

## **Noble Ruler 821**

### **Chapter 821: Ridiculous Dream**

Shangguan Wan's expression froze for a moment, but she quickly returned to normal as her lips curved up into a faint smile as she seemingly asked unintentionally, "Officer Yuwen, what does that mean?"

Yuwen Wei paused for a moment and explained, "Uh... As you might know, the preparatory works for the Princess's grand wedding were basically already completed back then, and everything was done to the highest standard. Do you want to do it like the Princess or... according to the normal princess formality?"

Even though he phrased his words very tactfully, Shangguan Wan understood what he meant.

This was because Shangguan Yue didn't prepare her wedding according to a normal princess formality but an even more upgraded one! Without a question, it was because of her Princess status!

During the Tianling Dynasty's thousand-year-long history, an emperor would basically hold a very grand ceremony whenever they ascended the throne during their wedding. Normally speaking, one would be treated the same way when they ascended the throne—regardless of whether it was a princess or a prince.

However, Shangguan Yue's was even grander than the ones before! This was because she was the second person in the entire Tianling royal family to have a Tianjing Yuan meridian after Shangguan Jing.

It was also because nobody in the entire Tianling Dynasty had complained or objected at all even though they had used up quite a lot of manpower and resources to prepare for it back then!

To them, the Princess deserved all of this!

And now, this person became Shangguan Wan.

Even though Shangguan Wan held power today, she wasn't as popular as the Princess back then. So normally speaking, she should directly go according to the princess's formality.

But Yuwen Wei was being meticulous, so he still came to ask her just in case he made a mistake.

Shangguan Wan stood at the top and crossed her hands. Even though she looked very calm, the two hands in her sleeves had already been clenched very tightly.

To her, this problem was an insult! Ever since they were young, Shangguan Yue was better than her in every aspect!

From minor things like a brush to major things like an entire palace! Every single aspect, Shangguan Yue would always be better than her!

Now that Shangguan Yue was finally dead, she completely crushed her bones underneath her feet. Shangguan Wan originally thought that she could finally step over Shangguan Yue forever, but she gradually realized that it wasn't the case.

Like the wedding's formality.

She naturally wanted to do it according to what Shangguan Yue did, but she couldn't do so. This was because she knew too clearly what kinds of troubles her choice would bring.

After a momentary silence, Shangguan Wan spoke, trying to make her voice sound calm. "How can I compare to my elder sister? Let's just do it according to the normal princess's formality."

Her lips curled up, but her eyes were icy cold.

Yuwen Wei lightly nodded. "Yes. I'll listen to your commands for everything, Your Highness. And..."

He paused and seemed hesitant.

Shangguan Wan's brows flinched. "Officer Yuwen, do you have other matters?"

"...I do have something else I want to ask you about, Your Highness. It's... for the items prepared for Princess's wedding previously. Some of them have been taken care of, while the others were just left aside. For example, there are a few treasured items used specifically for weddings... What do you want to do with them?"

The arrangements for Shangguan Yue's grand wedding back then were very elegant and intricate. Every single item used was a treasure chosen meticulously, and any one of them was extremely precious.

From what Shangguan Wan knew, the red carpet they prepared to welcome the bride was made using the most extravagant icy gold thread, and numerous red rubies were sewn into it. It really could be known as extravagant as every step was worth millions.

Just a mere red carpet was so extravagant and shocking. The other items were definitely more distinguished than ever.

Hence, Yuwen Wei was asking her if she wanted to use such items.

On the one hand, the Princess had accidentally passed on before her wedding, so these items didn't seem appropriate to be used. But on the other hand, these were all painstakingly made with a lot of manpower and resources. If they were really just set aside like that and new ones were made, it would be troublesome as well.

Shangguan Wan suppressed her anger, looked down, and lightly sighed. "Those are Elder Sister's items after all. If I see them, I might get reminded of her and feel terrible. Let's not use them then. Keep those items properly!"

Yuwen Wei's expression changed slightly. Actually, he originally thought that Shangguan Wan would be willing to use some of the items.

This wasn't related to money or fortune. This was because when someone in the Tianling royal family got married, many items wouldn't be customized again, and they would reuse the old items.

On the one hand, it showed the passing on of power. On the other hand, it represented the connection of bloodlines.

However, he didn't expect Shangguan Wan to be unwilling to use any of them...

“Your Highness, I’m afraid it would be a bit rushed if you want to change all of them to new ones...”

“This is a problem you have to deal with then, Officer Yuwen. Must I personally worry about such issues?” Shangguan Wan was already very frustrated, and her tone became colder.

Yuwen Wei understood what she meant and immediately said sensibly, “Yes! Your Highness, don’t worry. I’ll definitely do my best!”

Shangguan Wan’s anger then subsided a little, but her brows and eyes were still icy cold. “If there’s nothing else you want to instruct me, I’ll take my leave first.”

Shangguan Wan waved her hands.

Yuwen Wei bowed and exited.

Until his figure completely disappeared outside the door, Shangguan Wan was still enraged. *Yuwen Wei purposely came for me this time! Princess here, Princess there. She has already been dead for close to two years. What’s there to talk about her?!*

“That’s enough. Stop thinking about those useless things. You should find a way to recover your Yuan meridian as soon as possible!” A hoarse and cold voice suddenly came from her mind.

A chill was sent down Shangguan Wan’s spine, and shock flashed across her eyes. “Y-Yes!”

“If your Yuan meridian doesn’t completely heal before your wedding, I’m afraid you won’t be able to raise that staff in front of so many people, right?”

This sentence directly hurt Shangguan Wan. All this while, this was what she was most worried about!

“You’re right, Senior!”

“I previously told you to summon a few people into the palace, but you were very afraid. If you still don’t do anything about it, there won’t be much time!”

“B-but if I do it so openly, it’ll definitely arouse suspicions...” Shangguan Wan’s head also hurt. *Previously, I only took a portion from Yang Qin’er. After this matter was exposed, people suspected me for a very long time. Jiang Yucheng even scolded me harshly! I really don’t dare...*

That voice snickered continuously. “If you don’t dare to call them over, can’t you just go out and find them?”

“Go out? But—”

“Don’t worry. I’ll help you then.”

“...Yes!”

...

After Dugu Mobao and the rest left, Chu Liuyue looked at that black back view and was deeply shocked. She didn't recover her senses for a very long time.

*I've seen Master before! I must've had some interactions with him before! And... In that dream-like hallucination, his tone was very intimate and gentle! He called me 'Yue'er!' A ridiculous guess suddenly surfaced in Chu Liuyue's heart! He's—*

## **Chapter 822: I'm Back**

Something seemed to be shouting in her heart! That answer was within reach—as if there was only a thin layer of mesh in between.

She would know as long as she poked through it.

At this point, Chu Liuyue's head started hurting badly! She gasped in pain and held her head.

It was as if someone was holding an axe and kept swinging it at her, wanting to split her forehead apart. The excruciating pain made Chu Liuyue clench her teeth, and her entire body trembled.

After some time, the pain gradually subsided.

Chu Liuyue's forehead was filled with tiny beads of sweat. Her lips had turned pale, and her entire person was covered in sweat as if she had just been pulled out of the water.

She leaned against the stone wall at the side and rested for some time before she gradually recovered. She was clearly very close to that answer, but there seemed to be an invisible hand stopping her and not letting her proceed further.

Chu Liuyue sighed deeply and looked up at the dark sky as something rippled in the depths of her eyes. *Master must know me, and it's very likely that we were quite close before. But other than the scene by the cliff, I can't remember anything else.*

After standing at the spot and thinking for a moment, Chu Liuyue decided to set this matter aside. *It's not only Master—the identities of the Big Baby trio are also a mystery... I can only ask them when I see them again! Now, the most important thing is to go out and find the Dancing Lotus!*

The moment Chu Liuyue had this idea, she suddenly felt a sensation from the dantian.

She was dazed for a moment and realized the ripple was coming from the Heavenly Square Cauldron. *It seems to be... the Heaven-Wrecking Holy Seed?*

An idea popped up in Chu Liuyue's mind, and she summoned the Heavenly Square Cauldron.

A tiny transparent cauldron sat quietly in her palm.

The two emerald Heaven-Wrecking Holy Seeds were floating within, gently moving in one direction.

Chu Liuyue narrowed her eyes. *It's swaying toward... the position of the Dancing Lotus?*

"Tuan Zi!" As she commanded, a red color flashed across her eyes!



Tuan Zi appeared in front of her!

Chu Liuyue looked at its wing and saw that its injury had basically recovered.

A legendary fiend's recovery strength was originally strong. Additionally, Tuan Zi was a red-tailed phoenix with an extremely strong bloodline power, so this was even more so for it.

Furthermore, the Heaven-Wrecking Holy Seed had already conceded to Chu Liuyue. The energy it previously saved would no longer harm them and would even help Tuan Zi.

If one didn't take a close look, they wouldn't be able to tell that it was injured.

Chu Liuyue felt slightly more at ease.

*Whoosh—*

Tuan Zi spread its wings, and Chu Liuyue jumped onto its back.

Chu Liuyue yelled loudly.

Tuan Zi let out a clear scream, and its wings vibrated as it flew up!

...

*Shoo!*

A ground-breaking shrill immediately attracted the attention of the people waiting outside! The few of them seemed to have felt something as they looked up in unison.

The rolling leaf fir—which had already wilted to death—started breaking inch by inch and silently became powder. It then disappeared with the wind!

Qin Yi squinted his eyes.

Lei Laosi couldn't conceal his excitement and looked at his big brother. When he saw the latter's expression, he was even more agitated.

Qiang Wanzhou stared at the front closely. His soft golden hair had covered half his face, but his young and pretty face had a rare tinge of nervousness.

Mu Hongyu was originally cultivating, but she rapidly widened her eyes when she heard this.

At the side, Congcong couldn't help but walk forward two steps as respect and fear flashed across its eyes.

Ye Ranran sensibly detected the change in the atmosphere, and her eyes lit up as she softly said to Mu Hongyu, "Is Liuyue coming out?"

Once she said this, a gigantic figure quickly rushed down.

An ear-piercing howl was heard, and a red tail glided across the sky like fire—it was the red-tailed phoenix!

The crowd focused on it and saw a girl on the red-tailed phoenix's back. The girl stood with her back straight as she welcomed the wind, her black hair flying up!

*If it isn't Chu Liuyue, who else can it be?*

After being in the dark space for a long time, she couldn't really adjust to her surroundings when she suddenly came out. However, this was before the break of dawn, and the blue sky still had a faint glow to it.

Chu Liuyue closed her eyes and quickly saw the scene in front of her clearly. She scanned from the corner of her eyes and saw that the gigantic Mystic Forest below her had already wilted to death.

At one glance, it was quiet and silent with a tinge of sinister aura. There were also a few people standing near the mother tree that was gradually vanishing.

“Liuyue!” Mu Hongyu couldn't hold herself back as she yelled out first and kept waving toward Chu Liuyue, overflowing with excitement and happiness. “Liuyue! We're here!”

Ye Ranran was also so emotional that her cheeks flushed red. “It really is her! She really came out!”

After such a long wait, nobody knew what kind of torture they had experienced in their hearts. However, it was worth it to have this moment!

Qiang Wanzhou pressed his lips against each other. Even though he didn't have much of an expression on his face, his crystal-like eyes dazzled. *I knew it. I knew all this while that she would definitely be safe.*

"Hahaha! I knew it! I knew it!" Lei Laosi's uneasy heart finally relaxed as he waved his fists and laughed. *What kind of person is Her Highness? All of this is expected!*

Qin Yi's lips curled up slightly as he stood with his hands behind his back, and he looked up at that girl.

She was like a god of war that had fought back from hell as her entire body exuded a strong and harsh aura, causing people to bow down to her unwittingly.

Even if she was in a perilous situation, she would definitely think of ways to solve all the difficulties and stand up again. This was... Her Highness that all of them had been following!

Seeing these few people, Chu Liuyue felt her heart warm up. In no time, her limbs seemed to be rejuvenated.

No matter what situation it was, there would always be people who would wait for her persistently.

Meeting their expectant and elated gazes, Chu Liuyue finally understood. *I've never been battling alone!*

“Tuan Zi, let’s go down!” said Chu Liuyue with a smile.

Tuan Zi answered, and its wings vibrated as it rushed toward the ground. The mighty legendary fiend aura immediately enveloped the entire space.

Chu Liuyue jumped down.

Mu Hongyu and Ye Ranran immediately went forward, but when they reached Chu Liuyue, they all widened their eyes in disbelief as they stared at her without blinking. “Liuyue? Liuyue, i-it’s really you!”

Chu Liuyue smiled brightly. Her lips curled up as she pinched the duo’s faces respectively. “Of course, it’s really me!”

Mu Hongyu was slightly better, while Ye Ranran’s eyes turned red directly.

“T-that’s great... I still thought...” As she spoke, her voice had a crying tone to it.

Chu Liuyue’s heart felt warm. “Don’t worry. I’m fine! Am I not doing well?”

She looked up at the remaining three people, and countless emotions gathered in her heart. Finally, they formed a single sentence. “Thank you for waiting for me. I am back.”

**Chapter 823: White Lion**

The moment Qin Yi and Lei Laosi heard this, their expressions became slightly solemn. Only they knew the true meaning behind this sentence—Not only was she Chu Liuyue, but she was more of Shangguan Yue!

This empire that originally belonged to her was once stolen away by others using despicable methods. Now, she was finally back to reclaim everything she had lost.

The girl in front of them dressed ordinarily and looked a little slim, but her pair of black gem-like eyes were filled with peerless dignity!

If it weren't because Mu Hongyu and the other two were still here, Lei Laosi would almost directly go down on one knee and bow to her! *Her Highness... is indeed Her Highness! I didn't wait all this while for nothing!*

Qin Yi glanced at him with a gentle gaze.

For close to two years, they had stayed here. Actually, they didn't even know if Her Highness was really still alive and when she would come back.

From start to end, they only lasted to this point because of the persistence in their hearts. Now that they could finally see the light at the end of the tunnel... Even he was feeling emotional, let alone Four.

Qiang Wanzhou looked over as if he sensed something. For some reason, he kept feeling that Qin Yi and the rest treated Chu Liuyue very differently...

Even though he wasn't very good with the ways of life, he had a sensitive beast-like instinct. If it weren't for this, he wouldn't really stay around them in such a relaxed manner and wait for Chu Liuyue to come out together.

He looked at Chu Liuyue and saw that her gaze was deep. One couldn't see the end of it.

*It seems like... She's hidden many secrets. Qiang Wanzhou looked down. Since she doesn't want to speak about them now, then I won't ask. When the day that she wants to speak about it comes, she will naturally do so.*

"Liuyue, why were you trapped underground for so long? What exactly happened in between? How did you come out?" After confirming that Chu Liuyue came out safely, Mu Hongyu was completely relaxed. Once she was at ease, she couldn't help but ask a series of questions.

Chu Liuyue was caught between laughter and tears. "It's a long story. I'll slowly tell you about it after we go back."

Ye Ranran gasped. "Liuyue, you seem to have... broken through again?"

Chu Liuyue blinked. I stayed for around a year inside that sealed Heaven-Wrecking Holy Seed's God Realm. It would really be strange if I didn't break through.

Her current cultivation level was that of a peak stage-five warrior; she was only a step away from becoming a stage-six warrior.

In actual fact, she had felt herself almost touching that invisible barrier a few times. But as she didn't have the time to focus on breaking through, she suppressed it.

As long as she wanted, she could step into the stage-six warrior level at any time now!

"I was just lucky," explained Chu Liuyue briefly.

Ye Ranran's round face was filled with shock. "Mentor said that luck is also part of your capabilities! Liuyue, when Cabinet Master, Mentor, and all the other senior brothers and sisters see the current you, they will definitely be proud!"

Chu Liuyue laughed and knocked on her forehead. "Do you think I can't tell? Didn't all of you break through too?"

Ye Ranran rubbed her forehead and laughed in embarrassment. "I have to thank Big Brother Qin and the rest for chasing me to cultivate and even guiding me in between!"

Chu Liuyue smiled with even deeper meaning as she looked at Qin Yi's group of two with teasing intent in her eyes. "Then, I'll really have to thank Big Brother Qin and Big Brother Lei."

The two of them were very strong, and Qin Yi was especially intelligent. In the entire Tianling Dynasty, countless people would beg to have a word of guidance from him but to no avail.

Now, he did a favor for Mu Hongyu and the rest. This would be very advantageous to them for their future cultivation.



Congcong moved in Mu Hongyu's arms as she changed position and hugged it with much difficulty. "Congcong, you're becoming increasingly heavier... If this goes on, I might not be able to lift you up— Hm? Where's that legendary fiend?"

Mu Hongyu looked up unintentionally and saw that the sky was empty. The white lion that hovered over there before seemed to have disappeared.

Once she said this, the others seemed to remember this incident.

Chu Liuyue asked strangely, "What legendary fiend?"

Mu Hongyu explained, "A gigantic white lion... But it looks dirty. I think it came from the Red Moon Desert."

When Chu Liuyue heard the front part of the sentence, her heart skipped a beat. *A white lion for a legendary fiend? I know one extremely capable white lion—Xue Xue. However, I remember that Xue Xue didn't seem to be a legendary fiend... Came from the Red Moon Desert... That is even more unlike it.*

But she still had a doubt in her heart.

"It left not long before you came out, but I don't know where it went," said Qin Yi lightly.

Chu Liuyue nodded in deep thought and temporarily suppressed her doubts. After that, she surveyed the surroundings while thinking of something. "Have the rest... already left?"

Once she said this, the atmosphere fell silent.

Qin Yi lightly said, "Shangguan Wan and the rest thought that you were already dead and quickly left with the rest of them, leaving us here."

Chu Liuyue nodded.

This was something Shangguan Wan could do.

"Originally, Senior Brother Zhu Hong and the rest wanted to wait for you together with us, but Big Brother Qin said that this place was too dangerous and convinced them to return," added Mu Hongyu.

Chu Liuyue slightly smiled. "They were all injured back then, so they naturally had to go back as soon as possible."

They were brought up by Dragon Teeth Mountain after all, so their characters were naturally good.

Ye Ranran asked, "Liuyue, let's go back now then! Cabinet Master and Mentor are definitely anxious from waiting!"

The majority of the group had already gone back, and they were the only ones still waiting here. The key was that they were stuck here and had no way of sending any news back.

They didn't know how the people that went back explained to Cabinet Master and the rest... Besides, even they previously weren't sure if Chu Liuyue could safely come back.

If Cabinet Master and the rest thought that something had happened to Chu Liuyue, they would be heartbroken!

*Qin Yi's gaze moved slightly. If I don't remember wrongly, Weichi Song should've come earlier. It's a pity that he was with Jiang Yucheng and the rest, so I didn't let them in. However, Weichi Song should be able to guess something.*

Chu Liuyue lightly shook her head. "We're not in a hurry. I have something else to do now."

"What?" The few of them looked over in confusion.

Chu Liuyue raised her hand and pointed toward Mirror Lake. "To take the Dancing Lotus!"

...

A flash of white appeared in the blue sky. Then, thick clouds with light shining through them reflected on it!

The entire sky gradually turned into an orange-red color. Finally, a red sun jumped out from the sea of clouds.

Above the Red Moon Desert, the coldness from the night quickly dissipated and gradually became boiling hot as the sun shone down.

A tall black figure was walking through the golden desert. Behind him, a white lion that had already turned into a dirty yellow color was following him.

#### **Chapter 824: Perfunctory**

The master and servant walked forward.

The sun was shining down hard from the sky, and the sand was burning. But Rong Xiu's footsteps were stable, and they maintained the same speed from start to end.

If someone watched this at this very moment and took a closer look, they would see that Rong Xiu's feet didn't even touch the sand below.

His every step would be half an inch above the sand. It seemed like he was walking on the sand, but he was actually walking on air.

He didn't leave behind any traces wherever he went, and Xue Xue basically did the same as it followed behind him.

"It seemed like you haven't given up on yourself these few years, and you actually trained yourself to this extent..."

Dugu Mobao's voice came over, and it sounded like it was right beside one's ear.

Rong Xiu smiled nonchalantly. "Thank you for the compliment, Senior."

Dugu Mobao snorted.

They originally wanted to teach this kid a lesson, but they only realized now that their previous methods could no longer cause any threat to him.

Rong Xiu could deal with all of these with ease.

But no matter how much they asked, Rong Xiu still refused to reveal what had happened to Yue'er girlie and insisted that she should tell them herself.

*But Girlie can't even remember who they are now, so what else can she say?*

Lan Xiao lightly snorted and couldn't help but say, "If only we could leave this hell-like place... Why would we need to haggle with this kid?"

Diwu Zhangze calmly said, "Stop daydreaming."

"Who is daydreaming?" retorted Lan Xiao with much dissatisfaction. "If nothing happened to Girlie and everything went smoothly, we might already be let out now!"

Who knew so many things would happen in between? They had waited in this place for too long and finally met Girlie with much difficulty, rarely seeing a spark of hope. But in the end...

Clearly, they had to wait all over again.

“We don’t need to think about it now. Girlie hasn’t even broken through to become a stage-six warrior...” Diwu Zhangze paused, and his tone became much more solemn. “And the more important thing is that she no longer has a Tianjing Yuan meridian.”

The moment he said this, the surroundings fell silent.

Dugu Mobao and Lan Xiao lost their voices. Actually, this was also what they were most worried about.

Their capabilities were obvious. Even if they didn’t personally go up to take Chu Liuyue’s pulse, they could still roughly determine her Yuan meridian level by judging the aura circulating in her body.

That was definitely a Dijing Yuan meridian, not a Tianjing Yuan meridian!

“Even if she doesn’t have a Tianjing Yuan meridian now, she will definitely still be a top elite in the future,” said Dugu Mobao confidently.

That was the confidence and pride only a strong warrior would have due to their capabilities!

“The one that the few of us taught will not lose to anyone! Since she has forgotten, we’ll just do it all over again!”

...

Xi Ling.

The Jiang Residence seemed to be the most lively.

On the one hand, they had to prepare for the Eldest Young Master and the Third Princess's wedding. On the other hand, they had to prepare for the marriage alliance between Fourth Missy and the Xiahou family.

Everyone in the residence was busy, but amongst them, Jiang Yucheng was the freest one. He spent most of his time recuperating in his room. Other than important matters that needed his advice, he left everything else to his subordinates.

That morning, Jiang Yucheng took his medicine and decided to go out. But the moment he stepped out, he saw Sun Qi bringing three people to him.

Jiang Yucheng saw the familiar face of the person at the front and squinted his eyes. *Yuwen Wei? It's clear what he's here for.*

Sun Qi came forward and bowed. "Eldest Young Master, Officer Yuwen is here."

Jiang Yucheng and Yuwen Wei greeted each other politely.

Then, Yuwen Wei said in a straightforward manner, "Eldest Young Master, I came here today to discuss some matters regarding the wedding."

Jiang Yucheng smiled. "Sorry that you had to take this extra trip. I believe you must've already asked the Third Princess for her opinion before this, right?"

Yuwen Wei nodded. "The Third Princess wants to go according to a normal princess's formalities, and everything to be used during the wedding should be completely changed to new ones."

Jiang Yucheng furrowed his brows. "Completely changed to new ones? Is that what Her Highness wanted?"

"Yes."

"There isn't much time before the wedding. There won't be enough time if we need to prepare everything again, right? There are clearly many ready-made items. Why aren't we using them?"

Yuwen Wei paused for a moment. "I already told them to rush it out. Don't worry. It won't delay the wedding process."

But Jiang Yucheng's expression didn't get any better.

Without thinking, he knew why Shangguan Wan made such a request. She just didn't want to use the things once prepared for Shangguan Yue—even though they hadn't gotten married. They didn't even use those items then.

Jiang Yucheng felt a sense of hatred. *Shangguan Wan should definitely know how difficult it will be for the Ceremonial Department's people, and it won't be good for her reputation. However, she still chose to do it just because she didn't want to use Shangguan Yue's items.*



Jiang Yucheng's expression became colder. "Since time is so tight, we'll do everything briefly. Anyway, whatever needs to be prepared should already be found in the residence. At that time, we can just use them. As for the rest... Reduce whatever you can and just go according to the princess's formalities. Officer Yuwen, you're very experienced. You don't need me to say anything further, right?"

Yuwen Wei was dazed for a moment. "Eldest Young Master, you mean..."

"I'll leave everything to you. I still have some things on today, so I'll make a move first. If you still have any doubts, you can just discuss it with my father." After that, Jiang Yucheng nodded before leaving.

The remaining people fell silent in unison. Nobody expected Jiang Yucheng to leave in such a hurry...

*We came over to discuss the wedding with him, yet he swiftly pushed all the responsibility away?! What exactly is he going to do that can be more important than his wedding with the Third Princess?*

Sun Qi glanced in the direction that Jiang Yucheng left and sighed in his heart. *For some reason, the Eldest Young Master has been in a very bad mood recently. Even I don't dare to bother him. I can only meticulously do my job and not ask about anything else.*

He cupped his hands toward Yuwen Wei. "Officer Yuwen, I'll bring you to see the Old Master?"

No matter what, the Old Master's status was still there, and it wasn't too unbecoming...

Yuwen Wei recovered his senses, smiled, and politely said, "No need. We all understood what the Eldest Young Master meant, so we won't disturb Officer Jiang."

Sun Qi didn't speak further as he respectfully sent the few of them off.

After leaving the Jiang Residence and walking quite a distance away, a youngster behind Yuwen Wei finally couldn't help but say, "What exactly does Eldest Young Master Jiang mean? Why does he not care about the wedding at all?"

Yuwen Wei thought for a moment. "We don't have to care about such things. Just do what he says."

The two of them answered in unison, "...Yes!"

Yuwen Wei turned around and glanced at the Jiang Residence with deep meaning. *It seems like this Eldest Young Master Jiang doesn't really care that much about the Third Princess as much as he seems to on the surface...*

## **Chapter 825: Found**

What Jiang Yucheng meant was that he would be using the things which had been prepared for his wedding with the late Crown Princess. In fact, a lot of them would be excluded as the scale of a mere princess's wedding wasn't as huge as that of the Crown Princess.

Although Yuwen Wei had perfectly relayed Shangguan Wan's reluctance to use the things left behind by her half-sister lest she feel emotional when she saw them, Jiang Yucheng still decided to do things his way.

While Jiang Yucheng might seem like he was doing this out of consideration to relieve everyone's pressure from working on crunch time, the reality was that he didn't give a hoot about Shangguan

Wan's feelings. If he were truly sincere about her, he definitely wouldn't have done things so carelessly because their wedding day was also the day of her ascension to the throne. It would be a spectacular event and the talk of the entire Tianling Dynasty.

*It's surprising that Jiang Yucheng is being so perfunctory with this wedding when he should be particularly concerned about it. Two years ago, he even personally took care of every single matter of his wedding with the late Crown Princess on his side.* The frown on Yuwen Wei's face eventually disappeared as he calmly retracted his gaze and turned around to leave with his subordinates. "Let's go. We're on a tight schedule."

...

Yuwen Wei was right about Jiang Yucheng not taking the wedding affair to heart. In fact, the latter didn't even want to think about it because he would inevitably be reminded of Shangguan Wan's scarred face as well as her resentful and vicious expression.

Although Jiang Yucheng had long found out about the kind of person Shangguan Wan truly was, she wasn't as bad as she was now. That was why he had been turning a blind eye to her occasional tantrums. However, not only had she become hypersensitive now, but she would also often lose her temper like a madwoman over the slightest issue. His patience toward her had thus long run out.

*Never in the world would I marry Shangguan Wan if it weren't because...* Jiang Yucheng's countenance darkened as he headed to a secluded corner of the Jiang Residence alone. It was a deserted courtyard that looked cold and empty with weeds growing everywhere at the entrance.

He continued to walk straight ahead until he reached a room. He pushed the doors open, and the two guards standing on the right and left side immediately greeted him. "Greetings, Eldest Young Master!"

Jiang Yucheng nodded. "How's he doing?"

“He wasn’t too cooperative at first, but it’s all good now. Would you like to go see him?” asked one of the guards before hurrying to lead the way when he received Jiang Yucheng’s reply. “This way, please.”

The two of them then walked toward the room further inside.

If someone were to break into this place right now, they would sense the presence of several people in this seemingly desolated courtyard. However, ordinary people wouldn’t be able to break in here easily as this was where Jiang Yucheng kept his prisoners. Furthermore, the servants working at the Jiang Residence all knew that this was Jiang Yucheng’s territory and thus wouldn’t come here without permission.

...

The doors slowly creaked open.

Once Jiang Yucheng stepped into the room, the guard closed the doors and quietly waited outside.

The room was small, and dust was everywhere as if it had been a long time since anyone had stepped in here. Jiang Yucheng walked past the screen and into the side room.

It was a dark and cramped space that couldn’t even accommodate a person lying flat, but in it was a person slumped against the wall.

Despite the foul and bloody smell lingering in the air, Jiang Yucheng’s expression remained unchanged. He had encountered such a scene too many times that he had gotten used to them.

The man slowly lifted his head upon hearing the commotion. Having undergone a long period of torture, his originally robust body was now thin and bony. His cheeks and eye sockets were deeply sunken in as well. One could see that he was missing an ear under his disheveled hair and that a bowl-sized scar was in its place. As it turned out, this man was none other than Qi Dahe—who had been imprisoned by Jiang Yucheng the other day.

Qi Dahe's eyes glowed red when he saw who the visitor was.

Jiang Yucheng looked down at him condescendingly. "How does the Messed Yuan Gravel's backlash feel?"

Qi Dahe opened his mouth as if he wanted to say something, but all he could manage to produce was a hoarse croak. During his captivity, he had once tried to attempt suicide by biting his tongue, but someone found out about it before he could die. However, his tongue was then cut off by them, so he lost his ability to speak from then on.

Metal chains could be heard clanking when Qi Dahe reached out to grab Jiang Yucheng, and as it turned out, all four limbs of his were chained up. His hands—which were all bruised and bloody—only ended up grabbing the air.

Jiang Yucheng's voice rang coldly and mercilessly. "Don't worry. I'll let you out today. Chong Xu Cabinet's Cabinet Master is looking for you."

Qi Dahe panicked, his eyes brimming with despair. He tried his best to hide toward the back, but there was nowhere to hide in this cramped space, much less a chance for him to escape.

When Jiang Yucheng lifted his hand, orange powder scattered everywhere. It made Qi Dahe gradually stop struggling and eventually pass out.

After that, Jiang Yucheng looked down and lifted his own sleeve to reveal a sinister-looking scar on his arm. The red line could no longer be seen.

There were ways to get rid of this scar, although he definitely wouldn't do it.

He crouched down and examined the same spot on Qi Dahe's arm, and sure enough, the same red line appeared on it. He had gone through a lot of effort to make sure of that.

A hint of satisfaction showed on Jiang Yucheng's face as he took a few steps back and said, "Guards, take him out."

...

Lately, the mood at Chong Xu Cabinet had been rather depressing as everyone couldn't help but worry about the safety of Chu Liuyue and the others who were still at Dahuang Swamp. Rumors of their failure to return had been prevalent, and even the disciples on Qing Yuan Mountain had heard about the rumors despite most of them never leaving the mountain.

If it weren't for the fact that Jian Fengchi had come to explain the situation and that the Cabinet Master wasn't too worried about it, they would've all rushed to Dahuang Swamp to look for their juniors. The constant waiting was very tormenting, but this depressing mood was broken with Jiang Yucheng's arrival.

Weichi Song was tending to the herbs in the medicinal garden at this time. When he heard that Jiang Yucheng had brought someone with him, he frowned and ordered someone to tell the latter to wait for him.

It was only when he had finished tending to the garden that he went to meet Jiang Yucheng.

As soon as Weichi Song entered the room, Jiang Yucheng stood up and said, "I've found the person you want."

### **Chapter 826: Warrant**

Weichi Song's gaze landed on a man kneeling behind Jiang Yucheng. From the person's skeletal body and forlorn state, it looked like he had gone through a lot of torture. Old and new injuries could be seen on his wrists and other exposed areas. Weichi Song frowned. "This is..."

"This is Qi Dahe, a former subordinate of mine who went to Nan Jiang with me. As per your request, I interrogated all the people who went there with me, and I finally found the culprit by using a bit of corporal punishment to make him spill the truth," answered Jiang Yucheng calmly.

Just one glance at Qi Dahe was enough for Weichi Song to tell that Jiang Yucheng had used more than 'a bit of corporal punishment' and that Qi Dahe's days were numbered. "How did you find out that he was the culprit?"

"Through evidence, of course." Jiang Yucheng lifted his chin. "To tell you the truth, most of my subordinates who went to Nan Jiang with me returned with varying degrees of injuries. Thus, I dismissed them after giving them their severance payment. I only gathered all of them again to help you find the culprit, but I soon realized that there was something very wrong with Qi Dahe. Not only has his cultivation base regressed a lot, but he even has a mark on his left arm—that's the evidence of him suffering a backlash from the Mixed Yuan Gravel!"

Weichi Song's eyes twitched when he heard that.

“With such solid evidence, there’s no way he can deny that he isn’t the culprit!” Jiang Yucheng then let out a disappointed sigh. “I never thought that my subordinate would do such a thing... I nearly destroyed the entire Chong Xu Cabinet! Aside from bringing the culprit to you, I’m also here to apologize to you in person. Everything happened because of my poor management, and I’m truly sorry for that.”

Jiang Yucheng spoke so sincerely that anyone who heard this would surely be moved by what he said. However, that didn’t apply to Weichi Song—who took two steps forward to examine Qi Dahe’s condition.

Kneeling on the ground with his hands tied behind his back, Qi Dahe’s eyes looked empty and void as if his soul had been sucked out. He didn’t even move when Weichi Song went up to him to check his arms. It was like he no longer cared about anything.

Weichi Song asked, “Why does he seem a little strange?”

Jiang Yucheng patiently explained, “In his struggle to escape, he got seriously injured while fighting. He hurt his head pretty badly and thus ended up like this...”

*Weichi Song scoffed. Jiang Yucheng sure can lie without batting an eyelid! His acting is top-notch too! He found himself a random scapegoat and prepared all the necessary evidence so that there’s no way I can refute him. On top of that, it just so happens that the so-called culprit can’t defend himself because he’s hurt. In the end, he can make up the story however he wants, and I have no choice but to buy it. No wonder he dared to come knocking on our door so brazenly. He came completely prepared!*

Weichi Song looked down and realized that Qi Dahe really had a red mark on his arm, and based on the other symptoms displayed on his body, it seemed like he was truly suffering the backlash of the Mixed Yuan Gravel. From this, Weichi Song could tell that Jiang Yucheng had really gone to great lengths just to cover his trail, but he didn’t let these thoughts show on his face.



Jiang Yucheng was all calm and relaxed knowing that even though all the so-called evidence and culprit could fool an ordinary person, he might not be able to fool Weichi Song—who was a wily old fox in his eyes. But he thought nothing of that because there was no way the latter could refute all the evidence laid out here.

*Even if Weichi Song doesn't believe me, he has no way to go about finding evidence to prove Qi Dahe's innocence and that everything was, in fact, my doing. Jiang Yucheng was certain that Weichi Song wouldn't be able to do that. No matter what, the outcome will still be the same!*

Weichi Song silently glanced at Qi Dahe before straightening his body and turning his head to look at Jiang Yucheng. "You're right about him suffering the backlash of the Mixed Yuan Gravel. He must be the culprit then. Did you ask him why he did that to us, Eldest Young Master Jiang?"

Jiang Yucheng froze and then shook his head. "No."

Weichi Song's expression became tense as if he couldn't come to terms with this answer. But that was only normal, given that there was seemingly no reason for Qi Dahe—an ordinary person—to target Chong Xu Cabinet. The group of people that attacked Chong Xu Cabinet also seemed to be of extraordinary status.

Weichi Song said solemnly, "There must be some other people behind Qi Dahe!"

Despite the slight twitching of Jiang Yucheng's eyes, he controlled his expression very well. "I have the same sentiments, but Qi Dahe's lips are really tight. I couldn't get anything out of him no matter what. In any case, I'm leaving him to you."

Weichi Song's expression relaxed a little. "Thank you for your help, Eldest Young Master Jiang. In that case... Can I deal with him however I want?"

“Of course.” Jiang Yucheng cupped his fist in his hand. “Although I don’t know why Qi Dahe did such a thing, he was ultimately my subordinate. I feel really apologetic to you regarding this matter...”

Jiang Yucheng’s hypocritical display only irked Weichi Song though. The latter turned around, hiding his emotions well. “You don’t have to feel that way, nor do you have to take responsibility for his actions. I’d also like to apologize for any offense caused to you... I was just too anxious at that time...”

Jiang Yucheng smiled. “Cabinet Master sure is forgiving. I ought to be the one apologizing to you instead.”

Weichi Song didn’t dwell on this matter for too long. Instead, he let out a long sigh. “Well, nobody expected this to happen. It was just like how everyone thought the Thirteen Yue Guards were loyal to the late Crown Princess. Who would’ve thought that... By the way, didn’t you issue a warrant to capture the Thirteen Yue Guards previously? Is there any progress?”

#### **Chapter 827: Kill or Save**

Weichi Song’s mention of the Thirteen Yue Guards made Jiang Yucheng instinctively frown. However, it quickly disappeared, and his expression returned to normal in no time. Shaking his head, he said, “No. As you know, the Thirteen Yue Guards possess extraordinary abilities, which makes it extremely hard for us to find them.”

Back then, Jiang Yucheng and Shangguan Wan had exhausted all their means to transfer the Thirteen Yue Guards away from Xi Ling in order to make their move on Shangguan Yue. Although the Thirteen Yue Guards immediately rushed back to Xi Ling upon realizing that something was amiss, it was too late. The royal family’s ancestral hall was almost completely consumed by the blazing fire.

Not long after Shangguan Yue’s death, the Thirteen Yue Guards began looking into the matter as they found her death to be highly suspicious. Their prime suspect was none other than Jiang Yucheng. This was why the latter swiftly launched a counterattack and declared to the public that the Thirteen Yue

Guards had colluded with the enemy to betray their master and that they deserved to be punished for their crime. He even issued a warrant for their arrest on that very day.

Although the Thirteen Yue Guards were quite capable, they were no match for Jiang Yucheng under those circumstances, for the entire Xi Ling City was basically under the latter's control. Not only did he have the upper hand in all aspects, but he also held the Black Guard's military power in his hands. Thus, they could only flee for their lives and disappear from Xi Ling.

Thinking about it, it had been almost two years since then, but there had been no progress in Jiang Yucheng's search for the Thirteen Yue Guards despite him repeatedly ordering his men to look for them. He was fully aware that the reason why they could go undetected for so long was that they might've already left the Tianling Dynasty and gone beyond Heaven's Canopy. In that case, the chances of him finding them were even slimmer.

He might not have mentioned it often, but the fact that the Thirteen Yue Guards were still well and alive was a hidden concern of his. Unlike Shangguan Yue's other guards, their loyalty was pledged only to her, so they wouldn't take anyone else's orders—not even the Emperor's.

As 'Thirteen Yue Guards' was their only identity, they had nothing to worry about other than Shangguan Yue's safety. For her, they could even stage a revolt without the slightest hesitation. While one might be able to control other guards with power and money, this wouldn't work on the Thirteen Yue Guards.

"Why did you suddenly mention the Thirteen Yue Guards though? Do you have news about them?" Jiang Yucheng probed.

Weichi Song, however, shook his head. "I was simply reminded of them when I saw how Qi Dahe betrayed you. I believe that you must've valued him highly, given that he had the chance to go to Nan Jiang with you. Who would've expected things to turn out this way... This just goes to show how unpredictable people can be! Even if you trust someone fully, you never know when they might stab you in the back!"

Jiang Yucheng's expression stiffened for a moment. "True..."

"Even though that sort of person might become conceited after that, retribution will surely befall on them eventually. Don't you agree, Eldest Young Master Jiang?"

Jiang Yucheng found it hard to maintain the smile on his face as what Weichi Song said was too jarring to him. There was this one moment where he suspected that the latter was talking about him, but he couldn't find anything amiss when he carefully studied the latter's face. In the end, he felt so awkward that he decided to take his leave. "Since I've already brought the culprit to you, I'll leave you to settle everything else. I shan't disturb you any longer."

Weichi Song didn't ask Jiang Yucheng to stay any longer either and let him leave just like that. He then closed the doors and walked over to Qi Dahe's side.

A silver glint then appeared in his hand, and he proceeded to cut the rope on Qi Dahe's wrists.

There were deep rope marks on Qi Dahe's wrists, but these superficial injuries were nothing compared to his body—which was marred with numerous injuries. Given his current condition, it could be said that he was hanging onto his last breath.

Weichi Song's eyebrows gradually knitted together as he took Qi Dahe's pulse. The latter's condition was as terrible as the former had imagined. Having suffered the backlash of the Mixed Yuan Gravel and going through all sorts of torture, it was a miracle that Qi Dahe was still alive. But that was only to be expected as Jiang Yucheng had deliberately kept him alive—or rather, barely alive to deliver his promise to Weichi Song.

Given Qi Dahe's current condition, he probably only had two weeks of lifespan left—which he would spend in a delirious state. This meant that nobody would be able to get answers out of him.

Weichi Song took out a pill and fed it to Da Qihe before summoning two disciples over and instructing them to take good care of the latter as he was a very important person. The disciples naturally did as told and carefully took Qi Dahe away. As most of the disciples in Chong Xu Cabinet were heavenly doctors, they were the best at doing this sort of thing.

Meanwhile, Weichi Song began personally refining Qi Dahe's medicine, which was much to everyone's surprise. As they only knew that the latter was brought here by Jiang Yucheng, they wondered who he was and why their Cabinet Master was going to such lengths to save him when he was about to die soon. Despite their curiosity, everyone still obediently obeyed Weichi Song's order.

That was how Qi Dahe settled down in Chong Xu Cabinet.

...

While on his way home after leaving Chong Xu Cabinet, Jiang Yucheng's mood improved considerably at the thought that he had finally solved the matter that had been troubling him for days. Not only had he sent a scapegoat over, but he had even prepared solid evidence that Weichi Song couldn't refute.

*Even if Qi Dahe manages to live for a few more days, Weichi Song won't be able to get anything out of him since his brain is damaged. It doesn't matter if Weichi Song still has doubts about this matter. He no longer has any reason or excuse to find trouble with me over this. It's the first piece of good news in days.* Jiang Yucheng exhaled in relief, only to be reminded of Xia Mu—who had disappeared without a trace—a second later.

It had been a while since Xia Mu went missing, but Jiang Yucheng still couldn't find him despite searching all over Xi Ling. It was like what happened that day was just a dream. However, the scar on his stomach constantly reminded him of the humiliation he suffered that day.

As he continued to walk home, he sensed that something was amiss and that a pair of eyes seemed to be watching him from the dark. He stopped in his tracks right there and then as he turned his head back.

However, not only did he not find anyone behind him, but the feeling of being watched also instantly vanished.

He frowned and continued walking forward while being on alert, but that feeling of being watched never appeared again. *Was I imagining things?*

After walking for some time, Jiang Yucheng realized with a start that he had unknowingly arrived at the entrance of Xin Li Garden. The thought of the stolen zither made him hesitate for a moment, but he eventually decided to enter the garden.

### **Chapter 828: Have We Met Before?**

Everyone in Xin Li Garden bowed and greeted Jiang Yucheng as he walked in, but the latter paid them no attention and headed straight to Thousand View Garden. Upon noting his arrival, the guards there greeted him. "Greetings, Eldest Young Master Jiang!"

After the stolen zither incident, Jiang Yucheng tightened the security by dispatching more guards to watch over Thousand View Garden both in the open and in the dark. However, he hadn't visited this place ever since that day.

Standing by the lake, he looked at the zither room as he asked the guards, "Is there anything unusual lately?"

"No, Eldest Young Master," replied one of the guards.

*I knew it. That zither was the most valuable item in that room. Since that person has already stolen it, the odds of them returning are very low. It's just that... Who would be interested in that antique zither?* Jiang Yucheng then dismissed the guards with a wave of his hand and proceeded to walk toward the zither room, deep in thought.

*While that phoenix-tailed zither is indeed quite precious and unique, it's ultimately just a zither. Besides, almost everyone in the Tianling Dynasty knows that it was Shangguan Yue's favorite zither. Based on this point alone, there's no way that person will dare to take the zither out and show it to others, much less sell it. Don't tell me they just want to keep it for themselves? Jiang Yucheng just couldn't figure out why that person would steal the zither. On top of that, no matter how hard he tried to recall that person's features, nothing came to mind at all. Although he once suspected Mu Hongyu to be the perpetrator, her aura seemed a little different from that person's.*

...

Dragon Teeth Mountain.

Jian Fengchi had nothing to do today, so he decided to leave the mountain. When he arrived at the foot of the mountain, he saw an average-looking young man talking to the guard at the entrance. He wasn't very concerned about it until he vaguely heard Mu Hongyu's name just as he was about to walk over.

Stopping in his tracks, he looked over and asked, "What's going on?"

The guard hurriedly bowed to him and explained, "This man is here to deliver a letter from Mu Hongyu's family, but he refuses to let us receive the letter on her behalf even after telling him that she isn't around."

*"What's your name?" asked Jian Fengchi while silently sizing the delivery man up. His face couldn't be any more than ordinary. It's a face one will instantly forget when he's amidst a sea of people, but his eyes are so clear and resolute that they don't seem fitting on an ordinary person. Most importantly, I find him somewhat familiar. It's like... I've seen him somewhere before...*

“My name is Qin Qi, and I’ve helped Ms. Hongyu deliver a letter before. It’s just that it was Ms. Liuyue I met previously.” Qi Han didn’t expect to run into Jian Fengchi—who had met him and the rest of the Thirteen Yue Guards many times in the past—so he was quite worried that the latter might recognize him. If it weren’t for the fact that Xiao Ba’s pill had changed his aura, he was sure that his identity would definitely be exposed this time.

Qi Han maintained a calm expression throughout.

Jian Fengchi instantly believed what Qin Qi said, for he remembered clearly that it was indeed Chu Liuyue who helped pass the letter from Mu Hongyu’s parents. *I guess he’s one of those people in Xi Ling City who specialize in helping people to deliver messages to and from Heaven’s Canopy.*

“I’m Jian Fengchi. It’s true that Hongyu isn’t back yet. Is it okay if I help keep and pass the letter to her?” Jian Fengchi smiled. “I understand that you might not trust others with the letter, but you probably know that it was I who redeemed Hongyu back then. Therefore, there shouldn’t be any problem with you passing her items to me.”

It was well-known in the entire Xi Ling City that Jian Fengchi had once splurged six million white crystals to bid for Mu Hongyu—the owner of the Faint Yuan Body. According to the Tianling Dynasty’s laws, Mu Hongyu was now Jian Fengchi’s slave, so everything that belonged to her naturally belonged to him as well. Thus, nobody was more qualified than him to keep her letter.

Jian Fengchi usually didn’t really like to mention this matter, nor did he live with Mu Hongyu as master and slave. In fact, everyone on Dragon Teeth Mountain saw Mu Hongyu as their equal and didn’t look down on her because of her identity. It was just that Jian Fengchi knew this to be the most convenient and effective excuse to use in order to get that letter.

Sure enough, the delivery man took out the letter and handed it over to Jian Fengchi after hesitating a little. “Please keep the letter well, Young Master Jian. Be sure to pass it to Ms. Hongyu as soon as you see her.”



Jian Fengchi reached out and took the letter from him while saying with a smile, "I will."

Qi Han then hesitantly added, "If you see Ms. Liuyue, please show her this letter too."

"Oh? Why?"

"Because... Ms. Liuyue hasn't been receiving letters from her family lately. She used to get them quite often, so I was wondering if something had happened. Since Ms. Hongyu is friends with her, the letter might mention something," explained Qi Han.

Jian Fengchi narrowed his eyes. "You seem to be quite concerned about Liuyue."

"Ms. Liuyue is our regular customer and is also generous with her money, so it's only natural that we pay more attention to her affairs," explained Qi Han calmly.

Jian Fengchi had no doubts about this. In Qin Qi's line of work, their efficiency tended to increase when they were paid more money. Given that it had been a few months since Chu Liuyue had come to Xi Ling, it made sense that she would pay them generously as this was the only way for her to contact her family.

"Since I've delivered the letter, I'll take my leave now if there's nothing else." Qi Han turned around and left thereafter. He actually had no intentions of saying so much, but he had no way to contact Chu Liuyue since she was still at Dahuang Swamp. With all the rumors circulating in Xi Ling City, it was only inevitable that he was worried about her.

Jian Fengchi looked at the letter in his hand, and sure enough, the letter was addressed to Mu Hongyu. The handwriting on it was the same as the letter she had previously received, which confirmed that the letter was indeed hers. *For some reason though... Something seems odd about Qin Qi...*

He carefully put the letter away before looking up again. Something struck his mind right there and then when he found Qin Qi's back view strangely familiar. "Wait a minute!"

Qi Han stopped and looked back. "Is anything the matter, Young Master Jian?"

Jian Fengchi ran over and stopped right in front of Qin Qi, his throat tightening as he stared at the young chap in front of him. "You..."

Qi Han seemed to realize that Jian Fengchi had detected that something was amiss. He slowly clenched his hands—which were hidden under his sleeves.

*His face and voice are unfamiliar, but those eyes...* Jian Fengchi asked, "Have we met before?"

### **Chapter 829: It's Been a While**

Qi Han calmly answered, "I'm just someone who delivers letters, and I've never crossed paths with you before, although I did see you a few times in the years I've been in Xi Ling City. I didn't expect you to remember me."

Many people had met Jian Fengchi—who was known as the hegemon of Xi Ling—before. Even if they hadn't seen him in person, they had surely heard rumors about him. Everyone knew that his ice-blue eyes were the symbol of Dragon Teeth Mountain's Jian family.

Jian Fengchi smiled with narrowed eyes. “That’s not what I meant though.”

“Forgive me for my stupidity, but I don’t exactly understand what you mean by this. Please enlighten me, Young Master Jian.” Although Qi Han already had a vague answer inside his heart, he didn’t show any sign of panic and kept his calm and composure. However, this was only to be expected. As a member of the Thirteen Yue Guard, he would be deemed too useless if he couldn’t even do such a simple thing.

Jian Fengchi crossed his arms in front of his chest while stroking his chin with his hand. Although he appeared to be deep in thought, the smile on his face deepened. “For some reason, you seemed really familiar to me the moment I saw you. It’s like... we know each other.”

“You must be joking, Young Master Jian. How could a nobody like me possibly have the chance to get to know you?”

“Exactly. I don’t need letters to be delivered outside Heaven’s Canopy, nor have I ever engaged your services... But you look really alike to someone I know.” Jian Fengchi cocked an eyebrow. “His name has the word ‘Qi’ too. Don’t you think it’s such a coincidence?”

Qi Han narrowed his eyes.

While Jiang Yucheng wouldn’t be able to recognize him due to his successful change of appearance and aura, Jian Fengchi could. And this was because the latter was more familiar with the Thirteen Yue Guards—Qi Han in particular—than the former.

Jian Fengchi was always making things difficult for Shangguan Yue in the past, and Qi Han would step forward to challenge him whenever that happened. Although Qi Han’s cultivation base was higher than Jian Fengchi’s, the latter was a heavenly doctor and would use medicines at times. They each had their own merits and could be considered to be equals, so they naturally came to know each other better over time.

Even though Qi Han appeared aloof, he was very loyal to Shangguan Yue and would do his best in everything that was related to her—his courage and zeal were all dedicated to her. It was also because of this nature of his that he rushed into the burning ancestral hall back then in spite of everything else and became disfigured as a result.

Qi Han wasn't too surprised that Jian Fengchi managed to identify him, but this simply wasn't the best time to reveal his identity. He frowned. "What exactly do you want to say, Young Master Jian?"

The two guards manning the entrance couldn't resist looking over from time to time upon noticing that the two had been talking for quite some time.

Jian Fengchi suddenly flashed Qi Han a bright smile. "Nothing. I just thought that you and I could get along pretty well!"

Qi Han found it surprising that Jian Fengchi was helping him to cover up his identity despite having already found out who he was.

Jian Fengchi then suddenly tossed a pouch at Qi Han. "There are 1,000 white crystals in there. Do something for me, and that money is yours."

"What do you want me to do?" asked Qi Han with puzzlement.

Jian Fengchi winked. "I'm going to Chun Feng Restaurant, and you're going with me."

...

It had never occurred to Qi Han that the reason why Jian Fengchi gave him so much money was just so that he would accompany him to Chun Feng Restaurant. Thus, it was only when they arrived at the restaurant entrance that he found out that Jian Fengchi wasn't joking with him.

"Let's go!" Jian Fengchi roared with laughter internally when he saw the complicated expression on Qi Han's face. *If this were in the past, he surely would've started a fight with me right away. Unfortunately, as a lowly mailman, he can only listen to my orders because we're in public now.*

"There's no need for you to crack such jokes with me, Young Master Jian. You may just tell me what exactly you want." Qi Han's voice and aura were so frigid that he seemed capable of freezing people to death.

Jian Fengchi nearly burst out laughing aloud when he noticed how Qi Han's feet seemed to be nailed to the ground. The latter refused to even take a single step forward. "It's every man's dream to visit Chun Feng Restaurant, but why does it seem like a dangerous place when it comes to you? You'll naturally find out what I want once you go in with me."

Qi Han's face became tense. If it weren't because he feared that Jian Fengchi would reveal his identity, he definitely wouldn't allow the latter to make fun of him in this manner. However, making him enter that sort of establishment was a form of torture to him.

Just then, Nanny Zhang hurriedly came out to welcome Jian Fengchi with smiles when she saw him outside. "Isn't this Young Master Jian? It's been a while since you've been here! The girls have been missing you dearly!"

A hint of disdain appeared on Qi Han's face.

Everyone in Xi Ling City knew that Chun Feng Restaurant was as good as Jian Fengchi's second home. The time he spent here was, in fact, much longer than on Dragon Teeth Mountain. Instead of feeling ashamed, he even felt proud about it and would happily indulge himself in debauchery every day.

Without turning his head back, Jian Fengchi knew what sort of look Qi Han was giving him. He opened his folding fan and smiled flirtatiously. "But I'm here now, aren't I? It feels like eons since I last met Liu'er."

Being the expert at reading faces, Nanny Zhang guessed that Jian Fengchi knew the young man behind him, especially since she saw the two talking to each other earlier. Thus, after she greeted Jian Fengchi, she flashed a fawning smile at Qi Han as she made her way over to him. "Oh my, what a handsome young man this is! How come I've never seen you around before? This must be your first time at Chun Feng Restaurant, right?"

Qi Han swiftly avoided Nanny Zhang's hands, his aura even colder than ever.

Nanny Zhang felt a little embarrassed as she instinctively looked at Jian Fengchi.

"Haha. This is my friend, and he's here with me today. You don't have to worry about anything since I'm around. You don't have to serve me either; just get Liu'er over."

When Nanny Zhang saw how protective Jian Fengchi was toward Qi Han, she became even more courteous. "Sure, sure! Please come in!"

After that, she immediately trotted off to find Shui Liu'er.

Qi Han's eyes flickered slightly at the mention of Shui Liu'er.

Jian Fengchi raised his chin. "Come on!"

Qi Han hesitated for a bit before eventually following Jian Fengchi inside.

...

It was all quiet inside Jian Fengchi's private room.

There weren't many customers in Chun Feng Restaurant at this hour as it was currently daytime. Since it wasn't anything unusual to see Jian Fengchi here, they didn't attract too much attention when they entered the restaurant.

Perhaps it was also due to Jian Fengchi's earlier instructions, but nobody came to disturb them either.

A wicked smile spread on Jian Fengchi's face as he lazily leaned against a couch. "It's been a while, Qi Han."

### **Chapter 830: Retrieve**

*He indeed recognized my identity!* Qi Han's heart skipped a beat, but he calmed down very quickly because he had already guessed it earlier. *Since this is already an open secret, there is no need to continue acting.*

Qi Han openly asked, "Why did you call me over today?"

Strangeness flashed across Jian Fengchi's eyes as he straightened his body. "You admitted it just like that? I thought I still needed to spend a lot of effort to get you to admit it!"

Qi Han knitted his brows, and frustration flashed across his eyes. "Since you already confirmed my identity in your heart, you won't change your opinion no matter how much I explain, right? If you have something to say, just do it. I'm very busy."

"Pfft, you still speak as rudely as before..." Jian Fengchi shrugged his shoulders and didn't intend to continue beating around the bushes. "When did you come back to Xi Ling?"

Qi Han's voice became cold and hard. "None of your business."

Jian Fengchi was stumped, and his eyelid twitched. *It has already been so long. Why is Qi Han's stupid and irritable temper still the same as before?*

But thinking of the Thirteen Yue Guard's current situation, Jian Fengchi held it in and swallowed back his scolding words. "...Jiang Yucheng hasn't retracted his bounty for you, yet you still dare to come back? Did you... come here to seek death?"

This sentence wasn't a tease.

Jiang Yucheng was determined to drive the Thirteen Yue Guard into the corner. It was really too dangerous for Qi Han to appear in Xi Ling this openly. Even though he had greatly changed from before and ordinary people wouldn't recognize him, what if...



It was impossible for someone to totally become another person. They would expose themselves at any time.

Besides, they were facing Jiang Yucheng—who held great power now!

“I have my own plans.” Qi Han’s reply was extremely curt, and he had no intentions of continuing the conversation. In actual fact, if it weren’t because Her Highness trusted Jian Fengchi a little back then, Qi Han wouldn’t even say this much.

Jian Fengchi was speechless, and he rubbed his temples in pain. *There are clearly 13 people in the Thirteen Yue Guard. Why must I meet Qi Han, the one that is most difficult to deal with? Anyone else would be easier to talk to than Qi Han, but there is no use thinking of this now.*

Jian Fengchi silently convinced himself in his heart and tried hard to ask calmly, “Did you go to Country Yao Chen before?”

This time, Qi Han didn’t hide it. “That’s right.”

Jian Fengchi squinted his eyes.

The Thirteen Yue Guard escaped from Heaven’s Canopy, and it was possible for them to go anywhere. *It’s nothing strange for Qi Han to go to Country Yao Chen, but... The timing and venue that he appeared at is a little amiss.*

Jian Fengchi remembered it very clearly. *That day was the day a mutiny happened in Country Yao Chen. The palace descended into chaos, the gleam of blades, and the shadow of swords as fire rushed up to the sky. Why would Qi Han join in on the commotion there?*

Thinking of the previous letter, Jian Fengchi tried to ask, "You know Chu Liuyue?"

According to Qi Han's personality, he wouldn't say such words if they didn't know each other. Even though he was using the identity of Qin Qi, he wouldn't care so much about a letter from a stranger's family member.

Qi Han honestly nodded.

Jian Fengchi was smart, and they both understood each other quite a bit, so there was no need to lie.

"Then... Does she know your identity?" Jian Fengchi's expression became more serious.

"Of course, she doesn't," said Qi Han lightly. "We coincidentally met each other at Country Yao Chen. She only knows that I took over Qin Qi's identity here, but she doesn't know anything more."

Jian Fengchi vaguely felt that something was amiss, but he couldn't point it out.

The duo fell silent.

Then, Qi Han knitted his brows. "If you called me over today just to ask me all of this, I've already told you the answer. Can I leave?"

Before Jian Fengchi could speak, a sweet and gentle woman's voice came from the side. "No."

When Qi Han heard this, his expression slightly changed as he turned around to take a look.

Shui Liu'er coincidentally walked in. She was wearing an emerald-green dress with a white hairpin, and she looked very beautiful.

Her every movement was like a Big Missy taught by an aristocratic family as she walked toward the two of them and stood beside Qi Han. She then smiled, and a natural flirtatious look was revealed in her eyes. "Qi Han, why do you want to leave when you just came? We didn't even get to talk properly."

Qi Han's lips pressed against each other slightly.

He had no beef with Shui Liu'er.

"My time is a little tight. Just ask whatever else you want to know."

Shui Liu'er sighed. "Tell me first: Were you the one at Xiahou Residence a few days ago?"

Qi Han paused for a moment and didn't say anything.

Shui Liu'er smiled rather helplessly. "If you don't trust us, then... We'll speak first."

She retracted her expression by quite a bit and seriously said, "I can tell you that I also went to the Xiahou Residence a few days ago. Speaking of which, I still have to thank you for distracting Xiahou Rong and the rest that day. It saved me quite a bit of trouble."

Qi Han glanced at Shui Liu'er.

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

Shui Liu'er honestly said, "You're right—the Nine Clouds Yuan Recovery Pill is now with me."

...

Dahuang Swamp.

It was currently daytime.

Chu Liuyue and the rest had rushed their way through the Mystic Forest and finally arrived at the edge of the intersection between the forest and Mirror Lake.

The sky was clear, and there wasn't a single cloud in the sky. The lake was very peaceful, and the wind would blow occasionally, causing a layer of ripples.

All the views were reflected within the Mirror Lake, looking like a pretty painting.

Chu Liuyue saw the Dancing Lotus shaking gently in the center of the lake at first glance.

With the sun shining down, the translucent, pinkish-white petals were like superior rubies as they glistened with a thin layer of crystal-like light.

Chu Liuyue patted Tuan Zi's head and was about to go over.

Ye Ranran hurriedly said, "Liuyue, wait!"

Chu Liuyue looked at her and saw the worry on Ye Ranran's face.

"Liuyue, the Dancing Lotus is a premium herb. Will it be safe if you just suddenly go and retrieve it?" She was also a heavenly doctor, so it was impossible if one said that she had no desires for the Dancing Lotus.

After all, some might not even get to see it once in their lives. This was also the reason that made Ye Ranran even more worried.

Chu Liuyue slightly smiled. "Don't worry. I know how to retrieve it."

Seeing her calm expression, Ye Ranran was less worried. "Then, you must be careful."

Chu Liuyue nodded. "I'll be right back."

With that, Tuan Zi spread its wings and flew up. Its speed was very quick, and it rapidly reached the center of the lake as it flew above the Dancing Lotus.

Chu Liuyue glanced at the Dancing Lotus and bit her index finger. After that, a bright red blood pearl immediately emerged.

Tuan Zi then lowered its body, and Chu Liuyue extended her hand to pick the Dancing Lotus.

But the moment she touched the thin stem—

*Kacha!*

A crisp sound was heard!