

Refining 1571

Chapter 1571 – Middle-aged Man Mister Zhou

“His Majesty is fishing.”

The Old Ye Family’s Old Family Head said in a calm voice. He was wearing a large plain robe as he sat on a wooden chair, sipping tea.

It was not that the Old Family Head was not qualified to join the Main Court Meeting.

Many years ago, when he put down his armor and returned to the capital, he received His Majesty’s decree – the old general is late in years and does not need to attend court meetings if there is nothing to do.

By late in years, it really meant late in years. The Old Family Head had assisted three generations of kings and was a true official for three dynasties.

There were many that looked forward to him washing his hands of things and kicking the bucket. It would give everyone else a lot more breathing room.

However, the Old Family Head remained alive. Although he was now slightly listless, as long as he was alive, he would be the backbone of the Old Ye Family and a general who no one dared to offend.

In front of him stood a poor guy with a missing hand and leg. Back then, when the border army and the Barbarian Clan were at war, he woke up after the battle and found himself like this.

He did not make any fuss, and after recovering, he followed the Old Family Head back to the capital once he retired from the army.

For all these years since, he had been hiding in the Old Ye Family’s manor and not many people had come across him. But all of the Old Family Head’s direct descendants knew that the Old Family Head had an extremely brilliant advisor who was missing limbs. Over the years, the Old Family Head would discuss any important things with him.

He was a rare person who could influence the Old Family Head.

The two of them sat facing each other. One hand and one leg, along with a small portion of his body, had been cleanly cut off. It gave an impression that it must have been extremely difficult for him to have survived. But he did not seem to pity himself. His eyes sparkled slightly.

“Ye Bohu is a smart man. If not, he would not have managed to gain anything over the years. He will be able to see the situation with His Majesty going fishing. Even if he does anything, he would not be able to affect the Later Ye Family.”

The Old Family Head placed down his tea cup and smiled, “You are right. But this time, the one who His Majesty wants is not Ye Bohu. So even if Ye Bohu is stupid enough to fall for it, His Majesty will also have to loosen a part of the net. After all, more haste and less speed. This has to be done slowly. It will not be perfect, but the losses have to be cut at least.”

The advisor said slowly, "What His Majesty wants is a reason so that even after the storm passes, he can still do something to the Later Ye Family."

He paused before frowning, "But other than this, I feel like he has another motivation. After all, His Majesty has always been magnificent at laying out plans. If it was just to find a sore spot to continue to deal with the Later Ye Family, it would be too petty."

The Old Family Head looked out at the darkness outside that the lamp was not able to chase away, "If the Later Ye Family does not do anything, there will not be many that dare to kill General Jinwu's men in the capital."

The eyes of the advisor lit up, "Huicui Pavilion!" He looked up, "His Majesty has no reason to fall out with them. So the only way is to take a chance to make a deal. For example...getting someone else to do the dirty work."

The Old Family Head smiled and nodded. Although he had lost an arm and a leg and become disabled, Yuan Kui was still an extremely brilliant person in his eyes.

His Majesty's plan had brilliant foresight. But in reality, the storm in the capital was just the prelude to the thunder and lightning that was coming.

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The world did not lack smart people.

But when there were schemes, everything would get swept away, leaving one with no choice.

Ye Bohu could tell that His Majesty was fishing, but even so, he could not do anything but abide by it.

Otherwise, would the king really let them go if they were submissive and did not do anything? Of course not.

So even though he knew it, he had to proceed.

Ye Bohu had always respected the king. Today, in the dark night, his respect was even greater. He was wearing the attire of a first-class marquis, along with the dragon pattern of a marshal of the Imperial Army. He looked extremely powerful and impressive.

"Marshal, it is time to go."

Ye Bohu turned and moved. He looked calm and determined.

His chances of winning against His Majesty were not high, but he had to try. What if he was pleasantly surprised?

For example, if General Jinwu Ning Qin were to die in the dark night before the Main Court Meeting.

When the time came, His Majesty, the old turtle from the Old Ye Family, as well as those rotting trees from the Imperial Clan that were afraid to die, would have an exciting performance.

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The carriage was enhanced by a formation to ensure a smooth ride. Inside the carriage, it was silent. As today's bait, Qin Yu would be lying if he said that he was not in the slightest bit angry.

But although he was annoyed, he did his best to cooperate. After all, whether he looked at the Later Ye Family from a personal or overall perspective, he had to get rid of them.

The entire journey was quiet, but Qin Yu knew that the massacre had already begun amidst this silence.

The ten iron guards from the Old Ye Family were very strong. They managed to find the assassins and kill them without giving them any chance to go near the carriage.

The two Old Four Claws sat beside the carriage driver. Their heads were drooping as if they were tired from getting up so early.

Roughly estimating the time, the carriage had covered about half the distance between the mansion and the palace. In a few more moments, the carriage would reach the Imperial Palace. When that happened, the assassination today would become a joke.

The Imperial Palace was the homeground of the West Desolate King. No one would dare to challenge him there. Anyone who dared to try anything would most definitely die. There would be no chance of success.

The nation's luck gathered there and it was an extremely strong and domineering place!

So if they wanted to kill Qin Yu, they had to do it before the carriage reach the palace.

With the red string wrapped around his fingers, the white jade released a slight coldness. This caused Qin Yu's senses to enhance and become clearer than they had been. A very strong instinct grew within him.

The opponent had now made their real move.

All of a sudden, there was a grunt from the darkness as if something heavy had fallen.

Qin Yu turned to look. It was the first time someone had defeated one of the iron guards from the Old Ye Family. Although he was not able to clearly see what was going on, the image of a burly figure falling to the ground appeared in his mind.

Beneath the face mask, the anger and indignance that filled the eyes slowly faded to bleakness.

Looking down at the white jade, Qin Yu guessed that it was because of this jade – but this was not the extent of its powers.

If the mysterious being from space time made a move, it would not be so simple.

Beside the carriage driver, the two Old Four Claws opened their eyes at the same time.

Amidst their dim eyes, it was like lightning struck, revealing everything in front of them.

"Focus on driving; don't care about anything else." One of the Old Four Claws said softly. He sounded both gloomy and smooth, like a venomous snake ready to strike.

The carriage driver tried his best to nod as he gulped. He paled even more.

There was another grunt followed by the sound of something round rolling on the floor. 'Gululu', a head rolled in front of the carriage.

Pak –

The head exploded. Red and white fluid burst out. Every drop shot out like an arrow being released.

The Old Four Claw chuckled under his breath as he reached out. The air twisted to form an invisible shield.

Bang bang bang –

The sound of things hitting the shield could be heard. The splashes caused ripples but did not penetrate through the shield.

“Don't fall into a daze. Hurry up. We cannot delay the marquis' arrival into the palace.”

The Old Four Claw looked up into the depths of the darkness. His eyes seemed to be sneering. You guys weren't even born when we were already scheming and fighting.

The tactic of luring an enemy away from his territory would not work.

The iron guards from the Old Ye Family were sent by the Old Family Head. Even if they all die, it is the Old Ye Family's business. It has nothing to do with us.

In the darkness, there was a skinny figure holding up a headless body. It exchanged glances with the Old Four Claw from a distance. He frowned and threw the iron guard's corpse to the side. He turned and left, disappearing into the darkness.

The Old Four Claw raised a brow. He did not expect him to leave like that.

When the head exploded, it released energy through the red and white fluid. However, it was just the remnant energy from when he killed the iron guard. Its power showed how strong the assassin was.

When they exchanged glances, the Old Four Claw thought that a fight would ensue...he frowned. He did not relax but instead looked even more tense.

“Hehe, interesting. Today is very interesting.” The other Old Four Claw chuckled as he licked his lips. There was an intense heat in his eyes.

“Hmph! Be careful. I don't want to collect your corpse.” The Old Four Claw who took action first said blandly.

“No need. If I die, just leave me to the wild. I have done too many shameful things in my lifetime. I should let the heavens take their anger out on me. Perhaps I will be able to reincarnate.”

“Okay.”

The two Old Four Claws fell silent. They sat up straight but the frown lines on their faces were much fewer than before. Their powerful aura remained hidden, but when it was released, it would surge up into the heavens like a volcano erupting!

At this moment, they were nearing the palace and they could sense a frightening aura in the air.

It filled the air, making it hard to breathe. It felt like even moving was difficult.

There was someone strong. Someone very strong!

A long purple robe could be seen in the darkness. The figure had wide shoulders resembling mountains and his sleeves flowed like rivers. He was like the rising sun and could not be looked at directly.

The two Old Four Claws narrowed their eyes at the same time as they looked at the middle-aged guest who was approaching them.

The bothersome iron guards from the Old Ye Family were now in the muddy darkness. Some were dead, some were captured. But all of them were now useless.

There was no way for them to block the middle-aged man.

This was also a part of the scheme.

“Mister Zhou. I never thought it would be you today.” The Old Four Claw who had commented that today was interesting now looked solemn.

The middle-aged guest waved his sleeve. He looked extremely calm, “Since the both of you recognize me, are you going to leave or do you want to die?”

With a piercing laugh, one of the Old Four Claws hit the carriage and his body flew out, “I have admired you for a long time. How can I leave!”

The space was torn apart and there was a piercing sound. The temperature in the air dropped drastically. As the Old Four Claw punched, an ice dragon appeared. The ice dragon had armor covering its body. It was bright yellow in color and the imperial dragon energy could be felt.

The dragon energy became more and more lifelike. With a roar, it opened its mouth and swallowed.

The middle-aged guest appeared calm as he looked at the ice dragon flying towards him. He reached out a finger to touch.

A half-transparent mountain illusion suddenly appeared in front of the ice dragon which was speeding through the air.

Although it was an illusion, the power it emitted was immense. Though the ice dragon was powerful, it was impossible to dream of hitting the mountain. It was the equivalent of trying to break a stone using an egg.

The dragon’s cries were interrupted by a loud explosion sound. The mountain’s illusion was not even shaken, but the dragon’s body started to crumble into multiple pieces.

The Old Four Claw in mid-air suddenly made a strange sound as he retracted his body and fell to the ground like a huge stone.

‘Bom’, with a loud crashing sound, a horrifying pit formed in the ground. Numerous cracks appeared around the pit and extended like spider webs in all directions.

The middle-aged guest frowned slightly as he jumped into the air.

In the next moment, the ground that he was standing on cracked. The ice dragon, which had been grinded to powder, appeared in front of the mountain illusion and flew into the sky.

Its mouth was opened wide as if it was about to tear the middle-aged guest into pieces.

But this felt like an insurmountable moat. Waving his sleeve, the air twisted and formed a huge net, surrounding the ice dragon.

The space started to collapse inwards and shrunk. Angry roars could be heard as they slowly turned into miserable cries.

Eventually, the ice dragon that was caught in the air turned into a white pearl and fell silent.

Pfft –

The Old Four Claw spat out a mouthful of fresh blood. His face was pale as he wiped his mouth and chuckled, “Mister Zhou, you are indeed powerful.”

The middle-aged guest said, “I am here to kill someone today and don’t have time to waste. If you don’t move, don’t blame me for disrespecting the king.”

The Old Four Claw laughed, “Mister Zhou, this does not make sense. His Majesty has always treated you well ever since you entered the capital...”

The middle-aged guest stepped forward, not giving them a chance to delay. The capital of the West Desolate was where the nation’s luck was gathered. Even with his cultivation, he would be helpless.

Since he had made his move, he had to kill Marquis Chongwu in the shortest time possible.

Boom –

There was a loud sound as the Old Four Claw was thrown back. Blood spurted out of his nose and mouth. However, his clothes, with the python engraving on them, were completely fine.

When the blood from the Old Four Claw touched the python on his robe, its eyes lit up. It felt like it was being awakened.

“Guard the carriage.” The other Old Four Claw growled as he flew up into the sky. He was stopped by the Old Four Claw who was coming down. The descending Old Four Claw sneered, “You can die and feed your body to the wild. But until we finish what His Majesty assigned us, we cannot die.”

‘Peh’, the injured Old Four Claw spat out blood and smiled sinisterly, “I am fine. I am not dead yet.”

He looked up at the middle-aged man; his eyes were filled with viciousness, “The people from the palace are pitiful. After living a trashy life, it is somewhat of an honor to die with someone like Mister Zhou.”

The middle-aged Mister Zhou was expressionless. He did not seem to be moved nor did he look scared by the two Old Four Claws joining hands. He continued to walk forward. His footsteps were steady and quiet, as if they could level anything.

One step, two steps, three steps...

The two Old Four Claws seemed to be withstanding an immense pressure and were pushing back with all their might. A fierce light flashed in their eyes. This time, not only did blood spurt out from their noses, mouths, eyes and ears, their skin started to crack.

Deep red blood dripped from the cracks and slowly dyed their python robes.

Chapter 1572 – Short Long River Sword

The middle-aged guest continued to move forwards. He spoke calmly, “Don’t waste any more time. Let me see what the Old Four Claws are truly capable of.”

With their bodies drenched in blood, they looked hideous. The two Old Four Claws exchanged glances and knew that they had reached their end today.

“Since Mister Zhou looks highly upon us, we cannot let you down.”

“Although the Heavenly Silkworm Sutra damages the users, we think that it still has some merit and we hope you can advise us!”

As they shouted, the pythons on the robes of the two Old Four Claws came to life. They were like huge mouths, swallowing the two Old Four Claws.

The sound of them being swallowed was accompanied by the crunching of bones. The two Old Four Claws were eaten cleanly. The two pythons from their robes came to life and their three hundred meter bodies landed heavily on the floor. They raised their heads and hissed, with their tongues sticking out. Their eyes were locked on the middle-aged guest.

The Heavenly Silkworm Sutra was similar to silkworms eating mulberry leaves and producing silk. It was cultivated on the robes of the Old Four Claws. After it finished its cultivation, the Old Four Claws became highly respected in the Imperial Palace.

But at the same time, they dug their own graves.

Once they fought with their lives on the line, they would sacrifice themselves. With their blood as food, they would awaken the pythons on their robes and express their full power.

Of course, this method could only be used once. After they used it, the Old Four Claws would die and their souls would disappear without getting a chance to reincarnate.

That was why they spoke about leaving their bodies to the wild and looking for a chance to reincarnate. The truth was that not even their bodies would be left behind. Hence, it was impossible for them to be reincarnated.

The middle-aged guest frowned. It was not that he was feeling reluctant but he was thinking about how only the Imperial Palace could allow such a cruel and unrestrained cultivation method to be developed, without worrying about the user turning evil.

When he took action today, he had already prepared himself. Moreover, the Heavenly Silkworm Sutra was not a secret. Seeing the two pythons roar into the air, the middle-aged guest turned his palms and pushed downwards. A huge lotus leaf seemed to cover the entire sky.

As the saying went, when one is disgraced, the whole family is doomed. When the sky was covered, anything in the middle would not be able to escape easily. The two pythons roared mournfully, their gigantic bodies twisting and smacking. However, the floor and the space were extremely stable and did not show any signs of cracks. It was like an invisible energy was pressing on the world and sandwiching them inside.

Gold and jade letters appeared on the huge bodies of the pythons. They did not seem impressive but each letter was extremely heavy. They weighed down on the scales of the pythons, causing their flesh to bleed. The immensely powerful bodies immediately turned into a mess of blood.

The middle-aged guest looked slightly regretful. However, time was not on his side and he was not able to hesitate.

Pak –

With a soft sound, the jade pendant hanging on his waist turned into dust.

The jade and gold words on the body of the pythons glowed and melted into their flesh. The flesh began to boil and miserable shrieks could be heard.

The Heavenly Silkworm Sutra was cultivated into a python robe. While silkworms ate mulberry leaves, what did the Old Four Claws from the palace eat? This was where the phrase ‘ill treatment’ came about.

By sacrificing themselves, the two Old Four Claws called upon the pythons. The pythons were now on the verge of death and would not be able to escape no matter how much they struggled. It was not that they were not powerful, but it was that this middle-aged guest, Mister Zhou, was the most horrifying in this entire capital.

The reason why Huicui Pavilion could get him to make a move was firstly because they gave him sufficient payment. Secondly, it was because they had extensive connections and were able to find out where Mister Zhou resided, hence coming to an agreement.

His Majesty was also shocked and slightly disappointed by this. After all, he had also thought of recruiting this middle-aged guest to add more power to the West Desolate.

Coming from the Divine Zhou Continent in the West Desolate, although he was an outcast, he had immense qualifications and power. The West Desolate King, who controlled the nation’s luck, could clearly see this.

The middle-aged guest was someone qualified to try for the King realm!

The middle-aged guest also knew this. However, he did not regret. There was a lady on a sickbed who he needed to rescue. He was bound by ‘love’.

He stepped forwards, closing the rest of the distance in a flash. He appeared right outside the carriage. The middle-aged guest’s face was calm. He did not look guilty nor murderous.

“Protect the general!”

Big Head Wang and the rest of the army from the mine surrounded the carriage. They had been stunned by the fight in front of them and they were all pale as they trembled. But when the middle-aged guest flew over and unsheathed his sword, they all jumped out without hesitating.

They would be lying if they said they were not afraid. But their minds had gone blank and they did not have time to think and reacted instinctively.

Our general cannot die here!

Whether they could defend him and how effective their attacks would be...Big Head Wang did not have time to think. After all, their lives in the army had always been rotten. If they died, it would just be repaying the general for his kindness.

The truth was that they were useless. Though Big Head Wang and the soldiers were not afraid of death, before they could do anything, they were thrown out of the way. They vomited blood and rolled on the floor like harvested carrots. They were in a sorry state but would not lose their lives.

Although the middle-aged guest had left his hometown and become an outcast, he still abided by principles and did not kill wantonly.

Unless it was someone that he intended to kill...gentlemen had things they would do and things they would not do...it actually all depended on his mood.

This sounded like something a bastard would say. However, it was something that Junior Uncle would always say. This caused the elders of the academy to be frustrated, but there was nothing they could do about it.

After all, Junior Uncle was the strongest in the academy and even his teachers acknowledged this.

If Junior Uncle were here today, what would it be like? He would probably not be in a rush to kill but would rather wait for the Imperial Palace to react. He might even force the King realm cultivators in the capital to come out and have a good fight. He would probably be wondering if his sword could cut this entire city in half.

The middle-aged guest's eyes lit up as a hint of disappointment appeared in them. In this life, he would not have the chance to see Junior Uncle take action ever again.

Shaking his head, he pushed away his thoughts. Since he could not compare to Junior Uncle, he should try to kill Qin Yu as fast as possible.

The middle-aged guest looked determined. Lifting his finger, there was a light ray.

His finger was like a sword as he brought it down!

Other than the carriage driver, there was no one left to stop him.

Before his finger fell, a horrifying feeling surged. As it reached people's hearts and minds, their souls were crushed into pieces.

The carriage driver was pale and his face filled with horror. However, in an instant, the fear disappeared and he looked seriously at the finger. The long whip in his hand broke, and within the bamboo handle, there was a hidden sword.

He raised his sword. An intense sword aura erupted from it. The aura rolled and surged into the air like a flooded river.

The middle-aged guest frowned slightly as he looked a bit surprised. He did not expect that this unassuming carriage driver would be such a strong sword cultivator.

But once he moved his finger, there was no turning back. He moved faster, and like lightning, his finger met with the edge of the carriage driver's sword.

The middle-aged guest frowned even harder as his huge robe was blown upwards as if a lot of air was being blown at him. He flew back. He moved extremely gracefully as his long sleeves blew in the wind. He looked like a fairy flying through the night.

As he landed, he looked at the carriage driver. Or rather, he was looking at the short sword in the carriage driver's hand. It was described as short because the length of the sword itself was short. However, the sword intent in it was so immense that it seemed impossibly long.

Simply put, from here to there...it was longer than the sky!

"What is this sword called?"

The carriage driver looked even paler, like a clean sheet of paper. However, his breathing was slow and gentle, "The sword is called Long River. It is from an ancient river and it was refined through a supreme divine way. It is a bit of a humiliation to the sword for me to have inherited it."

The middle-aged guest nodded, agreeing with him. The carriage driver was of a very high cultivation and was one of the most powerful sword cultivators in this world. But he was still considered somewhat unworthy of the sword in his hand.

It was not that he was weak, but that the sword was extremely strong. Especially since it was placed in the West Desolate Imperial Palace and was refined by the nation's luck. After many years of cultivation and refinement, it was as if the sword has been washed and it was now shining.

Having been silent for thousands of years, the sword was drawn today and its sword aura stretched far and wide, with the power to cut the world! It felt as if it could cut even the heavens in half. How could it not be able to bring down a person? After all, no matter how strong middle-aged Mister Zhou was, he was incomparable to the heavens.

"If you were strong enough, I would have died to that strike."

The middle-aged guest turned to leave. He suddenly swayed and numerous cuts and wounds appeared all over his body. Fresh blood spurted out and dyed his wide robe red.

The intense aura, resembling the rising sun, felt as if it had been covered by fog and disappeared completely.

The carriage driver looked on in admiration as he put his hands together in greeting, "I won today because of my sword...Mister Zhou, please be on your way."

Boom boom boom –

The ground started to tremble. It was the Imperial Palace Secret Guards rushing over. The middle-aged guest, who was drenched in blood, would not be able to escape even if he wanted to.

The two Old Four Claws had fed themselves to the pythons. Their body parts were strewn all over.

There was a strong scent of blood in the air.

Big Head Wang and the rest of the mine army that had been thrown out did not die but were badly injured. They struggled to stand as they looked at the scene in front of them.

They never expected that the immensely and impossibly strong middle-aged guest would actually be so badly hurt by a single strike. Or perhaps they were confused as to why they were actually able to survive.

The carriage driver took a deep breath and sighed gently. There was some blood splattered on him. He had sacrificed a lot to activate that one strike. Even though he was a sword cultivator, he was also affected.

If he wanted to recover, he would have to go into seclusion for a while and use up many resources. He turned and knocked lightly on the carriage, "Marquis, the assassin has been dealt with. You can go to court peacefully."

In the carriage, Qin Yu stared at the carriage door. He looked extremely tense and was not at all relaxed. The originally cool white jade was now a burning rock in his palms.

There was nothing in front of him, yet he seemed to be able to see a pair of cold eyes on a respectful face.

The carriage was silent. The carriage driver frowned. He did not know when and where he exposed himself. But since he had been found out, he could only take action.

In the next moment, the carriage door was broken down. The immense power and aura that he had earlier was gone.

The short Long River Sword pierced through the door and aimed for the top of Qin Yu's head. The sword turned pitch black as if containing all the darkness in the world.

So the carriage driver was the last chess piece for today.

The reason why he forced the middle-aged guest to back off was because he knew that although Mister Zhou was powerful, he was not able to kill Qin Yu. It was because Qin Yu held the West Desolate's Marquis Chongwu seal. In this seal, incense power had already been infused.

So when the carriage driver chose to cut off the middle-aged guest, he paid a price. But this price was the nation's luck from the West Desolate. It now regained its original strength and could release the true power of the Long River Sword.

With the falling of the sword, it could cut off the incense!

The Marquis Chongwu seal that Qin Yu was carrying shattered with a 'pak'. The incense power was a formless substance and turned into a bubble.

Under normal circumstances, someone of a Half-King level was needed to defend against the bubble. But in front of the Long River Sword, it was as weak as an actual bubble.

It burst as the sword fell. The blade of the sword did not stop as it approached Qin Yu's head. Even a Ruler would be killed in an instant by the sharp blade of the sword, without any chance of preserving their body or soul.

Ding –

With a soft sound, it was like the blade of the sword hit an iron stone. The carriage driver who wielded it looked shocked.

The energy that rebounded was as strong as a tsunami as it travelled through the sword back into his arm and into his chest. His bones and muscles broke with 'pi pa pi pa' sounds.

The hand holding the sword had turned into bone as all the flesh was torn and evaporated into a blood mist. The carriage driver was thrown backwards. He quickly retrieved a talisman and tore it. He disappeared in an instant.

As for the short Long River Sword, it shattered into many pieces and fell in front of Qin Yu.

However, the sword was no longer sharp but instead became soft like flowing water. The broken pieces fused together.

The sound of killing could be heard from afar. Soon, it was followed by shrieks and the sound of something heavy falling onto the floor.

Qin Yu frowned as he stood on the carriage that had been broken. The two handsome horses that were pulling the carriage had been reduced to lumps of flesh on the ground when the carriage driver had attacked the middle-aged guest.

The Imperial Palace Secret Guards surrounded the middle-aged guest who was attempting to leave and forced him back. Bloods poured out of his wounds non-stop.

After his robe was thoroughly drenched, it started to flow onto the floor. Wherever he stepped, he would leave behind a bloody footprint.

But the middle-aged guest did not fall. Instead he was like a broken water bag, leaking water everywhere. He lifted his hands and sent the Imperial Palace Secret Guard that had dashed up to him flying. The status of the guard remained unknown.

All of a sudden, the middle-aged guest sighed and looked at Qin Yu. He looked extremely exhausted and his eyes were bleak. Yet, he was not scared or indignant. He looked calm but also slightly impatient.

"Marquis Chongwu, I am about to die, but I promised someone that I would go back and see her one last time to give this jade to her. Can you let me leave?"

He lifted up a jade that was completely black. It had been soaked in blood, yet the blood did not seem to stain it at all.

Qin Yu looked at him and nodded, "Okay."

The Imperial Palace Secret Guards hesitated.

Qin Yu said slowly, "I will take responsibility for this." The Secret Guards backed off and the middle-aged guest looked at Qin Yu. He smiled before turning to leave.

Qin Yu watched him as he left, leaving a trail of blood. There was a complicated look in Qin Yu's eyes.

In the face of death, this was probably the strongest cultivator Qin Yu had met.

He was not yet at the King realm, but the gap was probably not that big. A person like that was actually willing to die today.

Taking a deep breath, Qin Yu calmed himself down and jumped off the carriage. He left bloody footprints as he walked forwards.

Chapter 1573 – The Man from Parasol County

Together with the Secret Guards, Marquis Chongwu Ning Qin entered the Imperial Palace. He was covered in blood.

Everyone's attention was on him!

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In a deep and wide alley, there was a brothel that was normally crowded with people and prostitutes. But today, it was completely dark. It was as silent as an abandoned house. No one knew where the ladies that used to stand here to invite guests had gone.

Blood continued to drip from the robe of the middle-aged guest. His face was now extremely pale. A trail of blood was left on the wooden floor of this brothel.

He looked calm. The slight indignance and impatience in his eyes were completely gone and all that was left was peace.

The middle-aged guest did not seem to be surprised by the state of the brothel today. He continued to move quietly. It was obvious he had found the person he was looking for.

Crossing the long hallway, he lifted a hand to push open a door. As the door opened, the light from the room spilled out.

The woman sitting by a round table was the boss of this brothel. But as she looked up, there were no more signs of the flirtation that she had in the past. She looked calm as she stood up to greet him. Her posture and grace were similar to those of a noble lady.

"Huicui Pavilion thanks you, Mister Zhou."

The middle-aged guest looked bland, "I don't care that I am a chess piece in your hands. Though I failed to kill the person, according to our agreement, as long as I take action, it does not matter whether I succeed or not. You have to give the thing to me...as long as I am alive."

There was guilt in the woman's eyes as she spoke even more respectfully, "Mister, you are righteous. I stayed behind for the agreement. I will personally hand it over to you."

A wooden box appeared in her hands. It was completely free of marks and even the opening was not clear.

The middle-aged man could sense the aura in the box as he nodded, "Thank you."

The woman did not dare to accept his thanks and she backed off to the side, presenting the box to him.

The middle-aged guest reached out to take it and left. Bloody footprints were created in the opposite direction and stretched far into the darkness.

The beautiful-looking woman's eyes widened as she looked slightly stunned. In the next moment, a line of blood suddenly appeared on her clean white neck. With a 'bom', her head rolled onto the floor.

She took the risk to stay in the brothel to wait for the middle-aged guest in order to represent Huicui Pavilion and complete the deal with Mister Zhou.

But like the middle-aged guest said, the agreement was built on the basis that he was still alive. This also meant that if he died, the thing in the wooden box could remain in Huicui Pavilion.

The woman never thought of taking it for herself and she would never dare to have such thoughts. However, if she could kill Mister Zhou and retain the wooden box, she would have made a huge accomplishment.

However, the woman never thought that the venom on the surface of the box would be useless against the middle-aged guest.

More importantly, he was severely injured and could die at any moment. Yet, he was able to kill her in the blink of an eye. But according to reports, it was said that the middle-aged guest had lost his divine way when fighting the Imperial Palace Secret Guards.

Did the middle-aged guest intentionally hide his abilities? Or did someone from the brothel want her to die? There were two possibilities, but the woman had no chance to find out the truth.

As the middle-aged guest stepped out of Huicui Pavilion, his eyes darkened even more. Like the last leaf on a tree in autumn, he struggled as he did not want to leave. He struggled in the autumn wind.

He took one step after the other.

He staggered as he reached out to hold onto a screen. The middle-aged guest's breathing finally became disordered, and he chuckled bitterly while he panted.

"Little Zhou, is that you?"

A woman's weak voice could be heard. She sounded anxious and uneasy.

The middle-aged guest took a deep breath and touched the area between his eyebrows. A gust of wind blew around him. He used some kind of divine way and all the severe and horrifying injuries on his body were healed. He looked like he did before, with not a single scar on him. Even the wide robe that was drenched in blood was now perfectly clean.

With a pink complexion and bright eyes, he stepped out and smiled, "It is me."

He walked to the bed and laid down on it, taking the woman into his arms, "Don't worry. I said that I would come back alive to see you. I would not let you down."

The skinny and frail woman had a sickly-looking complexion and she nodded hard.

The middle-aged guest took out a wooden box and placed it on her chest, "I finally found the thing to save you. You just need to sleep, and once you wake up, all the pain will have disappeared."

Lowering his head, he gave her a light kiss. He looked extremely guilty, "Unfortunately, I don't think I can stay with you anymore. This time, the commotion was too big and I did not succeed. I have to leave the capital for the time being and prevent the West Desolate from finding me."

The eyes of the sickly woman widened and her lips moved as if she wanted to say something. However, the wooden box that was placed on her had started to glow. The light wisps flowed into her mouth and nose. It started to work on her body as if fixing a piece of dead wood. An uncontrollable fatigue washed over her.

The middle-aged guest's appearance started to become blurred but his smile was as warm as it always was, "Sleep. I will definitely come back to find you."

As the woman fell asleep, the middle-aged guest lowered his head for a moment. He suddenly started coughing. He lifted his hand to cover his mouth and laid the woman down on the bed.

His footsteps were slightly hasty. After turning round the screen, he stepped into darkness. In the moment that his figure entered the darkness, there was a 'pfft pfft' sound as if water was bubbling out from the top of his head.

.....

In the Main Court Meeting, the West Desolate King was extremely furious. He reprimanded all the guards in the capital severely for the assassination attempt on Marquis Chongwu.

Several high-ranking generals from the Imperial Army had to kneel to seek forgiveness. The lords that were not involved stood and watched, keeping themselves far from it.

The Imperial Army was extremely powerful and had strong control in many areas. The lords were more than happy to watch these high-ranking generals suffer.

But at the same time, many people subconsciously looked at Marquis Chongwu, who stood out even more because of the generals' mistakes.

Although they did not know the details of the assassination attempt, they more or less knew what happened. Even bystanders could sense how scary the entire situation had been and could not help but sweat.

But Marquis Chongqu Ning Qin was perfectly fine. Other than the fact that he looked slightly pale, he appeared completely unharmed.

Horrifying!

In the end, His Majesty outrageously declared that Ye Yuantai, who had recently been appointed as the main general of the Defense Division, would be demoted.

He was from the Later Ye Family and was one of the important chess pieces that they had placed.

His aggressiveness was apparent!

The faces of the various court members changed. Although they knew that the Imperial Clan wanted to punish the Later Ye Family, violent and rash decisions that could cause severe damage to the West Desolate were the worst possible outcome.

Ye Bohu politely asked for forgiveness and expressed that it was his negligence in not being sufficiently strict that caused Ye Yuantai to lose his position. He was willing to be punished by His Majesty.

Sitting high above, His Majesty looked at Ye Bohu. Just when everyone worried that His Majesty would pursue the matter to bring down the Later Ye Family, His Majesty laughed. He asked how Ye Bohu could be held responsible for this small matter given that his family and family's business was so big.

His Majesty ended the matter there and asked Ye Bohu to return to his position.

After that, there was peace in court.

As His Majesty stood up to leave, Ye Bohu suddenly walked up. Everyone's expressions changed and they backed off to the sides.

Since the Old Family Head from the Old Ye Family was not around, he was the highest-ranking and most powerful person in court.

Even though His Majesty was not happy with them and the Later Ye Family was caught in the storm, barely any time had passed and no one dared to underestimate them.

Qin Yu looked up at Ye Bohu. He seemed calm, but Qin Yu could sense the murderous aura in his calm facade.

There was viciousness, like a mountain tiger eyeing its prey.

"Marquis Chongwu, it seems like we have a misunderstanding."

Qin Yu put his hands together, "Marshal Ye, you are too serious. I have always admired the Later Ye Family and even if there are any small issues, it has all been uncovered."

Ye Bohu suddenly smiled, "Uncovered? Interesting choice of word. I like it."

He stepped forwards and patted Qin Yu's shoulder, "We are both from the army. If there is a chance in the future, I would like to get to know you more."

Qin Yu smiled, "Definitely."

Ye Bohu turned and left. He walked away in an impressive manner.

.....

It has been such a long time since something so violent had happened in the capital. A favored court minister went through an assassination attempt on his way to court.

The effects of it spread far and wide and they had to get to the root of the problem. Otherwise, the West Desolate's reputation would be ruined.

The main general of the Defense Division, Ye Yuantai, had been demoted. With a somber face, the generals from the Defense Division placed the entire capital under lockdown.

Huicui Pavilion, which had retreated back into the shadows, was forcefully pulled out into the sun.

Chasing, killing and escaping...a series of things happened and the capital was a lot more chaotic than before.

On a day like this, a middle-aged man held a letter in his hand as he walked past the locked city gate.

He turned and waved to the general guarding the gate. The general paused for a while before breaking out into an earnest and brilliant smile.

The middle-aged man smiled. However, internally he knew that this general's good intentions had gone to waste.

His identity and pouch now were both borrowed. There was no way for him to keep to his promise.

It was not good to lie, but what choice do I have? It is not like I can just stay in the West Desolate and wait to die right?

Tsk tsk!

The middle-aged man pursed his lips as a completely different smile appeared on his face. He continued on until he disappeared from sight.

At the city gate, the general wiped saliva from the corners of his mouth. His complexion was flushed as if he had drunk several jars of wine, and he was swaying.

His confidante looked at him and sneered, "General, all the elders in the Imperial Army are really angry. Lord Ye Yuantai was demoted. If someone finds out that you let him pass, it will be hard to explain."

The general looked at him and chuckled coldly, "You bastards. Are you afraid of getting implicated by me? Hmph! Greedy hypocrites. Without me, how could you have gotten to where you are today?"

His soldiers all knew that the general was cowardly. Hence, he maintained his position as a general at the city gates for so many years and did not get promoted.

Today, he dared to act so brazenly and let the wealthy-looking middle-aged man pass. It meant that he must be confident. The key was most likely in the token that the middle-aged man took out and showed only to the general.

But more importantly, although they had guesses, they felt uneasy. After all, it felt like there was a noose around their neck already and at any moment they would hear a 'kacak' sound and they would fall.

Taking a glance at his subordinates who were smiling superficially at him, the general's mouth twitched as he suppressed the glee in his heart. He exposed a small hint, "What do you all know? That is someone from Parasol County. He can move in and out of even the Imperial Palace freely, let alone our tiny city. Do you think I dare to obstruct him? It is not like I am tired of living!"

Someone from Parasol County who could enter the Imperial Palace freely...they thought of a taboo topic that had been recently brought up. Their expressions changed as they looked at the general earnestly.

Damn it, if you don't get promoted, then how are we to get promoted and become rich?

The general smiled proudly, "Shut your mouths tight. Since you all know that the punishment may cost you your lives, don't talk nonsense."

They all acknowledged his words. The general called for them to come and have a drink. Someone proposed that after today's rotation, they would invite the general for drinks while others mentioned their own sisters at home, nieces...aunts.

The guard smiled appreciatively.

Marquis Chongwu.

He had arrived.

The middle-aged man coughed and looked majestic and impressive. He was about to call to enter.

However, he was suddenly frozen to the spot. There was shock in his eyes.

He felt as if the temperature had suddenly dropped severely and he was sealed in.

Sss –

Sucking in a sharp breath of cold air, the middle-aged man turned to leave. But before he could take a step, he was frozen on the spot and cold sweat dotted his forehead.

He turned with a miserable expression. He seemed to lose all the impressiveness he had earlier, "Okay, I won't go. If you want me to stay here, I will not move."

Very soon, the door opened. The doormen stepped aside respectfully and Rourou walked out. She looked down at the middle-aged man and snorted, "You have guts. Are you not afraid to die?"

The middle-aged man was about to collapse on the ground. He was really going to start crying. He was so upset that tears filled his eyes, "I am sorry, please have mercy!"

Rourou turned and walked back inside, "Come in."

She looked furious. If not for Qin Yu, I would not be bothered with you. I would have squashed you with a finger.

The middle-aged man stumbled as he wiped the tears from his face and chased after her.

However, the way he chased after her was not to run but to roll after her like a ball.

Of course, it looked like he had practiced this before.

The doormen looked at him in amazement. They could not help the admiration that filled their hearts, this was probably the most amazing thing they had seen in their pathetic lives.

The middle-aged man turned back and glared at the doormen. He seemed to be scolding them internally. If not for this amazing ability of his to turn into a dog, how could he have lived until today?

Chapter 1574 – Another Guest at the Mansion

After the court was dismissed, Qin Yu sat in the carriage bestowed to him by the Imperial Palace. He could not help but look at the closed door. The door wouldn't be cut down so brutally again like before right?

That sword was filled with darkness. It did not seem amazing, but it was extremely horrifying.

When it came to inflicting damage, it was much stronger than when it was used against the middle-aged man.

Yet, that sword was not able to hurt Qin Yu in the slightest. He looked down at the white jade that was now cool in his hands. He looked amazed.

A treasure. A precious treasure!

No wonder Rourou had reminded him to return it to her when he returned.

He did not want to!

If it were anyone else, they would have the same feeling after surviving that blade just by holding this white jade.

But thinking about it, Qin Yu knew that there was no way he could keep this.

Moreover, even if Rourou gave it to him...he might not dare to take it.

Rubbing his chin, Qin Yu chuckled as he suppressed his thoughts.

He then looked at the thing in his other hand.

It was a ball that was as clear as water. Yet, it was gelatinous and felt soft and spongy in his hand. However, Qin Yu did not think that it was something he could squish easily.

Because this ball was created after the short Long River Sword broke and fused with his Marquis Chongwu Seal.

This thing had no aura and Qin Yu did not know what it was for. But instinct told him that he should keep it; perhaps it had some special use.

Thankfully, the Imperial Palace did not ask what happened to the short Long River Sword. Perhaps they thought that it had vanished after breaking.

In reality, that was what should have happened. But it just happened to give rise to something with a part of the Marquis Chongwu Seal. Moreover, incense power had been released and was surrounding Qin Yu at that point. A Divine Nation was barely present.

The auras interacted and formed this transparent ball of water.

A curious coincidence or a mysterious heavenly phenomenon.

The journey was smooth and he reached his mansion. It was not that the Later Ye Family gave up on killing him but it was that Ye Bohu had an unspoken agreement with His Majesty.

In the capital, there was only one attempt if you wanted to conduct an assassination. If you failed, you would have to try another method. Otherwise, do you really think the Imperial Palace would take this calmly without flipping? The entire Later Ye Family may just be thrown into chaos and be beheaded.

The driver bowed respectfully when Qin Yu got off the carriage. Qin Yu coughed lightly but his expression was off and this made the driver nervous. He did not know what he did to be frowned upon by the marquis.

The porter informed him that a strange guest had come to the mansion. More importantly, the lady had personally come to greet the guest and invite him in.

After he said 'please go ahead', the porter's expression turned even stranger.

Qin Yu frowned but ignored the porter. When Yun Qing and Yun Die arrived, they were escorted by a servant lady. However, Rourou personally came to greet the guest today. This was definitely strange for her personality and identity.

Who was this person?

He stepped into the mansion and immediately headed for the rear courtyard. He quickly spotted the guest.

He was not familiar to Qin Yu and Qin Yu was sure that they had never met before.

However, Qin Yu's eyes lowered and he felt that the man's aura was weird.

Furthermore, he also realized why the porter said that the guest was strange.

The man was kneeled down on the ground, curled up into a ball with his head tucked in. Rourou sat on his back and casually sipped tea. It felt like this was a scene of a criminal being captured by his master.

"What is going on?"

Qin Yu coughed lightly and sat on the seat beside Rourou.

Rourou smirked coldly, "He is here for you."

The man worked daily to resolve matters. His good days were trampled over.

As he thought about this, he felt strangled and his mood worsened.

Kneeling on the ground, he glanced at Qin Yu and he was immediately startled as his face turned pale.

He thought to himself, 'I, Wang Xuanfeng, lived for so many years and I have seen so many battles. Am I going to die here today?'

He wasn't timid, but Rourou gave him a terrifying feeling.

Not to mention attacking her, it felt like he would be killed if he glanced at her. As such, Wang Xuanfeng had a dark look. It felt like thunder was rumbling in the sky above him and he did not know when a bolt of lightning would strike down and incinerate him.

Qin Yu glanced at him. After he thought carefully, he asked, "Who are you? Why are you looking for me?"

Trembling, Wang Xuanfeng spoke in a timid voice, "I come from the west and I am here for Master Prajna."

Qin Yu suddenly recalled that Great Shaman Mengshan had used his disciple to ask him for help before he left the Barbarian Clan.

Could it be for this man?

Wang Xuanfeng immediately waved his hand dismissively and gulped, "It is not me, not for me..." He hesitantly glanced at his surroundings.

Qin Yu knew that this was an important matter and he stared at Rourou. She did not give him any signals and he immediately felt more at ease. Smiling, he said, "Don't worry, this place is safe."

Hmph!

Rourou scoffed.

He owed her once for saving his life and now he was going to trouble her again. He was truly shameless.

Qin Yu coughed again and he pretended not to notice her glare.

Wang Xuanfeng took out a jade box that had a yellow talisman pasted on it from his waistband. Perhaps the jade box had been hidden for a long time but there were burnt marks on the yellow talisman. The black marks made it look like the box had been burnt before.

He carried the jade box carefully and offered it to Qin Yu, "My lord, this is a tuft of hair from that one. Could you please look at it?"

Rourou glanced at the jade box and suddenly laughed coldly. She stood up and left.

Qin Yu's expression became awkward and he looked at Wang Xuanfeng and instructed, "Wait here and don't move around." He took the jade box and hurried to catch up to Rourou.

Rourou walked briskly and Qin Yu chased after her. His expression was still strange and he smiled bitterly, not knowing how to speak.

The servant ladies and other slaves they encountered along the way quickly made for them. The lady seemed angry and the marquis was timidly hurrying after her.

Who didn't know about the assassination attempt against their marquis? Although they did not know the implications about the assassination, they could sense the gazes coming from every mansion surrounding them. These gazes were filled with respect and fear.

This only came recently. Even when the marquis was granted his title, the gazes were only filled with jealousy. Evidently, after the assassination attempt, the marquis was more powerful in the capital than before.

However, when this powerful marquis return to his manor, he would have to bear the brunt of his lady's anger. Who could have imagined this?

The servant ladies gave up their fantasies completely!

When she returned to her living quarters, Rourou's anger had not been resolved yet. She pushed aside the people in her way, quickly poured herself a cup of tea, and gulped it down.

Qin Yu gave a long sigh, "With Great Shaman Mengshan's status, he would not ask for a favor so casually. But since he did, this must be a grave matter. As such, I really hope that you will be able to help him again this time. After all, I cannot fake my identity now."

He looked at Rourou. Before she replied, his expression darkened and his voice deepened, "If you are really not willing to, then..."

His words came out slower and he did not finish his sentence before he stopped.

Rourou smirked, "Continue. Why did you stop speaking? I want to hear more."

Qin Yu turned and sat down, "I know that this is not reasonable of me. But what can I do so that you will help me?"

Rourou scoffed, "Little Qin Yu, you are really starting to disrespect me. Do you think that I will not do anything to you?"

Qin Yu replied, "I would not dare to. I am being sincere. As long as you ask me, I will definitely agree to your request if I can do it and make you satisfied. After all, we are considered close right?"

Rourou shot him a glance and then slowly turned back. She stretched an arm forward and said, "Give it to me."

Qin Yu coughed, "What?"

"Stop acting dumb. Return that white jade I gave you."

"This...oh, I believe that the Later Ye Family will not give up. Maybe they will try to pull something again..."

Rourou stared at him blankly but her lips were curled into a smirk. It looked like she was saying, 'If I believe a single word, I am a loser.'

Qin Yu laughed bitterly, "Is there no room for negotiation?"

"Give it back!"

Things ought to be returned to their original owners and Qin Yu had to know when to push and pull in his requests. Since Rourou was so relentless with this, he would be stupid to disobey her.

Qin Yu took the item out and gave it back to her with two hands. He did not forget to say his thanks.

Rourou put the white jade away. Her expression was dark and she said, "I am glad that you know how much you owe me. Let me tell you, there isn't anyone in this world who has not repaid their debt to me."

Qin Yu frowned, "You really can't help?"

The white jade was a side issue. This was the real matter.

Rourou glanced at the box in Qin Yu's hands. Her face fell again and she waved her hand dismissively, "Go go go, you keep finding me things to do everyday. I do have a condition though. If you don't agree to it, I will never help you even if the world flips upside down."

After a while, Qin Yu left the room with a frown. Once he was outside, he turned back with a bitter smile on his face. He did not understand the reason for Rourou's actions. This condition was so strange!

He shook his head and left. Wang Xuanfeng was very obedient and he stayed at his spot in the guest house, still kneeling down in a corner with his head tucked under his arms.

Qin Yu gestured with his hand, "Stand up and speak."

Wang Xuanfeng's face lit up, but before could celebrate, a thought jumped to his mind and he kneeled back down. He spoke timidly, "I will just speak like this."

He must have been really frightened; who knew what Rourou did to him just now. Qin Yu could not be bothered with that. If he was willing to kneel, then he could just kneel. Qin Yu got straight to the point, "I can help you, but on one condition."

.....

Wang Xuanfeng's expression was as white as a sheet when he walked out of the marquis' mansion. His vision blurred and he felt like he could see himself getting beheaded from just conveying this message.

How pitiful!

Oh heavens, why do these things always fall upon me? What did I do wrong? Is it too late to make up for it?

Wang Xuanfeng was utterly devastated and felt incredibly wronged. He hurried to leave the capital and headed straight for the Teleportation Portal.

Even though he knew that he may end up in an even more pitiful state, he did not dare to delay after receiving Qin Yu's answer.

.....

Long Horn Alley was one alley among hundreds of thousand other ordinary ones in the capital. No one knew why it was called this however.

Either way, the men who lived here did not feel that they were outstanding in any way because of this name.

However, there was one point that was indisputable. Long Horn Alley was truly long, and it linked two districts in the city.

A few years ago, an odd family moved to the alley. After they moved in, they lived their lives in seclusion.

Aside from the day that they moved in, no one saw what the family looked like. The master seemed to be a sick lady. People's impression of her was vague, but those who saw her said that she was a beauty.

Her man seemed dignified and was like a scholar. The boss lady of the wine house on the alley was attracted to him.

However, it was a pity that after that day, no one saw them. Many people felt that it was a shame that the beauty and the man no longer appeared.

In the beginning, the neighbors gossiped about them. But as time passed, no one bothered about them anymore.

After all, days passed and people had to carry on with their lives and not be hung up on the past. Also, in the world of cultivators, many strange things happened. As long as they lived peacefully and were not dragged into incidents, they did not need to be busybodies.

Of course, the reason why the people living along the alley were relaxed was because they were official residents of the Imperial Capital. No one would dare to cause havoc here.

The boss lady of the winehouse was also a cultivator. Although her cultivation realm was not high, she had a charming middle-aged lady look.

She leaned lazily against the chair. A few drunkards were staring at her but she was used to this. It was hard for women to earn money here; letting them stare at her and her chest was not that hard.

'Squeak' a soft sound echoed through the air. The drunkard next to her was talking about the assassination attempt from the previous day in a dramatic manner. It felt even more descriptive than if he experienced it himself.

The boss lady was not paying attention to him. However, she felt that the sound of the door opening was strange. Everyone here were regulars who lived along this street. After living here for so long, she was sharp in noticing changes in her surroundings.

She turned around and saw that the door of the family that had been closely shut for many years had been opened.

A lady wearing a veil hat walked out. Although her face was covered, her beauty could be seen.

It was unbelievable that someone with such looks existed in this world and the boss lady suddenly felt jealous. This was especially so since all the passionate looks that were on her just a second ago were diverted away.

Gulp –

Someone swallowed their saliva!

The lady who walked out raised an arm to block her eyes as though she hadn't seen the nine suns above her for a very long time.

Right at that moment, the boss lady's eyes brightened. She noticed the few foreign faces along the alley.

She had accumulated much knowledge after all these years but kept a low profile. Was their target this lady?

Very quickly, a disappointed look washed over the boss lady's face. Although the lady was stopped by a few men, the lady simply said a few sentences as she pointed to the courtyard behind her. The men cupped their hands together and bowed before they backed off.

They looked like they were being respectful.

The lady turned and left. After a few steps, she suddenly whipped her head around and met the boss lady's glance. Her smile was like a hundred flowers had instantly bloomed and it felt out of this world.

However, the boss lady felt as though a bucket of cold water had been poured on her, causing her to shiver all over.

She hurriedly lowered her head and her complexion was as white as snow. It was almost as if she was gravely ill.

Chapter 1575 – Young Ancestor

The great river was naturally formed and it felt like a tree in the middle of colorful clouds. It could be considered the heavens above the heavens. This sentence was applicable to the southwest area of the West Desolate. It was a place blessed with thick spiritual energy of the world, known as Parasol County.

Although it was a territory that was deep within the empire, the West Desolate could not interfere with the internal matters of Parasol County. This was because Parasol County's jurisdiction was already assigned to another family when the empire was first established. Putting it simply, it was a country within a country.

In the beginning, the elites, sects, and even the local residents of the county felt uneasy. It was a simple logic: how can someone else sleep soundly on your own bed?

Not to mention just the bed, it felt like someone had barged into the room, invited themselves to the family feast, and demanded ownership of the place. No one else could touch the food on the table.

This was arrogance!

What could they do against the empire of the West Desolate? Even though the empire was just established and the priority was to keep things stable, when things became stable, the empire would return for payment. This was a proven fact in history.

Some tried to move with their family and a famous faction even decided to abandon the land chosen by their ancestors to move to Ashen River County. The lord of Parasol County chose to turn a blind eye to all the movement.

However, years passed and Parasol County was still doing well. The empire did not send men to demand payment from the county again. Most importantly, the parasol tree in Parasol County turned into a spiritual tree that touched the clouds. No one knew the reason why it became like this, but the tree attracted the sea of spiritual energy above the heavens. A great river of energy was formed and it flowed into the county.

As such, the ordinary county turned into a Holy Land fit for cultivation in the blink of an eye. With the coming of spiritual energy of the world into the county, it started to flourish. Many counties beside it grew green with envy as they looked at it.

The people who left wanted to return. This time however, the county governor was not as forgiving, and he turned all of them away without any exceptions.

One powerful sect tried to scheme to get in, relying on its strength and background. However, the big mansion that occupied half the city showed its power with a brilliant sword flash in the air. One day later, news spread that the ancestral hall of that sect was sliced in half by someone. The most powerful elder of the sect, whose cultivation was deep and mysterious, had been turned into a wastrel.

Back then, that sect's power was not as weak as it was now. They continued to protest about it but the capital remained silent. This silence was sufficient enough to show its attitude. Parasol County made no exceptions and cared not about the details, and this matter came to a close in the end.

Afterwards, there was peace in Parasol County. No one provoked the big mansion in the county. The county that was now shaded by the colorful clouds in the sky became a Holy Land of the world. Everyone respected it and no one dared to violate it.

This was the Imperial Li Family of the Zhou Empire.

The reason why they were associated with the empire was because they were a branch of the current emperor's family. Everyone in the family who was a direct successor to the throne had the surname Li, and the current emperor, who controlled the empire, was no exception to this.

For such a powerful family, who would make qualms about how big their mansion was? No one challenged them.

Today, the river of spiritual energy and colorful clouds were above the Li Family's manor. Two important guests had arrived.

Every male of the family, regardless of whether they were old ancestors or a three year old child who just began to walk, were called into the ancestral hall. They bowed respectfully to the young man and woman on the main seats.

They were considered young because of their appearance. The man wore a long robe and his face was as bright as jade. His eyes were also stern and it looked like he would learn everything about someone with a simple glance. The lady beside him was tall; her legs were long and with one look, she could see

through one's soul. Her eyes were not arrogant but they seemed powerful. She wore a slight smile that lured people to her.

Appearances were not representative of their ages. Old people who had high cultivation could maintain a youthful appearance. However, in the ancestral hall, there were many men who were older than them. The man remained expressionless as he bore the pressure. However, there was a helpless look on the lady's face.

"Alright, please rise. I have not gone out yet. You bunch of old and young folks are all kneeled on the ground, I feel so old myself."

The woman blinked her eyes and smiled.

Many in the ancestral hall heaved a sigh of relief and they smiled. The Li Family had complicated roots that stretched deep within the West Desolate. It might seem like an honorable trip for people to leave the Divine Central Desolate. However, the main family was not confident at all.

Furthermore, the two people were still young but had high statuses. Their parents were bored from cultivation and they spent their time grooming them. Of course, these two individuals were born with a lot of talent. After some cultivation, they had already surpassed many in their same generation.

Perhaps there might be some who were stronger than them in cultivation sense. However, if they battled, they would be killed by the two on the spot within five blows. The reason why was twofold. Cultivation skills and divine ways were the first reason. The second was that they had a lot of treasures.

The sword in the man's hand and the simple-looking white hairpin on the girl's head. If one took a closer look at these two items, pain would shoot through their eyes and they would cry. They could only take the opportunity to express how in awe they were of the two individuals and hide themselves behind their tears.

"Thank you Young Ancestors." With the lead of a few Old Ancestors, the group bowed and expressed their thanks. Then, they all rose.

The man held his sword and calmly said, "Alright, since we have met, the unrelated people may leave first. The more complicated it is, the more I will get a headache." His tone was impatient and the Li Family in Parasol County did not dare to show any dissatisfaction. They led the younger generation of men out of the ancestral hall.

Finally, the people who remained were the family head of the Li Family and three Old Ancestors who often secluded themselves to cultivate.

The one with the weakest cultivation was an individual who became a Ruler many years ago.

Li Chenghao bowed respectfully, "Young Ancestors, after the order from the main family of the Central Desolate, we assigned men to investigate the West Desolate secretly. We had a few finds before you two arrived. But after careful screening, they did not meet the requirements."

The man scoffed, "After saying so much, isn't it that you did not have any gains? If you have so many thoughts, why don't you channel your energy to cultivate. It isn't right for you to work hard here when you are so old."

Li Chenghao jumped in surprise and he felt like he had been seen through. He wiped his forehead and apologized profusely.

The three Old Ancestors of the Li Family stared at Li Chenghao with dissatisfaction and a look of warning. It was a great opportunity for them now that the main family from the Central Desolate sent men here. Nothing could go wrong. The family head who held power for the Li Family started to break out in cold sweat and his face turned pale. However, his expression remained stern.

The lady wearing the white jade hairpin finally smiled and said, "Alright, Li Ge, stop bullying others and keep that fighting intent."

"Hmmp!" Li Ge closed his eyes and the invisible sword force around Li Chenghao instantly vanished.

Li Chenghao wiped his head and bowed to the lady, "Thank you Lady Hua."

Li Ge's lips twitched and he opened his eyes slightly to glare at Li Chenghao. Li Chenghao was so daring.

Li Ruhua's smile was charming as she looked at Li Chenghao. His face was filled with appreciation. She said, "My name was given to me by my parents. I don't like it, but I didn't have a choice. In the future, call me Second Miss."

Li Chenghao felt uneasy and he started sweating like a river again. As he wiped his sweat, he urgently nodded while still feeling suffocated. Ruhua was such a nice name so the young miss' actions were really puzzling.

Suddenly, Li Ge's eyes flung open. He coughed lightly and said, "Let's discuss official things."

Li Ruhua smiled and her eyes curled up, "The new king of the Barbarian Clan has appeared. Somehow, he broke through thirteen layers of locks and has disappeared off the face of the earth. Since that is the case, it will not be easy to find him. Family Head, Chenghao did not have any finds but this is actually to be expected. However, if you really do find him, we have to very careful. It might just be a scheme that the Barbarian Clan purposely crafted for us."

Li Chenghao nodded. The main family rarely had kind people, but he felt that Miss Ruhua was kind and understanding. However, he did not know that he almost 'lit himself on fire' just now.

"Although the thirteenth floor lock was covered up, it gave away his general direction." Li Ge swept his sleeve aside and streaks of sword force rushed out into the air. They interchanged and morphed into an intricate map that was so detailed, it even showed the way from the mountains and rivers to the city.

Li Ge casually drew a circle that enclosed the West Desolate and a big portion of the western territory in it, "This is why Second Miss and I came here."

Second Miss nodded, "However, we can't determine whether the person who covered up the tracks did it on purpose. As such, there are people heading to the north, east, and south areas too. Of course, they are not from the Li Family."

One of the Old Ancestors of Parasol County frowned slightly. He asked, "Young Ancestors, could this be a test too?"

Li Ge's expression turned hostile, "Of course, anyone who finds the new Barbarian King will get a chance to get to the thirteenth floor."

A deep passionate look crossed his eyes, "As such, if you can successfully help us find the Barbarian King, anything you wish will be fulfilled. I can even ask the Family Head to give you a chance to send a portion of your clansmen to the Central Desolate."

Li Chenghao and the three Old Ancestors lit up and they cried, "Young Ancestors, don't worry, the Li Family will do its best!"

.....

The woman wearing a veil who came out from the alley attracted a lot of eyes. People stared at her with desire and their passion was burning like a fire that wanted to devour her alive.

She was not angry, and sometimes she would even return their gazes. Her eyes gave them her reply and they would start panting as their eyes turned red.

"Ah!"

A scream suddenly emerged from one of the wine taverns along the street. A rich young man admiring the beauty had been leaning against the window. His hands flew to cover his eyes that had blood streaming down from them. The air that the blood touched would start giving off steam from the heat.

Bright flames enveloped the rich young man and the guards surrounding him turned as white as a sheet. However, the fire was too strong and fierce. Its power was immense and before they could react, the flames died down.

A pile of bones that was like polished porcelain fell to the ground with a 'clang'.

"Young master!"

The guards cried in horror as their eyes turned red.

Of course they did not suffer because they were staring at the beauty. The death of the young master meant that his guards would be dragged to their deaths too.

"Was it that lady?"

"Capture her!"

Shoosh –

Shoosh –

Ear-piercing shouts came as the guards rushed out of the window and landed on the ground. They scanned their surroundings but they saw no sign of that woman.

She was like a shadow that had suddenly disappeared.

At a stone bridge located a few hundred meters away from this long alley, a figure appeared. Once light fell upon the figure, it was revealed that this figure was indeed the beautiful lady wearing a veil.

Chapter 1576 – Incense Child

Anywhere that there was light on this earth would have dark shadows too.

Even the capital of the West Desolate, which was known as the most bustling and lively city in the area, also had a lot of dark secrets hiding in corners.

Many homeless people in disheveled clothes used a stone bridge as a shelter. There were men and women and there was a detestful smell in the air that made people wrinkle their noses involuntarily.

The appearance of the veiled lady here felt like a breath of fresh air and many were attracted to her. Some women were jealous and envious of her while the men were greedy and passionate after their initial shock.

Their adam's apples bobbed up and down. Suddenly, there was a rumble. Someone swallowed their saliva and it acted as a signal to the rest.

Someone stood up with a fierce look in his eyes and he scanned the other men. A deep laughter emerged. The man wore scruffy clothes but his attire was considered good in terms of the standard here. He was also burly and his eyes were burning fiercely.

Unexpectedly, the veiled lady walked towards him, making him momentarily stunned. He smiled warmly, "Since you understand the situation here, I can help you and make this smoother for you. I may even escort you out later."

He reached forward to grab onto her veil, wanting to take it down and see her beauty. His actions were smooth but the moment he peeled off a corner of her veil, he licked his lips and his eyes bulged wide open.

No one knew what he saw, but he froze and looked like a wooden stick. With a 'thud', he fell to the ground.

His aura was gone and he was as still as a corpse. Obviously, he was already dead and he could not die again.

The veiled lady paused in her tracks and glanced at the body. There was a complicated look in her sad eyes.

Without hesitation, she stepped over the man's corpse and continued towards the hole in the bridge.

This time, no one dared to look at the lady anymore. Everyone who lived here kept their heads as low as possible and dared not make any sound.

The veiled lady stopped only when she was deep under the bridge. The pungent smell in the air was piercing. There was also a thick rotten smell that felt never ending.

Around seven or eight dead bodies were piled over each other. Some of the bodies were so decayed that more than half of the bones were gone. Others had died recently and the bloodstains were still there.

The lady stretched out her hand and pushed aside the first two bodies at the top. Then, she stared blankly at one of the corpses in front of her.

Wounds were all over every inch of flesh on this corpse. Looking at it from the top of its head to the bottom of its feet, every piece of flesh had been vandalized.

All the blood had been sapped out of the body through these wounds and the revealed muscles and bones were a pale white color.

The long robe the corpse originally wore was torn away by someone else, revealing his state. No matter how hard the veiled lady looked at this corpse, she could not see the elegance and gratefulness that this man had in the past.

However, she knew that this body was his.

She thought that she would not feel sad and she only wanted to confirm his end with his body.

But, she realized she was wrong. Her heart pounded strongly like it was whipping her face and asking her if she was regretful.

Bang –

Bang –

Clear heartbeats reverberated from this woman's chest and her body started shaking. Her violent heartbeats echoed through the bridge and every living person there had a painful expression.

There was fear in their eyes and they desperately wanted to run. However, all their energy seemed to have been sapped out of them and they could not move.

Blood started to gush out of their eyes, noses and mouths. Soon, blood was seeping out of their skin pores and they were mummified in the blink of an eye. There was still fear and desperation in their expressions, but after all the blood and water in their bodies were sapped away, they became mummies.

“Ah!”

A scream came from the woman.

Flames burst through and surrounded the entire stone bridge. As scorching heat flooded the air, a fox's body could be vaguely made out.

One after another, tails appeared behind the fox. Energy surged into the air and the aura was superb!

.....

Marquis Chongwu Residence.

Rourou's eyebrows suddenly lifted and she looked in the direction where there was blazing fire in the air.

“Eight tails...no, it is going to transform. Hehe, how hidden.”

She looked at it more intently with glimmers in her eyes that were speedily shifting.

“Hehehe, how pitiful and how laughable. Is the Demon Clan that pathetic now? This should be the golden chance in its life but it is going crazy after its completion.”

Her eyebrows were raised and she pouted. Her face was full of dissatisfaction.

However, the nine-tailed fox’s Demon Elixir was a delicacy because they stole secrets from others to go through many calamities. They could be said to be all encompassing.

Rourou felt greed for a moment but she soon let out a long sigh and helplessness filled her face. If she fought with the nine-tailed fox in her current circumstances, she would expose herself. Then, she would be chased back and it would be troublesome to descend again.

Without any choice, she had to withhold her greed for the nine-tailed fox’s Demon Elixir. She couldn’t eat it...not to worry, she could think of another solution in the future or devour a few other elixirs to make up for this.

Mm, three, she needed at least three elixirs to make up for this. She wants to be filled!

Rourou closed her eyes, hoping that not seeing it would make it less tormenting for her.

.....

After the incident with Marquis Hou in Huicui Pavilion, another nine-tailed fox appeared in the capital. Not only did it burn down a stone bridge, it also burnt through a large part of the city, ruining it. Many were injured and dead.

This humiliated the Defense Division in the capital and they were slapped left and right. It was also a challenge to the capital of the West Desolate.

If they could not deliver a good result, the Defense Division of the capital would suffer the rage of the military.

However, after fire shot into the sky, there was a flash of the fox’s shadow before it disappeared. Even after experts of the military were deployed, they could not find a trace of the fox.

It was almost as if it had evaporated into thin air.

.....

Imperial Palace.

Behind the curtain, the emperor wore a stern look.

“It is the nine-tailed fox.”

Seated on the throne, he could sense everything that happened in the capital.

Even if there was only a flash of the fox’s shadow before it disappeared, he sensed it.

Below the throne, Lord Chengtian and a few other ministers of the court frowned deeply.

Living creatures in the world could cultivate, and this included various demons. The Fox Clan was one of them.

However, the nine-tailed fox was different. It represented the peak of demonic cultivation and it had great Divine Ways.

Because of the natural laws of the world, the strongest demon clans came from the Divine Central Desolate region. It was hard for any creature to be born around its borders and hence, the nine-tailed fox came from the Central Desolate.

It was not known when this demon infiltrated the capital. What was the reason for its sudden reveal?

The emperor sighed a long breath and suddenly said, "Lord Chengtian, have there been any disturbances in Parasol County?"

The Li Family enjoyed wealth and peace but it was already being monitored by the capital since a long time ago. It could be considered a shock, or the Li Family knew about this already but chose to remain silent.

Lord Chengtian bowed, "Your Majesty, there was an urgent report regarding them yesterday. All males of the Li Family in Parasol County gathered at their ancestral hall yesterday. We could not investigate further because of the distance, but based on what we gathered from later events, two Young Ancestors descended to the Li Family. If we are not wrong, they are from the Li Family of the Central Desolate."

Behind the curtains, the emperor drummed his fingers against a table. Li Family men from the Central Desolate descended to Parasol County and then the nine-tailed fox appeared. Could these two events be related?

He suddenly thought of a top secret report from an investigation. Recently, there had been disturbances on the thirteenth floor of the Holy Land of the Central Desolate. Major clans responded to the disturbances but they could not find out the reason for it. Could all of this be related?

"Investigate! Find the nine-tailed fox. Regardless of where it came from, it has to pay for wreaking havoc in the capital of the West Desolate."

"Yes, Your Majesty!"

.....

Qin Yu wore a strange look as he stared at the 'ball of clearwater' in his hands. If his senses weren't wrong, this thing was currently absorbing incense power.

He focused his attention to it and realized that there was a silhouette of a person slowly forming. This person was smiling as he sat down cross-legged.

Despite how blurry the figure was, Qin Yu felt like this man was looking back at him, though he was not sure if he was imagining it.

Thin streaks of incense power were gathering to the man and it made his figure become clearer with each second.

Qin Yu did not know the reason for this phenomenon. If he did not have a half-constructed Divine Nation, he would not have taken note of this.

He slowly frowned as he continued staring at the person visible in the 'ball of clearwater'. Qin Yu had no idea whether this was a good or bad thing.

When he encountered problems, he could ask Rourou.

However, before he stood up, he heard a cold laughter, "I am the first one you think of when you encounter an issue. Qin Yu, should I praise you for being smart or scold you for being daring?"

Rourou had entered the room, unbeknownst to Qin Yu. She raised a finger and pointed to herself, "I am a mysterious being from space time and my strength is deep and mysterious. My cultivation realm is also strange and wondrous. When I descend to the world, I strike spiritual contracts with living beings to complete deals..."

Qin Yu stared at her, "So, you are praising yourself now?"

She was suddenly cut off and she gritted her teeth and snapped, "Shut up!"

She shot him a glare and her lips quivered. However, she remained silent.

In fact, she was slightly worried. When she possessed this young lady's body after she descended to the world, it seemed like she was accumulating karma for herself.

However, when she focused herself to sense things, she could not find anything...although great beings could not be fathomed, this was the first time she felt uneasy and ignorant.

What went wrong?

As this thought flashed through her head, Rourou sat down and grabbed the 'ball of clearwater' in Qin Yu's hand. It flew into her palms in a swift motion.

"Although, I get irritated by you, Qin Yu, your luck is quite good. You actually refined this thing with the right opportunity."

Rourou pressed her fingers together strongly and molded the 'ball of clearwater'. The incense person in it seemed to have been frightened and he screamed.

"Shut up!"

The screams immediately stopped.

Evidently, the person was terrified of Rourou. Rourou glanced sideways at Qin Yu. Her meaning was obvious – you are not as obedient as this small man.

Qin Yu's expression was calm and he asked, "What is this?"

Rourou explained, "Incense power is a sort of belief. The Divine Nation you built...mm, you can consider it half-made but it is still a far cry from the real Incense Great Dao. It is understandable that you do not know about this.

“This man is called the Incense Child. It is a spirit born occasionally in the cultivation of Incense Great Dao. This thing can help its master to absorb incense power from the world. It is similar to an entity outside the body of a cultivator and it can speed up the absorption of incense power.”

Although Rourou’s tone was calm, Qin Yu could sense oddities in her words. He asked, “Is it very valuable?”

Rourou’s lips quivered but she eventually nodded. “It can be considered so. Once cultivators start to cultivate Incense Great Dao, they would be hungry for this. Of course, not every Incense Child will be attractive to buyers. You will naturally learn about this in time.”

She looked at Qin Yu and threw aside the ‘ball of clearwater’ casually. “Do you want to consider a deal? If you hand this little guy over, I can consider waiving some of the debt you have accumulated.”

Qin Yu stared at her silently.

Rourou coughed slightly, “Thirty percent.”

Qin Yu continued to remain silent.

Rourou gritted her teeth, “Half. This is the best I can give you. No one will be willing to give you a higher price than me no matter where you go!”

Chapter 1577 – Scholar

Li Ruhua was silent.

Holding his sword, Li Ge suddenly said, “Isn’t Seascap City one of the 108 cities of the West Desolate?”

Li Chenghao nodded, “That’s right, it is exactly as you said.”

Li Ge glanced at the silent Li Ruhua beside him. He gently flicked his fingers, “A nine-tailed fox recently appeared in the capital of the West Desolate and a disciple died in Seascap City. Could there be a connection between these events?”

Li Chenghao was focused and he stared closely at the Young Ancestor of the Li Family. Where did this logic come from?

Of course, he could only make casual comments but he did not dare to refute the Young Ancestor. In the end, he could only praise the Young Ancestor for being intelligent and creative.

Li Ge glanced over, “What do you think?”

Li Ruhua nodded, “Although it was only a young junior of the Li Family in Parasol County, he was still a descendant of the Li Family. His death must be justified.”

The two Young Ancestors wanted to avenge the young brat, Li Cangzhou. There was no reason for the Li Family in Parasol County to reject it.

After he bowed, he left to arrange things. A long while later, Li Chenghao’s expression finally returned to normal.

He knew his value in front of the two Young Ancestors. If he was killed, they would not bat an eyelid. Vengeance for Li Cangzhou? There was definitely another reason for this.

Once Li Ge returned to his living quarters, he flicked the handle of his sword and a soft hum started to play from the sword. Numerous streaks of sword energy flew out and encircled the two of them.

He turned around and frowned, "You have a feeling about the death of the junior from the Li Family of Parasol County?"

Li Ruhua nodded but a hint of hesitation crossed her face before she shook her head, "I have a vague feeling but it is not very clear. It feels like the reflection of the moon in a lake...somehow, it feels like it is always changing and dispersing."

Li Ge's expression turned calm, "Then we have to hurry. No wonder you are in a rush. We won't have time if we try to cover things up."

Li Ruhua answered, "The Li Family of Parasol County was exiled in the past and they must still hold grudges over that. However, they aren't foolish and they will know what to do. Until we find the Barbarian King, we can temporarily trust them."

Li Ge nodded, "If you say they can be trusted, then there shan't be a problem." He suddenly chuckled, "I can't believe a nine-tailed fox appeared in the capital of the West Desolate. Through this incident, I might even be able to buy her over. It will be really pleasant if I can enjoy my future days."

Glancing at him, Li Ruhua said, "The fox demon is still a demon. Although it is rumored that she is very pretty, a demon will always eat men."

.....

There was a big stone by a small river bend. Through the constant grinding of the currents, its surface had been polished cleanly and there weren't any spots where rough edges were revealed.

A scholar held a shabby scroll in his hand. It was so battered and old but it still held its shape. Occasionally, the scholar would shake his head and mumble to himself. It seemed as though the scripture in the scroll was truly wondrous.

All of a sudden, there was a 'boom'. It sounded as if thunder had rumbled deep in the earth. It also felt like a great creature that had been in a slumber for a long time had finally woken up. It started to throw a tantrum the moment it woke up.

The meandering river in front of the scholar suddenly turned into a violent beast. Water gushed out of the earth and shot into the air like pillars. In an instant, the stream had turned into a great river.

Strong currents from the river whipped away all the stones nearby. Those which weren't strong enough tumbled away violently.

Yet, the big stone beneath the scholar remained unmoving. He finally finished reading the scroll and he wrapped it up in satisfaction. After casually securing it to his waistband, he stood up and looked at the roaring river before him. It felt like it was having an outburst and its deafening roars shook the sky.

“Stop making a ruckus. What is the use in hiding in the water? Since I am here, you will eventually be struck by a sword. Why don’t you show yourself quickly? Firstly, you won’t miss the hour. Secondly, I will also be able to leave here early and find a place to eat.”

The scholar patted his tummy, “Look at this, it is flat.”

The roars from the river sounded more ferocious and wild currents crashed over the river banks.

As though the scholar heard something, he smiled, “You feel wronged? The academy doesn’t care about that. It is merely retribution.”

“Oh, you claim you are not related to it and you don’t know anything...I know that, but so what? Demons are a family. Which ancient demon king said this in the past? Although I can’t remember who it was, these words are very wise. Since you are all a family, there isn’t an issue with looking for you.”

The river continued to protest but there wasn’t any consciousness. Evidently, the great demon who hid in the river and endured hardships just to wait for the day when it broke through felt at a loss for words...the alternative was that it was so scared, it was speechless.

The scholar shook his head and wore a helpless look, “All you great demons are strong, but you are much less daring than your ancestors. The scrolls say that you guys almost became the masters of this world. How glorious that would have been.”

The great demon in the water remained silent and pretended to be ignorant. It would rather miss the hour of opportunity than reveal itself.

The scholar sighed, “If that is the case, then I can only put in some effort. But you had better think of the consequences carefully.”

There wasn’t a reply and the scholar stood up and tidied his sleeves. Without seeming to have moved, a flash of sword light zipped through the air and sliced through the river.

Instantly, the river seemed to have paused and there was complete silence. In the next instant, it was split into two right where the sword flash went.

A big corpse of a fish appeared. It was large and spanned a few thousand feet long. Its scales reflected the light from the sun and it carried a rich aura where its scales reflected brilliantly. At the edge of its mouth, two long whiskers grew out and there appeared to be a pair of horns on its head.

Looking at it, it felt like it was almost going to become a dragon. If it broke through successfully, it would have transformed into a dragon.

A new great demon would have appeared on the divine plane of the Central Desolate a few years later.

However, at the last step before it could transform into a dragon, someone cut the river in half and killed it.

The scholar shook his head, “Why did you protest? You made me expend my energy.”

He jumped off the stone but did not enter the water. As the great demon was killed, the river also disappeared and it returned to its original form of a small stream. With that, a foot-long golden fish floated to the surface of the water.

Somehow, the scholar retrieved a black wooden rod. He moved skillfully as he stuck the rod into the river and pierced through the fish from its mouth to its tail. As he lifted the fish up, he chuckled to himself, "Tasty, tasty."

Cooking the fish on a real fire with oil created a deep fragrance.

Many eyes started to gather towards him from all directions. There was silence in the world and even the wind stopped. There was fear in the air and it felt like the world itself was afraid that it would be smashed into pieces in the next instant.

The scholar picked up the gourd that hung from his waistband. He tilted his head and drank it. Then, he scanned his surroundings and said, "Do you want to eat too? Come over, you won't achieve anything by being so far away."

No one replied and the air felt even more silent.

The scholar shook his head and smiled, "If you guys aren't going to move, then I will help myself." He lifted the wooden rod and directed the meat into his mouth. He gulped down the food, "People say that dragon meat is really good. They weren't exaggerating."

With one bite, he savored the juicy meat. Fragrance exploded from it and wafted into his nose.

Instantly, anger and annoyance started to fill the eyes that were staring at him from all directions...there was undeniable greed and want from them.

The scholar continued to eat and drink by himself. He ate until his mouth was completely filled, and then, he lifted his finger and pointed around him, "You guys are so fake. You obviously want to eat each other but still call each other family. How laughable."

He was answered by silence again and no one dared to take action. They did not even dare to vent their anger nor let any aura be revealed in fear that they would be locked down by him.

After the feast, the scholar seemed to be a little drunk. His eyes looked unfocused and he started to mutter to himself. His mind was fuzzled and after he drank, it seemed like his hearing was not as sharp.

Later on, he grew silent.

The eyes that gathered on him suddenly sensed danger and the demons wanted to run. However, they were gone in the blink of an eye.

The scholar sat down cross-legged and used a corner of his sleeve to wipe his mouth. Regardless of how dirty he was, the long sleeve remained as clean as a sheet and it was not stained at all.

"Little Zhou...I told you already...demons are demons...they cannot be trusted..."

"You said you understood back then, but that was nonsense. Otherwise, you would not have ended up like that."

With one last bite, the scholar finished his meal. At that moment, the ground suddenly shook and a sharp, painful scream pierced his ears.

There was despair, fear, and anger in the scream.

The golden fish was just about to break through its realm and transform into a dragon. It would have become a top great demon of the world.

However, it died today and every mark it had in this world was wiped clean with the final mouthful the scholar took of his meal.

From this moment on, it would be truly dead and there would be no way for it to be reincarnated. Even if time was reversed via the great river, there would be no trace of it anymore.

This was also the outcome the scholar was referring to when he talked about the consequences of his efforts.

After he was full, the scholar lay on the floor and entered a deep sleep.

The wind blew again and gently caressed his face. Peace resumed in the world.

Even at this moment, no one dared to attack the scholar despite their hatred.

.....

Dense clouds in the sky gathered rain and soon, it fell. Rain droplets shimmered with golden light as they fell into the lake, to the joy of the fishes in it. Occasionally, some fish would burst out of the water's surface and drink the shining raindrops.

Many cultivators were gathered around the lake. Some of them had ordinary cultivation ranks, but there were also those who were strong and held themselves well. They were all here to spectate the 'rain gift from heavens' that happened once in a hundred years.

A few large fishes in the lake had grown two claws and they were able to climb out of the water. They faced the clouds and continuously bowed towards them, thanking the heavenly Old Ancestor for his grace. This was their opportunity to pass down spiritual intelligence to their descendants.

Every drop of golden rain was an opportunity for them. No wonder the goldfishes in the lake were so emotional.

This was the real art of a heavenly being. In the entire Divine Zhou continent, there were only a few who could do this. They were really lucky to have an Old Ancestor look after them and deter threats in all directions. This was how they were able to cultivate peacefully without the fear of a catastrophe.

All of a sudden, the few fishes with two claws that climbed out of the water fell to the ground with a 'slap'. Their eyes were still filled with joy and emotion but they had no more aura.

Then, numerous goldfishes that were jumping out of the water to capture the gold rain droplets flipped over on their stomachs and floated to the surface. The entire lake surface was covered with dead fishes.

There was utter silence!

Not only did the lake fall silent, every cultivator surrounding the lake wore a face of disbelief as their eyes bulged wide open.

None of them knew what happen.

The next scene made all their hearts clench and they could not help shivering. The corpses of the fishes both in the lake and outside it turned to a cloud of mist and they rapidly dispersed and disappeared. In the blink of an eye, all of them were gone.

More frightening, the cultivators' memories were starting to become hazy. It felt like an invisible force was forcefully erasing their memories and getting rid of any evidence of what happened here.

“Hmph!”

There was a cold scoff and the rain clouds above were suddenly split apart. Sunlight fell down, revealing the main peak hidden within. At that instant, everyone around the lake lost their consciousness and they sat on the floor cross-legged as though they were all cultivating.

An old man in a long robe appeared by the lake. His eyes scanned the surroundings and his expression darkened.

“Crazy idiot of the academy, what in the world are you doing? I truly wonder how long you can continue to be so outrageous!”

A lake of goldfishes was nothing much. Once dead, they were dead. At most, he would only consider it a pity. However, using Great Dao to erase memories would unavoidably harm the souls of the disciples; it would affect their future Great Dao.

He could not tolerate this anymore!

However, as outraged as the old man was now, he did not step forward to demand an answer from the crazy idiot of the academy.

Firstly, it was hard to enter and exit that place now. Secondly, he was not confident that he could beat that idiot even if he went there.

This caused the old man's face to grow darker and he gritted his teeth angrily. In the end, he swept his sleeve aside in a huff and left.

At the same time as he disappeared, the people around the lake woke up. Nothing appeared amiss to anyone and a few moments later, they cupped their hands together to each other and bade farewells before they left.

Their memories had been thoroughly wiped.

Chapter 1578 – Imperial Palace Inner Warehouse

Marquis Chongwu, Ning Qin, had personally entered the palace to ask the king for a few treasures. He mentioned that his cultivation had reached a bottleneck and he wanted to try using other treasures to complete his breakthrough.

He had been direct in his request and the West Desolate King gave him a direct response too. With one hand, he permitted the request. However, it was not good for this event to be known of by others. The king did not use the national warehouse but instead opened the internal warehouse of the Imperial Palace. Then, he ordered some men to escort Qin Yu in.

Qin Yu bowed respectfully and his tone was grateful. All of this happened quite silently. If he wanted to get the horse to run, he had to feed it grass. Since the Imperial Clan 'needed' him now, it was not an issue for him to make a few requests.

This was to the point that the more he did this, the more at ease the king would feel.

The chief eunuch led Qin Yu to the internal warehouse. Back in the study, the king's eyes flashed behind the curtains and he thought deeply.

Suddenly, he said, "What do you think of General Jinwu, Ning Qin?"

There wasn't anyone else in the study, but after the king spoke, a feminine voice came from a corner of the room, "If Your Majesty is willing to trust him, that would be good."

The king laughed and shook his head, "You don't have to bootlick me. You are not good at this and are worse than Lord Chengtian. Just tell me what you think of him."

The dark shadow was silent for a long time. Then, the feminine voice came again, "I don't think anything is amiss. General Jinwu is loyal to Your Majesty. But I still feel like he is hiding something."

"Not even a peak-level Ruler would be able to withstand a blow from the Long River Sword. Death would be the only way out. I don't understand how General Jinwu was able to escape unscathed."

The king nodded behind the curtains, "You are right, this does not make sense. However, I am confident that I am able to control Ning Qin. I am fine if he hides some secrets. After all, no fish will live in clear waters."

He stood up and paced back and forth. Suddenly, he shook his head and smiled helplessly, "Old servant, you know me too well. I can't hide anything from you."

A youthful-looking eunuch walked out from the darkness. His skin was white and so smooth that ladies would get jealous of him. His entire demeanor was warm and feminine. The eunuch chuckled and cupped his hands together, "I am willing to share Your Majesty's burdens."

The king waved his hand.

The young eunuch walked away and his shadow disappeared in an instant.

The internal warehouse of the Imperial Palace was an important place. Although this was a personal warehouse for the West Desolate King, everything in this world belonged to him and the value of the items in the warehouse was unimaginable.

The eunuch who led Qin Yu to the palace was the same person who gave the imperial decree to him. Qin Yu could be considered familiar with him. However, the eunuch was busy with other matters and he hurried over to apologize to Qin Yu. After Qin Yu pardoned him, he introduced a youthful-looking eunuch beside him as his junior who would lead Qin Yu to the internal warehouse.

Qin Yu glanced casually at the young eunuch who lowered his head in silence. He had great physical features and if he changed into a woman's outfit, he could be considered a top beauty in the country.

"Greetings to Marquis."

The young eunuch bowed respectfully.

Qin Yu smiled and nodded, "Are you aware of the things I need? The internal warehouse of the king is too big; I will have to trouble you to lead the way."

The young eunuch smiled, "Marquis, don't worry. Before Senior left, he informed me of the directions." The first item was an unassuming black wooden stick that was as long as the arm of a grown man. Many intricate marks lined it.

It looked very ordinary and it felt like a piece of wood that would be thrown into the fireplace. Yet, upon closer inspection, one would find that the markings on the wood had many flickers of lightning that jumped continuously.

"I heard that there is a place called Sinking Thunder Lake in Dragon Stage County of the West Desolate. It is a place that naturally attracts divine lightning of the heavens to strike. A spotted laurel lives there and it is a descendant of an ancient divine tree. There are many oddities about it and it can survive being struck by lightning for ten thousand years.

"This piece of wood is a branch from the spotted laurel and it contains enough power to withstand a million lightning strikes. Lightning Withstanding Wood of the world cannot compare to this at all.

Qin Yu nodded. He could sense the supreme power coming from the piece of black wood. "Thank you for the explanation. This piece of wood does fulfill my requirements."

The eunuch smiled and he stretched his arm forward to lead the way, "Marquis, please follow me."

The warehouse was large but there was a strong force in the air that felt like a forbidden seal was placed here. Occasionally, its aura would leak out. It made Qin Yu's heart clench slightly. However, the eunuch maintained a calm face and acted casually. It was either that he had grown accustomed to it or there was another reason.

His mind quickly spun and he suppressed these thoughts. The Imperial Palace was mysterious and there were hidden dangers in all corners. If something was not related to him, it was best that he avoided it in case he got dragged in.

The second item was a pair of cicada wings. They were light and thin but their surface had streaks of light circling in it like shallow waves. They were currently trapped in a bubble.

"The wings of this cicada come from a mysterious object. It was hidden in the earth for three thousand years. For the first thousand years, it lived in its egg. For the next thousand years it grew, and it took another thousand years before it could come out of the earth. Once it reached the outside world, it grew into an adult within fifteen minutes. It would have flown to the heavens as fast as lightning and it could cover a vast distance in the blink of an eye.

The eunuch smiled as he explained. He raised a finger and gently touched the bubble, startling the cicada. The light on its wings shone brightly but it disappeared the next instant. A few moments later, it appeared in another corner of the bubble.

“This is a special ability of the cicada wings. It can turn invisible in an instant and cut off its aura, thus disappearing from the world temporarily. Then, it can appear in another corner. This bubble is actually a deceased jellyfish from the deep ocean that has been dead for ten thousand years. There is another world in the bubble and it can trap the cicada inside. Otherwise, it would disappear and appear a hundred thousand kilometers away in the blink of an eye. It could teleport to any corner of the world.”

Qin Yu glanced at the cicada wings and fell silent. A few moments later, he smiled, “You are very knowledgeable, I am in awe.”

The young eunuch smiled but did not make any attempt to elaborate. He led Qin Yu to another corner of the warehouse and explained, “This last item is called Crimson Blood.”

He stopped moving and turned to look at Qin Yu, “Actually, I am curious as to how you know of its existence.”

Qin Yu thought about it and asked, “Can I refuse to answer that question?”

The eunuch smiled and nodded as he bowed, “Of course, this is your right as a marquis. I was only curious.”

He did not probe about it and continued to walk towards a deeper end of the warehouse. As Qin Yu looked at the eunuch’s back, he frowned but his expression returned to normal the next instant.

The two of them stopped. There was no other way forward and there was only a lotus in front of him.

Its roots stretched out inside the warehouse and because there were forbidden arrays aiding it, the roots manage to break through the hard floor.

It was almost as if the entire inner warehouse was giving it nutrients continuously. As such, the leaves of the lotus were lustrous and green. There was a lotus flower bud in the middle of it that had not bloomed.

The eunuch pointed his finger forward, “This lotus flower comes from a fragment from outside of this world. It traversed vast distances and when it descended on this world, it almost burnt away. It carried scorching temperatures and it caused an entire lake to evaporate when it fell. The fragment instantly disintegrated, but somehow, there was a lotus that maintained its life force.

“No one knows the real purpose of this lotus. However, we know that it is naturally a Saint level item and it can repel evil spirits in this world. As such, it was placed in the warehouse and supplied nutrients from arrays to preserve its life. This lotus was then used to seal that sphere of Crimson Blood.”

The young eunuch paused and smiled, “It is not known where this Crimson Blood came from and what it was involved in. Please forgive me, Marquis.”

Qin Yu cupped his hands together, “You have already told me a lot. I don’t dare to be dissatisfied and I have to thank you for being honest with me.”

Qin Yu's expression was calm and he stared at the young eunuch whose aura seemed ordinary. However, Qin Yu did not know how many secrets the young eunuch was hiding. "Is there anything that I can help you with?"

The young eunuch smiled and bowed, "Marquis is wise and I shall not hide anything. What you need to do is very simple. You simply need to pluck this lotus flower and bring it out of the warehouse with you."

Qin Yu thought about it and nodded.

The eunuch stepped to the side and gestured with his hand.

Qin Yu strode forward and stood beside the lotus flower. He reached an arm forward and grabbed the stem of the lotus. He snapped the stem and turned around, "Is this alright?"

The eunuch bowed, "Marquis, it is yours now."

Qin Yu flipped his arm around and the lotus flower disappeared.

A few moments later, the inner warehouse was sealed shut and the eunuch left. The previous eunuch hurried over.

"I am Wei Ming, greetings to Marquis!" He bowed as he wiped the sweat on his forehead urgently. His eyes shifted from side to side and when he did not see the young eunuch, he hesitantly asked, "The young eunuch is new to the palace and he was lucky that His Majesty took him in. His Majesty requested me to lead him around. Did he do well just now? If there is anything that offended you, please forgive him."

Wei Ming was a famous eunuch from the study of the West Desolate King who had made a name for himself. He also held the title of chief eunuch in the palace and he had a lot of influence. Many ministers had to be courteous and put on a smile for him too.

The reason why he treated Qin Yu with such a respectful attitude was not because Qin Yu was qualified enough to be let in on the top secrets of the West Desolate empire. Instead, Wei Ming knew the king well enough and he was aware of how highly the king thought of Qin Yu.

No matter how powerful eunuchs were, they were only side dogs to the king. If they were not keen in their observations, they would be killed sooner or later.

Qin Yu smiled, "The young eunuch did very well, I am very satisfied." It seemed that Wei Ming did not know much about the young eunuch either.

This young eunuch was probably the real confidant of the king. As he thought about the two Old Four Claws who died in battle against Mister Zhou, Qin Yu shook his head.

They were different.

Wei Ming heaved a sigh of relief and put on a bright smile, "That is good. It is the young lad's blessing to have served you."

He patted his chest and sighed, "Sigh, I almost forgot about the real matter. His Majesty is occupied with something and he ordered me to inform you that you don't have to thank him after you have received the items. You may return home."

Qin Yu cupped his hands together, "I thank His Majesty's grace. I will take my leave."

.....

Behind the curtains, the king received the report. He sipped on his tea as a helpless expression crossed his face, "I am afraid that I am not able to change my personality. Now, I am ashamed to face Marquis Chongwu."

Although it was not uncommon for kings to break their promises, they would still feel ashamed after breaking so many promises in a row.

The young eunuch smiled as he bowed, "Your Majesty rules the world and takes care of society; you have to be careful about everything. This is the right move."

The king scoffed coldly and laughed, "You can act dumb. I asked you to take a look but I didn't ask you to lead the way."

The young eunuch was not intimidated and he bowed while laughing. "It is my fault. I admit to it."

Bursting out with laughter, the king was still slightly annoyed but he waved his hand to dismiss the eunuch.

The young eunuch bowed and turned towards a corner. His figure entered the darkness and he disappeared.

Right at that moment, the king's voice echoed through the hall again, "Search for the nine-tailed fox and give him an answer."

"Yes, Your Majesty."

.....

Based on their geographical locations, Seascape City was a distance away from the capital. Even powerful cultivators would need some time to travel across such a vast distance.

However, as one of the 108 cities, there were Teleportation Portals that linked it to the capital. After obtaining permission, people could use the Teleportation Portals to enter the capital. From this angle, Seascape City was close to the capital.

There was that stone bridge in the capital of the West Desolate that had already been turned to ashes. Likewise, in Seascape City, there were many hidden flies buzzing around the seemingly peaceful landscape.

People dying was a very natural thing and the city governor would not even bat an eyelid to that. However, after the letter from the Li Family of Parasol County arrived in Seascape City, the old, cunning, and knowledgeable governor felt like a hole had appeared in his mind.

Dead people was nothing, but he had to identify the dead.

Who knew which among the dead was Li Cangzhou. However, since this person could cause the Li Family of Parasol County to be enraged, this was a serious matter.

The first thing that Chen Yuanshen did was to inform the king about this. However, before the Imperial Palace could give him a reply, three people from the Li Family of Parasol County arrived at Seascap City!

Although it wasn't the family head, Li Chenghao, who came as the leader of the group of three, it was instead an Old Ancestor who hardly came out because he often closed himself in seclusion to cultivate. His aura was as deep as the ocean.

While Chen Yuanshen was not afraid that they would attack him, he was sweating buckets and he respectfully invited the three to the city governor manor.

"City Governor Chen, although this nephew of mine was not very outstanding, I watched him grow up. Now that he has been murdered, I have to find the real murderer and take revenge for him. Otherwise, I will not be doing justice to his parents who passed away early."

The Old Ancestor slowly spoke in a calm voice. However, there was a strong suppressing aura around him.

Chen Yuanshen answered, "Old Ancestor, please rest assured. Since this happened in my city, I will sweep every corner of the land and find the murderer for you."

The most splendid guest house in the city governor mansion was arranged for the Li Family.

Once the door was closed, the atmosphere turned heavy. The Old Ancestor bowed turned around and bowed, "Young Ancestors, apologies."

Li Ge stood expressionlessly.

Li Ruhua waved her hand and smiled, "You don't have to apologize for what we already arranged for."

"Young Ancestors, please go ahead."

Li Ge raised his hand and slashed it forward. The space in front of him was split apart silently and the two Young Ancestors stepped into the void.

The space healed itself.

The Old Ancestor was in wonder. Based on cultivation rank, he was still higher than the Young Ancestors. However, he definitely would not be able to execute such a move that transcended space.

The Old Ancestor could not fathom the sword in Li Ge's hand but its powers made his heart clench...he was truly envious!

Shoosh –

Li Ge and Li Ruhua appeared beside a lake in Seascap City. There were a few houses scattered around the lake. Because it was getting dark, they could only make out a few lanterns in the distance.

Li Ruhua scanned her surroundings and could not help frowning. Soon, her expression returned to normal and she said, "That's right. He died here."

Li Ge calmly replied, "The Li Family of Parasol County can be considered distant relatives of us. The restriction spell in the ancestral temple is also connected to us by blood. The murderer definitely used a unique measure such that the murder was only exposed a few days after it occurred."

Li Ruhua smiled, "We have to be careful...however, I am actually looking forward to the murderer exposing himself in front of us."

Li Ge remained silent but he was composed. He was confident of the sword in his hand.

Chapter 1579 – Intelligent Man

Under a willow tree by the lake, a calm breeze passed by. Li Ruhua's eyes were closed and she used her senses on the surroundings. She found some remnant aura left here.

Li Ge held his sword upright. His expression was calm but his eyes were shining brightly.

All of a sudden, the calm breeze grew faster and it continued to become more violent.

Turning his head around, he frowned slightly and his heart started to grow more heavy.

A few moments later, Li Ruhua's eyes opened and her complexion was slightly pale. Her voice sounded haggard as she slowly said, "Li Cangzhou truly died here. However, the aura of the murderer has been altered by a Great Divine Way. I tried to trace it but I only encountered chaos."

As she explained, she could not help lifting her hand to rub her forehead and reduce her discomfort.

Li Ge's expression darkened.

Li Ruhua was naturally born with a Divine Way and she was looked highly upon by the clan. The two of them cooperated together but they also had a rivalry. As such, Li Ge knew Li Ruhua's capabilities well.

Back then, he was making an excuse by mentioning the nine-tailed fox that appeared in the capital when he was talking to Li Chenghao.

The excuse had been haphazard and it seemed like the Li Family head was cowardly and timid. Yet, he was intelligent and he already realized that something had been amiss.

Now that he looked back at it, Li Ge found the situation more strange. Someone who could use a Great Divine Way to alter auras and block Li Ruhua from investigating...was this incident really unrelated to the nine-tailed fox in the capital? Furthermore, the murdered Li Cangzhou was a member of the Li Family in Parasol County. If karma existed in the West Desolate, who would kill him casually...the murderer had some background!

"Who are you?"

There was a shout. A pair of guards by the river had spotted the two of them.

Guests that came to the few houses by the lake were approved beforehand. The appearance of two strangers made the guards uncomfortable. If the strangers were bad people and were here to target any guests, the guards would not be spared if anything went wrong!

However, the guards did not have to worry for long. The flash of a sword lit up the sky and two heads rolled to the ground. Blood spurted all over the area and the two Young Ancestors of the Li Family turned and left.

Moon Brothel was instantly thrown into chaos. The manager had a deep background and he often handled matters for the city governor. His face was as cold as steel and he gritted his teeth as he tried his best to appease the guests. At the same time, he demanded that there be an explanation for the incident today.

However, before long, the city governor learned about the killing at Moon Brothel. Yet, he did not do anything. This silence made the Moon Brothel's manager's heart clench and a thick feeling of unease cross him. He did not dare to stir up this matter anymore.

After all, people were inherently different. The dead were the dead.

Chen Yuanshen sipped his tea with a bitter smile. Although he did not have evidence, Xu Shen had seen the mark left by the fatal sword strike. Even at this moment, the fierceness in Xu Shen's eyes made Chen Yuanshen's heart jump. Who else could the murderer be?

He thought about the young man with the sword behind the Old Ancestor of the Li Family. He could not help sighing to himself. As expected of a man destined to hold the country up in the future, he was truly outstanding!

Li Zicheng sensed the arrival of the two Young Ancestors, but since they chose to remain silent, he chose to be ignorant too.

He closed his eyes and continued his cultivation.

The arrival of the Young Ancestors from the Li Family of the Central Desolate represented a chance for him to break through. If not for them, he would not bother showing up here. With his cultivation realm, everything was a passing cloud to him. Raising his cultivation realm was his priority.

Closing the door, Li Ge unsheathed his sword. There was a sword hum and the air in the room was sliced apart to form a seal.

He raised his head and looked at Li Ruhua.

"It seems that we have to head to the capital of the West Desolate."

Although she was faced with a chaotic fragment when she investigated using a Divine Way, she was still able to lock onto a small thread of aura.

Its direction came from the capital!

.....

Rourou was currently examining the three items that Qin Yu obtained from the internal warehouse of the Imperial Palace.

The wooden stick had sustained the strikes of a hundred thousand lightning bolts and it could be considered a top tier Lightning Withstanding Wood of the world.

The cicada wings were a mysterious object of the world. This was a pair of wings that the cicada left behind after being captured. It had taken three thousand years for its wings to form and it would have flown straight to the heavens.

Lastly, the Crimson Blood's origins were unknown but it was sealed by a lotus flower.

"Not bad, these are all good items. Furthermore, there is an unexpected find." Rourou tapped on the deceased jellyfish bubble containing the cicada wings and they disappeared and appeared at another location. "This deceased jellyfish is able to isolate itself from the world. After refining it, it can become a treasure that can cover your aura."

She glanced at Qin Yu, "However, the most valuable item here is the lotus flower. If you are willing to give it to me, I can dismiss thirty percent of your debt to me."

Qin Yu thought about it and came to his conclusion. The value of this lotus flower was one sixth the value of the Incense Child.

His eyes lit up and he asked, "What is the use of it?"

Rourou explained, "Once you refine it with your soul, evil will be averted." She drummed her fingers and stared at the broken stem of the lotus flower. With a smile, she said, "Of course, if you can get the entire lotus flower, I will even waive all your debt to me. I may even owe you a favor after that."

After pondering for a while, Qin Yu shook his head with resolve. Items in the Imperial Palace were guarded heavily, and not to mention the security in the internal warehouse, even if the treasures were placed on the roadside, no one would be permitted to touch them. Did they really think that the king of the Imperial Palace was a buddha?

Rourou pouted but remained silent. "The Crimson Blood is for you. Since you used the excuse of breaking through your realm, you have to do it. Furthermore, your cultivation realm is pretty weak now.

"As for the cicada wings and the deceased jellyfish, I believe I can help you to refine them into treasures. However, you ought to know that the price I charge is high."

She lifted a finger and pointed to the Lightning Withstanding Wood. "This black thing shall be my payment."

Qin Yu nodded without hesitation, "Alright. After the items are refined into treasures, I will trade them with you for items for the Incense Child.

"Cough, but you will have to lend this item to me for a while. Don't worry, I will definitely compensate you."

Rourou rubbed her face and she groaned painfully. She realized that Qin Yu was getting less and less cute.

He was so thick-skinned. He had truly improved lots in this aspect!

.....

Seascape City was in a state of emergency. The Old Ancestor of the Li Family in Parasol County arrived with two juniors to investigate the murder of Li Cangzhou.

After one day, an urgent report was sent to the palace. The Old Ancestor was now leading the two juniors to the capital.

The report was written in a helpless and bitter tone. It also mentioned that because of the insistence of the Old Ancestor, Chen Sanglue would be accompanying them.

Behind the curtains, the king placed down the report and his eyes flashed coldly.

There was a sigh from the dark shadow by the study room. Chen Sanglue's performance after all these years showed that he was not an intelligent man.

Today, he brought the damn chess piece with him. It cut off any way back for him.

"Hmph! You old fart, don't act so outrageously just because I rely on you!" The king snapped angrily.

The feminine voice sounded, "I wouldn't dare to. Please don't be angry, my king. I simply feel that Chen Sanglue has let you down. He is dumb."

The king scoffed coldly. "Li Zicheng came personally; the two with him must be people from the Li Family of the Central Desolate. I want to know the intentions for them to come here."

He lowered his head but his gaze was high.

The figure in the darkness stepped forward and bowed, "I am currently investigating but the aura from the nine-tailed fox has completely disappeared. I believe that it has been blocked by something."

"I want results."

"I understand."

.....

The young master Min Xiangtai's performance recently made everyone in the manor happy, including the old master. Unlike in the past, he did not spend a whole lot of money to go to entertainment venues to enjoy the fireworks there. Instead, he picked up books and studied in his room.

The master knew his son's personality well and he did not trust him easily. However, after multiple investigations, he reached the same conclusion: Min Xiangtai had suddenly turned over a new leaf!

Demons and ghosts existed in the cultivation world. There was never a lack of strange and unexplainable things. The old master's expression changed and he gritted his teeth and sought out the housekeeper.

As night fell, the gate to Min Xiangtai's courtyard was opened again. He was dragged out of the room by two burly men in red.

He shouted, "Father, what are you doing?" All of a sudden, a bucket of blood from a black dog was poured over him. Although the pitiful young master was a cultivator, he was like a fragile lady in the hands of the two burly men. He could only thrash around like a kid, unable to fend them off him.

An old practitioner in a long yellow robe followed behind the old master. He stepped forward with a talisman in his hands. Then, he hit the body with black dog blood on it. He had struck Min Xiangtai's head and he grunted, "Urgh! Is the beast still not going to show itself?"

With some hand signals, the talisman was ignited without a sound. Then, the practitioner lit Min Xiangtai's hair with it, creating much chaos.

After some scrambling from the crowd, the fire was finally put out. The once charming and appealing Min Xiangtai was truly pitiful. After being burnt by the fire, he was kicked and beaten up like a pig.

A bucket of water and another round of beatings greeted him. After he regained consciousness, Min Xiangtai screamed in agony, "Father, my dear father, what are you doing?"

This voice and gaze. That's right, he was definitely his son.

The old master sighed for a long time. Then, there was awkwardness. The old madame had heard the news and she rushed over to hug Min Xiangtai. She cried "My pitiful life!" Then, she turned around in a huff and grabbed the old master. She took her anger out on him and reduced him to a pitiful state.

The old master said, "Thank you ancestors. My son has really turned over a new leaf." The old master burst into laughter as he held his head and squirmed in pain.

A few moments later, peace finally returned to the yard. After applying medicine from the practitioner, the purple bruises on Min Xiangtai's face was not as swollen as before.

Once the two servant ladies in the study room, Shi Shu and Shi Qi, were dismissed, Min Xiangtai sat by the study table. His hands cupped his face and he was truly ashamed to meet other people.

A light laughter came to his ears, "Your father is truly...an interesting man."

The two times he had intruded into this place were nights when it was a full moon. They also happened at the right time.

If this was merely coincidence, it was too coincidental. However, thinking about it, this was only normal. After all, how could any normal person hide a great demon in his study?

However, wasn't this a splendid thing in an already wonderful scene? It was incredible that even she, the nine-tailed fox, was not able to sense the aura of the old master.

Min Xiangtai took it that the lady was teasing him. His face turned red and he cupped his hands, "Miss, please don't tease me."

The lady laughed but did not say much. Since he was an intelligent man, she ought to avoid him. The lady yawned and looked at the nervous but eager Min Xiangtai, "Young master, I am very tired. I shan't accompany you tonight."

She turned around and transformed into a cloud of mist that entered the books and disappeared.

Chapter 1580A – Lord Min

The biggest joke in Seascap City in recent years was definitely Chen Sanglue.

This young master from the City Governor's Mansion had a prestigious background, and was originally one of the top figures in the city.

However, he made a mistake and offended someone that he should not have offended. The incident that happened back then in Moon Brothel had shaken the entire city.

Of course, what happened in Moon Brothel was not really a secret. Even things that the public should not have known started to slowly be learned about as time went on.

If General Jinwu was just a powerless figure, then it would not be a big deal. However, after he entered the Imperial Capital, he was extremely fortunate.

Consequently, without giving anyone time to digest what was happening, he was promoted to the rank of a third-class marquis and a first-ranked great general.

Now, everyone understood that General Jinwu was someone that His Majesty greatly valued and trusted. Comparing both of them, Chen Sanglue had truly become a clown.

Furthermore, not long ago, when Marquis Chongwu was returning to the Imperial Capital to receive his decree and to report for duties, he had stopped by in Seascap City for a while. At the inn where he was staying, the city governor Chen Yuanshen had personally come and punished Chen Sanglue in front of him.

His two legs were broken by his own father, and his own lieutenant Xu Shen had broken off his own arm. Yet, in the end, they still did not succeed in making amends and left the inn unhappily.

It was simple logic. The more His Majesty trusted and valued Marquis Chongwu, the more embarrassing it was for Chen Sanglue, who was the son of Seascap City's governor.

This was their relationship with each other, which could be understood if one thought about it carefully.

Seascap City looked calm on the surface, but under this facade, there were countless strong undercurrents that were raging.

The West Desolate's territory was vast, but they only had 108 main cities. This implied some kind of heavenly law at play here. A city governor did not only have power and status, but more importantly, they had invisible Great Dao blessings that were very helpful for cultivation.

Of course, many people coveted such a position.

After all these incidents happened, Chen Sanglue became a drunkard who stayed in his house all day.

One day, while he was drunk again, he was chasing after a few of his female servants and having fun with them. From the corner of his eye, he saw a person who was as beautiful as a fairy.

Chen Sanglue laughed loudly and rushed towards that person. He could vaguely hear his father's fierce reprimanding voice which sobered him up a little, but still, he did not stop. On the contrary, his laugh became even louder and wilful.

A fragrance spread to his nose and mouth, but before he could really throw himself into that beauty's arms, he blacked out and fell into unconsciousness.

After some time passed, he woke up groggily. Then, he realized that he was in a moving carriage.

"You've woken up."

The woman in front of him spoke softly but her eyes were closed, as if she knew everything that was going on around her.

Chen Sanglue raised his hand to rub the spot between his eyebrows where he could feel a headache building. He struggled to sit up and asked in a low voice, "Who are you? Where am I?"

The woman's eyes were still closed as she replied, "Don't worry, you're not being kidnapped. It was Chen Yuanshen who personally allowed you to leave with us.

"And...we're at the West Desolate's Imperial Capital."

Chen Sanglue's eyes narrowed slightly as he took a proper look at this woman in front of him who still had her eyes closed. Then, he suddenly stood up and respectfully greeted her, "Chen Sanglue did not mean to offend Immortal Li. Please forgive me!"

The woman exhaled lightly and opened her eyes to look at him. Then, she smiled and said, "Young Master Chen is indeed clever, but you must be really weak. You are a man, but you are so full of self-pity after just a few obstacles."

Chen Sanglue laughed in self-mockery, "What Miss says is true." His eyes dimmed a little as he shook his head and continued, "Immortal Li, why have you brought me to the Imperial Capital?"

Li Ruhua smiled brightly and beautifully as she replied, "I need you to lead the way for me."

She looked at Chen Sanglue, but she was not really looking at him. She was looking at the tangle of karma webs that was behind him.

These webs were the only reason why he managed to live until today. Otherwise, Li Ge's sword would already have helped him to understand that some women in this world could never be touched.

However, today, Li Ge was not present. There was only Li Ruhua and Chen Sanglue in the carriage, and it was hard to tell the reason why.

Chen Sanglue thought for a while before he cupped his hands and said, "It's good as long as I can be of help to Immortal Li."

Folding his legs to sit cross-legged, he closed his eyes to cultivate.

Li Ruhua was stunned for a moment before smiling. When she looked at him again, her eyes were filled with amusement.

She closed her eyes once more, a faint smile appearing on her lips.

This man had been born in the Southwest Desolate's fragmented area and had only entered the Desolate Area not long ago, but had climbed to his current position...this was even more interesting.

Moments later, the carriage halted. Li Ruhua raised her hand to lift the curtain as she looked out.

.....

Qin Yu, who had become addicted to renting things from Rourou, was chased out by her. He had become really smooth and his skin had become really thick. However, she had to admit that if she decided to close one eye to it, his non-conventional ways gave him plenty of room to play around.

After all, she had never leased items to anyone else in countless years. Mostly, she only made one-shot deals with people. This was because these people usually only had one chance to trade with her.

Of course, everything was based on Rourou's willingness to go through with these trades. Otherwise, if it was someone else who tried to negotiate with her, just a snap of her soft, white fingers could cause their brains to explode into mush.

However, she still needed to put on an act, otherwise Qin Yu would continue to push his boundaries. If one day he crossed the line, was she going to kill him or not? Therefore, it was only beneficial for everyone if she continued to give him warnings.

At this time, Rourou was trying to refine a very interesting treasure made from the deceased jellyfish and cicada wings.

Her fingers flicked slightly and layers of waves were created in the space in front of her. When these waves hit each other, the impact created the outline of a large phantom cauldron.

The deceased jellyfish and cicada wings floated in this large phantom cauldron and looked like they were already semi-dissolved as wisps of mysterious aura surrounded them.

She could craft ordinary refining tools easily. However, these materials she had were quite good, and also, even though this object that she refined wasn't going to be hers...even though she felt a little weird in her heart, Rourou also thought that it would be good to try refining this to be the best it could be.

Therefore, she used a few tricks up her sleeve and 'borrowed' this cauldron from someone. Even though it was just a phantom and had only a tenth of its true power, it was more than enough to refine these two delicate materials that she had.

At this time, Rourou suddenly frowned. She raised her head to take a look, and coldness surged in her eyes. Someone was using the laws of karma to trace Qin Yu's location.

Her first thought was that all the cover-ups that they came up with in the past had already been seen through by somebody. If this really was the case, then a huge war was going to break out.

Even she would be implicated.

However, very quickly, Rourou's expression softened a little. Even if someone did come to find them, it did not mean that things had gone awry yet.

After looking at the large phantom cauldron that was refining the deceased jellyfish and cicada wings, the corner of her lips were upturned and she suddenly raised her hand and pointed in front of her.

Hum –

The large cauldron trembled slightly. A faint humming sound was produced from it, as if someone had struck it softly from the outside.

.....

With a light groan, Li Ruhua's face turned pale and her eyes showed surprise.

She did not care about Chen Sanglue who was sitting opposite her as she said, "Let's go!"

The carriage sped up and left. It was only when they left the long street that Li Ruhua spat some blood from her mouth, and her face looked much better than it was before.

Indeed, he was a capable person.

She was outside Marquis Chongwu's residence, using her divine sense to trace the karma webs behind Chen Sanglue. However, before she could gain any new insights, she was shaken by the sound of a loud hum.

Thankfully, the purpose of the loud hum was just to force her to retreat and not chase after her. Otherwise, the consequences would not be as simple as coughing up blood.

Wiping the traces of blood from the corners of her mouth, Li Ruhua turned and looked at Marquis Chongwu's residence from afar. A glint of light flashed across her eyes.

Chen Sanglue suddenly said, "Miss, did you come here because of Marquis Chongwu Ning Qin?"

Li Ruhua looked at him. She was not supposed to divulge this matter to someone who was just leading the way for her, however, her heart was shaken now. She smiled and nodded, "Not bad."

Chen Sanglue cupped his hands and said, "If there is any way that I can help, Miss, you can just let me know." He did not bother to conceal his hatred towards Marquis Chongwu.

Li Ruhua smiled and agreed, "Okay."

She retracted her gaze and uncurled her fingers that were covering her mouth, looking at the red spot in her palm.

Chapter 1580B – Lord Min

As the space continued to fluctuate with waves, a soft sigh could be heard coming from where the large phantom cauldron was.

"Your Excellency, I am willing to lend you a phantom of my cauldron to help you refine what you need, but I don't wish to be dragged into a big karma web."

As the voice rang in the room, Rourou still looked calm. Evidently, she had already expected something like this to happen. She giggled and said, "We're old friends, don't be so petty."

"If I had a choice, I'd rather not have this friendship with Your Excellency..." A tinge of sorrow and loneliness could be heard in this calm voice.

After a short pause, the voice continued, "After this, I will have repaid the favor that I owed Your Excellency back then. Let's have nothing to do with each other from now on."

Rourou nodded and replied, "Sure."

"Thank you, Your Excellency." The phantom cauldron fell silent once again.

.....

Marquis Chongwu had announced to the outside world that he was entering closed-door meditation. This time, it was not an excuse. He had really begun to cultivate. Since he had openly made a trip to the Imperial Palace's internal warehouse, if he did not immediately go into closed-door meditation, it would be mocking the West Desolate King's wisdom. It would be like telling the whole world that there was something wrong with the Imperial Palace's treasures.

Furthermore, Qin Yu had indeed reached a bottleneck in his cultivation journey. It was time to move to the next step. There were many big figures that he had to face with his current social standing. Even though he had Rourou by his side, only through strengthening his own roots could he have a peaceful sleep at night with no worries.

Rourou did not really explain what the Crimson Blood was. The young eunuch from the Imperial Palace did not tell him anything about it either. After pondering for a while, he knew that Rourou would not have any ill intentions towards him.

Then...I shall consume it.

Qin Yu opened his mouth and swallowed the Crimson Blood together with a lotus flower.

This was the suggestion given by Rourou, who said that eating it this way would be most effective. At most, he might suffer a little, but this small amount of pain was negligible compared to the amount of benefits he could gain.

Even though Qin Yu was already mentally prepared to only trust seventy-five percent of what Rourou said, he quickly realized that even seventy-five percent was too much.

A terrifying, burning sensation spread in his chest and to his abdomen, as if he was being cooked alive in a furnace that was lit with ferocious flames. It continued spreading from the inside to the outside of his body, until he felt like every inch of his flesh, blood and soul was being burnt alive. The pain was comparable to being placed on a pan covered with sizzling, hot oil.

Fortunately, he had swallowed a lotus flower together with the Crimson Blood and that offered some assistance in dissipating the Crimson Blood and releasing cold energy. This allowed Qin Yu to keep his last strand of consciousness. Otherwise, he probably would not have been able to withstand this amount of pain which would otherwise cause him to collapse. Then, his cultivation efforts would have failed.

To Qin Yu, of course this was a good thing. However, staying conscious also meant that he could truly feel every inch of raw pain.

It was a sour and bitter feeling.

Rourou, you are indeed ruthless. Wait for me, I, Qin Yu, am definitely not finished dealing with you!

.....

The master of the Min Residence was a decent man. He came from a wealthy family and had always been charitable, which gave him a good reputation in the surrounding areas.

Even though...he was slightly perverted, but who was perfect? We should all have an understanding heart.

Not long after the nine suns rose in the sky, the door of the Min Residence opened. Lord Min, who was used to getting up early and going on morning walks, walked out of the door in a plain, long robe.

“Hey, you’re here!”

“Good morning!”

“I will come back later. Reserve the same seat for me, as usual.”

Lord Min began to take a stroll as he greeted people cordially. This was his everyday routine that could not be disrupted even if there was a storm outside. The residents who lived around him already knew this.

Additionally, Lord Min’s eyes were always squinted. When he saw good-looking women, he often could not stop himself from being tempted and always took a few looks. However, his reputation was never stained because of this.

It had been a long time, so everyone did not mind anymore. So what if he took a few more looks at them? It was not like they would lose a few pieces of their flesh. Some women who had a more eager personality would, on the other hand, take the initiative to wink at Lord Min. He would immediately swallow his saliva and quickly walk away with a lowered head.

While walking away, he would mumble to himself, “A gentleman only looks, but does not touch...a gentleman only looks, but does not touch...” If one walked close to him, one could hear this. This habit of his had already spread, becoming a rather big joke.

As per usual, after walking one lap around the Min Residence, half an hour had passed. At this moment, the nine suns had risen higher in the sky. The number of people in the streets had also increased. Lord Min went to a store that was a stone’s throw distance away from his house to have breakfast.

“Sir, you can have a seat here. Your buns and tea have already been prepared for you; please have them while they’re warm.”

The store owner smiled while greeting Lord Min with a respectful tone.

Behind the store owner, there was a young girl aged about seventeen or eighteen years old. Her black hair was tied into a big braid, and her eyes dodged back and forth while hiding behind the owner.

With his mouth full of food, Lord Min said while chewing, “Tsk, tsk, this brat is turning eighteen years old this year, isn’t she? Time really flies; she is becoming a lady already.”

Someone piped in, “Lord Min, you have a great reputation, but after personally watching the store owner’s daughter grow up, you’re not having other thoughts, are you?”

A wave of laughter erupted. The black-haired girl's face flushed, but she was not embarrassed, because she was used to it. In these two years, especially since she had grown into her body, Lord Min's eyes started to linger for a longer period of time. Every time he came, he would take a look at her.

The store owner laughed along, not displeased at all. It was almost as if if Lord Min opened his mouth to ask for her hand in marriage, the store owner would gladly marry his daughter off to enjoy the fortunes of being Lord Min's wife.

Lord Min laughed and jokingly chided, "Even such delicious buns are not enough to stuff your mouth shut!"

Another wave of laughter erupted.

However, something strange happened today. Lord Min, who had only eaten half of his breakfast, suddenly clutched his stomach and hurried off.

"What's going on? Could Lord Min really be thinking of that, and because we've exposed him, he ran away embarrassed?" one of the gentlemen laughed as he joked along.

However, this time, there was no reaction to this gentleman's words. All the customers in the store looked at him unhappily.

The smile on the gentleman's face faded away bit by bit as he started to look gloomy.

The store owner smiled and put down a bamboo steamer full of buns and said, "This is free-of-charge, for you. You don't have to pay for this meal." The store owner's next words made the gentleman's face become more and more hideous.

"My family encountered a disaster years ago, and it was only because Lord Min saved us that we were able to live until this day. Please do not come to my restaurant again in the future. Thank you."

The gentleman slapped the table ferociously, but at this time, a tinge of coldness surged from the bottom of his heart. Looking at the store owner who was slightly bowed, his face full of smiles, the gentleman gritted his teeth with the last of his guts and threw down a bunch of taels, "I'll pay for the meal myself!"

He then got up and walked away, looking extremely haggard.

"Hmph! Where did this stupid customer come from? Did he not bother to ask around? Our Lord Min's reputation is not one that he can just step all over!"

"We can joke around because of our long friendships with Lord Min and no one takes it seriously. That man was being really unpleasant."

"Boss, you did a good job. If he dares to create trouble, I'll ask my son, who is in the Imperial Capital's Defense Division to teach him a lesson."

The store owner laughed as he listened to the customers complimenting him. Then, he went to the back and continued to make more buns. As the steam rose, it covered his face, and also the expression of worry when he looked in the direction of the Min Residence.

