

Black Iron 1191

Chapter 1191: Home Affairs

On the next morning, Zhang Tie woke up surrounded by the white and plump butts and breasts.

Linda was sleeping on his left; Fiona was lying on his chest; Beverly pushed her head against his right hand; Aimei and Aixue leaned against his waist and thigh. Zhang Tie's whole body was pressed by his wives.

As it was Bai Suxian's first time to visit Zhang Mansion, she needed to be reserved; additionally, as a princess, she felt it was improper to strive for Zhang Tie's favor with the other women. Therefore, she didn't join the chorus last night. Linda, Beverly, Fiona, Aimei and Aixue felt like having good rain after a long drought. After the home banquet came to an end last night, Zhang Tie returned to his own courtyard. Since they started to help him take a bath, Zhang Tie had been surrounded by an endless affection. After having 7 rounds of fights in the tenderness, Linda and the other 4 women finally fell asleep satisfactorily due to fatigue.

As the room was matched with heating units, although it was heavily snowing outside, it was as warm as spring in the room. The entire room was filled with sweetness and love. Although they were crisscrossing on the huge bed in naked, they would not catch a cold.

Beverly's blond hair caused Zhang Tie's ear itchy. Zhang Tie turned around and saw Beverly's mature and beautiful face on his right side as he felt pretty tranquil inside.

After over 10 years' hardships, the little girl that he had acquainted with since in Wild Wolf Valley had become a beautiful, grande dame and the mother of two kids. Previously, Beverly was very beautiful; now, she became more enchanting. This woman was still fascinated and spoiled by Zhang Tie.

So were Linda and Fiona.

Zhang Tie lightly kissed Beverly's forehead. The moment his lips left Beverly's shiny forehead, her long eyelashes had moved. Closely after that, she opened her eyes and watched Zhang Tie silently.

"Baby, you're tired. take another nap!" Zhang Tie whispered.

"Please don't leave us alone. We want to see you on our side when we wake up. We want to know that it's not a dream!" Beverly mumbled as she pushed closer to Zhang Tie's side. Meanwhile, she put an arm around Zhang Tie tightly with eyes closed.

After hearing Beverly's request, Zhang Tie abandoned the thought of getting up. As an earth knight, Zhang Tie had reached another peak physically and spiritually. No matter how many times had he "fought" those women last night, only after taking a 2-h nap before the daybreak, Zhang Tie had already recovered once again.

Zhang Tie then closed his eyes once again as he just waited quietly to get up together with his wives.

Although lying on the bed, Zhang Tie's spiritual energy had covered the overall internal city of Jinwu City since he woke up just now.

The day had not broken yet. The guards who were on duty outside the internal city had started to make shifts; some servants and maids in the Zhang Mansion had prepared to get up and work; some servants of Zhang Mansion were checking some fresh vegetables and food ingredients and loading them onto vehicles in the back gate of the internal city before pushing the vehicles to the refrigerators of the kitchen in the backyard under the leadership of a steward.

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In winter, the boiler in the kitchen of Zhang Mansion worked around the clock. The boiler firemen in the kitchen were busy making the fire fiercer so as to heat up the water in the pots. Some female cooks were preparing for the first round of breakfast for the servants and maids. Some porridge and bones had been stewed since last night.

A steward was making an inspection in the kitchen as he gave directions every now and then.

"Watch out, second young master has come back, followed by the princess of Lord Guangnan of Taixia Country. As she's born in an influential major clan, she has seen the world. Our kitchen couldn't make any mistake on dietary in case of incurring jokes and losing Zhang Mansion's face; otherwise, even I can't bear it. It's jubilant across Zhang Mansion. The old man and the old madam are both happy. As the new year's festival is coming, last night, general steward Zhang whispered to me that our year-end bonus would increase at least 2 times. Be more careful!" The steward said as he made an inspection in the kitchen.

After hearing his words, the atmosphere in the kitchen heightened at once. As Zhang Mansion always treated their servants mercifully, if the year-end bonus could increase 2 more times, it definitely meant a great amount for those servants and maids.

"Steward Liu, it's said that the princess who followed second young master back directly called old man and old madam dad and mom. Is that true?" A female cook who was adjusting the temperature of the water and washing dishes asked in a low volume.

"Of course, it's real. Yesterday, I've heard it from the crowd behind the square. Our second young master is not a commoner. Even the princess of Taixia Country would behave tamely in front of our second young master. Later on, Zhang Mansion will grow increasingly more prosperous. It would be increasingly harder to enter Zhang Mansion. Therefore, you're fortunate to work in Zhang Mansion!" The dietary steward said in a high spirit.

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In a pinewood in the backyard garden of Zhang Mansion, some little cute squirrels were wrapping themselves using their big furry tails and sleeping leisurely in the tree holes being filled with pine nuts. Zhang Gui was slowly walking in this wood in a thin fur and checking the safety layout in Zhang Mansion seriously...

The heavy snow in the wood was already thick. When commoners stepped on it, they would cause sounds "pffft"; however, when Zhang Gui walked on the snow, he only left half-inch thick footprints.

There were two hidden posts beneath the snow, which couldn't be discovered from outside by commoners. When Zhang Gui was close to the two hidden posts, he took out a token that he received

when he came to Zhang Mansion yesterday from his waist and waved it towards the two hidden posts before continuing to walk forward...

The hidden posts were matched with heavy crossbows. Not until they caught sight of the waist token did they move their sight bead of the crossbows away from Zhang Gui's body.

The pinewood was still as quiet as usual.

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Zhang Yang also got up early. Before it broke, he had already cleansed up and put on his clothes tidily. After that, he went to his study to deal with affairs. Over these years, Zhang Yang had been used to get up early. He even got up earlier than most of the servants in Zhang Mansion. Perhaps Zhang Yang didn't have an aptitude in cultivation, he was always more diligent than anyone else.

This also explained why Jinwu Business Group constantly developed over these years.

One subordinate of Zhang Yang was reporting something to him.

"...I've figured out the background of the three rumormongers in Heavenly Fragrance Building last night. They indeed came from Shengzhou Province. That young man is called Tang Jiyao, a grandson of Tang Gaolin the provincial governor of Shengzhou Province. He's not outstanding in Tang Clan. He always has a great ambition but little talent. He didn't have any great achievements. Tang Jiyao just imitated literati across Taixia Country to travel in Youzhou Province, followed by his two guards. Tang Gaolin the provincial governor of Shengzhou Province attaches to the Gobbling Party; therefore, the Gobbling Party have a great power in Shengzhou Province. All the members of Tang Clan are the loyal fans of the Gobbling Party in Shengzhou Province. Tang Jiyao is just a timid guy. After some torture, he had admitted that what he said in Heavenly Fragrance Building were imagined by him by combining the gossips in Youzhou Province. There's nobody on his back. Besides a remote-sensing communications device, we find nothing else valuable in the hotel where the three people lived..."

"He didn't need to be told how to do this!" Zhang Yang who was sitting behind the office desk revealed a sneer, "Tang Clan is thoughtful. Soon after Meng Shidao is said to promote to the prime minister, Tang Clan has dispatched a lame duck to Jinwu City to bring trouble to Huaiyuan Palace and express their loyalty to Meng Shidao. Tang Clan has so many people. Even though this unworthy descendant is Tang Gaolin's grandson, his life is nothing pitiful. I'm afraid that even Tang Gaolin couldn't remember him among hundreds of grandsons. As long as this event is heard by Meng Shidao and has Meng Shidao bear Tang Clan in Shengzhou Province in mind, it would be a worthy business for Tang Clan!"

"Do I...need to report it to the castellan?"

"These dirty words could only make the listener upset. It's unnecessary to let my father know about it. Just put the 3 d**chebags behind the bars. Ignore that!"

"Just put them behind the bars? Do we need to set one free to report to Tang Clan so that Tang Clan could assign representatives here to take them away?"

"Yup, just put them behind the bars, all of them. No need to interrogate them. Lock them up in another place stealthily. Nothing has happened. Now that Tang Clan want to throw a stone to clear the road, I will not make them satisfied!" Zhang Yang said with a resolute look. Even though he was talking about a

clan of provincial governor, he didn't look fearful at all; instead, he only looked vicious and resolute. "If an elder of Tang Clan comes here, have the subordinates pretend to know nothing about it. We will solve it in official procedures. I wonder what Tang Clan could do to Youzhou Province. If Tang Clan don't show up, just lock them up until they die. Now that Tang Jiyao is talkative, let him talk about his mercy, righteousness, morality and ethics to those vicious convicts awaiting execution in the prison. Don't let them die easily..."

'Yes, sir!' Zhang Yang's subordinate replied while lowering his body.

"Oh, check the business groups and clans who have trade ties with Tang Clan. From now on, Jinwu Business Group will stop cooperating with any business group, commercial organization and firms who are affiliated to Tang Clan. Make sure that Tang Clan could not gain any vial of all-purpose medicament. Let those business groups make choices themselves. If they want to cooperate with Tang Clan, they don't need to do business with Jinwu Business Group! Additionally, check the competitors of Tang Clan's business groups; give me a name list of them. As for these people who dare turn up their noses at us and promote themselves to higher levels by treating Zhang Clan as tools, we have to let them feel some pain."

"Yes, sir..."

When Zhang Yang was dealing with the event in his study, Knight Liu was who employed by Zhang Yang was guarding outside the room.

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Some maids in the main mansion had already got up and made preparations; however, Zhang Tie's dad and mom had not got up yet. In the basement of the main mansion, there was a cultivation room. A knight at his 50s was sitting on a cattail hassock with crossed legs in a dull look. This knight was assigned by Heavens Fortune Sect to protect Zhang family a few years ago.

In normal times, this knight didn't leave the cultivation room. He just cultivated quietly in the cultivation room. Zhang Clan only needed to have people send him some fresh water and fruits regularly each month. This knight didn't even come out to meet Zhang Tie yesterday.

Zhang Tie extended his spiritual energy over there and wanted to see what this knight was doing.

The moment Zhang Tie transferred his spiritual energy over there, the knight suddenly opened his eyes while shooting out shrewd eye light like how a ferocious tiger opened its eyes. Closely after that, this knight looked towards Zhang Tie's courtyard. At the same time, he made a strange hand gesture while uttering lightly, "Block..."

As his invisible spiritual energy quivered for a short while in the underground cultivation room, Zhang Tie's observation was blocked at once. Zhang Tie felt that his perceptions had been covered by a piece of black curtain. As a result, he could see nothing at all.

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'F*ck!'

Lying on the bed, Zhang Tie opened his eyes at the same time with a faintly shocked look.

‘Didn’t elder brother tell me that Heavens Fortune Sect assigned a black iron knight here? But that guy below there is absolutely an earth knight.’ Zhang Tie exclaimed inside.

‘This earth knight is not an average earth knight; he’s much more powerful than Zhang Gui. When I looked at Zhang Gui using my spiritual energy, I was not discovered; when I threw a glance at the knight of Heavenly Fortune Sect, I was discovered at once. Additionally, he could block my perceptions about the cultivation room in a secret method.’

Zhang Tie revealed a bitter smile, ‘An earth knight of one of the top 7 sects has been protecting my family for a few years? I owe Heavenly Fortune Sect too much. Let an earth knight be our watchdog? Damn! Only people inside the Emperor’s Imperial City of Xuanyuan Hill could enjoy such a special treatment!’

Chapter 1192: Making a Promise

As the day was gradually breaking, Zhang Mansion was becoming increasingly boisterous.

Zhang Tie and the 5 wives didn’t stay on the huge bed for too long; especially his wives. As Zhang Tie had just come back, if his wives got up too late, they would be ridiculed. Therefore, they got up as early as usual. After cleansing themselves together with Zhang Tie, they had a breakfast with Bai Suxian. After that, they went to Zhang Tie’s parents’ main mansion to wish them good health.

In the morning, wish parents good health; in the evening, help parents cleanse themselves and go to bed. This was a regulation followed by many major Hua clans. Therefore, Linda, Beverly, Fiona, Aimei and Aixue had been used to it.

“Are Shini, Shixia and the other children still sleeping at this moment?” Zhang Tie asked Linda on the way towards the main mansion when he found that his 5 children had not got up.

It was Zhang Tie’s 2nd time to see his 5 children. It was also Zhang Tie’s 5 children’s first time to see Zhang Tie’s original body yesterday. The 5 children’s ages varied from 3 years old to less than 4 years old. Zhang Tie was like a stranger to them. Besides calling Zhang Tie’s dad, the 5 little guys almost ignored Zhang Tie. After supper, they played for a while under the guidance of the babysitters and nursery teachers before falling asleep.

3 boys, 2 girls. The little girl delivered by Linda was called Zhang Shini; the little girl delivered by Fiona was called Zhang Shixia; Beverly, Aimei and Aixue delivered boys, whose names were respectively Zhang Chengba, Zhang Chengxiao and Zhang Chengbing. Therefore, Zhang Tie had got 8 children in Taixia Country, 6 boys and 2 girls. Besides the 5 little guys who were still in Zhang Mansion, Zhang Chenglei, Zhang Chengting and Zhang Chengpei had already entered Heavens Fortune Sect.

“The doctor said that kids need to sleep more in winter so as to raise their vitality and grow better. They don’t need to get up too early!” Linda replied genially.

“In different seasons, one’s vitality indeed changes. Kids indeed don’t have to get up at the same time around the year. When I was young in Lord Guangnan’s Mansion, I would also get up late in winter. This is also the manifestation about the coexistence between the universe and human in details!” Bai Suxian said.

Although Bai Suxian had just come to Zhang Mansion yesterday, at Zhang Tie's request, Bai Suxian and the other 5 women had called each other sisters, regardless of age. They could also get along well with each other. At least they would not lose temper in front of Zhang Tie. As Bai Suxian was new here, by contrast, Linda and the other 4 wives had already delivered babies; of course, Bai Suxian would not strive for Zhang Tie's favor. Based on Bai Suxian's temperament, she also disdained to strive for a favor in front of all the other women. Similarly, Linda and the other 4 wives knew that Bai Suxian had a dignified identity and was Zhang Tie's helper on the battle field; of course, they treated her politely. Therefore, they all got along well with each other.

Among the other elders of Huaiyuan Palace, Elder Muray had the fewest wives; even so, he still had over 20 wives. Each knight-level elder had a lot of children and grandchildren. By contrast, Zhang Tie only had less than 10 wives, which indicated that he was "a bit meticulous" in sex among knights. Of course, all of his women felt very satisfied.

After hearing the words of Linda and Bai Suxian, Zhang Tie shook his head as he revealed a bitter smile. 'As the undertaking grows larger, there would be more regulations at home. I didn't even know these regulations when I was young. However, even these kids' daily lives have been guided by counselors.'

When Zhang Tie and his wives came to the main mansion, Zhang Yang and Zhang Tie's three elder sisters-in-law Wang Huizhen, Lu Shiyun and Wang Huayin almost arrived there at the same time. After that, Zhang Tie's parents took their sons and daughters-in-law to wish Zhang Haitian and old madam good health. As the old man had the highest seniority, of course, the juniors should wish him good health on their own initiative. After that, Zhang family saw the old man and their relatives off until they boarded the airboat. These relatives would return to Tiger Embracing City by this airboat of Jinwu Business Group.

Zhang Haitian's undertakings were all in Tiger Embracing City. After accomplishing the merger and acquisition of the clan's shipbuilding enterprise under the affiliation of Huaiyuan Palace, Jinwu Business Group, Zhang Yang and Zhang Tie had owned the most of shares of Jinwu Shipbuilding Plant. The two brothers had absolute right of speech about the shipbuilding plant. However, Zhang Yang and Zhang Tie handed the management right of the plant to their uncles and cousins. Actually, the entire clan of Zhang Haitian was headed by Zhang Tie and Zhang Yang in Jinwu City.

Not until the Jinwu Airboat flew off did Zhang Tie let out a sigh slowly as he turned around and asked Zhang Yang, "When did the old man start to use a walking stick?"

After a few years, Zhang Tie found that Zhang Haitian had grown much elder and less spirited than before. Additionally, he started to be humpbacked and use a walking stick.

"The old man started to use the walking stick 2 years ago!" Zhang Yang replied with a sigh too, "When the old man was young, he spent his full efforts in the affairs of the shipbuilding plant; therefore, he didn't spend too much time in cultivation. Only after 80 years old, his health grew much worse. It's useless even though we have the best doctors, medicines and alchemist's equipment; especially during the period when you were screwed and left home, I was told that the old man didn't smile all the year round. He even let out deep sighs every day and would ask about your information in each a few days. Therefore, he grew much elder in only 2 years. When the old man knew that you were coming back, he became unprecedentedly happy..."

Zhang Tie became silent for a second before saying, "We'd better notice the eldest uncle. After a few days, let's send the old man to the warm south to pass the winter. As the old man has a poor health, he'd better not pass winter from then on. It's too cold in winter here, the old man could barely tide over it! Elder brother, you can pay attention to the southern isles and buy a proper one. Later on, our family can pass winter in the south."

Zhang Yang threw a glance at Zhang Tie as he nodded.

The whole family then returned to the main mansion. At this moment, the steward of the main mansion came here to report that the knight of Heavens Fortune Sect had already come out and would like to see second young master alone.

The knight of Heavens Fortune Sect had been in a secluded cultivation in Zhang Tie's family for a few years. However, on the 2nd day since Zhang Tie came back, he had come out.

This news was out of the imagination of Zhang Tie's parents and Zhang Yang, except for Zhang Tie.

However, they were not shocked too much. Because the relationship between Heavens Fortunes Sect and Zhang family was based on the friendship between Zhang Tie and Heavens Fortune Sect. If not, Heavens Fortune Sect would not assign a knight to protect Zhang Tie's family a few years ago, not to mention that they enrolled Zhang Tie's 3 kids as their disciples.

In the parlor of the main mansion, Zhang Tie saw that knight from Heavens Fortune Sect.

This knight was short and sturdy with a dull look in a cyan robe which had turned a bit white after being washed too many times and a pair of ordinary cloth shoes. Given his look, he was about 50 years old with some gray hair like an old farmer entering the city in a set of clean clothes. How could such a person look like an earth knight on the street?

"Hermit, thanks for protecting Zhang Clan over these years!" Zhang Tie sincerely bowed deeply towards that knight from Heavens Fortune Sect.

"Elder Mushen, don't be that polite!" This knight replied with a simple and honest smile.

"Hermit, may I know your name and position in Heavens Fortune Sect?" Zhang Tie sat beside this knight from Heavens Fortune Sect as he asked.

Until now, Zhang family only knew that this knight from Heavens Fortune Sect was surnamed Zhou and was a black iron knight. Since this person entered Zhang family and met Zhang Tie's parents, he didn't make too many exchanges with Zhang family. They were both clear about the "exchange" between them this morning; therefore, it was unnecessary for them to mention about that at this moment.

"I'm Zhou Hongbang, a wild cultivator in Simpleness Embracing Palace of Heavens Fortune Sect. I like being tranquil. My secret method grants me a sensitive perception. When Elder Mushen was wronged and left home a few years ago, none of the members of Heavens Fortune Sect believed that Elder Mushen could do such a conscienceless thing in Fuhai City; therefore, our Elders Council determined to assign one person to help Zhang family in Youzhou Province tide over this difficulty. I offered my self here!" This earth knight's words were as simple and honest as his look. When one communicated with him, one would feel tranquil and comfortable.

“It’s my great honor to be favored by Heavens Fortune Sect!” Zhang Tie let out a long sigh.

Zhou Hongbang turned solemn at once, “Elder Mushen, no need to be that humble. Your 3 sons are really top talents in cultivation; additionally, they have already joined our Heavens Fortune Sect. They’re destined to promote to knights and make our sect more prosperous. As the good model of righteousness among humans, how could our Heavens Fortune Sect allow our disciples’ family to suffer from such a big trouble? In the competition for the position of the provincial governor of Youzhou Province, Elder Mushen gave out your gentle light, all of the elders in Heavens Fortune Sect and my master nephew Cangwu had witnessed that. My master nephew Cangwu even guaranteed that Elder Mushen could never do that in Fuhai City with his own cultivation base. When a Hua gentleman like you was screwed helplessly by the possible demons and b*stards of Heavens Reaching Church, of course, our Heavens Fortune Sect would not just ignore that. Over these years, Heavens Fortune Sect had been looking for the culprit of the tragedy in Fuhai City so as to redress Elder Mushen’s case. Unexpectedly, only after we found some clues, the culprit had revealed himself. We could not imagine that he was hiding in Xuanyuan Hill.

“It’s easy for us to add brilliance to one’s present splendor; however, it’s difficult to help a lame dog over a stile. Zhang Tie has bore Heavens Fortune Sect’s sincerity deep in mind. Later on, if Heavens Fortune Sect need my help, I, Zhang Tie would go through fire and water at the cost of my life!” Zhang Tie said as he clenched his fists with a solemn and resolute look...

Chapter 1193: Stealing Leisure Time from a Busy Life

When you got a drop of water; you should repay with a fountain. This was what Zhang Tie’s parents taught him since he was young, not to mention this time when Heavens Fortune Sect really helped Zhang Tie’s family tide over the toughest period. Therefore, Zhang Tie appreciated Heavens Fortune Sect sincerely with such a decisive promise instead of being perfunctory. It was Zhang Tie’s first time to make such a sincere promise.

Although Zhang Tie’s family hadn’t experienced any big trouble during those years when the knight of Heavens Fortune Sect was over there; neither did this knight fight for Zhang family once. Actually, at that critical moment, only by enrolling Zhang Tie’s sons as apprentices and assigning an earth knight to Zhang family could Heavens Fortune Sect frighten those evil forces who wanted to find Zhang family trouble.

It was also out of Zhang Tie’s imagination that Feng Cangwu would like to guarantee that Zhang Tie was innocent with his cultivation base. Like Mountain Lifting Hermit, Feng Cangwu was also Zhang Tie’s bosom brother who would like to sacrifice himself for Zhang Tie at the critical moment.

If it came to that day, Zhang Tie would really fight for Heavens Fortune Sect and such a bosom friend at the cost of his life.

Watching the sincerity and fortitude on Zhang Tie’s enviably young face, Zhou Hongbang was moved. Just like a gentleman, who would never go back on his words, he realized that Zhang Tie’s words were real.

“Elder Mushen, no need to be that polite!” The earth knight of Heavens Fortune Sect cupped his hands towards Zhang Tie with a solemn look as he said, “As Elder Mushen came back to Jinwu City with a powerhouse, I think I should leave Zhang family. As Taixia Country is suffering from the catastrophe of bloody figures as a whole; especially the provinces near Heavens Fortune Sect, all the knight-level powerhouses in my sect have been assigned to those afflicted provinces by turns to exterminate the large units of bloody figures, I have reported to my sect that I would leave Zhang family yesterday. The elders of our sect have already allowed me to return to Heavens Fortune Sect and exterminate all the bloody figures that I met on the way!”

Although Zhang Tie didn’t know what secret method this knight of Heavens Fortune Sect had, he estimated that this earth knight had already known the real battle strength of Zhang Gui. Therefore, he prepared to leave the Zhang family. ‘Now that Heavens Fortune Sect is decisive, I don’t need to keep him or behave affectedly.’

“If Hermit Zhou wants to leave, Zhang Tie will not urge you to stay. I will send a gift to Hermit so as to increase your battle strength and help you kill more demons and bloody figures and protect a region!” Zhang Tie said as he threw a glance at the trivial traces near Zhou Hongbang’s hand wrists and parts between his thumbs and index fingers. Closely after that, a grim long saber that gave out red light appeared in Zhang Tie’s hand in a split second. A burning image of saber-toothed tiger loomed in the light. Additionally, the moment this long saber appeared, the temperature in the parlor increased by a few degrees Celsius. The saber slightly quivered and rang itself as if a fierce tiger was going to break out of the shackle while roaring. As an earth knight, Zhang Tie could clearly sense the strong surging fire strength over this long saber.

‘This is a silver secret item-level treasure saber; definitely a top-class good among silver secret items.’

As he was too close to this treasure saber, Zhou Hongbang’s face turned red while being reflected by the glow of this treasure saber as if he was sitting beside a fireplace.

“No, it’s too expensive!” The earth knight from Heavens Fortune Sect hurriedly declined. Honestly, very few earth knights in Heavens Fortune Sect could present such a top-class silver secret item.

“Does Hermit think that Zhang Tie and Zhang family’s sincerity couldn’t even match such a lifeless object?” Zhang Tie’s face turned solemn at once as he continued, “We’re sincere friends. It’s just a piece of silver secret item. If Hermit doesn’t take it, it means that Hermit and Heavens Fortune Sect look down upon Zhang Tie and feel that Zhang Tie is not even qualified to make friends with you; otherwise, Hermit doesn’t think that Zhang family’s safety could match a piece of silver secret item. Now that, Zhang Tie will pick my sons back from Heavens Fortune Sect tomorrow. From then on, we will not expect to claim ties with Heavens Fortune Sect.”

Zhou Hongbang gazed at Zhang Tie seriously for a few seconds before nodding solemnly and silently and accepting this silver secret treasure saber.

After Zhou Hongbang accepted it, Zhang Tie revealed a smile, “Now that Hermit is going to return to Heavens Fortune Sect, Zhang Tie wonder whether Brother Cangwu is in the base of Heavens Fortune Sect now?”

“Master nephew Cangwu cultivated in the Earth-elements Realm a few years ago. After the catastrophe of bloody figures broke out in Taixia Country, Heavens Fortune Sect called back all the knights from Earth-elements Realm. Master nephew Cangwu might be on the way back to Heavens Fortune Sect!”

“If so, Hermit, please give this item to Brother Cangwu!” Zhang Tie said. At the same time, he moved his hand, giving out a light. This time, a silver secret longsword appeared in his hand. Being different than that treasure saber, this longsword in his hand was like a visional light and shade. Given its look, it could definitely match that treasure saber. It might even carry some special ability.

Even though Zhou Hongbang had rich experience in Heavens Fortune Sect, he still became a bit dumbfounded at this moment. It was already out of his imagination that Zhang Tie could present a silver secret item. He had not imagined that Zhang Tie could present another one without even blinking his eyes.

‘They are silver secret items, silver secret items. They are not rune weapons that could be bought in the market. How could an earth knight casually present two silver secret items to others? What a rich knight!’ The earth knight watched the two silver secret items as if he was dreaming.

However, Zhou Hongbang finally accepted both silver secret items. After that, he took out a finger ring and a small piece of crystal and passed them to Zhang Tie as he said, “With this remote-sensing telecommunications finger ring, you could contact Elder Qingfeng of Heavens Fortune Sect. Elder Mushen’s 3 sons are instructed by Elder Qingfeng!”

The crystal contained the telecommunications code and the secret code that could be used to confirm both identities. It was a purely strong spiritual information. The moment Zhang Tie injected his spiritual energy into the crystal and established connections with the information in the crystal, he had captured the content of the spiritual information automatically. At the same time, the spiritual energy in the crystal disappeared and the crystal also broke into pieces. It seemed to be a secret method of Heavens Fortune Sect. The information in the crystal contained the mark of the spiritual energy wave of the one who injected his spiritual energy into it. After being reviewed once, it would disappear. If another one stealth a glance at it, he would not restore the crystal; neither could he copy the same information. Bloody Soul Sutra contained the similar means; however, this means could only be learned by a shadow knight who had formed his water chakra.

Zhang Tie accepted this remote-sensing finger ring. From then on, he had one more remote-sensing equipment.

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A few minutes later, after talking with Zhang Tie alone and bidding a farewell to Zhang Tie’s parents and Zhang Yang, this earth knight directly shot into the sky from Zhang Mansion before flying towards the south of Jinwu City in the heavy wind and snow under the gaze of the entire Zhang family.

Not until that grey point gradually disappeared in the sky did Zhang Tie’s family draw back their sights.

Zhang Tie turned around and watched his parents. All of a sudden, he revealed a smile as if he was greedy, “Mom, this weather is suitable for us to have a hot pot. How about eating hotpot today?”

Zhang Tie's mom became stunned for a second. After exchanging a glance with Zhang Tie's dad, she revealed an affectionate smile like how she saw her son over 10 years ago in Blackhot City, "You want a hotpot?"

"Yes!" Zhang Tie revealed a bitter smile as he rubbed his belly, "Previously, I thought that I could eat full at home; I've not imagined that I would also be hungry at home. Last night, I was not full at all. In the beginning, I had to talk with the old man, my eldest uncle and my youngest uncle; later on, so many cousins and 70-80 children of my cousins proposed toasts to me and called me uncle by turns. I couldn't ignore them; neither could I just have food. Therefore, I was not full. My belly is still rumbling now. At this moment, when I remembered the hotpot made by mom in Blackhot City in winter; plus the rice brew, I couldn't help but drool!"

Bai Suxian watched Zhang Tie with an interested look. It was her first time to see Zhang Tie's idle look at home. When she compared Zhang Tie's imposing look in the Earth-elements Realm with his current tame look, Bai Suxian felt pretty fresh.

"Right, let's eat hotpot then!" Zhang Tie's mom replied as she and Zhang Tie's elder sisters-in-law and wives burst out into laughter at the same time, "I will make a hotpot for you at home!"

"Coincidentally, I'm at home, Jinwu City have an annual leave, I will help your mom!" Zhang Tie's dad also said with a smile.

"I will prepare the food ingredients!" Zhang Yang said as he revealed a smile too.

"I will be responsible for firing as usual..." Zhang Tie said with a smile. At the same time, he threw a glance at his eldest sister-in-law before saying, "Eldest sister-in-law is good at making chili sauce and cold dish. I've not enjoyed eldest sister-in-law's food for a long time!"

Wang Huizhen replied with a smile; meanwhile, she threw an appreciative glance at Zhang Tie. Wang Huizhen knew that as long as Zhang Tie called her eldest sister-in-law and remembered what dishes were she good at, the positions of she and her two sons in this family would be indestructible and unshakable.

Among the 3 wives of Zhang Yang, Wang Huizhen had the most average background and look. Additionally, after the new year, Zhang Yang would marry his 4th wife from Zhu Clan in Yanzhou Province. It was the clan of the provincial governor. Now that the 4th wife came from such a major clan, she must have an outstanding look and figure. Therefore, as a woman, Wang Huizhen had a deep sense of crisis at Zhang family. After having more and more wives, even if Zhang Yang wouldn't live up to Wang Huizhen, Wang Huizhen was clear how to be an influential eldest sister-in-law in Zhang family.

Lu Shiyun and Wang Huayin exchanged a glance with each other before revealing a smile at the same time, "Elder sister Huizhen's chili sauce and cold dish are yummy. We two will help elder sister Huizhen make them!"

"What about us?" Fiona asked as she pointed at her own nose in an innocent way.

"You..." Zhang Tie looked at Fiona from her head to her toe before saying, "You're good at eating, Just do that. Linda and Beverly could help mom!"

"Nuisance, I'm not a pig. You're a foodie!" Fiona blushed as she stomped to the ground.

Everybody burst out into laughter.

“Bai Suxian is good at roasting meat. You should show your talent!” Zhang Tie told Bai Suxian.

Bai Suxian revealed a sweet smile towards Zhang Tie...

This day, Zhang Mansion was filled with cheers and laughter...

...

Since he returned home, Zhang Tie didn't leave his family members anymore. He just played with his children, accompanied by his parents, walked and chatted with his wives or directly watched the snow-covered landscape by airboat in the wild. Each morning, Zhang Tie would make up various snowmen in his own courtyard with his 3 sons and 2 daughters. In the process of making odd-looking snowmen, Zhang Tie's kids grew more and more intimate with him and called him papa more and more naturally...

When Zhang Tie returned to Zhang Mansion in Jinwu City and enjoyed the long-awaited slight warmth of his family, the news that Zhang Tie had returned to Jinwu City had spread over Taixia Country and shocked everybody.

Actually, it was not shocking that Zhang Tie returned home. What was really shocking was that the news that Zhang Tie had promoted to an earth knight in only a few years. The more unbelievable news was that Zhang Tie had been rewarded with Fire-Dragon Bounty Territory and the very Cui Li who founded the Iron-Dragon Sect was Zhang Tie's incarnation.

In only a few days, the entire Jinwu City had been as boisterous as a pot of boiling water. A lot of people arrived at Jinwu City from the other provinces in the Northeast Military Region, even further places every day. They wanted to see Zhang Tie by sending the formal visit requests or lavish gifts; however, Zhang Tie declined them all.

Zhang Mansion almost received over 100 formal visit requests every day from all parties. However, Zhang Tie ignored them all.

During the few days at home, Zhang Tie only met three batches of people: first, Donder; second, Barley's group from all the others places across Youzhou Province; third, Zhang Tie paid a visit to the parents of Beverly and Fiona in a simple way. After Jinwu City was established, the parents of Beverly and Fiona also moved to Jinwu City and lived wealthy and leisure lives. Besides Zhang family, few people knew the relationship between them and Zhang Tie.

In this way, Zhang Tie welcomed the new year's eve of the 904th year of Black Iron Calendar at home.

After the new year's festival, Huaiyuan Palace released the news to the public that they would hold the rotating chakra ceremony for Zhang Tie to celebrate that he had promoted to an earth knight on February 2nd of the lunar calendar.

February 2nd was the best day of the year for holding rotating chakra ceremony...

Chapter 1194: The Start of Chaos

Time always flew at home; especially after the new year's festival. It soon came to late lunar January unconsciously. Zhang Tie had already stayed at home for almost 1 month.

Over the past month, besides staying with his family members, Zhang Tie was also paying attention to the situation in Ice and Snow Wilderness.

It was evidently not a good idea for Sacred Light Empire to dispatch an expedition to Ice and Snow Wilderness in winter. Because the two harbors that the expeditionary fleet prepared to dock at for replenishment had been frozen in winter. Therefore, the expeditionary fleet would face a great problem in replenishment. Ice and Snow Wilderness was in the northernmost part of Waii Subcontinent. The closer it was to the vast unmanned ice land, the slower the fleet would move facing the northwest wind and the surging waves, not to mention the icebergs that might flow downwards from the north. In the evening, a battleship might be easily severely damaged or capsized by an iceberg that floated on the ocean.

The merchant ships and businessmen that traversed between Sacred Iceland Kingdom and Western Continent were keeping a close watch on the movements of Sacred Light Empire. After spending a lot of money, the intelligence network of Sacred Iceland Kingdom started to run at a high speed on the Western Continent. Intelligence about the expeditionary fleet of Sacred Light Empire would gather in Saint Peterburg almost every day.

After analyzing the intelligence from all aspects, Pontiff Sarlin speculated that the expeditionary fleet of Sacred Light Empire might leave their military base on this mid-February or early March; at most late March.

Therefore, Zhang Tie became reassured. After accomplishing his rotating chakra ceremony, he had enough time to deal with the crisis facing Ice and Snow Wilderness.

Zhang Tie was not considering how to defeat the expeditionary fleet of Sacred Light Empire; he was considering how to make Sacred Light Empire afraid so that those d**chebags would not dare cast their greedy eyes on Sacred Iceland Kingdom anymore and would feel vexed and lack in self-confidence the moment they heard the name of Sacred Iceland Kingdom.

If not deal with this crisis well, given the overall national strength of Sacred Light Empire, even if they were defeated once, they would attack the Sacred Iceland Kingdom for the 2nd time even the 3rd time. If so, Sacred Iceland Kingdom would have endless troubles.

Gulas and Dali had returned to Ice and Snow Wilderness safe and sound before the new year. They failed to find their allies and reliances. Because major clans in Taixia Country were too picky. They would not invest in the barren land of Ice and Snow Wilderness at all, not to mention align with that small country. If not in the Treasures Meeting, Gulas and Dali might not even catch the attention of any major clan in Taixia Country at all. The two people indeed sold some vials of the source of berserk energy in the Treasures Meeting; as for many purchasers, the so-called source of berserk energy from Ice and Snow Wilderness was just a good medicament that could make people go berserk and sustain that state for a longer time. It could be used for the rest of their lives. However, it was not easy to activate the effect of this medicament either. Not each fighter could activate its effect. Low-level fighters might have a demand for a source of berserk energy; however, after promoting to knights, this medicament would

become meaningless for them. In Treasures Meeting, those which were meaningless to knights could barely catch people's attention.

Gulas and Dali didn't find a powerful ally for Sacred Iceland Kingdom; however, they brought back a news about the large-scale riot in Xuanyuan Hill and the rest of Taixia Country.

The finance minister of Taixia Country was a lackey of Three-eye Association 1. A catastrophe of bloody figures broke out in Taixia Country as a whole. This news aroused a great shock across Sacred Iceland Kingdom, not to mention the Western Continent and other subcontinents. Even Pontiff Sarlin asked Zhang Tie about the current situation facing Taixia Country through remote-sensing crystal out of concern.

As for people from other continents and subcontinents, Taixia Country was very unrivaled. People from all the other continents and subcontinents longed for, jealous about and hated for the prosperity and power of Taixia Country. However, undoubtedly, Taixia Country and Hua people were the pillars and the hope of all humans in the war between humans and demons. Any turmoil in Taixia Country would cause a mighty uproar in other continents and subcontinents.

Since the riot broke out in Xuanyuan Hill on November 15th last year, those who firstly sensed fear were not Hua people in Taixia Country, but top-class figures in continents and subcontinents outside Taixia Country. These people were clear that they would never survive this holy war if Taixia Country collapsed due to civil strife. This holy war was like a terrifying storm. Taixia Country was the largest human battleship in this tempest. If the largest human battleship would capsize and sink, those sampans would definitely be shattered by the huge waves. If Taixia failed to resist demons, all humans would enter the darkest days.

"How's Taixia Country doing now?"

Zhang Tie really didn't know how to answer Elder Sarlin.

Zhang Tie's personal situation was very good. He had promoted to an earth knight and had been found innocent. Additionally, he became famous across Taixia Country. Zhang family's power also expanded constantly. Besides all-purpose medicament, Fire-Dragon Bounty Territory would soon produce revolutionary high-power alcohol; additionally, Zhang Tie had returned home. He stayed with his family members and enjoyed playing with his sons and daughters every day. As a result, his foundation in Taixia Country was growing increasingly consolidated; he had more and more friends in Taixia Country. He had even established relationships with Lord Guangnan's Mansion and Heavens Fortune Sect. However, the culprit who screwed him had been killed by Zhang Tie himself; he even made a fortune. The Gobbling Party were having an intense conflict with the Heavens Reaching Church. It could be said that Zhang Tie's situation was unprecedentedly good. He had not lived such a leisure and comfortable life before. Actually, Zhang Tie had officially reached a wholly new peak in his life.

Zhang Tie welcomed his new peak moments in his life; however, the coldness of the 3rd holy war raided the entire Taixia Country in only a few months.

When it came to winter, the bloody figures across Taixia Country; especially those in northern regions temporarily slowed down their attacking frequencies. The bloody figures became more disperse, causing increasing greater destructions in wider areas.

In December, the catastrophe of bloody figures had just covered over 60 provinces; however, in the next January, bloody figures had been discovered across Taixia Country, except for some wild provinces and Xuanyuan Hill. The catastrophe of bloody figures was spreading over the entire country. Before January 1st, the 904th year of Black Iron Calendar, the catastrophe of bloody figures which had broken out for less than 2 months had caused a casualty of over 0.37 billion people. This figure was increasing every day. There were totally over 10 million bloody figures across Taixia Country. After being encircled and annihilated for over 1 month, this figure was constantly reducing; however, the rest alive bloody figures were still killing people and causing panic across the country in each second.

Even Youzhou province was involved in such a turmoil.

On January 3rd, when Zhang Tie was immersing in the festive atmosphere of the new year, some teams of bloody figures had poured into Yangui Mountain Range from Tongzhou Province. They might have already sneaked into Youzhou Province.

After entering Yangui Mountain Range and carrying out a bloodbath in two small mountain villages, these bloody figures had completely disappeared. When a hunter living in the mountain discovered the abnormal phenomenon in the two small mountain villages, he hurriedly came to report it to the officials.

Some teams of bloody figures with unidentified population might have penetrated through Yangui Mountain Range and entered Youzhou Province. Therefore, Youzhou Province became vigilant as a whole; especially the garrisons in some cities near Yangui Mountain Range which had been mobilized. The moment Fire-Dragon Bounty Territory received the news, they had cordoned off the entire region.

Not until Zhang Tie received the news from Huaiyuan Palace did he know it at home.

Of course, during the same period, Zhang Tie received a “good news” about bloody figures——The battle fortress prison that Zhang Tie had people build near the mountain gate of Iron-Dragon Sect to lock up bloody figures had been officially assembled.

Zhang Tie named this prison for bloody figures as Demon Suppression Battlefortress. The entire fortress could contain 200,000 bloody figures. It was a large-scale battlefortress construction business group which was responsible for undertaking similar business in Yanzhou Province of Taixia Country. After Zhang Yang expressed his demand and paid off 70% of the engineering fund, this business group completed the construction of Demon Suppression Battlefortress in the shortest period.

Zhang Tie had not visited the Demon Suppression Battlefortress yet. However, it was said that it was even a bit larger than the former crystal battlefortress. After Demon Suppression Battlefortress was completed, the first batch of 1287 bloody figures that Zhang Tie and Jinwu Business Group had purchased had been locked into the Demon Suppression Battlefortress. Jinwu Guards were responsible for guarding them.

When the catastrophe of bloody figures spread over Taixia Country, the loyal backbones of Heavens Reaching Church who had “produced” these bloody figures disappeared in the latest 2 months. Besides some trivial figures, very few famous knight-level powerhouses of Heavens Reaching Church being wanted by the Supreme Court of Taixia Country could be discovered. Those d**chebags just disappeared out of the void, causing people to be restless.

Chapter 1195: The End of the Leisure Days

Many missing loyal backbones of Heavens Reaching Church and powerhouses were closely related to Bloody Soul Temple. Take Wen Clan in Pingsha Valley of Zhongzhou Province which had been exterminated as an instance, now that these backbone clans and followers couldn't be discovered while building bloody seas across Taixia Country, they were not common clans and powers. Such clans would at least have one black iron knight. Actually, according to the official report, these loyal followers of Heavens Reaching Church who were exposed due to the catastrophe of bloody figures and bloody sea contained 264 black iron knights, 19 earth knights and 1 shadow knight.

The shadow knight came from Gao Clan of Time-honored Taste Palace in Liang Zhou Province, one of the top 9 immortal provinces in Taixia Country. Han Zhengfang's wife came from Gao Clan. If not the accident in Xuanyuan Hill, who could imagine that well-known Gao Clan of Time-honored Taste Palace in Liangzhou Province belonged to Heavens Reaching Church.

That wanted shadow knight was Gao Tianzhao, the former clan head of Gao Clan, also the great-great-grandfather of the current clan head of Gao Clan, the forebear of Gao Clan.

Besides Gao Tianzhao, 4 earth knights and over 30 black iron knights of Gao Clan entered the wanted list of the Supreme Court too.

All the knights of Gao Clan had escaped. Those who couldn't escape just scattered in all directions. They would be arrested and killed by the fighters of Supreme Court. Overnight, the remarkable Gao Clan of Time-honored Taste Palace had collapsed, shocking too many people.

It was an earth-shaking event for the Supreme Court to confiscate Gao Clan. It happened when Zhang Tie was still in the underground magma sea beneath the volcano. Zhang Tie gradually understood the details after returning to Youzhou Province.

Gao Clan was the first supermajor of Taixia Country being confiscated as it was involved in the plot of demons, Time-honored Taste Palace was only inferior to the imperial household of Taixia Country. Therefore, this event had a great influence. All the major clans in Taixia Country had been shocked. It was said that the Supreme Court even found a time-honored altar of Bloody Soul Temple from Gao Clan. Therefore, Gao Clan's secret identity was exposed. Gao Can was confirmed as the clan being affiliated to Bloody Soul Temple in Taixia Country. However, besides Gao Clan, it was hard to say whether there were any more secret clans being affiliated to Bloody Soul Temple in Taixia Country.

Nobody could imagine that Bloody Soul Temple could bury so many timebombs in Taixia Country after the top 7 sects in Taixia Country joined hands to exterminate the Bloody Soul Temple.

In order to hunt for the knights of Heavens Reaching Church, the judicial minister, one of the top 9 ministers of Taixia Country who had been in Xuanyuan Hill for many years had already left Xuanyuan Hill. He guided and implemented the encirclement and annihilation of these subversives. All the supreme powerhouses in the provincial and prefectural courts across Taixia Country had left to catch them.

Thankfully, the catastrophe of bloody figures broke out very hastily on last November 15th, sparing less time for Heavens Reaching Church to make preparations. If they made well preparations for that, over 10 million bloody figures under the leadership of so many knights would cause dozens even hundreds of

times more damages like what once happened in Waii Subcontinent. As long as demon knights could resist the attacks of human knights, the super demon corps on the ground would be unrivaled. By contrast, after losing the guidance of knights, this super corps of bloody figures would be casually separated into smaller troops by human knights across Taixia Country like how a cook dissected an ox. If these bloody figures troops moved slowly or couldn't break through timely, they would be encircled and annihilated by outnumbered human corps which poured in from all directions.

After causing a great chaos across Taixia Country, those knights of Heavens Reaching Church seemed to have disappeared all of a sudden. At least Zhang Tie had not heard about any major move of these b*stards in the last 2 months.

Even Zhang Gui couldn't figure out where these people hid in and what they were going to do. Previously, Zhang Gui was following Han Zhengfang and Han Yuanhong. He was not on the same line with those loyal backbones of Heavens Reaching Church who were directly guided and dispatched by Han Zhengfang and prepared for arising riots across Taixia Country. The two systems might have contacts; Zhang Gui also recognized some loyal followers of Heavens Reaching Church; however, he couldn't get hang of the concrete schedules of these people after they arouse the riot.

According to Zhang Gui, Han Zhengfang's subordinates belonged to two systems. Although the two systems looked like a unity, they were different than each other. Zhang Gui sought refuge with Han Zhengfang after promoting to a knight. However, Han Zhengfang kept vigilance about him. As a result, Zhang Gui couldn't participate in some plans. Zhang Gui actually always followed Han Zhengfang's youngest son Han Yuantu. By contrast, someone in Heavens Reaching Church was more reliable to Han Zhengfang. For instance Gao Clan of Time-honored Taste Palace, which was qualified to be the direct subordinates of Han Zhengfang. Han Zhengfang's direct subordinates were under the control of his eldest son Han Yuanhong.

When Zhang Gui sought refuge with Han Zhengfang, he didn't know that Han Zhengfang's subordinates were divided into two systems. He gradually realized that later on. Zhang Gui guessed that those people and clans whom Han Zhengfang trusted most in Heavens Reaching Church might be those from the secret clans being affiliated to Bloody Soul Temple like Han Zhengfang himself. Those clans and knights that surrendered to Han Zhengfang were always a bit estranged to Han Zhengfang compared to these knights who came from the secret clans of Bloody Soul Temple.

The source of Heavens Reaching Church was involved with the Bloody Soul Temple which was once exterminated by the top 7 sects in Taixia Country. Additionally, Heavens Reaching Church colluded with demons. Therefore, the relationship between Bloody Soul Temple, Heavens Reaching Church and demons was complicated.

Since the beginning of the 904th year of Black Iron Calendar, the entire Taixia Country had been in chaos. Few people could celebrate the spring festival at home in a reassuring way; especially those knight-level powerhouses.

As Taixia Country was becoming increasingly chaotic, as a member of Hua people in Taixia Country, Zhang Tie couldn't spare any effort in exterminating bloody figures and demons.

On January 17th, after Zhang Tie stayed at home leisurely and comfortably for less than 1 month, he had received the notice of Huaiyuan Palace. He was requested to discuss something in the Ancestral Shrine

Palace of Huaiyuan Palace in Tiger Embracing City. All the elders and Zhang Taixuan would attend this meeting.

Given its scale, they were definitely talking about something trivial. As an elder of Huaiyuan Palace, of course, Zhang Tie couldn't be absent out of no reason. From another perspective, he could manifest his authority as an elder and position in his family by attending this meeting in the Ancestral Shrine Palace. Of course, Zhang Tie had to go there.

On the afternoon of January 18th, after having lunch and hushing his 3 sons and 2 daughters to have a nap, Zhang Tie bade a farewell to his family members. Closely after that, he shot into the sky before flying towards Embracing Tiger City...

Chapter 1196: Coming to Embracing Tiger City in Disguise

Jinwu City was neighboring Yanghe Prefecture, Youzhou Province, which was less than 600 miles from Embracing Tiger City. The distance between Jinwu City and Embracing Tiger City might be a bit long for commoners, which would cost a lot of time by train or airship; however, as for an earth knight like Zhang Tie, the distance of 600 miles was like leaving home for the marketplace. Even though Zhang Tie didn't use the ability of divine dominator, he could also arrive at Embracing Tiger City in 1 hour.

After the 5th day of the lunar January, it didn't snow in Youzhou Province anymore. However, it was as cold as usual; especially these days. After the accumulated snow started to melt, it became much colder in the air.

Flying in the sky, Zhang Tie found that the landscape below was covered with white snow. Zhang Tie entered the air territory above Tiger Embracing City before 2 pm. He then landed on a lane of a residential area which was unpopulated nearby the harbor of Embracing Tiger City.

After landing on the lane, Zhang Tie put on his snow-proof hood and buckled it up. As a result, the greater part of his face had been covered at once, only exposing his eyebrows and eyes. The others couldn't identify the face under the hood at all; they could only identify that this man was not old.

Given Zhang Tie's popularity in Youzhou Province; especially Embracing Tiger City, he couldn't be identified by people on the street only in this way.

Zhang Tie just stayed with his family members at home these days. Although he also gained some messages from outside, as these messages were indirect, they were not accurate enough. Coincidentally, as he came to Tiger Embracing City to attend the meeting, he wanted to check the atmosphere in Embracing Tiger City too. As a knight in Taixia Country, now that he didn't plan to hide in Castle of Black Iron completely, he had to care about something more or less. As Zhang Tie was also once an average person, he knew that something couldn't be more genuine and concrete unless among the people.

There was thin accumulated snow on the ground of the lane. Zhang Tie walked out of the lane toward the outside street.

By contrast, the street outside the lane was pretty boisterous.

The moment Zhang Tie arrived at the mouth of the lane, a gate near the mouth of the lane had opened, causing a squeak. Some people walked out of there. 2 people were seeing off another 2 people.

“Second younger brother, I will hand Deming to you. When he comes to your boîte, teach him whatever you want. Beat him if he’s not obedient. Don’t spoil him. Let him do all the dirty and tired jobs in the boîte!”

The 2 people who were leaving were a middle-aged couple in ordinary dress. Given their looks, they must come from rural areas outside the city. Although they wore clean clothes, Zhang Tie could easily know their identities the moment he saw them. The man who was talking looked simple and honest.

“Eldest brother, don’t worry. I will treat De Ming as my own son. As long my family has food, we will never make him hungry!” The couple who saw them off looked a bit younger. Given the looks of the current speaker and the earlier one, they must be brothers. “I will slowly teach Deming about the affairs in the boîte. Deming could also be a boss in the future!”

“With your words, I’m reassured!”

“We’re of the same family. At this moment, you and eldest sister-in-law don’t need to be so kind to us. Deming, come over here. Bid a farewell to your dad and mom. Later on, you could only meet your parents once a few months in the Embracing Tiger City...”

A teenager with bloody eyes moved forward and knelt down on the snow before the younger couple, “Dad, mom, don’t worry about me. After I grasp talents from the second uncle and make enough money, I will buy a house in the downtown and bring you there...”

When Zhang Tie came over there, the 5 people turned around to glance at him at the same time. Zhang Tie just passed by leisurely. He didn’t let them feel that he was watching them just like a passer-by. He then came to the bustling street.

Although it was cold, after the new year festival, the street had become boisterous. After the 3rd day of lunar January, the roadside stores had opened constantly. A minority of stores would open on the 6th day or the 8th day of the lunar January for a good fortune. Only a few stores had not opened after the Lantern Festival. The bosses of these stores must be in the other provinces and had not come back yet.

There were some traces of celebrating the Lantern Festival 3 days ago on the street. The front stores were all hanging delicate lanterns. Some lanterns were even hanging over twigs on the roadside.

Zhang Tie walked on the streets leisurely. Many people on the street were in the same snow-proof hood like him. Embracing Tiger City was close to the ocean. Therefore, the sea wind was stronger in winter. These days, those who sought living outside had to cover their faces and daub fish oil over their faces in case of being wounded by the piercingly cold wind. Many people in Tiger Embracing City were in similar dress. Besides being exquisite and delicate, Zhang Tie’s dress was nothing special. Therefore, nobody paid special attention to him on the street. The back of hands and faces of some people on the street were oily too. They might be seeking a living on the wharf or the ship.

“Eldest brother, I will call a car to carry you back!”

“No need, we’ve come to Embracing Tiger City for a few times. We’re familiar with the road. When your eldest sister-in-law and I arrived at Embracing Tiger City, we’ve made an appointment with Li Dazhuang

who's responsible for delivering grains. We will wait for him at the west gate of Tiger Embracing City and go back by his vehicle. Hurry, go back, it's cold outside..."

The street outside the lane was east-west. After coming to the street, Zhang Tie immediately turned to the west leisurely.

Even though he had turned to the street, the talk in the lane still drifted in his ears. Needless to say, Zhang Tie knew that the rural couple must have politely declined the good intention of the urban couple. Even though, the urban couple still saw him off to the mouth of the lane. After talking with each other for a short while, they had departed. The rural couple just walked 30 m away behind Zhang Tie while the urban couple had returned home and closed the door with the son of the rural couple.

After leaving the mouth of the lane for a short while, when they were a bit farther away from the mouth of the lane, the woman who was always silent suddenly uttered, "Younger sister-in-law didn't speak just now; I'm a bit worried about it..."

The man became silent for a second before nodding affirmatively, "Don't worry, my second younger brother is strong-minded. His words work at home. When my second younger brother came to Embracing Tiger City for developing his undertaking, his boîe was even bought by our brothers. Our family even sold about 7,000 square meters' land. I even sold some cattle for him. Over these years, you've already seen that, my second younger brother is not that ungrateful. He usually helped our family; not to mention that he watched Deming growing up. Whatever, he's Deming's uncle. He will not mistreat Deming!"

"Although it sounds reasonable, I'm still worried about that. After all, Deming will stay in Embracing Tiger City for not only a few months. If it's too long, I'm afraid that the second sister-in-law would feel unhappy..."

"Alas, we have to do that!" The simple and honest man let out a sigh before continuing, "In our village, those able ones would hurriedly send their children into the downtown. It's said that Landlord Liu has sent his children into a school in Youzhou City. Old Cao has sent his son to Goldenlight City as an apprentice; even Li Laizi's two children have been sent into the sawmill in Embracing Tiger City which was opened by his uncle. The downtown would always be safer than the rural areas more or less. A few years ago, it was safe and stable in rural areas; however, it's becoming dangerous in rural areas now. It's said that hundreds of villages outside cities had been cleaned by bloody figures overnight. Many people even became the food of those bloody figures. The 3-5 m high guardrails and walls outside the villages could only prevent ordinary wild beasts and burglars. Bloody figures could easily jump over them. Ordinary villages couldn't resist bloody figures at all. A few days ago, bloody figures had already arrived at Youzhou Province. It's said that many people were killed. We have to find a way for Deming..."

"I'm only worried about Deming..."

"The country is becoming increasingly chaotic. It's nothing for Deming to suffer some hardships as long as he's safe. Ah, where's that set of jade jewelry? Bring them when we come to Embracing Tiger City next time. You give them to 2nd sister-in-law stealthily. Don't let my 2nd younger brother know that. It's women's business."

“Ahh? I keep them for Dehua’s wife in the future. No matter how poor we’re, if we want to marry a son-in-law, we have to prepare some nice-looking jewelry!”

“Dehua is in the army. He doesn’t need them for the time being. We’d better deal with Deming’s affair first! It’s better than nothing as long as the two brothers could survive! When spring comes, I will try my luck in the mountain and find some wild ginseng...”

“As you wish...” The woman nodded after being silent for a second...

Zhang Tie knew that it was very dangerous to find ginseng in the mountains of Youzhou Province; especially for fighters below LV 9. As wild ginseng grew in mountains, which were covered with mutated beasts, commoners had to risk a great danger to enter mountains. Many people couldn’t come back alive.

‘How poor parents!’

Zhang Tie let out a long sigh as he had not imagined that even Embracing Tiger City which was far away from the catastrophe of bloody figures could suffer from such a great shock. Even the villagers outside the city wanted to send their family members to the downtown and seek for a safe asylum.

After looking at the flow rate of people on the street seriously, Zhang Tie found that there were indeed more people than when he came here last two times.

Even Youzhou Province had been in such an urgent situation, not to mention the other provinces. Although there were many cities in Taixia Country, over 70-80% of people lived outside of cities. The moment the catastrophe of bloody figures broke out, the entire country was in a panic while villagers hurriedly poured into downtowns. Some downtowns might have been in chaos.

When Zhang Tie slightly frowned and thought about it, he heard a roar from the inn in front of him, “You lunatic, how dare you pretend to be a pharmacist? How could a pharmacist be so poor in Taixia Country? If you don’t have money, roll out of my inn...”

Closely after the roar, one person had been thrown out of the door together with his quilt and blanket.

Chapter 1197: The Lunatic

The accumulated snow on the street had long thawed due to so many passers-by, causing soft and icy mud. The person being thrown out of the inn together with his broken roll of quilt and blanket directly fell into the mud. How embarrassing it was! The passers-by on the roadside streets hurriedly dodged away from him. Zhang Tie and some passers-by then started to watch the fun on one side.

Some strong lads and a cook of the inn were standing outside the gate while glaring at the person who had been thrown out. A glib lad cupped his hands and explained loudly, “Dear neighbors and friends. Our Yuean Inn is not bullying him. This guy had lived in our inn for over 1 week for free. Previously, our boss was soft-hearted and let him live in for a few days as it’s cold outside. We’ve not imagined that this guy planned to stay in our inn all the way. He bullied us. It doesn’t work wherever it is. As we cannot stand it anymore, we have to drive him out of Yuean Inn. Please be the witnesses for us, we don’t mind whether he’s dead or not!”

After being thrown out, the one quivered all over out of fury. He stood up from the mud and pointed at those young men in the inn before saying furiously, "You...you...are going too far...I've paid this month's rent and food...how could you drive me out before the end..."

"When you came here, our boss had told you that our rent would change with the marketing price. It changes every day. When in slack season, it would be cheaper; when in boom season, it would be more expensive. You paid the rent in November; however, the rent across Embracing Tiger City had been growing since the beginning of December. All the other inns' rents were rising. Of course, our Yuean Inn's rent and food fee would rise too. We're following the general trend. Your rent and food fee has been used up soon after the new year festival. As our boss pitied you, he allowed you to stay inside for a few more days. Even if you notify the official, we will not be afraid of you. How ridiculous! How could you be a pharmacist? If all the pharmacists across the world were like you, pharmacists couldn't even match coolies..."

"Hahaha...I'm not a pharmacist...if I'm not a pharmacist, how could I be so embarrassed..." The embarrassed middle-aged man burst out into laughter miserably with bloody eyes as if he had lost his marbles. He tore open his wet and dirty clothes and exposed his naked chest to the chilly wind before roaring towards the sky, "Come on, kill me; come on, kill me. I know you will not let me go; come on, kill me. All the people across the world are swarming around as flies do for good and hang around as dogs do for food. I've been so poor for the well-being of all the people across the world. It's meaningless. If you want to torment all the people across the world, just do it. If you want to kill me, just do that. Aren't your heavens reaching? Aren't you preparing for turning all the medicinal materials into poisons? Come on, kill me..."

Being stimulated and humiliated by the lads of the inn, this middle-aged man was driven mad, which scared those lads a few steps back. They strictly guarded the gate of the inn so as to prevent him from breaking into the inn and causing some troubles. All the onlookers hurriedly scattered to a certain degree, including Zhang Tie.

"Alas, this man turned a bit abnormal. How about fetching the criminal hunters to catch him? It would be troublesome if he hurt someone..." Someone among the onlookers whispered.

"How about sending him to the Benign Doctor's Clinic? It's too cold, he's driven mad. How poor he is!"

After hearing the words of the onlookers, that man laughed loudly. He even dropped off his tears, "Yes, I'm a lunatic, I'm a lunatic..."

"Even heroes might be breathless. Everybody would have a low ebb in life. Nothing to watch here. Please leave. This friend, please not be that excited!" A calm and crispy sound drifted out of the onlookers. When all the people turned around, they saw a strong young man in snow-proof cloak behind the crowd. Given his voice, this man should be younger than 20 years old; however, those eagle-eyed people could find that his cloak and boots were all well-made and rare in the market. Additionally, this young man had an unspoken temperament. Even though he didn't expose his face, he was still awe-stricken.

"Ha, just leave out of here, just leave..."

The young man's voice sounded supernatural. After hearing his words, all the onlookers really left. Even that middle-aged man who was a bit excited just now became quiet. He didn't shout loudly or did anything excessive anymore.

Of course, it was Zhang Tie who spoke. Additionally, he used a secret skill of Soul Forbidden Method. His words sounded very comfortable. Therefore, all the onlookers just followed his order unconsciously. When the crowd dispersed, Zhang Tie walked towards the gate of the inn as he asked those lads who were standing outside the gate of the inn, "How much has this guy owed you?"

That eloquent lad whispered while shrugging with a bit fearful look, "This man...has lived a few more days in our inn. He owes us over 20 silver coins. You know, we're not a welfare institution..."

"Well, I understand you. It's not your fault. Take it..." Zhang Tie flipped a gold coin onto the hand of the lad after drawing an elegant golden arc in the air. "I've paid off his debt. Keep the change. Tell your boss. It's good to help people tide over difficulties; however, it would be much better if he could do well from beginning to end..."

"Yes...yes...yes, thanks, thanks..." After taking that gold coin, those lads revealed a smile at the same time. They treated Zhang Tie more politely. Such a generous and righteous guest was always welcomed wherever he was.

"Are there any other belongings of him in your inn?"

"No, no more!" Those lads hurriedly shook their heads, "He only came with such a broken blanket and a quilt. Nothing else!"

Zhang Tie turned around and looked at that middle-aged man who was especially berserk just now. That man had already recovered his composure while wrapping himself in clothes. His face had turned a bit blue in the cold wind. Zhang Tie told him, "Follow me!"

The middle-aged man hesitated for a second. After following Zhang Tie for a couple of steps, he threw a glance at the broken blanket and quilt in the mud as he wanted to pick them up.

"No need to pick them up. They are dirty and wet. Just throw them!"

After hearing Zhang Tie's words, that middle-aged man stopped picking them up and just followed after Zhang Tie while shrinking his body.

Zhang Tie walked a short while ahead of the middle-aged man silently. The middle-aged man didn't speak either. Over 10 minutes later, they stopped in front of "Jinyun Hotel" on a more prosperous avenue.

This "Jinyun Hotel" was much more luxurious than that inn. Although it was cold, the garden outside the hotel was still verdant. There was a huge dome which was made of glass fiber reinforced plastics on the top of the garden. There were heating units on the ground. The shiny marbles were resplendent and spotless. Two rows of tall and thin beautiful girls were standing at the gate to welcome guests.

Zhang Tie directly entered the gate. Being scared by such a grand place, the middle-aged man dared not enter it. Therefore, he became hesitated.

“Come in? You didn’t even care about your life just now, why not dare enter a hotel?” Zhang Tie turned around as he threw a glance at that middle-aged man.

The middle-aged man gritted his teeth. Closely after that, he followed Zhang Tie in as if he was ready to risk everything.

“Gentleman, you want...” A female usher walked over here as he threw a glance at Zhang Tie and that middle-aged man who followed after Zhang Tie. Zhang Tie looked noble all over; however, that middle-aged man behind him looked sloppy. They were absolutely from two different worlds.

“Prepare a special courtyard for me...” Zhang Tie said as he passed a good check to the girl, the par value of which was 1,000 gold coins. At the sight of such a “large denomination”, the girl swallowed all the words back. With such a gold check, the two people could live in the most expensive courtyard for 1 year.

Under the amazed gazes of the other gentlemen and young ladies who were accessing to the hotel, that female usher directly led Zhang Tie and that middle-aged man into a tranquil courtyard which was matched with a warm spring.

“Bring him some fitted clothes, shoes and socks for him given his size. I don’t care about money!” Zhang Tie told the female usher. Such a high-end hotel was always matched with a high-end shopping mall. It’s easy for people to buy clothes here.

After the female usher left, Zhang Tie told that middle-aged man, “You’d better take a bath and change a set of new clothes before talking with me...”

After doing all these, Zhang Tie just took a seat and drank tea water in the parlor while waiting for the middle-aged man to come out to talk with him after taking a bath.

Chapter 1198: The Inquiry

Zhang Tie just sat and drank tea water in the parlor of the courtyard. He had already taken off his hood, revealing an excessively young face.

He just helped that middle-aged man by himself. What counted most was the sentence that middle-aged man roared when being driven mad—All the people across the world are swarming around as flies do for good and hang around as dogs do for food. I’ve been so poor for the well-being of all the people across the world. It’s meaningless. If you want to torment all the people across the world, just do it. If you want to kill me, just do that. Aren’t you heavens reaching? Aren’t you preparing for turning all the medicinal materials into poisons? Come on, kill me...

As the middle-aged man shouted it when losing his marbles, very few people would believe in his words. However, as Zhang Tie was proficient in Soul Forbidden Method, he could clearly sense that that man was in his right mind although being despaired and mad. He was not talking rubbish. He just aired his grievance in a self-abandoned way.

——Turning all the medicinal materials into poisons!

This sentence caught Zhang Tie’s attention.

At Zhang Tie's request, over 10 waiters entered the bathroom of the courtyard with a lot of clothes, shoes and socks in hands for the selection of that middle-aged man. They made two rounds. Some waiter even pushed a dining cart into the bathroom. Zhang Tie just waited there patiently. When he drank tea water, he took out a vial of water-element crystal which gave out shiny blue light and started to absorb it.

Even grasshopper legs were meat. Although Zhang Tie had prepared to not take absorbing element crystals as the major method for forming his chakra; now that he was free, given that it was inconvenient for him to cultivate "The Great Wilderness Sutra" and the other secret methods, he just casually took out one vial of water-element crystal and started to absorb it just like cracking melon seeds. By the way, he could increase his battle strength to a certain degree, why not? No matter what, Zhang Tie had a lot of water-element crystals.

After entering Castle of Black Iron and absorbing the fruit of brilliance, Zhang Tie could carry out 26 tasks at the same time. In this state, Zhang Tie's absorbing speed was much faster. Even though Zhang Tie didn't make his utmost effort, he had completely absorbed one water-element crystal in less than 1 hour.

After absorbing the 1st water-element crystal, Zhang Tie took out the 2nd one. When he absorbed half of the 2nd one, the middle-aged man entered the parlor of the courtyard.

The moment that man entered the parlor and saw that water-element crystal being consumed in a visible way, he thought that he was ready to risk everything immediately disappeared. Meanwhile, he became restrained all over.

"Thanks...thanks hermit for saving me!" After entering the parlor, that middle-aged man bowed deeply towards Zhang Tie while putting his two hands on both sides of his legs. Lowering his eyes, he just waited for Zhang Tie's order.

Zhang Tie threw a glance at that man. After taking a bath, having a full meal and putting on a new set of brilliant clothes, that man didn't look that sloppy anymore.

Given his look, this man was at his 40s. He had an average figure with a gentle, narrow and long face. At his age, he had only lit 4 surging points on his spine. Therefore, he was very average in cultivation. Additionally, he might have suffered some wounds in his guts, which had not been recovered yet. However, he should have seen the world. At least, he had seen water-element crystals and knew that Zhang Tie was holding a water-element crystal. Those who could absorb water-element crystals were at least earth knights.

Zhang Tie didn't feel strange about the words of this person. If the man had not even seen a water-element crystal, even Zhang Tie would doubt that he had made a wrong judgment.

"Take a seat, I have something to ask you!" Zhang Tie put it straight as he pointed at the chair beside his teapoy. When Zhang Tie talked with him, his battle qi had surrounded the entire parlor. Therefore, nobody else could hear the contents of their talk.

"Yes, sir!" That man also sat straight on a chair beside Zhang Tie. At the sight of his deed, Zhang Tie nodded inside too. If this person dared be presumptuous in front of an earth knight, he must be really

mad. If so, Zhang Tie would not say anything else to him. Given this man's response, although he looked restrained, he was at least polite. It was similar to that when a commoner met a strange earth knight.

"What's your name? How long have you been to Youzhou Province?"

"This humble man is Sun Jiagu. Since I came to Embracing Tiger City from Qiongzhou Province by sea last October, I have been living in that inn!" That man answered honestly.

"You said you're a pharmacist?"

"I've just promoted to gourd-suspending pharmacist master 2 years ago!"

A gourd-suspending pharmacist was the 3rd level in the world of pharmacists. Before this level, there were herbal medicine apprentice and knapsack pharmacist. If one person could only reach the level of a gourd-suspending pharmacist at his 40s, it meant he was very average in his qualification. He was more like a roving doctor or could at most open a clinic in the downtown to survive himself. If he wanted to make greater achievements, he had to ascend to some more levels.

"What's wrong about you? How could you deteriorate to such a degree? On the street, you said that someone wanted to turn all the medicinal materials in Taixia Country into poisons and even kill you!"

After hearing this question, Sun Jiagu finally plucked up his courage to ask Zhang Tie while looking straight into Zhang Tie's eyes and gritting his teeth, "May I know your family name and which sect are you from, hermit?"

"I'm Zhang Tie, a clan elder of Huaiyuan Palace!" Zhang Tie exposed his real identity frankly too.

After hearing Zhang Tie's name, Sun Jiagu widely opened his eyes at once, "You...you're that...Zhang Tie...the provincial chief justice who caused a great loss to Heavens Reaching Church in Youzhou Province and..."

Given Sun Jiagu's shocked expression, Zhang Tie knew that he must have heard about Zhang Tie's name and even seen Zhang Tie's image on order for arrest. However, he couldn't remember whom this young man was for the time being.

"Right, I'm that Zhang Tie who was once wanted by the Supreme Court across the country; however, the Supreme Court have already canceled off my order for arrest last year. I'm innocent and have already returned to Youzhou Province!" Zhang Tie revealed a smile, "I wonder whether I could ask you about something with my identity!"

Sun Jiagu looked at Zhang Tie as he quivered his lips. Before he uttered, he had dropped tears.

"Go ahead, I'm afraid that you've not told that to anyone else. Therefore, you feel a great stress. Just say it. Now that we could meet each other by accident, I wish to be your first audience!" Zhang Tie said kindly.

"Yes...I will say it...I will tell you all of it..." Sun Jiagu wiped off his tears by sleeves as he gradually recovered his composure, "I was born in Yongfeng Prefecture, Jizhou Province. I served as a herbal medicine apprentice in a drugstore at 16; when I was 31, I promoted to a knapsack pharmacist. I spent most of the time in herbal medicines and have learned how to make ordinary medicinal pills. Later on, through recommendation, I entered Taian Palace, a local major clan in Jizhou Province and got married.

After that, I worked in a drugstore being affiliated to Cheng Clan. Cheng Clan of Taian Palace has over 20 cities, hundreds of thousands square miles' medicinal fields and dozens of medicinal mountains; additionally, they have earth knights. Cheng Clan is good at planting herbal medicines and producing medicines, which are circulating across Jizhou Province and many surrounding provinces. Even the corps across Taixia Country would purchase Cheng Clan's medicines by large batches. As I excel at making some low-level medicinal pills, I was responsible for supervising and guiding the lads and apprentices to make medicine pills."

Zhang Tie listened to Sun Jiagu's explanation seriously as he nodded from time to time. Sun Jiagu's experience was similar to that of most of the low-level pharmacists in Taixia Country. These people couldn't continue to promote in the industry of pharmacists; therefore, most of them would seek a reliance and stable work in a major clan. Although top-class medicaments were precious, many low-level medicaments and medicinal pills were the absolute mainstream in the market across Taixia Country even among all the humans. Whatever, commoners and ordinary fighters below LV 9 accounted for most of the people in this world. Only by meeting the demand of these low-level people could the industry indeed grow.

Although senior recovery medicaments were good, above 99% of commoners in this world might not have a chance to see senior recovery medicaments, not to mention using them.

Basically, Zhang Clan's all-purpose medicaments were targeted at commoners. Because all-purpose medicaments could only replace the effects of some preliminary and low-level medicaments.

Zhang Tie made a hand gesture to let Sun Jiagu continue.

"I enjoyed a good treatment in Cheng Clan. Previously, I planned to stay in Cheng Clan for the rest of my life. Whatever, it was a stable life. However, I discovered an amazing plot in Cheng Clan by chance!"

"What plot?"

"The entire Cheng Clan are stealthily making medicinal pills and medicaments using poisonous medicinal materials; additionally, they are distributing their poisonous medicinal materials to the other provinces across Taixia Country..."

Chapter 1199: The Fall of the Dark (I)

"According to you, Cheng Clan used poisonous medicinal materials to make various medicinal pills and medicaments; additionally, Cheng Clan sold their poisonous medicinal pills and medicaments to the other provinces. Didn't anyone discover such evident actions?" Zhang Tie asked while frowning.

"The poisonous medicinal materials of Cheng Clan's medicinal materials was very special. It could never be matched by any poison that we've seen. Commoners could not discover the toxin in the medicinal pills at all..." Sun Jiagu revealed a bitter smile.

"Did Cheng Clan add something poisonous into their medicinal materials?"

“No, Cheng Clan didn’t add anything into their medicinal materials. Cheng Clan produced all the medicinal pills in accordance with the strict manufacturing process and technologies. They couldn’t add anything inside their medicinal materials!”

Zhang Tie became confused as he asked, “So why were Cheng Clan’s medicinal materials poisonous?”

“They planted it!”

“You mean those medicinal materials that Cheng Clan planted were born to be poisonous?” Zhang Tie asked out of amazement. Although he was not a pharmacist, Zhang Tie still felt Sun Jiagu’s words were unbelievable based on his understanding of the profession of pharmacist.

“Yes!”

“Had Cheng Clan added poison into the fertilizers or pesticides of those medicinal materials?”

“No. All the medicinal materials in the medicinal fields of Cheng Clan were as same as those in other clans. Additionally, Cheng Clan had many herbalists. If Cheng Clan added poison in fertilizers and pesticides, those herbalists must have discovered it!”

“Have Cheng Clan used shoddy medicinal materials or purposefully used wrong ingredients and components or took advantage of the mutual resistance between the properties of drugs?”

“None of them. Cheng Clan never made mistakes in producing medicinal pills. They always used the right raw materials, proportions and formulas!”

Zhang Tie forced a smile, “I’m confused. If there’s no problem in medicinal materials or manufacturing processes. Additionally, they didn’t add poison on purpose. How could Cheng Clan’s herbal medicines become poisonous then? Were they born to be poisonous?”

“Yes, Cheng Clan’s herbal medicines were indeed born to be poisonous!” Sun Jiagu said while gritting his teeth.

“What herbal medicines did Cheng Clan plant?”

“Cheng clan’s herbal medicines included honeysuckle, evergreen vine, weeping forsythia, Isatis root, fishy grass, ginseng, crown prince ginseng, Chinese date, Chinese wolfberry, walnut kernel, root of red-rooted salvia, mung, yellow bean, lily, sweet wormwood, Polygonum multiflorum, longan pulp, bark of eucommia, licorice, semi-summer, Chinese bellflower, ginkgo, Chinese ephedra; the root of fangfeng, reed rhizome, earth-bone skin, bamboo leaf, chrysanthemum, patchouly, Morinda Officinalis, trifoliate orange and selfheal, etc.. Cheng Clan was the biggest druggist in Jizhou Province. Cheng Clan had a large area of herbal medicine mountains and planted hundreds of herbal medicines. Most of the herbal medicines that could be planted artificially could be found in Cheng Clan’s medicinal fields on a large scale!”

“You mean the herbal medicines of Cheng Clan were born to be poisonous?”

“At the beginning, I didn’t believe it either; however, through repeated experiments, I confirmed this fact!”

“How did you discover that Cheng Clan’s herbal medicines were poisonous?”

“Since I became a herbal medicine apprentice at 16 years old, I had formed a habit, namely raising some white rats for a drug test. I inherited this habit from my enlightening master. Herbology originated from traditional Chinese medicines. It’s the elementary knowledge for pharmacists. All the pharmacists have to learn it, no matter what level he is. As there’re too many kinds of herbal medicines, some of them even carried toxicity; especially after being made into medicinal pills and medicaments, if you couldn’t get hang of the proportions or choose the right variety, you might always have problems. Therefore, herbal medicine apprentices would always raise some small animals for a drug test. I’d been used to do that even after I got married. In the beginning, I used white rats for testing drugs; later on, I raised them as pets...”

“After promoting to a bottle-suspending pharmacist, I excelled at producing a low-level pill that could preserve one’s spiritual energy and benefit one’s blood circulation. It mainly targeted at commoners. Even old men, pregnant women and people in weakness could use it. Therefore, it has a great sales volume in Taixia Country. In the drugstore of Cheng Clan, I was responsible for supervising and guiding a medicine workshop to produce this pill. In the process of producing it, I discovered something wrong with their herbal medicines!”

Zhang Tie just listened to him quietly. At this moment, Sun Jiagu’s expression became evidently sophisticated.

“The pill required very common medicinal materials, namely; walnut kernel and Chinese date. The two medicinal materials could be found everywhere in the medicine workshop. People would send them there every day. I was responsible for checking and accepting them. As I raised some white rats at home, before leaving the medicine workshop at the end of each day, I would grab a handful of walnut kernels or Chinese dates from the warehouse of the medicine workshop to feed my pets at home. After working in the medicine workshop of Cheng Clan for half a year, the first batch of white rats that I raised at home died one after another...”

“At the beginning, I didn’t pay attention to it. Because I’ve already raised those white rats for about 2 years. Generally, white rats could only survive 2 or 3 years. Therefore, when those white rats died, I didn’t think too much. After they died, I bought another batch of white rats and raised them with walnut kernels and Chinese date as usual!”

“However, after half a year later, the white rats died one after another too. At that time, I still didn’t imagine that there was any problem with the medicines. I thought it might be the other reasons. Perhaps I didn’t look after them well or these white rats were weak and sickly. Therefore, I raised the 3rd batch of white rats...”

“Finally, the 3rd batch of white rats died half a year later too. This time, it reminded me that the walnut kernels and Chinese data that I brought back home might have some problem. However, this event was of great significance. As I was just a supervisor of a small medicine workshop, of course, I dared not do the wild talk or tell this result to the others; I just paid special attention to the walnut kernels and Chinese date. After that, I bought the 4th batch of white rats. I divided them into two groups. One group of white rats only ate the walnuts and Chinese dates that I brought back from Cheng Clan; the other group of white rats only ate some grains and preserved fruits that I bought from other places. Half a year later, the result shocked me once again. The group of white rats who were fed with preserved fruits

and grains grew well; however, the other group of white rats who were fed with walnut kernels and Chinese dates died as usual!”

“I was startled. However, I dared not disseminate that news. After repeating the same experiment for two times, I got the same result. It finally confirmed that the medicines in the medicine workshop of Cheng Clan were poisonous. Later on, with my work as a cover, through careful observation, I investigated each link since the plantation of medicinal materials until they entered the medicine workshop, I found no problem in these links. The biggest problem lay in the seeds of the medicinal materials of Cheng Clan. These seeds were born to be poisonous. However, you couldn’t discover their toxicity. Because these medicinal materials were normal in looks and tastes. Even the most experienced pharmacists couldn’t discover any difference by tasting them. Only by taking these medicinal materials produced by Cheng Clan for a long time could they confirm the hidden toxicity in them!”

“Later on, I stayed in Cheng Clan for a few more years and sought evidence step by step. Finally, I found that all the medicinal materials that were artificially planted in Cheng Clan were different than natural medicinal materials and those planted by the other clans. All the medicinal materials that were artificially planted in Cheng Clan carried hidden toxicity. After taking them for a long time, humans would be severely poisoned. What was more terrifying was that the poisonous seeds of those medicinal materials in Cheng Clan were also sold to neighboring provinces in various commercial means besides being used for making various medicaments and medicinal pills. As a result, many herbalists who survived on planting medicinal materials in the other provinces would plant those poisonous seeds and constantly spread them to other provinces across Taixia Country; besides, those poisonous medicinal materials would be made into various medicinal pills and medicaments which would further poison the other people in the world...”

“What was more terrifying was that I discovered that the “toxicity” of those poisonous medicinal materials in Cheng Clan was contagious. For instance, there were two groups of medicinal materials, one group belonged to Cheng Clan, the other group was nontoxic. The medicinal materials of Cheng Clan could pass their toxicity to those nontoxic medicinal materials through pollen transmission. As a result, the next generation of those nontoxic medicinal materials would become poisonous too!”

“I doubt that the genes of all the traditional Chinese medicines had been modified. Although those medicinal materials looked nothing different than common medicinal materials, their genes had been demonized. Additionally, as long as they were planted, they would cause gene contamination. It’s a plot of demons and Three-eye Association!”

“I’m just an average bottle-suspending pharmacist. I have no reliance or powerful human relationship. After discovering that, I dared not reveal it to anyone else. Because Cheng Clan had a very great power in Jizhou Province; additionally, I heard that Cheng Clan even had a relationship in Xuanyuan Hill. If I exposed it casually, I might lose my life instead of playing any effect. I buried this secret deep in mind. Half a year ago, I found a reason to leave Cheng Clan. I planned to accuse Cheng Clan in Xuanyuan Hill. I preferred to die for the benefits of all the people across the country. However, on the way to Xuanyuan Hill, I was discovered by Cheng Clan. Therefore, Cheng Clan assigned a killer to kill me. Thankfully, I had long prepared for that, the killer didn’t get me. However, I had to hide here and there so as to survive myself...”

“All my words are true. If any word is false, you could chop off my head at any time!” Sun Jiagu looked at Zhang Tie with hopeful eyes as he looked like a bit excited after saying so many words.

After being silent for a short while, Zhang Tie threw a glance at Sun Jiagu before asking, “Do you want me to deal with Cheng Clan for you?”

“Cheng Clan does harm to the entire world; they’re definitely the lackeys of demons. Shouldn’t they be exterminated?” Sun Jiagu asked while being more excited.

“You’ve been staying in the inn since you came to Embracing Tiger City in October?”

“Yes, I entered Embracing Tiger City in October. Because I was afraid of the killer dispatched by Cheng Clan, I spent most of my time in the inn...” Sun Jiagu replied with a curious look after being stunned for a second.

“Cheng Clan in Jizhou Province had been exterminated. After the riot aroused in Xuanyuan Hill on November 15th, a catastrophe of bloody figures had broken out in Jizhou Province. The bloody sea that Cheng Clan built to raise bloody figures in their clan’s hinterland had been exposed. Cheng Clan had been exterminated by the Supreme Court of Taixia Country. All the kights of Cheng Clan had escaped away. They were being wanted by the Supreme Court of Taixia Country.” Zhang Tie exposed this news to Sun Jiagu.

The catastrophe of bloody figures in Taixia Country was growing increasingly fiercer in an increasing scale. More and more clans being related to Heavens Reaching Church and Bloody Soul Temple were involved in. The official news was always faster than those among the people. As a clan elder of Huaiyuan Palace, Zhang Tie knew the details a bit earlier. As for Sun Jiagu, after coming to Embracing Tiger City, he had been hiding here and there; therefore, he was more uninformed and couldn’t get the first-hand details about the catastrophe of bloody figures across Taixia Country. Therefore, he still thought that Cheng Clan was dominating in Jizhou Province.

After hearing Zhang Tie’s news, Sun Jiagu became dumbfounded at once. With mouth widely opened, he became stunned and silent for quite a while.

“If the killer that Cheng Clan assigned to hunt you is still alive, he will never come for you anymore as he can’t even keep himself safe. Later on, you don’t need to hide here and there anymore!” Zhang Tie comforted Sun Jiagu kindly while watching the latter’s distracted look.

Based on Sun Jiagu’s battle strength, the killer assigned to kill him was at most a LV 9 fighter. As Cheng Clan had been exterminated, it was meaningless for that killer to hunt Sun Jiagu. That guy might have been wanted by the Supreme Court and was escaping or had been killed. Compared to his own life, an average bottle-suspending pharmacist who worked for Cheng Clan was nothing but sh*t.

However, Sun Jiagu’s words were still valuable to Zhang Tie. Additionally, although Sun Jiagu was just an average bottle-suspending pharmacist, he was disciplined. After discovering the problem in Cheng Clan, he dared accuse Cheng Clan in Xuanyuan Hill. This person must be generous and righteous; especially the last point which Zhang Tie appreciated the most. Although being a small figure, he carried a great moral standing.

"I've left 1,000 gold coins for you in the hotel. If you don't want to stay here anymore or feel disappointed, you could open a small drugstore in the downtown and live a stable and peaceful life in the future with the money that I gave you. If you want to do something more, you could join Jinwu Business Group in Jinwu City!" Zhang Tie said. At the same time, he moved his hand as he put a vial of senior recovery medicament, which was giving out a bizarre light, on the table before saying, "This vial of senior recovery medicament could cure all of your injuries!"

After saying that, Zhang Tie directly put on his hood and left the courtyard of the hotel...

Sun Jiagu just watched that vial of senior recovery medicament with a blank look...

...

Outside the hotel, the air became cold once again. At this moment, the gloomy skyline indicated that the night was falling. Although the cold in the air was nothing for Zhang Tie, the cold in Zhang Tie's heart made him tighten up his hood unconsciously.

Zhang Tie looked up at the sky before walking towards the direction of Embracing Tiger Mountain immediately...

Chapter 1200: The Fall of the Dark (II)

The Ancestral Shrine Palace of Huaiyuan Palace rested on Embracing Tiger Mountain, which was one of the forbidden lands in Tiger Embracing City. Ordinary people were forbidden to approach Embracing Tiger City, not to mention entering it.

Zhang Tie walked all the way to the foot of the Tiger Embracing Mountain. The moment he entered the territory of Tiger Embracing Mountain, clan warriors of Huaiyuan Palace had come forward to stop him.

"Travellers are forbidden to approach the clan territory of Huaiyuan Palace!"

Two teams of clan warriors were standing at the entrance of Embracing Tiger Mountain. All of them were tall and strong in heavy armors with heavy swords on one side of their waists. They looked very imposing and solemn. Two clan deacons were standing behind those warriors.

Additionally, there was a huge stone archway higher than 20 m at the entrance. There were 4 vigorous, huge golden words on the archway—Huaiyuan Family Style.

Zhang Tie didn't speak; instead, he just pulled off his hood, exposing his face.

At the sight of Zhang Tie's face, the 20 warriors and 2 clan deacons quivered all over at the same time. Closely after that, all the warriors knelt down by one knee at the same time. The two clan deacons also bowed deeply towards him before saying, "Elder Mushen!"

Zhang Tie's face could even be recognized by ordinary people in the Embracing Tiger City, not to mention these clan warriors who were responsible for the safety of Embracing Tiger Mountain. Zhang Tie's meritorious services were known to everyone in Huaiyuan Palace. After Zhang Tie came back, all the members of Huaiyuan Palace became spirited. Therefore, Zhang Tie's prestige in Huaiyuan Palace reached a peak.

“Don’t be that polite!” Zhang Tie replied simply as he was thinking about something else. After that, he passed through the archway and walked up the mountain. Two clan deacons hurriedly led Zhang Tie to the Ancestral Shrine Palace of Huaiyuan Palace.

“Have the clan head and the other elders arrived?” Zhang Tie asked the two clan deacons.

After Zhang Taixuan promoted to the provincial governor of Youzhou Province, he and the other elders of Huaiyuan Palace spent more time in Youzhou City than in Embracing Tiger City. If not the clan elders meeting, it might be a bit easier for the clan elders of Huaiyuan Palace to gather in Youzhou City than in Embracing Tiger City.

Actually, this clan elders meeting could also be held in Youzhou City; however, as Zhang Taixuan was meticulous; he was afraid of being reproached for turning Youzhou City the private city of Huaiyuan Palace after promoting to the provincial governor of Youzhou Province; therefore, this clan elders meeting was held in Embracing Tiger City.

“10 minutes ago, besides Elder Muray, all the clan elders and clan head had already arrived at the Ancestral Shrine Palace!” One deacon said respectfully.

Zhang Tie arrived at Embracing Tiger Mountain 1 hour earlier than the scheduled time. After promoting to an earth knight, Zhang Tie also paid attention to his image in Huaiyuan Palace; he didn’t want to leave a bad impression on people. Therefore, he arrived 1 hour earlier. Zhang Huaiyuan and the other clan elders of Huaiyuan Palace almost arrived at the same time.

Zhang Tie nodded.

The Ancestral Shrine Palace was halfway up to the mountain. The pine needles over Embracing Tiger Mountain were still hanging over snow while the steps up to the mountain were swept clean.

Almost when Zhang Tie arrived at the terrace outside the Ancestral Shrine Palace, a figure landed on Zhang Tie’s side with flame.

“Elder Muray!”

“Elder Mushen!”

The two people greeted each other before entering the Ancestral Shrine Palace at the same time. At this moment, Taixuan, Muan, Muyuan, Muyu and Muen walked out of the Ancestral Shrine Palace to welcome Zhang Tie and Elder Muray. They greeted each other outside the Ancestral Shrine Palace.

They had not seen each other for almost 1 month. When they met each other once again, none of them looked relaxed.

Zhang Taixuan threw a glance at the others before saying, “Now that all the elders have arrived, it’s unnecessary for us to wait anymore. Let’s come to a start!”

Everybody nodded as they entered the Ancestral Shrine Palace. The moment they entered it, the gate had been closed from outside. Many clan deacons guarded outside the Ancestral Shrine Palace. There were also clan deacons inside doors. As a result, the atmosphere became solemn at once.

The imposing statue that Lord Huaiyuan stood with a crossbow in hand in the Ancestral Shrine Palace was nothing different than that in Jinyun Country. In front of the statue, there were memorial tablets of forebears of Huaiyuan Palace.

As the head of Huaiyuan Palace, Zhang Taixuan led the other elders to light incense for the memorial tablets of their forebears. After that, they sat down around a roundtable.

Zhang Tie sat beside Zhang Taixuan, which indicated that Zhang Tie's position in Zhang Clan was evidently much higher than that of the other elders. After accomplishing this rotating chakra ceremony, Zhang Tie would become the only grand elder in Huaiyuan Palace. Although Zhang Tie had not officially promoted to a grand elder of Huaiyun Palace, his supreme position had been gradually displayed in all aspects. Therefore, everybody accepted that, including Zhang Taixuan.

After everybody took seats, Zhang Taixuan glanced around solemnly before saying, "On last November 15th, a riot broke out in Xuanyuan Hill. Han Zhengfang the finance minister's real identity was exposed. Closely after that, he had an earth-shaking fight with Meng Shidao the master of the crown prince, which shocked the rest of the world. Overnight, the catastrophe of bloody figures broke out in over 70 provinces across Taixia Country, causing great casualties. After that, the overall situation facing Taixia Country deteriorated. As a result, the entire country was covered with battle smokes and flames..."

At this moment, the other clan elders threw a glance at Zhang Tie stealthily. Zhang Taixuan also paused for a second while throwing a glance at Zhang Tie. All the people at present were not idiots. Han Zhengfang was the culprit of the tragedy in Fuhai City. When Han Zhengfang's real identity was exposed by over 100,000 swans in terms of the most exaggerating "big-words poster", Zhang Tie was in Xuanyuan Hill. What a coincidence, the one being screwed and the culprit of the tragedy in Fuhai City appeared in Xuanyuan Hill at the same time, the catastrophe broke out. As a result, the culprit of the tragedy was exposed by a "force majeure". Therefore, the elders of Huaiyuan Palace doubted that it was done by Zhang Tie.

However, this event was really weird. The one who could control so many swans in Xuanyuan Hill at once must be a top-class animal control master. There were fewer than 10 such figures in Taixia Country. It was not strange for Zhang Tie to know something about animal controlling skill as many knights in Taixia Country knew something about animal controlling skill. Zhang Tie might learn to control animals from Patron Church. However, he didn't excel at it. All the elders of Huaiyuan Palace knew that point. However, the elders of Huaiyuan Palace didn't believe that Zhang Tie could master such a terrifying animal controlling skill. Additionally, Zhang Tie went to Xuanyuan Hill to attend the Treasures Meeting and investigate the case of bloody figures in Zhongzhou Province. What was more, Zhang Tie didn't have any contact with Han Zhengfang before; how could he know the real identity of Han Zhengfang? After staying in Xuanyuan Hill for so many years, Han Zhengfang had rooted in Taixia Country deeply. It was definitely impossible for an outsider to expose his real identity. Therefore, they felt that Zhang Tie shouldn't be related to the riot in Xuanyuan Hill on last November 15th.

On one aspect, it was such a weird coincidence; on the other hand, it was the ability which couldn't be explained. The coincidence was a motive; however, the ability didn't come out of anywhere. Nevertheless, Zhang Tie kept silent about what happened in Xuanyuan Hill; therefore, Zhang Taixuan and the other elders threw a curious glance at Zhang Tie.

Zhang Tie was clear about these points. However, he would not accept it if he was treated as the target by the Heavens Reaching Church and the Gobbling Party. After all, if he didn't admit that, nobody in the world knew that he was related to the riot in Xuanyuan Hill on last November 15th. 'During the period of Treasures Meeting, there were thousands of knights in Xuanyuan Hill. Who would believe that I could know the real identity of Han Zhengfang only after coming to Xuanyuan Hill for a few days while I had no contact with Han Zhengfang before? This is too fantastic! If I have long known about the real identity of Han Zhengfang, Han Zhengfang had already become the target for all when I released that post in the forum of Mountain of Brightness. I became the scapegoat for so long, even God couldn't bear it; therefore, the Mighty God made me innocent.'

Zhang Tie glanced around while blinking his eyes innocently.

When the others found that Zhang Tie just kept silent, they moved their eyes away from him. Nobody in Huaiyuan Palace would mention it later on.

"Ahem...ahem..." Zhang Taixuan cleared his throat as he continued, "As Emperor Xuanyuan is missing, Taixia Country has long been unstable internally. At this moment, Heavens Reaching Church is bewildering people in Taixia Country. The catastrophe of bloody figures has spread over Taixia Country. Even Youzhou Province was afflicted by bloody figures. The holy war has just broken out for a few years, the contingent of demons have not reached Taixia Country yet. However, Taixia Country has been suffering from troubles and contradictions both inside and outside. For the long-term benefit of Huaiyuan Palace, Taixuan has to invite all the clan elders to negotiate about the big plan of our clan. We need to make preparations as early as possible!"

"Our Huaiyuan Palace has just returned to Taixia Country from Waii Subcontinent. Our foundation couldn't match that of the other major clans in Taixia Country. However, Taixia Country is the final asylum of Huaiyuan Palace. We couldn't go anywhere else. All the elders at present must be clear about that. Therefore, Huaiyuan Palace has to make preparations for emergencies."

After Zhang Taixuan finished his words, Elder Muen opened his mouth. As Elder Muen also came from the branch of Yiyang City, he agreed with Zhang Taixuan's opinion. Zhang Tie and Elder Muyuan then exchanged a glance with each other. All the other clan elders at present then exchanged a glance with each other as they realized that Zhang Taixuan might expose something amazing...

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