

## **Noble Ruler 691**

### **Chapter 691: Familiar**

Elder Qiuxi reacted very quickly as he hollered, “Protect Her Highness!”

The surrounding people, especially the Black Guards, rushed to this side quickly. They were fast, but the ground cracked even quicker.

The gullies spread even more rapidly, and the crowd dispersed in all directions. Even so, some still fell into the cracks on the ground.

The entire team was immediately in a mess.

Many of the rolling leaf firs that were moving comparatively slower couldn't escape the fate of dropping into the cracks.

Looking at the many rolling leaf firs that were broken or had even disappeared, Chu Liuyue finally understood why they were escaping in such a hurry earlier.

*Crack!*

A deep sound was heard.

Chu Liuyue looked down and saw a crack quickly spread from the side of her feet.

Tuan Zi suddenly jumped up from her shoulders and went forward.

“Tuan Zi!” yelled Chu Liuyue in shock when she saw it jump over the cracks and head to the Mystic Forest’s depths. “Come back!”

Tuan Zi paused for a moment and turned around to look at her before going further in.

Chu Liuyue’s heart tingled. *Is... Tuan Zi asking me to go over? What exactly is it doing?*

Chu Liuyue didn’t have time to think about it as she clenched her teeth and rapidly followed the fiend.

“Liuyue, where are you going?” Mu Hongyu felt something flash across her eyes, and Chu Liuyue disappeared from her spot. She was dazed as she yelled at Chu Liuyue’s back view.

A cold wind blew past her ear—Qiang Wanzhou had already silently followed her.

“Hey...” Mu Hongyu wanted to stop them, but the duo’s figures had gradually disappeared.

She glanced at Ye Ranran. “What should we do now?”

Ye Ranran widened her eyes. “We’re naturally going to follow!”

Before I came, I already made an agreement with my mentor and the Cabinet Master that I definitely wouldn't be Liuyue and Wanzhou's burden. Even if uncertainty and dangers lie ahead of me, I have to go!

Mu Hongyu nodded in determination. "Okay! Let's go!"

Then, the two of them braved themselves and followed the other two almost simultaneously.

In the blink of an eye, the four of them left consecutively.

The forest was currently in a state of mess as the gullies on the ground kept expanding. Everyone was thinking of all sorts of ways to escape, and nobody noticed that the few of them had disappeared during that short period of time.

On the other end, with Elder Qiuxi and Elder Duanmu's help, Shangguan Wan had it much easier.

After an unknown period of time, the messy situation finally and gradually appeased.

The ground was covered by gullies that were so deep one couldn't see the bottom, and some of them were wide enough to swallow a person whole. It looked very terrifying.

The originally lush greenery was damaged and became broken trees and twigs in no time. Many people here were also injured because they couldn't escape in time.

Cracked branches, broken leaves, dust, bloodstains... It looked like a mess at one glance.

Shangguan Wan took a deep breath in, and terror and anxiety still filled her face. "W-what exactly is going on? Is it an earthquake?!"

Mu Qinghe knitted his brows tightly, glanced at the increasingly dark sky, and boomed, "I'm afraid... not! If I didn't guess wrongly, this should've been caused by that ninth-grade fiend..."

Jiang Yucheng followed Mu Qinghe's line of sight. "What fiend is it? How can something that hasn't broken through to become a legendary fiend have such formidable strength?"

It wasn't like he hadn't seen a ninth-grade fiend before. Not talking about others, just Shangguan Yue alone back then had a ninth-grade Nine-Colored Heavenly Pheasant. However, it didn't seem to be so powerful...

*Just one holler, and it could actually cause the ground within miles to crack?!*

Shangguan Wan bit her lips and felt conflicted.

On the one hand, she was quite fearful. On the other hand, she also wanted to go see for herself what kind of fiend it exactly was.

*If it's already so formidable before it breaks through, then... Won't it be even more unimaginable when it truly becomes a legendary fiend?*

Jiang Yucheng unwittingly moved his steps and suddenly felt that he had stepped on something weird beneath his feet.

He looked down. "What is this?"

Moving away the fallen leaves and dust, he saw that he was actually stepping on a thumb-wide... branch?

It turned out to be a rolling leaf fir branch.

Jiang Yucheng heaved a sigh of relief in his heart.

The previous commotion was too huge, and it caused many rolling leaf firs to fall. This was why many of their branches were exposed in the open.

He raised his head to kick it, wanting to kick that branch away. But the moment his feet touched that branch, he saw that it suddenly extended and wrapped around his foot.

Jiang Yucheng knitted his brows and vaguely felt that something was wrong. He lifted his leg to get rid of it, but he realized that the branch wrapped around him even more tightly.

Jiang Yucheng's face turned cold, and he raised his sword to slash it.

*Whoosh!*

That branch suddenly hurled and threw Jiang Yucheng toward a deep gully.

“Yucheng!”

“Eldest Young Master!”

The crowd gasped in shock when they saw this scene.

Quite a few people rushed over, wanting to pull Jiang Yucheng back. But after the earlier mess, the crowd wasn't that close to each other anymore.

In addition, the incident had happened too suddenly. Before they could even take action, Jiang Yucheng's figure had disappeared within that gully.

“Lieutenant Mu! What exactly is going on?” asked Shangguan Wan angrily.

But before Mu Qinghe could say anything, he suddenly felt something amiss and lowered his head. At some point, branches had tightly wrapped around his feet.

In actual fact, it wasn't only him. Almost everyone present met with the same predicament simultaneously.

*Whoosh!*

*Whoosh! Whoosh!*

In a moment's time, the rest were gradually thrown into different gullies.

Even Shangguan Wan couldn't say anything in time before she was directly dragged down by the branch beside her feet.

Very quickly, everyone's figures disappeared within the forest. Then, the gullies on the ground gradually closed.

The previously torn and rotten rolling leaf firs had quickly recovered their original appearance respectively.

A light wind blew past, and countless fallen leaves gathered together. The Mystic Forest then recovered its previous appearance as if nothing had happened.

*Roar!*

A frightening and angry roar was heard again.

Black clouds tumbled in the sky, and the entire forest was dark as a faint red mist spread around. Wherever the red mist spread, the leaves would rapidly wilt and then fall.

In no time, the originally lush leaves had all fallen, leaving behind bald trees.

However, everything hadn't stopped. The red mist continued brewing, and silently, the branches also started to become dry.

Without saying, the trunks started to shrink and quiver intensely.

At first glance, the dehydrated trees under the dark sky in the forest looked like skeletons that were about to pick a fight. It was sinisterly horrifying.

...

Tuan Zi was very fast, and it kept running toward the inside. Every time it ran a distance away, it would still turn around to look at Chu Liuyue to ensure that she was following it before continuing onward.

Chu Liuyue followed behind it closely in this manner. *Tuan Zi was still doing okay earlier, but it suddenly became weird after the ground started to crack.*

The further in they went, the more Chu Liuyue confirmed her inner guesses. *Tuan Zi really wants to bring me somewhere!*

Seeing Tuan Zi's agile figure, Chu Liuyue was confused. *Why is Tuan Zi so familiar with the Mystic Forest?*

Chapter 692: Rainbow Stream

Translator: Atlas Studios Editor: Atlas Studios

At one moment, Chu Liuyue even felt that Tuan Zi had once been here. However, this thought disappeared in no time.

The first time she met Tuan Zi was in the forest outside Country Yao Chen's Imperial City, and this was the Tianling Dynasty's Dahuang Swamp.

The two places were thousands of miles apart, and there was a Heaven's Canopy in between. No matter how she thought of it, it was impossible.

Chu Liuyue kept following Tuan Zi, and they continued going forward.

Qiang Wanzhou quickly caught up. After a while, Mu Hongyu and Ye Ranran came too.

Seeing that everyone was safe, Chu Liuyue felt more at ease.

Tuan Zi had previously left too suddenly, so she didn't even have the time to explain to the rest.

While following Chu Liuyue forward, Mu Hongyu couldn't help but ask, "Liuyue, where are we going now?"

The Mystic Forest was eerily silent, and it was even more so the further in they went. In addition to the earlier frustrated movements of the golden mane bear cub, she felt very uneasy.

Chu Liuyue gently shook her head. “Tuan Zi suddenly went in this direction. I also don’t know where it wants to go.”

Mu Hongyu looked in front, and expectedly, she saw Tuan Zi waiting for them at the front. It seemed like it didn’t run like this without reason.

“Is Tuan Zi bringing us to some place?” asked Mu Hongyu softly.

Chu Liuyue nodded. “I guess so.”

Even she still wasn’t clear about what exactly was going on.

“Ah! Quickly, look!” Ye Ranran—who was following behind—suddenly gasped and couldn’t conceal the shock in her voice.

Upon hearing this, Chu Liuyue and the rest immediately turned back to look.

Shock flashed across their faces with this one glance.

They saw that the forest they had left behind was suddenly covered by a sea of black clouds, and it became as dark as ever. Moreover, the originally lush greenery suddenly all wilted, leaving behind bald and dry outlines.

In that terrifying and oppressing shadow, it was as if a ferocious ghost climbed out from the ground and was showing off wildly, leaving people petrified.

“Wh-what exactly is going on?!” stammered Mu Hongyu as she was stunned.

Who would’ve expected that the normal forest would suddenly become like this?

“What about those people? The people—” Mu Hongyu raised her finger to point at the place that was like a ghost town, and her hands trembled slightly.

There didn’t seem to be anyone’s figures left in that place.

Chu Liuyue’s eyes narrowed as she stared in front closely.

It seemed like she could vaguely see a thin red mist floating around in that forest.

Ye Ranran—who was the youngest—was also frightened to no end when she saw this scene, and she couldn’t help but ask, “I-Is it because we walked too far away that we can’t see their figures? They should still be there, right?”

The few of them did not say a word.

The surroundings fell into eerie silence.

Tears welled up in Ye Ranran’s eyes, and they kept moving around as she subconsciously looked at Chu Liuyue. It seemed as though she was begging for help.

“Liuyue... Liuyue, what exactly is going on?” Actually, she also knew how illogical her previous thought was. They were indeed a distance away, but there were more than thousands of people there. If they were still around, why would they not be able to see their figures at all?

Even though that forest was very dark, they could still see the outlines of the trees and branches upon closer inspection. Hence, it was impossible that they couldn’t see so many people.

The most terrifying thing was that... all those people disappeared, and it was done silently!

If it weren’t because she looked back unintentionally, they might not even know such a big issue had occurred there.

Chu Liuyue pulled her over and comforted, “Don’t worry first. I think the mist in the Mystic Forest has acted up. This mist is very poisonous, and it can cause one to hallucinate. That mist has already spread to our area here, so perhaps what we see isn’t the real scene.”

Ye Ranran felt more at ease. “R-really?”

Chu Liuyue gave her an assuring gaze and patiently convinced her. “Think about it. The few of us are doing okay, and there are so many of them together. What can happen to them? Let’s not talk about the few elders and the many disciples. Just the Black Guards alone have formidable combat strength. With Lieutenant Mu leading them, there shouldn’t be a problem.”

Hearing this, Ye Ranran felt that it was very reasonable and believed it even more.

Mu Hongyu looked at Chu Liuyue, and worry filled her eyes.

Chu Liuyue silently shook her head. “No matter what, this place is very dangerous. We must leave as soon as possible! When we’re safe, we’ll think of another way to meet those people!”

Ye Ranran believed in Chu Liuyue very much, so when she heard this, she hurriedly nodded in agreement.

With Chu Liuyue around, she always felt that she had a backbone. What she could do now was try her best not to become their burden.

Looking at Qiang Wanzhou and Mu Hongyu at the side—who seemed to be calmer than herself—Ye Ranran felt guilty and reproached herself. “I’ll listen to you, Liuyue, for everything!”

Chu Liuyue looked up at the end.

The countless wilted trees were like different skeletons yelling at the top of their lungs and moaning painfully.

She hid the emotions in her eyes as she turned around and chased after Tuan Zi. “Let’s go!”

...

The few of them traveled very quickly as the wind howled beside their ears.

As Chu Liuyue rapidly ran forward, she kept thinking of what happened earlier. That red mist that spread all over is humid, but it isn't only that.

She had come to the Mystic Forest before. Normally speaking, humid mist would only appear in the forest around evening. But not only was the timing off now, even the color... was not right!

The true humid mist was pale white in color, and it wasn't that different from normal mist. It wasn't this strange red color.

Moreover, she had never seen the forest present itself in such a manner...

If we were also there earlier... Chu Liuyue looked up and gazed toward Tuan Zi as she knitted her brows slightly. Did Tuan Zi long know that this would happen... so it purposely brought us away? But how did Tuan Zi know? It even knew where to escape to.

Chu Liuyue had long known that Tuan Zi was different from ordinary blood ferrets, but it was only until now that she discovered that she seemed to have underestimated it.

Perhaps the previous scene was too impactful, so for a period of time afterward, the few of them kept silent. Nobody said anything as they silently proceeded forward.

Even if they didn't turn back, they seemed to feel the invisible, harsh, and sinister feeling approaching them.

After some time, Tuan Zi stopped again. This time, it didn't continue forward.

Chu Liuyue braved herself and directly rushed to Tuan Zi's side.

Qiang Wanzhou and the rest hurriedly followed.

After standing still, Chu Liuyue then realized that a small stream was flowing in front of Tuan Zi. It squatted by the bank—as obedient as ever.

“Tuan Zi.” Chu Liuyue called out to it.

Tuan Zi looked up and jumped onto her shoulders. Then, it raised its claws and pointed toward the stream.

Chu Liuyue took a closer look, and her gaze focused.

That stream of water was actually glowing in rainbow scales, which looked very magnificent!

### **Chapter 693: Sneak Attack!**

On the whole, this stream of water was as clear as ever. Only when one went in to take a closer look could they see shards of rainbow glow in the stream.

It was as if someone shattered rainbow crystals and scattered them into the water—dazzling and as magnificent as ever.

Compared to the previous scene, it was two completely different worlds.

Chu Liuyue glanced at Tuan Zi from the corner of her eye.

Tuan Zi stretched out its claws and pointed forward as it stared at her.

“You want us to follow the stream and walk up?” Chu Liuyue tried to ask.

Tuan Zi nodded crazily.

Chu Liuyue turned around and looked at the upper bank of the stream.

The stream of water was very narrow, and Chu Liuyue could step past it with one step across. It seemed to come from the forest’s depths, and it led to another direction.

Chu Liuyue followed the water stream and looked over as she squinted her eyes. *The source of the stream water seems like...*

*Roar!*

A terrifying roar sounded—it was earth-shattering!

Compared to the previous few sounds, it was much clearer than before. This also meant that they were much closer to the ninth-grade fiend that was about to break through!

Moreover, this sound made Chu Liuyue confirm that the stream of water was flowing down from where the fiend was.

The rainbow color glowing in the water might even be related to that fiend!

Chu Liuyue thought for a moment, lifted her legs, and went forward.

Qiang Wanzhou and the rest immediately followed her silently. It was as if Chu Liuyue became their leader unknowingly.

It was as if all the problems would be solved with her around.

There would always be a type of person in the world who could become the most dazzling form of existence no matter where they were.

Chu Liuyue was exactly such a person.

Even though this place was very dangerous, they still followed her forward unwittingly.

...

The few of them followed the stream of water and gradually walked deeper into the forest.

The deeper they went, the larger the water stream became. The magnificent rainbow glow within also became even more intense.

Gradually, the color of the stream also changed.

Chu Liuyue walked while looking at the stream of water, and she thought to herself.

The richer the strength contained within the stream of water, the more curious she was about what was on the upper region of the stream.

And on the entire way, the surroundings were very calm.

Upon closer hearing, they could only hear the leaves rustling, the cracking sound of the few of them walking through the forest, and the flowing sound of the stream of water. Other than this, there were no other movements.

“Didn’t Lieutenant Mu previously say that there are a lot of high-level fiends here? We’ve been in here for so long, but we haven’t even seen one.” The fear in Ye Ranran’s heart had gradually dissipated, and she couldn’t help but question curiously. “We haven’t even seen the shadow of a low-level fiend, not to mention high-level fiends.”

Actually, Chu Liuyue felt strange about the same thing as well.

When she previously came to the Mystic Forest, there were indeed all sorts of fiends lurking around. Even during the evening and nighttime—when the mist would spread—they could often hear rustling sounds.

That was the sound of the fiends moving.

However, this place was indeed too quiet today. Even if it were really because of the suppression from the ninth-grade fiend that caused the crowd of fiends to hide respectively, it didn't seem likely that they would be in such a state.

To put it more bluntly, it was... dead silence. This place had no form of liveliness at all—other than that stream of water.

But there was nothing else within that stream of water, other than the increasingly intense rainbow color.

“Perhaps there will be some after we walk a little more,” said Chu Liuyue.

When an ordinary high-level fiend broke through, it would indeed emanate an immense suppression that would cause the surrounding low-level fiends to feel a fatal threat. Due to this, they would avoid the area.

However, it was different when a ninth-grade fiend tried to break through and become a legendary fiend. Even though the suppression was terrifying, the bloodline of a legendary fiend had a natural attraction toward the other fiends.

The concept of varying standards that was etched into their bones would lead them to respect and admire the legendary fiend. This would cause them to continue going forward to pay their respects to the legendary fiend, even if they had to endure that terrifying suppression.

Now that the ninth-grade fiend caused such a huge commotion, there should logically be quite a few fiends around.

Ye Ranran nodded seriously.

...

After another period of time, Chu Liuyue felt that the surrounding air became stickier. Every step she took forward used up even more energy than before.

It was as if a very heavy mountain was suppressing them, causing them to be unable to breathe.

Chu Liuyue frowned. *This should be caused by that ninth-grade fiend's suppression!*

After walking a distance in such an effortful manner, Chu Liuyue's back was drenched in sweat. She took a deep breath in and finally stopped. "Let's rest for a while."

It was as if Mu Hongyu and Ye Ranran had met their lifesaver as they hurriedly found a place to sit down and rest.

Chu Liuyue sat down cross-legged at the side.

Qiang Wanzhou stood beside her with his back straight.

Chu Liuyue waved toward him. "Little Zhou, sit down and rest too."

From this angle, she could coincidentally see his lips that were slightly pale. It was obvious that this journey wasn't easy for him either.

Qiang Wanzhou's voice was as cold as usual. "I can just stand."

Just in case they met with any danger, it would be more convenient to move if they were standing instead of sitting down. He did this as well when he followed that person back then.

Chu Liuyue was caught between laughter and tears. She naturally knew what Qiang Wanzhou was thinking. "Little Zhou, you don't have to worry too much. This area should already be within that ninth-grade fiend's territory. Other than itself, anyone else who comes here would be like us. It won't be too dangerous now. Besides, you should rest."

However, Qiang Wanzhou was very stubborn. He shook his head and pressed his thin lips against each other tightly. His forehead was filled with beads of sweat as they followed his very intricate appearance and neck and trickled down, finally landing inside his gray clothes.

It was obvious that he wasn't having a good time now.

Chu Liuyue sighed lightly and said, "Little Zhou, the one-month agreement is already up. You're no longer my servant, so you don't have to do this."

But Qiang Wanzhou suddenly shook his body and looked at her as anxiety flashed across his eyes. "You don't want me anymore?"

*W-where did all of this come from?* Chu Liuyue was dazed. "No, don't misunderstand. I just feel that since our agreement has already ended, you don't have to see yourself as my servant. Besides, you're also my junior brother now, right?"

When Chu Liuyue said this, her lips curved up slightly, and her eyes seemed to be dazzling.

Qiang Wanzhou heaved a sigh of relief. "No need."

Then, as if he was afraid that Chu Liuyue would misunderstand, he said again, "I think this is quite good."

He was already used to such days and did not want to change.

Seeing his stubbornness, Chu Liuyue knew that there was no use convincing him otherwise. Thus, she decisively gave up.

*Anyway, this child always has some strange persistence... It's not bad if he becomes my junior brother and follows me like this.* Chu Liuyue was thinking of this when a piercing sound was heard beside her ear.

A harsh, cold air came toward her neck.

Her heart was suddenly alarmed! *Danger!*

### **Chapter 694: Familiar**

*Ca!*

Qiang Wanzhou moved his feet, stood in front of Chu Liuyue, waved his sword, and swung it.

*Kacha!*

The sound of something breaking was heard.

Chu Liuyue's heart skipped a beat as she turned around to look.

There was nobody else in the distant forest, and by her feet was a... wooden arrow that broke into two.

This wooden arrow was made from a tree branch, but it was as thick as a thumb and had simple workmanship. Only the sharp arrowhead had some sharpness to it.

But just this small wooden arrow actually made Chu Liuyue feel extreme danger when it rushed over just now. This could prove how formidable the other party was.

Chu Liuyue glanced around her surroundings again, but she didn't find anyone's figure.

"What's the matter? Did someone launch a sneak attack?" When Mu Hongyu and Ye Ranran heard the commotion, they hurried over and looked very nervous.

Chu Liuyue picked up the broken wooden arrow and scrutinized it. *It seems like this wooden sword is newly made. The other party's arrow is more like testing our skills.*

Chu Liuyue's gaze turned slightly, and it finally landed on a certain area. "What does it count to secretly launch an arrow and attack someone? Why don't you come out and meet us?"

The leaves rustled as the winds blew. Other than this, nobody answered.

Chu Liuyue waited for a while again, but the other party didn't respond at all. She used more force in her palm, and a fire spark suddenly came out.

That wooden arrow rapidly burned in her hands and finally turned into specks of ashes that completely disappeared.

She knew that the other party could see that this was her warning.

"If you don't wish to come out, then it's best if we stay in our own lanes," said Chu Liuyue coldly and clearly. Then, she turned around and continued walking toward the upper region of the water stream.

Qiang Wanzhou held his sword and followed.

Ye Ranran walked quickly and couldn't help but ask, "Liuyue, are we just going to let the sneak attack go?"

Chu Liuyue's lips curved up undetectably. *Normally, I naturally wouldn't leave this be. But now... On the one hand, the other party knows more about us. On the other hand, it's more important to find the ninth-grade fiend as soon as possible. If we just keep going on with the other party, it would waste a lot of time.*

"Let's talk when they dare to come out."

"They?" Not only Ye Ranran, but even Mu Hongyu was stunned. *Is there more than one person on the opposing side?*

Chu Liuyue lightly nodded and didn't explain further.

In actual fact, she had indeed detected two people's auras previously. Even though they were hidden, she could still feel them.

"Why would there be people here..." muttered Mu Hongyu softly. *When we turned around, that forest was already clearly...*

She thought that there were only the four of them here.

Chu Liuyue pondered for a moment, and a faint thought appeared in her heart. *The people who sneaked an attack on me might be the people in charge of protecting that ninth-grade fiend...*

But this guess was too ridiculous. Not to mention how formidable a ninth-grade fiend was, but even when it was about to break through and was in its most fragile and dangerous state, there might not be a fiend willing to let humans guard for them.

In normal circumstances, high-level fiends saw humans as enemies and were suspicious of them. They didn't trust humans, so why would they leave such an important task to them?

Hence, this thought was quickly suppressed by Chu Liuyue after it surfaced. The more likely scenario was that the two of them were also coming for the ninth-grade fiend.

Chu Liuyue suppressed her thoughts and continued forward.

The color in the stream became increasingly intense, and when the spots of rainbow gathered together, it was dazzling and magnificent.

An extremely light fragrance spread around.

Mu Hongyu crinkled her nose. "Hey, do you guys smell that? It seems like... seems like the fragrance is coming from the stream!"

Ye Ranran forcefully breathed in twice and was quite shocked. "I think there really is a smell! But this smell... doesn't smell like any herbs..."

She had been cultivating alongside Elder Xia Yi and had seen many herbs, so she basically could identify what most herbs were with one sniff. Even though this fragrance was light, she had never smelled this before.

“Liuyue, what do you think?” Ye Ranran looked at Chu Liuyue uncertainly.

When Ye Ranran saw Chu Liuyue refining medicine before, she knew that the latter’s skills were definitely above hers. Hence, she was even more convinced by her words.

But Chu Liuyue seemed to be stunned as she had a dazed gaze and did not speak.

Ye Ranran called after her. “Liuyue, Liuyue?”

Chu Liuyue recovered her senses.

“Liuyue, what’s wrong? Why were you in a trance?”

“...Nothing...” Chu Liuyue shook her head. “I just feel that this smell... seems familiar.”

The few of them looked over curiously.

Mu Hongyu’s almond-like eyes were bright. “Liuyue, why do you say that you have smelled this before? What exactly is this?”

Chu Liuyue shook her head hesitantly. "I'm not too sure either..."

She had thought for quite long previously, but she couldn't recall what exactly this smell was. She also didn't know why she would find it familiar.

Chu Liuyue didn't know where this strange feeling came from.

Mu Hongyu first looked shocked, but she quickly cheered herself up. "Since you find it familiar, you must've smelled it before! You just can't recall it at this moment! When we walk further in, you might just remember what it is!"

Chu Liuyue nodded.

The few of them continued walking further, but they traveled even more slowly. This was because the further in they walked, the heavier the suppression. Every once in a while, they also had to stop to rest.

However, the people that sneaked an attack on them did not appear again.

...

On the other hand, Jiang Yucheng felt that his body kept dropping after falling into the gully.

The gully was quite narrow at the beginning, and his body kept hitting the sharp stones beside him, causing him to be wounded.

He circulated the force in his body and tried to leave the place, but he shockingly discovered that his abilities were restricted by an unknown strength.

Within the darkness, he couldn't see anything and couldn't get himself out of it. He could only allow himself to continue falling.

The deeper he fell, the wider his surroundings became.

Gradually, he didn't touch the stone walls anymore. However, this didn't calm Jiang Yucheng—he became even more nervous instead. *Who could imagine that such a strange and spacious area would be under the Mystic Forest? Everything here is clearly problematic!*

“Wan'er?! Mu Qinghe?!” He called a few people's names consecutively, but nobody responded.

In the spacious area, only his voice kept echoing in the area.

*Poof!*

In this tense state, Jiang Yucheng finally landed on the ground.

No, to be more accurate, it wasn't solid ground. But it seemed like...

Jiang Yucheng took out a water pearl. It faintly glowed and illuminated the surroundings.

He could finally see what was around him clearly.

With this glance, he instantly gasped!

At this moment, he was actually in the dark soil!

### **Chapter 695: Near**

Looking over, he couldn't see the sides of the black, sticky soil.

The smell of rot permeated the area—nauseating and suffocating.

*What kind of place is this?! Jiang Yucheng was alarmed and extremely disgusted at the same time as he wanted to leave this place immediately.*

He almost instinctively looked up—it was complete darkness, without a single hint of light.

*Jiang Yucheng's heart harshly sank. Is... Is the entrance sealed shut?! If not, there should still be a bit of light!*

He rapidly scanned his surroundings and called out a few names, but nobody responded.

*Could it be that I dropped down alone?* Jiang Yucheng furrowed his brows tightly.

He didn't know that after him, Shangguan Wan, Mu Qinghe, and the rest were all respectively hurled down. But they all landed in different gullies, so they naturally wouldn't be with him. And at this point, their situations weren't any better than Jiang Yucheng.

However, Jiang Yucheng did not know this at all.

He really couldn't endure this environment, so he could only choose a direction randomly and plan to go out from there. But the moment he lifted his leg—

He couldn't.

A bad feeling crept into his heart, and he gradually lowered his head—his two feet had completely sunk into the soil.

Without his detection, the soil had already reached his ankles silently.

Jiang Yucheng's heart clenched up, and he immediately strengthened himself. However, something seemed to be tightly clutching onto him, so he couldn't struggle free.

Not only did Jiang Yucheng not come out after trying all sorts of methods repeatedly, but he also sank even deeper.

The soil had already reached his shin.

*I can't let this go on!* An idea popped up in Jiang Yucheng's heart. Finally, he picked up a thumb-sized icicle item.

He put his force within, and cold, sinister intent immediately exuded from it.

His hand was covered in a thin layer of frost. Then, the cold intent spread in all directions.

Not long later, the surrounding soil started freezing.

Jiang Yucheng pressed against that hard ice layer and finally extracted himself from the soil.

The intense, foul smell wafted toward his nose. His two legs, up to his shin, were stained with a thick layer of black soil.

One of his boots had dropped into the soil, and he couldn't bring it up.

Jiang Yucheng collapsed onto the ice layer as he tolerated his disgust and threw away the other boot as well. In his memory, he had never been in such a mess before.

When he roughly cleaned away the mess behind him, Jiang Yucheng finally stood up.

Endless darkness surrounded him everywhere.

He furrowed his brows tightly. *Mu Qinghe never mentioned that the Mystic Forest had such a place before...*

When he was still hesitant, a strange sound suddenly came from afar. In this silent place where one could even hear a pin drop, any little commotion would intensify in volume exponentially.

Just when Jiang Yucheng was extremely nervous, his heart also shook when he heard this sound. He held his breath and walked in the direction of the sound.

What he didn't see was that after he left, a hand stuck out from within the soil. A sinisterly white bone waved toward his back before silently sinking in.

The soil moved without a sound. It was as if something was silently moving.

...

Chu Liuyue and the rest walked for another hour.

The surrounding trees gradually had fewer leaves, but they were all very thick and looked as if they had been growing for hundreds of years.

A brilliantly colorful barrier appeared in front of them. The terrifying suppression came from above.

Chu Liuyue stared at that barrier and boomed, “I don’t think we can go forward anymore.”

*Plop!*

Ye Ranran breathed in heavily and sat down on the ground. “I’m so tired... What kind of fiend is this? Why is its suppression so strong?!”

She had the weakest combat skills out of the few of them, but she didn’t grumble at all along the way and insisted on following them.

Then, she didn’t forget to feed herself a pill to strengthen herself. Afterward, she gave a pill to the remaining three of them.

Even though Chu Liuyue had brought some herself, she still smiled and accepted it when she saw Ye Ranran handing the pill over to her enthusiastically.

Qiang Wanzhou saw that she accepted it and didn’t reject his.

Chu Liuyue took the pill and circulated her aura as she turned around to look at the barrier.

The barrier was like a gigantic, colorful, and oval-shaped glass cover that covered this entire area.

That stream was originally a very ordinary stream in the forest. But as it coincidentally spread across this barrier—as the countless rays of rainbow light shone down and landed in the stream—it gradually became what they saw.

The position where the stream and the barrier intersected had already become a permanent state. From far away, it looked as if a gigantic rainbow crystal was pressing on it.

When the countless colors melted into the stream of water, it was as magnificent as ever. An immense suppression appeared on top of that barrier, showing off its exquisiteness.

Even just by standing there, Chu Liuyue faintly found it hard to breathe. *I've come to the Mystic Forest before, but I have never seen such a scene. When did this appear? Or had it... originally existed already? What exactly is it inside this barrier?*

As the barrier was too brilliant, they really couldn't see the scene inside clearly.

That fragrance came out from this barrier, and that sense of familiarity became increasingly stronger.

Chu Liuyue seemed not able to control herself as she continued to walk forward.

Qiang Wanzhou slightly knitted his brows and immediately stopped her.

Worry flashed across the young and pretty face. "Danger."

Chu Liuyue looked at his clear and clean eyes and smiled slightly. "Don't worry. I know what to do."

Qiang Wanzhou turned around to glance at that barrier and said, "I'll do it!"

Then, he walked forward. He tightly held the Cloud-Sky Copper Sword as if he would immediately brandish it when something happened.

Chu Liuyue pulled him back.

Seeing Qiang Wanzhou's stubborn face, she could only sigh. "Why don't we do this? You'll be in front, and I'll be at the back. If something really happens, you'll be right beside me. It won't be too late if you take action then."

Qiang Wanzhou thought for a moment and finally agreed.

Chu Liuyue took two steps forward and stood in front of him. At this point, she was only one step away from the rainbow barrier.

As long as she extended her hand, she could easily touch it.

Chu Liuyue took a deep breath in and rapidly circulated her force as she held the crystal barrier tightly with one hand and made full preparations.

Actually, there was something she didn't tell Qiang Wanzhou and the rest: She didn't feel that this barrier was dangerous.

For some reason, she just felt that this barrier didn't seem to threaten her—even if the force around it was enough to destroy her.

Chu Liuyue gradually stretched her hand out.

### **Chapter 696: Can't Leave**

*Whoosh!*

A cold and harsh aura suddenly came from the side, and Chu Liuyue's gaze turned cold slightly!

Qiang Wanzhou had already raised his sword.

*Buzz!*

It was near her, and Chu Liuyue could even hear the sound of the arrow trembling.

The loose hair in front of Qiang Wanzhou's forehead moved slightly due to the strong aura.

A piercing pain came from her brows, but the Cloud-Sky Copper Sword was right in front.

If that arrow had moved another inch forward, he would've slashed it apart. But at this moment, that arrow stopped three steps away from the duo.

Chu Liuyue could even see the ripple that was formed in the air. It was as if a stone was thrown into a lake, causing lots of ripples to appear.

This was a long, black arrow made from exquisite metal. Its workmanship was unique, its lines were smooth, and it was as sharp as ever.

Compared to the previous rough wooden arrow, they were worlds apart. This arrow also contained genuine murderous intent.

Chu Liuyue looked at the source of the arrow and squinted her eyes. "Since this has already happened, why don't you just show yourself? There isn't any meaning to just hide around!"

After she said this, the entire forest was silent.

Qiang Wanzhou still held the sword tightly and very alertly.

Mu Hongyu and Ye Ranran were both nervous as they looked over to that area in unison.

After a moment, a burly man walked over. He was born with thick brows and big eyes, and he was wearing a rough sack shirt. He had copper-like skin, and coupled with his firm muscles, he looked extremely strong.

Chu Liuyue was shocked. *I didn't even see the figure of such a muscular and strong man, and I didn't even hear him moving. If it weren't because I detected his aura, I wouldn't have known that such a person was here all along and following us. It shows just how strong this man's capabilities are.*

Chu Liuyue had just broken through and become a stage-five warrior, so she couldn't find out what the other party's true cultivation level was. But from his surrounding aura... It seemed like he was at least an intermediate stage-seven warrior.

He might even be a peak stage-seven warrior!

The burly man held a bow in his hand and carried a container of arrows on his back. It proved that he was indeed the one who took action previously.

The weird thing was that he had another black hammer around his waist. It was completely dark, and a silver pattern seemed to be carved on the bottom of it.

However, Chu Liuyue couldn't tell what exactly it was from this side.

Detecting the incoming person's formidable abilities, Mu Hongyu and Ye Ranran became even more nervous. *This person... If we really fight with him, the few of us might not be his match even when we join hands!*

Chu Liuyue also noticed this, so she patted Qiang Wanzhou's shoulders. "Little Zhou, move back."

Qiang Wanzhou didn't move, and the cold intent on the Cloud-Sky Copper Sword glistened.

His fighting intent was overwhelming. With this formation, he seemed to have already decided to put his entire life down.

Chu Liuyue was caught between laughter and tears. "Little Zhou, let's not fight with him."

*If we did, we'd be the ones at a loss. What for?* Chu Liuyue had always been very sensible. If she could win against somebody, she would fight. But if she couldn't, she would run away.

The point was that she wasn't that confident of successfully escaping from this man with the rest of them. So... it was pretty good if they just sat down and talked!

Qiang Wanzhou finally took half a step back, but he was still very guarded as he looked at the man opposite him alertly.

That man didn't seem to care as he laughed out loud. "You really know how to go with the flow."

He could already tell that this young woman in red was the center of the group.

Chu Liuyue also smiled. "I'm Chu Liuyue. May I know your name?"

The burly man saw that Chu Liuyue was very decisive, and he decided to be swift in answering as well. "Lei Laosi!"

*Lei Laosi? That doesn't sound like a name, but more of a nickname.* However, Chu Liuyue wouldn't dig deep into this.

Lei Laosi raised his hand, and a thick layer of calluses appeared on his fan-like palm.

His fingers moved slightly, and the black arrow floating in front of Chu Liuyue and Qiang Wanzhou quickly returned. He then caught the arrow with one hand and threw it back into the arrow container.

“You all look quite young, and you are children from wealthy families, right? Why did you suddenly come here?” Lei Laosi chuckled, crossed his arms, and leaned against a thick trunk by the side. “This isn’t a fun place!”

Chu Liuyue could tell that he didn’t mean harm, so she felt slightly appeased. *If he really wanted to kill us, he wouldn’t wait until now.*

Chu Liuyue thought for a moment and said, “Honestly speaking, we followed the Third Princess here...”

“Which Third Princess are you talking about?!”

Chu Liuyue had just finished her words halfway when she saw that Lei Laosi’s expression changed as harshness flashed in his eyes.

*It seems like this Lei Laosi knows Shangguan Wan?* Chu Liuyue hesitated for a moment, but she still said, “Isn’t there only one Third Princess in the Tianling Dynasty?”

The moment she said that, Lei Laosi’s expression had completely darkened as he took out another long arrow.

He placed it on the bow and pulled it back—the cold and sharp arrowhead was pointed at Chu Liuyue.

“So you’re her people!” Unconcealable and intense murderous intent was found on Lei Laosi’s face. “Since this is so, you all deserve to die!”

The sound of the arrow being pulled back was heard, and it grappled one’s heart.

Detecting the danger, Qiang Wanzhou raised his sword.

Peacock-blue fire suddenly rose up.

Lei Laosi glanced from the corner of his eyes, squinted, and snorted. “Are you worthy of that sword?”

Then, he was about to release the arrow.

Chu Liuyue immediately said, “We’re not Shangguan Wan’s people!”

Hearing that name, Lei Laosi’s eyelids twitched slightly. Then, he snorted. “You previously said that you followed her here. Why aren’t you her people now? You’re full of lies!”

Chu Liuyue raised her hand, pressed Qiang Wanzhou’s wrist, and forcefully pressed his sword down. Then, she stepped forward with a calm face as she carefully said, “We did come with her, but it doesn’t represent that we’re her people. In actual fact, she brought a total of more than 1,000 people over.”

Lei Laosi looked slightly shocked. “What? Why did she bring so many people here?!”

Chu Liuyue quickly explained the situation briefly. "...That's why so many people came together this time, but we were separated from them not long earlier and came here. As for the rest... We also don't know where they are."

After hearing this, Lei Laosi's expression gradually became warmer. "You said that you're from Chong Xu Cabinet?"

Chu Liuyue slightly nodded and glanced at Mu Hongyu. "She's from Dragon Teeth Mountain, but we're friends."

"Dragon Teeth Mountain... Hmph!" Lei Laosi coldly snorted, but the murderous intent in his eyes had already disappeared.

Chu Liuyue heaved a sigh of relief in her heart. *It seems like I guessed correctly. This Lei Laosi indeed doesn't have any bad intentions toward people from Chong Xu Cabinet and Dragon Teeth Mountain.*

"I'll give Chong Xu Cabinet's Cabinet Master face and let you off! Hurry up and leave!" Lei Laosi waved his hands in frustration.

Chu Liuyue glanced at the rainbow barrier beside her and did not move. *I'm already here, so how can I leave?*

### **Chapter 697: News**

Chu Liuyue didn't move, and the rest naturally did not budge either.

The scene was completely silent for a moment.

Lei Laosi detected that something was amiss and tightly furrowed his thick brows. “What, did all of you not hear what I just said?”

Chu Liuyue smiled and said, “Big Brother Lei, you followed us all the way just now. I believe that you should also know that we came here to find out what’s on the upper side of the stream... We came here with much difficulty, yet you directly asked us to leave. Isn’t this quite inappropriate?”

Lei Laosi seemed to have heard some joke as he laughed and stared at the few people as if he were looking at some unreasonable children who were ridiculously fearless.

He raised his chin. “I know you want to enter this barrier, but... Why don’t you take a look at this place and see if you have the abilities to enter? You just barged right in. Youths really know no fear. Aren’t you afraid that you’ll die here?”

Chu Liuyue said respectfully and sincerely, “Thank you for the reminder, Big Brother Lei, but I have always been someone that cherishes my life a lot. I definitely won’t do anything that will threaten my life. If I do it, it proves that I have the confidence to extract myself from it completely.”

“Arrogant!!” Lei Laosi yelled in frustration. “You just came for the legendary fiend! At the end of the day, isn’t it just because you want to extract the legendary fiend blood for Shangguan Wan? What for His Majesty... It’s all bullshit!”

His words were filled with contempt and hatred toward Shangguan Wan.

Chu Liuyue’s heart tingled slightly. *Hearing this... this Lei Laosi seems to have a special type of grudge against Shangguan Wan. It also seems like he knows what happened to His Majesty now... But judging*

*from his appearance, he clearly looks like a barbarian that lives in the forest. Did he suffer in the past because of Shangguan Wan, so he came to the Mystic Forest?*

Chu Liuyue shook her head. "Big Brother Lei, don't misunderstand. We really have nothing to do with Shangguan Wan, so it's impossible for us to do anything for her. Only Jiang Yucheng and those people are willing to do this for her, but it definitely doesn't include us."

Lei Laosi suddenly thought of something and said in an indefinite manner, "Jiang Yucheng is also here?"

His sentence directly seemed like it was squeezed out of his teeth. Every single word was brought with etching hatred.

It was exactly the same when compared to his attitude toward Shangguan Wan previously.

*Chu Liuyue nodded. I wonder what deep hatred Lei Laosi has toward those two people before, to the point that he would be so furious when he hears their names at this moment.*

"Honestly speaking, we only walked a distance away just now. But when we turned around again, they had already disappeared..." Chu Liuyue didn't finish her sentence when she heard Lei Laosi laugh out loud.

*"So it was them! Ha, it's actually them!" I previously only felt commotion from the forest outside, but I didn't really care about it. I did not expect... It actually took care of Shangguan Wan, Jiang Yucheng, and that bunch of people! The heavens are really shining down on us! In that case, it's definitely enough to make them struggle even if they aren't dead.*

Upon thinking of what they were currently experiencing, Lei Laosi immediately felt much better, and his eyes were even smiling. "Since you could avoid the mist and even reach here, it proves that you do have

some fate. But... this really isn't some place you should stay! If you still refuse to leave, then I'll send you guys off! Take it as me repaying you for telling me such good news!"

Then, Lei Laosi whipped out his hammer from his waist.

Just as he was about to take action, he saw the girl opposite smile with her eyes curled up. "Big Brother Lei, it's possible that we don't go in, but can't you just let us watch from here? After all... We have never seen a ninth-grade fiend breaking through before, so it's inevitable that we are curious. See, we already reached here with much difficulty..."

With her smile, it seemed like the entire river of stars entered her eyes as they dazzled and shone brightly.

Lei Laosi was suddenly stunned. *This appearance and behavior really look like...*

Seeing Lei Laosi's expression relax for a moment, Chu Liuyue thought that he was convinced and hurriedly said, "We promise that we'll just stay here, and we definitely won't randomly move or get into trouble. After we finish watching, we'll leave immediately. How's that?"

Seeing her sincere gaze filled with desire, Lei Laosi faltered. Then, he silently looked at the area behind Chu Liuyue and the rest.

Chu Liuyue knew that he was looking at someone else. Even though she didn't know who that person was and didn't know why that person didn't want to reveal themselves, their identity had to be similar to that of Lei Laosi.

Lei Laosi's glance was clearly to discuss with that person.

Chu Liuyue's eyes moved slightly, and she continued saying, "Anyway, Big Brother Lei, you're here too. Are you afraid that we'll do something? Besides... Many things have happened in Xi Ling City recently. Why don't we sit down and talk about it?"

Lei Laosi coldly chuckled. "You're so young, but you do have a glib tongue! It's not that you can't stay here, but all of you must move ten steps back! Without my permission, nobody is allowed to take another step forward!"

He also didn't know why he couldn't harden his heart when he looked at Chu Liuyue.

She had a vague sense of familiarity.

Chu Liuyue immediately said happily, "Thank you, Big Brother Lei!"

Then, she hurriedly exchanged glances with the few of them and pulled them backward.

Tuan Zi waved its claws reluctantly as it stared at the rainbow barrier. *Just a little... Just a little!*

Chu Liuyue detected its desire as she grabbed its tail and pressed it against her arms. Then, she softly said, "Tuan Zi, listen."

Tuan Zi could only lay in her arms obediently, but its eyes kept floating to that side.

After moving ten steps back, Chu Liuyue and the rest stood still.

Lei Laosi looked at them and asked, "What happened in Xi Ling City? Tell me about it."

Chu Liuyue smiled in her heart and thought, *As expected—he still wanted to know about it.*

She thought for a while and said, "In a few months, Shangguan Wan and Jiang Yucheng are getting married."

Lei Laosi immediately straightened his body, and the veins popped on his forehead as his face flushed red with anger. "How dare they—"

*Roar!*

A roar that shook the mountains and rivers suddenly came from within the rainbow barrier.

*Hong long!*

The black clouds tumbled in the sky as silver snake-like lightning quickly gathered within the clouds.

Terrifying suppression swept across the area as the forest howled.

Chu Liuyue's entire body was shocked, and her eardrums were about to burst.

The others weren't any better as their faces paled in unison.

Chu Liuyue immediately looked up.

The countless rays of rainbow light were gathering at the upper side.

*Is... it going to break through?!*

Tuan Zi stuck its head out from her arms, and its black and watery eyes gradually became rainbow!

### **Chapter 698: A Wing**

At this moment, Chu Liuyue had focused all her energy on that rainbow barrier and didn't notice the change in Tuan Zi—who was in her arms.

The thick clouds crazily swarmed around in the skies, and they rapidly gathered. Looking at it, it wasn't any weaker than the suppression of the lightning that Chu Liuyue had triggered when she was refining the Cloud-Sky Copper Sword.

Chu Liuyue squinted her eyes slightly. *Hm... I do miss it quite a bit... Back then, the lightning didn't want to land for a very long time, and I spent a lot of effort tidying it up.*

If the few people around knew of Chu Liuyue's thoughts at this moment, they would be so shocked that their jaws would drop.

In this world, be it cultivators or fiends, they all loved and were afraid of lightning.

They loved the strength it encompassed. As long as they could trigger the lightning, it basically meant that their abilities would strengthen. At the very least, their Yuan instruments' standards would increase.

They hated the ferociousness of the lightning's strength. If one wasn't careful, their lives might even be lost.

However, there should be only one person who would forcefully snatch the lightning down from the skies and stuff it inside the Yuan instrument to nourish it like Chu Liuyue and then even miss it afterward.

Even her ancestor couldn't help but say, "Girl, you're not thinking of snatching other people's lightning, right... That's triggered because the other is breaking through and becoming a legendary fiend..."

Chu Liuyue coughed. "Ancestor, listen to what you're saying. Am I that type of person?"

Shangguan Jing kept quiet for a moment and slowly said, "How would I know?"

Chu Liuyue was speechless. *It seems like the previous incident has left quite a huge scar in Ancestor's heart...*

"Don't worry. I just want to see what fiend is breaking through here. I'm not thinking of anything else. After all, I already have an agreement with a legendary fiend, right?"

Chu Liuyue convinced him in her heart.

Even though the legendary three-eyed eagle hadn't recovered its physical body, she already had the skeleton of a great phoenix dragon and a purplish-gold Buddha leaf. As long as she found some suitable herbs, she could find a suitable location and time to help the legendary three-eyed eagle recover its physical body.

Others might have some burning desire for legendary fiends, but she really did not have any.

Upon hearing this, Shangguan Jing felt a little more appeased. "Since you said this, I naturally will believe you. Besides... With this rainbow barrier, you shouldn't be able to break through it even with another you. That Lei Laosi is correct—this place is very dangerous. You guys should leave after watching."

The ancestor's voice had an extra tinge of solemnness and seriousness.

Chu Liuyue's heart tingled slightly. "Thank you, Ancestor."

Shangguan Jing did not speak anymore.

Looking at the gigantic semicircle in front, Chu Liuyue fell into deep thought. *I knew that the barrier was formidable, but I didn't expect Ancestor to have such a high evaluation of it. Could it... really be that strong?*

With this barrier in the way, she couldn't even see what was going on inside, even if they were very near it. Other than the brilliant lights shining past, they couldn't see anything—not even a rough outline.

*What else can we see?*

Chu Liuyue couldn't help but ask the legendary three-eyed eagle in her heart, "Can you detect exactly what fiend is inside now?"

This time, the legendary three-eyed eagle hesitated for a moment before saying, "I don't know."

Chu Liuyue found it weird. *The legendary three-eyed eagle is a legendary fiend, and its standards are higher than a ninth-grade fiend. Logically speaking, it should be able to feel the other party's aura when they are so close to each other.*

"Um... If even you don't know..."

As if sensing the doubt in Chu Liuyue's words, the legendary three-eyed eagle explained, "This rainbow barrier should be set up by that fiend in advance, and it contains tremendous strength. Besides, if I'm not wrong, it should've used other methods. Hence, I can't identify it in a short while."

"I see..." Chu Liuyue believed it more as she couldn't help but be more curious and laughed. "It's so weird. There's actually a ninth-grade fiend that is this smart and capable in the world. No wonder it can try to break through and become a legendary fiend... But I don't know what exactly it is... It'd be great if I can personally see it."

*It can also satisfy my curiosity!*

The legendary three-eyed eagle did not reply to her.

Tuan Zi shrank into Chu Liuyue's arms guiltily as it hurriedly glanced at her before looking at that rainbow barrier again.

On the barrier, it was as if countless grains of rainbow sand gently flowed past it. It was mesmerizing and very beautiful.

*Huala-*

A gigantic shadow flashed across the barrier.

Chu Liuyue's eyes lit up as she immediately sat up straight and looked over.

However, that shadow disappeared after a moment, and it quickly dispersed within the countless specks of light.

Chu Liuyue didn't even see its shape, and disappointment flashed across her face. *This fiend is really weird. It hasn't even shown its face until now...*

"Ah... What a pity! I didn't even see what it was clearly!" Mu Hongyu held her face up in defeat, and regret filled her face.

The golden mane bear cub suddenly appeared and snuggled into her arms, watching with her.

Mu Hongyu pinched its ears and smiled. "Congcong, why did you come out? Aren't you afraid now?"

The golden mane bear cub waited obediently and allowed her to touch it. Upon hearing this, it actually shook its head.

This meant that it wasn't scared.

Mu Hongyu was very elated in her heart as she widened her almond-like eyes and asked, "Are you really not afraid? That's a ninth-grade fiend!"

The golden mane bear cub was also a high-level fiend itself, but it couldn't be compared to a ninth-grade fiend.

She originally thought that Congcong wouldn't dare to appear here. After all, it was still especially restless a while earlier...

"Then, why were you so afraid earlier? Hm? Hm, did Congcong become stronger?"

The golden mane bear cub followed Mu Hongyu shortly after it was born, so the latter always brought it along like she was raising a small doll. Even if the current golden mane bear cub was already half as tall as her and heavier than her, she would still tease and play with it.

The golden mane bear cub smiled happily and glanced at Tuan Zi.

Tuan Zi was currently playing with Chu Liuyue's hair, and it lightly flicked its claw.

The golden mane bear cub immediately retracted its gaze as it crazily nodded in response to Mu Hongyu's question.

Mu Hongyu smiled proudly and happily. "Since you want to watch it too, let's watch it together!"

*Speaking of this, it will also break through when it reaches a certain age, right?*

"Just now... was it a wing?" said Ye Ranran uncertainly.

Mu Hongyu looked at her. "Wing? You saw it?"

Ye Ranran shook her head. "I-I'm just guessing... When I glanced at it, it did look like..."

"Now that you're saying this, I think so too!" Mu Hongyu thought for a moment and suddenly became energetic. "It should be a moving wing! However, the shape was a little weird... I've never seen such a wing before."

Chu Liuyue tilted her head and looked at the duo. "What kind of wing?"

Ye Ranran raised her hands and drew a line in the sky. "It's like this..."

**Chapter 699: The Night where the Moon is Dark and Winds are Strong**

*Hong long!*

A lightning bolt struck down! A loud thunder sound was heard, and it reverberated throughout the area!

The suppression within was very strong, and the crazy force rapidly spread out in all directions.

The wind howled aggressively and blew everywhere. A large number of the trees near Chu Liuyue and the rest were blown till they broke, and some were even totally uprooted.

Dust flew up everywhere!

Chu Liuyue was slightly shocked and was about to move when she felt a warm yet strong force covering herself.

That terrifying aura was immediately blocked outside.

Chu Liuyue turned around in shock and saw that Lei Laosi had set up a white barrier.

Ice-blue lightning glowed on the barrier.

Chu Liuyue followed her gaze and discovered that Lei Laosi was holding a hammer.

The strength of the barrier seemed to come from the hammer.

“Hmph, now you know how formidable it is? That side-effect almost took half your lives away.” Lei Laosi coldly snickered, and his entire face had the expression of ‘I knew you newbies didn’t have much combat power.’

Facing Lei Laosi’s face of contempt, Chu Liuyue didn’t care at all and seriously thanked him. “Thank you, Big Brother Lei!”

Lei Laosi didn’t expect that not only was Chu Liuyue not afraid at all, but she even directly thanked him. Her words and attitude were all very sincere, causing him to be dazed.

During that moment, he didn’t know how he should retract that ferocious expression on his face.

*This girl is too smart! How am I going to continue?* Lei Laosi was disinterested, and he could only tactfully cover his expression.

With Chu Liuyue in the lead, Mu Hongyu and Ye Ranran hurriedly followed and said toward Lei Laosi in unison, “Thank you, Big Brother Lei!”

The two ladies’ face of overwhelming sincerity was actually even greater than Chu Liuyue’s and definitely not any lesser.

Lei Laosi’s eyelids twitched.

He was a bore and was used to seeing the gleams of blades and swords. He had seen countless fights and murders, but this was the first time a few petite girls thanked him continuously.

Lei Laosi instantly felt uncomfortable as he held the hammer in his hands and faltered. *I-I really... want to tell these few ladies to stop talking and not to use those grateful, teary eyes to look at me! Ahh!!*

Seeing Lei Laosi's especially awkward manner, Chu Liuyue secretly laughed to herself. *This Lei Laosi seems huge and talks brutally, but he's a good person in reality. The key is... He always seems to be a little awkward. He's clearly helping others, but he has to put up a ferocious appearance as if he's terrified of other people knowing that he is kind-hearted. His temper is pretty similar to someone amongst the Thirteen Yue Guard.*

Thinking of that person, Chu Liuyue's lips curled up slightly, and she couldn't help but smile.

Lei Laosi immediately exploded. "W-what are you smiling at!?"

Chu Liuyue coughed. "Nothing much. I just felt that Big Brother Lei... You're quite similar to someone that I know." But even though their temperament is similar, their appearances are worlds apart.

Lei Laosi believed her doubtfully but did not continue asking. He felt extremely uncomfortable because of Chu Liuyue's smiling appearance, and he could only turn his face away. *I won't look! I won't look! What I can't see won't hurt me!*

Chu Liuyue smiled for a while and let him off. She then looked up at the rainbow barrier again.

The first lightning bolt struck down, and the strength gradually dispersed as the effects slowly appeared.

She unwittingly glanced at it and shockingly discovered that the bottommost part of the barrier actually became transparent.

Even though the area wasn't large, they could see a portion of the scene covered by the barrier through here—a bunch of fallen leaves and half the stream.

They had no choice as this was the Mystic Forest. The grounds of the forest were always covered with thick fallen leaves.

But even though she could only see this, Chu Liuyue was already very excited.

It was as if after that lightning struck down, the fiend within absorbed a portion of the barrier's strength, which caused his type of situation to occur...

When a ninth-grade fiend broke through to become a legendary fiend, it had to endure nine bolts of lightning. When these nine bolts of lightning all struck down, perhaps the barrier would completely disappear.

By that time, they would be able to see exactly what was going on.

When the lightning struck down, it interrupted Ye Ranran's movements.

After seeing the change on the barrier, all the attention of everyone present had been attracted over, and they naturally forgot about that wing.

Chu Liuyue looked up, and as expected, she saw that the second lightning bolt was already rapidly gathering. But she didn't notice that Tuan Zi, who was in her arms, had already silently covered its eyes and the dazzle within them.

...

"Ah!" A painful moan was suddenly heard from behind the crowd.

Chu Liuyue knitted her brows and turned around to take a look. *This voice... It sounds like Jiang Yucheng?*

Mu Hongyu and the rest also followed her gaze and looked over.

The nearby forest was also affected by the aftershock, and it was in a mess.

And far away... There was no one.

"Who is screaming?" asked Mu Hongyu rather uneasily. "There's nobody... Did I hear it wrongly?"

Ye Ranran shook her head. "I heard it too! There is someone! I-I think he's underground!"

"Underground?" Mu Hongyu was dazed for a moment.

Ye Ranran already looked at Chu Liuyue. “Liuyue, you heard it too, right? Did that voice come from underground?”

Chu Liuyue’s eyes sparkled slightly. *Jiang Yucheng is pretty capable. He actually could escape from that type of situation and come here...*

Even though she didn’t know why his voice was coming from underground, Chu Liuyue still felt pretty disgusted. She didn’t want to know what exactly was going on.

She just hoped that Jiang Yucheng would go far away and not disturb her here.

However, Jiang Yucheng’s voice didn’t stop, and it was getting closer and closer.

Chu Liuyue’s mind moved slightly, and a thought popped up in her mind. *On the night when the moon is black and winds are strong, it’s time for murder and arson!*

The skies were now getting dark, and the entire forest was covered in this thick layer of shadow. Thus, everyone’s vision was inevitably affected.

Additionally, with that ninth-grade fiend breaking through, the commotion it caused was huge. If something really happened, it wouldn’t attract anyone’s attention.

She stood up. “Stay here and don’t move. I’ll go take a look.”

**Chapter 700: Meet**

Qiang Wanzhou moved and was about to get up and follow her.

Chu Liuyue turned around and lightly shook her head.

Qiang Wanzhou pressed his lips against each other tightly and could only stay where he was. However, his gaze was glued to Chu Liuyue as if he was afraid that she would meet with danger. After all, this Mystic Forest was indeed very strange throughout the entire journey.

Once he thought of the scene he saw previously, uneasiness surfaced in Qiang Wanzhou's heart.

Chu Liuyue didn't care about him and just walked forward.

Perhaps it was due to the ninth-grade fiend's strength, but the strange mist didn't spread to this area in the end. The forest within miles still looked very normal.

Chu Liuyue stepped on the thick leaves and walked forward.

Tuan Zi jumped onto her shoulders, turned around, and watched the lightning gathering in the sky.

Chu Liuyue patted it in comfort. "When I settle these things, we'll go back immediately."

Not only Tuan Zi, but she also wanted to continue watching.

*If it weren't for Jiang Yucheng...* Chu Liuyue walked as she carefully listened for where the voice came from.

After walking a distance, that voice became increasingly close.

In the end, Chu Liuyue stood in front of two intersecting trees and stared at the ground closely. *It seems that... He's right below here!*

Thick layers of wilted leaves were piled up around this area's surface—it didn't seem any different from the other places. But by standing there, she could clearly hear Jiang Yucheng's painful cries coming from below.

A thought popped up in Chu Liuyue's mind as she waved her sleeves.

The fallen leaves flew up respectively, and a root that was jutting out was found below.

Dust and moss gathered on top of it, and one really wouldn't be able to tell what it was if they didn't examine it carefully.

Chu Liuyue leaned her ear in and almost confirmed that Jiang Yucheng was below this tree.

*I wonder how he ended up below here...* Chu Liuyue thought as she knocked against the root.

*Knock knock...*

Jiang Yucheng's voice suddenly stopped. He had clearly heard this sound.

Chu Liuyue chuckled.

According to Jiang Yucheng's meticulous and doubtful nature, he won't think of asking for help when he hears this sound. Instead, he'll think about how to avoid this danger. Even if one gives him ten times the courage, he won't dare to rush up.

Chu Liuyue knocked against it again.

*Knock! Knock! Knock!*

This time, Jiang Yucheng became even quieter.

On the other hand, the root gradually moved.

Chu Liuyue looked up.

The tree beside her was also a rolling leaf fir.

*It seems like... it wants to leave?*

The root moved, and the soil and moss on it slowly dropped. A faint bloody smell then spread around.

Chu Liuyue knitted her brows. *This smell... It seems like the smell of blood, and it even has the smell of something rotting...*

Suddenly, her gaze focused as she stared at the numerous roots exposed on the outside.

The thin walls looked as if they were transparent as they were filled with red liquid that was slowly moving around. It was like... red blood!

Chu Liuyue's eyes shrunk. *I've seen rolling leaf fir roots before, but I have never witnessed such a situation!*

Chu Liuyue took a deep breath in and stared at the blood hand-like tree root as her mind kept replaying scenes that she had seen before. *Oh right, the roots of those rolling leaf firs all seemed to be glowing red! But those trees weren't as old as this one, and their roots were naturally much smaller. In addition, I didn't take a close look at that time... Are all those roots actually like this?*

Chu Liuyue took half a step back, whipped out her dagger, and directly stabbed it into the root.

*Whoosh!*

Red liquid gushed out, and the intense, bloody smell attacked her nose!

Chu Liuyue was shocked. *There's really blood inside! Even though it might not be pure blood liquid, quite a bit of real blood is definitely mixed within. If not, it wouldn't be this color or smell! Where did all of this blood come from?*

Thinking of when she saw the sinisterly weird scene earlier, a chill ran down Chu Liuyue's spine. *Could it be... Those people... The Dahuang Swamp is filled with dangers, but it also has a lot of temptations. Many cultivators come over every year, but only a small portion of them can survive. The remaining majority of them were actually buried in Dahuang Swamp. If rolling leaf firs really rely on sucking and eating human blood to nourish themselves... Then, this piece of lush greenery in the Mystic Forest—*

Chu Liuyue's eyelids twitched.

*Hong long!*

The second bolt of lightning harshly struck down!

Chu Liuyue immediately turned around and glanced at the scene. The dazzling light almost made her unable to open her eyes.

The strength of that lightning bolt was clearly greater than the first one.

Chu Liuyue squinted her eyes and vaguely saw the rainbow color in the bottom half of the barrier quickly disappearing as it gathered above.

Finally, it merged with the bright glow!

*That should be the fiend absorbing the strength from its own barrier to fight against the lightning, right?*

The transparent portions of the barrier expanded, but on Chu Liuyue's side, she could only see the fallen leaves within and some stones.

Other than this, there was nothing else.

Chu Liuyue was a little disappointed. *It seems like I have to wait a while before I can see the appearance of the fiend within...*

*Zing...*

The sound of something being dragged across the ground was heard.

Chu Liuyue immediately turned around and spotted the tree root that she had stabbed a hole in.

That tree root was bleeding, and the bright red liquid flowed everywhere, creating a huge puddle that looked terrifying.

Chu Liuyue's actions seemed to have triggered it to some extent.

It shrunk a little, and it moved even faster. The remaining roots were gradually being dragged out of the ground.

The entire tree started shaking as if it was waiting for this root to be extracted from the ground before it could directly run to escape.

Chu Liuyue's eyes turned slightly as she held her dagger tightly. She was about to take action when she saw a shred of cloth on the tree root.

Even though it was stained with soil, she could clearly see that the material was new and very expensive.

*That is a piece of Jiang Yucheng's clothes! He is indeed underground here! Looking at the bloodstained cloth, Chu Liuyue's lips curled up into a cold smile. It seems like Jiang Yucheng isn't having an easy life below here... Perhaps this tree root has absorbed some of his blood?*

A familiar aura became increasingly close.

Chu Liuyue stabbed the root again, and the root moved even more aggressively!

A large piece of ground was suddenly overturned.

Half a person's figure was hurled out from underneath all of a sudden—this person was Jiang Yucheng!

The upper half of his body was tightly intertwined by the tree roots' sections, and only his arm could move while the lower half of his body was still in the ground.

His body was covered with bloodstains, and he looked extremely miserable.

However, he was still very alert. The moment he came out, he immediately hurled the longsword in his hands and slashed at Chu Liuyue.

Chu Liuyue agilely avoided it, smiled, and said, “Eldest Young Master Jiang, what are you doing?”

Jiang Yucheng paused in his actions before seeing the smiling young girl in front of him. “Chu Liuyue?!”