

Refining 1561

Chapter 1561 – Returning to Seascap City Again

In order to prevent any accidents, the border armies were strictly prohibited from arranging large teleportation arrays that connected them to the heartland cities of the empire.

After two days of non-stop traveling, the messenger convoy had finally exited the wartime areas and arrived at a city near the border.

Qin Yu announced his identity and was allowed to proceed unimpeded. After hearing about the arrival of the messenger convoy, the city governor rushed over but only managed to see the back of the convoy driving into the Teleportation Portal. He could not help but sigh and felt disappointed!

A small city led to a big city, and a big city led to a main city. One could only go directly to the Imperial Capital through the 108 main cities in West Desolate territory.

After many twists and turns, perhaps it was just a coincidence, but Qin Yu returned to Seascap City once again. His current status was that of the third-ranked officer in the West Border Army, and he also had the title of a first-class Earl, which was comparable to the position of a Great General.

Now that he had received the imperial decree to return to the Imperial Capital, there must be the necessary regulations and etiquette in place to welcome him.

Therefore, after arriving at Seascap City, the guards from the mine who were surrounding the General's carriage made their way to an inn to settle down for a while.

Having been trapped in the mines for a long time, these soldiers lived like ghosts and they thought that they could no longer live like true humans. They did not expect that they would have this opportunity to follow their General to Seascap City to see for themselves what first-class prosperity looked like.

The main General named Big Head Wang held his head high. Together with his subordinates, they all showed their extreme eagerness and energy.

Even though we are only some lowly foot soldiers in the West Border Army and have finally restored our human bodies, we cannot let the General be underestimated by everyone!

Feeling the awe and reverence from people standing on both sides of the street, Big Head Wang stood even straighter and pulled down his headpiece to cover his reddened eyes. He felt even more thankful towards the General.

At this time, the messengers had already sent a message to the Imperial Capital. The next step would be to wait for a response. Once they obtained the permission to continue, they could then embark on the last part of their journey.

"General, the road has been arduous; we have teleported continuously across West Desolate territory. It has been hard on you, so please rest well for a day. If nothing goes wrong, we will be allowed to enter the Imperial Capital tomorrow."

The young eunuch plastered a huge smile on his face, his demeanor full of respect. Although it was too late to make amends for himself, it was better to try and gain some brownie points than to do nothing at all.

Qin Yu nodded and did not say anything to him. He led Rourou into an inn which had already been tidied up. They had been allocated the most lavish courtyard in the inn.

The young eunuch had an ordinary status in the palace. However, he had the honor of announcing this imperial decree, and until he returned to the capital, he represented the might of the emperor.

Naturally, he had a courtyard of his own in the inn as well. After closing the door, he paced back and forth before hurriedly taking out a jade slip from his arms. After a few moments, the jade slip shattered into powder. The young eunuch's face was pale and his lips were trembling in fear.

He poured a cup of tea for himself but his hands were trembling so much that he accidentally got his sleeves wet as well. However, before he could drink half the cup, horror filled his face and the tea cup fell to the ground.

There was a 'pa' sound as the tea cup smashed to the ground. The young eunuch stared blankly at the broken tea cup. As if all his strength had been drained out of him, he burst into tears and was flooded with grief.

At the same time as the young eunuch was crying with fear all by himself in his own courtyard, Qin Yu welcomed some guests.

It was Seascape City's governor, Chen Yuanshen.

"General Jinwu, I came today to apologize for what happened in the past."

Chen Yuanshen was an intelligent man in charge of this big city. He went straight to the point and did not bother giving a vague statement.

Just the first sentence expressed his intentions for coming here today.

That mighty and noble son of the city governor's mansion looked at General Jinwu clad in mighty armor. The General now sat on an equal footing as his father and he could only stare at the General with resentment and unwillingness in his eyes.

However, he knew that he had to lower his head today.

Back then, he got very excited when he heard about the turmoil boiling in the capital. However, things started to progress in a strange manner after that.

In addition, Chen Sanglue was aware of the change in his father's attitude. Though the Imperial Capital seemed to be embroiled in a tumultuous storm, General Jinwu still could not be shaken.

Since General Jinwu could not be shaken, this meant that the 'storm' would most likely help General Jinwu.

Otherwise, with his father's status, why would they be at General Jinwu's courtyard today, trying to earn his favor?

Taking in a deep breath, Chen Sanglue stepped forward and bowed politely, “I failed to see the truth back then and unintentionally offended you. Please be magnanimous and give me another chance.”

His words were sincere and he seemed full of remorse.

If Qin Yu did not have a keen ability to observe ‘people’s hearts’ he would really have believed that Chen Sanglue was sincere. Yet he picked out the brief flashes of emotions in Chen Sanglue’s eyes that gave him away.

Qin Yu picked up his tea cup and took a sip. He said, “City governor, your words are too serious. Now that the past matters have been revealed, I will let bygones be bygones.”

Chen Yuanshen laughed, “You are too magnanimous, General. Since you were offended, punishment must be carried out.”

With a wave of his sleeves, a ‘ka-cha’ sound rang out. Chen Sanglue screamed slightly as he knelt on the ground.

Blood soaked through his robe and seeped onto the ground. As he knelt in the pool of blood, his face was pale and contorted in pain and his forehead was covered with beads of sweat.

He looked extremely haggard, which was very different from how he used to look before – unrestrained and distinguished.

Qin Yu narrowed his eyes and he thought to himself that the great old fox was truly ruthless.

Breaking Chen Sanglue’s legs with his own hands to appease the general was definitely enough to show his sincerity. However, if he could be this heartless towards his own son, it can only be imagined how he treated outsiders.

Unless there was a chance to completely kick this person into the mud such that he would never have a chance to rise in power again, or to kill him directly, it would be better to never have such a person as an enemy.

In fact, this was exactly the message that Chen Yuanshen was trying to send to Qin Yu.

I am very sincere in resolving the grievances between us. Either we shake hands and make peace, or we use underhand methods to deal with each other.

Qin Yu frowned slightly. Picking up his teacup and taking another sip of tea, he said, “City governor, what is the meaning of this?”

Just because he knew what Chen Yuanshen was trying to tell him, does not mean that he had to accept it. This was especially since Chen Yuanshen sent the message in such a half-threatening way.

Chen Yuanshen replied, “I just wanted to express my sincerity in getting close to you. If it is not enough...Xu Shen, ask the General to punish you too!”

Ever since this man entered the room, this lieutenant stood in the corner like an invisible person. Once he heard his name being mentioned, he bowed and strode forward.

Xu Shen's face paled a bit, but without any hesitation, he grabbed one of his arms and ripped it off with force.

Not trying to stop the bleeding, Xu Shen knelt down on one knee and raised his broken arm, "General Jinwu, I was at fault in the past. Will this arm be enough to atone for my sins?"

Qin Yu laughed coldly and slammed the tea cup down on the table. "Interesting, very interesting. I was just passing by Seascap City. Why does the city governor have to make such a bloody scene in my courtyard? You're making it seem like I am the one who is unforgiving and bullied your Seascap City.

"If this matter spreads, what will happen to my reputation? You said that you would like to get closer to me, but by doing this, you are just forcing me to make an enemy out of you. Fine! In the future, if you are dissatisfied in any way, you may voice your concerns in court!"

Parting on bad terms.

This time when he walked out of the inn, his son had a broken leg and his lieutenant had a broken arm. Chen Yuanshen turned around and his face was no longer calculative as before. Instead, it was filled with helplessness.

His Majesty, since there is no evidence for what appended back then, can't you let this matter go?

The young eunuch in the inn looked at the scene in front of him, and his face turned pale with fright. His body shook and he did not dare to approach at all.

"Let's go."

Chen Yuanshen sighed lightly, before hopping onto the carriage and leaving.

Night fell, and rumors began to spread in Seascap City. General Jinwu Ning Qin did not forget his old grievances and suppressed the city governor.

Although no one knew the specific details, it was an indisputable fact that Chen Sanglue's leg was broken and Xu Shen lacked an arm.

Very quickly, people started to frown about Qin Yu. They thought that he had run wild after gaining so much power and he should not be approached. Some people also thought that since General Jinwu was too arrogant, he would very quickly meet his downfall in the future.

But at the same time, they also felt that since General Jinwu dared to be so domineering, he probably had calculated the situation.

In other words, he really did not care about the 'storm' that was happening in the Imperial Capital.

In the inn.

Someone was in Qin Yu's room again, but this time it was not really a guest.

He glanced at Hundred Saint who was opposite him and said, "You're hesitating so much. Speak, what did you do to betray me again?"

Hundred Saint laughed bitterly as he bowed, "I would not dare to deceive you, General. After I returned to the Imperial Capital, I was interrogated many times about whether there was anything unusual about your identity and your actions." After gritting his teeth, he continued, "I reported everything that you did according to the facts, without any concealment."

Hundred Saint thought about that time when his uncle had personally asked him if there was anything unusual about General Jinwu Ning Qin, and he hesitated before choosing to nod his head.

Of course there was something unusual!

For example, that young girl who came from the Demon Sect.

For example, how he managed to resolve the mine's Barbarian Curse which even a Half-King could not accomplish!

And of course, how General Jinwu had such hidden, powerful strength.

With all these factors, Hundred Saint did not dare to hide anything from his uncle.

So, at this moment, Hundred Saint's face turned pale and his heart was filled with endless guilt. He lowered his head and did not dare to look Qin Yu in the eye.

Qin Yu looked calm. He thought for a while before he said, "From the beginning, I have known about your role in the palace. Since I did not hide anything from you, I am not afraid of you telling the truth to others."

Hundred Saint instantly raised his head and looked at Qin Yu with surprise.

"What are you looking at? Like I've told you, there's no problem."

Hundred Saint let out a long sigh of relief.

Even though Hundred Saint did not think that he had managed to see through the general yet, he could at least be certain that General Jinwu was not a person who would protect his reputation at all costs.

Since he said that there was no problem, then this was indeed the case.

"That's good, that's good," Hundred Saint mumbled to himself with joy on his face.

Qin Yu laughed coldly and said, "Of course, this is also the reason why you will tell me the truth as it is, otherwise, I might investigate the matter. Your current status is also that of my military counselor, if you dare to falsely accuse your superior of doing things that he did not do, you shall suffer from capital punishment!"

Hundred Saint knew that there was truth in these words, and also a bit of a beating. He immediately saluted respectfully and said, "I would never dare to hide anything from you."

Qin Yu humphed, and did not bother to continue spouting nonsense, "Tell me, what's the situation like in the Imperial Capital now?"

Even though Qin Yu guessed that there would not be much risk in this trip to the capital, it was still good to be cautious.

Hundred Saint seemed to have expected that Qin Yu would ask him about this, and he explained in detail what he managed to find out about the situation in the Imperial Capital.

It was really very detailed. He covered almost every aspect of the situation.

Qin Yu had a puzzled expression on his face, "All this news, you couldn't have found it out yourself, right?"

Hundred Saint coughed lightly, "You are wise and clever, General." He did not explain, and in fact, there was no need to explain. The source of all this news must be Lord Chengtian.

Even though this matter seemed unimportant, it confirmed the speculation Qin Yu had before.

This time, his return to the Imperial Capital, would be full of surprises, but there would be no danger.

Hundred Saint thought for a while before he said, "General, the Seascapes City's governor is His Majesty's close confidant. Although he has been caught in some troubles these few years, he is still favored by His Majesty, and he also has many allies in court. Those small things that happened in the past..."

Before he could finish speaking, he was interrupted by Qin Yu's half-smiling look. He scratched his head and asked, "General, did I say something wrong?"

Qin Yu waved his hand and shook his head without an explanation.

How could things be so simple?

For the Seascapes City's governor to get his status today, would he have acted so rashly?

In short, what happened today was His Majesty testing Chen Yuanshen.

Of course, His Majesty was also trying to test Qin Yu.

Qin Yu refused to cooperate or accept Chen Yuanshen's request of getting closer. He seemed arrogant and domineering, but this was the best thing he could do to satisfy both parties.

Chapter 1562 – Are You Anxious?

Since the West Desolate King wanted to test Qin Yu's confidence, Qin Yu would show him!

In the morning of the next day, the Imperial Capital sent a letter to an inn, allowing General Jinwu Ning Qin to depart for the capital right away.

After adjusting and tallying the team, the convoy headed straight for the Teleportation Portal in Seascapes City.

The young eunuch did not show his face. Using the cold of last night as an excuse, he boarded the carriage and never came out again.

His attitude was very different compared to yesterday, but Qin Yu did not care. Qin Yu's opponent was the West Desolate King that all of the lords in the Imperial Palace highly respected.

How much status and power could a mere eunuch have in the Imperial Palace? Qin Yu could not even be bothered about this eunuch.

This was the kind of confidence that a Great General of the imperial military should have!

After a few moments, a humming sound could be heard as the Teleportation Portal burst into a dazzling light. The space started to distort and then all of them disappeared in a flash.

When the vibrations all over their bodies and the feeling of traveling through space disappeared, the carriage landed on the ground. They had finally arrived at the outskirts of the capital city.

The guards stationed at the Imperial Capital all bowed and saluted to show respect for the West Desolate King's messenger, and also for the Great General from the West Border Army.

Even though the Imperial Capital's Defense Division only had elites from the army, it was rare for any disturbances to occur in the capital.

Like a knife in its sheath, there was not much use for them at all. On the contrary, it was the troops stationed at the borders who had been fighting endlessly all year round for these last few years. Those who survived were the toughest soldiers.

The low-ranked general of the mine known as Big Head Wang could feel the gazes of his Imperial Capital colleagues on himself. He snorted. He led his subordinates to show off their bravado, as if they were the toughest and strongest warriors!

The expressions of the soldiers from the Defense Division changed as they thought about the strange atmosphere in the Imperial Capital recently. They secretly wondered if General Jinwu Ning Qin was here to take his revenge.

"Cough!"

From the carriage, Qin Yu's light cough could be heard.

Big Head Wang had also noticed the change in the guards' expressions. He thought to himself that there was also an appropriate time for him to show off his prestige and he really had to pay attention to that. Otherwise, if he overdid it, he might be punished.

He made a subtle gesture to indicate to his subordinates to restrain themselves a little. Unexpectedly, his nephew, Wang San, became complacent and did not get the signal. Wang San pumped out his chest, raised his head, and was even marching very loudly. His eyes were looking up into the sky, which was why he did not get the signal.

This made Big Head Wang very annoyed, but he did not want to kick or scold his nephew while everyone was watching.

Qin Yu's mouth twitched, not knowing how this Wang Family's uncle and nephew managed to get the opportunity to return to the Imperial Capital with him.

Their behavior was a joke.

Thankfully, despite the Defense Division soldiers' vigilant eyes, they did not act out. They only watched as Qin Yu and his convoy drove towards the Imperial Capital.

Afterwards, everything went smoothly. An assistant minister from the temple and an assistant general from the military headquarters came over to welcome him in person. Even though it was not a very grand gesture, it was a suitable level of etiquette that he deserved.

The young eunuch finally got off the carriage. His face was pale and his spirits were poor. His whole body was slumped, as if he was really ill. After greeting the various officials, he returned to the Imperial Palace with the messenger convoy.

Qin Yu glanced at him. He frowned slightly and immediately regained his composure. He got off the carriage to chat with the assistant minister and the assistant general.

Even though the atmosphere in the Imperial Capital was weird, General Jinwu was now the target of many people. Until the situation improved, he had to avoid offending anyone.

The assistant minister and assistant general cursed in their hearts as they had been forced to take up this task. Naturally, they were unconcerned when Qin Yu was greeting them.

Thankfully, General Jinwu Ning Qin was rather self-aware, and quickly stopped the superficial conversation.

The assistant minister and assistant general then hurriedly returned home to carry out their respective duties.

Hundred Saint became the one to lead the way. He said, "His Majesty has ordered some people to build a residence for you which was completed not long ago."

The West Desolate's Imperial Capital was naturally the top city in this world. It was luxurious, prosperous, and it also represented the supreme power of the West Desolate King.

After entering the city, they saw countless nobles who came and went. Although this group of fierce border troops attracted some gazes, people mostly just glanced at them, and not once did someone's eyes linger on them.

This made Big Head Wang realize that he was indeed in the prosperous Imperial Capital. He subconsciously restrained a bit of his arrogance. He retreated slightly, willing himself to become inconspicuous.

They reached the General's Mansion.

In the East City of the Imperial Capital, there was a plot of land where vermilion and purple converged. Although the size of the mansion was not large, by looking at the plaques of the house next to it and opposite it, one could tell that this residence was built according to General Jinwu's status. In fact, it was even more luxurious than what someone of his status would have ordinarily gotten.

However, the only strange thing was that this newly renovated and completed General's Mansion had no plaque, which made it look like land that had no owner.

Hundred Saint said, "When the mansion was built, there was news from the Imperial Palace that His Majesty would like to inscribe the plaque in person. However, there was a wave of impeachment against you, which is why the plaque has not been completed yet."

He hesitated slightly before adding, "This is also one of the many reasons why people in the Imperial Capital think that you've lost His Majesty's favor."

Qin Yu raised his head and glanced at the mansion without a plaque, then smiled slightly, "Perhaps His Majesty has not yet thought about what words should be written on it."

Hundred Saint's eyes lit up and he bowed with a smile, "I agree with what you said, General!"

The middle door opened wide, and all the servants that were already arranged to serve here walked out in two lines. They then knelt on the ground and kowtowed to General Jinwu respectfully. Among them, there were countless beautiful female servants who looked like beautiful flowers and precious jade. Their small eyes constantly glanced at Qin Yu, as if they were trying to place a hook on his soul to steal it away.

Qin Yu could clearly hear Rourou, who was still in the carriage, scolding coldly, "A group of shameless little brats!"

The next moment, outside the mansion, the female servants who were trying to seduce Qin Yu suddenly paled and their bodies could not help but tremble.

Amusement in his eyes, Qin Yu waved them away and walked into his residence.

There were carved columns with intricate paintings on them...in short, this house was very well built, and had definitely cost a large sum of money.

However, even though Qin Yu was looking at this luxurious decor, he did not really care for it.

To him, this mansion in the Imperial Capital was just a temporary rest stop. It was not like this was going to be his permanent home.

If Qin Yu really lived here one day, it would mean that this house had become a cage to lock him in.

That would be tragic!

He arranged for the troops from the mine to rest at the side residences, and warned them not to do anything that would embarrass him. When they were at the entrance earlier on, all of them looked at the female servants like tigers and wolves who were looking at their prey, as if they wanted to eat them alive.

Although Qin Yu did not really care what they did, in the West Desolate's Imperial Capital, no one knew if these female servants had been sent by someone else. It was better not to get involved, lest this group of men who had not gotten to interact with women for so many years suddenly become someone else's spies.

Rourou laughed coldly and said, "General, take it easy. Having too many women here can bite you in the ass too." She turned and went to the rear of the mansion, not forgetting to bring some female servants that she personally picked out herself.

Their common feature was that they were all extremely beautiful, and were the best of all the female servants.

Of course, outside of the mansion, they were also the most seductive.

Qin Yu was glad to be left alone, and he believed that Rourou would not do anything to them.

As for whether these servants would cause a ruckus...hehe, if they did not want to make trouble for themselves, they would behave.

He was not worried about Rourou at all.

The sun was in the middle of the sky, and then it hung westward, before starting to set.

Qin Yu raised his eyebrows as his face filled with surprise. Just when he thought that the Imperial Palace would not summon him today, the lanterns all over the mansion were suddenly lit as an imperial edict was delivered.

The unsmiling, old eunuch bowed slightly and said, "General Jinwu, His Majesty has been very busy today. He has just finished dealing with all the trivial matters and has ordered me to come to invite you to his palace."

The old eunuch looked thin and old. He was also trembling as if he could be blown away by a gust of wind. However, at this moment, Qin Yu could feel the old eunuch suppressing himself.

The reason for his acute senses was the 'Soul Seed'. Otherwise, he would not have been able to detect this suppression of aura even though this old eunuch was standing right in front of him.

The West Desolate's Imperial Palace was indeed like a lion's den. An old eunuch, who he had never seen before, actually had such a frightening level of cultivation!

Without any delay, Qin Yu replied, "It won't be good to keep His Majesty waiting for a long time. Let's go."

The journey went smoothly. Before he arrived at the Imperial Palace, even though he had been here a few times already, he was still in awe at the hint of invisible suppression in the air.

"Greetings, General Jinwu!"

The Imperial Palace guards knelt on the ground with one leg to salute him.

Qin Yu nodded, "Please rise."

The old eunuch kept walking until they reached the main gate of the Imperial Palace. Qin Yu was calm as he followed behind. They passed through a large palace, walked down a long corridor and crossing a huge square, before arriving at the place where the king handled government affairs.

The inscription on the plaque read: Hall of Longevity!

The three golden characters emitted brilliance even though it was dark, giving off a mysterious and extraordinary aura.

The old eunuch turned around and said, "General Jinwu, please wait here for a moment. I will go in to report your arrival..."

Before he could finish speaking, a chuckle sounded in his ear, "Okay you old man, you know that I am starving, so why bother?"

"Ning Qin, come in. I have been waiting for you."

The old eunuch was neither frightened nor flattered upon hearing the West Desolate King's teasing. He only bowed slightly and retreated to the corner of the palace gate.

Then, Qin Yu discovered that there was another old eunuch who stood on the other side of the palace gate.

This second old eunuch was even older than the first one.

This second old eunuch was like a piece of wood that was filled with cracks, and he stood at the gate with his eyes closed. Not a single strand of his aura could be felt.

When Qin Yu first arrived, he almost did not even realize that there was this person standing right there.

Seemingly aware of General Jinwu's eyes on him, the older eunuch opened his eyes and a burst of light flashed in them, like thunder streaking across the dim sky, especially dazzling at night.

Qin Yu's expression remained calm as he cupped his hands and said, "Sorry to trouble the both of you."

Then, he pushed open the door and entered the main hall.

After walking through the vestibule and turning past a screen, Qin Yu saw His Majesty, who was sitting cross-legged on the futon that was sewn with golden threads. In front of him was a full table of delicious delicacies.

This was the first time that Qin Yu was really seeing the appearance of the West Desolate King. His Majesty's face was rather pale, and he had a slight beard. He was slightly chubby and there was a smile on his face. Yet, the majestic aura of being the ruler of the whole of the West Desolate still made one's heart palpitate.

"Your loyal subject, General Jinwu Ning Qin, greets His Majesty!"

Before he could do a proper kowtow, he was interrupted by the West Desolate King's wave of an arm. The West Desolate King said, "I'm hungry, I'm hungry. Let's eat first. It's your good fortune to be able to have a nice meal today; you're welcome."

Qin Yu paused for a while before saying, "Yes. Thank you, Your Majesty."

Opposite the West Desolate King, there was a table covered with many dishes.

To be able to sit opposite the king and eat a meal together was a great honor.

The West Desolate King picked up his chopsticks and started to eat. "The dishes won't taste as nice when they're cold. I have some things to say to you later, so we shall not drink today."

Qin Yu cupped his hands and replied respectfully, "Yes, Your Majesty."

The West Desolate King smiled and said, "Ruling over the heavens and earth is important, but eating is the most important thing of all. You don't have to stand on occasion. Eat."

After thinking for a while, Qin Yu picked up the chopsticks. He could not really figure out what kind of approach the West Desolate King was taking today, so he could only try and respond to the situation the best he could.

The hall was silent. Only the occasional sound of their chopsticks touching the bowl or their chewing could be heard.

So this was what it was like to meet with the king one-on-one. Such occurrences were probably rather rare. However, now it was easy to understand why there was no one else in the main hall other than two old eunuchs that stood outside by the door.

Come to think of it, the West Desolate King probably did not want too many people to know about their meeting today.

After burping and putting down his chopsticks, the West Desolate King raised his hand to take a sip of tea and looked at Qin Yu who was sitting opposite him, "Is the food not to your liking? It was all made by the best chef in the Imperial Palace and it took many hours to cook all these dishes. I don't eat these dishes frequently either."

Qin Yu replied, "Your Majesty's imperial chef is naturally unparalleled in his cooking skills, but I have something on my mind, so my appetite is not very good."

The king laughed, "So that's the reason. I thought you were used to your wife's cooking, so you did not take a liking to the imperial chef's cooking."

Then, silence. After what the king said, the atmosphere in the hall changed suddenly!

Qin Yu got up to salute His Majesty, "I'm sorry to have caused you trouble, Your Majesty."

The West Desolate King's eyes flashed, "Oh? If you are talking about the matter regarding the Golden Crow Tribe and the Green Willow Tribe, then you have indeed caused me much trouble. There are a mountain of memorials in my study that have accused you of misconduct. It is big enough to crush you."

Qin Yu shook his head and a cold smile appeared at the corners of his mouth, "All these people who have sent memorials to you do not know about your grand plans. They have gotten the wrong idea about me, so naturally, this is not what I'm sorry about."

He then continued, "Back then, after the incident at the Tomb of the Barbarian King, Ye Wangu tried to seize the lantern from me. In order to protect myself, I used the aura of the lantern to lure a barbarian ascetic who was pursuing us, which resulted in Ye Wangu's death.

"This scene was witnessed by a girl brought along by the Night Demon Sect Master named Rourou. She seemed to have an ability to see through people's hearts, and I have always been concerned about this.

"Afterwards, the Later Ye Family started to act against me, as if they had made up their minds that I was the one who killed Ye Wangu..." Qin Yu paused for a while before continuing, "Although, strictly speaking, they did not find the wrong person. But this matter is top secret. Other than me, no one else knows about it. This is why I borrowed 100,000 troops to overwhelm the Demon Sect so that I could forcefully take Rourou away."

The West Desolate King laughed, "That's it?"

“That’s it.” Qin Yu laughed bitterly, “I know that the Demon Sect is powerful. It is the strongest sect in the world and what I did would inevitably lead to retaliation. It is my mistake, please punish me!”

The West Desolate King nodded, “It seems that your brain is still working and you knew that what you did would cause big trouble. The leader of the Demon Sect has already submitted a memorial to tell me of your actions. I’ve also heard that the lady from the Demon Sect has returned to the Imperial Capital with you. The leader of the Demon Sect has already rushed down to the capital; he has probably reached your mansion by now.”

The West Desolate King laughed coldly and looked at Qin Yu with a half-smile, “Let me ask you, are you anxious right now?”

Chapter 1563A – Heaven Inquiry

Qin Yu smiled bitterly in response, “Please, Your Majesty, on account of me having risked my life to serve you, protect me and my mansion. Do not let the Night Demon Sect Master kill us in a fit of anger!”

There was a lot of meaning behind the king asking Qin Yu, ‘Are you anxious?’

However, Qin Yu...was truly not anxious at all!

Since Rourou took the initiative to follow Qin Yu back to the Imperial Capital, naturally, she would have made the necessary preparations. Even if the Night Demon Sect Master was a peak-level Ruler, whether it was his cultivation realm or his shrewdness, he could never compare to the mysterious being from space time!

“Hmph! What you said made sense. I can put in a good word for you, but whether or not the Demon Sect acknowledges you as a son-in-law isn’t up to me.”

The king leaned back and stretched his knees a little. It was not a majestic posture, but the gaze in his eyes became deeper and more obscure, unfathomable like the deep ocean.

“Tell me everything about what happened after you joined the West Border Army. I am interested to know.”

“Yes, Your Majesty.”

Qin Yu started from the beginning and recounted his experience with ‘just the appropriate amount of details’.

When he was with the barbarian tribes earlier on, he already expected that such a day would happen.

And this was the result of his early preparation – to be able to tell a flawless story from beginning to end that was reasonable and had no loopholes.

The king nodded from time to time and he did not interrupt. He also did not think that this storytelling session was a waste of time.

After a while, Qin Yu bowed and said, “That’s all. If Your Majesty has any questions, I’d be happy to answer them.”

The king tapped his finger on the table and said, "I have sent a Half-King to take a look at the curse in the mine before. It was created by sacrificing millions of dead warriors, which makes it very tricky. How did you break it?"

Qin Yu cupped his hands, "I can only thank Your Majesty for giving the lantern to me. Its aura was able to naturally restrain the power of the Barbarian Curse. Otherwise, I would not have been able to have a smooth journey or gain a firm foothold in the army."

As he said this, he flicked his fingers and a strand of aura belonging to the lantern was suspended in front of him.

The Desolate King glanced at that aura and then nodded, "Alright, that's the only question I have. Let's talk business now. What was your intention for doing what you did in the barbarian tribes?"

Qin Yu looked solemn as he bowed, "To complete the important task entrusted by Your Majesty!"

Since His Majesty knew about Qin Yu's eating and drinking at the barbarian tribes, it meant that he had placed some eyes and ears in the smuggling team.

Qin Yu was not surprised by this; he even thought that this was the norm.

Of course, having some spies in the smuggling team was not enough for His Majesty to know about everything. For example, the ones with the good cooking skills were the 'root people' formed by the wine trees, and not Rourou.

The two trees seemed to be right there; they could be seen if one looked up.

However, in reality, it was not that simple. One could only see what the trees wanted one to see, and vice versa.

And this gap in the king's knowledge created room for Qin Yu to operate in.

Back then, when Qin Yu had a discussion with Prajna and confirmed their plans, he was already mentally prepared to respond to the West Desolate's inquiries.

Qin Yu got up, "Next time, I will lead a team to the Western Barbarian Land and I'll station us at the Green Willow Tribe."

He did not need to explain himself any further. This sentence alone was enough to explain everything.

There was a glimmer of light in the king's eyes. Until now, everything that General Jinwu Ning Qin said matched what he knew. There were no omissions and there was an explanation for everything.

The answers that Qin Yu gave were perfect.

Thinking that the Golden Crow Tribe and Green Willow Tribe could rise to power once again after regaining their tribe totems was merely viewing things through rose-tinted spectacles. Once the Boundary Breaking Seals had been arranged, everything would be destroyed in an instant.

With one word from the enemy, everything they had done would go to waste!

The great hall fell silent once again.

Qin Yu sat upright and his eyes were lowered slightly as he looked at the ground, showing his respect for the king. He knew very well that his performance had been perfect, even better than what he expected. However, he had not passed the test completely yet.

Qin Yu only came to a realization when he stepped into the palace and sat opposite the Desolate King. His only reason for returning to the Imperial Capital was to gain the absolute trust of the West Desolate King.

This should be his final test, and it had already begun from the moment he received the imperial decree.

The young eunuch was part of the test, so was the incident that happened in Seascape City, and so was the General's Mansion. Today, having a meal one-on-one with the Desolate King was also part of the test!

However, all this was just the precursors; they had not really gotten to the main part yet.

"General Jinwu, Ning Qin."

"Yes, Your Majesty."

.....

The West Desolate's Imperial Palace was brightly lit at night. The noble aura of the Royal Family soared to the sky, which made people feel daunted.

Right at this moment in the huge Imperial Capital, there were many hidden in the dark with their eyes wide open looking at the Imperial Palace.

They clearly sensed the mighty power that was coming from it. The next moment, above the Imperial Capital, the night sky was splendid. Hundreds and millions of stars started to shine brightly at the same time, leaving their radiance behind.

They were shining on the great Imperial Palace, as if they were making a holy cape made out of stars that wrapped around it.

At the same time, an extremely mysterious and indescribable aura descended from the sky.

At the General's Mansion, which had no plaque hanging at the front gate, the Night Demon Sect Master excitedly and happily left after seeing this phenomenon. At the back courtyard where Rourou was staying, her eyes became bright as she turned her head to look over, and subconsciously licked the corner of her mouth.

"I've eaten many things in the world, but you really taste the best. Unfortunately, I can only watch from a distance. How miserable I am."

Rourou mumbled to herself, her eyes filled with brilliance. If one looked closely, one could see a bottomless vortex that could swallow the sun, moon and stars.

"Borrowing power from the heavens to launch a Heaven Inquiry...before, there would definitely be problems. But now, of course, it is useless."

Gu-dong –

Rourou swallowed her saliva, then sighed as she threw herself on the bed.

Go to sleep, go to sleep. After falling asleep, I will not feel so miserable any more!

At sunset, General Jinwu Ning Qin was summoned to the Imperial Palace.

It seemed to be an inconspicuous matter, but at this stage, it had already become a point of focus for countless people.

After waiting for a long time, there was still no activity. Just when everyone started frowning, the king finally responded to the situation.

They were surprised to find out that the king did not mean to protect General Jinwu, who he had single-handedly promoted.

On the contrary, the king took this matter extremely seriously. It was to the point where he did not consider his role as a monarch and mobilized all the luck of his empire to borrow power from the heavens...it was to launch a Heaven Inquiry!

This was obviously something that could only be done with the consent and authorization of the Imperial Clan. After all, all the monarchs in this world were not able to get true, absolute power without any scruples, other than the Central Desolate.

Launching a Heaven Inquiry could expose some information about matters that people could not understand, which for that General Jinwu Ning Qin could be...what his true identity was!

Because the Imperial Clan would never allow the wasting of the empire's fortune for just a 'trivial matter', now that a Heaven Inquiry had been launched, it meant that General Jinwu Ning Qin was indeed qualified to receive such a treatment.

This made many people, who were secretly anticipating his downfall, reveal looks of surprise, hatred, and panic.

Chapter 1563B – Heaven Inquiry

The person in question would face the monarch, and answer every single question that was asked of him.

At this moment, the Heaven Inquiry began.

The inquirer was the West Desolate King, the noble son of the heavens. He temporarily put on a divine robe which gave him the powers of the heavens and earth.

“To the person standing before me, I have a question for you. Have you lied in the past hour?”

The question was precise and the angle of approach was ingenious. At this moment, the Desolate King had a very majestic appearance, and his eyes were as deep as a vast sea of stars.

The invisible power of heaven and earth enveloped Qin Yu within. The calm question resounded like the roar of thunder, but it was also like the ringing of a morning bell that resonated straight to the heart. It tore apart all pretenses, and cut off all concealment. Only one's true heart would be revealed.

Just this question alone was enough.

Qin Yu's face was calm, and after a brief pause, he said slowly, "No."

At this moment, his body was wrapped by the forces of the heavens and earth. He seemed to be calm on the surface, but he felt like his entire soul was suspended in endless thunder. As if he would be struck by the heavens' lightning and transformed to powder in the next instant, causing his soul to be scattered, never to be reborn.

Just as Qin Yu thought of his answer, hundreds of millions of thunderbolts ran wild and slammed into his soul. It looked like a desperate situation where he was going to die, but just at this moment, a piece of darkness suddenly appeared above Qin Yu's soul.

Like a big mouth, it swallowed all the lightning and thunder.

The lightning strikes were fleeting and incredibly fast. Before even a single thought had passed, a thousand of them had already fallen. But in Qin Yu's perception, this time felt extremely long and terrifying, making him never want to experience it again.

Above the sky, the dazzling galaxy returned to calmness. The lights emitted by the stars were a little dimmer than before.

On the surface of the Imperial Palace, the layer of starlight wrapped around it was removed.

Opposite Qin Yu, the king who was sitting on the futon raised his hand to rub his eyebrows, showing signs of burnout. However, there was an extremely happy and satisfied smile on his face.

The Desolate King now knew of everything that Qin Yu experienced and everyone who Qin Yu interacted with in the Barbarian Clan's territory. More than what he had said.

For example, Prajna.

The ascetic who lived in the temple atop the Traverse Mountains would not believe a Desolate cultivator unless they had a guarantee. Could it really just be because of that lantern he gave to Ning Qin?

This did not seem like a good enough reason.

Because the king was very sure that the appearance of Prajna represented an even stronger will.

The will of Great Shaman Mengshan, who had always been hiding atop the mountain, quietly cultivating.

He was also the only true leader of the West Barbarians!

However, the king did not need to ask any more specific questions regarding this matter. Whatever he pointed out earlier was enough to summarize the whole situation.

It was a detail that could not be spared!

Even if there was something problematic about General Jinwu, it would not be able to escape the Heaven Inquiry...now, the facts had shown that His Majesty had a good eye for people.

Therefore, the West Desolate King was in a very good mood now.

“Hahahaha!”

His laughter echoed throughout the hall.

Outside, at the door, the two old eunuchs who were guarding the palace opened their eyes at the same time, showing a bit of relief in their eyes.

“Ning Qin, I know that you have some grievances and anger in your heart. However, you should know that you are now responsible for a huge part of the West Desolate’s future plans. You should be able to understand why I have been testing you time and again. It is all only out of caution.

“However, today, as the king of the West Desolate, I will assure you that such tests will never happen again in the future. You have already gained my full trust. As long as you work hard to complete the setting up of the Boundary Breaking Seals, I promise you that I will make every wish of yours come true.”

Qin Yu laughed bitterly and bowed politely, “I do not dare to ask for any rewards. I will work hard for you, Your Majesty!”

His face was pale and he was sweating continuously. He was still terrified as he smiled anxiously and bitterly...at this moment, he was sincere about what he said.

This was because even Qin Yu had not thought that the West Desolate would use such a move against him. They did not hesitate to use the empire’s fortune to launch a Heaven Inquiry.

Fortunately, they only made this move now and not back then. If they had launched a Heaven Inquiry before he returned to the West Border Army...he would probably have become a miserable bone lying somewhere in the wilderness, his body parts scattered everywhere!

After a while, their one-on-one meeting came to an end. Qin Yu stepped out of the main hall and a gust of nighttime wind blew towards him, causing him to feel a sense of separation from the real world.

“General Jinwu, let me escort you back.” The expressionless old eunuch’s tone softened a little, and the look in his eyes was no longer as cold and indifferent as before.

Qin Yu cupped his hands and said, “Thank you.”

After leaving the Imperial Palace and boarding the carriage, Qin Yu sat still.

Without stopping, they finally arrived at the General’s Mansion. He thanked the old eunuch once again before watching the carriage leave, and then he turned and entered his mansion.

“Go, ask the Madam to come to my room.”

In the dark of the night, General Jinwu had just returned safely from his meeting with the king. It was only natural to invite his wife to come and celebrate with him.

Because everyone now knew that since General Jinwu Ning Qin was able to return unscathed tonight, it meant that all the tumultuous storms which had occurred in the Imperial Palace earlier would not affect him at all.

“Yes, General!”

The servants then quickly left.

Rourou pushed the door open to enter and closed it with the same hand. Qin Yu looked up at her with a questioning look in his eyes.

Rourou nodded her head.

Hu –

Qin Yu let out a long breath of relief and slumped on the chair. He gasped for breath, like a drowning person who was rescued from the water.

Opposite him, Rourou hesitated slightly. She did not laugh coldly or mock him as she poured a cup of tea for him. “You are already very good.”

It was not a compliment. She was just stating a simple fact.

When questioned by the heavens, it was extremely, extremely difficult to keep one’s true heart from being revealed!

.....

In another courtyard of the General’s Mansion.

The leader of the Demon Sect stood with his hands behind his back. His gaze was deep as he looked at the night sky above his head, unable to hide the excitement in his heart.

The lady was awake!

He did not know the reason for it, and all the more he did not expect that this day would come so quickly. However, without a doubt, the Night Demon Sect Master was sure that the young lady was no longer someone who needed his protection.

Deep in his heart, he did feel a little disappointed. But more importantly, he felt that he did not live up to his master’s trust.

Why did the young lady want to continue staying by General Jinwu’s side? Furthermore, there was that aura that came from the Imperial Palace earlier on.

It was a Heaven Inquiry!

From this, the Night Demon Sect Master could tell that Qin Yu was an important figure.

Could the awakening of the young lady have something to do with the Imperial Clan favoring Qin Yu? Could they have concealed a secret that he did not know about?

The Night Demon Sect Master took a deep breath and suppressed the agitation in his heart. He pondered silently for a long time, and then his eyes suddenly lit up. At this moment, he felt like he had guessed something right.

If what he guessed was right, then it could also explain why the young lady wished to stay with General Jinwu and why the young lady did not want to give an explanation.

However, the Night Demon Sect Master was not going to act rashly. He only had one chance. Only if the young lady spoke out could the Demon Sect, who had been silent for a long time, try to do something.

.....

On this night, after the Heaven Inquiry launched by the Imperial Palace, General Jinwu returned safely to his residence.

When the news spread, there would definitely be many people who struggled to sleep!

Chapter 1564 – Zhou, Not Li

West Desolate Imperial Palace, Hall of Longevity.

The West Desolate King sat upright and looked solemn. He raised his head to look at the ceiling. He then bowed and said, "Ancestors, please, show yourselves."

The space trembled slightly and strands of smoke and mist emerged.

These strands of smoke intertwined with each other and turned into figures. Although they were blurry, each figure gave off a strong feeling of oppression.

The king and the figures faced each other, and the hall was silent.

The Desolate King frowned and said, "I have proved my worth through my actions; could it be that the ancestors are still unwilling to help me?"

He then took a deep breath and continued, "I know that in the Great Desolate, other than the Central Desolate Area, there is a fixed amount of time for each monarch to rule, and there will be a backlash if I hold onto the throne. If a huge disaster happens in the future because of this, I am willing to bear the consequences alone. Even if I die, I want to usher in a new world for the West Desolate's Imperial Clan."

He inhaled again and then bowed, "I beg the ancestors to give me more time!"

An obscure and muffled sound resounded in the hall, making it indistinguishable.

After a long time, silence was restored, and the smoke figures finally came to a decision.

"We will give you a hundred years. Make good use of it."

Then, the smoke and mist dissipated.

The king got up and his eyes narrowed. A flash of lightning seemed to cross his eyes. A hundred years was not a very long time for Great Dao cultivators; it could pass in the blink of an eye. Yet, it was his last chance.

What a group of old, rotten people. They were restricting the advancement of the empire because of their own greed and they had to be removed completely...Zhou Dynasty, Zhou Dynasty, the national surname should be Zhou and not Li!

.....

Ye Family.

All the elderly in the Imperial Capital knew that there was originally only one Ye Family in this world.

Later, another one suddenly popped up and took control over thirty percent of the army.

This was why they were now known as the Old and Later Ye families.

When one did not specify which 'Ye Family' they were referring to, by default, it would refer to the one that was older and had more seniority – the Old Ye Family.

The leader of the army, the old patriarch of the Old Ye Family, was standing in a corridor. He squinted and looked at the sea of stars above his head.

Behind him were the true direct descendants of the Old Ye Family. There were not many of them, but they controlled a lot of power.

All of them were important figures in the army!

At this moment, they were standing solemnly and their eyes were glued to the old, thin figure in front of them. While there was respect in their gazes, there was also a serious tone.

They were all aware of the results of the Heaven Inquiry launched by the Imperial Palace.

The Old Ancestor had summoned them here because he was ready to make his move.

From what they recalled, it had been a very long time since the Old Ancestor had personally made a move. However, every time he intervened, it would be earth-shattering, enough to change the future of the empire.

“You have all entered the ancestral temple before to worship the ancestors of the Ye Family, and you should have read the Ye Family records. In this world, there was originally only one Ye Family, but later the Imperial Clan wanted to put a check and balance on our power in the military, so they brought in another Ye Family from the west.”

The Old Ancestor's expression was calm, but the things that he was about to say were shocking, causing the Ye Family descendants' hearts to be extremely shaken.

“The appearance of this other Ye Family has taken away forty percent of our family's fortune and it also prevented future dynasty changes.”

The Great Desolate was split into nine areas such that there were nine families who governed it. The Central Desolate Area was blessed with the heavens' luck and it suppressed the other areas. The throne of the Central Desolate had always been inherited smoothly without any issues.

In the remaining eight regions, there were multiple shifts in powers and different dynasties would rise from time to time.

Using the West Desolate as an example, even though the name of the empire had never been changed, there were four families that had come to power.

Yun, Wang, Lu, Zhou!

The current royal Zhou Family was only the fourth family in power in the history of the West Desolate!

'Out with the old, and in with the new', the meaning behind the Old Ancestor's words was clear. The Ye Family would come to rule the country after the Zhou Dynasty. It was unclear how the Old Ancestor came to this conclusion, but he never said empty words. There must be a reason for him saying this.

Even if the Ye Family descendants were all high-ranked generals in the army and had calm and strong minds, at this moment, their expressions all changed. However, they were still silent.

The Old Ancestor turned around and glanced at them, "Today, I told you this big secret because it is time for our Ye Family to reclaim that forty percent of our fortune which was taken away from us."

To do this, of course they would have to crush the other Ye Family until they had no hope of recovering!

This was going to be difficult.

There were two large pillars of the military. Even if the Later Ye Family was relatively late to the game, they had many strong people in the family. Many of their previous family heads were outstanding.

Although the Later Ye Family's overall strength was still inferior to the Old Ye Family's, they were not far behind.

If they wanted to destroy the Later Ye Family thoroughly enough that they would have no hope of making a comeback, they had to be careful. One wrong or careless step would lead to severe backlash.

If that happened, there would be a huge civil war within the West Desolate's military before the victor would emerge.

Thinking of this, the several Old Ye Family descendants could not help but frown as they thought deeply.

There was admiration in the Old Ancestor's eyes as he looked at the descendants, "Even after learning of this, all of you are able to keep calm. That's very good. You have lived up to this old man's expectations. The men in my Ye Family are truly as stable as a mountain.

"All of you do not need to worry too much about this matter. Since I have already judged that the time has come, the Later Ye Family will not be able to cause any turmoil!"

The two big pillars in the military...ha!

There was a hint of coldness in the Old Ancestor's face. The Later Ye Family was just a dog at the foot of the Imperial Clan, with an iron lock on its neck.

When one needed the dog to look after the house, of course one would not do anything to them. However, when one felt like this dog was becoming an eyesore, one just needed to tighten the chains on it and put it on the chopping board. Then, it would only be waiting for slaughter!

As for the timing...the Heaven Inquiry launched by the Imperial Palace today was the final confirmation that His Majesty needed. Since General Jinwu Ning Qin had gained His Majesty's trust, it meant that this entire plan could now be expedited.

The Boundary Breaking Seal was originally the Old Ye Family's agreement with His Majesty!

Thinking of that wise and noble man who sat behind the bead curtain in the Imperial Palace, the Old Ancestor's heart welled up with admiration.

His Majesty was truly the leader of the world who had a lot of aspirations. He knew very well that by joining forces with the Old Ye Family, the Old Ye Family would be able to get their forty percent of fortune back.

However, the king was not afraid. On the contrary, he was confident that he would still be in control of everything.

Even if the Old Ye Family's fortune was complete, they could only still be a sharp blade in the king's hand that was used to cut through thorns to open up a prosperous age for many generations in the West Desolate!

Despite his admiration for the king, the Old Ancestor could not help feeling bitter. The ultimate ruler of the world was still unknown!

Of course, if the Old Ancestor did not have the confidence, he would not act rashly.

Even if there was only one Ye Family left after this, they would still be a sharp blade held by the royal Zhou Family.

.....

Bohu Hall.

Today, there was no one here except for Ye Bohu.

The candles were not lit, and at this moment, the stars in the night sky were dim, making this place feel even darker.

There were bits of cold specks floating up and down in the air, penetrating the mind and body.

They even pierced through bones and created fear that plagued the bottom of people's hearts.

However, Ye Bohu was calm. In the pitch black night, his eyes felt like the eyes of a real tiger. They were cold and cruel.

His barbarian ascetic bloodline was inherited from his ancestors and branded in him, and could not be changed or erased. When he was young, he was also confused, bitter, and even desperate, but in the end he overcame these feelings one by one. He transformed these difficulties into a 'sharpening stone' that honed his body and mind.

Step by step, he got to where he was today, making him qualified enough to access the hidden secrets of his family!

A deal had been made long ago between the Imperial Clan and his family.

Therefore, his family had gotten the surname Ye to become one of the two pillars of the imperial military. To the outside world, it seemed like these two big Ye families were mutually supporting each other.

However, all of the Later Ye Family's descendants were very clear that this was just a beautiful illusion.

This illusion may be shattered at any moment. At that time, the Later Ye Family who was one of the pillars of the imperial military, the high and mighty Later Ye Family...would become the flowers that bloomed yesterday and the withered leaves in the autumn wind, which would be swept directly into a garbage dump that no one would care about.

For countless years, the Later Ye Family gave their best and risked their lives to gain more achievements so that they could gain the trust of the West Desolate Imperial Clan. For this, they lost many of their family members.

They were successful, but they had also failed. They succeeded in gaining more and more power in the military and they were now strong enough to be the rival of the Old Ye Family. However, they also failed because the Later Ye Family members could never integrate themselves fully into the ruling class of the empire.

This was even if...they truly held a lot of power!

After they had seen the view from the peak of a mountain and experienced power, no one was willing to continue living in a precarious situation where they were constantly in danger of being abandoned.

But today, as the Heaven Inquiry was launched and the sea of stars dimmed, Ye Bohu could feel piercing coldness in Bohu Hall.

While he did not know what General Jinwu Ning Qin, the Imperial Clan, and the Old Ye Family were scheming, the Later Ye Family was one of the pillars of the military and he had long noticed that there was a secret alliance between the Old Ye Family and the Imperial Clan.

It was apparent that General Jinwu was the one who facilitated this alliance.

Ye Bohu picked up the tea cup. The tea had already gone cold, but he did not care as he took a sip. His eyes narrowed and a coldness flashed in his eyes.

Ye Wangu's death was a warning to him, and he felt hatred towards Qin Yu and wanted to kill him.

Ye Wangu was truly his most precious son and he had wanted Ye Wangu to become the next head of the Later Ye Family.

At the same time, at the bottom of Ye Bohu's heart, there was an unexplainable anxiety and fear. He wanted to kill General Jinwu Ning Qin, so he took action outrageously. Unfortunately, the outcome of this incident did not turn out as he wished.

Looking back, he was the one who failed to pay attention in the beginning. And now, he had ended up in this state.

Betraying the West Desolate was the last resort that he had. Unless he had no other choice, Ye Bohu did not want to do this. Otherwise, the foundation of the Later Ye Family would be destroyed and there would be many casualties, even if some members managed to escape.

He drank one sip of the cold tea, followed by another sip. On the third sip, he finished the cup.

He could feel the coldness of tea traveling from his mouth to his throat, and down into his chest and abdomen.

In the depths of Ye Bohu's eyes, a violent and cold glint flashed past. The future of his family seemed to be very dangerous, but there was also a weak link that he could exploit.

General Jinwu, Ning Qin!

If he died, the alliance between the Old Ye Family and the Imperial Clan would suffer.

As time passed, the once heroic and powerful king would not be able to resist the Imperial Clan's pressure on him to abdicate, and then the Later Ye Family would survive and usher in a new world.

To exchange the death of one person for the future of his Later Ye Family...this was a transaction that had to be completed – at all costs!

.....

Other than the Imperial Palace, Old Ye Family, and Later Ye Family, there was one other person in the Imperial Capital who was now suffering from a great mental shock.

That was the West Desolate's Sixth Prince, Li Zhouyi.

When the Heaven Inquiry was launched, he could already feel how strange the situation had become. He suddenly found that General Jinwu, who was once his right hand man and his foundation, had become a stranger to him.

It was like someone had struck a blow to his head, causing his ears to buzz and his eyes to black out!

Li Zhouyi sat in his study. Occasionally, he grinded his teeth together and a look of despair would cross his face. He felt like everything he had done in the past was a big joke.

Ning Qin turned out to be working for His Majesty.

After a long while, Li Zhouyi took a deep breath and suppressed the waves of emotions he was feeling in his heart.

He got up and paced back and forth. After a while, he suddenly said, "Somebody send a letter to General Jinwu's residence and let him know that I will pay him a visit tomorrow."

General Jinwu may be working for His Majesty, but Li Zhouyi still had connections to him. He firmly remembered this, and definitely would not let go of General Jinwu.

Perhaps the future would be different from what he foresaw.

However, there was one thing that Li Zhouyi could not figure out. He was very sure that Ning Qin was a straw that he caught in a desperate situation.

He was definitely not planted by His Majesty.

Then why did Ning Qin start working for His Majesty? And he was even qualified for His Majesty to launch a Heaven Inquiry?

.....

The night passed by silently.

Qin Yu did not know how he eventually managed to fall asleep despite being in such a weak state and being so fearful.

He only felt surrounded by warmth and gentleness. This soothed his mind after experiencing the Heaven Inquiry.

When he opened his eyes and looked at the curtains above him, he was slightly dazed, and then he gradually returned to his senses.

He was still alive.

It was great to be alive!

Taking in a deep breath, wisps of fragrance entered his nose and mouth. Qin Yu jerked and he turned to look around him. Finally, he let out a sigh of relief and laughed at himself in mockery.

A long strand of hair fell on his bed. By the color of that strand of hair and its aura, it definitely was not his.

Frowning, he reached out to take it. After thinking about it, he put it under his nose and his face suddenly changed.

It really was hers!

Qin Yu raised his hand and rubbed his temples. Some vague memories emerged in his mind in bits and pieces, and a wry smile appeared at the corner of his mouth.

He suddenly felt that it was indeed a blessing to still be alive right now.

Since there was no one in the room other than himself, she had obviously left. Qin Yu sat upright for a while, thinking. There was only one question in his mind right now – ‘nothing happened, right?’

However, no matter how much he thought about it, he could not find the slightest fragment of memory of what happened last night. Instead, that warm and gentle feeling became more and more fresh in his mind. Then, he felt restless.

Looking down at the strand of hair, Qin Yu smiled bitterly. ‘Even in this state, why am I still thinking about stuff like this? I must have lost my mind!’

He turned over, got out of bed, poured himself a cup of tea, and swiftly finished it. After washing up, he opened the door and walked out.

As the saying went, ‘whatever will happen, will happen’...even if one tried to hide from it, or faced it head on, it was unavoidable!

Then, at first glance, he saw someone standing in the courtyard with his hands behind his back.

Squinting, Qin Yu stopped in his tracks and frowned, his eyes showing fear.

The other party turned around. It was a middle-aged man with a dignified face. When his eyes fell on Qin Yu, there was coldness and complexity in them.

“General Jinwu Ning Qin, if you dare to fail my family in the future...I will kill you with my own hands, at all costs!”

Killing intent filled the air.

After speaking, this man turned around and left, disappearing from sight.

Qin Yu’s brows furrowed tighter. Why would the mighty Night Demon Sect Master, the chief elder of the Demon Sect and a peak-level Ruler, wait for him to wake up just to tell him such harsh words?

This was hilarious!

But soon, Qin Yu seemed to realize something. His body suddenly stiffened and he fell into a daze. Thinking of what the Night Demon Sect Master said to him just now, he subconsciously licked the corners of his mouth and his face turned pale.

Right at this moment, a female servant came, bowed to him, and said, “General, Madam invites you to have breakfast with her.”

Qin Yu’s body stiffened even more. He took a deep breath and asked with a serious tone, “Let me ask you a question. Last night...where was Madam?”

The female servant was surprised. She hurriedly knelt down and answered in a trembling voice, “After you returned from the Imperial Palace last night, you invited the lady to your room. After that, all the servants were dismissed...” She looked at Qin Yu, clearly frightened, as if she was trying to say, ‘You slept together all night; why are you asking me this?’

Qin Yu was completely frozen!

Chapter 1565A – Pure Bead

In the General’s Mansion, breakfast was ready. The fragrance of the food wafted in the air, and the sounds of stomachs rumbling could be heard incessantly.

Each and every female servant was slender and as beautiful as a flower. At this moment, their faces were flushed and they were extremely ashamed.

However, their eyes could not help but focus on the table that was covered with vegetable steamed buns and porridge.

It was a very simple breakfast, or even crude for the General’s Mansion. However, the smell and taste of it...ah, I can’t think about it, I really can’t. My saliva is coming out!

When Qin Yu arrived, this was the scene he was greeted by. Beauties with rumbling stomachs. It was simply beautiful.

It made the female servants, who were holding back their saliva and lowering their heads, get an urge to open up a hole in the ground and bury their heads in it.

The corner of Rourou’s mouth turned upwards, revealing an imperceptible cold smile. She waved her hands and said, “All of you are dismissed; listening to your rumbling stomachs is annoying me!”

This was simply a slap in the face, making the servants even more ashamed. They hid their faces and quickly retreated.

Qin Yu coughed lightly and was about to say something before he was interrupted by Rourou's wave of her hand, "Let's eat first!"

Feeling hopeless, he merely nodded, sat down, and started to eat. Of course, before he could say anything, he already knew that the breakfast on the table in front of him was made by the 'root people'.

A stream of heat flowed out of the food and into his body, spreading to his limbs. Very quickly, Qin Yu felt hot all over his body and his face became rosy.

He guessed that this breakfast was meant to replenish the losses that his body suffered from the Heaven Inquiry yesterday.

His heart warmed slightly, then it started to panic.

Before, the Night Demon Sect Master spoke harshly to him. And there was also that female servant who looked at him weirdly. Now, there was a change in Rourou's attitude towards him as well...hiss, something happened, something must have happened!

Qin Yu was flustered and quickly jumped up. Looking at the young lady from the Demon Sect opposite him, who was enjoying her breakfast calmly, his eyes became more and more bewildered.

"Hmph!"

With a cold laugh, she slapped her chopsticks heavily on the table. Rourou put down a half-eaten bun and glared at Qin Yu with hatred, "Men. As expected, they are all the same kind of jerks. Are you feeling guilty because I'm treating you well? If you want to eat, stay and eat. If not, leave!"

Qin Yu exhaled heavily, gritted his teeth and said, "Last night..."

"Bah!What are you thinking? Don't start daydreaming now. I only took care of you last night because I was afraid that you were really scared to death. If that happens, I won't be able to collect all the debt you owe me!" Rourou rolled her eyes and said, "What? Do you really think that I would climb into your bed of my own accord?"

Qin Yu was overjoyed, "Thank you, thank you. I thought wrong, please forgive me for being rude." With that, his appetite was wide open. He ate ten buns and three bowls of porridge in one breath, feeling extremely comfortable and warm now.

Rourou still had a cold expression on her face as she glanced at Qin Yu from time to time. "Remember that you owe me another debt from this morning's meal."

She got up and left, in an extremely bad mood and with a gloomy expression on her face.

Qin Yu patted his slightly bloated stomach and a smile formed at the corners of his mouth.

As long as nothing happened, everything was well!

Otherwise, he really did not know what he would do in the future. Furthermore, this person inside Rourou's body was not someone he could mess with.

If he really touched her, hahaha, I'm afraid Qin Yu's body that was as tough as iron would just be eaten by her in one bite and ground into a waste product.

However, there was that strand of hair...Qin Yu stopped his thoughts. It must have fallen out accidentally when she was putting him on the bed.

That's right, that must be it!

Outside the courtyard, Rourou was walking down the long corridor. Her face became uglier and uglier as she gritted her teeth and mumbled to herself under her breath. Upon listening carefully, she was saying, "Haha, men. Always using those same old tricks."

A gust of wind blew, causing waves to form on the surface of the lake.

The emerald green lotus leaves instantly turned yellow, and as they came into contact with the water, they shattered into powder. Pieces of white fish started to come up to the top, floating together with the dead leaves. It was a very miserable scene.

.....

The Sixth Prince Li Zhouyi went to the General's Mansion in person on Monday.

In everyone's eyes, a prince's personal friendship with an important general from the border armies was a great sin. If he was not careful, a huge disaster would occur.

However, he did not need to worry too much when it came to General Jinwu. Furthermore, he had been awake all night and had figured out some things.

Li Zhouyi felt that it would be best to let more people know about his close relationship with General Jinwu.

The only thing he was afraid of was not letting people see this clearly enough!

"Your Highness, please enter, I will let the general know that you are here," the guard saluted respectfully and bowed to the prince.

Li Zhouyi smiled and waved his hand, "No need, I will just wait here. You can go ahead and let him know that I'm here."

The guard wiped the cold sweat on his forehead. He did not dare to delay any further as he turned around and trotted away.

Very quickly, the General's Mansion's door opened. Qin Yu stepped out, cupped his hands, and bowed respectfully, "Greetings, Your Highness."

After examining him carefully, Li Zhouyi laughed and said, "Ning Qin, you did a good job; you didn't embarrass me!"

Then, he waved his hand and continued, "Bring the gifts. I will have a few drinks with General Jinwu today, and we will drink till we forget everything!"

Qin Yu smiled and nodded, "Your Highness is truly elegant, I would be happy to accompany you."

As the West Desolate's Sixth Prince, Li Zhouyi's relationship with Qin Yu went way back.

When both of them were in the fragmented area, they had already fought many times. It was a pity that even today, this prince did not know about it. Of course, it was best if he did not know. Otherwise the prince's politeness would turn into hatred and killing intent.

Even though Qin Yu had gained the trust of the West Desolate King, intuition told him that Li Zhouyi would still be useful to him in the future.

The first visitor to the General's Mansion was the Sixth Prince. Even though he was ranked sixth amongst his siblings, he still stood firm despite all the ups and downs he faced.

According to reports, there were some rumors in the Imperial Capital that this Sixth Prince was a late bloomer. Furthermore, he was favored by the Desolate King, so he may have the opportunity to 'transform into a dragon'.

In short, in the eyes of the servants of the General's Mansion, this first guest was extremely important and honorable.

The banquet began as various delicacies were continuously sent into the hall. Of course, this time, it was not the 'root people' who cooked the food.

Naturally, the Sixth Prince's purpose for coming here today was not really just to eat and drink.

What he truly cared about was General Jinwu's attitude towards him. Even if he was only offered a glass of water, as long as General Jinwu treated him like how he used to, it was already the best outcome he could have hoped for.

The results, however, were mixed.

General Jinwu still acknowledged the friendship between them, but compared with the past, there was a little more distance. It was not obvious, but enough to be detectable.

Times had changed and the world had also changed. The Darkness Ruler back then, who had just entered the West Desolate, did not know much about the empire. Naturally, it could not be compared with his status today as an important general of the West Border Army.

The change in attitude was expected, so to be honest, Li Zhouyi was very happy with how Qin Yu treated him. What he was really worried about now was how to continue being friends with General Jinwu...as a prince who was trapped in the Imperial Capital, there were not many promises that he could make to a general of the West Border Army.

The distances between people were constantly changing.

After the banquet, Li Zhouyi, who had left a huge pile of gifts behind, drunkenly got up and said goodbye. Only as he was boarding his horse carriage did he hold Qin Yu's arm, and with the help of liquid courage, said, "I hope that General will not forget what we used to have."

As Qin Yu watched the carriage leave with a calm expression, he knew that Li Zhouyi had come today just to say these words.

Unfortunately, from the beginning, the two of them were destined to walk on different paths...therefore, what they used to have was just a farce.

Chapter 1565B – Pure Bead

Under everyone's eyes, the horse carriage drove away from the East City. The General's Mansion, which had undergone a Heaven Inquiry and emerged unscathed, seemed to be calm on the surface like before. However, in fact, it was now the center of attention in the Imperial Capital.

Li Zhouyi's actions made others want to do the same. Before the dust settled, there were many people who wanted to snatch the opportunity to show their closeness to General Jinwu. However, firstly, they could not find a suitable reason to, and secondly, since General Jinwu was heavily favored by His Majesty, it may not be beneficial to befriend him in private. If it were not for all these scruples, the General's Mansion would have been filled with guests long ago, and wouldn't be as peaceful as it was right now.

The carriage made its way to the Imperial Palace without stopping. The Sixth Prince's face was flushed red from the alcohol as he waved his hand to indicate that there was nothing wrong with him, and he returned to the palace alone.

After dismissing the attendants and female servants, Li Zhouyi's eyes became clear. Even though he reeked of alcohol, he was no longer in a state of drunkenness.

He took a deep breath before bowing, "Your son, Li Zhouyi, invites Your Majesty to show your presence."

Hum –

The space trembled and a phantom appeared. Behind the bead curtain, that figure who seemed impossible to see through said lightly, "How was it?"

Li Zhouyi replied, "I visited General Jinwu today and had a drink with him. I can confirm that he was full of energy; it does not seem like he had been injured at all."

As he spoke, he took something out from his robe and offered it with both hands.

To the naked eye, this object looked like a bubble-like bead. Its surface was very glossy, like a mirror that could clearly reflect its surroundings.

Even though it looked unassuming, it was actually a very precious treasure. It could secretly record whatever happened, and no matter how strong a cultivator was, this treasure could not be detected.

"Got it."

The voice rang out from behind the bead curtain once again as the bead disappeared. The space trembled again as it returned to its original state.

Hu –

Li Zhouyi let out a long breath. All he did was answer a few questions, and fine beads of sweat had already formed on his forehead. He raised his hand to wipe his sweat and poured himself a cup of tea. After drinking it all in one gulp, he still felt terrified in his heart.

Before, when he boarded the carriage, he seemed to have said something from the bottom of his heart to General Jinwu under the influence of alcohol.

However, that sentence was also targeted at the person who was going to read the Pure Pearl afterwards.

It was just that he did not know what the effects would be like...Li Zhouyi smiled bitterly, only hoping that it was not the worst outcome.

.....

Imperial Palace.

Behind the bead curtain, the Desolate King took a close look at everything recorded in the Pure Bead. With a little force from his finger, there was a light 'snap' sound. Nothing remained in its place now, and with wisps of smoke and mist, the Pure Bead completely disappeared.

He exhaled, his eyes as calm as a lake.

Previously, in the Hall of Longevity, this emperor who had supreme authority over the country solemnly promised that he would never doubt Qin Yu any longer.

However, now, the facts had shown that a king's word may have some sincerity in them, but it must not be completely believed.

Since General Jinwu Ning Qin's spirits were back to normal today, there was no way that he was lying.

Furthermore, the Heaven Inquiry could not have been wrong!

In the depths of the Desolate King's eyes, a gleam of light erupted and he got up, "Do any of the ancestors still have any objections?"

After a few breaths, there was a soft sigh in the air, "Everything is as Your Majesty says."

"No."

The Desolate King was expressionless as he said, "As the son of the heavens who is temporarily in charge of the West Desolate's fortune and authority, I am a saint who has been sent to this world and whatever I say is automatically the law.

"Last night, since I promised General Jinwu that I would no longer doubt him, acting like this today is really a slap in my face."

He raised his head and his gaze became even deeper like the ocean, "Don't the ancestors think that I should be compensated?"

The air was quiet and silent, and after a few seconds, the auras dissipated.

The West Desolate King sat behind the bead curtain as the corners of his lips slightly curled up, revealing a faint smile.

General Jinwu Ning Qin, I broke my promise to you and I will make it up to you. One day, you will be satisfied when you learn about what happened today.

.....

Qin Yu was extremely dissatisfied.

The Pure Bead was indeed marvelous and mysterious. It did not give off even a strand of aura, and could record whatever it saw.

Regardless of one's level of cultivation, it was undetectable!

However, nothing was absolute in this world. The mysterious being in Rourou's body was clearly an exception.

Even though she had not met Li Zhouyi, since she was here, except for the most secretive and obscure place in the Imperial Palace, everything was within her ability to detect.

Qin Yu laughed coldly. Just like this, he was now aware that he was being schemed against by someone else.

Thinking of Li Zhouyi who had come to visit him before, and how he was giving rueful expressions before...how shameful.

And this made Qin Yu a little more cautious. In this huge world, there were many mysterious methods that he had never heard of before. Even a person who looked unremarkable could not be underestimated, otherwise he was going to suffer a big loss one day.

At the same time, he felt more and more grateful towards that mysterious being in Rourou's body.

If she had not taken precautions in advance and supplemented the essence that he had lost last night, it would probably have raised suspicions in the Imperial Palace.

Even though it was not possible to overturn the conclusion of the Heaven Inquiry, Qin Yu was going to have an even more difficult time in the future and there would definitely be more twists and turns.

Though the heart was made of flesh, it could be as hard as steel.

This mysterious being had mysteriously appeared out of nowhere, and mysteriously treated him well. Even though he still had great concerns about this mysterious being from space time, he could not help but feel a little bit of trust and closeness towards her after journeying together for so long.

Even though he was a logical person, he was not able to completely control his emotions.

Rourou rolled her eyes and got up, "If you are touched and grateful, you don't have to tell me. Such words are worthless. If you really want to thank me, you can start thinking carefully about how you will repay the debts you owe me."

She gritted her teeth. She was repeatedly 'investing' in Qin Yu, but there had been no returns so far, making her feel very distressed.

Yet, at the corner of her mouth, there was a hint of a smile that even she did not notice.

It was light and cheerful.

.....

Night time.

The Imperial Palace issued an imperial decree, and now the messengers had arrived at the General's Mansion.

A huge plaque came along with the imperial decree. Although it was covered in cloth, it was difficult to hide its sharpness and mighty spirit.

"General Jinwu Ning Qin, you have contributed greatly to society. You have been promoted to the rank of a third-class marquis, with the title of Marquis Chongwu. Additionally, you will now be part of the military headquarters' privy council and promoted to a first-class general. End of decree!"

The content of the imperial decree was fairly simple and it only contained a few sentences. However, it was rather impressive.

The current Desolate King who ruled over the West Desolate learned lessons from the previous dynasties. Now, the highest title that an official could get was marquis. Looking at the West Desolate, only people who had achieved the greatest merits were qualified to become a marquis.

Some people who were as important as the old patriarch of the Old Ye Family, or the head of the Later Ye Family Ye Bohu, the two big pillars of the military, were only first-class marquis.

Even though Qin Yu was two classes below, he had only been in the West Desolate for a short time, so the speed of his promotion in the political court was simply astounding.

After the imperial decree was announced, the eunuch who was stationed at the imperial study who Qin Yu had met once before smiled and cupped his hands, "Marquis Chongwu, get up and receive the decree! I've served His Majesty for so many years, and it is my first time seeing someone as young as you becoming a marquis. Your potential is limitless! If there is an opportunity in the future, I hope you will take good care of me."

Qin Yu received the decree and bowed calmly to the eunuch, "You are too polite. Please come into my mansion to have some tea."

The eunuch waved his hand, "Hold on, I have not finished doing what I need to do. Since Marquis has received the imperial decree, please accept the plaque too."

There was noticeable envy in his eyes. "These words were personally written by His Majesty. It is the biggest honor that one can receive. There are many big figures in the Imperial Capital, but even after many years of hard work, they have not received an honor like this."

Qin Yu faced the Imperial Palace and bowed again, "General Jinwu Ning Qin thanks His Majesty for the generous gift!"

No matter what he felt towards the Desolate King, he still had to show a respectful attitude no matter what.

Pulling off the cloth, the pure-black plaque was revealed. On it, there was a golden cloud pattern and gold characters that read – 'General Jinwu'.

At the lower right corner, in a seemingly inconspicuous place, there was a line of small gold characters which stated that this mansion belonged to a first-class general, and a third-class marquis.

One imperial decree, a promotion of three ranks.

In the Imperial Capital, everyone was watching him and they were shocked!

Chapter 1566A – Turmoil in the Imperial Capital

A Heaven Inquiry was launched, yet General Jinwu was safe and sound. This alone was enough to prove that there was nothing wrong with him or what he did.

Since this turmoil could not hurt him at all, whether it was His Majesty's appeasement or 'revenge' towards the different parties in the Imperial Capital, it all only served to promote him further.

Qin Yu rode the gust of wind and it brought him as high as the clouds. However, his promotions stunned countless figures in the Imperial Capital.

Third-class Marquis Chongwu!

And he was also a first-class general who held a lot of power in the military. Other than a few big figures in the political courts, who else could suppress him?

Of course, there were definitely still some people powerful enough to do that, such as the Old Ye Family and the Later Ye Family, Prime Minister Han, the military privy council ministers, and some of the important lords in the Imperial Clan.

However, thinking of this, no one felt relieved. In fact, the bitter smiles on their faces became even worse, because these powerful figures were the pillars of the West Desolate's political court. This was an undisputed fact.

All of a sudden, they found out that General Jinwu Ning Qin, who came from the fragmented area and was mediocre in cultivation, was close to becoming an important minister! This made these figures who had spent years getting to their positions grit their teeth, and their eyes were red!

But now, these figures who were jealous and envious of General Jinwu were the lucky ones. Those that had earlier jumped out to fiercely criticize General Jinwu and asked the Desolate King to severely punish him were now so bitter that they were almost going to cry.

Since General Jinwu was not affected by any of their actions, and instead got a big promotion and became a marquis of the West Desolate, they were bound to have bad luck in the future.

.....

There was a palace that faced southeast in the Imperial Palace's harem, and located at a corner was the Hall of Fragrance. It was the residence of a concubine with the title of Noble Lady Xiang, who had been favored a lot in recent years.

Noble Lady Xiang was naturally born with a nice fragrance that was light-smelling but strong. It could sway people's hearts, but it could also help one to concentrate and improve their cultivation.

Ever since she was summoned to the Imperial Palace, she had been promoted three times in the past five years. After beginning as a lowly female attendant, she was now a noble lady in the three palaces and six courtyards of the Imperial Palace.

There were rumors saying that Noble Lady Xiang was pregnant with His Majesty's child, which put the position of a consort within her reach. This would make her a figure that was not to be underestimated in the harem.

After all, there were north winds, west winds, east winds, and south winds in this world, but the most powerful force of all was pillow talk. Use it well, and one can help to make a final decision, or turn the tides in their favor.

However, in the Hall of Fragrance, the atmosphere was quite gloomy. Firstly, it was because His Majesty was busy with official affairs and had not come here in half a month. Secondly, this noble lady, who always had been charming and gentle, was in a bad mood lately. She had already punished two unlucky female attendants.

Even though the punishment was not very severe, the two female attendants still ended up covered in blood, which made everyone's hearts tighten. All the other servants were much more cautious even when they walked, for fear that any big movements would lead to a disaster befalling upon them.

"Eunuch Wei," two female attendants curtsied respectfully.

It was not only because this person was the chief eunuch of the Hall of Fragrance. It was also because he had announced the king's imperial decree not long ago.

For the eunuchs, being able to announce the imperial decree was the highest honor that could be bestowed upon them. Furthermore, Eunuch Wei was the one who personally escorted General Jinwu Ning Qin back to the Imperial Palace. Even if these female servants stayed in the harem, they also managed to hear some gossip about the prestige of this newly-promoted marquis.

With Eunuch Wei's sociability and friendliness, it was highly possible that he had already established a good relationship with the marquis.

To follow someone so prestigious, coupled with Eunuch Wei's young age, it was not impossible for him to become the most powerful eunuch in the future.

He could potentially become like Eunuch Hu, who served directly under His Majesty. How majestic!

Thinking of this, the two female attendants' faces turned slightly red, and there was more charm in their eyes as they looked at Eunuch Wei.

In the Imperial Palace, the long nights were hard to get through. There were always some pitiful people who came together to comfort each other.

However, today Eunuch Wei was not in the mood to talk to the two delicate and beautiful female attendants. He merely nodded his head and walked away, and the two female attendants could not help but show a little annoyance and sadness on their faces.

“Wei Wei greets the mistress.”

After reporting his presence, he entered the room and kowtowed respectfully to Noble Lady Xiang.

Noble Lady Xiang, who was leaning on the soft couch and looking at him, had a complex look in her eyes as she said softly, “Get up. I told you to go and deliver things to the house; is everything okay at home?”

Wei Wei replied, “Lady, please do not worry. Old Master and Mistress are all well. They told me to bring a message to you. They wanted you to serve His Majesty with peace of mind and not to worry about them.”

After a little hesitation, a smile appeared on the corner of his mouth, “When I returned to the house this time, this servant was rewarded by the old master. He said that you personally made a few jars of wine last time and they had been buried underground for a long time. They only took them out when you were promoted to a noble lady, and today, they even gave one jar to this servant.”

Noble Lady Xiang’s face changed slightly before frowning, and her face became increasingly gloomy, “Father must have been confused. How can such fine wine that was brewed by me be given to a lowly servant!”

Her eyes were cold as she continued, “Wei Wei, put the wine in the palace. You are dismissed. Next time, if there’s nothing else, you don’t have to come to this palace anymore. You can do your own tasks outside.”

Several female attendants who were present in the room all widened their eyes at the same time, looking shocked.

They were thinking, ‘It’s just a jar of wine; even if it was made personally by a noble lady, you should not alienate Eunuch Wei, who you’ve always trusted, over this trivial matter’.

Feeling frightened and uneasy, the female attendants lowered their heads even more. They felt their hearts trembling.

Eunuch Wei knelt on the ground, and a trace of complexity flashed in his eyes. Then, he took a deep breath, as if he had come to a decision. He took out the jar of wine and put both hands on the ground as he kowtowed respectfully towards Noble Lady Xiang.

“Take care, Noble Lady Xiang. I will take my leave now.”

The eunuchs in the Imperial Palace were all crippled and pitiful creatures. There was once a female attendant who was bullied from time to time at the beginning when she had just entered the Imperial Palace.

One day, this pitiful female attendant got beaten as a punishment. This made the female attendant form a close relationship with a pitiful eunuch.

Then, after a few years, this female attendant was favored by His Majesty and step by step, she became a noble lady. The pitiful eunuch had also become a significant figure in the Imperial Palace. At least, he was no longer bullied by people. In fact, he was even qualified to bully others.

Walking out of the Hall of Fragrance, Wei Wei turned his head and glanced behind him with a gratified look on his face. Even if you are a prestigious noble lady now, to me, you are still that cowardly and timid female attendant you used to be.

That's good, that's enough for me.

Back then, Eunuch Wei and Noble Lady Xiang talked about everything in their lives. Eunuch Wei remembered everything about what Noble Lady Xiang experienced in her younger years. There was no handmade wine at all. The old master's 'reward' was actually a jar of wine that would send Eunuch Wei to his death.

Wei Wei smiled and raised his hand to straighten his round hat on his head. Although he was a cripple, he was not someone who would frame his friends.

Back at his residence, Wei Wei dismissed a few lowly eunuchs that came over to ask what happened to him. As he glanced at their backs and how they left in a panic, a smile appeared on his face as he was thinking of something.

Then, he closed the door.

A day later, in the middle of the night, the door opened with a 'click' from the outside. Two men, dressed in black, came in. They immediately saw Wei Wei whose head was collapsed on the table.

There was still a faint aroma of wine in the air, but the dishes on the table were already cold, just like Wei Wei, who was now lying on the table, as if he had just fallen asleep.

"Hmph! This worm does not know how to appreciate someone else's favors!" One of the men dressed in black yelled and then sneered, "You think that committing suicide can help your mistress escape this trial? Continue dreaming!"

He stepped forward and kicked the cold corpse onto the ground.

The other man frowned and said, "That's enough. He's already dead, what's the point in doing that to his corpse and damaging your own morality?" Glancing at the room, he waved his hand, "Go on, go and do what we were supposed to do and then let's leave."

The first man dressed in black stopped angrily, took a few things out from his robe, and entered the inner room.

Looking at Wei Wei's corpse, there was a hint of admiration in the frowning eyes of the second man dressed in black.

Among the eunuchs, there were actually some people who did not hesitate to die; it was not what he expected.

Hesitating for a while, he waved his sleeve and lifted Wei Wei up with an invisible force such that he was now lying on the table again.

This was all he could do to preserve the eunuch's dignity.

"Let's go."

The two men turned around and left, closing the door behind them.

The next day, the news about the chief eunuch of the Hall of Fragrance, Wei Wei, committing suicide had spread.

The palace guards personally took over and found several prohibited items in his room after conducting a search. Although no one else really knew what these items were specifically, there were speculations that these items involved witchcraft.

Witchcraft was, in a world where deities were worshiped, an extremely terrifying method.

All along, witchcraft was strictly a forbidden evil magic secret technique in the palace. Anyone involved in the slightest would receive capital punishment.

Chaos broke out in the Hall of Fragrance and mourning sounds could be heard everywhere. The imperial guards rushed in, pulling away all of the expressionless female attendants and eunuchs.

They knelt neatly outside the palace. The glow of a sword lit up, and their heads rolled onto the ground one by one and the bloody smell filled everyone's nostrils.

Very quickly, a pale-faced eunuch came over hurriedly with a bucket, and started to scrub the ground to get rid of all the blood.

In the hall, Noble Lady Xiang's face was pale. She held an embroidered handkerchief tightly in her hand. Her eyes were blank, as if she was terrified to an extreme point, but also as if she was numb to everything going on.

"Noble Lady Xiang, His Majesty has issued a decree for you to stay in the Hall of Fragrance. Without an edict, you are not allowed to take even a step outside," a leader of the palace guards said as he cupped his hands.

After he finished speaking, he turned around and left without waiting for a response. "Close the entrance and seal the inner aura so that it does not come into contact with the outside!"

Noble Lady Xiang's body trembled and she slowly came back to her senses. She closed her eyes as she heard the locks being put on the door and tears fell.

You clearly know that I was letting you go, so why did you still choose to die here?

Chapter 1566B – Turmoil in the Imperial Capital

News of the incident related to the harem's Noble Lady Xiang and her involvement in witchcraft spread far and wide. Everyone also knew about how the whole residence was 'cleaned' in one day, and the heads of the people that were killed gave off a bloody, pungent smell.

In addition, there were movements outside of the palace as well. Noble Lady Xiang's father, Yuan Wailang, who was a fifth-class official in the Ministry of Labor, was placed in prison.

For days, cries sounded out from Yuan Wailang's manor as all the young and strong men were taken into custody and the women were temporarily locked in the Music Division to wait for follow-up actions.

Anyone who dared to resist would be killed without mercy!

After just one night, Yuan Wailang could not stand the torture in prison and gave a few names that were involved in the witchcraft incident.

These people who were involved in the witchcraft incident were not very high-ranking officials, yet, they were spread out throughout the different divisions in the political court.

This time, everyone started to smell a strange aura revolving around this matter.

Two days later, a lieutenant general was also revealed to be involved in the witchcraft incident.

Without waiting for people from the Justice Division to come, the lieutenant general committed suicide at home, seemingly cutting off the trail of clues.

However, only after half a day, a high-ranking officer in the military who was also in the military privy council was deprived of his position and sent directly to prison!

It was astonishing, like everything was slowly being revealed. All eyes in the Imperial Capital had finally pinpointed the mastermind.

This deputy privy counselor had a lot of weight in the military, and the only reason why he could get away unscathed was because of his powerful background.

Later Ye Family!

Ye Bohu had personally spoken and given him the position of a deputy privy counselor. It was not a secret in the Imperial Capital.

Thinking about it again, the deceased chief eunuch of the Hall of Fragrance was the one who read the imperial decree that summoned General Jinwu to the Imperial Capital not long ago...hiss, it seemed like this matter was more far-reaching than expected!

Instantly, people in the Imperial Capital panicked. Even the oldest tortoises in the deepest waters of the Imperial Palace could not help but open their eyes.

They were thinking, 'Our Majesty had finally bought some time for himself after the Heaven Inquiry, but now, something has happened again!'

The two pillars of the military, the Old and Later Ye families were the cornerstones of the empire. How could the elders of the Imperial Clan allow them to do anything that could sway the stability of the country?

However, the Imperial Palace was silent on this matter. Evidently, they were acquiescing to everything that was happening.

In the Justice Division of the empire, the upright and selfless Lord Shangshu had married a woman with the Ye surname when he first entered officialdom. She was not very beautiful, but she was virtuous.

The dark clouds were starting to hang over the city!

.....

At Marquis Chongwu's residence.

Of course, the turmoils of the outside world could not touch Qin Yu. However, everyone knew very well that he was the starting point of this turmoil to begin with.

After hearing about the death of that young eunuch, Qin Yu's expression was calm. This was because back then, when he saw this person leave at the Capital Border Area, Qin Yu had already sensed that his body was being haunted by death.

Evidently, from that moment on, Wei Wei already knew about his tragic end.

In the Imperial Capital, with the imprisonment of the deputy privy counselor from the military, the turmoil that started with the incident of witchcraft in the Imperial Palace had completely transformed into a turbulent wave that swept across the West Desolate's political court.

Privately granting requests and receiving benefits, forming alliances for personal gain, disregarding national laws, corruption and bribery...this attack was ahead of schedule, and it involved countless ministers and officials in the political court.

But anyone with a discerning eye could tell that all those who got unlucky from this incident were those that encouraged the impeachment of General Jinwu back then.

To say that His Majesty set off such a huge disturbance in the political court as a way of helping General Jinwu vent his anger was completely impossible.

Then, if one continued to think about it, one would find the root cause of this incident that was elusive even for the old tortoises in the deep water.

Most of these people were closely related to the Later Ye Family, either openly or secretly, directly or indirectly.

Qin Yu was happy to see the Later Ye Family meet with bad luck. If there was an opportunity, he did not mind throwing a huge rock to sink them down further.

To let them drown in the well did not sound very nice, but they were the ones who tried to kill Qin Yu in the first place. Were they really expecting him to be a gentleman this time? That would be silly.

However, after thinking about it again and again, a bitter smile formed on Qin Yu's lips and he could not help but raise his hand to rub his temples. The Later Ye Family was only a chained dog held in the Imperial Clan's hands.

This dog, however, was very strong. It had lived for countless years and had followers all over the West Desolate. In the military, it had countless confidants and supreme authority.

Therefore, even if the owner had thought of killing the dog to eat its meat, it was definitely not something that could be easily achieved.

Otherwise, why would such a 'harem witchcraft' scandal break out, and then suddenly many people who were related to the Later Ye Family were sabotaged from all angles?

To put it simply, the Later Ye Family was likely to be doomed this time.

However, completely destroying the Later Ye Family's power was not something that could be accomplished overnight. If this matter was rushed, it might backfire. The chain on the Later Ye Family's neck would definitely get tighter and tighter, but until the last moment came, there would still be some breathing room for them.

This made Qin Yu extremely worried for his own safety.

No one was a fool. He, too, did not believe that the Later Ye Family could not detect the alliance formed between the Imperial Clan and the Old Ye Family.

Therefore, as long as Qin Yu was killed, the whole chess game could be overturned.

The Later Ye Family had to do this at all costs.

The more he thought about it, the more bitter his smile became. Qin Yu took a deep breath and got up to go out. He felt that these days, it would be better if he temporarily stayed at his 'wife's' courtyard to rest.

.....

Later Ye Family.

Bohu Hall.

The Imperial Capital was shaken by the storm. As the target of everyone's public criticism, everyone in the hall today looked heavy and solemn.

The atmosphere was extremely tense and depressing!

As direct descendants of the family, they had naturally known for a long time that their family was different from others. They also predicted that someday in the future, there would be a catastrophe that was going to happen to them.

But they did not think that this day would come so quickly and so suddenly.

Footsteps could be heard and everyone subconsciously got up, lowered their heads, and straightened their backs.

Ye Bohu stepped forward calmly, and the expression on his face was as determined as a rock.

"Family head!"

Everyone greeted him at the same time.

After walking to the main seat, Ye Bohu turned around, sat down, and glanced at everyone, "Get up."

"Yes, sir."

Without easing into it, Ye Bohu went straight to the point, "The turmoil that is happening in the Imperial Capital now is indeed targeted at us."

It became even more silent in Bohu Hall as everyone gritted their teeth. Some looked angry and shocked, while others looked as calm as a quiet lake.

"Is the West Desolate's Imperial Clan really going to betray their promise? We should not be afraid of them. We can just rebel against them and cause a world-shaking upheaval!"

Ye Bohu looked at the person who spoke, laughed coldly, and said, "You fool! Our family has been chained from the beginning. Since we are their dog, we must have this awareness that we are a dog. Rebelling against the West Desolate is the worst move that we can make. It's too early to say now."

Another person said, "Family head, the Imperial Clan and the Old Ye Family have clearly joined forces. If we do not rebel, even if we have deep roots all over the empire, we will still be killed off bit by bit."

Ye Bohu replied, "As long as the big trees on the mountain live for a long time, their roots will burrow into the rocks and spread over every corner. If they want to destroy us, they will have to uproot us completely. This can only be a slow process. If done too hastily, it will only cause a landslide." He exhaled slowly and said blandly, "I don't think His Majesty would want something like that to happen, so, we still have time."

"Family head, please give the order for us to kill General Jinwu Ning Qin." In Bohu Hall, at the last seat on the right, someone stood up and spoke calmly, but his face was full of fierce killing intent.

Though this man was seated on the last chair, it did not mean that he was the least powerful. This man was born into a side branch of the Later Ye Family, but forcibly cultivated the true body of a barbarian. Back then, when he went crazy, his explosive strength was astonishing.

Over the years, he stayed in the Imperial Capital and never stepped out of the Ye Family's mansion. No one ever saw him take action in person, but no one dared to underestimate him even in the slightest.

A bright light flashed in Ye Bohu's eyes. He raised his hand and nodded at Ye Gui, "You are able to see the crux of the problem. His Majesty and that old tiger from the Old Ye Family have put all the preparations in place and are just waiting for us to make a move. We indeed have to kill Qin Yu, but it cannot be us who does it." After pausing for a while, he continued, "At least, in the Imperial Capital, we must remain silent."

Ye Gui frowned, turned around, and sat down. He had always been taciturn and indifferent, and everyone was accustomed to his slightly rude behavior.

"I gathered all of you here today was to tell you not to take any chances. Our Later Ye Family is indeed on the edge of survival right now.

"However, there is another point I would like to make. I want all of you to know that the roots of our Later Ye Family in the Imperial Capital are deep and long enough. It will not be so easy to get rid of all of us.

"All of you are dismissed. Remember not to act rashly and complete your own tasks properly. Although the turmoil is targeted at us, it will not be able to reach us that quickly."

He was calm and confident.

“Yes, sir. We will take our leave now.”

Everyone stood up and saluted Ye Bohu before filing out of the room.

Ye Gui did not move, however, and stayed until the end.

Ye Bohu looked at him, frowned, and said, “When I need you, naturally, I will call for you.”

Ye Gui replied blandly, “I’ve already waited for many years.”

He then got up and left, his back as sturdy as a mountain.

If it were not for the kindness of the Later Ye Family back then, he would have committed suicide long ago.

He continued living for the day when he could repay the Later Ye Family’s kindness in raising and cultivating him.

Since it was stormy now, the moment he was waiting for was coming!

Chapter 1567A – Don’t Want to Meet

Some people say that prostitutes and murderers are the two oldest and longest-lasting professions in the world.

Regardless of whether this saying was true or not, these two professions had always existed in this world, never really disappearing for good.

At most, there were different names for these two jobs, like a shell that concealed their true form.

The Huicui Pavilion was the most powerful killing organization in the Great Desolate.

There was no other organization that could match up to them.

They had an ordinary name, and it even sounded rather old-fashioned, which was quite unexpected for a killing organization.

Yet, in actual fact, the Huicui Pavilion was extremely terrifying. Its motto had always been that as long as you were able to pay the price, you could get a strong target killed.

The ‘strong’ did not only refer to physical strength, it also referred to one’s status, rank, and so on.

In short, as long as the price was paid, there was no one that the Huicui Pavilion did not dare to kill.

There were many small and large incidents in history that proved this point. Otherwise, it would be impossible for Huicui Pavilion to have the reputation it had today.

The most shocking rumor was that three thousand years ago, the death of the South Desolate King who passed suddenly due to illness was actually the Huicui Pavilion’s doing.

Naturally, the South Desolate did not acknowledge such a rumor, but neither did they try to dispel the rumor, even though it concerned the dignified reputation of a king.

Huicui Pavilion, too, neither admitted to nor denied such rumors. The ordinary attitude of both parties made many people's hearts race in fear.

The occupational relationship between a prostitute and a murderer was explained previously. Still, no one could have imagined that in a wide valley southwest of the West Desolate Imperial Capital, a brothel that had a red light hanging high above the guests was actually one of the buildings owned by the Huicui Pavilion.

Swept by a red wave, there was a lot of touching. When the panting gradually subsided, the guest turned over and got out of bed.

The woman, whose face was flushed and was sweating profusely, had a tender and charming gaze. She propped up her sore body and helped her guest to get dressed.

A moment ago, this guest was having an intimate moment with her in bed. Now he looked indifferent. He pushed the door and left.

The woman wiped the sweat from her forehead and turned to sit on the bed. She rubbed her palm lightly and caught a cyan jade cicada.

The carving was exquisite and very vivid, as if it was going to fly away in the next moment.

The woman stood up and walked behind the screen at the end of the bed. She sat on the toilet bowl to do her business, and then threw the jade cicada into the copper ventilation pipe.

The 'ding-dong' sounds that were produced as the jade cicada bounced against the pipe walls, slowly faded until there it was completely silent.

.....

Old Ye Family.

The cunning and sharp Old Ancestor who was present on the night of the Heaven Inquiry had regained his old and senile appearance.

However, there was an occasional glimmer of light that flashed past in the depths of his eyes which made people tremble in their hearts.

"Ye Bohu has the most potential, strategy and wisdom out of everyone else in these few generations. Even I am unable to see through his methods. Therefore, even though there has been turmoil in the Imperial Capital lately, the Later Ye Family will still be stable for a short period of time."

Picking up the watering can and drenching the flowers and plants, the old patriarch looked calm as he said, "Send ten of our iron guards to stay by General Jinwu's side."

The general behind him bowed and excused himself.

The Old Ye Family's iron guards were not the strongest soldiers, but with ten of them working together, they could go against a peak-level Ruler.

They might not be able to kill a peak-level Ruler, but temporarily blocking one was not a problem at all. In the Imperial Capital, as long as a peak-level Ruler was blocked for a while, they would not be able to attack General Jinwu successfully any more.

The Old Ancestor's arrangement was just right.

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Imperial Palace.

Behind the bead curtain, the West Desolate King was busy dealing with government affairs. He had always been diligent. Ever since he took to the throne, there was not one day when he slacked off.

Lord Chengtian bowed and said, "Your Majesty, the Old Ye Family has dispatched ten of their iron guards and they are now standing guard outside Marquis Chongwu's residence."

A faint smile appeared at the corners of the king's mouth. He stopped writing and said, "Ye Bohu will be able to judge the situation and won't make any big moves now. However, with his violent tendencies, he would definitely try to do something to Ning Qin.

"It does not matter whether or not his attempt is successful. What matters to him is that the Later Ye Family is able to send out a message to the outside world that says, 'You can kill your own dog and eat it, but if you aren't careful, you will be bitten too'." The king leaned back and smiled even wider as he continued, "Simply put, they are trying to give me a warning."

Lord Chengtian pondered for a moment before saying, "Your Majesty is wise indeed."

"This is not that complicated to understand. Lord Chengtian, your flattery is unnecessary." The king laughed for a while before saying, "Go to the You Pavilion and pass on my will. Get Ding and Shu, the two Old Four Claws, and put them under General Jinwu's command. They will stay by his side from now on."

Ye Bohu was going to make a move as a warning to His Majesty, but as long as they were cautious, nothing could go wrong.

.....

Wearing python robes, with the four claws that could be seen under the abdomen area of the robes, was the origin of how these people came to be known as the 'Old Four Claws'. As the most despicable and crippled eunuchs in the Imperial Palace, it was an impressive thing to be able to continue wearing their robes instead of being sent away even after experiencing a dynasty change.

Therefore, these Old Four Claws that looked ordinary on the surface were actually very remarkable people.

They cultivated an extremely secret method in the Imperial Palace known as the Heavenly Silkworm Sutra. It was the most suitable cultivation method for their 'incomplete and crippled' bodies.

Of course, not all eunuchs in the palace were qualified to cultivate this method.

For example, Wei Wei, who committed suicide but was still unable to save his mistress, was far from qualified to receive this cultivation method.

Lord Chengtian had come personally to the General's Mansion. Behind him were two hunched Old Four Claws who had sharp auras. Their heads were lowered, as if they were going to fall asleep at any time.

"Greetings, Lord Chengtian!" Qin Yu cupped his hands in greeting.

Beside him, Hundred Saint cupped his hands respectfully as well.

Zhou Chengtian smiled, "Marquis Chongwu, I have come here today under His Majesty's orders to bring these two Old Four Claws."

"Greetings, Marquis."

These two Old Four Claws had eyes that were like slits. They cupped their hands casually, in a manner that was by no means respectful.

Qin Yu frowned, "Lord Chengtian, this..."

Lord Chengtian said, "There has been a lot of turmoil in the Imperial Capital lately. His Majesty was worried about your safety. These two Old Four Claws are confidants of the Imperial Palace and they can definitely be trusted. Marquis Chongwu, please do not worry."

"Your subject, Ning Qin, thanks Your Majesty!" Qin Yu stood up and bowed in the direction of the Imperial Palace. When he straightened up, he had a smile on his face, "Lord Chengtian has taken care of me many times. Since you're here, would you like to come in for a while?"

Zhou Chengtian smiled, "It's not that I don't want to, but I really can't today! I have other matters to deal with that I can't postpone. Next time, I will definitely come and pay a visit."

He came and went in a hurried manner. Lord Chengtian, who was deeply trusted by His Majesty, quickly said his goodbyes and left.

After Qin Yu bid Lord Chengtian goodbye, he turned to look at the two Old Four Claws behind him and started to contemplate something.

They seemed to detect his dilemma, so one of them opened his eyes and laughed, "Marquis, you don't have to care about us too much. Just arrange a place for us to settle in, and we will take care of the rest ourselves."

Qin Yu smiled and nodded, "Okay. Hundred Saint, help these two Old Four Claws settle in and make sure they are comfortable."

Hundred Saint obeyed his orders and cupped his hands as he said to the two Old Four Claws, "Please follow me."

"Hmph!"

A humph came from behind Qin Yu. He turned around to see Rourou, not at all surprised by her sudden presence.

“I’ve had enough of this place. When are we leaving?”

Qin Yu thought for a while before replying, “In a few days there will be a big political meeting at the imperial court. After I attend it, it won’t be long before we are allowed to return to the border army.”

Rourou was not used to being in the Imperial Capital, where there were restraints in every corner.

In actual fact, Qin Yu disliked being here too.

For people staying here, even though everything seemed to be magnificent and splendid, many of them were just chess pieces in the big political game. Whether they lived or died was not in their control.

Rourou looked at him, “Be careful. It’s okay if you fail to get what you want, but don’t get too involved.”

Qin Yu smiled in return, “Don’t worry about me.”

Chapter 1567B – Don’t Want to Meet

A brothel was a brothel.

Even if one gave it a nicer-sounding name, it could not change its true nature where people sold their bodies for money.

It was similar for some people; even if one was in the dark, one could still feel the terrifying aura radiating from their bodies.

Like a scorching sun in the sky that lit up every direction, the terrifying aura could be felt everywhere.

It was extremely dazzling.

“General Jinwu Ning Qin...” he said softly with a calm tone. However, he also sounded a bit solemn and serious.

“Sir, the price to pay for this deal is very high. According to your rules, you have to agree to our request.”

There was a brief silence before the man with the terrifying aura nodded, “Okay, I’ll take this deal.”

Then, he turned and left. The darkness instantly dissipated together with the man.

After a few breaths, it was bright and his eyes became clear again. A middle-aged guest suddenly appeared in the corner. He was handsome and had a calm demeanor.

Dressed in a green shirt with two breezy sleeves, he looked clear like a bright moon, which gave him a likable aura.

“Cough...cough...” A light cough came from behind the screen. The middle-aged guest frowned slightly with worry in his eyes.

He took a few steps over and turned past the screen. He then made eye contact with the scrawny woman who was on the bed. She smiled, using the edge of the blanket to cover her nose and mouth. Her face was flushed, and her eyes were full of warmth and tenderness.

The middle-aged man walked to the bedside and pulled the blanket down. He reached out to caress her face and said, "If you want to cough, just do so. It's not good to hold back."

The woman shook her head, "I'm fine..."

As soon as she finished speaking, she started to have a violent coughing fit. Her thin and bony chest heaved violently and splashes of red splattered everywhere.

There was a trace of panic in her eyes and she covered her mouth with her hands, "I'm fine, I'm really fine."

Blood spilled out from the sides of her mouth.

The middle-aged guest's eyes were full of pain. The woman who was bleeding non-stop on the bed now was once a beautiful fairy who countless people dreamed of being with.

If it were not for him, how could she have fallen into this plight? Therefore, the middle-aged guest had already sworn to himself that he had to save her and help her fully recover.

However, it was difficult. So difficult!

Fortunately, the heavens were fair. Both of them had suffered for so long, and today, there was finally a glimpse of hope for her to continue living.

Disregarding the bloodstains, the middle-aged guest leaned over and took the woman into his arms cautiously, like he was holding a precious porcelain vase, "Ying'er, rest assured. I have found a way to save you. Once I finish the task I am doing now, we will be able to get what we want."

The middle-aged guest smiled and continued, "Once you fully recover, we will leave this place, find a beautiful place among the mountains, set up a cave dwelling to hide from the world, and be an immortal couple."

The woman in his arms finally stopped coughing, but she still covered her mouth tightly, unwilling to let any more blood flow out of her nose and mouth. After hearing the middle-aged man's words, her eyes brightened and were filled with longing.

But very quickly, she seemed to have realized something and stared at the middle-aged guest.

They had been together for a long time, so naturally they understood each other very well. The middle-aged guest pondered for a while and said slowly, "Ying'er, I don't want to hide anything from you. This task that I have to do does have some risks, but you should know that with my level of cultivation, it will be fine as long as I am cautious."

Seeing that the woman was still staring at him unhappily, the middle-aged guest smiled and said, "Fine. I promise you, I will come back alive to see you."

Now, the woman smiled.

.....

One day before the big political meeting, two women, a master and a servant, arrived outside Marquis Chongwu's residence. Although the lady master was covered by a veil, her slender figure was enough to reveal her beauty.

Therefore, when the servant came forward to greet the doorman to say that it was someone that the marquis knew who came to visit, the doorman felt slightly put in a spot.

Everyone knew that the marquis already had a wife, who seemed to be childish and cute, but actually was very skillful and resourceful. Those female servants who originally harbored thoughts about seducing the marquis had since given up on them.

If he brought the letter in, he was afraid that he would incur the wrath of the marquis' wife, but if he did not...hiss, creating trouble for himself at home was unwise; who knew if he would continue to have a hard time in the future?

Just when the doorman was having a hard time and struggling with his dilemma, a female servant pushed the door open. She looked at the visitors and said, "Madam, please come in."

The doorman sighed and hurriedly retreated to the side, wishing he could become a tortoise so that he could retract his head into his body and pretend that he could not see anything.

The two ladies were Yun Qing and Yun Die. They came here today because they met with some difficulties along the way.

Back then, when Qin Yu left the Imperial Capital and went to perform his duties at the West Border Army, the two of them were sent away by Li Zhouyi to give Qin Yu a surprise at the West Border.

Unexpectedly, there were some accidents along the way. Their journey was delayed, and by the time they arrived, General Jinwu Ning Qin had already been posted to guard the mine.

The people who were escorting Yun Qing and Yun Die stopped immediately as none of them wanted to go anywhere near that cursed mine. After they sent a letter back to the Imperial Capital, they stayed put where they were as they waited for instructions on how to proceed.

Then, there was the fake news that General Jinwu had died underground in the mine. Even though the team had not received any instructions from His Highness yet, since they thought that General Jinwu was dead, there was no need to send this beauty to a dead person.

Therefore, they quickly returned to the Imperial Capital. Just when they returned, there were reports that General Jinwu Ning Qin had contributed towards suppressing the sinners' rebellion in the mine and was promoted to a third-class earl.

This time, Li Zhouyi was also dumbfounded. After severely punishing the team that was responsible for escorting Yun Qing and Yun Die, he temporarily placed both of them in a courtyard in the Imperial Capital.

Originally, he was thinking of sending both of them to the West Border Army again after the turmoil back then had died down.

However, after a series of events, many court ministers demanded the impeachment of General Jinwu. Then, General Jinwu rode the wind and went straight into the clouds, becoming the Marquis Chongwu of today.

The first time Li Zhouyi came to visit Qin Yu at his residence was because he had to complete a task assigned to him, and also because he was worried about Qin Yu. He felt like he had to repay the favors that Qin Yu did for him, so he did not mention this matter about Yun Qing yet.

He just wanted to return Yun Qing and Yun Die back to Qin Yu before he left the Imperial Capital.

But who would have thought that there were going to be more dramatic events? The turmoil in the Imperial Capital had led to the Later Ye Family becoming the target of public criticism.

Many discerning people could tell that Qin Yu's position in this turmoil was crucial. Li Zhouyi had seen with his own eyes how Qin Yu had killed someone for Yun Qing and Yun Die. Then, he left these two ladies in Li Zhouyi's hands, and they became a hot potato in his hands.

If this situation got manipulated by someone for their self-interest, Li Zhouyi would be implicated.

He did not want to think too much anymore, so he ordered someone to send Yun Qing and Yun Die to Marquis Chongwu's residence. As for how General Jinwu would deal with this and whether his wife was okay with it, that was up to him.

The carriage driver who was hiding in a corner and watching them from afar hurriedly left after seeing Yun Qing and Yun Die being escorted into Marquis Chongwu's residence by a female servant.

Marquis Chongwu's back courtyard.

Rourou rubbed her chin, her eyes full of uncertainty. To her, this was a rare situation. After walking back and forth with irritation on her face, she wanted to turn around to leave, but she also wanted to take a look at these two ladies who had come to her residence.

Just as Rourou was in a dilemma, the female servant's voice rang from the luxurious courtyard outside, "Madam, the guests have arrived."

Rourou took a deep breath and said, "Let them into the side courtyard and arrange for some servants to attend to them." She gritted her teeth and continued, "Send someone to inform the marquis about this and tell him to make the necessary arrangements himself."

This female servant, who had secretly sneered to herself all the way here, was now a little dumbfounded.

Slightly dazed, she obeyed Rourou's command respectfully and turned away, leading a few other servants with her. She looked at the two ladies and there was awe in her eyes.

In the flower hall, Rourou raised her hand to cover her face. She then dropped her hand. Gritting her teeth, she eventually let out a long sigh.

Never mind, since I don't really want to meet them, I shall not.

Chapter 1568 – She Was Her

When Qin Yu heard the news, he was still fiddling with the Third-class Marquis Chongwu Seal that had been delivered to him. The Marquis Seal was made up of black and gold. The two colors intertwined, seeming majestic like another universe.

Old friend? Two ladies?

Qin Yu frowned as he put the seal away and headed to the back courtyard.

On the way over, he asked and was able to guess who the two ladies were.

Entering the backyard, the master and servant figures of Yun Qing and Yun Die could be seen.

It was them.

Strictly speaking, it had not been long since they parted, but the difference in status between back then and now was startling. Seeing Qin Yu walking towards them in his marquis attire, they bowed deeply from a distance.

“Greetings Marquis!”

Sixth Prince Li Zhouyi and that lady must have thought they were General Jinwu’s old friends. However, the two of them knew clearly that they did not hold an important position in General Jinwu’s heart.

At most, he just had a use for them...but since Li Zhouyi ordered them to be sent to Marquis Chongwu’s Mansion, they had no choice but to enter as the carriage driver watched them.

Qin Yu’s eyes flickered, “Be at ease.”

He looked past them to the maid who was looking down respectfully, “Was it the lady who asked them to come in?”

“Yes.” The maid replied softly.

Subconsciously, her eyes wanted to glow but she seemed to recall something and bent even lower.

Qin Yu nodded as he looked at the face that was identical to his memories. He had a sudden realization and he said slowly, “Since you are here, you should stay. I have other things to handle and will leave first.”

Yun Die breathed a sigh of relief but sadness filled her.

Leaving the residence of the master and servant, Qin Yu took a deep breath as he headed straight to the main courtyard of the back residence. This was where the officially known ‘Lady’, Rourou lived.

Now, the news of how the lady of the mansion had invited in the two beautiful women had spread all over. Seeing the marquis in a rush with a concentrated look on his face, all the maids quickly bowed.

As soon as Qin Yu saw Rourou, he waved his hand, “Leave. Without my permission, no one is to enter.”

“Yes!”

Everyone rushed to leave.

Qin Yu stepped forward and stared at Rourou. He said in a low voice, "Answer me truthfully..." He paused, "Why did you allow the two of them in?"

Rourou blinked, "They said that they were your old friends and I saw that they were somewhat intertwined with you so I allowed them.

"After all, you are now General Jinwu and an eyesore to some people. Who knows if they are trying to find a way to kill you. I saw that there were no issues with them, so you can relax."

Qin Yu did not believe that this was all there was to it, "Don't lie. Tell me the truth. You are not a busybody. What is the reason for letting them in?"

Rourou rolled her eyes, "Believe what you will!"

She stood up and left.

Qin Yu did not stop her but merely said, "Since you don't want to say, I will have to ask Yun Qing over to verify."

"You dare!" Rourou looked angrily as she rushed to say, "Qin Yu, don't pretend not to know. I let those two women in for your benefit!"

Qin Yu nodded, "Thank you."

He turned and left.

'Deng deng deng' he took a few steps before Rourou grabbed his arm and glared at him.

If it were for other things, he would not have been bothered by her grabbing him.

But he could not let it go this time.

Qin Yu lowered his head and stared at Rourou. His eyes were calm but determined.

It was obvious that he was not going to rest until he got what he wanted.

"Hmph!" Rourou stopped glaring and released his arm. Qin Yu did not walk away. He knew Rourou had given in.

"You ingrate with no conscience!" She scolded angrily as she gritted her teeth, "That's right. The one called Yun Qing...that woman has something, but don't ask further. I won't say anything."

There was a glimmer in the depths of Qin Yu's eyes. He took a deep breath and pushed further, "Rourou, is she..."

"Stop!" Rourou shrieked and looked annoyed, "I already told you not to ask anymore. If you continue like this, I will leave!"

Qin Yu frowned. Instinct told him that Rourou was not lying.

She was not comfortable talking about Yun Qing. She was even slightly restless.

Were they...natural enemies?

It felt something like this.

Rourou was very apprehensive and extremely unwilling to meet Yun Qing.

At this moment, Qin Yu's heart was filled with excitement.

He smiled brightly.

He thought that she had really vanished and there was no more trace of her in this world.

But this was not the case. Feature had disappeared, but there was a trace of her left behind.

Although Yun Qing had yet to recognize him and her cultivation was very weak, she was her. If not, how could she cause the mysterious being to feel apprehensive?

Rourou did not look good. She looked as if she had crushed her own foot with a stone. She regretted interfering and allowing the master and servant pair to enter. But if she could turn back time, she would probably have done the same, even knowing the results.

This realization caused Rourou to feel extremely unhappy. She gritted her teeth and growled, "I did not say anything. If you dare to bring her here, I will leave immediately!"

Qin Yu smiled brightly, "Don't worry, I promise that Yun Qing will never appear in front of you."

As for the reason why, he was in no mood to think about it.

He had to see Yun Qing. He was going to visit that woman, who helped him do everything silently, and disappeared.

Qin Yu turned and left eagerly.

Rourou's expression turned even darker. Her face was as gloomy as thick dark clouds.

Marquis Chongwu left and then returned. Both the master servant pair as well as the maids in the residence were confused.

Taking a deep breath, Qin Yu walked in front of Yun Qing. As he saw her restrained and anxious face, he suddenly realized that although he had many things he wanted to say, he was not able to say anything.

Because even if Yun Qing was Feature, she did not recognize him.

Letting out a breath, Qin Yu tried his best to speak gently, "Yun Qing...did anyone treat you poorly in the capital?"

Yun Qing's eyes widened. She looked at him in astonishment. She could not understand how he had such an extreme change of attitude after disappearing for a short while.

From the calm and silent state, he had turned...protective!

That's right. This was the feeling Qin Yu was giving Yun Qing.

It was as if she just had to randomly say anyone's name and that person would be extremely unlucky no matter what.

But she had always been cautious and Yun Qing did not dare to believe her own feelings. She felt even more uneasy as she paled slightly and shook her head, "No."

Qin Yu took a step back and smiled, "Did I scare you? Yes I must have. Don't be scared or angry. I had a misunderstanding earlier and did not recognize you. Actually you...hmm, maybe it is not appropriate to tell you now. Basically, I owe you a huge favor from a long time ago."

"You may not understand what I am saying now, and you don't have to. Just remember that I will protect and help you. I will not let anyone hurt you."

He was smiling and his smile grew bigger as he spoke. However, he spoke every word sincerely.

Feature. I once thought that I would never be able to see you again. Now, I've finally found you. I will repay you ten times, no, a hundred times more than what I owe you.

Yun Qing was stunned as she looked at Qin Yu, who was becoming more and more foreign. Yet, she suddenly felt a closeness to him deep in her heart and she trusted him. However, she felt that it was absurd. She could not understand the huge change in Marquis Chongwu; he was a high ranking person in the West Desolate.

But this did not affect the sincerity that Yun Qing felt from him...as well as the excitement and increasing heart rate she felt.

She thought about it as she lowered her head, "Mmhm."

Yun Die looked at Marquis Chongwu, who was fixated on her master. She gritted her teeth and suddenly kneeled, "Marquis, if you really want to protect my lady, you have to help her. Back then, on the way to the border camp, she almost died!"

"Yun Die!" Yun Qing scolded loudly, looking panicked, "You...Marquis, don't listen to her. It is all in the past and I am fine."

Qin Yu frowned slightly before his eyebrows stretched out and he nodded, "It is good that you are fine." He knew that being hasty was not the way. He looked at the servants around them, "Serve Lady Yun Qing well. If there are any mistakes, I will not forgive you."

He spoke coldly, but when he looked at Yun Qing, warmth filled his eyes.

He waved and turned to leave.

Leaving the small yard, Qin Yu's face was calm but there was turmoil in his eyes.

Yun Qing had almost died!

At that time, he did not know that she was Feature.

Although she was fine now, the moment he thought about how he almost would never have seen her again, Qin Yu started to panic. Anger grew within him.

"Men!"

Big Head Wang silently appeared behind him, "General, please give me your orders!"

Qin Yu spoke slowly, "Go to Li Zhouyi's palace and tell him that I want to know why Yun Qing almost died...give me the exact story. Don't miss anything out."

"Exact story. I will tell him this."

Big Head Wang bowed, "Yes."

Turning to leave, he was full of emotions – our general is really powerful now. He even speaks to a West Desolate prince with this kind of attitude.

Honor, there was definitely honor!

He then realized that he did not know the capital at all. He had no idea where the Sixth Prince's palace was.

"Cough!"

Big Head Wang coughed lightly and waved his hand.

Woosh –

Woosh –

Several fit figures from the border army appeared.

Although they were resting in the side residences as ordered by the general, there were not just lying around.

Without any trace, they had already taken over the security matters around the mansion.

Big Head Wang nodded in satisfaction. They were definitely his people, they were good. When he saw his nephew, Wang San, he was in a better mood. He pointed.

"Wang San. Go to Sixth Prince Li Zhouyi's palace and help to pass on a message."

He straightened his back and put his hands together as he repeated what Qin Yu had said.

Wang San shrunk back as he looked hesitant, "Uncle...cough. This is not the border army and everyone knows our relationship. Uncle, I am the last one from our Wang Family and will be the one sending you on your way in the future. Don't get me in trouble."

He looked as if he was about to cry.

Big Head Wang kicked him and scolded him, "Our general is now among the top in this capital."

He lifted his thumb and shouted, "I told you to go so just go. Don't talk nonsense. Hurry! If you cause any delay in the general's matters, you will get it from me!"

Nephews were used to carry the blame. Humming to himself, Big Head Wang left in a good mood.

The rest of the border army looked at Wang San sympathetically before disappearing.

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Yun Qing asked everyone to leave before frowning at Yun Die. She had wanted to scold her a few times before but as she thought of how they only had each other, she could not bring herself to say anything.

Yun Die fell to a kneel, "My Lady, I know I was wrong. I should not have spoken."

Yun Qing chuckled bitterly, "If you already knew, then why did you do it? You know what our current state is like now. Living is already difficult. Why did you initiate trouble?"

As she started to speak, her smile turned even more sour, "Moreover, those people did not think much of Li Zhouyi. Although Marquis Chongwu is famous in the capital, if we bring in a huge enemy, we will suffer the brunt of it. How will we survive?"

Yun Die gritted her teeth, "Just now, the way Marquis Chongwu spoke seemed genuine..."

Yun Qing looked at her silently.

Yun Die remained kneeling, "My Lady, I did think about it and confirmed that he was genuine. If Marquis Chongwu meant what he said, he will definitely take revenge for you. Anyway, if he gets angry with us, it means that he is lying, and it would be better to know of that early. "

Yun Qing sighed softly. Yun Die grew up with her. Although officially they were master and servant, she had always looked at Yun Die like a sister.

After counting on each other for so many years, she could easily guess what she was thinking...although she was right, it was too rash. Did she think that after so many things happened, she was still that hopeful lady back in Seascap City?

But since things had already happened, there was no point. Yun Qing reached out to help her up, "Now, we can only see what the heavens have in store."

Seeing her master's eyes, Yun Die suddenly felt regretful. She had indeed behaved wilfully...but it was all Marquis Chongwu's fault for seeming so genuine and she could not help but believe him.

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Someone from the border army arrived outside the palace and asked to see Li Zhouyi. The guards were stunned for a while before they reacted. This bastard was using His Highness' taboo name.

Thankfully, Wang San thought quickly and rushed to say who he was before it turned into a bloodbath. He mentioned that he was from Marquis Chongwu's residence.

Despite this, he was faced with dagger-like glares and cold expressions as he waited for a response from in the palace.

If His Highness did not respond, or if he sneered, the guards would have ensured that this border army soldier was torn into eight pieces.

It was a pity that they were unable to unleash this cruelty.

"His Highness asks for you to enter!"

Border Cliff Saint looked at the soldier. Both his cultivation and appearance were mediocre. Although he looked slightly pale from fright, there was a straightforward feel about him.

Border Cliff Saint wondered why Marquis Chongwu had sent someone like him, who just followed orders and did not think about much?

Walking through the beautiful palace, Wang San swallowed his saliva as he regained his alertness.

Just now, he had actually used the prince's name directly in front of everyone.

Fear grew within him before he started having cold sweat. He then slowly reacted...he was actually still alive now and had actually been invited in.

Our general is too powerful...what an honor...

Cough. This uncle and nephew pair from the Wang Family were indeed from the same bloodline.

Birds of the same feather flocked together!

Chapter 1569 – The Li Family Before the Country

The royal family had the surname Zhou. However, the sixth prince was called Li Zhouyi. He was now looking at Wang San, from the border army, a soldier who just abided by orders. He frowned slightly as he chuckled bitterly.

Marquis Chongwu's order was full of dissatisfaction. He really could not understand. She was just a brothel lady he happened to meet. Just a moment of enjoyment. Was there a need to be so involved?

Unless, General Jinwu Ning Qin was really infatuated? But if that were the case, then how could they explain the lady of the mansion?

He could not understand and his head was hurting badly.

The reason was because he wanted to maintain a good relationship with Marquis Chongwu as this could affect his future succession.

But the Li Family...was even harder to handle. Although he was a prince, he was also helpless against them.

Wang San was oblivious to the fact that the Sixth Prince was now 'drowning in anxiety'. However, as he thought of how domineering and powerful his marquis was, he grew even more courageous as he waved, "Your Highness, the marquis is waiting for me. Please hurry."

Li Zhouyi almost laughed. He did not want to offend Marquis Chongwu but this runner was just a tiny soldier. Even if I kill you now, will anyone care?

However, the murderous intent only lasted for a second before he suppressed it. What was the point of killing such an insignificant soldier? It would just be creating trouble.

Taking a deep breath, Li Zhouyi replied, "I don't really know the details. Go and wait outside. After I clarify things, I will give you an answer."

Wang San was slightly dissatisfied, but he was not that courageous either. He put his hands together, "I will wait outside."

He was still urging him.

Border Cliff Saint rubbed his eyebrows as he looked at the prince. It was amazing that this bastard, Wang San, was still alive.

Li Zhouyi stood and left. This involved both Marquis Chongwu and the Li Family. He did not dare to make the decision all by himself. When he said he would clarify, he was just postponing it. He had to ask before he divulged any details.

As for Wang San, he was just a dazed person and the prince was not in the mood to waste time with him.

Li Zhouyi turned and entered the back palace. He put his hands together and greeted, "Your Majesty, I request your presence."

This time, he waited for quite a while before the air shook and the blurry figure of the king appeared behind the bead curtain.

"What is it?"

His tone was cold and powerful.

Li Zhouyi was extremely respectful and repeated everything that had happened without hiding anything. He did not mix in any of his opinions.

"This is very important and I did not dare to make a decision. Hence, I had to interrupt you. Please forgive me."

In the vibrating air, the king fell silent before speaking slowly, "You considered this well." He paused for a while, "You don't have to bother with it anymore. I will handle it."

The illusion disappeared and the air was still once more.

Li Zhouyi stood up. He rubbed his lips before smiling bitterly.

Just one sentence and that was it? If it were his other siblings, whom the king favored, they would probably be rewarded.

After all, although this seemed like a small thing, if someone with ill intentions were to know about it, it would cause an uproar.

Your Majesty, I am also your flesh and blood; how can you be so biased?

Taking a deep breath, he hid his emotions. When Li Zhouyi returned to the main palace, he was calm.

He called for Wang San and said slowly, "I have informed Marquis Chongwu. You can return."

Wang San scratched his head; he felt like he had been played.

"Get lost!"

Li Zhouyi looked furious.

Wang San finally reacted and realized that no matter how powerful the marquis was, he was just an insignificant subordinate and the prince could still easily kill him.

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Marquis Chongwu's Mansion.

Two Old Four Claws sat cross-legged in an empty residence. Both their heads drooped down and they did not seem to have any energy.

They were like two dried wooden sticks buried up to their necks.

But right at this moment, the two Old Four Claws opened their eyes simultaneously. There was a glimmer in their eyes.

Looking at each other, the two of them raised their hands and their fists met.

Boom –

A low sound erupted and spread outwards, resounding through the entire mansion.

In the back residence, Rourou frowned and there was a cold look in her eyes.

If it were before, or in another place, these two old eunuchs would have been dead should they dare to show off in front of her!

She tapped the air and there was a movement. It was as if a bubble formed and wrapped around her. She did not want to see the master and servant pair in the other residence, so she could not be bothered about them.

After all, she was a regular person now and even the West Desolate King would not be able to detect anything, much less the Old Four Claws.

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Qin Yu frowned; he could sense the actions from the two Old Four Claws.

Very soon, the air in front of him shook.

Sensing the aura, Qin Yu hurried to say, "Your subordinate Ning Qin greets Your Majesty."

Behind the bead curtain, the figure of the West Desolate King could be seen. He waved his hands, "Rise."

"Thank you, Your Majesty."

Qin Yu stood up as he frowned. He looked solemn, "It was just some personal matters; I did not think that it would disturb you. It seems like the issue is complicated."

There must be a reason why the West Desolate King suddenly appeared. Qin Yu thought about it and realized what the critical point was.

“Marquis Chongwu, I can tell you that you are looking for the Li Family.”

There was a pause before the king’s voice could be heard once more. Amidst the calmness, there was a slight sense of self-ridicule, “I am the king, but the lineage of the imperial family is named Li. Although it is the ancestral instruction set by the ancestors, I am very dissatisfied with this.”

Although he did not explicitly say it, these two sentences were sufficient to reveal that there were many other underlying issues.

Qin Yu frowned harder before his expression relaxed. He put his hands together respectfully, “Your Majesty, is the Li Family not able to be dealt with?”

The king replied, “They have a deep background and many blessings; until the time is right, we cannot act rashly or we will be hurt.” He looked at Qin Yu, “I promise you that if everything goes smoothly, I will give you an explanation for this matter.”

Qin Yu greeted, “Yes Your Majesty.”

“Mmhm, I can’t stay for long. I will take my leave.” The air was still once again and the king’s illusion disappeared.

Qin Yu remained still for a while before he frowned and a solemn look came over his features.

Li Family of the Zhou Empire...before the country...

They were people that caused even the West Desolate King feel apprehensive and he had to tolerate them. He shook his head as a bitter smile appeared on his face. Previously, he had spoken so directly in front of Yun Qing, but now, he only embarrassed himself.

This made Qin Yu feel awkward. However, he took a deep breath and suppressed these emotions.

He thought about it before standing up to walk out. He appeared in the residence of Yun Qing and her maid.

“Greetings Marquis!”

A group of servants rushed to greet him.

Yun Qing and Yun Die were amongst them.

Qin Yu waved his hand, “Leave.”

The servants left and only the two master and servant pair were left looking at Marquis Chongwu in the bright living room. They felt apprehensive.

Qin Yu smiled wryly, “Yun Qing, I am temporarily unable to deal with the people that almost killed you. But I promise you that I will remember this and give you an explanation.”

Yun Qing greeted and said seriously, “Marquis, there is no need. I already mentioned that I am fine and there is no need to dig up the past.”

Yun Die lowered her head and did not say anything. Disappointment flashed through her eyes and a hint of contempt could be seen within them.

All men in this world only knew how to talk. They talked extravagantly and make people believe them, but ultimately, they were useless and did not do what they said.

Qin Yu looked at her as his smile turned even more bitter, "The ones that attacked you are the Li Family from the West Desolate." He thought about it and added, "The West Desolate Imperial Clan has the surname Zhou. However, the descendants of the imperial family have the surname Li, like Li Zhouyi."

Yun Qing's expression shifted and Yun Die could not help but look up. Shock was written over their faces.

The emperor was Zhou but the Imperial Clan descendants were Li...this had been a topic that was forbidden to be spoken about in the West Desolate. There were many people that lost their lives because of this topic in the past.

Although many years had passed and the restriction around this topic has been much more relaxed, there were very few people who dared to talk about this.

But anyone who knew about this had always been confused, and their confusion had never eased.

Though Qin Yu did not say much, his meaning was clear and this shocked the master and servant pair. Looking at them, Qin Yu laughed wryly, "I don't have any need to lie to you both about this."

Yun Qing bowed and her face was pale, "I believe everything you say! So please don't dig any deeper into this!" She thought about how the person from the Li Family had disregarded even the Sixth Prince, Li Zhouyi.

If this were really the case, the Li Family was more powerful than the West Desolate Imperial Clan. There must be a lot of hidden information regarding this that withheld incredible power.

If not, they would not have been able to maintain their power until today.

Qin Yu nodded, "Don't worry. I promise that I will not do anything to the Li Family for now. However, I will do what I promised you."

He smiled gently, "From now on, I will protect you both and make sure you are safe." Back in the Abyss, you did so much for me. Now, it is time for me to repay you.

Seeing how his presence made them feel uncomfortable, Qin Yu stood up to leave.

Yun Die looked timid. She suddenly looked up, "My Lady, Marquis Chongwu..." She did not know how to continue.

Yun Qing gave a wry smile, "I also do not know what to do."

She was confused. She felt like she could trust and rely on him, but she could not understand why his attitude had changed so much.

Why?

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The two Old Four Claws looked at each other in confusion. They could not understand why Marquis Chongwu, someone who had extremely high potential to go far, would treat this master and servant pair so differently.

This entire mansion was under their observation and they could see that both Yun Qing and Yun Die were just regular people.

In terms of appearance, they were quite pretty. However, as people who had lived in the Imperial Palace for a long time, they have come across numerous beauties.

These two were not the best.

Unless he was really the kind that got infatuated? If this were really the case, it might be a good thing for His Majesty.

They were silent for a while before one of them took out a green jade talisman and touched its surface. A few moments later, he flicked his finger.

'Buzz' the air around the jade talisman rippled before it disappeared.

As confidantes of His Majesty, they were his eyes and ears. Although they were stationed in Marquis Chongwu's Mansion and were allowed to do what they wanted...they were ultimately His Majesty's lackeys.

Chapter 1570 – Main Court Meeting

Rourou snorted as she laughed. She could not help herself. They were just two dogs. Did they really think their noses were the best? In the mansion, you are just seeing what you are allowed to see. You are blind to everything else.

But as she thought of how she was forced to hide her aura because of these two dogs, she fell solemn.

She was in a bad mood when she saw Qin Yu, "I told you. Don't ask me anything about her; I won't say anything."

Qin Yu frowned. He thought about it before speaking in a low voice, "I won't ask about the past or the reason. I just want to know what I can do to help her remember me. Do you have any idea?"

Rourou shook her head and rejected him outrightly, "No."

Her eyes flashed as she seemed to have thought of something. She suddenly said, "I am not the only one behind you. Why don't you ask the other one?"

She did not say it nicely but she spoke the truth. Qin Yu remained calm and did not seem to get angry.

He knew who Rourou was referring to. But now, he was running from her and really did not feel like summoning her.

Rourou seemed to know what Qin Yu was thinking as she sneered, "Sometimes you are really smart. But sometimes, it feels like you are an utter fool."

She tapped her fingers on the table in a way that seemed similar to Qin Yu, "Think about what realm and level that one is from; do you really think that she would not have sensed what happened? Hehehe, you are just deceiving yourself!"

Qin Yu's expression shifted slightly. Previously, the Ruler always looked like she had been sleeping for many years and he managed to peacefully go about doing his things because of this.

Taking a deep breath, Qin Yu seemed to be brooding. He suddenly looked at Rourou, who made it seem like bringing up this point was just a coincidence.

"You seem to wish for me to summon the Ruler..."

Rourou sneered, "So what if you know? I did not intend to hide it from you." She pointed towards the door, "I have already given you the direction to help you do what you want to. Now, it all depends on whether you want to...go, I won't see you out!"

Qin Yu left her residence before he reacted. Isn't this my house? But today, he was in no mood to quarrel with her.

Although that being in Rourou had many bad habits, the good thing was that it did not like to lie.

It was precisely because of this that Qin Yu was able to manipulate her into revealing Yun Qing's identity. And when she said that she could not say, she would stick to it instead of coming up with a story to lie to Qin Yu.

So whatever she was saying now would most likely be real.

A close relationship must exist between the Ruler and Yun Qing, or rather, Feature. With regards to Feature, Qin Yu had tried to ask the Ruler when he left the Abyss and returned to the Vast Brightness World.

So it also meant that she lied to Qin Yu back then. This made Qin Yu more sure of his assumption – the Ruler had a relationship with Feature!

He benefitted from her but had yet to achieve the things he promised her.

So Qin Yu was feeling guilty. He had been hiding from her and was not willing to face her.

But for Feature, he was willing to go against what he felt...of course, there was another reason. If things were like what Rourou said and the Ruler already knew what was going on and simply chose to observe...

Then...the longer he remained silent, the more indignant she would become, and eventually, everything would pour out.

In his room, Qin Yu activated the space time rules with a thought and they started to shift.

In the back residence, Rourou's eyes lit up as she looked expectant. She then lifted her hand and tapped the air, covering all traces of the commotion Qin Yu created in order to prevent the two Old Four Claws from detecting anything.

It was not that she was temporarily not lying to Qin Yu. This was her personality and she did not lie.

The two Old Four Claws thought they had everything under control. But to her, they were like old sugarcanes that could be bitten anytime. They were blind even with their eyes opened.

Taking a deep breath, Qin Yu spread his arms out. Above his head, a Sun Moon illusion appeared.

Then, there was nothing after that.

As his cultivation level rose and he became more powerful, Qin Yu could sense the target of his summon.

But it felt like the Ruler was just a ball of air and gave no response. After trying for a while, Qin Yu frowned before letting out a sigh. He looked impatient.

If the Ruler was ignoring him, he had no choice. After all, this was a summoning and not a forceful kidnapping.

In the back residence, Rourou, who was helping Qin Yu hide the traces of his summoning, was looking gloomy.

She could not help but let out a slew of curse words as she scolded, "You...despicable and shameless old woman!"

After living for so many years, she definitely knew how to scold people.

Not only did she know, she was quite good at it. However, at that moment, all the evil words that she wanted to use remained deep in her and she was 'unable to say it'.

This made the powerful and unpredictable mysterious being feel her mood worsen.

The matter ended without anything changing.

Even if he knew that the Ruler knew about Feature, she was avoiding him and he could not do anything but wait.

Thankfully, Qin Yu had found Feature and was not in a rush.

Moreover...there was a limit to how long she could avoid him for. He did not believe that the Ruler could pretend to be air forever.

.....

Far away, in a half-abandoned gap between the heavens and earth, there was the sound of teeth grinding. It was described to be half-abandoned, but it was not because there had been a plundering or a huge change.

It was because neither living nor dead beings were able to reach the Heaven Earth Gap. When the Ruler barged in and used it as a place to rest, she covered her aura and this area was considered half-abandoned. It no longer had the full attributes of a Heaven Earth Gap.

"Little Hoof, you are vicious. You pushed the blame on me!"

"Wait, we are not done with this. You had better take this down and see how I get back at you!"

The Ruler's mood was absolutely horrible after she had been awoken. She pulled at her own hair.

Starlight shone on her body and instead of looking sloppy, she looked like a fairy.

She was like a messy beauty.

The Ruler thought about it for a while but could not think of a way to get revenge. Her eyelids started to droop and she was too tired to keep her eyes open.

"Just wait...when I wake...I will show you...how powerful..." She forced herself to say this before the sound of her snoring like a cat under the sun could be heard. The sound was extremely adorable.

.....

It was time for the Main Court Meeting.

The rules were extremely strict and anyone who qualified to attend had to wear court attire and attend on time.

They could not be late nor absent.

Even if there were special circumstances, they would have to raise the request in advance and the Ministry of Personnel had to approve it before reporting it to His Majesty. Finally, the party would then be allowed to take leave.

The good thing was that the Main Court Meeting only happened twice a year. Otherwise the various court members would suffer. Even just a set of neat court attire was troublesome. The higher one's position, the more complicated the attire.

In the dark of the night, Qin Yu was called on by his servants. Luckily, he had been thinking about the situation with Yun Qing and how to deal with it, so he was not caught off guard in bed.

Inner wear, outerwear, cloud-patterned pullover, the general pattern of tigers and wolves, the purple robe of a marquis, pendants, cloud shoes...all sorts. There were more than a dozen different things and they were all intricate. The way they were worn had to comply with etiquette and regulations and could not be worn wrongly even in the slightest.

Four servants surrounded Qin Yu as they worked until sweat was visible on their faces. However, there was a fragrant breeze surrounding them and they were not that annoying.

At one point, Rouoru arrived with a few other servants. As she saw the servants surrounding Qin Yu, who was standing with his arms spread out, the corners of her mouth twitched and she sighed softly.

The servants in the mansion had already known that the lady of their mansion was not like other ordinary female figures in other households. She held an extraordinary position and was not very respectful to the marquis. They all looked down without saying anything, afraid of getting blamed.

Another hour passed. After putting on the purple gold hat and having his black hair combed, Qin Yu's appearance could only be considered ordinary.

However, as the saying went, people relied on clothes like horses relied on saddles. This set of marquis attire looked noble and majestic.

Rourou's eyes lit up. Qin Yu's change could deceive others, but not her. However, the way he cleaned up was quite decent.

When Qin Yu opened his eyes, she had already returned to her usual lazy casual state, "It is the first Main Court Meeting; you have to be careful and avoid committing any taboos."

As she spoke, she walked up to him with a jade pendant in her hands. It was pure white without any markings or carvings. It did not look special.

"Take this pendant. Return it to me when you get back."

Hearing this, Qin Yu's fingers tightened as he smiled, "Thank you, My Lady."

Rourou subtly rolled her eyes and Qin Yu laughed out loud. For her to appear here was already significant. There was no need to care about the details.

Outside the door, Big Head Wang spoke respectfully, "General, we should go."

Qin Yu turned to leave and did not look back to wave. He held the white jade tightly in his hands, "My Lady, don't worry. I will be back soon."

The group of servants looked at them with admiration. Although sometimes, they felt like the relationship between the marquis and the lady was strange, at times like today, everything felt great.

The two Old Four Claws appeared out of nowhere, wearing loose clothing. They looked as bored as they usually did. They were hunched over like two old dogs.

But in the dark of the morning, the eyes of the two Old Four Claws seemed to glimmer. They would occasionally glance to the sides and their eyes flashed.

Qin Yu took big strides as he walked into the yard. He smiled and put his hands together, "Thank you to both of you."

One of the Old Four Claws nodded his head while the other remained expressionless.

Qin Yu did not care. After thanking them, he stood up and walked out.

Standing slightly behind him, the two Old Four Claws flanked his sides. Big Head Wang knew who they were and automatically took a few steps back with the other servants.

If it were on a battlefield, with more people, they would be better able to protect the general. But this was the Imperial Capital. The people here were strong and scheming. The people they had were considered little and just accessories.

It was nothing frustrating. The thing that the border army people were good at was accepting facts.

So when they first came to the capital and realized their weapons were not worth much here, they felt that the people in the capital were all beyond ordinary.

When their general was given the title of marquis and became a strong and famous person in the capital, even Wang San dared to show attitude at Li Zhouyi's place.

As Rourou looked at Qin Yu leave, the hint of a smile she had disappeared.

Yawning, she said, "Stop looking, you all have no chance. You are dismissed."

She was ready to head back to sleep.

As for Qin Yu's safety, she had already given him the jade and he would be fine.

Rourou was confident of this.

Stepping out of the mansion, Qin Yu frowned as he looked into the darkness where the light from the lamps did not reach.

Behind him, the two Old Four Claws remained calm. He ignored it.

Numerous marquis resided in the East City and many of them would be attending the meeting.

So the usually silent roads were filled with activity even though it was still dark.

When Qin Yu walked to his carriage, he sensed several gazes.

He looked over and saw that most of them were in court attire. He smiled and put his hands together in greeting.

Compared to the manors in the area, Marquis Chongwu's Mansion was one hundred percent nouveau riche. However, his power was real and His Majesty's trust in him made others envious.

The elders of the Imperial Clan had already chosen to give in. Although the hundred year agreement was a secret, those that were qualified to know, already knew.

At least for these one hundred years, Marquis Chongwu Ning Qin's position would be rock solid and might even improve further. They could leave other things to the future, but they still had to build the relationship now.

Qin Yu put his hands together in greeting. He did not overdo it and bent over to enter his carriage.

The two Old Four Claws now flanked the carriage driver on his right and left. The carriage driver paled as he forced himself to swallow. He whipped the reins.

Piak –

The carriage started to move in the direction of the Imperial Palace.

At this moment, a faint breeze could be felt. A subtle scent of blood passed through before disappearing.

Two corpses lay with their eyes wide open in the distance.

Only the eyes could be seen under the face mask of an Old Ye Family iron guard. His eyes were icy and emotionless. His figure was like a wolf, moving silently through the darkness and towards the carriage.

There were nine other iron guards like him. They moved through the darkness, completing the bloody harvest.

Today, at the Main Court Meeting...there was going to be a huge commotion!

