

## **Nobel Ruler 431**

### **Chapter 431: Sudden Surrounding**

Situ Xingchen immediately rushed to the hole and extended her hand to take the wooden box back.

At this time, Tuan Zi jumped out and directly knocked against the wooden box.

The wooden box instantly moved to the side, narrowly escaping Situ Xingchen's hand.

Indignance flashed across Situ Xingchen's eyes, but her actions showed no forms of hesitation as she continued to go forward. She planned to give her all through that broken hole.

The item inside the wooden box was important, but it couldn't be compared to her life.

*As long as I can escape from this place, everything can be discussed. When I go out, I will have chances to get the box back.*

But just as her head stuck out of the hole, a cold wind suddenly came through.

*Bang!*

Chu Liuyue's foot came flying forward as it hit Situ Xingchen's face.

Her figure suddenly flew backward and harshly slammed against the metal cage bars behind.

Taking the chance, Tuan Zi had already thrown the wooden box out.

Chu Liuyue easily took it and opened it.

A scroll of goat-skin paper lay in the box, and an indescribable suppression spread from the surface.

Chu Liuyue confirmed that this was it.

*Pak!*

She closed the wooden box again and placed it within the Cosmic Bag. Her series of actions was very smooth.

Situ Xingchen finally recovered her senses as her brain whirred, and her face felt excruciating pain.

An intense, bloody taste came between her lips as she opened her mouth and spat out blood. However, she discovered that it contained half her tooth.

Chu Liuyue used all her strength in that kick, and Situ Xingchen didn't even have the chance to escape as she got hit straight in the face.

Half her tooth was kicked away.

Situ Xingchen's hands trembled as she touched her face.

Her face had sticky bloodstains, and it quickly swelled up.

Without looking at a mirror, she knew how unkempt she looked at this moment.

Situ Xingchen's lungs were about to explode. *Not only did Chu Liuyue snatch the wooden box, but she has even ruined my appearance.*

This completely broke her last strand of rationality.

"I'll fight you to death!" Situ Xingchen hurled toward Chu Liuyue with all her might.

A silver light flashed, and a dagger appeared in Chu Liuyue's hands. Then, she raised her wrist.

*Choo!*

A thin blade flew out of the dagger and went for Situ Xingchen's head.

Upon feeling the sharp murderous intent, Situ Xingchen's heart sank as she immediately dodged it, but her force was sealed. Together with the torture she experienced in the past few days, she was exhausted.

In this manner, her footsteps were much slower than before.

Chu Liuyue's flying blade was very fast.

The sound of a sharp blade scraping past one's skin was heard.

That flying blade actually went right through Situ Xingchen's left shoulder. A bloody hole appeared, and blood spurted everywhere.

"Ah!" Situ Xingchen yelled out bitterly as she collapsed in defeat.

She anxiously looked at her shoulders that were still bleeding. The fresh, red blood quickly stained her entire shirt.

The bloody smell filled the air, and it was coupled with some awful scent that made one want to vomit.

Situ Xingchen was about to stand up when a second flying blade flew out of Chu Liuyue's dagger. This time, it was aimed at her left ankle.

A few crushed bones flew out.

Situ Xingchen's face turned white from the pain, and she couldn't even say anything as she curled into a ball.

Only her pair of eyes was glaring at Chu Liuyue in vengeance as if she wanted to tear her apart.

Chu Liuyue ignored her gaze.

*Hong!*

A loud sound came from outside again.

*It's time to leave!* Chu Liuyue turned around and ran outside.

Situ Xingchen struggled to stand up, but she still fell down defeatedly. She could only watch Chu Liuyue's figure disappear into the night.

Her chest vibrated, and she vomited blood again. *Chu Liuyue... If there's the chance, I'll make sure you suffer a hundred-fold of whatever I did today!*

Situ Xingchen took a deep breath in, bit her finger, and sent out a blood pearl. Then, she rubbed the blood onto the jade bracelet on her wrist.

It shone lightly, and the blood pearl was rapidly absorbed by the jade bracelet before disappearing without a trace.

However, the overlapping lights gradually became blood red.

...

Chu Liuyue went up the stairs, and the moment she jumped out, she felt the terrifying side-effects.

She looked over and shockingly discovered that the previously sturdy Xuan formation had actually cracked and was about to fall.

In front, the elder in gray had already been surrounded by countless imperial guards.

One look at it, and one would see three rows inside and three out. Even the frontmost position had a pile of corpses.

They were all clearly killed by the elder in gray.

Chu Liuyue knitted her brows slightly. *This elder is even stronger than I thought...*

Precisely because of this, the two parties entered a stalemate.

Suddenly, the elder in gray lowered his head and seemed to have seen something. His back was facing Chu Liuyue, so she couldn't see what he was doing.

But the next moment, the elder's aura started to spread.

"Whoever blocks me shall die!" His thick voice contained shocking strength.

With him as the center, an invisible force started spreading in all directions. Then, he turned around and rushed toward Blessing Palace.

Chu Liuyue's heart skipped a beat. *He's coming straight in my direction.*

*Huala!*

The defensive Xuan formation completely broke down.

*As long as he enters the palace, he will immediately feel my presence.* Chu Liuyue scanned her surroundings but discovered that she would attract attention when she escaped in any direction.

Just as she felt very conflicted, a white fire suddenly started burning from the side door of Blessing Palace.

When Emperor Jiawen rushed over, he saw this: The gigantic, silver Xuan formation had already broken down, and an elder in gray had rushed to the front of Blessing Palace.

The green-white fire started rising and surrounded the entire Blessing Palace.

Emperor Jiawen's temples throbbed as all the blood in his body seemed to freeze. "Stop him! Stop him!"

*Situ Xingchen is still inside! This man clearly wants to use the fire as a diversion to bring Situ Xingchen out! Absolutely no way is that going to happen!* Actually, Emperor Jiawen didn't know that the elder in gray was also stuck in the fire.

The fire came very suddenly, and it was burning wildly.

Even though he was a stage-six warrior, it was rather troublesome to deal with the fire.

At the same time, Chu Liuyue—who saw the burning fire in the palace—rushed out of the nearby window without hesitation.

When she jumped into the fire, her body was wrapped by a red fire.

A figure suddenly appeared in front of her and blocked her way.

It was that mysterious person!

**Chapter 432: Qi Han**



Chu Liuyue instantly became alert. *Did he appear at this time to attack me?*

The wide hat and robe covered his entire figure, and even his face had a black handkerchief.

From head to toe, he only revealed his narrow, black eyes.

Chu Liuyue looked at that pair of eyes, and an intense familiarity overwhelmed her heart.

Chu Liuyue's eyes shrunk. A name was stuck in her throat as if it was going to jump out at any time.

He looked at her with eyes that were as calm as dead water, without any ripples. However, Chu Liuyue instantly understood what he meant.

She looked at him and slowly extended her hand. Her fingertips were still trembling, but she slowly and determinedly showed a gesture in the end.

That man's gaze finally changed. The next moment, something flew out of his sleeves.

A silver light flashed across Chu Liuyue's eyes.

The next moment, she felt that her entire figure seemed to be dragged into a strange space.

Her surroundings were pitch black, and the strong oppression overwhelmed her, but Chu Liuyue did not panic. She knew that this was a transportation Yuan instrument—Tianying Ring.

This item was very precious. Even in the Tianling Dynasty, it was also a priceless treasure.

One just had to inject some force into the Tianying Ring, and they could instantly transport from one place to another.

According to the traveling distance, the ring was differentiated into various grades. The higher the grade, the rarer it was. Its relative safeness would also be higher.

Chu Liuyue had one before, so she knew it rather well.

After feeling it, she confirmed this was a superior-grade Tianying Ring.

Even though the disruptions in the space made one feel uncomfortable, there was no need to worry. Besides, she could feel the person standing near her.

Even though she couldn't see anything, Chu Liuyue did not worry.

The pair of narrow eyes kept replaying in her mind.

She took a deep breath in and suppressed her inner questions and emotions.

Not long later, the surrounding suppression suddenly disappeared.

Chu Liuyue was relaxed. She looked up and realized that she was at home again.

The candle in her room was still burning, emitting a faint light, as if she had never left before.

Looking at the moon hanging high in the night sky, Chu Liuyue roughly estimated that the entire process didn't even take two hours.

A hard gaze landed on her.

Chu Liuyue's heart tingled as she took a deep breath and finally turned around.

The two of them stared straight into each other's eyes.

The hand in Chu Liuyue's sleeves curled slightly as she finally said, "You... You came here today to help me take something from Situ Xingchen?"

That man didn't say anything, but his gaze changed.

Chu Liuyue couldn't describe her emotions. Her heart seemed to be stuffed with thick, soft, and wet cotton, which caused her to be unable to breathe.

However, there seemed to be a vague light that pierced through the mist in front of her, letting her have some hope and expectations...

The two of them fell silent.

Chu Liuyue knew what she was waiting for. She even knew what the other party was waiting for.

The clear moonlight shone down, dragging the duo's shadows.

Chu Liuyue clenched her hands and relaxed. She repeated the actions again as she started sweating on this slightly cold night.

After a while, she opened her mouth. Due to her nervousness, her throat was dry. "Below the Southern Mountain."

Her every word and sentence was pronounced very clearly. Together with faint bitterness and deep longing, the originally clear voice became slightly hoarse.

The opposite man's gaze finally became very affected. He finally opened his mouth and said his first sentence of the night. "The Thirteen Yue Guard returns!"

The next moment, he waved his sleeves and knelt down on one knee as his right hand was tightly pressed to the left side of his chest. "Princess, allow Qi Han[1] to bow to you!"

*It's him! It's really him!* Even though Chu Liuyue had already guessed his identity earlier, her heart still started beating wildly when she heard and confirmed it personally.

It was like a fire had expanded from her heart, burning her entire person.

Everything in the surroundings became blurred; only the figure in front of her became increasingly clear.

Chu Liuyue had imagined this many times as she wondered if anyone could see her true identity through this facade.

She thought of many people, but she didn't expect it to be the Thirteen Yue Guard. Besides, it was actually at this time and at this place!

Below the Northern mountain, the Thirteen Yue Guard returns!

This was the secret code between her and the Thirteen Yue Guard. Other than them, nobody else knew about it.

Therefore, when Chu Liuyue said the former sentence, it was akin to admitting her identity.

She closed her eyes and turned to walk to the house. "Come in and talk."

"Yes!"

...

Chu Liuyue walked into the room, and Qi Han followed her in.

After locking all the windows and ensuring that nobody would find something wrong, Chu Liuyue sat down on the stool.

She looked up, and Qi Han stood at the side with his back straight, but his eyes turned toward her from time to time.

It was obvious that Qi Han was still as shocked and confused as she was toward this situation.

Chu Liuyue raised her chin. "Sit."

Qi Han immediately said, "Thank you, Your Highness! I'll just stand!"

Chu Liuyue couldn't help but laugh out loud. *After not seeing each other for so long, everything has changed, but Qi Han's personality didn't change at all.*

"Sit. I'm no longer your master now. You don't have to be so restrained."

Qi Han immediately knelt down again. "The Thirteen Yue Guard only have you as our master!"

He paused and lowered his voice. "Or... do you not want us again?"

Chu Liuyue's nose turned sour. "Since when did I not want you? Get up first."

However, Qi Han was very stubborn. "You haven't returned in so long. Allow me to kneel some more to make up for the past few times."

Chu Liuyue laughed, but her eyes turned red. "If you don't get up, you can go back now."

Qi Han hesitated for a while before standing up straight at the side. After a slight pause, he said, "After you left, I didn't have anywhere to return to."

Chu Liuyue turned around and held back her tears. After a while, she calmed the turmoil in her heart. "Tell me. How did you spend the past year? How did you find me here?"

Qi Han said, "...Actually, before you got into trouble, we already noticed that something was wrong and planned to go back. However, we met with many people that ambushed us on the way. When we got back, you... More than half of the cave was burned..."

Chu Liuyue was dazed. "So, it means that you went back on that day?"

Qi Han nodded. "It's all because we're useless and went back too late!"

Chu Liuyue suddenly thought of something. "What's with the burns on your hand?"

Qi Han paused.

“You burned it that day, right?” asked Chu Liuyue.

Upon seeing Qi Han’s silent look, her heart jumped. “Take down your mask!”

### **Chapter 433: Nine-Colored Heavenly Pheasant**

Qi Han hesitated for a moment but still did it. The Thirteen Yue Guard never disobeyed Her Highness’s commands.

When he removed his mask and took off his hat, Chu Liuyue’s heart twitched harshly.

The youngster’s neck and the left side of his face were all filled with burn marks.

*The originally handsome appearance actually became like this. Only that pair of narrow eyes is still like old times.*

“W-why must you...” Chu Liuyue spoke with much difficulty. The moment she said those few words, it was like something choked her.

“Knowing that Your Highness is in danger, how can the Thirteen Yue Guard run away? It’s all because of our uselessness that we failed to save you.”



Qi Han didn't care about his ruined appearance and body. He only cared that he couldn't protect Her Highness as he went back too late.

Chu Liuyue did not speak for some time. *All along, I thought that I had died alone without any dependence. I did not expect that the Thirteen Yue Guard would return that day.*

"What happened after that?"

"After that, Jiang Yucheng continued sending people to kill us secretly. We planned to join the others and take revenge for you, but..."

"But you discovered too many of them had already betrayed me, right?" Chu Liuyue smiled slightly, and her eyes were calm as if she were narrating someone else's story.

Qi Han hesitated for a while before saying, "Actually, only a minority betrayed you. However... a portion of them held high statuses, so the situation was harder to deal with. Besides, we're just your personal guards, and we don't have much say. So..."

Chu Liuyue nodded in understanding. Even if Qi Han didn't say it, she could roughly guess the situation back then. "It's really hard on you to do that. What else happened?"

Jiang Yucheng and Shangguan Wan would definitely not let the Thirteen Yue Guard off so easily, and they would try to kill them all.

"Are the other Thirteen Yue Guard members okay currently?"

Qi Han clenched his fists. "Don't worry; the others are doing fine."

Chu Liuyue then felt better. Now, the Thirteen Yue Guard were the few people she could trust. "That's good, that's good... But Qi Han, why did you leave Heaven's Canopy alone? How did you find me?"

Actually, this was what Chu Liuyue was most curious about. Even I felt that having my soul in someone else's body was too ridiculous. How did Qi Han even find me? Besides, judging by how he behaved earlier, he clearly already knew about it. He came here today just for confirmation.

"Your Highness, not only me but the other Thirteen Yue Guard members also aren't in the Tianling Dynasty anymore. A month after the fire, Jiang Yucheng framed us for betraying the country and said that it was our actions that led to you going crazy during cultivation... After that, he sent out a warrant for us. The Thirteen Yue Guard discussed this and decided to leave Heaven's Canopy together."

*"Jiang Yucheng is such a bully!" Chu Liuyue's expression turned cold. Not only did he drive me to my death, but he even framed the Thirteen Yue Guard. After my death, he could literally cover the sky in the Tianling Dynasty with Shangguan Wan's help. Under these circumstances, it was the correct decision for the Thirteen Yue Guard to leave.*

"Actually, you could just leave the Tianling Dynasty. You didn't need to leave Heaven's Canopy. All of you are strong; it's a waste of your talents if you go outside." Chu Liuyue felt pity in her heart.

However, Qi Han shook his head. "Your Highness, you don't know, but we finally left Heaven's Canopy because we received a letter."

Chu Liuyue was stunned. "What letter?"

“A letter... regarding you!” Speaking of this, Qi Han suddenly looked up and gazed at Chu Liuyue determinedly. “The letter said that if we wanted to avenge you, we had to leave Heaven’s Canopy first!”

Chu Liuyue was shocked. “Who wrote that letter?”

“It was anonymous, and we still don’t know who wrote it even now. But... We didn’t have any other choice back then, so we just did it.”

“What?” Chu Liuyue was shocked. “It’s just a letter, yet all of you believed it and... did it?”

She had meticulously raised the Thirteen Yue Guard, and all of them were very capable and careful.

*Why would they make such a decision because of a mere letter? This is ridiculous!*

Qi Han’s expression turned strange. “Because... Because that letter’s handwriting was exactly the same as yours! The point is: there was an item of yours inside.”

*Chu Liuyue almost thought that she had heard wrongly as she immediately knitted her brows. Many people have seen my handwriting, so it isn’t impossible for one to mimic it. It’s impossible for the Thirteen Yue Guard to do it just because of the similar handwriting. If so, the item that came with the letter became very important and was the decision-making factor.*

“What item?”

“A feather from the Nine-Colored Heavenly Pheasant!”

Chu Liuyue abruptly stood up.

The Nine-Colored Heavenly Pheasant was her fiend back then. When she chose to drag everyone down and commit suicide, she had intentionally released the Nine-Colored Heavenly Pheasant to protect its life.

But after what happened in the end, the Nine-Colored Heavenly Pheasant had clearly died that day as well.

Besides, the Nine-Colored Heavenly Pheasant’s feathers were very precious, and they signified itself!

An average person couldn’t even touch the feathers, let alone pluck them out.

*Before I died, all nine of the Nine-Colored Heavenly Pheasant’s feathers were still intact. Since it died, how can anyone take its feathers? Where did the feather in the letter come from?*

#### **Chapter 434: Miss**

Only she had a Nine-Colored Heavenly Pheasant in the entire Tianling Dynasty. The Thirteen Yue Guard had followed her for so many years, so they would not be mistaken.

“It’s precisely because of the feather that we believed the letter... Besides, from then on, we thought that you were actually alive.”

Chu Liuyue was caught between laughter and tears.

If one were to say she was dead, she was indeed here. If one were to say she was alive, she actually only woke up a few months ago.

“So after you left Heaven’s Canopy, we went our separate ways and secretly investigated your whereabouts. This time, I found some news, so I started suspecting your identity.”

Chu Liuyue nodded in understanding. “Therefore, you purposely made that gesture when you came here?”

“Yes!”

“You were so sure that it was me?” Seeing Qi Han’s determined appearance, Chu Liuyue couldn’t help but laugh.

Qi Han honestly said, “I heard that Mu Qinghe was here, so I followed him over.”

Chu Liuyue’s smile froze.

“At the start, I just wanted to know why he stayed here for so long. Later on, I realized that something was amiss, so I started investigating you in secret.” Qi Han said it simply, but he had actually made a lot of preparations before he came.

Before he came, he was already 80 to 90 percent confident. No matter if it were her outstanding talent in all three cultivation paths or the extremely similar gaze, they all made him overthink. However, the most important thing was—

“Especially when I saw that you brought a present for Hong Yao that day and how familiar it was with you. Thus, it confirmed my guess.”

Chu Liuyue was dazed. “You know all of this?”

Qi Han nodded honestly.

Chu Liuyue: “...”

*I actually didn't know at all! Even though my abilities can't be compared to the past, my sensitivity and reaction speed has always been decent. In the end, I didn't even realize that Qi Han was investigating me for so long! After a temporary silence, Chu Liuyue finally said slowly, “I haven't seen you in more than a year, but you've gotten so much better at hiding.”*

A suspicious red flashed across the half of Qi Han's face that was not burned. “Thank you for your compliment, Your Highness! I still have a lot to learn!”

Chu Liuyue: “...”

*This kid really thinks that I'm complimenting him! But seeing his half scar-filled face, Chu Liuyue's heart ached. If everything was still okay...*

“Is there a way to remove your scar?”

Qi Han was dazed as if he didn't expect her to change the topic suddenly. He touched his face and said, “Actually, it's pretty good this way. Many people can't recognize me, so it's more convenient for me to do things.”

However, Chu Liuyue suddenly remembered something. “Wait! Could it be... Due to that fire back then, was I—”

*Back then, I was despondent and decided to commit suicide, wanting to drag both Jiang Yucheng and Shangguan Wan down. Thus, I burned all the strength in my body. The burning from a Tianjing Yuan meridian was extremely horrendous. If not, it couldn't impact the two of them harshly. But I didn't expect to implicate Qi Han...*

*Normal herbs simply could not deal with such scars as they have the Tianjing Yuan meridian's strength in them. If I could recover my Tianjing Yuan meridian, I might be able to solve this problem easily. Chu Liuyue rubbed her glabella. “Okay then. Since you're done talking, say it. Who told you about Situ Xingchen and made you come?”*

Qi Han's body froze.

...

At the same time, in the palace.

Blessing Palace was completely surrounded by the greenish-white fire as it shot toward the sky and illuminated half the night.

Many imperial guards and countless warriors tried to barge in from outside, but the phosphorus powder made the fire burn intensely. Hence, normal water didn't even work.

Seeing that the fire was growing bigger and bigger, the crowd became increasingly anxious.

Emperor Jiawen stood at the side and refused to leave no matter what the rest said.

The bright and hot light from the fire shone on his face, making it seem extra gloomy.

"Your Majesty, don't worry first. We've already set up another Xuan formation around Blessing Palace, and we have heavy defenses. Nobody inside can escape easily," advised Chu Ning bitterly.

Speechless, Emperor Jiawen stood with his hands behind his back as he stared closely at Blessing Palace.

Nobody knew what he was worried about.

Seeing this, Chu Ning didn't say anything else as he rushed to the front and brought the imperial guards to strengthen their defenses.

At this time, Elder Zong Ye finally crossed all the fire and rushed to the palace.



The moment he went in, he saw someone coming out from the ground below—it was Situ Xingchen!

Elder Zong Ye was elated as he immediately rushed over. “Xingchen!”

Hearing this familiar voice, Situ Xingchen immediately looked up. “Elder Zong Ye!”

Elder Zong Ye then saw her bloodied face, and his expression changed gravely. “What happened to you?!”

When he went near, he realized that not only was Situ Xingchen’s force locked, but her shoulders and ankle were also injured.

At this very moment, she couldn’t even walk normally.

Situ Xingchen’s eyes turned red with deep vengeance. “It’s Chu Liuyue! She stole my item and beat me up into this state! Elder Zong Ye, you must take revenge for me!”

Elder Zong Ye felt immense heartache as he hurriedly said, “Don’t worry! When we go out, I won’t let her off!”

Situ Xingchen was suddenly stunned as she grabbed his shoulders. “No, that’s not right! She just left from below. You should’ve seen her!”

**Chapter 435: Doubt**

Elder Zong Ye knitted his brows. “She came out? But I didn’t see anyone’s figure just now.”

An inauspicious feeling rose in Situ Xingchen’s heart. “You really didn’t see her? T-then what about now? Is she hiding in some corner here?”

*The entire place was an ocean of fire. With Chu Liuyue’s abilities, how could she escape smoothly and quietly?*

As Situ Xingchen Spoke, she agitatedly clutched Elder Zong Ye’s arm.

Upon seeing her anxious and maniacal face, Elder Zong Ye’s heart ached. *I don’t know what Xingchen has suffered for her to become like this!*

He comforted, “Xingchen! Xingchen, don’t be anxious! We can leave first and talk about the rest later—”

“Impossible!” Situ Xingchen shrieked at the top of her voice. “She took that wooden box away!”

*I spent so much effort to take it from the Empress. How can Chu Liuyue just snatch it away like that? I’ll be very indignant!*

Elder Zong Ye furrowed his brows and asked, “What wooden box? Is it very important?”

Situ Xingchen took a deep breath in. *I didn’t tell anyone about the wooden box and kept it meticulously. Even when I invited Father and Elder Zong Ye to come over, I just said that Rong Jin was the fake Heaven’s Chosen Son and that I was implicated.*

Facing Elder Zong Ye's questioning, she immediately felt guilty. "...It is quite important. You must help me!"

Elder Zong Ye surveyed his surroundings, and his gaze turned tense. "But... Emperor Jiawen and the rest have already come, and the people outside will just increase in number. The longer we delay, the harder it is for us to leave! Besides, I don't know who purposely set this fire! We must leave here as soon as possible! If not, your body won't be able to take it!"

He was very strong, but it wasn't that easy to bring Situ Xingchen out in her current state. Besides, he hid his identity this time.

If Emperor Jiawen and the rest knew who he was and the news got back to Mingyue Tianshan, he would definitely be in trouble.

"Xingchen, don't worry. Since you know that Chu Liuyue stole your item, we'll have chances to snatch it back in the future!" Then, he carried Situ Xingchen and planned to rush out.

Situ Xingchen had a lot of difficulties that she couldn't voice out, but she knew that this was the best option in such a scenario. Thus, she could only accept it.

A silver barrier instantly covered the duo.

The light dazzled and covered more than half of the duo's figures. From outside, one couldn't see who was inside.

Elder Zong Ye went on his toes and instantly rushed out of the greenish-white fire and into the sky.

“They’re out!” The surrounding crowd suddenly gasped.

Countless figures immediately surrounded and chased them.

Emperor Jiawen stared closely at the barrier. Even if he couldn’t see their faces, he could vaguely see that there were two people inside.

His heart sank. *One of them must be Situ Xingchen!*

“No matter what, you have to stop them!” commanded Emperor Jiawen.

*Choo! Choo! Choo!*

Countless sharp arrows shot out, but they were all blocked by the silver barrier.

But just as the duo was about to escape, a figure suddenly appeared and blocked their escape route.

Elder Zong Ye saw that person’s face and immediately became solemn. *It’s actually Ye Zhiting!*

The next moment, the other party’s sentence stunned him. “Long time no see, how have you been?”

*Ye Zhiting actually recognized me?! A thought popped up in Elder Zong Ye's mind. Ye Zhiting and I have only met each other a few times. The other party hasn't even seen my face, so how could Ye Zhiting confirm my identity now?*

Ye Zhiting smiled as he waved the fan in his hands. "Since you're here, why don't we sit down and have some tea?"

Elder Zong Ye guessed that Ye Zhiting was just bluffing him. He didn't even bother to reply as he crazily circulated his inner force.

The suppression on the barrier instantly became stronger, and it flew toward the sides.

Elder Ye's smile didn't change as he waved his wrist and flung his fan out.

*Hua!*

The moment it flew out, the fan immediately dropped and became countless white feathers that went toward Elder Zong Ye and Situ Xingchen in unison.

The sound of the feathers piercing through the air could be heard.

In the blink of an eye, those white feathers had already flown to the barrier and enveloped it.

Elder Zong Ye immediately felt a formidable suppression.

The surrounding space gradually seemed to become heavy and tense, and even their speed started to decrease.

Elder Zong Ye was shocked. *Ye Zhiting's fan is actually so strong!*

At this moment, one of the feathers suddenly rushed forward.

*Choo!*

A cracking sound was heard.

Then, Elder Zong Ye shockingly discovered that a crack appeared on his surrounding barrier as a white feather gradually pierced through.

He immediately wanted to repair it, but it was too late.

The next moment, that white feather suddenly disappeared.

The entire barrier immediately became countless rays of light and dispersed in all directions. The hat on his head was also crushed by this terrifying force.

But just as the two of them were about to be exposed in front of so many people, Elder Ye suddenly hollered, "Keep!"

The moment he said this, the white feathers instantly multiplied and overlapped each other as they completely covered the duo's figures.

...

Such a big commotion that occurred in the palace naturally couldn't be hidden.

Very quickly, countless pairs of eyes in the Imperial City looked in that direction.

In the dark night, only the skyrocketing fire was eye-catching.

Many people started to guess if something happened in the palace.

During this period of time, the Imperial City was not very peaceful. It had only been a few days, but the Empress had passed away, Rong Jin was removed from his Crown Prince position, and even the palace was burning now.

The entire atmosphere in the Imperial City seemed to be much heavier than before.

There seemed to be something brewing in the dark, making one extremely uneasy.

But in Chu Liuyue's room, everything was quiet.

Once she asked that, Qi Han fell silent.

Chu Liuyue looked at him quietly.

She wasn't doubting Qi Han. If not, she wouldn't directly admit her identity. However, it was obvious that Qi Han didn't explain some things clearly.

*Even if he had logically explained himself earlier, saying that he had coincidentally followed Mu Qinghe over and conveniently found me... However, if he didn't know something, how could he confirm that a young girl born in a desolated family in Country Yao Chen could be the once distinguished, high and mighty princess back then?*

*Besides, very few people knew that I wanted to snatch something from Situ Xingchen. Could all of this be solely discovered by Qi Han alone?*

*Mu Qinghe doubted me, and the two of us had some history. It was just because of my completely different appearance and body and the unexplainable identity that made him unable to confirm.*

*So... how did Qi Han know?*

### **Chapter 436: Did He Betray Me**

Qi Han knew he couldn't hide it. After some thought, he decided to tell her the truth. "Your Highness, this news came from Zhen Bao Pavilion."



Chu Liuyue was dazed. "Second Master Yan?"

Qi Han nodded but shook his head again.

It suddenly dawned on Chu Liuyue. "Did the Master of Zhen Bao Pavilion instruct Second Master Yan to tell you?"

A look of surprise flashed across Qi Han's eyes; he didn't expect her to guess it so quickly. *Her Highness is smart and wise, so it isn't surprising that she thought of this.*

"I went to Zhen Bao Pavilion to buy some herbs. When they delivered the order, I found a letter in one of the boxes."

Chu Liuyue instantly understood the situation. *I see; if it were that person, it wouldn't be weird. That person is formidable and has heaven-defying capabilities. The entire Country Yao Chen's Imperial City seems to be under his control, let alone others. But... if he purposely told Qi Han this, does it not mean that he long knew about my identity?!*

Chu Liuyue asked, "Where's the letter?"

Qi Han said, "That letter was specially handled. After I opened it and read it, it directly burned itself."

Chu Liuyue felt regret. It was obvious that the other party was very meticulous and didn't even want to expose any of his traces.

Qi Han glanced at her carefully. "Your Highness, I didn't say it earlier as I didn't want you to worry... I planned to tell you after I checked that person's identity."

Other than the Thirteen Yue Guard, there was still another person who knew Her Highness's identity in this world! He even knew before them!

After Qi Han knew about this, he felt conflicted. On the one hand, he felt very emotional that Chu Liuyue could possibly be Her Highness! On the other hand, he was secretly worried that the other party would use this to harm Her Highness.

After much thinking, Chu Liuyue laughed lightly and shook her head. "You want to find out his identity? I'm afraid it's a little difficult. Besides... Since he already knows and told you, there's nothing else to worry about."

*He has helped me so many times. If he wanted to deal with me, why would he waste so much effort?*

"That person's abilities and background are formidable. From now on, don't waste any more time and effort on checking him."

Qi Han was quite shocked. *Who is that person? Why is Her Highness so afraid of him? Besides... Judging by Her Highness's tone, it seems like she's rather familiar with him.*

"Your Highness, you know him?"

"No," said Chu Liuyue bluntly. She wanted to know the Master's identity more than anyone else, but the other party clearly didn't want her to find out. Therefore, why should she waste her effort?

She would know his identity when the time was ripe.

Since Chu Liuyue had said that, Qi Han would act according to her words.

“Where are the other Thirteen Yue Guard members? Do they know... about me?”

“They’re all not in Country Yao Chen, but I’ve been keeping in contact with them. However... I haven’t told them about you.” Before he personally confirmed Her Highness’s identity, he wouldn’t reveal it on his own.

Chu Liuyue smiled with satisfaction. “You’re doing great; your meticulous attitude is just like before.”

It was unexpected for her to acknowledge Qi Han today. It would be of tremendous help for her since the Thirteen Yue Guard was still loyal toward her, but it was better if fewer people knew about her identity.

“Don’t tell them about this first. When the time is right, I’ll personally let them know.”

Qi Han immediately said, “I understand, Your Highness!”

After all the matters had been settled, Chu Liuyue felt much better.

“Last question.” Her white and thin fingers lightly knocked against the table as she asked her question. “Did Mu Qinghe... betray me?”

...

“Zong Ye, we’re all rational. Let’s just lay everything out.”

In the palace, Elder Zong Ye and Situ Xingchen were trapped in the feather-made cage, and they couldn’t move at all.

Elder Ye stood in front of the two of them and looked down at them from above, while Emperor Jiawen stood next to him.

Other than this, there were no other people.

Elder Zong Ye kept quiet, but Situ Xingchen seemed to have fainted due to excessive blood loss.

“I also know Mingyue Tianshan’s rules. If the news of you barging into Country Yao Chen’s palace gets out... It won’t be good, right?” Ye Zhiting was still smiling happily, but the words that came out of his mouth sent chills down Elder Zong Ye’s spine.

Even though Mingyue Tianshan accepted disciples like other clans, they had a bottom line. They wouldn’t allow anyone to interfere with any country’s matters.

Elder Zong Ye had broken the rule! Needless to say, he would be punished, and he might even be evicted from Mingyue Tianshan.

“Ye Zhiting! What exactly do you want?!”

“Heh, shouldn’t I be the one asking you this? You came all the way here in the middle of the night and barged into Blessing Palace, even wanting to bring her away by force. Speaking of this... Isn’t this your fault?”

“You’re twisting the truth! Xingchen is Country Xing Luo’s eldest princess. It’s wrong for you to lock her up secretly.” While saying this, Elder Zong Ye’s blood boiled even more. “You tortured her to this state, and you still want to fault me?! You’re such a bully!”

“Hey... You can’t say this. Didn’t you also burn Blessing Palace just now?”

*We needed to use so much effort to completely extinguish such a huge fire! Some of the other palaces were also affected.*

Elder Zong Ye was so angry that his beard was in a mess. “I didn’t set that fire!”

Elder Ye was stunned. “How is it not you? Didn’t you plan to bring her away amidst the chaos?”

“Do I need to use such unscrupulous methods? If it weren’t for that fire, I would’ve brought Xingchen to leave a long time ago! Why will I still be talking to you here?”

Upon seeing the agitated Elder Zong Ye, Ye Zhiting was doubtful, and he glanced at Emperor Jiawen. *Is it... really not him?*

“Let me tell you: someone was ahead of me and entered Blessing Palace today. Besides, she even attacked Xingchen and destroyed her shoulder and leg.”

Upon hearing this, Elder Ye immediately knitted his brows and took a closer look at Situ Xingchen on the floor. *Wasn't this injury made by Emperor Jiawen?*

Emperor Jiawen also noticed something wrong as he stepped forward and stared at Elder Zong Ye. “Who is it?”

Elder Zong Ye sneered. “You all know this person—Chu Liuyue!”

“Impossible!” Elder Ye denied without thinking. *How can this be done by my precious disciple?!*

“How is this impossible? Xingchen told me herself! Ye Zhiting, Chu Liuyue is your disciple, right? She came and left so smoothly today... Could you be helping her in secret?”

“My a\*s!” Vulgarities spilled out of Ye Zhiting’s mouth. “How can Situ Xingchen’s words be believable?! She and my disciple have a grudge, so she must’ve used this chance to smear her!”

Elder Zong Ye didn’t smile as he looked at Emperor Jiawen. “Xingchen even said that Chu Liuyue had stolen something from her. You decide if you want to believe it.”

### **Chapter 437: Testify**

Hearing this, Elder Ye knew that something was wrong. *Didn't His Majesty also want to take something from Situ Xingchen? With Zong Ye's words, he might suspect Chu Liuyue.*

As expected, he turned around and saw Emperor Jiawen frowning his brows suspiciously.

Elder Ye immediately said, “Zong Ye, since it’s so, why don’t you say what Liuyue took from Situ Xingchen?”

Emperor Jiawen held his breath.

*Zong Ye was stumped. Situ Xingchen didn’t even have the time to tell me this... But I can confirm that it’s something that Emperor Jiawen wanted to take from Situ Xingchen, which was why he locked her up!*

His gaze flashed, and he looked at Emperor Jiawen. “Emperor Jiawen, won’t you know the best about what she stole?”

Elder Ye sneered. *Given Zong Ye’s behavior, he clearly doesn’t know! He might even be fabricating it!*

Emperor Jiawen stayed silent for a while as he glanced at the unconscious Situ Xingchen. “I’ll talk to her personally when she wakes up.”

Elder Zong Ye immediately became alert. “What does this mean?!”

“This means that before we find out the truth of the matter, you and Situ Xingchen will have to suffer here for a while, Elder Zong Ye. Oh right, Rong Jin and Situ Xingchen are currently in the midst of preparing for their wedding. Elder Zong Ye, as Situ Xingchen’s elder, it’s best if you attend the wedding as well.”

Then, Emperor Jiawen lifted his leg and planned to leave.

“Rong Xiao! How dare you?” Elder Zong Ye was shocked by his words and directly called out Emperor Jiawen’s full name when he panicked. “How can Rong Jin be Xingchen’s match?! If you’re really going to do this, don’t blame me for being merciless!”

Emperor Jiawen stood still and sneered. “I give Mingyue Tianshan face, so I call you Elder Zong Ye. However, this doesn’t mean that I’m afraid of you. You’re not the only strong one in Mingyue Tianshan.”

Elder Zong Ye felt suffocated. “You!”

“Such a big commotion happened tonight, and it would definitely attract a lot of people’s attention. Elder Zong Ye, you’re smart. If you’re willing to cooperate properly, I’ll take it as if nothing has happened today. But if you don’t... Don’t blame me for being ruthless!”

Situ Yan couldn’t succeed, so why did they think that another Zong Ye could accomplish matters?

Elder Ye stroked his beard. “I recall that I haven’t been to Mingyue Tianshan for a while. It seems like I should take some time out to visit them...”

*Elder Zong Ye’s face flushed red. I never expected to be threatened by Emperor Jiawen and Ye Zhiting, but this is my Achilles’ heel! I can’t withstand Mingyue Tianshan’s punishment... If I were to barge out forcefully, I could leave this place. But if so, Situ Xingchen would be left here alone. I wouldn’t be at ease.*



Hence, after several changes in facial expression, Elder Zong Ye finally clenched his teeth and accepted his fate.

He glared at Elder Ye with hatred. “Ye Zhiting, don’t be too delighted! From what I see, your precious disciple is very scheming! Perhaps she might even deceive you in the future without you even knowing!”

Elder Ye smiled and said, “Zong Ye, an outsider like you need not worry about the things between my disciple and me. If you have the time, you should care more about Situ Xingchen. If treatment for this injury drags on for too long, there will be aftereffects—”

“You!”

“Oh, right. After not seeing each other for so many years, your capabilities haven’t seemed to have improved. Take this chance and carefully reflect on yourself!” Then, Elder Ye snapped his fingers.

Countless white feathers immediately churned out intense power, forcefully separating the duo and instantly capturing them.

“It’ll be hard on you for the next few days, Elder Ye,” said Emperor Jiawen.

Situ Xingchen was okay, but Elder Zong Ye... Only Elder Ye could restrain him.

Elder Ye waved his hands. “I’ve disliked him since a long time ago, so I can take the chance to take my revenge on him. But... what do you think about the things he said earlier on, Your Majesty?”

Emperor Jiawen hesitated and finally decided to say honestly, "I think that... there might be such a possibility."

Elder Ye knitted his brows. "So, does it mean that you really suspect Liuyue, Your Majesty?"

Emperor Jiawen smiled bitterly and shook his head. "I have no choice... That thing is important. Others might not know, but you know the best, Elder Ye. I'm not doing this for myself, but... the entire Yao Chen."

Elder Ye thought for a while. "Why don't I directly ask her?"

Emperor Jiawen thought for a while and instantly felt that this was the best option.

He liked Chu Liuyue rather much. On the one hand, she was currently Rong Xiu's fiancé. If he touched her, Rong Xiu would be upset. On the other hand, there was Mu Qinghe...

"Thank you, Elder Ye."

...

The fire in the palace burned for an entire night.

It was finally extinguished the next morning before daybreak.

The entire Blessing Palace was ruined, and the neighboring palaces became debris.

Quite a few palace servants had also lost their lives.

Rumors had it that Blessing Palace hadn't been repaired in many years, so it was accidentally lit on fire.

Actually, any knowledgeable person would know that the greenish-white fire wasn't ordinary fire and that it was most likely started by phosphorus powder.

An average person couldn't get this. One just had to think to know that this implicated much more.

But since the palace had already given an explanation, nobody would be insensible enough to investigate.

However, Rong Jin used to stay at Blessing Palace. Now that he was just removed from his position and a huge fire was started, this made people think more.

It was clear that he had no chances of coming back this time.

...

Prince Li Mansion.

Early in the morning, Eunuch Min personally came over and said that His Majesty wanted to invite Rong Xiu into the palace.

The people at Prince Li Mansion were surprised.

His Majesty took special care of Rong Xiu and rarely invited him into the palace as he took the prince's health into consideration.

This summoning was rather sudden, but Rong Xiu didn't seem to think much about it as he briefly packed his things, brought his black cloak, and followed Eunuch Min into the palace.

Emperor Jiawen was waiting in the imperial study.

"Father."

Upon seeing Rong Xiu enter and that he was about to bow, Emperor Jiawen immediately said, "There's no need for such greetings. I called you here because I wanted to ask you about a few things."

Rong Xiu's intricate face looked as gentle as usual. "I will tell you everything that I know."

Emperor Jiawen opened his mouth but started to hesitate.

Rong Xiu was his most beloved son. He always felt guilty that he couldn't accompany Rong Xiu all these years. So after Rong Xiu came back, he kept finding ways to make it up to him.

It seemed rather inappropriate to ask such a question now.

Rong Xiu stood there quietly as if he completely didn't see Emperor Jiawen's conflict.

After much time, Emperor Jiawen finally clenched his teeth and said determinedly, "Rong Xiu, we lost something when the palace was ablaze yesterday, and someone testified that Liuyue did it. What do you think?"

### **Chapter 438: Picking What's More Important**

If someone else were here and heard this, they would definitely be taken aback. This incident had many implications, yet Emperor Jiawen directly asked him, which showed just how much he trusted Rong Xiu.

Rong Xiu opened his phoenix eyes and looked shocked. "Father, you called me here for this?"

Emperor Jiawen looked at him solemnly and didn't say a word.

Rong Xiu's lips curved up slightly, and something flashed across his eyes lightly. "Father, you're suspecting Yue'er?"

Emperor Jiawen rubbed his temples. "Rong Xiu, you've always been smart."

He had to admit that Elder Zong Ye's words made him falter. Last night, he almost didn't sleep a wink because he kept thinking about this. *Out of so many people, why did they point out Chu Liuyue? Besides, judging from Chu Liuyue's previous stunning performances, she might really be hiding some secrets.*

Even if Elder Ye had already agreed to ask Chu Liuyue personally, he still felt uneasy. But Chu Liuyue's identity was special, so he could not and was not willing to touch her. Thus, he could only call Rong Xiu over.

Rong Xiu thought for a while and suddenly said, "I think there's something you might not know, Father."

Emperor Jiawen sat up straight.

Rong Xiu was still smiling, but a playful aura spread across his face. "Situ Xingchen has... liked me for many years."

Emperor Jiawen was instantly stunned, but he quickly understood something. *Could it be that Situ Xingchen kept targeting Chu Liuyue because of this?*

Emperor Jiawen's brows twitched slowly. "Even if so, she shouldn't frame... After all, she already has a marriage agreement with Rong Jin... What good does it do if she offends Chu Liuyue?"

Rong Xiu's smiling intentions were deep and cold. "Father, you know the best what's going on between her marriage agreement with Brother."

Emperor Jiawen fell into deep thought.

“I wonder if you remember that I went to the Qing Jiao Competition on the last day.”

Emperor Jiawen nodded. “Of course, I remember.”

“I went over that day to ask Yue’er for a favor. When we left, we met Situ Xingchen. I unwittingly discovered that her sleeves had a cloud embroidery that was almost identical to mine.” Rong Xiu’s voice was distant.

Emperor Jiawen’s heart skipped a beat. *In the past, Rong Xiu loved those unique cloud embroideries. Hence, many of his clothes specifically had such designs.*

“Perhaps... it was a coincidence?”

“After I went back that day, I kept thinking about it and felt rather uncomfortable. Thus, I called the servants to burn all the clothes with such embroidery.”

Emperor Jiawen’s expression changed. *I have a vague impression of this, but I didn’t pay much attention to it. I just thought that Rong Xiu wanted to uplift his mood as he recovered from his illness, so he threw away all those clothes. I didn’t expect there to be a hidden reason.*

“That day, Situ Xingchen was also outside Prince Li Mansion and saw this scene. After she left, she hid in an isolated corner and killed a few cultivators. She wrecked their corpses and only stopped after they became a pile of mess,” said Rong Xiu slowly, but his words made people’s hearts beat wildly. “Father, do you think... that was also a coincidence?”

Emperor Jiawen finally couldn’t sit any longer as he suddenly stood up. “How do you know about this?”

Rong Xiu smiled calmly. "Father, I'm in the Imperial City. If I don't even know who went to Prince Li Mansion and who had what kind of attitude toward me, how can I continue surviving?"

Emperor Jiawen looked at him with a complicated gaze and didn't say anything for quite some time. "...Yes! I almost forgot..."

Even though Rong Xiu was frail, he was extremely intelligent. It would be a real disappointment if he couldn't even do this after staying at Mingyue Tianshan for so many years.

"Those few people regularly whiled their lives away at all sorts of gambling dens and brothels in the Imperial City, and they are very well-hated, so nobody cared that they died. This incident just died down, but if you want to verify it, it's simple—"

"No need to say anymore. I believe in you." Emperor Jiawen lazily waved his hands and leaned against the chair.

Rong Xiu kept quiet.

The room fell into silence.

Emperor Jiawen's thoughts were in turmoil. *Anyone can hear the strange parts of this incident. For so many years, Situ Xingchen has always been high, mighty, gentle, and elegant in everyone's hearts. But from this incident, one can clearly tell that she isn't that type of person.*

In actual fact, he had long felt this way after interacting with Situ Xingchen for the past few days. However, he didn't expect her to be even more vicious than he had imagined...



After linking everything up, many of his doubts were dispelled. "So... this means that Situ Xingchen purposely targeted Liuyue because her love turned into hatred?"

In this way, there was also a logical explanation as to why Situ Xingchen intervened in Rong Zhen's matter and had even accused Chu Liuyue for no reason.

Rong Xiu smiled nonchalantly. "I didn't say that. Father, you know what's right and wrong."

Emperor Jiawen opened his eyes and looked deeply at Rong Xiu. "I didn't expect the first time you decided to be honest with me about all of this would be due to Chu Liuyue."

Rong Xiu's words were akin to admitting that he had his own power in the Imperial City and that he wasn't as nonchalant as he portrayed himself to be. He definitely knew that this was the biggest taboo to an emperor.

"Aren't you afraid that I'll scheme against you?" asked Emperor Jiawen.

The sunlight shone in and reflected in Rong Xiu's eyes, causing them to dazzle and sparkle.

He said, "I just picked what's more important."

To him, she was the most important thing, and she was his only choice.

...

Almost at the same time, Chu Liuyue waited for Elder Ye in her backyard. *So many things had happened the night before. Situ Xingchen will definitely point me out and tell everything to Emperor Jiawen.*

Thus, she was long prepared. However, she didn't expect her own mentor to be the one that would come here.

Chu Liuyue delightedly welcomed him. "Mentor, what brings you here?"

Elder Ye looked at her and suddenly asked in shock, "Hm? Since when did you break through and become a stage-three warrior?"

*If I didn't remember wrongly, this girl had just broken through and became a stage-two warrior during the Qing Jiao Competition. Why did she do so quickly—Besides, her aura seems different from before...*

If Elder Ye had carefully checked Chu Liuyue's Yuan meridian, he would realize that the strange change was because of the advancement in her Yuan meridian level.

Chu Liuyue's eyes curved up like a crescent moon. "I just broke through these few days. I've learned quite a bit from Tai Yan Academy's library, so I tried to break through, and it worked."

Elder Ye thought about it in detail and felt that it made sense. He had long known that Chu Liuyue's body had rich force, so it was a matter of time for her to break through. "You're indeed my disciple! Haha!"

Upon seeing Elder Ye's face filled with happiness, Chu Liuyue's lips curved up as she seemingly nonchalantly reminded him, "Why did you come to look for me today?"

Elder Ye suddenly stopped laughing.

### **Chapter 439: Conviction**

Actually, he was displeased to do this.

Chu Liuyue was his only disciple. He couldn't even dote on her properly, so how could he question her? But if he did not, he couldn't give Emperor Jiawen an explanation.

*After much thinking, it's best if I do it.* Elder Ye coughed. "Girl, where... were you last night?"

Chu Liuyue blinked. "Of course, I was at home. If not, where else could I be?"

Elder Ye carefully scrutinized her expression. *I've always known that Chu Liuyue is stronger than what she has portrayed. At the very least, she is better than me at refining medicine.*

He knew very clearly that this girl had many secrets, but he didn't want to suspect her because of that.

"You should know that there was a fire in the palace yesterday, right?"

Chu Liuyue nodded and smiled. "Mentor, it's hard not to know about such a big fire."

Elder Ye thought it through and finally decided to ask directly, "Did you have anything to do with yesterday's incident?"

Chu Liuyue blinked. "What are you referring to?"

Elder Ye stared at her closely, but after a moment, he finally slapped his thighs. "I knew Situ Xingchen did it on purpose! Say, what's going on? Why does she want to drag you down?!"

Chu Liuyue: "..."

*Even though I know Elder Ye is biased toward me, he is too straightforward...* Chu Liuyue coughed softly. "It's a long story..."

*"Summarize it!" I still have to rush back and discuss this with Emperor Jiawen!*

"Oh." Chu Liuyue shrugged. "She thinks that I stole her man."

"..." Elder Ye's expression instantly became strange, and he couldn't express himself. "Rong Xiu?"

Chu Liuyue nodded. *Situ Xingchen personally told me yesterday. How can it be wrong?*

Elder Ye suddenly took a step back and sized Chu Liuyue up.

“Mentor, what are you looking at?” asked Chu Liuyue curiously.

Elder Ye suddenly laughed. “No wonder! No wonder! It’s because of this that Situ Xingchen keeps trying to drag you down!”

Chu Liuyue’s eyes twitched. *For some reason, he sounds pleased...*

“Okay, I know! Cultivate properly at home! You don’t have to care about anything else!” said Elder Ye as he was about to turn around and leave.

Suddenly, he turned back and asked, “Oh, right. Did Mu Qinghe say when he’s going to leave?”

Chu Liuyue’s gaze changed, but she quickly suppressed it and shook her head slightly. “He hasn’t, but... it should be soon.”

Mu Qinghe gained nothing from the imperial mausoleum trip, so he wouldn’t stay here for long.

Elder Ye nodded, and he looked very solemn as he reminded her, “It’s a great opportunity to be able to go to the Tianling Dynasty. You must cherish this chance, but...”

Elder Ye hesitated for a while and decided to swallow his remaining words. “If you’re leaving, remember to tell me in advance.”

Chu Liuyue nodded.

...

Today was the last day of the Empress's funeral. Everything was prepared adequately, but the sudden fire in Blessing Palace made everyone panic.

Even though Emperor Jiawen was mourning, he finally decided to simplify the Empress's funeral.

In the end, they just followed a concubine's routine.

As Emperor Jiawen missed her too much, he collapsed and couldn't attend the Empress's burial.

Rong Jin was heavily impacted and had fallen sick, so he couldn't even go out of Crown Prince Mansion. Oh, now that the plaque had been removed, it was no longer Crown Prince Mansion.

Thus, only Prince Ping—Rong Qi—and Rong Zhen went in the end. But out of these two people, one of them was a playful child that didn't have any power, and the other had a broken pearl of essence and was essentially a good-for-nothing.

Added up, they didn't have much presence.

Only a few people came from the Si family.

The Empress's entire funeral was extremely simple and miserable as it rushed to begin and rushed to end.

At this point, everyone could tell what Emperor Jiawen meant.

As the Empress and the entire country's mother, she should be given a grand funeral befitting of her status after her death. However, this ceremony wasn't even befitting of a lowly concubine.

If the Empress didn't do something to enrage His Majesty when she was alive, how could she end up in this state after her death?

All sorts of rumors went around the city, but they all eventually died quietly. Not long later, the crowd forgot about the Empress's death and started to discuss something else.

The Crown Prince position was empty, so His Majesty definitely had to choose a new Crown Prince from the existing pool of princes.

Emperor Jiawen had quite a few sons, but not many of them were suitable to be the Crown Prince.

After much discussion, they eventually realized that the best choice was the Third Prince, Rong Jiu. In terms of capabilities, he had entered the Northwest Army and went to war for many years, earning many accolades.

In terms of age, he was in his prime, and he was the second prince after Rong Jin.

Other than his rather lowly background, he didn't have any weaknesses.

Almost everyone was certain that Rong Jiu would become the new Crown Prince.

However, Rong Jiu was not so positive at this point. This was because he had been grounded in his residence for days.

The Empress's funeral was already over, but his father still didn't let him out, causing Rong Jiu to worry.

At this point, he suddenly heard that his father had summoned Rong Jin into the palace.

It seemed like the two of them had talked for quite some time in the imperial study.

The longer Rong Jiu waited, the more uneasy he felt.

Finally, someone came from the palace—The Empress was killed by the Third Prince. From today onward, he will be locked in jail and await his punishment!

#### **Chapter 440: The One who Knows Me**

The news made waves.

Rong Jiu was originally the person most suited to be the Crown Prince out of all the princes, and many people were already secretly planning to get into his good books.



They didn't expect him to be jailed for such an immoral conviction overnight.

Immediately, the Imperial City's skies were about to change.

...

"I heard that the Third Prince's birth mother, Noble Lady Yin, was harmed by the Empress back then and that he held this grudge for many years. Hence, he finally took action."

"Who knows about what happens in the harm? But even if this is true, the Third Prince is too impulsive. As long as he can become the Crown Prince, he can do whatever he wants. Yet, he had to take action..."

"After coming back from the Northwest Army, His Majesty did not let him go back for long, so he was definitely anxious... Besides, the Empress's funeral was so simple. Can't you see the problem?"

"Even if His Majesty hates the Empress, he can't allow the Third Prince to kill her... He shot himself in his foot."

"All these princes... The removed ones are removed, locked ones are locked, and the sick ones are still sick. If this goes on, there won't be many people to pick..."

When Chu Liuyue walked across the street, she could vaguely hear the whispers.

Even though they weren't allowed to discuss on the surface, it was hard for people not to talk when so many things had happened in the palace.

When she was about to reach Prince Li Mansion, she realized that the defenses here were much heavier than before.

Chu Liuyue raised her eyebrows a notch. *Almost the entire Imperial City fell into chaos, and it wasn't easy for Prince Li Mansion to stay out of trouble.*

Upon seeing Chu Liuyue, the guards at the entrance hurriedly welcomed her in enthusiastically. "Ms. Liuyue, you're finally here! His Highness has been waiting for you for some time!"

Chu Liuyue's lips curved up, and she walked in.

...

When she saw Rong Xiu, he was resting in the small hut in the backyard.

Two cups of freshly-brewed tea were placed on the stone table, together with a half-played chess game.

The light breeze came, and a few emerald leaves landed on Rong Xiu's snow-white robe, making him look extra cold and distinguished.

"Your Highness, you knew that I was coming?" Chu Liuyue walked over.

Rong Xiu picked up the intricate porcelain cup, and a white mist rose, almost causing one to be unable to see his deep gaze.

His red lips curved up slightly, and he gave his usual, warm smile. "I made this tea myself. See how it is compared to yours."

Chu Liuyue sat down and picked up the other cup. The fresh fragrance wafted toward her and tingled her nose, rejuvenating her heart and organs.

Chu Liuyue gently sipped on it. After the faint bitterness, there was a sweet aftertaste.

She honestly nodded. "You're much better than me." Compared to him, the tea she brewed was unworthy.

But Rong Xiu shook his head and smiled. "But I only like the ginger tea you make, Yue'er. This tea is nice, but I don't like it."

Chu Liuyue glanced at him. "You're still in the mood for jokes?"

"I do think that way." Rong Xiu raised his saber-like eyebrows. "Besides, what do you mean by that?"

Chu Liuyue squinted her eyes. *The entire Imperial City is in a mangled mess, but only this person can leisurely drink tea and play chess in his backyard. He is really calm.*

She shook her head and said straightforwardly, "You knew that His Majesty was going to do something about the Third Prince?"

Previously, Rong Xiu had mentioned that someone wanted to frame Rong Jiu and push the Empress's death to him. However, Chu Liuyue never expected that person to be Emperor Jiawen.

No matter what, Rong Jiu was his biological son. Him doing this was akin to sending Rong Jiu to his death.

Rong Xiu's expression didn't change, and he still smiled nonchalantly. "Since you already know, why are you asking me again?"

This was a tacit acceptance.

Chu Liuyue knitted her brows and was filled with doubt. "But why does His Majesty want to do this?"

There were many methods he could use if he didn't want Rong Jiu to ascend to the throne. At the very least, now that Rong Jiu was trapped in the Imperial City and had been stripped of his military power, he couldn't cause any trouble.

Besides, Rong Jiu had been on the battlefield for so many years and had earned many accolades. Without his identity as the prince, he definitely still had a lot of achievements to his name.

Why must Emperor Jiawen be so harsh on him?

“His Majesty clearly knows that the person who killed the Empress is—”

*Situ Xingchen! Until now, this news has been locked firmly.*

“Yue’er, you’re suspecting that Father is biased toward Situ Xingchen?” asked Rong Xiu with much interest.

Chu Liuyue shook her head. *From that night’s situation, Emperor Jiawen definitely had no intentions of letting Situ Xingchen off. He just wanted to take something from her. However... there really was no need to push the blame of the Empress’s death to Rong Jiu.*

She knew that the royal family was heartless, and she even had her own heart-wrenching experiences.

But... Emperor Jiawen clearly had another motive for doing so.

Rong Xiu smiled slightly and said, “If he can quietly be a lazy prince in the Imperial City, Father would naturally not do anything to him. The thing that made Father determined is—”

Chu Liuyue suddenly realized something when she saw his meaningful expression. “Your Highness, you mean that the Third Prince...”

Rong Xiu put down a piece.

*Pak!*

Chu Liuyue looked down, and her heart felt a pang.

Once this move was made, the stalemate between the black and white pieces was finally broken as both of them started to fight each other.

*Rong Jiu is going to revolt? If not, I really can't think of another reason for Emperor Jiawen to do this.*

*"Your Highness, how did you know that?" The moment Chu Liuyue asked this, she regretted it. As long as Rong Xiu wants to, he can know everything!*

However, Rong Xiu's expression changed strangely.

Chu Liuyue looked into his eyes and felt a telepathic connection. She widened her eyes in shock. "Could it be..."

Rong Xiu gave her a meaningful look before he smiled and waved toward her. "Yue'er, come over."

Chu Liuyue stood up and walked over in confusion.

Rong Xiu held her hands and pulled her into his arms, tightly holding onto her before looking down and kissing her.

Chu Liuyue was shocked, and her heart tingled from his warmth. *W-what's with this person? Why is he so sudden?!*

"Y-your Highness?" Chu Liuyue pushed his shoulders, but her waist was held even tighter as if she was about to fall into his arms.

He kissed her until her limbs went soft, and when she melted into a puddle in his arms, Rong Xiu finally stopped and changed to a light kiss.

Chu Liuyue looked at him, and her originally dazzling eyes became watery and filled with love. It was as though the sweetness was going to overflow.

Rong Xiu's eyes sparkled as he raised his hands and covered her eyes. He leaned close to her ear and whispered in a hoarse voice as if something was tugging at his heartstrings. "Don't look at me like that."

Chu Liuyue's ears burned. "...Your Highness?"

"You're the only one who knows me." Rong Xiu couldn't help but bite her soft earlobe.

Chu Liuyue shied away due to the tickle, and her body became even softer.

Rong Xiu buried his head in her shoulders and closed his eyes. *She always knows what I'm thinking, from the past till now.*