked to see the abrupt change in the director’s expression.

“Shut up!” It was the last straw for Cheng Han. He flung the book at the guard who was trying to explain the situation.

The man fell to his knees immediately and apologized. “Director, please forgive me! Please, forgive me!”

Shocked, the other guard also knelt in a hurry.

They had never seen the director so furious before. His wrath was beyond their imagination.

Meanwhile, Elder Mo Cang—who had been following behind the director—finally entered the library. He stopped when he saw the two men kneeling and pleading for forgiveness.

Even though Cheng Han had his back facing the elder, the latter could imagine his expression.

Just as Mo Cang was figuring out what to say, another line of words appeared on the plaque: *Wuxiang Sculpture, intermediate Xuan-stage.*

Chu Liuyue was at it again.

He ordered immediately, “What are you standing there for? Record this down! Quickly!”

Dumfounded, the two guards looked at the plaque and saw the lines as well.

They turned pale. *Chu Liuyue has already found an Earth-stage warrior technique book. She should be reading it. Why is she looking at other books?*

Cheng Han saw the plaque and turned to read the title.

When he saw that it was a Xuan-stage warrior technique book, he finally heaved a sigh of relief.

Elder Mo Cang approached the director to soothe his feathers once he saw the tension vanish from the latter's face. "The Earth-stage warrior technique book must be too complicated for Chu Liuyue to understand with her current capabilities. She seems to have given it up."

Cheng Han massaged his temples. "I hope so."

The next instant, he widened his eyes as if a thought occurred to him and stared at the second floor. *Is she giving up?*

To confirm his suspicion, another line of words appeared on the plaque. It was another book on Xuan-stage techniques.

And so, the stars continued appearing on the plaque again.

This meant Chu Liuyue was still searching for something.

A wave of panic welled inside Cheng Han. *Can it be... Does she know about the secret hidden in our library?*