

The Gods 1891

Chapter 1891 - Fragments (1)

“Lingxi, I want to show you something.”

Xiao Lingxi was about to ask what when a pitch black slate suddenly appeared in Yun Che’s hands.

The moment her eyes made contact with the object, her heart suddenly shook like it had been struck full force by a giant hammer. Her inquiry never made it past her lips.

“This... is...” Even as she spoke, it felt as if her eyes and her mind had flown somewhere else.

“The Heaven Smiting Devil Emperor gave it to Meiyin before she left, and Meiyin to me afterward,” Yun Che said. “The engravings on the slate are probably—”

Suddenly, the seemingly inert, pitch black slate shone with a dark, devilish light.

“...” Yun Che cut himself off. It was the same anomaly as before, but it still stunned him nonetheless.

The light scattered quickly into several thousand smaller beams, but they didn’t travel into the distance. Instead, they paused unnaturally in the air before taking the form of many odd words.

It was the Divine Text of Absolute Beginning!

Xiao Lingxi stared at the strange, floating words dazedly. She mumbled, “It’s... the World-Defying Heavenly Manual again.”

The first time she saw the World-Defying Heavenly Manual, she had been surprised and perplexed by it. But now, her emotions felt a lot flightier and more difficult to describe.

Also, unlike the last time, the color of the floating text was pitch black. It could be the effects of the Heaven Smiting Devil Emperor’s power, or maybe it had been like this from the start.

“The World-Defying Heavenly Manual was split into three parts, and this is the last one.” Yun Che said with a sigh. “Even the gods and devils of the Era of the Gods weren’t able to reunite them. That it has been during our time can only be described as a miracle.”

The first part of the World-Defying Heavenly Manual had come from the Moon Slaughter Devil Sovereign of the Eternal Night Devil Clan, an ancient devil who just barely clung to life since the disaster of the Evil Infant's Wheel of Myriad Tribulations until he was ended by Yun Che.

The second part had been discovered by Qianye Ying’er in the God Realm of Absolute Beginning.

Finally, the third part had been in the possession of the Heaven Smiting Devil Emperor, an existence who was thought to have passed away an eternity ago.

The past, the present, and the beyond.

The three parts of the World-Defying Heavenly Manual had literally existed in three separate times and spaces until they fell into Yun Che’s hands.

For the first time ever, the complete version of the Ancestral Divine Art would appear to this universe. It was a boon not even the ancient Creation Gods and the Devil Emperors had the karma to partake in.

A long time later, after Xiao Lingxi showed no signs of breaking out of her daze anytime soon, Yun Che asked in a tentative tone, “Do you still recognize these characters? The Divine Text of Absolute Beginning?”

“Mn.” Xiao Lingxi nodded subtly. “Not only do I recognize them, I feel like I’ve seen this somewhere... even though I know that I’ve never seen them before.”

Yun Che: “... !?”

Xiao Lingxi slowly recited, “At the beginning of heaven’s end and the eternity of earth’s depths, the universe came to be, and the way stretches forever...”

“The lightning ached, the thunder severed, the cold labored, the ice perished, the wind mourned, the cloud grieved, the mountain sorrowed, stone lamented, the flame wept, the blaze sobbed; light and darkness fusing seamlessly only to return to nothing in the end...”

Xiao Lingxi’s slow, soft words flowed into his ears. Not a sliver of profound energy could be detected in her voice, but it easily intruded into the deepest corners of his mind and soul just like before.

Yun Che’s eyes were shut before he realized it. Not only that, his consciousness had, uncaring of his will at all, automatically blocked out all other sensory information and put him under a unique state of emptiness.

In this emptiness, there was only Xiao Lingxi’s voice and the Ancestral Divine Art that was slowly but surely growing complete with every word she spoke.

“... a heart spawns countless thoughts, but all thoughts eventually run out of desire, and the lack of desire leads to nothingness. However, nothingness creates countless spirits, and countless spirits nurture countless hearts... Man is not self, but self becomes more like Man as a result... The beginning of heaven, the end of earth, the creation of Primal Chaos, the conclusion of samsara... one way or another, it all returns to nothing...”

Xiao Lingxi didn’t notice Yun Che’s condition at all. She kept speaking even as her eyes grew more unfocused, her expression turned solid, and her voice steadied to the point where it was almost perfectly even and emotionless.

The World-Defying Heavenly Manual—the Ancestral Divine Art was unfolding in her mind and soul at the same rate as it crept toward completion in Yun Che’s...

In the sky, Mu Xuanyin was caught by hesitation after Yun Che and Xiao Longxi had entered their unnatural state. Worried as she was, she didn’t dare to approach them.

Moreover, Xiao Lingxi’s words were going in one ear and out the other. She couldn’t remember a single word even though she heard them clearly.

“This... is the World-Defying Heavenly Manual?” Mu Xuanyin whispered to herself.

“... Lightless is dark, darkless is light. Pathless is path, lawless is law. Only nothingness is endless and eternal.”

When the final word left Xiao Lingxi’s lips, the devilish light suddenly dispersed, and the pitch black Divine Text of Absolute Beginning vanished like it was never there. All that was left was the pitch black and inert slate sitting on Yun Che’s knees.

The color in Xiao Lingxi’s eyes suddenly dissipated. Her pupils vanished bit by bit as endless gray and white devoured the world before her eyes.

Suddenly, a blurry image appeared in the grayish white world. When she subconsciously tried to see what it was, a dozen more images appeared in the world. Their number quickly grew to a hundred, a thousand, a million, a billion...

The infinite images that appeared quickly and without warning easily blew apart Xiao Lingxi’s fragile soul sea. Her crumbling consciousness couldn’t sense it, but her body was falling back toward the floor.

Yun Che never noticed it from the start until the end.

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What was nothingness?

Every animate and inanimate object in the universe was born from nothing, ended in nothing, evolved from nothing, and dissolved into nothing. It was the beginning and the end of everything.

What was the Law of Nothingness?

Yun Che was the only person in the universe who possessed it.

However, he couldn’t even begin to explain what it was.

It was thanks to the Law of Nothingness that he was able to absorb the energy of a profound crystal and even a profound beast’s profound core directly as his strength. It was why he could take control of any king realm’s lost divine artifact or divine origin power by force despite not having the necessary lineage.

Common sense and basic laws simply didn’t apply to him.

He didn’t know how to circulate the Law of Nothingness. He couldn’t even sense it in his power or his body.

However, it didn’t stop him from doing impossible things such as achieving his current cultivation, outright ignoring the basic rules of the universe in many cases and more. It all came naturally to him.

To give an example, it was like his eyes suddenly but naturally grew the ability to identify a new and never-before-seen color. He didn’t need to learn, practice, study, use anything or employ any outside help at all.

He had never been able to study the Ancestral Divine Art Xiao Lingxi had kindly interpreted for him. He didn’t even know how to begin to do so. However, it didn’t stop him from suddenly—but naturally—gaining some sort of supernatural and rule-breaking ability afterward.

Not only that, the World-Defying Heavenly Manual had thrown him into weird and inexplicable dreams every time it worked its power on him, and this time was no exception.

Right now, Yun Che was contending with all kinds of strange “dream” fragments in his mind:

“Yuanba, you’re really way too awesome. Grandfather said that you’re the number one genius in Floating Cloud City, a genius that our Floating Cloud City might not produce again even after a thousand years. He also said that you might very well shake up the entire Blue Wind Nation in the future... I really really envy you.”

“Heh heh!... actually, I’m the one who envies you! You already have a little aunt and you can do everything together. But as for me, Mother passed away early and I’m the only person in the house, I don’t even have any brothers or sisters. If I had a big brother or sister... or even a little brother or sister, then I wouldn’t feel so lonely and bored anymore.”

“Then ask Uncle Xia to marry a few new concubines so that you can have lots of brothers and sisters.”

“My father just doesn’t want to. Every year, there are many people who are trying to get my father to take new concubines, but my father won’t relent no matter what.”

“...”

It was a familiar dream Yun Che had dropped into.

There was a marked difference, however. Previously, the “dreams” were blurry, ephemeral, and almost impossible to recall besides some bits and pieces. It was why he had paid them little to no attention previously. Dreams were naturally illogical and fleeting.

This time though, he was completely awake even though he was supposed to be dreaming.

Unlike the previous dreams, this one felt so clear that it was like he was actually present at the scene.

This time, he also had a clear view of Xia Yuanba’s dream appearance.

The Yun Che in the dream looked exactly like what he was in reality, but Xia Yuanba... the young boy looked to be around ten years old, and he was one year younger than Yun Che. However, he was about half a head taller, and his physique was unnaturally thin.

It was completely different from the brawny Xia Yuanba he remembered!

Moreover, his thinness wasn’t the skinniness of a ten-year-old. He looked thin only because there was little to no fat in his body. It was the kind of muscular physique that only a trained person could acquire.

It almost felt like every cell in his body was hibernating or something. They were just waiting for a great power to awaken them all.

Ten years old. He was just ten years old.

Yun Che hadn’t exactly led a long life, but he had never seen a body like this!

Even better, Yun Che’s soul shivered for an instant when he met Xia Yuanba’s eyes.

His young features were etched with concern and determination for dream Yun Che... but his eyes also contained a kind of power that pierced the soul itself.

Yun Che wasn't the fragile young man of Floating Cloud City he used to be. He was the man who defeated the greatest profound practitioner ever to stand at the pinnacle of the universe. There was nothing and no one that could threaten him anymore.

However, the hidden light in young Xia Yuanba's eyes had caused tremors in his soul. Him, the great emperor of the God Realm!

He was very familiar with Xia Yuanba's Tyrannical Emperor's Divine Veins. It was an incredibly rare talent even in the God Realm, so much so that he would've become a realm king had he been born in an upper star realm.

However... the divine light in this Xia Yuanba's eyes was far stronger than even the real Yuanba's eyes after he had awakened his veins.

It was... beyond even the supernatural body he had been gifted by the Tyrannical Emperor's Divine Veins.

Forget seeing it, he didn't think this extraordinary physique was even recorded in the long history of the God Realm.

If he had to make a comparison...

He would say that it was at least on par with the female-only talent, the "Heart of Snow Glazed Glass".

Yun Che stared at the "dream" Xia Yuanba with the clearest eyes and coolest mind since he began having these dreams. At just the young age of ten years old, Xia Yuanba possessed a thin but unnaturally muscular physique, a talent that exceeded even the Tyrannical Emperor's Divine Veins, and a completely different future...

However, he neither had an older sister nor any siblings whatsoever.

Why was his dream warped like this?

Why was it happening again?

And why did it all feel so eerily real!?

Chapter 1892 - Fragments (2)

A new dream fragment entered his consciousness.

In this dream, Yun Che—still a ten-year-old child—was sitting next to Xiao Lingxi and listening to Xiao Lie describing a familiar story in a warm tone:

"Back then, not long after Che'er had been born, Governor Situ's daughter was born. However, due to the illness of the governor's wife, when the child was born, she was very weak and on the brink of death."

“If her life was to be saved, they needed someone who was at least at the Spirit Profound Realm to even have a chance. One could count the number of people who had reached the Spirit Profound Realm in Floating Cloud City with their fingers, and every single one of these people possessed extraordinary status. In order to save her, they would definitely harm their own foundations. As a result, nearly every one of them was unmoved despite the governor’s desperate begging.”

“The only exception was Ying’er. He risked serious harm to himself and nearly exhausted all of his profound strength to stabilize that child’s vitality. As a result, she was able to survive.”

“Che’er, that was how the destined wedding between you and the governor’s daughter happened. At that time, Governor Situ was so grateful to Ying’er for saving his daughter’s life that he became sworn brothers with Ying’er there and then. Furthermore, he announced in front of everyone that his daughter would be married to Xiao Ying’s son in the future in order to repay heaven’s kindness.”

“Hmph.” Xiao Lingxi turned her nose upwards as she said in a very soft voice, “I don’t like that Situ Xuan at all. She’s always so aloof... and she’s even like that when she sees Little Che.”

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It was another dream he had experienced before. The scenery, the words, everything was exactly the same as it was last time. The only difference was that he was perfectly conscious this time.

In this dream, the person Xiao Ying sacrificed himself to save was Situ Xuan, not Xia Qingyue.

As a result, his bride-to-be thanks to Xiao Ying’s heroism also became Situ Xuan, not Xia Qingyue.

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Another dream fragment entered his consciousness. This time, it was the figure of a girl.

“Stand right there, Xiao Che!”

She was a tall and slim woman dressed in luxurious clothing. She looked around fifteen or sixteen years old, but she was pretty in a way that didn’t fit her age because she had heavy makeup.

For the current Yun Che, it was utterly beneath him to even allow a woman like her to hold his gaze for an instant. That being said, she was perfectly attractive to a young man who hadn’t yet begun to broaden his horizons.

At the very least, it was clear that his dream self—he was still Xiao Che at this time—was just barely keeping a lid on his nervousness.

“Miss Situ,” Yun Che replied politely. This was the first time ever Situ Xuan had taken the initiative to speak with him, so he could barely conceal his excitement and joy.

The name “Situ Xuan” had appeared multiple times in his dreams.

In his actual memory, Situ Xuan was the daughter of Governor Situ and had resided in Floating Cloud City just like him. Naturally, he had met her before. But for some reason, his memories of her were so blurry that he couldn’t even recall her appearance.

He hadn't paid heed to it at the time because he was busy surviving in the God Realm when he first started having these "dreams". Why would he care about some governor's daughter he hadn't even made the acquaintance of when he was still in his birth city?

Not to mention that dreams often turned out to be completely nonsensical.

This time though, he had a perfect view of Situ Xuan, and suddenly, it felt as if an invisible fog had been lifted from his head. His memories and impression of Situ Xuan suddenly became crystal clear.

In fact, they felt so clear that... it was as if he had never forgotten about her in the first place.

Situ Xuan stared at Yun Che with unconcealed arrogance and disdain. "Do you know what a toad is?"

"..." His dream self's entire body tensed like a spring. It took him several breaths before the suffocating sensation finally faded, and he regained enough cool to speak in an even tone, "Feel free to speak your mind, Miss Situ."

"..."

Despite being only fifteen years old, he had heard so many insults that he had grown numb to them. However, to hear one from Situ Xuan herself was a blow that nearly tore a hole in his mental defense.

"Hmph!" Situ Xuan side-eyed him. "Our marriage is only five months away. I'm the daughter of a governor, and yet I'm being forced to marry a complete cripple like you. Do you know how much scorn I've had to bear because of you!?"

Yun Che felt his face turning pale, so he bit his tongue to regain control of himself. "I understand. If you won't marry me, you may ask your father and my grandfather to... cancel the engagement. It isn't too late yet."

"Cancel? Do you really think I would wait until now if it was possible!?" Situ Xuan's voice grew increasingly shrill. "The entire city knows your dead dad saved my life when I was born!"

"My dad has sworn to wed us before countless people!"

"If your dad was still alive, then it would've been fine. We could've negotiated a different way to repay our favor. But no, not only is he dead, it is rumored that half the reason he died was because he exhausted himself to save me! My dad would be called an ingrate for the rest of his life if he cancels the engagement now!"

"The Situ Family is a venerated family. Its dignity will not suffer for the likes of you," Situ Xuan said slowly. "Don't worry though. My dad won't cancel the engagement, and neither will I."

Her eyes suddenly took on a disgusting flavor. "You are a cripple, but you're not completely useless. After all, you do have quite the handsome appearance. If nothing else, you are very qualified to be a boy toy."

"..." Yun Che's mental defense finally collapsed, and his features began spasming uncontrollably.

"Since we met by chance today, I may as well tell you about the future." Situ Xuan's half-narrowed eyes were colored in three-tenths disdain and seven-tenths playfulness. The bad kind. "You will learn to be..."

obedient during these last couple months. If your performance pleases me, you may even enjoy a somewhat good life after we get married. Otherwise... let's just say that your crippled body may not be strong enough to stand my teachings."

Crack!

Did he break a tooth? He probably did. Yun Che could feel a growing pool of blood in his mouth.

"Little Che!"

Suddenly, the most familiar cry in his life entered his ears. It washed away all those negative emotions that nearly crushed his soul like a pure spring.

Seemingly satisfied with Yun Che's tortured but suppressed expression, Situ Xuan shot him one last arrogant smirk before turning away.

It wasn't long before a girl who looked as lithe as a colorful butterfly appeared beside Yun Che. She looked at the departing Situ Xuan and exclaimed in surprise, "Is that Situ Xuan? Were you talking to her just now?"

Yun Che looked at the girl clinging to his arm. Just a few breaths ago, his shame and anger felt tangible enough to burst out of his chest. However, the large majority of it disappeared the second his gaze made contact with her countenance.

There were countless people inside or outside the Xiao Clan who insulted him for his disability. He had gotten used to it a long time ago.

However, three people kept him going no matter how difficult things became: his grandfather, who loved him dearly and had never given up on him, his good friend Xia Yuanba, who defended him with everything he had since young, and his little aunt, who loved him so much she would search for him just because he had been out of sight for slightly over an hour.

He was already blessed to have three people who cared for him from the bottom of their hearts. What everyone else says... need not and shouldn't be the focus of his life.

That's right. From a very young age, no matter what kind of humiliation and insults he had suffered before, the mere sight and sound of Xiao Lingxi could always calm him down and satisfy him. That was all that really mattered.

"Mn." Yun Che nodded. "I think this is the first time she spoke to me of her own accord. It's not like we've never run into each other before, but she has never acknowledged me before now."

"Eh? Really?" Xiao Lingxi's surprise grew. "What did she say to you?"

"Nothing. It was just about the arrangements after the wedding," Yun Che said in a casual tone. He was never going to repeat Situ Xuan's words to Xiao Lingxi because the last thing he wanted to see was her angry, sorrowful face.

The second last thing he wanted to see would be his grandfather's expression after hearing this.

I see.” Xiao Lingxi’s voice softened, and a tinge of something that even she herself didn’t notice entered her gaze. “There have been a lot of weird rumors in the city for the past two years. They all say that Situ Xuan would do everything in her power to cancel the engagement. I guess rumors were just rumors after all, huh?”

“Of course rumors are just rumors.” Yun Che chuckled. “The governor won’t cancel the engagement... that’s what Situ Xuan said to me herself.”

“Mn. That’s good. I’m sure dad will be happy to hear this.”

That was what she said, but Xiao Lingxi didn’t feel happy at all even though she was one of the people who detested the rumors the most.

“Did... did you speak with Situ Xuan for a long time?” Xiao Lingxi asked. She didn’t understand why she was asking such a weird question herself.

“No. It was a very short conversation,” Yun Che replied before adding, “I don’t like talking to her. I would never even think to marry her if the engagement didn’t exist. I would rather be with you forever, little aunt.”

“Heehee!” Xiao Lingxi let out a girlish giggle before hiding her expression. “To be honest, I don’t like Situ Xuan at all, and I like the idea of the two of you marrying even less. But... that is what dad wants. He won’t be able to rest easy unless the marriage goes through.”

“Anyway, let’s go home together.” She grabbed Yun Che’s arm before continuing expectantly, “Dad hired a super duper good doctor this time. A lot of people call him a ‘medical immortal’. I’m sure... he’ll be able to cure you, Little Che!”

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Now that the fog had lifted, Yun Che could say with absolute certainty that the Situ Xuan he remembered was exactly identical to the one he was seeing in his dreams.

However, he was equally certain that these dreams didn’t match his reality. The differences were minor, but they were enough to make his dreams a completely separate reality.

That was the crux of the problem though, wasn’t it? It felt so real that it was like a separate reality. A different past that actually happened.

The scene changed again, and this time it was filled with red. Red tables, red candles, red curtains and more.

“Little Che, wake up! Today’s the day you’re getting married to Miss Situ, and it’s almost time already! Quickly!”

Xiao Lingxi insistently but gently woke him from his slumber. Later, she helped him into his red wedding clothes.

“Little Che, I made this porridge for you. You have a weak constitution, and it’s going to be a long morning, so... you should finish everything.” She brought him a ridiculously huge bowl of porridge. It smelled delicious.

“I got it, I got it.” He didn’t even bother with the spoon. He just drank the whole thing from the bowl.

After he was done, he looked at Xiao Lingxi and grew a bit misty-eyed. “I wonder if I can still eat your meals after I get married, Little Aunt.”

“Heehe, don’t forget that the governor’s daughter is marrying into your family, not the other way around. If you want, I can prepare your meals everyday just like before.”

Suddenly, her smile lessened, and she said softly, “I’m sure we’ll have less time for each other after you get married though, Little Che.”

“Of course not!” He raised his hand and swore immediately. “Didn’t I promise you yesterday that I’ll never forget about you even after I marry Situ Xuan? We’ll spend just as much time with each other as we used to, and I’ll always be there whenever you call for me!”

He would never forget how Situ Xuan looked when she spouted those ugly words at him.

There were only two reasons he was going through with this wedding. One, he wanted to fulfill his grandfather’s wish. Two, he wanted to protect his late father’s honor.

The aftermath of the wedding was sure to be ugly, but he no longer feared it one bit because Xiao Lingxi was right. No matter what happened in the future, he would still be in the Xiao Clan, and Xiao Lingxi would still be right beside him.

“Big brother! Big brother!!”

It was Xia Yuanba’s voice. He had rushed in looking like someone had lit a flame under his ass.

“Yuanba! You’re surprisingly early today.” Yun Che greeted him smilingly.

“Hehe! It’s the day of your marriage, so how can I not be around to help out?” Xia Yuanba looked incredibly excited.

In the scene, the fifteen-year-old Xia Yuanba looked extraordinarily handsome. He was still a little thin, and his skin color seemed a tad lighter than normal. This was nothing to an ordinary person, but the current Yun Che could tell that it wasn’t because Xia Yuanba hadn’t gone outdoors as of late. A sort of cold, metallic sheen was hovering right above his skin, and it was what gave him a whiter complexion.

He also noticed that the light in Xia Yuanba’s pupils had grown more repressed... but as a result, became even more piercing than before.

“So er... how does it feel like to get married? Why do I feel like you’re not very excited?” Xia Yuanba asked.

“To be honest, I am not excited. I barely care about the wedding at all.” Yun Che then stared at Xia Yuanba for a moment before saying, “You on the other hand, are unusually excited given the time of the day. It’s not just because of my wedding, is it?”

“Hehe.” Xia Yuanba’s eyes shone brightly. “I do have some good news to share. The day before yesterday, my father invited a friend of his—a teacher from New Moon Profound Palace—over to his

house. He was hoping to ask for a favor and drop me into New Moon Profound Palace. But after his friend saw me, he said that someone of my talent should just join Blue Wind Profound Palace directly!”

“Oh! That’s amazing! That’s something the entire Floating Cloud City should celebrate!” Yun Che congratulated and felt happy for Xia Yuanba from the bottom of his heart. However, he couldn’t help but feel deeply envious of his friend and sad over his own fate as well.

To the real Yun Che, he knew with that dream Xia Yuanba’s talent would’ve stunned even the king realms of the God Realm, much less the likes of Blue Wind Profound Palace.

To dream Yun Che though, even Blue Wind Profound Palace was an impossible dream to grasp.

“Hehehe...” Xian Yuanba could barely conceal his excitement. “I was so excited I haven’t slept for the past two days. When I join Blue Wind Profound Palace and become even stronger than before, I’m sure no one will ever dare to bully you again!”

“But father said that this is best kept a secret to avoid unnecessary complications, so right now you’re the only one who knows about it... oh right! For the past two years, I heard a lot of malicious rumors about Governor Situ planning to cancel your engagement and marrying Situ Xuan to the son of your clan master, Xiao Yulong instead.”

Yun Che: “...”

“I was really angry when I heard those rumors, but I didn’t tell you because I didn’t want you to worry. Thankfully, the rumors have proven themselves to be nothing but falsehoods.” Xia Yuanba laughed guilelessly. “I bet those rumor-mongers are aching from all the slaps they’ve received right now.”

“Wind does not blow from an empty cave without reason.” Yun Che smiled as if he didn’t care about the insults. “It’s fine, I’m used to it already. Frankly, I’m overjoyed that a cripple like me could have a friend like you, much less the daughter of the governor as my wife.”

“Your entrance to Blue Wind Profound Palace is what we really should celebrate. I bet the entire city will rejoice on the day you... officially enter... Blue Wind... Profound... Palace...”

His voice suddenly turned weak and stuttering. His features gradually became contorted in pain, and the darkness blotting his vision kept growing no matter how many times he blinked...

He collapsed.

“Big brother? Ah? Big brother!” A panicking Xia Yuanba caught him before he fell over. “Big brother? Is something wrong... BIG BROTHER!!”

His pupils grew more and more unfocused. The entire world was fading away like a dream. He could still hear Xia Yuanba’s voice, but he couldn’t form an answer at all.

“Little Che? Little Che... wake up! Don’t scare me... LITTLE CHE!!”

Xiao Lingxi’s voice was the last thing he heard before his consciousness faded completely.

Outside the image, Yun Che watched as Xiao Lingxi hugged his dream self and cried like never before.

Her tears wet his wedding clothes, and her features were full of pain and despair...

It was only then the image came to a complete stop.

Again, he had experienced this dream before. Similarly, the difference between then and now was clarity.

In his memory, he had passed away on his wedding day with Xia Qingyue.

In his dreams, he had passed away on his wedding day with Situ Xuan.

Yun Che opened his eyes.

Light filled his vision. It was the same courtyard, the same familiar scent.

This time though, the dreams were no longer blurry.

This time, he remembered every image, every face and every voice as clear as crystal.

Chapter 1893 - "Somniloquy"

"Ah!" A sweet cry rang beside him. "You're awake, husband!"

Yun Che looked up. Su Ling'er's face was just inches away from his own, and Caizhi and Little Demon Empress were right beside her. They had clearly been watching over him for a very long time.

He actually wasn't sure if he had woken up from his slumber. The dreams were that realistic, and he had never remembered them as clearly as he was now.

"What happened?" Caizhi asked. "Why did you seal your senses for such a long time?"

"It's nothing. It's a special state of enlightenment," replied Yun Che while returning his gaze to the courtyard. Still a little out of it, he asked, "So, how long was I out this time?"

"Seven days," Su Ling'er replied.

At least it wasn't half a month like last time.

Before he could relax though, Su Ling'er dropped another bomb. "Husband, you need to check on sister Lingxi now."

"Lingxi?" Her panicky tone jolted him like lightning. He rose to his feet and asked, "What happened to her?"

"She fainted when you sealed away your own senses. I wasn't able to wake her up no matter what I tried, and... she still hasn't woken up yet."

Yun Che was already gone before Su Ling'er finished her sentence.

Xiao Lingxi was lying quietly on her bed and breathing evenly. Her face looked pale, but thankfully it wasn't so sickly that it was cause for worry.

However, her brow was knitted into a small but permanent frown. It was as if an invisible string was tugging at her mind and keeping her from true rest.

Yun Che grabbed her right wrist with one hand and tapped her solar plexus with the other. He slowly injected a vast amount of profound energy into her body in the gentlest way he could.

A careful examination later, Yun Che's own brow relaxed for a second before knitting again in doubt.

Xiao Lingxi's vitality and soul sea were perfectly normal. There were no internal or external injuries to be found either. If she was someone else, he would've assumed that they were pretending to be unconscious already. However, Xiao Lingxi would never pull something like that.

"How is she?" Su Ling'er asked nervously.

Yun Che rose up and answered, "She's... fine. She'll probably awaken very soon."

Noticing Yun Che's odd tone and expression, Su Ling'er hesitated for a moment before saying, "To tell you the truth, this isn't the first or even the tenth time sister Lingxi has fallen into an unnatural sleep like this. It is the longest she has ever been unconscious though."

"What?" Yun Che's eyes narrowed. "When was that?"

"It began when you first left for the God Realm," Su Ling'er said. "She fainted the moment you left with Senior Mu Bingyun."

Yun Che: "..."

"She woke up really quickly that time, but her heart rate and pulse had become ten times faster than a normal person's."

"What!?" Yun Che exclaimed in shock.

Xiao Lingxi's cultivation was extremely weak back then. Her heart rate and pulse should never be able to jump that high!

Su Ling'er continued, "However, it wasn't long before she fully returned to normal, so I simply assumed that it was a case of excessive worry and didn't pay it too much attention."

"I was wrong. Since that day, she would fall unconscious from time to time, and the duration kept growing longer and longer. I was never able to find out the cause... after her thirty third coma though, the mysterious ailment suddenly vanished. She has been fine ever since."

"But now, it's starting again..."

Su Ling'er clenched her hands like she could somehow squeeze out her worries.

"Why didn't I know about this sooner?" A deep sense of unease grew in Yun Che's heart.

She replied, "You were gone for years, and when you returned you had lost all of your profound energy. How could we burden you with even more worry?"

"Sister Lingxi had already made a full recovery by then too. She told us again and again not to tell you about it and make you worry."

Xiao Lingxi had always been like this. Even when they were younger, she had never been willing to burden him or add to his worries.

A heavy rock sat in Yun Che's chest. He thought to himself in frustration, what is happening to Lingxi?
Please, just please don't let it be harmful to her.

No. No. If it isn't harmful, then all is well. If it is, then I will neutralize it no matter what it is.

I am the Great Emperor of the God Realm and the cultivator of the Divine Miracle of Life... there is nothing I can't solve!

He exhaled slowly to enter a state of perfect calmness and sobriety. Then, he began his questions, "Besides the obvious, what other symptoms did she display during that time?"

Su Ling'er thought for a moment before replying, "There were a couple of times she would say weird things after she awoke from her slumber."

"Like what?" Yun Che asked urgently.

"For example, on the day she saw you off to the God Realm she said... she said she saw you scattering into ashes amidst a terrible explosion of fire and starlight."

"!!!" Yun Che's expression didn't change, but his mind had become as turbulent as a sea storm.

He had in fact perished during his first trip to the Star God Realm.

The Star Gods of the Star God Realm had killed him with their starlight powers...

... and the flames of nirvana had claimed him in those final moments.

.....

Illusion?

Coincidence?

Prophecy...

.....

"Little... Che..."

A quiet voice abruptly brought him back down to earth. He looked down and saw Xiao Lingxi opening her eyes slowly.

"Lingxi!"

Yun Che immediately leaned forward and placed an arm across her back. He slowly helped her to a sitting position on her bed.

"Are you alright, Sister Lingxi? Do you feel uncomfortable anywhere?" Su Ling'er asked both worriedly and concernedly.

Xiao Lingxi shook her head. "I'm fine. I just... had a very long dream."

"... a dream?" Yun Che's features twitched a little. It so happened that he had woken up from a long dream himself.

"It was so long that I cannot even begin to describe how long it was." Xiao Lingxi's murmur was tinged with deep exhaustion. "But I can't recall even a single bit now that I'm awake."

"What... is happening... to me..."

"It was just a dream. It's perfectly normal to forget the contents of a dream. You don't need to recall it, much less pay it any heed," Yun Che said smilingly. "If you feel tired, feel free to take a short nap."

"Little Che." Suddenly, Xiao Lingxi grasped Yun Che's palms tightly. "Will... will you forgive me if one day, you realized that I had hurt you terribly?"

Her fingers were cold and trembling.

Yun Che returned the grip. "Why do you say that when you know that you can never bear to hurt me?"

His vision blurred the second the words escaped his lips.

He remembered saying something similar to a certain person.

However, that person had become someone who had wounded him like no other.

"I don't know." A shimmer of heartbreaking tears coated Xiao Lingxi's eyes. "I... I keep hearing a voice telling me... that I did something terribly wrong and selfish... and it led to a most cruel and irreversible outcome..."

"You must be mistaken." Yun Che shook her hands a little. "You don't actually think that dreams are real, do you? Just... take a short nap. The strange thoughts will disappear when you've gotten over your sleepiness."

"A dream..." Xiao Lingxi murmured, "Yes, it was a dream. So why... do I keep thinking of it as reality?"

"..." Yun Che didn't say anything after that, much less demand answers from her. He simply embraced her in silence.

Yes, it was all just a dream.

Nothing was wrong, and nothing would go wrong ever again.

After Xiao Lingxi had shaken off her initial daze, she seemed to have fully returned to normal. Yun Che couldn't detect anything wrong with her.

Once in a while when she was all alone, a vacant expression would overcome her features. She never stopped trying to recall her dreams.

To date, all three parts of the World-Defying Heavenly Manual were fully engraved into Yun Che's mind.

Just like the previous times, he had entered a strange state of enlightenment, but he couldn't even begin to identify what he had learned from the experience.

One thing was certain, however. The inheritance of the Ancestral God, the World-Defying Heavenly Manual and the Ancestral Divine Art were finally complete. According to the ancient records, it was an existence that transcended even the Creation Gods and the Devil Emperors!

Yun Che was practically heaven itself, and he had visited personally... to see his daughter!?

Could it be... no! It was impossible!

Although Yun Che was rumored to be extremely lecherous, all his women were a million times better than Situ Xuan in every way!

His daughter was a beauty among mortals, but that was only among mortals! There was no way she would fall into his crosshairs!

Did Situ Xuan offend him then?

That was even more impossible!

Forget that Situ Xuan utterly lacked the strength to offend Yun Che, why would he show up personally to enact her punishment? All he needed to do was to say one sentence, and everyone across the world would rush over to carry out the deed themselves!

It wasn't long before the servant returned. Following right beside him was a fragile-looking woman and a maid supporting her.

"This humble girl Situ Xuan greets Spiritual Master Yun."

She was between thirty to forty years old, and she was dressed rather sumptuously. She had a thin physique, and her life aura and profound aura were unusually weak. It was probably why she looked much older than another woman of her age.

She was soft spoken not because she chose to be, but because she lacked the strength to do so. He could tell that she would not live to a century even with the governor's great wealth to sustain her.

Yun Che stared at her briefly.

Despite her aging features, she definitely matched her younger self in his memories.

She was definitely the Situ Xuan who had appeared in his dreams again and again.

Chapter 1894 - Wuxin Visits The God Realm (1)

"She isn't married?" Yun Che asked.

He wasn't expecting to find Situ Xuan in the Situ residence. At her age, she should've gotten married and been living together with her husband a long time ago.

"S-she is not, Spiritual Master Yun." Situ Nan explained, "Xuan'er was born with a birth defect. She was okay during the first eighteen years, but on the day she was going to marry the son of the governor of Yuwen City, her illness suddenly reared its ugly head and... we have been housing and nursing her since. Her illness is so severe that we dare not neglect her health even to this day."

While Situ Nan was talking, Yun Che had scanned Situ Xuan about a dozen times over with his spiritual perception.

According to his senses, Situ Xuan was a woman with a birth defect, severely depleted vitality, and short lifespan... and that was all. There was nothing special about her whatsoever.

He was both disappointed and relieved.

Yun Che shot Situ Xuan one last glance and said, "Hmph, I see."

Then he was gone, leaving behind an entire residence of dumbfounded people in his wake.

An entire hour later, Situ Nan finally staggered back to his feet. However, he was still staring at the spot Yun Che had vanished without a trace and wondering if he had dreamed the whole thing.

"Finally! It's done!"

An excited cry entered his ears the moment Yun Che returned to the Xiao Clan.

Right after that, a white light mixed with a bit of imperceptible crimson took to the sky. It was of course Shui Meiyin.

Beneath her, a dimensional profound formation about 6 meters in diameter was circulating in silence.

It was incredibly small considering the standards of the current world. No one would believe that it was connected to the impossibly far Southern Divine Region unless they had experienced it themselves.

"Do you want to give it a try, Big Brother Yun Che?" Shui Meiyin flew over to Yun Che the second she caught his scent.

"It has been a while since I went back," said Yun Che curiously. Now that the dimensional profound formation was complete, he could travel between the Blue Pole Star and Emperor Yun City whenever he wanted to.

Also, a certain empress was going to nag him to death if he continued to shirk his duties any longer.

"Is it done? Is it done?"

The sudden emergence of the strange spatial aura and divine light had attracted the nearby Wuxin like a magnet. She stood beside her father and watched the dimensional profound formation with barely suppressed excitement.

"Yep!" Shui Meiyin said to Yun Wuxin, "All you need to do is to step into the formation, and you'll be teleported to your dad's city in just seven breaths. Right now, it is the highest and holiest place in the entire God Realm."

"But of course, it is just a second home to our little princess."

"I want to go now!" Yun Wuxin pulled her father's arm strongly.

"Don't you want to wait for your mom and aunts first?" Yun Che asked.

"I want to go now!" Yun Wuxin clearly couldn't wait any longer. "Also, my mom may not have forgiven you yet."

"Urk..."

In the end, Yun Che was dragged by Yun Wuxin into the newly minted profound formation by force. He didn't even get the chance to notify Xiao Lingxi and the others about his departure.

.....

Emperor Yun City was a 150 kilometer long floating city. It wasn't a particularly large city by any means, but there wasn't a soul in the God Realm who would dare to not know about it.

Sitting directly beneath was a vast and seemingly borderless star realm. Once upon a time, it was called the Southern Sea God Realm.

The Southern Sea God Realm was known as the greatest star realm of the Southern Divine Region for almost a million years. Now though, it was only as superior as the shadow cast by Emperor Yun City itself.

The smoke and ruins that befell the Southern Sea Capital a while ago was long gone. Instead, it was covered by countless profound ships and even more profound practitioners. They were working to rebuild the former king realm of the Southern Divine Region into a whole new star realm.

Of course, most of the resources spent had come from the Southern Sea God Realm's treasury.

The project was overseen by the two southern region king realms, the Xuanyuan Realm and the Purple Micro Realm. For obvious reasons, they were very motivated to see the project completed perfectly. The Xuanyuan God Emperor and Purple Micro God Emperor only wished that they could've performed the tasks themselves.

The eye of the dimensional profound formation in Emperor Yun City was set at the back of Emperor Yun Palace.

The very first place Yun Wuxin visited in the God Realm was the most elevated place in the God Realm, Emperor Yun City. Naturally, the elements and spirit energy of the place—countless times richer than they were on the Blue Pole Star—had suffocated and dizzied her instantly. Of course, Yun Che easily dealt with her condition with just a casual wave of his hand.

"Emperor Yun City is not really a city. It is a profound ark from ancient times called the 'World Dragon City'. Its creation actually has quite a lot to do with the World Piercer held by your auntie Meiyin. It belonged to the Dragon God Realm, but I took it for myself after defeating Long Bai."

While holding his daughter's dainty hands, Yun Che took her to every corner of Emperor Yun City while telling her everything there was to know about the God Realm.

The process was also meant to give her time to adapt to the laws and auras of the God Realm.

"This is the Silk Shadow Palace, the bedroom of your Auntie Qianying."

"This is the Color Sound Palace, the bedroom of your Auntie Meiyin... this is the Ice Phoenix Palace... this is the Rainbow Star Palace..."

Suddenly, Yun Wuxin interrupted, "What about mom, master and me? Do we get a palace as well?"

"Of course," Yun Che said smilingly. They both blurred, and before Yun Wuxin knew it she was staring at a palace adorned with all kinds of icy crystals and dreamlike corals. "This is the Graceful Dream Palace. I had collected these crystals and corals from the Heavenly Netherfrost Lake of Snow Song Realm myself."

They will never melt unless they are burned with a divine flame. I hope that she will like it when I show it to her.”

Yun Wuxin’s eyes curled into crescents. Amidst the fantastical array of reflected light, she thought she could see her father carefully setting down the items one by one and using some of them to make the word “Graceful Dream” A beautiful smile crossed her lips without her noticing.

“Mom will definitely love this... she might even forgive you for what you did.”

“But!” Yun Wuxin abruptly changed her tune. “Even if mom forgives you, that doesn’t mean that you’re allowed to bully little aunt behind her back, understand!?”

Yun Che: “Ahem hem hem!”

“Hmph!” Yun Wuxin snorted before lowering her voice to a whisper, “At least court her openly. Do you really think mom doesn’t know about...”

“Hmm? What did you say?”

“Nothing!”

“...”

“You see that?” Yun Che pointed at the image of a phoenix in the sky. The sky itself was dyed red by its radiance. “That is where your master’s palace is, the Phoenix Snow Palace. Your palace is in between Graceful Dream Palace and Phoenix Snow Palace.”

Yun Wuxin looked and whispered the name, “Eternal... Heart... Palace.”

The three engraved words filled her with infinite warmth and strength. She knew immediately that her father had carved them with his own fingers.

“Why did you call it that?” Yun Wuxin asked her father expectantly.

Yun Che smiled and moved his daughter’s hand to his chest. Then, he stared into her eyes and began, “I have never been a good father, Wuxin. I’ve missed you for many years, worried you unduly, and broken my promises to you again and again. You even had to sacrifice your greatest talent for me.”

“There are many things I cannot fix or redeem even after I’ve become the strongest person in the universe, but... no matter what happens in the future, no matter when or where, no matter how high I’ve ascended or how long I’ve fallen, I want you to know that you will always occupy the most important place in my heart. Always.”

“...” Yun Wuxin’s gaze stilled for a moment. She stared into her father’s eyes for one breath... two breaths... and then she lost control of herself and burst into laughter.

“Er...” Yun Che tapped his nose in embarrassment. “Was it that bad? I practiced it a lot of times in my mind, you know.”

“It’s not bad, it’s just so... old-fashioned!” Even with one hand covering her lips, it was obvious that Yun Wuxin couldn’t stop smiling. “My father is the great emperor of the universe! You should be able to speak so~ profoundly that a normal person would never be able to say it!”

"I'll... I'll do my best next time," Yun Che promised, but it obviously lacked confidence.

"It's fine."

Before Yun Che knew it, Yun Wuxin was leaning against his shoulder with her eyes closed in contentment. "It is enough. It is enough to last me a lifetime."

"Oh my, it looks like I've shown up at an inconvenient time. I didn't mean to disturb your precious father daughter time."

The speaker was none other than Chi Wuyao. She was followed by Jie Xin and Jie Ling.

On a related note, the coolness in Jie Xin and Jie Ling's eyes had melted away immediately after they saw Yun Che. They proceeded to bow their heads so they wouldn't be able to meet his eyes.

On the night Yun Che was crowned the Great Emperor of the God Realm, he slept with the Nine Witches. This was the first time Jie Xin and Jie Ling had met him since that day.

Naturally, they felt shy and embarrassed in his presence.

"Auntie Wuyao," Yun Wuxin greeted and saluted Chi Wuyao politely. She held great respect toward the Empress because she was, out of all the women her father had courted, easily the one with the greatest right to the first wife position, and the person her father depended on the most.

Chi Wuyao smiled and nodded in return before facing toward Yun Che. "My Emperor, are you aware that your city has nearly forgotten its own master's name?"

Yun Che replied with a straight face, "You don't need me to carry out your business. In fact, my presence could've made your work harder than it should've been."

Chi Wuyao rolled her eyes at him before complaining to Yun Wuxin, "You see that, Wuxin? In the future, be sure not to pick a man as shameless and irresponsible as your father to be your husband."

Yun Wuxin giggled at that. She might be young and inexperienced, but she could sense the deep emotion behind Chi Wuyao's every "complaint". It was a love so deep that even an outsider could be moved by it.

No wonder her father was the most envied man in the entire universe.

"It so happens that Cang Sh*tian is showing up today to report about the latest rebellions and matters regarding the Enforcer Bureau. I suppose it's about time I stop overstep my authority and leave the work in your rightful hands."

Yun Che subconsciously raised a hand to say "no", but he quickly lowered it and nodded. "Yes. Send Cang Sh*tian to meet me."

He had been "Emperor Yun" for almost half a year already. He really should begin carrying his own weight!

The palace bedrooms were devoid of presences because no one was allowed to approach them. When they approached the main hall though, a vast, heavy, and icy pressure immediately pressed down on all of them.

The guards chosen to protect Emperor Yun City and guard Emperor Yun himself were naturally powerful. For example, the lowest bar of acceptance was Divine Sovereign Realm. A Divine Master was also posted every ten thousand steps in every direction.

The combined aura of these experts alone would keep most people from taking even half a step in Emperor Yun City's direction.

Yun Wuxin was only in the Divine Origin Realm. She immediately felt like ten thousand mountains were pressing against her person.

She stopped in her tracks and gritted her teeth tightly. She began shaking like a leaf as icy fear threatened to buckle her knees, shred her body, destroy her beliefs, and engrave the essence of submission onto her core.

Yun Che summoned a bit of profound energy between his fingers, but he didn't dispel the pressure for Yun Wuxin. Instead, he injected it into her soul and "fought" against the pressure alongside her.

This was his Emperor Yun City, and she was his daughter. She should be able to adapt and conquer this pressure with her own body and will.

Yun Wuxin gritted her teeth harder and harder. Pain kept flashing across her beautiful features. However, her mind and soul never succumbed, her posture never bent for even a second, and her knees never buckled to the pressure.

Not even when Yun Che withdrew his palm and left her to fight on her own.

For an entire hour, Yun Wuxin fought unceasingly against the pressure. She probably felt that it was much longer than that.

She succeeded. At the end of her struggles, her body stopped shivering completely, and she opened her eyes to reveal more determination than fear. "I'm fine now, father."

"As expected of our little princess," Chi Wuyao praised from the bottom of her heart. It wasn't perfect, but the fact that Yun Wuxin managed to regain control of herself in just an hour was very impressive. At this rate, this level of spiritual pressure would be like air to her in half a year at most.

It would be a great advantage when she faced off against powerful enemies in the future.

After all, her enemy's starting point would just be a king realm at best, but hers would be Emperor Yun City. It would be a gap as great as heaven and earth themselves.

Chapter 1895 - Wuxin Visits The God Realm (2)

The front of the main hall was brimming with heavenly aura.

Every guard stationed in this area was a towering presence that could cower even a realm king to submission.

For a second, space itself froze when Yun Che stepped into the main hall.

Rumble!

Then, every person within sight dropped to one knee and saluted Yun Che.

“Welcome back, Your Majesty!”

“He who grasps the heavens with his bare hands and unites the four divine regions! May his power be unrivaled, his domination be unending, his rule to hold strong for eons, and his memory to last for evermore!”

The air shook, and heaven and earth themselves trembled before their cry.

However, Yun Wuxin’s reaction toward the paeon was nervousness, shock and... second-hand embarrassment?

Yun Che shot his daughter a glance before lowering his voice, “Wuyao, who the heck is the one who made this paean?”

“I did, of course,” Chi Wuyao replied. “Is it not to your fancy?”

“# ¥%...” Chi Wuyao was without a doubt the shrewdest and scariest woman he ever met.

However, the paeon she wrote was so embarrassing that he felt like something was crawling on his scalp even now.

To give a comparison, he felt as if he had gone from Great Emperor of the God Realm all the way down to a... clown.

To think... that she would have a weak point like this.

“It’s not that I dislike it,” Yun Che chose his words carefully, “I just think that this is the kind of stuff a mortal emperor would enjoy, not I—us.”

“... I see. I understand.” Chi Wuyao dipped her head a little at the same time she groaned in her mind:

Was it really that bad...?

It was at this moment everyone felt an aura speed toward the main hall. It belonged to none other than Cang Sh*tian.

The second he sensed Yun Che’s presence, he immediately withdrew his profound energy and imperial aura to a harmless degree. His posture was already half-bent into a bow before his feet could touch the floor.

Thump!

Finally, Cang Sh*tian sank to his knees and declared, “Cang Sh*tian greets the Great Emperor and the Empress! He who grasps the heavens with his bare hands and unites the four divine regions! May his power be unrivaled, his domination be—”

“That’s enough.” Yun Che’s scalp was tingling again.

“Huh?” Caught off guard, Cang Sh*tian looked up and saw something unexpected. It was a nervous-looking Yun Wuxin clinging to Yun Che’s left arm tight enough to break bones.

The fact that Emperor Yun had brought this woman to the first court he held since months spoke volumes about their relationship. That they were acting cozy right in front of the Empress spoke even more!

Not one to miss an obvious hint, Cang Sh*tian immediately bowed again before crying, “Congratulations to Emperor Yun for finding another concubine! She is as pretty as a sculpture by heaven’s hands, as dignified as a fairy, and a perfect match with—”

“She is my daughter,” Yun Che cut him off coldly.

Cang Sh*tian’s paeon died in his throat. Then, he slapped his own face with everything he had before prostrating himself completely before Yun Che. He spoke in a trembling voice, “I have committed a grave offense. I ask Your Majesty... and Your Highness to hand out my punishment.”

“Hmph!” Yun Che stepped forward with a cold look in his eyes. “Cang Sh*tian, you and I both know what a capable man you are, and it has been months since I traveled to the lower realms to accompany my wives and daughter. Are you really telling me that you have no idea about their existence at all!?”

“Your Majesty,” Cang Sh*tian looked fearful, but his eyes spoke otherwise and with surprising honesty. “I pride myself on being your keenest mad dog. For Your Majesty, I will gladly fondle even the darkest and filthiest secrets of them all.”

“However, the opposite is equally true. What Your Majesty doesn’t wish for others to know, I will never know even if I am equipped with a thousand times the ability and a million times the courage! And I most certainly will not allow others to know about it!”

Cang Sh*tian had almost shouted his declaration.

Forget Yun Che and Chi Wuyao, even the guards stationed outside the hall could hear him clearly.

Cang Sh*tian had to be the first king realm God Emperor ever to walk over himself so thoroughly to show his loyalty.

Even Yun Wuxin could only stare at him in utter shock.

Yun Che shot Cang Sh*tian a long look before turning away. “Come. We will speak inside.”

Nearly every palace in Emperor Yun City possessed an independent space of their own, meaning that they were much larger than they appeared on the outside. This was especially true for the heart of the city, the great hall.

Right now, Yun Che was sitting on his throne—the seat of power that represented the highest authority in the entire Primal Chaos—and listening quietly to Cang Sh*tian’s reports in the great hall. Just like Chi Wuyao had informed him earlier, Cang Sh*tian spoke mostly about the recent, important happenings of the three divine regions and the progress of the Enforcer Bureau.

He had resolved himself to perform his responsibilities... if he were to be honest with himself, he was extremely uncomfortable with serious scenes like this.

“... in the past one hundred days, there have been 1923 rebellion cases in total across all three divine regions. Half of them occurred in the Western Divine Region, 35% in the Eastern Divine Region, and 15% in the Southern Divine Region.”

“If I were to categorize them by scale, 1921 of them were small-scale rebellions, and only two were big-scale rebellions. They were all quelled within six days. In descending order, the strongest rebel was 1 Divine Sovereign, 13 Divine Kings, 101 Divine Spirits, and the rest were below Divine Spirit Realm.”

The numbers were much smaller than Yun Che had anticipated, but ultimately unsurprising.

There was no such thing as a perfectly smooth transition to a new regime, much less an era. Moreover, the three Divine Regions’ prejudice toward darkness in general had been cultivated for literally a million years. It was only natural that someone would remain firm in their beliefs and fight to the bitter end.

However, the strongest powers in the universe had already submitted to Yun Che’s rule. These rebellions could be a thousand times greater, and they still wouldn’t be able to threaten him one bit.

Moreover, the stronger a profound practitioner, and the higher they stood in the world, the more they would realize just how stupid it was to even try to defy Yun Che’s momentum.

It was why the strongest profound practitioners who participated in the past 100 days of rebellions were only one Divine Sovereign and thirteen Divine Kings.

“How do you plan to deal with these people?” Yun Che asked.

Cang Sh*tian replied, “I plan to obey the Empress’ wisdom. She has commanded that I exterminate ninety percent of the culprits and their three families, cripple the remaining ten percent, and pardon between ten to a hundred of them.”

He then added, “Besides that, we have also taken control of the clans and sects that don’t fall under the three families that are set to be exterminated, but are still linked to them. It is the same for those who were crippled or pardoned. We are absolutely certain that not a single person has slipped past our notice. On that note, are there any changes you wish for me to make, Your Majesty?”

“It is fine,” Yun Che replied, “you may simply obey the Empress’ wisdom.”

Beside Yun Che, Yun Wuxin couldn’t help but stick out her tongue in secret.

She was understanding more and more just how much responsibility her “Auntie Wuyao” was saddled with. Her title might be Empress, but she was carrying out all the responsibilities of the Great Emperor.

“I am unsurprised that the majority of the rebellions have occurred in the Western Divine Region. However, I am surprised that the rebellions in the Southern Divine Region don’t even exceed twenty percent.” Yun Che scrunched his eyebrows into an ominous frown. “Are you sure the numbers are correct?”

Cang Sh*tian replied immediately and without hesitation, “Your Majesty is wise. I may be native to the Southern Divine Region, but I pride myself on being able to serve Your Majesty. I would never dare to obfuscate the truth on behalf of the Southern Divine Region.”

“Your Majesty, the Eastern Divine Region is the one that suffered the most lives lost during your overturning of the previous order. Therefore, a small half of the eastern region rebels were motivated by their desire to take revenge for their sects or their families.”

“However, back when Shuhe... my apologies. Back when Consort Grace was still unmarried, she already knew everything there was to know regarding the Southern Divine Region. Today, all the information she collected has been woven into a great web that spans across every star realm in the Southern Divine Region.”

“As a result, most of the rebellions were destroyed before they ever had the chance to take form. That is why there is little to no rebellion to speak of in the Southern Divine Region.”

“Hmm?” Yun Che asked, “Cang Shuhe is that capable even when she was unable to take a step beyond her abode?”

Cang Sh*tian dipped his head slightly. “Consort Grace had meant to gift Sh*tian the web she spent thousands of years to weave. Now, it has been put to use for Your Majesty. If... if you have the time, I humbly request that Your Majesty to get to know Consort Grace better. I promise that she will not bring shame to the title you have granted her.”

“... is there anything else?” Yun Che asked.

“No, Your Majesty. My report is complete.”

Yun Che rose to his feet and declared, “If there is nothing else, then you may take your leave.”

“As you command.”

After Cang Sh*tian was gone, Chi Wuyao finally broke her silence and said, “What a perfect dog he is. It would be truly saddening if he were to suddenly disappear one day.”

“I got it already,” Yun Che replied helplessly, “I will find time to visit the Deep Sea Realm.”

“That would be best.” Chi Wuyao walked up to Yun Che before continuing, “By the way, there is something that I would like to speak with you about.”

“... just give it to me straight.” Knowing her, the more formal she acted, the less serious the matter she wanted to discuss was.

Chi Wuyao’s lips curled into a half-smile as she began, “Emperor Yun City is blessed with divine power and countless palaces, but the large majority of them are empty and unused. Don’t you think that it looks a bit lonely?”

“The construction of the Emperor Yun God Realm—that is the former Southern Sea God Realm—is progressing smoothly. When it reaches completion, the core alone will span fifty thousand kilometers. The entire region will be your private domain.”

“Thousands of temporary imperial residences have been built across all four Divine Regions as well.”

“All this is fine and well, but there is one thing that desperately needs you to personally remedy, and that is your harem. As the first great emperor of the Primal Chaos, your consorts and your attendants

combined don't even exceed two dozen. Meanwhile, a lower realm king easily has three thousand concubines in his harem."

Yun Che: "..."

Yun Wuxin: "....."

Chi Wuyao continued, "The failure is of course my responsibility. I don't fear the backbiting of mortal men, but the stain on Your Majesty's dignity cannot be allowed—"

"Stop! Stop!" Yun Che hurriedly raised his hands to stop Chi Wuyao. After shooting Yun Wuxin a guilty look, he replied, "We'll talk about this later."

Even before his coronation, Chi Wuyao had complained to him that his "small" harem was unbefitting his status. Since then similar conversations had happened enough times that he almost dreaded the thought of seeing her again.

The worst part was that she was completely serious about it. The fact that she pushed the Nine Witches, that she had spent unimaginable effort to raise, into his bed during the night of his coronation was proof of that.

"If there is a later, that must mean that Your Majesty does not reject the idea. That is good." Chi Wuyao's frown lessened a little, and her eyes twinkled like rippling water. "For the past few months, I have ordered the men to select nine thousand women of excellent background, talent and appearance. When you are free, simply—"

"AHEM HEM HEM!!" Yun Che turned his back on Yun Wuxin and winked at Chi Wuyao desperately. "WE'LL TALK ABOUT THIS LATER! LATER!!"

Seriousness aside, she was absolutely doing this to him on purpose. She was probably punishing him for fooling around his home planet and neglecting his duties for too long.

It was at this moment Yun Wuxin asked weakly, "Should... should I head out and explore on my own, father, Auntie Wuyao?"

Yun Che hurriedly caught her hand and said, "No, no, the aura of the God Realm and the lower realms is too different. I'll take you wherever you wish to go, do not stray too far away from me."

This was the first time Yun Wuxin had visited the God Realm. There was no way he was going to leave her to her own devices without good reason.

"Very well. We shall 'talk about this later'." It sounded like Chi Wuyao was letting him off the hook, but she added, "However, there is one other thing that I require your assistance with, Your Majesty."

Yun Che watched her warily.

Chi Wuyao continued, "Our dark profound practitioners need your Eternal Calamity of Darkness to adjust their compatibility and be able to leave the Northern Divine Region freely. This is one task I cannot complete on your behalf, so if you may..."

Yun Che hid a sigh of relief before nodding. "I haven't forgotten about that. Two months from now, I shall travel to the Northern Divine Region and grant my blessing. Moreover, I promise to rally the northern region profound practitioners and adjust their compatibility every decade."

"Very well. I shall inform my people to make the necessary preparations."

"Oh right," Yun Che said suddenly, "how did that... matter I discussed with you go?"

"Oh. That." Chi Wuyao paused for a second before smiling. "I wouldn't be so lazy as to neglect a personal request you've made to me. If you are free, you can head over now and have a look yourself."

He never worried that Chi Wuyao might mess up something. It was because she never failed to exceed his expectations.

He hesitated only for a short moment before passing his daughter to Chi Wuyao. "Wuxin, keep Auntie Wuyao company for a bit, will you? I'll be back very soon."

Chapter 1896 - The Wood Spirits' Home

Yun Che left Emperor Yun City behind and flew toward the north alone.

"Where are you going, Master?" He Ling couldn't help her curiosity.

Since her life became one with Yun Che's, their experiences became shared as well. There shouldn't be anything about Yun Che that she didn't know, and yet she couldn't recall him asking a special favor from Chi Wuyao at all.

"Patience. It's not too far away from here."

His reply only made her more curious and mystified.

It wasn't long before a small star realm entered their vision.

He Ling thought that they would fly over the star realm, but he flew straight toward it.

"This is your destination, Mast... ah!?"

He Ling's puzzled tone abruptly turned into a cry of shock.

"This aura... no, these auras are..."

Her voice grew increasingly soft and agitated.

Yun Che sped up, and the distant star realm grew bigger at a much faster pace. Eventually, his senses became fully attuned to the vast world before his eyes.

It was a planet covered in emerald green. Even from a distance, he could feel an impossibly pure aura washing over his person, expelling the darkness in his heart and cleansing the impurities of his soul.

He came to a stop above the star realm and looked. Emerald wood, new bamboo and blue grass connected heaven and earth. Between them were countless other plants and flowers.

The sky of this planet was unusually high, and it merged seamlessly with the blue sea below. The clouds were pure white, and the breeze seemed to ignore physical boundaries and seep into one's very soul.

This planet would seem like a forgotten paradise to those who were used to a world polluted by sin, strife and desire.

He Ling manifested beside Yun Che. For a long time, she simply stared at the world below her with increasingly blurry eyes...

“Sis! Don’t fly so fast, sis! I, I can’t keep up with you!... Ah!”

The childish voice that ended in a cry of surprise belonged to a boy. He wobbled unsteadily as he crash-landed into the bamboo forest below him.

The girl he was chasing after stopped in her tracks before flying to where the young boy had fallen. Placing her hands on her hips, she said, “You’re so useless, Little E! I could’ve flown all the way to Penannular Emerald Peak when I was your age.”

“If this was in the past, hmph, you would be the first to be captured by a bad person.”

Both the boy and the girl had dark green hair, greenish-blue pupils, and sharp ears. Their aura was so pure that it was like an unreserved gift from Mother Nature herself.

Anyone who saw them would know that they were juvenile Wood Spirits.

The boy climbed to his feet and said smilingly, “We’re not in the past though! Now that Emperor Yun is protecting us, no bad person will ever dare to bully us again.”

The two children were currently in a vast wilderness. If this was in the past, they would never be allowed to come here without adult supervision.

Even with adult supervision, they would be spending every waking hour hiding themselves from view.

When they awoke from their slumber, they would occasionally find one or more of their kin had vanished for eternity.

Those days had been the nightmares of nightmares.

“That’s why we should be more alert than ever!!”

The girl blinked round, emerald eyes at her younger brother and said in a serious voice that she had obviously copied from an adult, “One of our clan’s ironclad principles is to always return the favors we owe! We must never forget the one who gave us the land beneath our feet and the peace we currently enjoy! If we don’t become stronger now, how can we possibly repay Emperor Yun’s favor in the future?”

The girl had led a fugitive’s life since the moment she was born. She was only a dozen or so years old, but she had already “moved” countless times, survived countless tragedies, and even witnessed them right before her very eyes. It wouldn’t be an exaggeration to say that she had lived in terror her whole life... until Yun Che had overturned the previous order.

Today, not only had Emperor Yun, sovereign of the four Divine Regions, enacted the harshest Wood Spirit protection law ever in the history of the God Realm, he even purified and modified an entire star realm for the wood spirit race.

Moreover, they were protected 24/7 by the enforcers stationed all around the star realm. Without the Enforcer Bureau's permission, no one could even get close to it.

They no longer had to live in fear and drift from place to place.

They wouldn't ever have to return to that dreadful past.

To the Wood Spirits, this outcome was something they didn't even dare to dream of. That it actually became a reality was... they didn't know how to begin to return Emperor Yun's favor.

The girl's speech caused the boy to fall silent for a moment. Then, he clenched his teeth and struggled to his feet. He declared with boyish determination, "Sister is right. We won't be able to repay Emperor Yun's favor if we don't become stronger."

"Mm!" The girl nodded once before saying in a soft tone, "There was a Wood Spirit in the projection when Emperor Yun was attacking the Eternal Heaven Realm, and grandpa said that she might very well be a princess of the royal family. She may even be watching over us from somewhere right now. This is also why we must grow stronger! We must return Emperor Yun's favor, and we must not disappoint the princess!"

The girl wasn't just encouraging her younger brother. She was also encouraging herself.

"..." He Ling's tears had turned into a cascade at this point.

Yun Che said softly, "The God Realm is huge, but it will never be big enough to satisfy a person's desire. I could've made the ban ten times stricter, and it still wouldn't be enough to protect the Wood Spirits completely."

"After I killed Long Bai and determined Emperor Yun City's location, I asked Wuyao to mobilize the major star realms, rally the Wood Spirits scattered across all the divine regions, and purify this small star realm for them. Obviously, I named it the 'Wood Spirit Realm'."

"..." He Ling's lips moved, but no sound came out.

"This star realm was an auxiliary star realm of the Southern Sea God Realm. It's pretty small, but it is overflowing with pure spirit energy because they used to nurture their spirit herbs and plants here."

"It is less than two hours away from the Southern Sea God Realm, so you can visit them anytime you want. In case of emergencies, our forces will also be able to come to their aid immediately."

Below them, the sister and brother had already departed the bamboo forest together. In the distance, they could also sense countless Wood Spirits going about their business and releasing their pure aura freely. They no longer had to strain their nerves, conceal their heartbeats and do everything in their power to stay hidden. They no longer had to fear ever again.

"The three divine regions have been made aware of the Wood Spirit Realm. The major star realms have also spread the word that Wood Spirits looking to move to Wood Spirit Realm can simply seek out the nearest enforcer bureau and be escorted there by the enforcers."

He looked at He Ling and touched her dancing hair. "Not much time has passed, so this is all I can do for the moment. You won't have to wait long though. One day, the Wood Spirits will no longer need to

shelter within the Wood Spirit Realm. They'll be able to come and go whenever they like, and travel to wherever it is they wish to go. They will only be loved, cared for, and respected. They won't need to worry about being harmed ever again."

The world owed the wood spirit race too much.

He owed the wood spirit race too much.

He Ling finally removed her gaze from the dreamlike world beneath her feet and stared at Yun Che. Tears refracting the emerald light in her pupils, she said, "Master, I..."

Suddenly, Yun Che put a finger to her soft lips and said, "Come now. There is no need for thanks between you and I. Also..."

He continued after a pause, "It is nothing compared to your and He Lin's sacrifices. Truly."

He Lin and He Ling were the ones who gave everything the wood spirit race had today. Not him.

"..." He Ling stopped talking and watched him in silence.

"Do you want to meet them?" Yun Che wiped away the tear stains on her cheeks. "I'm sure they will be glad to meet their royal princess; to know that the royal bloodline is still alive

However, He Ling slowly shook her head.

"I'm... not the princess of the wood spirit race anymore." She murmured while staring into Yun Che's eyes, "My family is avenged, and the wood spirit race is protected and at peace. I no longer have any regrets left in this life. From now on, I am only your He Ling."

"No." Yun Che smiled. "You belong to yourself. No one, not even I have the right to claim your freedom against your will."

"Does that mean there will be a day you don't want me?" He Ling's teary eyes trembled piteously.

"What are you saying?" Yun Che pinched her cheek lightly. "You don't actually believe me, do you? I'm a selfish and domineering man. I will literally tie you to my person if you dare to even think about leaving my side."

He Ling bloomed into a beautiful smile and leaned on his chest. She held him as tightly as she could and whispered with firm determination, "I will never leave you, Master... never."

(↑FLAG WARNING!)

Another half a year passed by.

It had only been a year since Yun Che was crowned Great Emperor of the God Realm, but his reign had solidified to an astonishing level. One word from Emperor Yun could mobilize every king realm in the universe to action. It wouldn't be an exaggeration to say that he was their new heaven.

The rebellions still happened from time to time, but the numbers dropped drastically each month. Progress was being made regarding the communication between the Northern Divine Region and the three divine regions as well.

On his daughter's twenty-first birthday, Yun Che officially took Yun Wuxin on a tour across the entire God Realm. It was what he promised to be her birthday gift.

Yun Che had started his journey to godhood from the Eastern Divine Region, but Yun Wuxin had started hers from the Southern Divine Region because it was the closest. They would then travel to the Western Divine Region next and the Eastern Divine Region later. They would be stopping by the God Realm of Absolute Beginning as well.

Finally, he would take her to the lower realms of the Eastern Divine Region. They would also explore the star realms surrounding Blue Pole Star's former location.

The vast universe, the mysterious star realms, the strange races, the magical views, ancient or modern ruins, strange but naturally occurring phenomena, pocket worlds...

Yun Wuxin's world was quickly flipped upside down not long after her journey began.

She just recognized that everything she knew was but a drop in the ocean that was the Primal Chaos.

Lower star realms, middle star realms, upper star realms; they visited each plane to learn about their unique lifestyles and perspectives.

What was an unreachable goal for a denizen for one plane was just the starting point for another plane. Yun Wuxin was shown the differences between worlds again, and again, and again.

Yun Che hadn't bothered to hide his tracks or his aura. Every time he was recognized, profound practitioners of all levels would grovel at their feet and display the utmost fear and respect.

It also made Yun Wuxin realize just how high her father stood in this incredible world called the God Realm.

Chapter 1897 - Journey (1)

"Why are you resisting the enforcers? Emperor Yun is the savior of the universe, and the enforcers are directly subordinate to Emperor Yun himself! Only they can enforce a region's order and protect a realm's peace!"

"You are the ones who are confused and brainwashed by Emperor Yun! He is a devil person, the vilest of them all! He has killed so many people, massacred so many star realms, and exterminated so many clans for the sake of revenge, and now he's creating these so-called enforcers to control the rest of us! Are you seriously going to defend a tyrant!?"

"Exactly! All these disasters only happened because Emperor Yun was dealt the worst betrayal imaginable in the universe! Did you not see how ugly those king realms he destroyed truly were? Are you going to deny the fact that he saved the Primal Chaos?"

"So you're saying that he can kill innocents because it's part of his revenge? He can kill whoever he wants because he saved the universe?"

“There are many star realms who strongly rejected the enforcers at the beginning, but can you name even one who hasn’t submitted to their rule yet? You’re the one who’s being stubborn here! If you’re really so righteous, then I dare you to repeat everything you just said before an enforcer!”

“I... dare not, but I am righteous! No matter how powerful Emperor Yun becomes, I will never allow him to distort my beliefs! There exists karma and retribution in this world. One day, a hero will slay the leader of the devil people and free the three divine regions from their filthy darkness! When that day comes, all of you will be judged as sinners!”

.....

This fierce argument had happened between two disciples of the same sect. It had taken place in a middle star realm on the edge of the Southern Divine Region.

This wasn’t the first time Yun Wuxin had witnessed something like this. Her father had a lot of supporters, worshippers and reverers, but the opposite was equally true.

This time, something about the disciple’s argument triggered her and caused her to clench her teeth in anger. “How dare he curse my father! What a vile person!”

Yun Che simply smiled and asked her, “You’ve experienced many things in your journey already, Wuxin. By this world’s standards, do you think I’m a good or bad person?”

Yun Wuxin replied without thinking, “Of course you’re a good person! If it wasn’t for you, this universe would’ve turned into a true hell. All these people who call you a monster are just rotten, pretentious hypocrites who love to lord over others with their faulty logic! If they went through everything you did, they would’ve done much worse! Hmph!”

Still fuming, she glared at the disciple who cursed her father to be slain by a “hero” and said, “If it was me, I... I... I would press his face into the ground for a wash for ten days and nights!”

“Hahahaha!” Yun Che couldn’t help but laugh at Yun Wuxin’s utter inability to be ruthless.

“Aren’t you angry at all, father?” asked Yun Wuxin while puffing out her cheeks.

“Angry? With him?” Yun Che shook his head wryly. “If I were to appear before him right here and now, his knees would buckle, his so-called beliefs would evaporate into nothing, and he might even soil his pants out of sheer terror. If I wished for him to die, I wouldn’t even need to raise a hand or say a word. He could be the sect master’s own son, and his sect would still kill him before groveling at my feet for forgiveness.”

“I would be quite the unsightly great emperor if I allowed such a man to affect me in any way.”

As Yun Wuxin listened to her father’s reply, her anger slowly gave way to thoughtfulness.

“Free speech is free, but it takes real qualifications to assess anything.” Yun Che continued, “There is no such thing as absolute good or evil in this world. They are what they are because someone defined them, and in this universe, there is only one person who can define me as good or evil.”

Yun Wuxin waited patiently and curiously for her father to continue.

“Myself.”

Yun Che declared calmly and evenly.

“If you call yourself good, then you are good? If you call yourself bad, then you are bad?” Yun Wuxin clarified.

“Correct!” Yun Che inclined his head.

“And that’s because...” Yun Wuxin thought for a moment before answering haltingly but understandingly, “... you are the highest authority of them all? You are the victor who defeated everyone and everything?”

“Mn.” Yun Che nodded again. “When the Dragon God Realm was still the sovereign realm, the Dragon Monarch’s order was the mandate of heaven, the Dragon God Realm’s will was the will of heaven itself. All of the God Realm revered, yearned for, worshiped, and praised them for who they were.”

“But today, the Dragon God Realm is known as the Sinned Dragon Realm. Thanks to your Auntie Wuyao machinations, the once untouchable Dragon Monarch and Dragon Gods are reviled and looked down upon, and the crippled descendants of the Dragon Gods are treated with pity and indifference.”

“You would think that this is an impossible transition or at least one that will take a long time to accomplish, but the reality is that it happened in just a couple of years.”

Yun Che lifted his right hand. It was clean, white, and perfectly unblemished. It had also been a while since it was last stained by blood.

“In this world, no one has the right to define me as good or evil, but I have the right to define anyone in the world as anything.”

“The strong control everything, and the weak don’t even have the right to decide their own fate. It’s no profound truth. It is just the most basic rule of survival no matter what world or plane a person hails from.”

Her father’s words entered her ears and nestled inside her heart. When she looked at that disciple who so dared to criticize her father, she no longer felt even a shred of anger toward him.

“Do you want me to work harder and become someone who can control their own fate, father? Someone who cannot be defined by others as good or evil?” Yun Wuxin asked.

“No.” But Yun Che shook his head and placed a gentle hand on her shoulder. “You do not need to, for you are my daughter.”

“If you wish to strive to become a powerful person, I will cheer for you and provide you with any help you need. If you simply want to become an ordinary person and lead a normal life, I will cheer for you all the same.”

Yun Wuxin: “...”

“I have had enough pain, loss, terror, loss of control and more to last many lifetimes. The reason I crawled to a peak I don’t even like is because I want my loved ones to be able to choose freely and lead

whatever life they wish to lead. If you want something, take it. If you dislike something, reject it. You may even choose to hesitate on something for evermore, for I am here to give you that choice, forever.”

Yun Wuxin’s lips parted slightly. A long time later, she said with a bit of mistiness in her eyes, “Father, I’m going to be a bad girl if you keep coddling me like this.”

“Hahahaha! If you want to become a bad girl, you may take some lessons from your Auntie Qianye!” Yun Che half-joked while guffawing.

.....

They arrived at another middle star realm with an excessive amount of lightning element in the air. As a result of the environment, most of the profound practitioners of this realm cultivated a lightning profound art.

However, a couple of dark auras were surging beneath the unstable thunderclouds today.

“You are going too far, friends from the northern region! This mine may be small, but it has belonged to us Purple Profound Clan for three hundred years! Every sect and profound practitioners in this vast thunder domain can prove it!”

The old man in purple robes was fuming, but it was obvious that his words were restrained. He was accompanied by a hundred or so profound practitioners wearing the same color. Standing on the opposite side were thirteen men in black clothing and emanating a black, foggy aura.

Although the Purple Profound Clan profound practitioners vastly outnumbered the dark profound practitioners, the latter were all Divine Kings... there was no way the former could do anything against them.

“We broke our own rules to let you in because you are friends from the northern region, and Emperor Yun has decreed that all profound practitioners are to interact amiably with northern profound practitioners. However, nowhere in the decree is it stated that you are allowed to rob us blind for your own rapacious designs! Aren’t you afraid that—”

“Afraid? Afraid of what?” The leader of the dark profound practitioners interrupted the old man rudely before lifting his arm. While admiring the dark fog surrounding his palm, he said, “Did you forget that Emperor Yun was the great Devil Master of the Northern Divine Region before he was the great emperor? His protection is as eternal as darkness itself!”

“On the other hand, you people are simply the losers of the war against the Devil Master and us!”

“You’ve tormented us for a million years, and now you want to live in peace with us after we’ve won? Could YOU accept this were you in our position!?”

“You can keep the mine,” said the dark profound practitioner to his leader’s right arrogantly. “Instead, you will submit three thousand tonnes of Purple Crystals as tribute after the thirteen of us have founded our sect here.”

“This is our final offer. If you don’t learn your place soon, there will be one less Purple Profound Clan in this world!”

“You!” The purple-robed old man grew even more furious, and his facial muscles looked like they would tear themselves apart. However, the enemy was far too strong for them to overcome. He simply couldn’t bear to take that last, irreversible step.

Emperor Yun was formerly the Devil Master, and the Devil Master had risen to power from the Northern Divine Region. Together, they had crushed the other three Divine Regions beneath their feet. There was no one who didn’t know about this.

Following that logic, it was perfectly natural for Emperor Yun to take the dark profound practitioners’ side and protect them.

The purple-robed old man sucked in another deep breath to restrain his bursting anger. “Don’t forget that the sects of the Great Wilderness Thunder Domain are as one! If you rip us off, our allies will take action against you!”

“Is that so? You can try.” All the dark profound practitioners snorted as if they had heard a joke. “I can’t believe everyone on this Great Wilderness Thunder Domain is as blind and stupid as you lot though!”

“You!”

The purple-robed old man was going to say something more when a middle-aged man behind him let out a pained sigh. “That’s enough, senior uncle. Just give them the mine so we can protect the sect.”

“Emperor Yun rose to power because of the devil people. He himself is a devil person. How can he not defend his own kind? Sigh.”

“Master,” a youngster interrupted in a small voice, “our clansmen have reported this to the newly established enforcer bureau. The enforcers may yet stop this.”

“It’s no use.” The middle-aged man shook his head pessimistically. “Their commander is also a dark profound practitioner. Why else do you think these devil people are this fearless?”

Right as he finished his sentence, a shout that sounded like a thunderclap suddenly boomed through the air:

“Who dares to disobey the law within the jurisdiction of the enforcer bureau!”

The shout was imbued with the power of a Divine Sovereign. It shook everyone’s heart and threatened to shatter their eardrums.

They looked up. A dozen or so people were flying toward them at high speed, and the leader of the group had a chiseled face, fiendish eyes, wore a set of black clothes and billowed a black aura that could only belong to a dark profound practitioner.

The man’s name was Sikong Hanzhao, and he was the commander of the enforcer bureau and a Divine Sovereign of an upper star realm of the Northern Divine Region. He had been tasked to command the enforcer bureau of this star realm.

Chapter 1898 - Journey (2)

“Lord... Lord Sikong.”

The purple-robed old man's face turned a shade whiter when he saw Sukong Hanzhao and his enforcers. He hurriedly stepped forward to greet the group, but Sukong Hanzhao waved him off and said coldly,

"No need to explain. I have already learned everything there is to learn about this matter."

"Haha, Lord Sikong! Long time no see." The leader of the dark profound practitioners let out a hearty laugh before walking up to the commander. "I have heard that the lord enforcer overseeing this realm is kin and an old friend, and I was planning to visit you some time later. To think that we would meet right now—"

"Who are you calling your kin and friend?"

An angry cry froze the dark profound practitioner in his tracks. Glaring at the leader with anger, Sikong Hanzhao waved his arm and ordered, "Take them down!"

The enforcers rushed forward with irrefutable might. Caught off guard, the thirteen dark profound practitioners were suppressed before they could do anything.

Stunned and confused, the leader of the dark profound practitioners dared not resist overtly. Instead, he asked with widened eyes, "What... what are you doing, Lord Sikong?"

"Hmph!" Sikong Hanzhao said angrily, "On the day Emperor Yun was crowned, he decreed that the profound practitioners of the three divine regions AND the Northern Divine Region are to put their past behind them and treat each other as equals. You are all beneficiaries of Emperor Yun, and yet you disobey his decree and even smear his and our names in mud!? Unforgivable!"

"No! No! Emperor Yun is our heaven! We have all fought together with Emperor Yun back then. We would never disobey him!" Shocked by his accusation, the dark profound practitioners tried to defend themselves, "Lord... Lord Sikong, we are kin, and we have all suffered under the yoke of the three divine regions. Don't you understand why we're doing this!? How could—"

"You dare defend yourself with twisted words!?" Sikong Hanzhao waved his arm and dropped a devastating blast of Divine Sovereign energy on the group.

Crack!!

"Uahhhhhhh!!!"

The sound of shattering bones was so terrible that the profound practitioners of the Purple Profound Clan turned white with terror. The bloodcurdling screams especially felt like they were tangibly squeezing their hearts.

Sikong Hanzhao had shattered the leg bones of all thirteen dark profound practitioners with one palm strike.

After he lowered his arm, he declared firmly, "Emperor Yun's decree applies to all no matter the class or race! Anyone who defies it will be punished!"

"Ah... Ahhhhh..." The groveling dark profound practitioners groaned piteously. The pain was so terrible that their clothes became drenched in sweat almost immediately. "Lord Sikong, we have seen the error of our ways, so please... for the origin that flows in our veins... mercy... mercy..."

“Break their limbs and hang them outside the enforcer bureau for nine days! Make it clear that anyone who begs for them will be subjected to the same punishment!”

Sikong Hanzhao ignored the begging and ordered a crueler punishment. The sound of breaking bones and bloodcurdling screams resounded once more, and the thirteen dark profound practitioners lost their arms as well.

Further back, the younger profound practitioners of the Purple Profound Clan had turned as pale as a sheet. At the beginning, their hatred for the thirteen dark profound practitioners ran bone-deep, but now? They actually felt pity for the offenders.

“Drag them away!” said Sikong Hanzhao while turning away.

“Yes sir!” Two enforcers tied up the utterly beaten dark profound practitioners with profound energies and began dragging them toward the place they would be hung.

For a time, an oppressive silence dominated the scene. Then beard shivering and heart shivering even harder, the purple-robed old man took a step forward and bowed deeply to Sikong Hanzhao. “Lord Sikong, thank you—”

“Unnecessary!” Sikong Hanzhao cut him off with a raised hand and a cold voice. “We are simply fulfilling our duty... It is the mission Emperor Yun has bestowed upon us.”

He proceeded to sweep his gaze across every man and woman before uttering, “You may war against whoever to the death, and the enforcers will not interfere with your business. We will ask you not to bother us with such nonsense either.”

“But if it involves Emperor Yun’s decrees... may the downfall of these villains be all the example you need!”

Sikong Hanzhao’s domineering attitude and heartless words should’ve invoked shock and terror, but the purple-robed old man actually let out a long sigh of relief instead. He bowed even deeper and said, “Emperor Yun’s saving of the world will never be forgotten. His unifying of the four divine regions is good fortune upon all of the Primal Chaos.”

“From here on out, the Purple Profound Clan will obey Emperor Yun’s decrees as if they came from heaven itself. If the enforcers ever has need of our service, we too will—”

“Unnecessary!”

Sikong Hanzhao clasped his hands behind his back before taking off into the sky. He was gone in but the blink of an eye.

The enforcers’ work had been forceful, domineering, clean and efficient to the max.

It would be a long time before anyone would forget about them, if ever.

For a long time, the purple-robed old man stared at the horizon where the enforcers had vanished. Then, he spun around to face his people and shouted animatedly, “Did you see that? Did you see that!? Who dares say that the enforcers will prioritize their own after today? Who dares say that Emperor Yun will take the dark profound practitioners’ side!?”

A small group of people bowed their heads in shame.

“Yes... this junior was foolish and narrow-minded.”

“From now on, I will rebuke anyone who dares to challenge Emperor Yun and the enforcers’ fairness with all my heart.”

“Emperor Yun truly is the unparalleled emperor of the four divine regions! He truly is a man who is deserving of the worship of the entire Primal Chaos!”

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“These enforcers are so cool!”

Yun Wuxin exclaimed in admiration. She and Yun Che had arrived just in time to watch the whole thing from beginning to end. Suddenly, she changed her tune and said, “I can’t believe the nerve of those dark profound practitioners though! It is thanks to father that they got to enjoy everything they got to enjoy today! How dare they tarnish father’s reputation so!?”

Yun Che withdrew his spiritual perception from the distance before replying with a meaningful expression, “The enforcers have probably entered this star region just recently. In order to remove the denizens’ natural caution and rejection in the shortest amount of time possible, it is necessary to ‘kill the chicken to warn the monkeys’.”

“Kill the chicken to... warn the monkeys?” Yun Wuxin turned to him in astonishment.

Yun Che continued to smile. “Correct. However, the monkeys are real, but the chicken is fake. Do you get what I’m saying?”

It took Yun Wuxin only a moment to realize his meaning. She looked in the direction the enforcers had disappeared to and exclaimed in shock, “You mean... those dark profound practitioners were... pretending the entire time?”

“That’s right.” While taking joy in the fact that his daughter was intelligent, Yun Che continued to explain, “Currently, we are pushing for both the dark profound practitioners and the profound practitioners of three divine regions to put the past behind them and treat each other as equals. To do this, the enforcers must choose between punishing a profound practitioner of the three divine regions in defense of a dark profound practitioner, or the other way around. You understand why the latter is far more effective even though fairness is ensured for both cases.”

Yun Wuxin slowly but surely puzzled out the process Yun Che had explained to her.

The show allowed the enforcers to remind both races of the importance of living in harmony, establish the enforcers’ authority in the shortest amount of time possible, eliminate existing prejudices and the common belief that Emperor Yun would definitely take the dark profound practitioners’ side because he was the former Devil Master.

It was a move that killed many birds in one stone.

“Is this one of the secret measures you implemented, father? It’s... not bad,” Yun Wuxin praised with sparkling eyes. At the same time, her disgust for the thirteen “criminals” had turned from disgust to sympathy and respect.

The performance was fake, but there was no faking breaking bones and being hung in public.

“This is one of your Auntie Wuyao’s favorite tricks,” Yun Che explained. “Moreover, she understands deeply the foolishness of repeating the same trick twice, so she has developed thousands of scenarios for this one trick alone.”

Yun Wuxin’s respect for Chi Wuyao skyrocketed even as her lips parted in astonishment.

“Auntie Wuyao is amazing,” she murmured with a look of adoration. “Father, do you think I can visit Auntie Wuyao and ask for her guidance? She’s not too busy to entertain me, is she?”

“There’s no need.” However, Yun Che surprised her by shaking his head. “You won’t be able to learn her style anyway.”

“Ah?” Yun Wuxin didn’t understand his meaning.

Yun Che gazed to the distance again as he explained in a slightly melancholic tone, “The trick is ultimately secondary to the acumen. Only a person who has been through everything would know how to employ the right trick against the right person at the right time and under the right circumstances.”

“Wuyao’s life is one where she has met all the facades of humanity. It isn’t something any woman can hope to emulate or even imagine.”

“The life experience she must have gone through to become an empress who can rule the entire universe... it is my sincerest wish that you will never have to walk that path.”

“...” Yun Wuxin fell silent for a very long time. She thought she understood what her father was saying.

“Come. It is time we move to our next destination.” Yun Che took flight.

“Where to? Is it another star realm?” Yun Wuxin followed closely behind her father. She was already much faster than when she had first entered the God Realm.

Since their journey began, Yun Che had been assisting in her cultivation by tempering her body with the Great Way of the Buddha and the Divine Miracle of Life.

As a result, Yun Wuxin wasn’t trying particularly hard to progress her cultivation, but the speed at which she was progressing was still something no profound practitioner of an equal realm could ever hope to achieve.

Surprisingly, Yun Che didn’t fly long before coming to a stop.

They had stopped at the enforcer bureau of this star realm.

The thirteen dark profound practitioners whose limbs were shattered a moment ago were already hanging on the roof of the building.

Their divine king auras were a shock to anyone who was passing by the area. It showed them the consequences of disobeying Emperor Yun's decree and the strength, fairness and strictness of the enforcer bureau. It told them that the law would be obeyed even if the criminal was a dark profound practitioner themselves.

It was a thousand times more effective than any speech or admonishment anyone could come up with.

The thirteen dark profound practitioners were suspended in midair by long, thin steel cables. It was so gruesome that it was unbearable to look at.

Their bones might have been broken, but they were still Divine Kings. They could've escaped any time they wanted to, but the onlookers believed they wouldn't because of the fear of Emperor Yun the enforcers had put into their hearts.

Yun Che descended toward the thirteen dark profound practitioners but didn't dispel his veil of invisibility. Then, he said, "Thank you. It cannot be easy."

The thirteen suspended dark profound practitioners who looked like dead bodies from a distance widened their eyes in utter disbelief. Then, Yun Che's figure appeared for a brief instant to affirm that they weren't hallucinating.

He was only ten steps away from them.

Shock, excitement, disbelief... every cell in their bodies was shivering uncontrollably. Every drop of blood was boiling with emotion.

"Your Mag... Your Majesty!"

Personally, they preferred to address him as "Your Magnificence" or "Devil Master".

It was because "Emperor Yun" and "Your Majesty" belonged to the four divine regions. Only "Your Magnificence" and "Devil Master" were for the Northern Divine Region and the dark profound practitioners.

"This is nothing... compared to what Your Majesty has done for us, this is nothing at all."

The speaker was literally crying as he said this.

To be approached and even consoled by the Devil Master himself? Forget this bit of pain, he could die a million times now and still feel not a shred of regret.

"To sacrifice for Your Majesty and the Northern Divine Region will only ever be an honor, never a hardship," another dark profound practitioner said with a tremor.

The dark profound practitioners' loyalty and reverence for Yun Che might not ever be surpassed by anyone from the three divine regions.

Yun Che gave them one final nod before leaving the scene.

Forget the humiliation, the thirteen dark profound practitioners almost couldn't feel the pain in their bodies anymore. When the excitement finally faded, what was left behind was an utter lack of regret and ceaseless pride for having served the Devil Master.

While Yun Wuxin was flying next to Yun Che, she kept glancing sideways at her father's face again, and again, and again.

"Did you draw something on my face?" Yun Che suddenly met her gaze and asked.

Yun Wuxin's eyebrows curled into crescents as she giggled. "No, I was just thinking how blessed I am to have a father that I can admire for the rest of my life."

Her father had only made a brief appearance, but it was enough to move the dark profound practitioners to tears.

For the longest time, all she saw from Yun Che was his fatherly side. It was only when she began her journey that she realized little by little that her father was also a king who stood above all others.

"Well," Yun Che replied approvingly, "I'm not going to tell you not to think of me like that. In fact, please do your best not to be disappointed in me too soon."

"Heehee... so, where are we heading next, father?"

"Our next destination is the Ten Directions Deep Sea Realm, the southern region king realm I told you about before. It will be difficult to adapt to the atmosphere of a king realm, so you should—"

"Oh I know! It's the king realm where your Consort~ Grace lives!"

"..."

"As far as I'm aware, everyone who's been made your consort is an incredible person. Take me there already, father! I want to meet her as soon as possible!"

Chapter 1899 - Journey (3)

On the third month of their journey, Yun Che took Yun Wuxin to her very first king realm, the Ten Directions Deep Sea Realm.

Obviously, the Deep Sea God Emperor, Cang Shuhe, was waiting for them when they arrived.

"Welcome Your Majesty and Your Highness," she said with a voice as gentle as autumn water while curtsying gracefully.

Yun Wuxin returned the gesture. "Greetings Auntie Shuhe, I'm Wuxin."

Yun Che had told her briefly about Cang Shuhe a long time ago. Maybe it was because his explanation was too simple, but she couldn't help but stare at her for a moment.

Of course, Yun Wuxin knew that her father's consort would be an incredible beauty. That was one thing she didn't even need to think about.

However, Cang Shuhe's beauty went far beyond just a pretty face. Her liquid eyes, soft lips, delicate eyebrows, snow white hands, cascading black hair; everything about her called out to one's desire to protect.

She was like a catkin in a tornado, a feather on the sea.

If Yun Che hadn't told Yun Wuxin about her, she would never have believed that Cang Shuhe was a god emperor who ruled a king realm. She was also certain that no one who saw her for the first time would ever be able to make the connection.

Cang Shuhe shot Yun Wuxin a beautiful smile and said, "My apologies, Wuxin. I should have prepared a first meeting gift for you, but I was only informed of your arrival four hours ago. As a compromise, I offer you anything that is to your fancy within the Ten Directions Deep Sea Realm."

It wasn't just her countenance and temperament. Her voice was velvety in a way that tickled the soul, and every word she spoke was soothing like the breeze of a deep valley. It wouldn't be an exaggeration to say that it was a luxury to be able to hear her speak.

"Thank you, Auntie Shuhe." Yun Wuxin saluted her again before blurting out, "You're so pretty, Auntie Shuhe. Your voice is... incredibly melodious as well."

She didn't know why, but she had been filled with the desire to praise Cang Shuhe from the moment she saw her.

Cang Shuhe responded with another smile before saying, "You are the one who's cute and pretty, my little princess. No wonder His Majesty pampers you so."

Although Cang Shuhe had shown up in person to receive Yun Che, she was only accompanied by her personal attendant, Rui Yi. The Sea Gods and Divine Envoys were nowhere to be seen. Also, Rui Yi had been keeping her gaze trained on the floor and kept silent the entire time.

Not once did she look at Emperor Yun or hide the overflowing indignance in her half-lidded eyes.

"You don't have to receive us yourself. As the Deep Sea God Emperor, you must be busy with work." Yun Che said in an indifferent tone, "The Blue Silent Sea lies northside of this star realm. I plan to take Wuxin there on the Blue Sea Fierce Shark."

The Blue Sea Fierce Shark was the largest profound beast ever captured in the current universe and the Deep Sea God Emperor's exclusive mount. Naturally, Yun Che wouldn't miss the opportunity to show it to his daughter.

"# ¥ %..." Rui Yi finally looked up. If eyes could shoot fire, Yun Che's face would be engulfed in flames already.

She had thought that Yun Che had finally found that non-existent conscience in his heart and decided to visit Shuhe... but no, the sonuvabitch only came to borrow the Blue Sea Fierce Shark!

Cang Shuhe replied in her velvety voice, "Your Majesty and Wuxin have visited multiple star realms before coming here, right? Why don't you take a short break before continuing on your journey? Your Majesty may not feel fatigue from the journey, but Wuxin is still a young woman. She won't be able to enjoy her trip to the fullest if she is tired."

"I have already prepared some snacks. Why don't you give them a try?"

"That sounds great!" Yun Wuxin exclaimed before Yun Che could give his response, "I want to see Auntie Shuhe's place anyway!"

“... very well.” Yun Che had no choice but to accept.

Almost two years had passed since that fateful battle, but the Deep Sea God Realm remained deeply marred by the scars it left behind.

In fact, to this day, some of Yun Che and Long Bai’s energies still hadn’t faded.

As a result, the Deep Sea Capital had been temporarily located to the east. Over there, things were looking much better and improving.

“Considering the scale of the battle back then, it is impressive that the Deep Sea God Realm has restored so much in such a short time.”

Yun Che praised—or was he?—as they made their way toward the capital city.

Cang Shuhe replied, “The Deep Sea was severely damaged by that battle, but its roots were ultimately untouched. Given proper care, it is only a matter of time before it regains its former glory.”

“I don’t sense a new Sea God either,” Yun Che added.

“Your concern soothes me, Your Majesty,” Cang Shuhe’s smile was as smooth as silk, and her voice as soft as cotton. “It is true that we lost a lot of Sea Gods and a large majority of our Divine Envoys, but Your Majesty now holds the universe in his palm, and we are under your protection. If no enemy will attack us while we are weak, then we may as well nurture our talent patiently and with consideration for the future. It is better to be slow than to make a regrettable, potentially irreversible decision out of haste, no?”

“...” Yun Che looked at her. “You are quite the rational and patient god emperor. Your style is vastly different from your brother’s.”

Cang Shuhe replied, “My brother may look wild and unruly, but he really possesses a sharp and abstruse mind. I don’t deserve to be mentioned in the same sentence as him.”

“I won’t deny that. A man who is praised time and again and entrusted with a most important position by the Empress herself cannot be simple.”

Suddenly, Yun Che’s tone took a change, and his black eyes turned a few shades darker. “Your humility is excessive, however. You have only been god emperor for a year, but you already have the entire Southern Divine Region under your control. Quite a few god emperors would have words with you if they knew about your judgment of yourself.”

Cang Shuhe shook her head. “I was plagued by a grave illness and lusted after by the Southern Sea. For half my life, I didn’t even get to see the sun and moon above my head. What could I do to stave off the boredom and loneliness? I read the letters, studied the ancients’ wisdom, learned from my ancestors’ mistakes, perused the happenings of the realms, and observed the changes of the world.”

While saying this, she caught a single flower that had somehow attached itself to her sash and released it so it might continue drifting to the vast unknown, alone.

“Before I knew it, ten thousand years had passed me by, and the nine thousand star realms of the great Southern Divine Region have become as natural as the inner workings of my own mind.”

Yun Che: "..."

"What I have is knowledge and only knowledge. In terms of the ability to rule both Man and the world, I would not even dare to compare myself to my brother, much less accept Your Majesty's praise as the truth of my abilities."

"In summary, the Ten Directions Deep Sea Realm is doing well only because I am Consort Grace, and because my brother's influence when he was still the god emperor hasn't yet faded completely."

For a time, Yun Che was actually lost for words.

As it turned out, Cang Shuhe's terrifying hoard of knowledge was built atop an unimaginable period of bleakness and loneliness. It was ten thousand years of confinement where she couldn't even view the sky itself.

The image alone was so heavy it was suffocating.

Why did she try so hard to live even though her life could only be described as a little hell of her own? It was simply because she didn't want to betray everything Cang Sh*tian had done for her.

Yun Wuxin looked back and forth between Cang Shuhe and her suddenly quiet father. She was self-aware enough to know that the junior shouldn't say anything in this situation.

After they arrived at the capital, Cang Shuhe led them straight to her bedroom instead of the main hall.

The bedroom was warm, comfortable, peaceful and quiet. The attendants within the palace and the divine envoys outside the palace had already been sent away.

"I have sent the servants away knowing that Your Majesty has little love for conventional formalities and noise."

Although Cang Shuhe had been his consort for over a year, this was the first time he had entered her bedroom.

For a king realm god emperor's bedroom, its decor was unbelievably simple. The ornaments were plain, and the colors were monotonous. However, there definitely existed a form of elegance in this plainness that would put many people's senses to shame.

"I see you are as simple as Cang Sh*tian is lavish," Yun Che commented casually.

Considering Cang Shuhe's past, he understood why she would prefer this style.

"In that case..." Cang Shuhe stared into Yun Che's eyes as her lips curled into a beautiful smile. "Which one do you prefer more, lavishness or simplicity?"

"I choose whatever I want at the time." Again, Yun Che spoke casually while taking a seat, "Does there exist another answer for me?"

"Tsk!" At the back, Rui Yi hid a disdainful click of the tongue.

Cang Shuhe chuckled. "You are the only one who's qualified to give such an answer, Your Majesty."

"Ah!"

Suddenly, Yun Wuxin let out an exclamation of surprise.

She had been exploring the bedroom since they came in, and right now she was standing in front of a wooden table and staring at a spread open painting.

Only a small half of the painting had been completed. It portrayed simple scenery with simple creatures—birds, fishes, and insects—in it, but the art was so masterful it gave the observer the illusion that they were inside the painting itself. Yun Wuxin felt like she was actually inside that tiny corner of the painting listening to the wind and watching the flying birds and insects.

Even greater was the mood that was beyond any adjective to describe flowing out of the paper.

Feng Xue'er loved calligraphy and painting, and Yun Wuxin sometimes practiced them when she wasn't cultivating. However, the art before her had surpassed everything she had ever seen in her life.

It had surpassed even her understanding of "art" itself.

All this from a single piece of unfinished painting.

"Auntie Shuhe," it took a long time for Yun Wuxin to finally move her gaze away from the painting, "did you... draw this?"

This was Cang Shuhe's bedroom. Naturally, it could only be her work.

She just couldn't quite believe it.

"It is a leisurely work I painted some time ago." Cang Shuhe turned to look at Yun Wuxin. "As you can see though, it remains unfinished. If you like it, I can gift it to you after I've completed it. Just be sure to hang around until then."

"R... really?"

Yun Wuxin could barely say a word right now. To a person who had no interest in art, it was at best the artwork of a god emperor. To an interested person though... even this incomplete painting was a treasure they wouldn't trade for all the gold in the world.

"Thank you, Auntie Shuhe! I will definitely cherish it!"

Yun Che was astonished. It was rare even for him to witness such a joyful Wuxin. It was to the point where he was feeling slightly jealous of Shuhe. "I didn't know that you possessed such a skill."

"Hmph! This is nothing. This is but one small facade of the young miss' talents!"

Rui Yi interrupted before Cang Shuhe could voice a reply, "The young miss is equally peerless in calligraphy, engraving, zheng, qin, di, xiao, embroidery and more! The guy who married her must have cultivated ten thousand years of good karma to be this lucky!"

"Rui Yi!" Cang Shuhe reprimanded. "You will speak gently in front of His Majesty, and you will not forget your manners."

"..." Rui Yi turned away and pouted. It was obvious that she was dissatisfied about something.

She also seemed used to addressing Cang Shuhe as “young miss” instead of the more appropriate “god emperor” in a private setting.

Cang Shuhe smiled. “Ten thousand years is a long time. When my boredom reaches an unbearable level, I will practice some hobbies to pass the time. They are unworthy of Your Majesty’s attention though.”

“Auntie Shuhe is that amazing?” Yun Wuxin might’ve thought that Rui Yi was exaggerating before she saw the painting, but now she couldn’t help but believe the attendant. The painting really was that amazing.

“Of course!” Rui Yi replied immediately and with great pride. “I have served the young miss my whole life. I know better than anyone just how amazing she is. If I have to praise only one of her skills though, then it would definitely be her cooking skills!”

“It is rumored that the best food in the entire Southern Divine Region is the Rippling Heart Jade Soup of Pavilion of Delightful Dreams from the Seven Star Realm. Hmph! They say that only because they aren’t blessed enough to taste the young miss’ delicacies!”

“You can criticize that Ripple Heart Jade whatever as crude, and it will still be an affront to my young miss’ dishes!”

Yun Che raised his eyebrows slightly. He wasn’t unfamiliar with the name Rippling Heart Jade Soup.

Before the great war against the Western Divine Region, Shui Meiyin had dragged him to Seven Star Realm on the pretense that she wanted to taste the so-called best food in the Southern Divine Region. It was none other than the Rippling Heart Jade Soup.

However, they weren’t able to sate their appetite that day ironically because of the northern army’s mass relocation to the Southern Divine Region. The Pavilion of Delightful Dreams had skipped town all the way to the lower realm in fear of their lives.

Earlier during the journey, Yun Che had purposely visited Seven Star Realm again because he expected the Pavilion of Delightful Dreams to have returned now that the situation had stabilized, and peace had returned to the Southern Divine Region. He was right. Both he and Yun Wuxin were able to enjoy the Rippling Heart Jade Soup Shui Meiyin thought so highly of.

The outcome didn’t disappoint him either. Not only did the delicacy deserve its fame and Shui Meiyin’s strong recommendation, he would even say that it had surpassed his expectations.

Naturally, Yun Wuxin also felt like her taste buds were about to explode from sheer pleasure.

That was just a month ago.

Chapter 1900 - Journey (4)

As expected, Rui Yi’s claim was a shock to Yun Wuxin.

She would criticize the so-called best food in the entire Southern Divine Region; the “Rippling Heart Jade Soup” that completely flipped over her understanding of gourmet food as... crude?

“Father took me to the Pavilion of Delightful Dreams to taste the Rippling Heart Jade Soup a month ago,” Yun Wuxin spoke up and said. “As far as I can tell, it really does deserve its fame. Is Auntie Shuhe’s cooking... even better than that?”

Rui Yi’s eyes and posture immediately softened. She clearly had a much better impression of the daughter than the father. “After hearing of your arrival, my young miss set aside everything to prepare some snacks for you two. You may verify the truth by your own senses if you don’t believe me, my lady.”

She walked to the tea table in front of Yun Wuxin and lifted the jade cover.

Speaking of which, the jade cover was imbued with a thin layer of barrier on it to prevent the food’s scent from leaking.

There was a cup of tea, a plate of three slices of milk cake, and another plate of small biscuits.

It was an incredibly simple yet elegant serving.

Visually speaking, it seemed a little too simple for a big shot like Emperor Yun.

However, Yun Che’s nose twitched before his eyes even caught sight of the food.

Yun Che was no tea lover, but the faint aroma that pervaded his senses—first the nose, then the heart itself—felt like it possessed some sort of unnamed magic. Not only was it indescribably refreshing and fragrant, the sweet scents that seemed to be in perfect harmony with each other caused his ears, eyes, mouth, nose, and subsequently his entire body to relax before he realized it.

The pleasure and contentment from inhaling the aroma alone were difficult to describe. It was like being lifted up by a gentle, invisible cloud and cleansed by a spirit rain.

“...” Yun Che realized then that Rui Yi might not be exaggerating after all.

“It... smells... wonderful.”

Yun Che was a hardened man, and he didn’t make it a habit of displaying his emotions. Yun Wuxin, however, was nowhere as collected as he was. She let slip a thoughtless murmur before stumbling to the tea table as if she was pulled by an invisible, gentle hand.

“Please choose anything you like, my lady. You will understand what I mean then.” Rui Yi arranged the bamboo chopsticks for Yun Wuxin before awaiting her reaction. She also side-eyed Yun Che when she thought he wasn’t looking.

Yun Wuxin’s lips parted and closed unconsciously. She grabbed a pair of chopsticks, picked up a slice of milk cake with the utmost care—the incredible fragrance growing even thicker as the distance closed—and put it in her mouth.

“...”

Then, her movements came to a complete stop.

For a time, she simply stood there and did nothing at all. Eventually, she removed the chopsticks from her lips and began chewing the food very carefully, but otherwise her expression and the rest of her body remained frozen. Even her eyes became glazed like her soul had been sucked out of her body.

Yun Wuxin's strange reaction triggered a chuckle from Yun Che. "Is it really that amazing?"

"How is it? Does it suit your taste?" Cang Shuhe asked gently.

For a while, Yun Wuxin continued chewing almost as if she couldn't bear to spare the effort to speak. Finally, she whispered, "Give it a try, father. You'll understand why I'm like this."

However, Rui Yi looked away from Yun Che immediately. She was unwilling to open the jade cover on his tea table for him.

While this was going on, Yun Wuxin had grabbed her chopsticks again to pick up the second slice of milk cake and—

Yun Che consciously leaned backward and waved his hand repeatedly, "I-I can do it myself..."

It was too late. The milk cake was merely centimeters away from his mouth. "Quickly! You will regret it if you don't eat this!"

He wouldn't care if this was a private gathering between friends and family, but neither Rui Yi nor Cang Shuhe fell into that category. They were his subjects, and Yun Che wasn't so lackadaisical that he would forget his status and act like a slouch in front of them.

However, his daughter didn't think that way, and truth be told he could never keep up a majestic presence before his daughter anyway, especially not if it meant disappointing her. In the end, he opened his mouth and accepted the feeding.

The milk cake passed through his lips and slipped into his mouth. For a moment, gentle fragrance assaulted his taste buds, and the next an impossible amount of pleasure and satisfaction spread across his entire body.

His five senses lurched under the ultimate pleasure, his blood felt like it was singing in joy, and his soul grew light enough to dance to a tune.

He had already tuned his expectation way up beforehand, but the food still managed to surpass it.

It was only now that Yun Wuxin allowed herself to cry out in astonishment, "Oh my god oh my god oh my god! How can food possibly taste so good? It's so good I feel like I'm dreaming... how in the world did you do it, auntie Shuhe?"

"I'm glad." Cang Shuhe accepted Yun Wuxin's overflowing praise with a small but graceful smile.

"Unfortunately, this is all I managed to prepare in the given time. If you would like, I can cook you my best pastries and dishes over the next couple days?"

"Mn!" Yun Wuxin responded happily before picking up a biscuit next. Again, she let out a moan that would seem totally exaggerated if it wasn't actually that good.

"What do you think, Your Majesty?"

A hint of expectation and nervousness entered Cang Shuhe's eyes. Clearly, she cared about Yun Che's assessment more than Yun Wuxin's.

"It's great." Yun Che nodded slightly and expressionlessly.

The impossibly tame reaction pissed Rui Yi off so much she nearly crushed a tooth there and then.

“Heartless man! Pretentious bastard!”

Rui Yi didn’t mean to curse him aloud, but she was so frustrated that she accidentally let them slip as a mutter.

Yun Che was the strongest profound practitioner in the Primal Chaos, and his spiritual perception was no exception. He narrowed his eyes slightly and continued, “As far as I can tell, this tea fragrance and pastry are truly second to none. They really are that good.”

“However,” his eyes abruptly turned as cold as ice, “it is equally clear that your attendant training skills are nowhere close to your culinary skills!”

“Have you forgotten to teach her the word ‘death’!?”

Heaven and earth quaked under Emperor Yun’s fury, and even Yun Wuxin was caught off guard by her father’s outburst. She stared at him in astonishment while holding the half piece of biscuit she couldn’t bear to swallow yet between her teeth.

For the first time, Cang Shuhe’s seemingly eternally sweet features gave way to panic. She hurriedly rose to her feet and said, “Please quell your anger, Your Majesty. It is true that I have not disciplined Rui Yi as much as I should because we share a sister’s relationship. She definitely shouldn’t have forgotten her place and offended Your Majesty.”

“Rui Yi! Apologize to His Majesty now!”

She blinked repeatedly at Rui Yi as she rebuked her. She was terrified that Rui Yi would allow her stubbornness to go to her head, and as it turned out her fears weren’t misplaced in the slightest.

Yun Che’s aura was so oppressive that it chilled Rui Yi’s whole body and drove her half a step backward. However, she immediately gritted her teeth and squeezed out the words with almost fatalistic determination, “I will... NOT!”

“Rui Yi!!” Cang Shuhe’s voice grew an octave higher.

Against all odds, Rui Yi somehow managed to take one step toward Yun Che before shouting at him, “Yun Che! I don’t care if you’re the Devil Master or Emperor Yun! You irritate me, and I hate you, understand!?”

Yun Che: (HUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUH?)

“Rui Yi, have you gone ins—”

“Miss! If I’m going to die anyway, you may as well let me finish what I have to say! If I don’t get it out now and I somehow survive this, I’ll still die from sheer frustration anyway!”

At this point. Rui Yi was going for broke. She took another step forward and raised her voice, “It has been more than a year since you forced the young miss to become the Deep Sea God Emperor and your so-called Consort Grace! And yet, you haven’t visited the Ten Directions Deep Sea Realm or summoned her to the Emperor Yun City even once this whole time!”

“Do you even know how many people in the Southern Divine Region, no, the entire God Realm are making fun of the young miss behind her back? Nearly all of them believe that she is just a tool you’re using to control the Southern Divine Region!”

“...” Yun Che’s brow knitted.

“...” Yun Wuxin’s eyes widened even further.

She had gotten used to people groveling before her father with the utmost fear and respect, but this was the first time she saw anyone pointing a finger at her father’s nose in a spitting fury.

“Rui Yi! Get out! Get out now!” At this point, Cang Shuhe was experiencing a full blown panic attack. She dashed up to her attendant and tried to push her out of the bedroom.

However, Rui Yi saw her coming a mile away and easily dodged out of the way. While doing so, she continued to shout angrily at Yun Che, “When you first showed up, I thought that young miss’ eternally suffering has finally come to an end! But no, you ignored her, humiliated her, and even used her like a tool!”

“Even so, the young miss kept toiling with almost no breaks for the past year or so! She... she is the best person in the entire universe, and you, Emperor Yun, are nowhere close to even deserving of her! You—Mm!”

Yun Che raised a hand, and space itself froze in place. A killing intent sharp enough to penetrate the marrow cut off whatever it was Rui Yi was trying to say.

“I see you’re trying really hard to court death,” Yun Che said coolly.

“Your Majesty... no! No!!” Cang Shuhe rushed over and grabbed Yun Che’s raised arm in a death grip. Her eyes were full of pain and begging.

“What’s... so scary about death!?” Rui Yi continued in a fatalistic tone despite Yun Che’s killing intent. “You know as well as I how much lifespan the young miss has left... if she dies, I’m not living either! You think I am afraid to die!?”

Yun Che: “...”

“I’ll prove it with my death that not everyone will allow you to bully my young miss as you please, even if you’re the so-called great emperor of the God Realm!”

“Hah!” Yun Che let out a faint sneer. “You are surprisingly loyal for a brat, aren’t—”

“You’re the brat!” Rui Yi cut him off angrily, “You think I don’t know that you’re only thirty some years old? If we’re looking purely at age and experience, you’re not even old enough to be my bratty baby!”

“Pooooo!”

Yun Wuxin spat out the half-eaten biscuit she had been holding between her teeth.

“Nooooooo what have I done!” Yun Wuxin exclaimed in regret immediately after. Her heart was literally aching at the loss of the biscuit. She had never felt more wasteful than she did right now.

The half-eaten biscuit wasn't the only one who had suffered. At least half of Yun Che's killing intent had been extinguished by Yun Wuxin's spitting act as well.

The young woman lifted the part of the dress that had been dirtied by the spit and said in a miserable voice, "I'm so sorry for wasting your delicious snack, Auntie Shuhe..."

Suddenly, she perked up as if she remembered something. "Auntie Rui Yi, can you take me to the dressing room? Father told me that there exists a dress called the 'Illusory Water Sea Dress' in the Ten Directions Deep Sea Realm, and that it's the gift of the realm's infinite sea. I've been looking forward to seeing it for a very long time."

"Eh?" Rui Yi was prepared to die by Yun Che's hands so that Cang Shuhe could finally give up on the loathsome man, but Yun Wuxin's interruption had disrupted her momentum completely.

"What are you waiting for, Rui Yi? Take the princess to the dressing room already!" Still clutching Yun Che's wrist, Cang Shuhe urged again, "Go!"

"Come on!" Yun Wuxin was already pulling Rui Yi's sleeve and dragging her toward the exit already.

And so Yun Wuxin half-dragged a confused Rui Yi out of the door and finally vanished from Yun Che's sight.

Yun Che's palm was still suspended in the air, but he didn't kill Rui Yi.

Cang Shuhe's nerves finally loosened up as she let out a long sigh of relief. She then bowed her head before Yun Che and said, "Thank you for showing mercy, Your Majesty. I promise I will discipline her more strictly from now on... if that is insufficient, I can order her to keep out of your sight as well."

Expression unchanged, Yun Che said slowly, "On the day I met you for the first time, I was at the height of my infamy and inauspiciousness. The god emperors and even your own brother feared me to the soul."

"However, you barely reacted when we first met or when I was treating you. I couldn't sense any fear from you at all."

"Later on, I forced your body to adapt to the Deep Sea divine power and put you through an unimaginable amount of pain. You could clearly feel your lifespan shortening to a flicker throughout the process as well. However, you remained as calm as a pool of dead water."

He stared at Cang Shuhe's eyes before continuing, "That is why I thought you to be a woman of extreme indifference. Until yesterday, I had believed that all but the smallest vestiges of your emotions had died with your ten thousand years of suffering."

Cang Shuhe: "..."

"But... that wasn't the case. Your terror and panic were almost tangible when I expressed the intent to kill your attendant..." he looked down at her chest. "Even now, your heartbeat is still out of control."

He had clearly made an error in judgment.

Cang Shuhe looked up. "Is this why you've neglected me all this time, Your Majesty?"

“...” Yun Che didn’t answer her.

Cang Shuhe lowered her gaze before replying, “It was a cold and painful ten thousand years. Without her constant companionship, I wouldn’t have lasted long enough to meet Your Majesty.”

“She may be my personal attendant in name, but we are really closer than blood-related sisters. One might even say that our bond has transcended common comprehension.”

“I think I understand,” Yun Che replied. “You think I didn’t notice she was glaring at me like she could swallow me the whole time? She really can’t stand you suffering even the slightest bit of injustice. Hmph!”

Yun Che’s words caused a faint ripple across Cang Shuhe’s eyes. “You’ve forgiven her, Your Majesty?”

“I am the Great Emperor of the God Realm after all. Like I would lower myself to the level of a bra—” he paused for a second before correcting himself, “—an old hag!”

Cang Shuhe burst into a giggle. “Oh, Your Majesty. The Empress or Consort Ice will leave you out to dry if they knew what you just said.”

Cang Shuhe’s smiling face was incredibly beautiful. It was as infectious as the autumn wind and clouds.

In fact, Yun Che had regretted his words the second they escaped his lips... it wasn’t his intention, but he had still offended Chi Wuyao, Mu Xuanyin and even Cang Shuhe herself all in one go.

That damned little... attendant! She may have a screw loose, but I suppose it’s a little petty to kill her for wanting to defend her mistress’s honor to the death. There is no way that I’m letting her go without some punishment, however!

Just you wait. I swear by my title I’ll make you cry!

“Naturally, my Empress and consorts do not belong to the same level as she.” Yun Che paused for a moment before adding, “By the way... you won’t tell them what I said, will you?”

Cang Shuhe neither nodded nor shook her head. Instead, she smiled like a deep spring of infinite wonders that could draw in one’s eyes and thoughts until they drowned themselves in it, “Your Majesty, do you know that the biggest mistake countless men have made in history is in believing that a woman will keep their secrets?”

Yun Che laughed in spite of himself.

For the first time, he realized that basking in Cang Shuhe’s gaze and listening to her voice were a pleasure.