

Secret Love 2081

Chapter 2081: Apologize to my dad and mom

“Worriless, you’ve done something foolish. How could you—with this kind of person...?!”

Patriarch Nie had an awful expression on his face. “He actually led people here to attack the Nie family and the entire Independent State is about to learn he’s actually Tangtang’s real father! Where should the Nie family place their pride now?!”

“Sir Patriarch, it’s a misunderstanding, it’s really a misunderstanding!” one of the Four Asuras cried.

“Scram!” Patriarch Nie shouted.

“Sure sure, no problem. Where does your esteemed self want me to scram?”

Patriarch Nie didn’t want to respond to him and turned back to Ye Wanwan. “I won’t approve of him, Worriless!”

“Worriless, he’s too absurd!” Madam Nie also said.

“Dad, Mom.” Ye Wanwan looked at her parents. “Don’t worry. If you two don’t approve of him, I won’t approve of him, and Tangtang also won’t approve of him!”

Patriarch Nie and Master’s expressions improved slightly after hearing that.

“Why are you all dawdling here?! Get lost already!”

Patriarch Nie yelled at the audience.

“Go go go... Let’s go!”

Heavenly Asura quickly waved his hand and led Lin Que and the others away.

After Patriarch Nie’s admonishment, the other observing factions also left tactfully.

Soon, Si Yehan was the only one left in front of the Nie residence.

“Let’s go!”

Patriarch Nie waved his hand, leading Ye Wanwan and the others back inside the house.

“Dad... Mom... He’s Lord Asura, so he’ll be pointed and stared at if he keeps standing in front of our house... It wouldn’t be good for us either, so how about we let him come inside first? This way, we can discuss everything out in the open too. After all, he’s Tangtang’s father,” Ye Wanwan suggested softly.

“No! He’s prohibited from taking a single step inside the Nie Estate!” Patriarch Nie replied.

Madam Nie glanced at Patriarch Nie instantly. “Worriless is right. Let him come in first. Even if Worriless breaks all ties with him, they have to talk it out or else what good would it be?”

“But...” Patriarch Nie frowned lightly.

“What but? I said let him enter.”

Madam Nie turned to Si Yehan and said, “Come inside.”

“Okay...” Si Yehan nodded and walked behind Ye Wanwan, conscientiously keeping a small distance between himself and Ye Wanwan.

The current Si Yehan greatly resembled a child who did something wrong, and a rare trace of anxiety appeared in his eyes.

...

Inside the Nie living room:

Ye Wanwan stared at Si Yehan. “Why are you standing there?! Hurry and pour some tea for my dad and mom and admit your mistakes already!”

Si Yehan: “...”

“No need, we can’t afford it. Otherwise, what if he besieged our Nie family again when he’s unhappy one day?” Patriarch Nie snorted.

Si Yehan: “...”

“Apologize to my dad and mom first and admit your wrongs,” Ye Wanwan ordered with a frown.

Si Yehan looked at Madam Nie and Patriarch Nie. “It was a misunderstanding...”

Ye Wanwan nearly spat on Si Yehan’s face. Was his EQ actually low or was he faking it?!

She freaking told him to apologize and he gave her a “It was a misunderstanding”?!

“I told you to apologize! What misunderstanding, huh?!” Ye Wanwan urgently yelled.

Doesn’t he see how angry Dad and Mom are? Pacify them! Hey, do you freaking know how to pacify someone?!

“Patriarch Nie, Madam Nie, I’m sorry. It was my fault for not understanding things clearly first.”

Finally, Si Yehan apologized and bowed toward Madam Nie and Patriarch Nie.

As Tangtang stared at Si Yehan standing in the middle of the living room, he tugged on Ye Wanwan’s sleeve. “Mommy... is he really my real dad?”

“En.” Ye Wanwan nodded.

However, now wasn’t the time to fuss about whether he was Tangtang’s real dad or not. They needed to figure out how to allow this real dad to redeem himself.

Chapter 2082: How can I hand you over to him without worry?

Ye Wanwan inspected her parents and discovered they were rather furious indeed, especially after learning Tangtang was her and Lord Asura’s son.

Forget about Asura's reputation in the Independent State for now. The simple fact that Lord Asura led people to besiege the Nie residence today and spoke arrogantly made Madam Nie and Patriarch Nie unable to back down.

Ye Wanwan felt helpless. Si Yehan seriously had a one-track mind. Even if something happened, couldn't he call her first and at least figure out the situation first?

However, anything they said now would be too late. Now that things had reached this point, there wasn't a regret pill for him to take, and they could only rack their minds for a solution to repair things.

Based on the current look of things though, Dad and Mom were in the peak of their anger, so anything they said probably wouldn't be too effective. Furthermore, with Si Yehan's EQ, it'd be better if he talked less.

Si Yehan stood quietly in the living room, and Patriarch Nie and Madam Nie were also uninterested in speaking to Si Yehan, so the atmosphere was rather awkward.

"Head back first."

Ye Wanwan told him a while later.

Si Yehan apologized already, and it was inadvisable to rush everything else. They had to allow her parents to calm down first.

"Right. Let him go back first," Patriarch Nie also said.

Si Yehan looked at Ye Wanwan then Tangtang, as though unwilling to leave just like this.

Ye Wanwan sent him a look when she saw that.

He got into such big trouble, so there was no way the Nie family's anger would dissipate that easily. If Si Yehan remained there and didn't leave, it'd only produce the opposite effect and further displease Madam and Patriarch Nie.

"Please excuse my many offenses today. I'll visit another day to make amends," Si Yehan said to Patriarch and Madam Nie before turning to leave.

"Wait," Madam Nie suddenly called out.

Si Yehan paused immediately and turned to Madam Nie.

"Explain yourself first. What's going on between you and my daughter, Worriless?" Madam Nie asked him.

"..." Si Yehan's gaze landed on Ye Wanwan. He didn't know how to answer this question.

"Mom... I'll tell you about this later..." Ye Wanwan hastily interjected.

"I'm asking Lord Asura," Madam Nie said.

"Madam Nie..." Si Yehan looked at Madam Nie as he briefly explained the past events.

After hearing the story, Madam Nie glanced at Ye Wanwan before telling Si Yehan to leave for now.

...

After Si Yehan left, Madam Nie finally turned to Ye Wanwan with a deep frown. "Worriless, you should know who he is. This kind of person is vicious and cruel and would commit any imaginable misdeed. How could your dad and I hand you and Tangtang over to him without worrying?"

Ye Wanwan: "..."

Indeed, to outsiders, Lord Asura's actions and style were abnormal.

However, that applied merely to outsiders. Her dad and mom didn't know Si Yehan well, so it was normal for them to have apprehensions. If Ye Wanwan put herself in their shoes, she would share the same concerns as a parent.

"Mom, don't worry, I know what I should do," Ye Wanwan replied to Madam Nie with a smile.

No matter what, she needed to placate her parents first. There were plenty of future opportunities in this pacification endeavor.

...

After Si Yehan returned to Asura's headquarters, he immediately called Ye Wanwan, wanting to figure out some solution to rescue the situation.

However, right now, they could only wait for an opportunity since this misunderstanding was rather enormous.

Chapter 2083: Do you want to see Daddy?

Three days later, an uninvited guest arrived at Asura's headquarters.

Jiang Yan entered Si Yehan's office and looked at Si Yehan. "My Lord, that Nameless Nie came... and brought a group with him. They're taking everything valuable like a group of bandits, including the supplies we just bought."

Si Yehan expressionlessly closed a document on the desk and calmly stood up. "Take me there."

"Yes."

Jiang Yan snorted. He didn't believe that Nameless Nie could still act so presumptuously when his Lord was personally there.

A moment later, Jiang Yan led Si Yehan to Asura's warehouse.

Elite members of Asura encircled the warehouse. They were enraged as they watched Spray of Flowers and Brick-moving Foreigner moving the cargo in the warehouse as though they were moving things from their own house.

However, the Asura members didn't dare to block Nameless Nie since he was the uncle of Young Master of Asura!

But... even if he was Young Master's uncle, wasn't he going too far?! Who would move things from someone else's storage like this?!

Who were they?!

"Put it down!"

When Jiang Yan stood in the warehouse and saw Nameless Nie about to move the cargo they were about to trade with other factions, he was instantly enraged and screamed.

However, Nameless Nie and his group didn't seem to have heard him. They were immersed in their own world and wholly focused on moving the supplies, mumbling to themselves.

"We're rich this time..."

...

"My Lord, look at them! They aren't members of the Nie family! They're clearly a group of bandits!" Jiang Yan was enraged.

They were freaking shadier than the Fearless Alliance!

Compared to Nameless Nie and his team, the Fearless Alliance was nothing.

When the Fearless Alliance robbed things, at least they went to rob them whereas Nameless Nie and his team matter-of-factly moved them like they were in their own home...

What was more aggravating was that they were moving things in front of them!

"Stop! How dare you rob our warehouse in front of Lord Asura?!"

Jiang Yan rebuked Nameless Nie and his group.

Nameless Nie turned around and looked at Jiang Yan without the slightest change in his expression.

"Rob? I'm moving my brother-in-law's things. What the h*ll does it have to do with you?"

"That's right! Our captain is Tangtang's real uncle, and Lord Asura is Tangtang's real dad, so what if we move some things? Is there something wrong with that, huh?!" Taoist Devotee vehemently nodded in agreement.

"My Lord..."

Jiang Yan looked at the man next to him.

"What? Is there a problem, Brother-In-Law?" Nameless Nie asked Si Yehan.

Nameless Nie addressing him as "Brother-In-Law" caused Si Yehan's eyes to flicker, and the man calmly said, "Let them move our things."

"Huh?"

Jiang Yan was dumbfounded. The items Nameless Nie and his group were moving were goods they were about to trade with several other factions...

But his Lord was going to let them take them just like this?!

“Great, Brother-In-Law! I’ll bring Tangtang here to play with you for a few days soon!” Nameless Nie waved at Si Yehan after getting into his car.

“Will he really bring Young Master here?”

Jiang Yan looked incredibly doubtful.

Si Yehan didn’t say anything to that and turned to leave.

...

The Nie family...

Ye Wanwan looked at Tangtang, her eyes turning before she asked, “Tangtang, do you want to see Daddy?”

“Daddy?”

Tangtang thought about it before replying, “That’s fine.”

Ye Wanwan: “...”

He really was Si Yehan’s real son without a doubt!

“Then go tell Grandpa and Grandma that you’re going to school... You mustn’t slip up, alright?” Ye Wanwan carefully instructed.

“En.”

“Then I’ll bring you to see Daddy, okay?” Ye Wanwan smiled.

“Okay.” Tangtang nodded.

Chapter 2084: He wasn’t certain

That afternoon, Ye Wanwan lied and said she was taking Tangtang to school when in reality, she had Nameless Nie escort Tangtang to Asura’s headquarters.

She could use Tangtang as a breakthrough to Patriarch and Madam Nie. If Tangtang got along with Si Yehan, she believed her parents couldn’t bear to separate Tangtang from his father.

Of course, Patriarch and Madam Nie couldn’t make decisions about her life for her, but older people had to be sweet-talked. It shouldn’t be too difficult for her family to be whole and harmonious.

After Tangtang agreed, Ye Wanwan and Tangtang operated separately. One went to Si Yehan’s place while the other stayed at home to appease her parents.

...

At Asura’s headquarters:

Jiang Yan was squatting in a corner with his weapon tossed to the side. He had maintained this position for a whole day already.

Ever since he saw that DNA test result, his life and beliefs collapsed.

Lin Que looked at Jiang Yan's closed-off state with an unsurprised expression. He walked over and sympathetically clapped the other man on the shoulder. "Ey, Little Red Red, what did I say? I reminded you to not offend that girl before! Great; you've completely offended the future Mrs. Asura. If that girl casually whispered something to our Lord during pillow-talk, what would happen to you?"

Jiang Yan leaped up instantly. "Stop your nonsense! Our Lord absolutely isn't that kind of muddle-headed person!"

Lin Que raised his brows. "Oh? Are you certain? Look into my eyes and say it again."

Jiang Yan: "..."

This insinuating retort instantly turned Jiang Yan into a punctured balloon.

I'm... not certain...

At that moment, a guard came to report that Nameless Nie had arrived again.

As soon as Jiang Yan heard that, he was charged again and immediately rushed out.

"Why are you here again?! I've already locked the warehouse with several dozen specially-made locks, so don't bother thinking about opening it!"

Jiang Yan was trembling with anger as he looked at Nameless Nie. He swore to the heavens that he never wanted to see this most money-hungry oddball in the Nie family's history ever again.

"Are you blind?" Nameless Nie gestured to Tangtang standing next to him with his eyes. "Can't you see I'm here to drop Tangtang off to see my brother-in-law?"

"Young Master?"

Jiang Yan finally saw Tangtang. He was seized by anger as soon as he saw Nameless Nie, so he didn't notice anything else.

"It really is Young Master..."

Jiang Yan was astonished by this. He never expected this fool to really bring Young Master here!

Jiang Yan didn't think Nameless Nie really meant it when he said it.

Only then did Jiang Yan's expression improve. At least Nameless Nie kept his word.

"Remember to tell my brother-in-law that I spoiled this child too rotten at home, so as the dad, he can't indulge him and must beat him when necessary!" Nameless Nie added.

Tangtang's icy gaze landed on Nameless Nie.

Jiang Yan's lips slightly twitched. *?Is he a real uncle...?*

Nameless Nie probably didn't send Tangtang there to allow the father and son to meet; it was... to let his Lord discipline the Young Master, right?!

"You're such a chicken. You even locked the warehouse with specially-made locks? Tell my brother-in-law that the goods last time were merely my compensation for all these years; they don't count as a betrothal gift!"

Nameless Nie continued with a purse of his lips.

Before Jiang Yan could respond, under Tangtang's threatening gaze, Nameless Nie chuckled awkwardly and disappeared without a trace.

Only Tangtang and Jiang Yan were left in front of Asura's headquarters as well as some of Asura's guards.

Chapter 2085: Father and son interaction

Jiang Yan stared at his Lord's son, who suddenly popped out of nowhere, and took a deep breath to calm himself down. He then smiled faintly and said, "Young Master, his Lord is reading over documents right now and hasn't finished his work yet. Are you hungry? How about I take you to grab a bite first, Young Master? After his Lord is finished working..."

Although he still couldn't accept the fact that the vixen contaminated his Lord, he couldn't help but act reverently toward this miniature version of his Lord.

"Take me to see my Daddy now," Tangtang expressionlessly ordered.

Jiang Yan: "...? *Didn't I say my Lord is busy right now?*

"Young Master, your father, he's..."

Tangtang frowned lightly and interrupted Jiang Yan: "Do I need to repeat myself a second time?"

Jiang Yan: "..."

Jiang Yan was certain that this young master of the Nie family was absolutely his Lord's biological son without a doubt! From his tone of speech to his mannerisms, he was basically a copy of his Lord!

"Um... Alright."

Helpless to do anything else, Jiang Yan could only guide Tangtang toward Lord Asura's study.

Halfway there, Jiang Yan looked at Tangtang and suggested, "Young Master, this path is difficult to walk on. How about I carry you?"

"No need." Tangtang shook his head.

"Um... how about I hold your hand?" Jiang Yan offered.

Tangtang glanced at Jiang Yan. Although Tangtang's face didn't change a smidgen, his black eyes were brimming with unconcealed disdain.

Jiang Yan wanted to cry. Did all the children nowadays not require adults to hold their hands? He was actually disdained by his Young Master.

Soon, Jiang Yan arrived in front of Lord Asura's study with Tangtang and knocked on the door.

However, he didn't receive any response.

"My Lord, Young Master is here!" Jiang Yan explained.

A few seconds later, the door to the study was finally opened. The man stood by the door, his eyes landing on Tangtang.

Almost simultaneously, the father and son duo met each other's eyes, but they stayed silent for a long time without speaking.

Next to them, Jiang Yan felt a bit awkward. Wasn't this father and son duo's style of interaction a bit strange?

"Come in." Si Yehan took Tangtang's hand and led him inside the study.

Jiang Yan followed behind them, wanting to use this opportunity to make some reports. Before he could enter the office though, the door was slammed shut with a *bang*.

Inside the office, Tangtang sat on the side while Si Yehan continued to read his documents.

"Where's your mom?" Si Yehan asked as he read the document in hand without looking away.

"At home," Tangtang replied while looking at Si Yehan.

"En." Si Yehan then proceeded to work.

"Are you hungry?"

A moment later, Si Yehan spoke again.

"I've eaten," Tangtang responded.

After that, the father and son duo entered an odd silence again.

When Si Yehan finished going over the documents, it was late at night already.

During that period of time, Si Yehan had Jiang Yan send some food to them.

"Are you tired?" Si Yehan asked Tangtang as he set his pen on the desk.

"I'm fine," Tangtang replied.

"Time to rest."

Si Yehan stood up and took Tangtang's hand before leading him outside the study.

About 15 minutes later, Si Yehan arrived at his bedroom with Tangtang in tow.

"Do you know how to shower by yourself?" Si Yehan questioned.

“I do.”

Tangtang nodded and turned to enter the bathroom.

“Didn’t you not know before?”

Chapter 2086: The scene turned a bit awkward

Back in China, it was Wanwan who helped him shower every time.

Tangtang stoically shook his head. “I know now.”

“...” Si Yehan didn’t say anything and set a new toothbrush and clean towels on the washstand.

A moment later, Si Yehan opened the wardrobe.

If Ye Wanwan was there, she would definitely be speechless with surprise. Si Yehan’s wardrobe was actually comprised of children’s clothes entirely and some toys too!

Si Yehan quietly took out a pair of pajamas and placed them on the bed before returning to the bathroom.

“Come here.”

Si Yehan stopped by the washstand and called out to Tangtang.

Tangtang walked toward Si Yehan without any hesitation.

Si Yehan pulled out a hair dryer and put it on low mode before starting to blow-dry Tangtang’s hair for him lightly.

“Daddy, do you know how to use a hairdryer?”

Tangtang frowned. Why was all the hot air from the hair dryer blowing on his face?

“First time.” Si Yehan was expressionless.

“Then how do you blow dry your hair?” Tangtang asked.

However, Si Yehan didn’t answer this question. After he amateurishly finished blow-drying Tangtang’s hair, he led Tangtang back to the bedroom.

Si Yehan picked up the pajamas he lay on the bed and handed them to Tangtang.

“Do you know how to put them on?”

“I don’t want them.” Tangtang furrowed his brows as he contemptuously stared at the cute-looking pajamas his dad was holding.

Si Yehan glanced at the pajamas in his hand with a frown. He clearly picked them according to this guy’s previous preferences.

In China, Tangtang liked it a lot whenever Wanwan picked these pajamas for him.

Si Yehan walked to the wardrobe and opened it.

“Choose,” Si Yehan calmly said.

“Too high. I can’t see,” Tangtang replied.

Si Yehan stood in his spot silently for a moment before bending down and picking Tangtang up.

“Choose,” Si Yehan repeated.

...

In the end, Tangtang chose a pair of rather normal-looking pajamas.

At that moment, Si Yehan’s phone started ringing. It was Ye Wanwan calling.

“Hey, baby!”

Ye Wanwan’s soft and sweet voice emitted from the other end.

Tangtang sharply caught his Mommy’s voice from the phone, and his little ears instantly perked up. He was originally sitting far, far away from Si Yehan but dashed toward Si Yehan at once.

Si Yehan glanced at the little fella and sent his son a look that said “Your Mommy’s calling me” before answering, “Hey?”

The little fella’s cheeks puffed up, and he peered at the man with displeasure.

Ye Wanwan said, “My brother sent Tangtang to your place, right? I told my parents that I sent Tangtang to a teacher, so you can spend some time with Tangtang.”

Si Yehan: “Sure.”

Under his son’s accusatory gaze, Si Yehan turned on the speakerphone and knelt down too.

On the other end of the phone, Ye Wanwan worriedly inquired, “How are you two getting along?”

Si Yehan answered, “We’re getting along great.”

“No, I’m not good. Daddy’s lying,” Tangtang interjected.

Tangtang then proceeded to launch into a series of complaints about how he didn’t eat well or dress well and how his Daddy didn’t even know how to blow-dry his hair.

Si Yehan: “...”

Ye Wanwan: “...”

Ye Wanwan sounded exasperated. “I thought you got some experience caring for a child while we were in China...”

“...I originally also thought I had some experience,” Si Yehan responded.

However, the reality was the complete opposite of his imagination.

Just what gave him the misconception that this child was easy to take care of?

But when Wanwan was there, Tangtang was clearly easy to take care of...

Chapter 2087: That popping candy time

Si Yehan's fingers tightened around his phone as he listened to Wanwan's voice. He had countless thoughts to say, countless questions to ask, but he couldn't form a single word. "Wanwan..."

Ye Wanwan: "What?"

Si Yehan dazedly stared at the little fella next to him—this child that she birthed for him. "Tangtang... is my child?"

Ye Wanwan rolled her eyes. "Try asking me again? Look at your son's face and try to ask me again!"

Si Yehan stopped speaking after glancing at his son.

When he saw Tangtang that first time, it wasn't that obvious and he merely thought Tangtang's brows resembled Wanwan. However, a child had a different appearance every day, and Tangtang did resemble him more and more after such a long time had passed...

But how...

Si Yehan's voice was hoarse. "When?"

When did she have Tangtang? He didn't know anything...

At the mention of this, Ye Wanwan felt a bit guilty. In truth, this matter was also her fault since she seemed to have purposely hidden it from him.

Calculating from Tangtang's birthday, Tangtang was conceived the first time she and Si Yehan got together...

Since she was a ball of anxiety and exhaustion from her parents' barrage, she hadn't told Si Yehan that she recovered her memories yet.

"Ah... that one time..." Ye Wanwan cleared her throat.

Ye Wanwan reminded him, "That one time you were bribed by me with a bag of popping candy..."

Tangtang tilted his head, puzzled. He was conceived from Daddy being bribed by Mommy with popping candies?

The second Ye Wanwan's words hit, those ancient, dusty memories all rushed before his eyes.

How did she know...

Si Yehan's eyes shot open, and his voice was hoarse and dry. "You... remembered..."

Ye Wanwan narrowed her eyes. "Uh-huh! Not only do I remember, but I also remember every single detail! I thought everything was my wishful thinking and you received one-sided dogged harassment

from me back then! I thought I brutishly ravaged you! I thought I forcefully debauched you! So I felt pretty bad the whole time. Who knew? It turns out you were a wolf in sheep's clothing and kept playing hard to get and tricking me in all sorts of ways? Aren't you too crafty?!"

Ye Wanwan couldn't stop her universe from exploding when this was brought up.

As Si Yehan listened to the girl running through these memories word by word, he felt like something lost from his heart was slowly returning to his body bit by bit, swelling him up.

"How could it be forced... From start to end... it was me who methodically tried to keep you... it was me... who couldn't live without you..."

The man's hoarse voice came from the other end and extinguished all of Ye Wanwan's anger instantly, leaving behind a pile of ash.

*F*ck! That should be illegal!*

"Who allowed you to suddenly start sweet-talking me out of nowhere... I'm telling you... it doesn't work on me..." Ye Wanwan grumbled.

"After you left, I kept waiting for you at home. I was afraid you wouldn't find me when you returned," Si Yehan said.

*"...!!!"?D*mn! Illegal!!!*

"Wanwan, I want to see you."

When Ye Wanwan heard his repressed voice, she didn't even have a speck of ash left and flowers started popping and blooming everywhere. "Do you think I don't? My dad and mom are both keeping me under tight lock and key right now. I was only able to send Tangtang over because I spent money to bribe my brother..."

Si Yehan squeezed his phone, knowing he was too impulsive this time. "I will think of a method."

In view of his performance in front of her parents last time, Ye Wanwan expressed her doubts.

...

Chapter 2088: Si Xia

At the same time, a swab of dark clouds dispersed, revealing an island located on the northern side of the Independent State, seemingly secluded from the rest of the world. It silently towered there like a gigantic, torrential beast that wanted to devour every living being that passed. The gales were the roars of the beast, striking terror in its listeners' hearts.

The enormous island stretched as far as the eye could see. There were many intersecting dirt roads and an enormous prison in the center sealed off by specially-made iron fences. No one could enter; no one could leave.

Currently, a young man was using a hoe to dig away the dirt on the exterior, as though he wanted to excavate a tunnel out of the prison with the might of one.

“Hahaha, lad, you haven’t been here for too long. When you’ve been here longer, you’ll get used to it.”

“That’s right. If we could get out by digging like you, we would’ve left ages ago. Why would we have waited until now?”

On the side, a few middle-aged men looked at the young man and spoke up in exasperation.

Hearing that, the young man smashed his hoe into the ground with tinges of despair.

“Lad, what’s your name?” the leader of the middle-aged men inquired.

The young man was silent for a moment before slowly looking up. “Si Xia.”

“Si Xia?”

The men looked at each other. His surname was Si...

“Don’t tell me you’re a member of the Si clan?!”

The only people in the Independent State with the surname Si originated from the Si clan.

“Heh, how am I considered a member of the Si clan?”

Si Xia’s lips curled up in a bitter smile.

“Brother Si Xia, just what happened? How did you get captured here?” the lead man asked Si Xia with a furrow of his brows.

This place was the land of despair.

Everyone thought the Martial Arts Union possessed an underground prison and the deepest level held the most vicious, evil, and serious criminals. However... this place—this was the true location of the Martial Arts Union’s scariest prison.

“My father’s name in the Independent State is probably Si Wutian,” Si Xia uttered after some time.

“Si Wutian? Isn’t he the egregious traitor from the Si clan...? You’re his son?”

The middle-aged men all looked surprised.

Si Wutian had some degree of fame in the Independent State back then. His fame increased especially after he was expelled from the Si clan.

However, in recent years, Si Wutian seemed to have left the Independent State and vanished without a trace.

“Originally, I came to the Independent State to find my father and followed the clues to the Si clan. However, they claimed I was a son of a sinner and instructed the Martial Arts Union to lock me into this wretched place.” Si Xia’s eyes shone coldly.

After learning his story, the middle-aged men sighed. If that was the case, it was already an incredible fortune that the Si clan didn't kill Si Xia on the spot. There wasn't much to complain about.

...

Suddenly, a boiling cauldron of voices invaded the island.

There was news released that someone saw Ji Xiuran—Emperor Ji—on the island earlier.

“Even Emperor Ji got captured to this deplorable place? How's that possible?!”

“I can't believe it. Even a figure like Ji Xiuran was...”

“It wasn't only Emperor Ji! There's also the leader of Heavenly Owl, Haitang¹!”

“Heavenly Owl?! The Fearless Alliance's elder brother?! Even Haitang got captured...?”

“Both Emperor Ji and Heavenly Owl are the most superior powers in the Independent State! How could that be?!”

“Heh, it appears the Independent State will really have a change of weather.”

...

In a shabby, dim jail where the smell of mold permeated the air:

A man's good-looking face was ghastly pale without a trace of blood.

A woman stared at the man, her brows locked together.

Chapter 2089: Suffering every day

“Master Li, Xiuran's body...”

The leader of Heavenly Owl, Haitang, looked at the white-haired elderly man who was conducting an examination on the man.

“There isn't any medical equipment here, so I'm unable to examine him in detail, but my preliminary calculation is that he probably only has a few months at most,” Master Li replied with a shake of his head and a sigh.

“This...” Haitang stared at Ji Xiuran, unable to imagine that this man was about to pass from this world.

“It's fine.” A placid smile spread across the man's pale face. “I've gained enough already.”

“Truthfully, you should know, Haitang, that Emperor Ji's situation is considered a miracle already.” Master Li shook his head.

“Back then, it was me who diagnosed Emperor Ji's terminal illness and judged that he would only have two to three years left at most. The fact that Emperor Ji was able to prolong his life until today and survive relied entirely on unimaginable willpower. The price for this willpower was that he had to endure unimaginable pain every single day,” Master Li lamented.

“Heh, I didn’t expect you to have entered this place with Haitang, Master Li,” Ji Xiuran remarked.

“That day, Master Li was enjoying some tea with me, so he encountered this undeserved calamity. I feel rather apologetic.” Haitang turned to Master Li.

“What are you saying, Haitang? Whether I’m captured or not would make no difference to me. How much longer can a bag of old bones like me possibly dwell on this earth? I’ll eventually turn into a skeleton, so I don’t mind,” Master Li responded.

“Master Li... Is Xiuran’s illness incurable?” Haitang asked with a frown.

Master Li was silent for a moment before shaking his head. “To Emperor Ji right now, every day might be painful, right?”

“It’s bearable. Don’t worry,” Ji Xiuran assured Haitang with a light chuckle.

“Emperor Ji, Haitang, I’m going to go out first to examine the conditions here.”

After Master Li fixed Ji Xiuran’s clothing, he stood up and left the jail.

The jails here were tantamount to decorations. They weren’t locked, and you could enter and leave as you wish, serving as living quarters essentially. It was this entire island that was the true prison.

...

“Unimaginable willpower. Is it because of Worriless, Xiuran?”

After Master Li left, Haitang turned to this man, whose perpetual smile still hung on his face.

Even though he learned his time on this earth was limited and he needed to consume a large quantity of medicine every day and suffer from pain unimaginable to normal people, his face still wore that extremely infectious smile.

“Is it Worriless that’s allowed you to persevere until today? Is it because you couldn’t accept not finding her?” Haitang sighed.

Ji Xiuran grew silent.

“Why?” A long while later, Haitang looked at Ji Xiuran. “You should know Worriless better than me, no?”

“And?” Ji Xiuran asked.

“Back then, you were diagnosed with a terminal illness by Master Li... so you intentionally distanced yourself from Worriless. You loved her so much and considered her your life. Why didn’t you tell her the truth? Why did you hurt her so thoroughly and distance her from you?” Haitang said.

“Worriless...?” Ji Xiuran sank into thought between responding, “I merely consider her a younger sister.”

“Younger sister?” Haitang shook her head. “Have you started fooling yourself too now?”

Ji Xiuran smiled faintly and fell into silence.

“You know you wouldn’t have much longer to live, so you intentionally alienated her and distanced her from yourself. Do you think I didn’t know? You were unwilling to hurt her, so you chose to suffer by yourself. And last time, you clashed with Lord Asura at the Shen Estate.”

Chapter 2090: Is it worth it?

“The real reason was... your heart ached, right? You nearly lost all rationality,” Haitang finished exasperatedly.

“Lord Asura, is it? He should be someone worthy of being entrusted with her for the rest of her life,” Ji Xiuran murmured softly some time later.

“Was it worth it?” Haitang asked a long while later.

“What do you think?” Ji Xiuran narrowed his eyes.

“Regardless of how entrustable someone else is, he’s still not you.” Haitang stared at Ji Xiuran—this man who she couldn’t understand at all.

“Pah!”

Suddenly, Ji Xiuran spat out a mouthful of fresh blood.

“Are you okay?”

Haitang shot forward to support Ji Xiuran.

Ji Xiuran was silent for a moment before slowly standing up. He shook his head and said, “I... don’t have time.”

“As Master Li said, right now... you suffer every day, right... Your strong willpower comes from Worriless... Now that Worriless has returned, your wish is fulfilled, right? You persisted for so long just so you could see Worriless again...” An indescribable emotion broiled in Haitang’s eyes.

Ji Xiuran continued to stay silent.

“With your body’s current condition, you can’t attack at all. However, you exchanged blows with Lord Asura last time... You’re killing yourself. If it weren’t for that time, your body wouldn’t have deteriorated this much,” Haitang said.

“It’s all the same.” Ji Xiuran shook his head. “I said I don’t have much time left.”

“When they captured me, my illness happened to act up... Coming here, I consider it my last act... for Worriless.”

The man trudged his way outside the cell, his face ashen.

Staring after Ji Xiuran’s departing figure, Haitang didn’t say a word.

Just what did this man want to do? With his crippled body, what could he do currently?

Haitang finally stood up as well and followed Ji Xiuran.

Elsewhere on the island, in an extremely dilapidated room:

Ji Xiuran slowly entered the room.

“Emperor Ji!”

The dozen or so men and women all stood up upon spotting Ji Xiuran.

“Xiuran, how did you get captured here?”

The leader—an apathetic man—stared at Ji Xiuran and asked with a frown.

The speaker was one of the Eight Gods under Emperor Ji, the first god.

No one had ever seen the First God and no one knew that this First God had landed on this island many, many years ago.

“Don’t ask unnecessary questions. How’s the investigation?” Ji Xiuran asked instead.

“The Martial Arts Union. They must want to dominate the Independent State...” a woman answered after a while.

“Continue,” Ji Xiuran said.

The First God replied, “On this island, we discovered the Direct Line and the Martial Arts Union have joined forces...”

“Emperor Ji, you should also know that the Direct Line has started retaliating these last few years. They secretly persuaded every patrician family to defect and everyone who was unwilling to submit and pledge allegiance ended up assassinated later,” the woman said with a frown.

“The Martial Arts Union is behind all of this. Their ambitions will probably send the Independent State into unrest.”

Ji Xiuran closed his eyes and considered it for a moment before shaking his head. “Not necessarily.”

It was true that the Martial Arts Union was connected to the Direct Line, but they might not really be obeying the Direct Line.

“Emperor Ji, you mean...”

“The Martial Arts Union, huh... Interesting.”

Ji Xiuran smiled faintly. “Perhaps the Martial Arts Union is protecting everyone.”

The people looked at each other, bewildered.

The Martial Arts Union?

Protect everyone?

“Most of the factions on this island oppose the Direct Line. If the Martial Arts Union was obeying the Direct Line, what they would’ve done is kill us, not imprison us,” Ji Xiuran quietly explained.