

Nobel Ruler 351

Chapter 351: Search

“Chu Liuyue seems to stay on the second floor... She’s more talented as a Xuan Master and heavenly doctor. Why doesn’t she go to the third and fourth floors?” Mo Cang muttered curiously, oblivious to Cheng Han’s reaction.

This made Cheng Han worry even more.

That’s right! If she didn’t know something, why would Chu Liuyue only remain on the second floor and not go to the other floors? Also, she started reading the other books after she found that one scroll on Earth-stage warrior techniques! She is clearly looking for something!

Cheng Han was anxious, but he couldn’t rush in and stop Chu Liuyue!

Words were still appearing on the stone tablet.

Chu Liuyue was still going through the books on the second floor at lightning speed.

Another book.

Another book.

And another book.

Cheng Han stood there unmoved. The others dared not move and waited alongside him.

After a long while, Elder Mo Cang spoke up. "...Director, Chu Liuyue is going to be in there for a while. You... don't intend to wait here, do you?"

Cheng Han was even more frustrated. *Of course, I know! That is what I am most worried about!*

He didn't expect Chu Liuyue to find and read the Jingshen Finger, but staying here would be strange and would most definitely attract a lot of people's attention!

"Observe carefully! Record down all the books that Chu Liuyue has gone through!" With that, he turned and left.

Elder Mo Cang found Cheng Han's reaction strange, and he turned to look at the library again. *What's the director worried about?*

...

After Cheng Han and Elder Mo Cang left, only the two people in charge of guarding the library were left.

Given the way things had developed, they dared not let their guard down, and they continued watching her closely.

Time passed, and it was soon midnight.

However, the lights on the second floor were still lit.

One of the guards yawned and began complaining. "...When is Chu Liuyue going to read until?! It's so late, but she's not sleeping yet!"

The other person was affected, and they began feeling tired too. "Who wouldn't want the chance to go into the library and browse as they wish?! Would you spend your time sleeping? Besides, she's probably really excited about finding the Earth-stage warrior technique! I would give up sleep to finish reading it if it were me!"

"Even if that's the case, everyone needs a break, right? Even if she's not tired, I'm tired from all the writing I've done today!"

The pair waited for a while and decided to take turns to record after seeing that Chu Liuyue had no intentions of stopping.

...

"This isn't it... Not this... Not this one either..." Chu Liuyue scanned through another shelf, but she didn't find anything.

Since she found the Jingshen Finger, she increased her rate of reading, and she had gone through about one-fifth of the books here. However, she didn't find anything on the Jingshen Finger.

It was like a needle in a haystack.

Chu Liuyue sighed. *Maybe there is only one scroll here. After all, if Tai Yan Academy really had the complete edition, it would've caused a lot of commotion.*

Chu Liuyue was about to continue when Tuan Zi appeared and looked at her disapprovingly.

She paused. "Tuan Zi, what's wrong?"

Tuan Zi crossed its paws and put it underneath its head.

Chu Liuyue burst out laughing. "You want me to sleep?"

Tuan Zi nodded vigorously.

Chu Liuyue shook her head. "Don't worry; I'm not sleepy now." She was thinking of the Jingshen Finger and was indeed not tired.

Just as she was about to walk forward, Tuan Zi stopped her and shook its head vigorously.

Chu Liuyue laughed and tapped Tuan Zi on its head. "Okay, stop shaking. I'll go rest."

It was only then that Tuan Zi rubbed itself against her face.

Perhaps it was because she had exhausted herself, but Chu Liuyue quickly fell asleep.

...

Chu Liuyue woke up early the next morning and picked up from where she left off.

The two keepers of the library had visible dark circles beneath their eyes from staying up all night. They couldn't even remember what time Chu Liuyue had stopped last night, but she had begun again.

They were upset, but they resigned themselves to their fate of recording.

...

Cheng Han didn't sleep well all night. The terrifying images in his mind didn't disappear, even after he woke up.

They were all related to Chu Liuyue and... the Jingshen Finger.

Cheng Han felt uneasy and intended to go check on the library again, but he was stopped by someone.

It was the people who were investigating Yang Jianqing and Heng Jingchuo. The families of the two had been brought over, and they were to be interrogated by people from the three academies.

Cheng Han had no choice but to follow them.

The matter with the library was thus set aside.

...

Country Yao Chen, the palace.

The Empress couldn't help but ask the two people before her, "Is there really no news?"

The pair nodded. "Your Majesty, we've searched the entire Imperial City quietly, but we haven't found any traces of the Fourth Princess."

The Empress limply leaned back into her chair as if all the energy had been sucked out of her.

It had been a few days, and they hadn't received any news of Rong Zhen.

The two people were both from the Si family. If they said there were no signs, it really meant that they couldn't find anything.

The Empress closed her eyes weakly.

They had intended to have Si Ting get information from Chu Liuyue, but he refused. Before she could find a replacement, Chu Liuyue had left for Tai Yan Academy.

She was really out of options now.

“I understand. You all head back first.” The Empress waved and dismissed the two.

Everyone in the palace knew they were from the Si family. They claimed that they were sending things on behalf of the Si family, so they naturally couldn’t stay for long.

The Empress remained on her seat after the two people left. She did not utter a word.

“What are you worried about, Empress?” A familiar voice suddenly came from the door.

The Empress was stunned, and she looked up to see Emperor Jiawen standing there! She jumped up before she hurried to greet him. “Greetings, Your Majesty!”

Emperor Jiawen walked over and helped her up. “Don’t stand on ceremony, Empress.”

The Empress smiled before she looked toward the servants. “His Majesty arrived, but none of you announced his arrival! You all...”

“Empress, don’t get mad at them. I told them not to.” Emperor Jiawen shook his head.

The Empress adjusted her expression and smiled. "Since you said it, Your Majesty, then I have no reason to chastise them. However, it's been a long while since you've been here; I'm very flattered."

Emperor Jiawen replied, "I've been a little cold towards all of you recently. I came to take a look since I heard that you've been in a bad mood. Oh right, I haven't gone to see Zhen Zhen in a while. Why don't you accompany me there?"

Chapter 352: Dealings

The Empress's elation from the first half of the sentence rapidly decreased with the second half.

She looked up in shock. "What? Your Majesty wants to go see Zhen Zhen?"

Emperor Jiawen straightened his beard as he sighed. "Yes, I left her hanging since she was so spoiled and wilful before. I want her to reflect and change. It's been a while since then, and I believe she should've realized her mistakes. Besides, I do miss her, so I wanted to ask you to go see her with me."

Emperor Jiawen had his set of considerations. Rong Jin did make a big mistake, but he had received the punishment he deserved for it. At the end of it all, that mistake was on him; the Empress and the others were just implicated by him.

Emperor Jiawen just wanted to instill a little more fear in them; he had no intention of crushing Rong Jin. As for Rong Zhen, she used to be one of his favorite daughters, so he still felt bad for her. That was why he decided to go see Rong Zhen with the Empress after all this time.

The Empress replied hesitantly, "Your Majesty, Rong Zhen has been in a bad mood recently. She has locked herself in her room and refuses to come out. I worry that she might do something to offend you if you go. How about we go after she has calmed down after a while?"

Emperor Jiawen frowned. "Locked herself up? What now? Who offended her?"

The Empress smiled guiltily. "This... You know, because of Lieutenant Mu... She had been hoping to get him to heal her broken pearl of essence, but... You know what happened after. She was really upset."

Emperor Jiawen's expression relaxed a little. "No wonder."

He had wanted to put in a good word for Rong Zhen, but Mu Qinghe was a tough nut to crack. Besides, Rong Zhen had offended him, so there was no hope of it.

Rong Zhen could only blame her bad luck for this.

"I heard that Chu Liuyue got Lieutenant Mu to bring a heavenly doctor from the Tianling Dynasty on behalf of Princess Yong Ping to examine Princess Consort Ping Jiang..." The Empress looked down sadly. "I'm really envious, but it's a pity that Zhen Zhen had some conflict with Chu Liuyue. Otherwise, I would ask her to help, and maybe Zhen Zhen could..."

As she spoke, she used her handkerchief to wipe her tears as if she were sad and regretful. However, she was glancing at Emperor Jiawen from the corner of her eye.

But to her disappointment, Emperor Jiawen did not seem upset at all.

She was a little depressed. *Rong Zhen is the princess, but the treatment she receives is worse than that of Chu Liuyue and Mu Hongyu! Why isn't His Majesty upset!?*

The Empress didn't know that Emperor Jiawen had been to Tianling Dynasty and that he knew what kind of strong existence it was.

Emperor Jiawen clearly knew that he and Country Yao Chen were nothing in the eyes of Mu Qinghe.

Mu Qinghe could do whatever he wanted and help whoever he wanted; there was no room for negotiation.

Emperor Jiawen pondered for a moment before he spoke. "It's not your fault. Everything is destined, but it's not good for her to continue like this... Oh well, I'll go check on her myself!"

The Empress was stunned, and she didn't even bother to wipe her tears. "Your Majesty! I think... it's better to let Zhen Zhen calm down alone. You know her personality. The more we push her, the more defiant she is..."

Emperor Jiawen frowned and stared at the Empress. "Empress, you seem very unwilling for me to go see Zhen Zhen?"

This is strange. The Empress would usually think of all sorts of ways to invite me over. Emperor Jiawen knew that the Empress was trying to show off his affection for Rong Zhen, but he turned a blind eye to it for the most part. But today... was really strange.

"No! I just... just..." The Empress rebutted without thinking, but she didn't know how to continue.

Emperor Jiawen became even more suspicious, and his expression became more solemn. "Since you're unwilling, I'll go myself!"

With that, he headed for outside!

The Empress was panicked. *If I don't stop him, the consequences will be disastrous!*

She followed him without thinking, but she was coming up with countless excuses in her mind.

However, Emperor Jiawen seemed dead set on going over!

Just as she panicked, a person hurried right in. "Your Majesty, urgent news!"

Emperor Jiawen finally stopped and asked with a frown, "What urgent news? What's so urgent?"

Another person brought up a wooden box. "Your Majesty will know after you read it!"

Emperor Jiawen looked at the wooden box and narrowed his eyes. *This is the box I use for secret communications with Country Xing Luo, so it has to contain a secret letter from the other side. Why would they send news now?*

The Empress took a glance, and she was elated when she recognized what it was! *It is indeed urgent news, so His Majesty will definitely deal with it first! No matter how urgent Rong Zhen's matter is, it won't be more urgent than national matters!*

As expected, Emperor Jiawen turned to look at the Empress with the wooden box in his hand. “We’ll stop here for today. I’ll go see Rong Zhen after I’m done with all this.”

The Empress couldn’t ask for anything better. “Don’t worry, Your Majesty. I’ll go check on Zhen Zhen and counsel her later.”

Emperor Jiawen felt that something was wrong, but he couldn’t be bothered. “Back to the Imperial Study!”

Eunuch Min turned. “To the Imperial Study...”

The procession left grandly.

The Empress only breathed a sigh of relief when they disappeared, but she knew she had to find Rong Zhen—fast.

His Majesty is suspicious now, and he will definitely follow up. If he finds out that Rong Zhen is missing... The Empress dared not imagine it!

She stood in place for a while but decided to follow through with her act. “To the Fourth Princess’s residence!”

...

On the other side, Emperor Jiawen returned to the Imperial Study and only opened the wooden box when he was sure that it was secure.

There was a piece of paper within it, but there was no writing on it.

However, Emperor Jiawen wasn't surprised. Instead, he spread it out and picked up the brush next to him. He then dipped the brush in ink and pressed it down on the paper.

He did it again and again until the paper was covered in ink.

At first glance, it seemed like it was a puddle of ink, but white characters soon appeared beneath the ink.

The contents only fully appeared after about 15 minutes.

Emperor Jiawen looked at it, and a stunned expression flashed across his face. He looked a little unsure, but he closed in and read the letter word for word again.

He stared at the paper until the words disappeared. "Summon the Crown Prince!"

Chapter 353: Elder Zong Ye

In the blink of an eye, Chu Liuyue had already stayed at Tai Yan Academy for five days. Other than regular resting, she invested most of her efforts in the library.

When the sixth morning arrived, Chu Liuyue put down the book in her hands and sighed heavily. “There really isn’t any...”

These few days, she had read through all the books on the second floor once. However, she did not find anything related to Jingshen Finger.

This was within her expectations, but she was still rather disappointed.

She looked up.

The third floor was for Xuan formations, and the fourth was for medical formulas. Even though she didn’t really need books of these aspects, she could still go up to take a look at them.

Thinking of this, she finally went up.

...

Cheng Han arrived at the library again and saw two stacks of books beside each of the two guards.

Needless to ask, those were the records of the books that Chu Liuyue had read.

Cheng Han’s eyelids harshly twitched. On the first day, he knew Chu Liuyue was a ruthless character, but he still underestimated her pervertedness.

“Director, you’re here!” The two of them had suffered for many days and became much frailer, but they still forcefully energized themselves upon seeing Cheng Han’s arrival.

“How many has she read?” asked Cheng Han as he forcefully tried to control his expression. He had been busy dealing with Yang Jianqing and Heng Jingchuo’s matters these few days, so he had no time to come over.

He did not want to flip open those booklets at all!

The two of them looked at each other and felt a little guilty.

“Just say it!”

“Director, she has finished all the books on the second floor within these few days...” said one of them bravely.

Cheng Han’s vision turned black, and his heart seemed to turn numb. “Then... what about Earth-stage warrior techniques?”

“...She didn’t open any new Earth-stage warrior techniques other than the initial one.”

Cheng Han’s black vision gradually subsided, and he gulped with difficulty. *That’s good, that’s good! That’s the most important thing! As long as she doesn’t continue... everything can be saved!*

“She’s still on the second floor?”

“Yes.”

“She—”

“Mentor!”

Cheng Han was about to say something when he suddenly heard a familiar voice and turned his head in shock. “Xingchen, what’s the matter?”

Situ Xingchen smiled lightly. “I came here today to take leave from you for a while because I want to return to the palace.”

Cheng Han curiously asked, “Why do you suddenly want to go back?”

Situ Xingchen normally spent most of her time in the academy and would only return to the palace when she had something to attend to.

Situ Xingchen nodded and said, “Elder Zong Ye arrived today.”

“Elder Zong Ye?! So fast?” Cheng Han was shocked.

“Yes, Father plans to hold a welcome party for Elder Zong Ye tonight, so I have to make a trip back.”

Cheng Han knew about this. Elder Zong Ye was actually the brother of Country Xing Luo’s current Empress—Zong Yuxi—who was also Situ Xingchen’s biological uncle. He was a Mingyue Tianshan elder and had a distinguished status.

Situ Xingchen was sent there when she was young because of this connection.

Mingyue Tianshan was very far from here, and the people there rarely left the mountain. Hence, it was very rare for Elder Zong Ye to come out.

The reason for him doing so was because of Situ Ziyue.

Previously at the Qing Jiao Competition, he had lost to Chu Liuyue terribly, and both his physical and mental health was impacted greatly.

He was completely defeated, and his physical health didn’t turn better, causing Zong Yuxi to be very worried. Hence, she invited Elder Zong Ye over.

On the one hand, she wanted him to check if Situ Ziyue’s body was fine. On the other hand, she wanted to see if he could counsel Situ Ziyue.

Of course, she herself also missed this brother of hers, who she hadn’t seen in many years.

Now that Elder Zong Ye was here, they naturally had to give him grand treatment.

“You should. When you see Elder Zong Ye, tell him I said hi,” said Cheng Han.

Situ Xingchen smiled and agreed. However, her gaze silently swept past the booklets beside the two people, and bitterness flashed across her eyes. “These booklets record all the books that Chu Liuyue read?”

Upon this being mentioned, Cheng Han’s face turned terrible. “Ignore her! She just flipped through more books, but I bet she can’t even remember one-hundredth of it!”

Situ Xingchen’s smile became slightly forced. After hearing Cheng Han’s words, she could guess how scary the number of books Chu Liuyue had borrowed and read in the library was.

I have been in Tai Yan Academy for so long, but I’ve probably read fewer books than Chu Liuyue has in these few days. Besides, I have already heard from Elder Mo Cang that Chu Liuyue found an Earth-stage warrior technique book!

This made her very indignant.

She could tell that Cheng Han was unwilling to talk about it, so she sensibly did not continue asking. “When I’m not around, I can’t take care of the medicinal mountain. Mentor, please forgive me.”

“Elder Zong Ye’s matters are more important. You don’t have to worry about the medicinal mountain. Just go!” Cheng Han waved his hand.

Situ Xingchen then bowed again and turned around to leave.

Cheng Han looked back at the library. He had never wished for time to pass more quickly as badly as he did now.

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Chu Liuyue stayed on the third floor and fourth floor for two days, respectively.

Even though the Xuan formations here weren't low level, and there were some rare, precious medical formulas, they didn't hold much meaning to Chu Liuyue.

The things she remembered in her mind were much more than the ones here.

The reason why she still spent so much time on these two floors was that she hadn't given up on the Jingshen Finger.

She had a gut feeling that there was something here related to the Jingshen Finger. Thus, she became patient and continued to search for a few days. However, there were no results.

When she was free, she would sometimes repeat the Jingshen Finger scroll's contents in her mind. At the very least, she had done it at least a few hundred times, so she could even recite it backward.

However, it wasn't complete.

Chu Liuyue put down the medical formula in her hands. Back then, she thought that ten days might not be enough, but it looked like she didn't have much need to stay here on the last day.

After thinking for a while, she finally decided to leave. But when she was about to go downstairs, she felt a strange ripple above her head.

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Chapter 355: God Realm

Chu Liuyue moved forward almost uncontrollably.

The moment her body stepped into the frozen space, a chilly feeling enveloped her.

The entire space was like a flowing liquid as Chu Liuyue could clearly feel her movements in this space. The resistance she felt made it seem as though she was walking in a silently flowing stream.

She held her breath and looked up, unable to conceal her curiosity.

That black feather quietly floated in the most central region as if nothing could move it.

Chu Liuyue knew that it was the key to the legendary three-eyed eagle's God Realm. Everything in this space was controlled by that black feather.

Chu Liuyue secretly gasped in amazement at the God Realm.

Rumor had it that a cultivator could advance into a higher realm and display a God Realm's power when they broke through as a stage-nine warrior. But it was a pity that this was just a rumor to her.

The Tianling Dynasty's ancestor had once reached the cultivation level above a stage-nine warrior, but he left not long after that and never went back. The royal family's history books also didn't have any information about it afterward.

Everything was left for the people's countless guesses.

Chu Liuyue was the second person in the entire Tianling Dynasty to have the Tianjing Yuan meridian after that ancestor. Everyone was secretly anticipating that she would break through to the same realm as the ancestor, and even she herself had cultivated non-stop for that.

But it was a pity that she no longer had this chance as she was betrayed and forced to burn herself to death.

Chu Liuyue sighed in her heart as she collected her memories and walked forward.

After walking up the ninth step, she arrived in front of the Xuan formation.

She extended her hand and felt the stars on the Xuan formation.

At this point, everything in the legendary three-eyed eagle's God Realm was within its control, so even the aura on this Xuan formation seemed to be completely frozen.

Chu Liuyue continued moving forward, and her entire body passed through the Xuan formation silently.

When she turned back, she saw that the Xuan formation had already returned to its original state, and it didn't look like it was touched.

I have to admit, the legendary three-eyed eagle really has its ways... Chu Liuyue thought to herself as she finally went up to the fifth floor.

The familiar ripple came from in front.

She looked up.

...

Country Xing Luo's palace.

Situ Ziyue's bedroom.

Elder Zong Ye was taking his pulse while Situ Xingchen stood by the side and waited quietly.

After a while, Elder Zong Ye finally let go of Situ Ziyue's hand and slightly smiled. "It's better. Your internal injuries have basically recovered, and they won't affect your future cultivation."

Situ Ziyue's tense expression finally relaxed a little. "It's all thanks to you. If you didn't help me these few days, my body—"

"Hey, you can't say that! I remember that Xingchen's mentor, Cheng Han, is also a fifth-grade heavenly doctor. Even if I don't come, he can definitely help you too." Elder Zong Ye smiled as he waved his hands.

Situ Ziyue sighed and said, "Honestly, Elder Zong Ye, it's not that I don't trust Director Cheng Han, but... I trust you more."

This praise indeed made Elder Zong Ye look better.

At the side, Situ Xingchen still smiled lightly as if she didn't care that Situ Ziyue was underestimating her mentor.

She had stayed in Mingyue Tianshan for many years and definitely understood Elder Zong Ye's character.

Elder Zong Ye had entered Mingyue Tianshan to cultivate in his early years and became an elder after so many years. He had a distinguished status and naturally wouldn't look up to people like Cheng Han.

"Haha! Ziyue, I know that you're being nice, but Xingchen is here. Cheng Han is her mentor after all. Aren't you afraid that you'll hurt her by saying that?" Elder Zong Ye laughed.

"Actually, Brother is right. To me, Mentor Cheng Han can't be compared to you." Situ Xingchen's smile was bright, and her beautiful face looked genuine.

Elder Zong Ye took out his fan and gently knocked on Situ Xingchen's forehead. "I haven't seen you in a few years, but your mouth is becoming sweeter!"

Situ Xingchen laughed. "You're teasing me again."

She then looked outside and said, "The sky is dark. Elder Zong Ye, why don't you let Brother rest first, and I'll accompany you back?"

Elder Zong Ye looked at her in deep thought and laughed. "Okay, let's go and let Ziyue recover!"

Situ Ziyue originally planned to send him off personally, but he was rejected by the duo. He could only lie back down on the bed.

On the other end, Situ Xingchen accompanied Elder Zong Ye and left.

After walking a distance, they reached a slightly more isolated road when Elder Zong Ye asked, "Xingchen, is there something bothering you?"

A helpless smile appeared on Situ Xingchen's face. "It's been so many years, but my thoughts can't escape you."

Elder Zong Ye put his hands behind his back, and his voice was much lower and warmer. "I watched you grow up, and I've always treated you as my biological daughter. These few days, you've been busy with Ziyue, but I can tell that there's something troubling you and that you're not really happy. If you don't mind, you can just tell me."

Situ Xingchen kept quiet for a while until she softly said, "Elder Zong Ye, did you know... that Brother Rong Xiu is engaged?"

"What?!" Elder Zong Ye suddenly stood still and looked at Situ Xingchen in shock. "When did this happen? With who?!"

"Just ten days ago. The girl he's engaged to is... Chu Liuyue."

Elder Zong Ye was confused. "Who is that?!"

He had stayed at Mingyue Tianshan for most of his life, so he didn't understand much about the outside world.

This time when he left the mountain, he rushed over instantly and had been busy looking after Situ Ziyue's body. Thus, he didn't hear about the Qing Jiao Competition. Naturally, he didn't know about these events.

Situ Xingchen briefly introduced Chu Liuyue and roughly explained the recent happenings.

Elder Zong Ye couldn't escape his trance for a long time. "You're saying that he took the initiative to woo that girl? How can that be? His personality is so cold. He's been at Mingyue Tianshan for so many years, but he never interacted with other women much. Why did he go back and—"

Elder Zong Ye looked at Situ Xingchen painfully. "No wonder you..."

He had long felt that Situ Xingchen admired Rong Xiu. Upon seeing her miserable look now, he had indeed guessed correctly.

Situ Xingchen forced a smile and said, "You don't have to worry about me. I'm okay; I thought that I could wait for him after so many years, but I didn't expect... I guess you can just say that we have no fate."

Elder Zong Ye looked at her, thought for a while, and asked, "Why don't we ask his mentor and see if we can cancel this marriage agreement?"

Situ Xingchen's heart faltered, but she shook her head. "You can lead a horse to water, but you can't make it drink. Why must I be the evil person? Besides... Country Yao Chen's Crown Prince—Rong Jin—is coming tomorrow."

Elder Zong Ye asked in confusion, "Why did he suddenly come?"

Situ Xingchen looked down. "Marriage alliance."

Chapter 356: Lose Control

"Marriage alliance? With who?" Elder Zong Ye was dazed.

Suddenly, he understood everything when he saw Situ Xingchen's expression. "With you?!"

Situ Xingchen lightly nodded. "Father does have this intention."

Elder Zong Ye was beyond shocked. *Country Xing Luo and Country Yao Chen previously didn't interact much. Why do they suddenly want to have a marriage alliance? He is even thinking about marrying off Situ Xingchen?*

"What is your father thinking? Rong Jin isn't outstanding, and from what you said just now, he's also petty and incapable. He doesn't deserve you!"

Even if it wasn't Rong Xiu, it should be another handsome and talented lad. How could it be Rong Xiu?

Situ Xingchen seemed not to care and said, "After all, he is Country Yao Chen's Crown Prince, and he can't be completely useless after making it so far. Perhaps you've underestimated him. Besides, even though this matter hasn't been confirmed, Father is very insistent on it. He must have his reasons, right?"

"Anyway, I just don't approve of this!" grunted Elder Zong Ye. "If it really becomes true, won't you have to stay in Country Yao Chen in the future? Since Rong Jin did so many ridiculous things, it proves that he's not capable of doing great things!"

"Even though he's still the Crown Prince now, he might not be able to stay in that position for long. Xingchen, don't worry. When the lad comes tomorrow, I'll definitely stop this marriage. With me around, your father won't dare to force you!"

Situ Xingchen's eyes were evasive. "Elder Zong Ye, I know that you're doing this for my own good, but I said so many things to you today... Actually, I want you to agree to this marriage tomorrow."

"What?! You really want to marry Rong Xiu?" Elder Zong Ye looked at Situ Xingchen in disbelief. "Y-you can't be throwing a tantrum because Rong Xiu is marrying someone else, so you want to marry his brother, right?"

Situ Xingchen chuckled. "You're thinking too much. Why would I do such a thing? I really approve of this. You also know that not many people knew about this before. If this matter is suddenly brought up, many people will object to it. But if you say that you agree to this, then the others definitely won't say anything else."

Elder Zong Ye had a distinguished status in Country Xing Luo. As long as he spoke up, the matter would be successful.

"I... Xingchen, have you really decided?"

“Yes.”

Elder Zong Ye looked at Situ Xingchen’s determined expression and couldn’t help but sigh. “Okay then! Since it is so, I’ll agree!”

Situ Xingchen smiled with deep meaning. “Thank you, Elder Zong Ye.”

...

Country Yao Chen, the palace.

The sky was dark, but the Empress and Rong Jin were still discussing something in the room.

“You’re going to Country Xing Luo tomorrow. This marriage alliance must go through.” The Empress looked very stern. “This is your best chance. If you miss this, god knows how long you’ll need to wait.”

Rong Jin nodded. “I understand. Don’t worry, I’ve already contacted Situ Xingchen through mail, and there won’t be any problems.”

The Empress relaxed slightly, leaned against the chair, and a satisfied smile appeared on her face. “That’s good. I previously told you to find ways to know her better, but I didn’t expect it to be so smooth.”

Rong Jin also smiled in an arrogant manner. "Everyone said that Situ Xingchen is Country Xing Luo's brightest shining star and that countless people have proposed to her ever since she came of age, but she did not agree to them. I originally thought that she would be difficult to approach, but I didn't expect just a letter to..."

"Perhaps she was already interested in you before." The Empress sized up Rong Jin up and smiled. "To women, romance is very unpredictable."

Everyone said that Situ Xingchen was very picky, but an accomplished person like Rong Jin could very easily make her heart falter.

Originally, Rong Jin did not feel much for Situ Xingchen, but of course it would boost his ego when an outstanding all-rounder beauty liked him.

Precisely because of this, his attitude toward this marriage took a huge change.

Previously, he was still rather reluctant. But upon thinking how he could see Situ Xingchen the next day and settle their marriage, he was somewhat expectant.

"Anyway, you did great in this matter. Next time, we need to settle this as soon as possible. As long as we confirm this marriage agreement, your Crown Prince position is secured." The Empress sighed, "This way, even if your father knows about Zhen Zhen, we have something to back us up."

Rong Jin asked worriedly, "Have we still not found her?"

"There's no news at all. It's as if she has completely disappeared into thin air."

If it weren't for the peace in the palace, she would almost think that Rong Zhen was dead. However, it was clearly not so.

Rong Zhen was just secretly hidden at some place, but they couldn't find her after such a long time.

The Empress didn't know how she spent the past few days in fear and anxiety.

When Emperor Jiawen previously said that he wanted to visit Rong Zhen, he was delayed by the sudden letter from Country Xing Luo.

She later guessed that the letter's content was related to the marriage alliance. This was because Emperor Jiawen rescinded Rong Jin's punishment not long after, and he seemed to be nicer to Rong Jin.

"You're leaving tomorrow, and your father had even specifically asked Zhen Zhen to send you off, but I stopped it. Your father will be busy with you and Situ Xingchen, so he can't care about Zhen Zhen for now. But he already has his suspicions, so we can't keep this matter a secret for long. As long as you quickly settle the marriage, your father won't do anything to us when he considers the pros and cons."

Rong Jin nodded. "I understand."

...

Prince Li Mansion...

Rong Xiu sat in the study and was writing something.

Yu Mo and Yan Qing waited at the side.

The crystal, octagonal lamp shone on Rong Xiu's jade-like face.

He looked down, and his long eyelashes cast a faint shadow at the bottom of his eyes. It was like a light mist in the moonlit night—clear and distinguished.

After some time, he finally stopped writing.

Yu Mo and Yan Qing were energized as they looked up.

Rong Xiu picked up the thing he wrote, looked at it, and placed it on a square, crystal-clear jade piece.

When the two items touched, the square jade suddenly glowed.

It turned out that the jade was inwardly concave, and there was a shallow water stream.

When that item touched the water, it immediately melted and became a few waves of light on the water surface.

The light disappeared after a while, and the water recovered its initial calmness as it gradually seeped into the insides of the jade and disappeared.

One look at it, and it seemed to be an ordinary jade piece without anything special about it.

Rong Xiu pushed that item forward and said lightly, "Send this back."

Yan Qing stepped forward and carefully picked the item up, but at this point, he saw a golden glow suddenly appear on Rong Xiu's long and white fingers.

He exclaimed in shock, "Master—"

Chapter 357: Ultimate Jingshen

Rong Xiu glanced at his finger, and his gaze was cold.

The next moment, the golden light instantly disappeared.

The entire process was very fast. If Yu Mo and Yan Qing weren't standing nearby, they would've thought that it was just a part of their hallucination.

Looking slightly tired, Rong Xiu leaned against his chair with one hand on his forehead. "You're dismissed."

After their shock, Yan Qing's expression turned serious. "Master, you should hurriedly make a trip back."

I just left for a few days to take this, but Master already became like this! Upon closer thinking, Master never went back ever since he started hanging out with Chu Liuyue.

Rong Xiu closed his eyes and didn't say anything, but his meaning was clear.

"Master—"

Yan Qing wanted to advise him further, but Yu Mo coughed at the side and kept shooting Yan Qing a look.

Yan Qing turned around, saw Yu Mo, and hesitated for a while. However, he eventually still left politely. "Master, don't worry. I'll handle it right away."

He then left with the magical jade.

Yu Mo hurriedly said, "It's already very late. Master, you should rest. I'll go down too."

Rong Xiu waved his hands.

Yu Mo hurriedly followed Yan Qing out.

...

The moment Yu Mo stepped out, he saw Yan Qing waiting for him outside.

The two of them exchanged a glance and didn't say anything, but they left together.

The two of them walked side by side for quite some distance until they were far away from Rong Xiu's study.

Yan Qing then finally spoke with a cold face. "It definitely isn't the first time that today's situation has happened. Did you know about this earlier on?"

Yu Mo could only pull a bitter face and nod. "Such a situation happened a few days ago."

"Why didn't you convince him? Don't you know how serious this incident will be? If I didn't see it today, when were you planning to tell me?"

Yan Qing was usually very calm and nonchalant. He rarely had any emotions, let alone act outraged. His reaction showed how big of an impact this situation had.

Yu Mo subconsciously shivered and felt guilty for some reason. "I-I... I advised him at the time, but how can I convince Master?"

Yan Qing's face was still cold. "You should've told me earlier then!"

"What's the use of telling you?" Yu Mo harshly rubbed his face. "Do you think Master will listen to you?"

Yan Qing quietened down.

They had followed Master for many years and knew his character the best. Since he refused to go back now, nobody could convince him otherwise.

“It seems like Master previously summoning it with force... has a big impact on him,” muttered Yan Qing. *If it weren't for that, Master should've been able to hold it there for a period of time. But now...*

“Isn't Master planning on not going back during this period of time by getting you to retrieve this?” Yu Mo patted his shoulders. “Don't be too worried. Master has his own plans.”

Yan Qing kept quiet for a while and asked, “Did Master say when he's planning to return?”

Yu Mo looked like he was in a difficult position. “I think... he's waiting for Mu Qinghe to leave.”

For some reason, this Mu Qinghe had been stuck in the Imperial City. He didn't do anything, but he refused to leave.

Nobody knew what he wanted to do, and nobody dared to ask. Even Emperor Jiawen did not dare to disturb him out of the blue, let alone others.

“I think you should send this thing back first. Let's not delay what's important. If anything happens to Master, I'm still here. Don't worry; if anything else happens, I'll inform you immediately.”

Yu Mo reassured him again and again before Yan Qing finally let it go and left with the piece of jade.

As he looked at Yan Qing's departing back view, guilt flashed across Yu Mo's eyes. *If Yan Qing knew that Master's condition is actually much worse than what he had seen today, he would definitely feel terrible. Now, I can only pray for Mu Qinghe to leave as soon as possible... and for that person to hurriedly come back!*

...

Library.

Chu Liuyue stared at the empty fifth floor and knitted her brows together. *There's actually nothing here? There isn't even a bookshelf here, let alone books.*

The four white walls were empty at first glance.

Chu Liuyue felt that it was very strange. *That's not right. It is impossible for any academy with a similar library to leave an entire floor empty.*

She did not give up and went forward as she started to inspect everything. But no matter how hard she found, she didn't find anything.

She had even knocked on all of the walls, but they were still the same.

After searching around for one round, she finally stopped. Chu Liuyue held her chin and immersed herself into deep thought. *When I was previously about to leave the fourth floor, I did feel three ripples. Even if the ripples got increasingly weaker, they still existed without a doubt. However, where did they come from?*

Chu Liuyue originally thought that there had to be something special, even if the books here weren't as numerous as the other floors. However, she didn't expect that there would be nothing here.

Perhaps I haven't discovered it yet. Chu Liuyue thought for a long while and still didn't get an answer, so she swiftly sat on the floor cross-legged.

Anyway, she still had one day left and could afford to wait here to see if the ripples would appear again.

Time trickled past, but Chu Liuyue did not move at all.

She was very bored and decided to silently recite Jingshen Finger again.

When she came in, the two parties already had an agreement. She could borrow any book she wanted in the library, but she had to put them back into their original positions after she was done with them.

Moreover, she wasn't allowed to bring the books from one floor to the next.

Hence, Chu Liuyue could only rely on her memory and recite the Jingshen Finger.

She gathered all her focus, and the Jingshen Finger gradually appeared in her mind.

Chu Liuyue started recalling from the first move and cultivated.

The force in her body went toward her dantian. When they gathered and formed a ball, she controlled this strength and injected it into her right index finger.

But before that strength reached the index finger, it disappeared in her pulse.

Chu Liuyue rearranged herself, used less force, and tried again.

It still failed. However, Chu Liuyue didn't give up and kept trying.

The first step was to control her force and to allow it to extend to the right index finger through the Yuan meridian.

Just this point alone was very difficult as it required cultivators to have a resilient Yuan meridian and precise control.

At first, Chu Liuyue just wanted to try, but she later realized that it was even harder than she had thought.

Her competitiveness was triggered, and she tried more than 1,000 times.

When the sunlight poured in the next morning, a light silver color finally wrapped around Chu Liuyue's right index finger.

Before she could exclaim in joy, Chu Liuyue suddenly felt that her surroundings had lit up.

She instinctively squinted her eyes and looked at her surroundings, but she suddenly widened them.

Countless silver symbols appeared on the four walls around her, and they sparkled brightly.

Chapter 358: Heavenly Stage Warrior Technique!

Chu Liuyue looked at the scene in front of her in shock. *The fifth floor is indeed not empty! Such a big secret was actually hidden in its four walls!*

Chu Liuyue instinctively wanted to move forward.

Suddenly, countless rays flew from all directions and gradually gathered in front of her.

After a moment, two silver words appeared in front of her: "Ultimate Jingshen!"

Those two words were like a stream of water as they shook lightly. They sparkled brightly, but they had a superior suppression to them.

Chu Liuyue's heart jumped. *This aura... is very similar to Jingshen Finger, but it seems to be even more powerful than Jingshen Finger! This suppression... is beyond this world!*

Chu Liuyue's heart beat rapidly. As if she was mysteriously attracted to something, she slowly raised her fingers and touched the two words.

Doing this was like calmly throwing a stone into a calm lake.

The empty air in front of her suddenly had ripples, and they spread in all directions with the two words in the middle.

The ripples extended to the surrounding walls.

Buzz!

A mysterious ripple was felt again.

Chu Liuyue looked over. She saw those few words floating on the four walls being affected as they started extinguishing like the stars in a dark sky.

Her heart skipped a beat. *This ripple is exactly the same as the one I previously experienced on the fourth floor.*

The next moment, Chu Liuyue suddenly felt a strange feeling coming from her fingers, which extended to the bottom of her heart.

There instantly seemed to be an indescribable connection between her and this entire space.

Chu Liuyue looked up as if she had felt something and stared at the right to scrutinize the handwriting closely.

Very quickly, she realized that the contents were exactly the same as the Jingshen Finger she saw earlier.

She hurriedly looked at the second wall. *As expected, its contents are related to the previous Jingshen Finger.*

But upon closer inspection, Chu Liuyue felt that something was amiss. *The content on the second wall turned Jingshen Finger into a palm move, and its suppression also became stronger.*

Chu Liuyue closed her eyes and seriously looked again. She could basically confirm that this palm move was an intermediate Earth-stage move.

A ridiculous yet bold thought suddenly flashed across Chu Liuyue's mind.

She almost immediately looked at the third wall.

At this point, the palm move became a fist technique.

The more important point was that one could reach the advanced Earth-stage once this fist technique was mastered.

Chu Liuyue took a deep breath in and tried hard to calm her harshly beating heart as she looked at the last wall.

Like the first three walls, there were dimly lit words floating on it. However, when Chu Liuyue stared at it for quite some time, she realized that she didn't understand what it was.

She couldn't smoothly read and understand all the words and sentences, which looked very messy.

Chu Liuyue looked at the fourth wall for some time, but she still had no clue. However, this made her even more agitated. *Rumors have it that Heaven-stage warrior techniques are different from average warrior techniques that are written down on paper. All the Heaven-stage techniques in the world have to be acquired by the gods by chance.*

If one wants to cultivate Heaven-stage techniques, they can't use their eyes to see. They have to use their force to feel it instead. If the cultivator isn't strong enough, they wouldn't even understand it, let alone see it—which is exactly what is happening now!

Chu Liuyue had once seen a Heaven-stage warrior technique in her previous life, which was on the day she turned of age.

It was left behind by the Tianling Dynasty's ancestor, and it had always been treasured by the royal family.

Originally, she could officially start cultivating that Heaven-stage warrior technique after she ascended the throne, but she couldn't wait for that day to come.

But even though so much time had passed, Chu Liuyue could still clearly remember what happened when she saw that Heaven-stage warrior technique.

She remembered everything clearly, so she was certain that the content on the last wall was indeed a Heaven-stage warrior technique.

Chu Liuyue clenched her fists tightly, and blood rushed throughout her body, making her feel like she was burning.

Actually, when she saw the second wall's contents, she guessed that the technique's grade would gradually increase.

It really turned out to be so! It was even a Heaven-stage warrior technique!

After her shock, Chu Liuyue started to calm down and think. *No wonder Elder Mo Cang said that only directors could enter the fifth floor. Once people know about this earth-shattering secret, it would attract countless powerful warriors to fight for it. By then, Tai Yan Academy would definitely be unable to hold them back. The entire Country Xing Luo might even be implicated.*

But...

Chu Liuyue didn't understand why such a shocking thing would exist in the small Tai Yan Academy at Country Xing Luo.

She even suspected that Tai Yan Academy's director did not know what it was. *If Cheng Han knew about it, why did he not cultivate it? Even if he doesn't understand the Heaven-stage warrior technique now, the fist technique and palm technique from before are equally shocking. If he doesn't know...*

"You owe me another time." The legendary three-eyed eagle's voice suddenly sounded.

Chu Liuyue was stunned, and she immediately reacted. *Yes, Heaven-stage warrior techniques exert immense suppression. If it weren't for the legendary three-eyed eagle's God Realm, I would've long caused a huge commotion. Judging from this, the legendary three-eyed eagle has indeed helped me quite a bit.*

"Okay, I'll temporarily remember it." Chu Liuyue didn't mind and admitted to it swiftly.

The legendary three-eyed eagle kept quiet for a while before coldly saying, "Your luck is pretty good."

Chu Liuyue's lips curved up. "Of course!"

Isn't that so? It's heaven-defying! This is a Heaven-stage warrior technique! Some people might not even be able to see one in their entire lives! I just came to look at some books in the library and chanced upon it!

Even Chu Liuyue couldn't help but gasp that her trip was very worth it. However, there was an urgent problem—she had no way of bringing the Ultimate Jingshen away.

She had already memorized the Jingshen Finger.

Jingshen Palm and Jingshen Fist were much more complicated, but she could definitely remember them if she looked at them more.

The most troublesome thing was the content on the last wall.

Chu Liuyue realized that she had no way of recalling the information on it.

Heaven-stage warrior techniques exerted immense suppression. Considering her current cultivation level and abilities, she had no way of understanding them.

Every time she finished looking at it, there seemed to be a hand that successfully wiped away the information from her brain by force.

Moreover, Chu Liuyue felt exhausted after a few tries.

She knew that this was the outcome of forcing herself, so she did not continue. Instead, she turned her attention to the two words shining in front of her.

“Ultimate Jingshen...” muttered Chu Liuyue softly.

Chu Liuyue had to leave this place today, so she had to come up with a way to remember it. She really couldn't give up on the Heaven-stage warrior technique that was just within her reach.

She looked at her hands and thought of a question: *How did I summon this Ultimate Jingshen previously?*

Suddenly, a ripple was felt in her dantian.

Chu Liuyue was slightly shocked.

A water droplet appeared on her fingertip.

That water droplet rapidly changed and later became a piece of transparent, broken paper.

The last wall's content was clearly reflected on it.

Chapter 359: Inscription Copying

The light glowing on the transparent paper was flashing according to the blinking of the handwriting on that wall.

That item then flew to Chu Liuyue again.

Chu Liuyue focused on it and instantly gasped when she saw what was on it.

She saw that the torn transparent paper's content was exactly the same as what was written on the last wall. Every symbol, even every spark of light, was identical.

The size of the transparent page wasn't even one-hundredth of that wall, but when Chu Liuyue saw it, she felt that the symbols reflected on the transparent paper were very clear for some reason. She could even clearly see the small spaces between the symbols.

It was just a torn, transparent book page, but Chu Liuyue felt that it had infinite space to contain everything.

Chu Liuyue stretched out her hand, and the transparent paper flew into her hands.

She looked down to take a closer look and noticed that every symbol could be clearly seen.

She opened her mouth, but she was too shocked to say anything—*This transparent paper has completely copied the inscription of the Heaven-stage warrior technique on the last wall.*

If Chu Liuyue hadn't seen it for herself, she definitely wouldn't believe it.

Heaven-stage warrior techniques are a godly presence. How could they be so easily copied? Chu Liuyue closed her eyes, took a deep breath, and opened them again.

Everything in front of her did not disappear!

Chu Liuyue couldn't help but look at the wall again, but it did not change.

The next moment, her palm felt cold. That torn piece of paper formed back into a water droplet and returned to her dantian.

Then, Chu Liuyue could clearly feel that there was something extra in her brain—it was the Heaven-stage technique!

Even if she couldn't understand it now, it actually existed in her body!

“T-this can even happen?” Chu Liuyue muttered to herself.

She only knew that the water droplet in her dantian contained insurmountable strength and that it could save her every time she met with danger. However, she didn't expect it to be able to help her copy the Heaven-stage warrior technique!

No, she didn't expect Heaven-stage warrior techniques to be copyable.

“It's not copying the inscription; it just forcefully stole the Heavenly Dao in it,” said the legendary three-eyed eagle suddenly.

Chu Liuyue was dazed. “What?”

The legendary three-eyed eagle slowly said, “Look at it again.”

Chu Liuyue glanced at the last wall again. “There's aren't any changes—”

Before she could finish her sentence, Chu Liuyue suddenly felt that something was amiss.

The symbols on the last wall didn't change, but the overall aura was indeed different. It seemed like... it had lost the indescribable godly sensation from before, leaving behind a messy cluster of symbols.

The three big silver words floating in front of her gradually disappeared into thin air.

"The reason why Heaven-stage warrior techniques are different is that they have the Heavenly Dao. Now that this strength has been taken away by you, everything left behind will turn into garbage. Without the direction from the Heavenly Dao, cultivators won't be enlightened even if they look at it for the next 100 years."

Chu Liuyue was elated. "I see! So does this mean that this so-called... Heavenly Dao is equivalent to a Heaven-stage warrior technique's soul? Without this, a Heaven-stage warrior technique is as good as dead, right?"

"It seems like you aren't that stupid," said the legendary three-eyed eagle coldly.

Chu Liuyue didn't care about the legendary three-eyed eagle's mockery toward her. She appreciated it for telling her this.

After a moment of deep thought, she continued, "Then, if I leave now and bring the item away with me, will others find out there's something wrong here?"

The legendary three-eyed eagle chuckled and had an unconcealable arrogant tone to it. "Of course not. In my God Realm, I control everything. Even if you leave here, nobody will find out that there are any changes unless they are also a strong warrior that can understand Heaven-stage warrior techniques."

Chu Liuyue felt more assured. *There shouldn't be this kind of existence in Tai Yan Academy.*

She nodded. "Let's go right now!"

...

When Chu Liuyue came out of the library, it was close to noon.

After the torture during this period of time, the duo at the door had slimmed down quite a bit and looked very frail. Thus, they all widened their mouths in shock when they saw Chu Liuyue walking out.

"C-Chu..." The two of them stuttered for half a day and could only point at Chu Liuyue with trembling fingers.

Chu Liuyue looked up at the blue sky, lightly exhaled, and said to the two people behind her, "I left early."

"R-really?" The both of them were stunned and in disbelief. *Chu Liuyue can stay inside for a month. It has only been ten days, yet she's planning to end it?*

Chu Liuyue tilted her head, and her gaze swept across the stack of booklets beside the duo. "Do those record all the books I've read?"

The two of them instinctively nodded. When they saw Chu Liuyue's seemingly smiling expression, they recovered their senses and hung their head in shame.

They knew clearly how many books Chu Liuyue had read—she had read through the entire second floor and quite a bit of the third and fourth floors.

Even if she left now, she had seen more than enough. If she really stayed for a full month, she would finish reading through the entire library.

“Y-you... I'll call Elder Mo Cang over right away!” One of them left in a hurry.

Chu Liuyue didn't mind and waited on the spot. *Ten days have passed. I wonder how it's going on Mu Qinghe's side...*

...

Palace, Imperial City, Country Yao Chen.

Emperor Jiawen's face was as dark as thunder as he directed a deadly glare at the Empress in front of him. “Let me ask you again: Where is Rong Zhen?”

The Empress panicked, and she hurriedly explained, “Your Majesty, listen to my explanation—”

Hua!

Emperor Jiawen suddenly swept everything on the table to the floor and angrily hollered, "I'm asking you: Where's Rong Zhen now?!"

The Empress was so frightened that her entire body trembled. Her legs went weak as she knelt on the floor.

Tears streamed down her face. "Your Majesty, I-I also don't know where Rong Zhen is now..."

Emperor Jiawen was so angry that his face turned green. The past few days, he didn't have time to care about Rong Zhen due to Country Xing Luo's matters. After Rong Jin left with the rest, he then remembered that he hadn't seen Rong Zhen in a while.

Thinking that Rong Zhen didn't come out on such an important day, Emperor Jiawen felt that she was too immature and wanted to go to her room personally and lecture her.

In the midst of it, the Empress had stopped him a few times, which made him increasingly suspicious. In the end, he directly got someone to push open the door to Rong Zhen's room.

When he entered, he realized that Rong Zhen was not there. He then realized that something was amiss, and he started questioning the Empress.

At this moment, Eunuch Min suddenly rushed over from outside and whispered something into Emperor Jiawen's ears.

Emperor Jiawen was furious as he harshly kicked the Empress's chest. "Si Huijing, you're so brazen! How dare you secretly have guards by your side?"

Chapter 360: Telepathic Bell

The Empress's heart skipped a beat. *The matter is indeed exposed!*

She was petrified as she tolerated the pain in her chest and begged pitifully. "Your Majesty, I don't have any other intentions for doing it! I just wanted to protect myself. All these years, there's only Si Meng..."

"How dare you argue?" Emperor Jiawen was infuriated, and his eyes seemed to have fire blazing in them.

The Empress was taken aback. *Emperor Jiawen has never directed such a huge outburst toward me before.*

Actually, she also knew that this incident had crossed Emperor Jiawen's bottom line. It did not matter if she had one or ten; the important thing was that Emperor Jiawen didn't know about Si Meng's presence.

This was akin to giving Emperor Jiawen and all the guards in the palace a resounding slap.

"Speak! Where's that traitor and Rong Zhen now?"

The Empress cried and shook her head. "Your Majesty, I really don't know. Si Meng had died a few days ago, but Zhen Zhen is still missing..."

Emperor Jiawen stared at her with a deadly gaze and sneered. "Dead? Isn't that too much of a coincidence?"

"It's true! I've always kept in contact with him, but it suddenly broke a few days ago. He really died! Your Majesty, I'm not lying to you!"

Upon seeing the Empress's appearance, Emperor Jiawen finally believed her a little. However, his anger didn't subside at all. "We can talk about him being alive or dead later. Now, I want to know where Rong Zhen is!"

The Empress cried even more miserably. "Your Majesty, I've actually been looking for Rong Zhen in secret these few days, b-but... I couldn't find any clues... I'm also very worried, and I couldn't sleep at night..."

Emperor Jiawen couldn't hold it in and kicked her again. "If you were truly uneasy, you would've told me earlier! If I didn't find out about it myself today, how long were you planning to hide this from me? You're already the Empress, and your son is the Crown Prince. What else are you unsatisfied with?"

The Empress knelt on the floor, and her hair was messy. Her clothes were dirty, and she looked very unkempt.

Eunuch Min stood behind Emperor Jiawen and was horrified by this scene. He had served His Majesty for many years, but he had never seen him hit the Empress before. This showed that His Majesty was really enraged this time.

He did not dare to move either.

It was fine that the Empress had hidden the fact that Rong Zhen went missing, but she had also secretly kept guards by her side. This was clearly pitting herself against His Majesty! Once this thing was exposed, she might not even be able to continue being the Empress.

“Someone, drag the Empress down! At the same time, summon Si Ye to the palace!” Emperor Jiawen wanted to ask Si Ye if the Si family intended to rebel.

The Empress suddenly raised her head, and her face was filled with horror. *Is His Majesty locking me up? How can this be? Once word gets out, I definitely can't be the Empress anymore!*

“Your Majesty, Your Majesty! I’m begging you, please take into account me serving you for so many years and let me off this time around! There’s still R-Rong... Rong Jin! I can accept any punishment you give me, but if Country Xing Luo finds out about this, it will definitely affect both parties’ marriage alliance!”

Her later sentences made Emperor Jiawen falter. *That’s right. Rong Jin is currently in Country Xing Luo. If things go smoothly, he can settle his marriage with Situ Xingchen. However, if news of this ugly matter gets out...*

He glared at the Empress harshly, causing her heart to go weak. “Si Huijing! You really know how to play your cards!”

She must’ve planned all of this in advance and purposely made Rong Jin her last shield! Emperor Jiawen clearly knew that the Empress had dug a hole for him, but he had to jump into it!

The Empress’s pale lips trembled, and she looked away, not daring to look at Emperor Jiawen or speak another word.

After some time, Emperor Jiawen coldly said, "Send my word down! The Empress is gravely ill and can't get out of bed. In the future, everything in the palace will be handled by Concubine Gu!"

The Empress's heart sank. *His Majesty is grounding me and taking away all my power!*

"Your Majesty!"

Emperor Jiawen lowered himself and harshly squeezed the Empress's chin. He enunciated every word carefully as he said, "I'll send someone to find Rong Zhen. When Rong Jin's matter is over, and we find out the truth behind Rong Zhen's whereabouts, I'll teach you a lesson."

He then flung his wrist, and the Empress collapsed on the floor.

Emperor Jiawen turned around and walked out of the room with big steps.

Eunuch Min glanced at the Empress and hurriedly followed him.

Only when their figures disappeared did the Empress finally heave a sigh of relief and take something out from her arms. *Now, all my hopes are on Rong Jin... This marriage alliance must go smoothly!*

...

Country Xing Luo.

The palace held a welcome party for Rong Jin and the rest.

In the palace, everyone gathered together to drink and gamble.

Many of them gave a toast to Rong Jin, and the atmosphere was very lively. This was because Country Xing Luo's Emperor, Situ Chong, had just agreed to Rong Jin's proposal for Situ Xingchen.

The two parties had officially become engaged!

Situ Chong seemed to be very satisfied with Rong Jin as he directly arranged the date of their wedding to be a month later.

This made the crowd very doubtful. Many aristocratic families had previously requested for Situ Xingchen's hand in marriage, but both Situ Xingchen and Situ Chong did not budge.

Originally, they thought that Situ Chong couldn't bear to give his princess away, but they did not expect him to agree readily when Rong Jin appeared.

Of course, everyone knew that the marriage alliance was a serious matter and that they had definitely already discussed it in advance.

This was just a routine of formality. However, the crowd still did not understand why it was Rong Jin.

They heard that Country Yao Chen's Crown Prince did not have a good reputation recently.

The more surprising thing was that Elder Zong Ye—who had just returned from Mingyue Tianshan—seemed to admire Rong Jin quite a bit.

With his words, nobody dared to object to it.

The marriage alliance was then completed smoothly.

Rong Jin was enveloped in everyone's enthusiastic greetings and was over the moon. Looking at other people's looks of jealousy and envy, he finally could unleash everything he suffered previously.

With a face full of smiles, he toasted Situ Xingchen—who was sitting not far away.

Situ Xingchen smiled and nodded, looking extremely graceful.

Rong Jin felt relieved. *What's mine will still be mine.*

Suddenly, his gaze changed, and he smiled at the crowd. "My head hurts slightly; I'll go out to take a breather."

The crowd thought that Rong Jin was heading outside to avoid drinking that much, so they chuckled and didn't stop him.

Rong Jin left the palace in quite a hurry.

Situ Xingchen squinted her eyes, stood up, and followed him out.

Rong Jin walked to an isolated corner and took out a bell from his arms.

The bell was ringing at this point, and the sound was extremely soft. However, Rong Jin's face turned even worse.

Before he left, he specifically left this telepathic bell behind. If Rong Zhen's matter was exposed, his mother would ring the bell.

Did something happen to Mother?

"Your Highness." A gentle voice was heard.