

## Canon 71

### Chapter 71: General's Order

"Does anyone know what song this is?" Emperor Yuan Feng asked as he watched Zhou Shu play the zither on the hill.

...

The ministers exchanged glances and shook their heads.

"Although this song is not very elegant, it has a unique flavor to it. It might be a folk song," a minister said.

Yin Wuyou narrowed her bright eyes. She recalled the two lines of poetry she had heard from Zhou Shu. Later, she had gone to the restaurant Zhou Shu had mentioned. The storyteller there had never even heard those two lines.

Yes, this song is also a little suspicious! Yin Wuyou thought.

"Isn't it easy for Your Majesty to find out?" Another minister spoke.

He stepped forward and shouted, "Sir, does this song have a name?"

His voice spread far and wide. Even Zhou Shu's singing couldn't cover up this voice. It was obvious that this minister was a martial artist with high cultivation.

This wasn't strange. In the Great Xia Imperial Court, the majority of the ministers were already ranked martial artists.

Zhou Shu didn't activate his true qi as he replied in a low voice, "'General's Order', also known as 'A Man Should Strengthen Himself'!

"This song is for the warriors of Great Xia. I wish you all a triumphant return!"

After Zhou Shu finished playing the last note, he bowed toward the foot of the hill. Then with the zither on his back, he left.

"What a great 'General's Order'! What a great 'A Man Should Strengthen Himself'!" The minister who asked clapped his hands. "This child has an ancient style, and he's definitely not an ordinary person!"

"General's Order?" Emperor Yuan Feng nodded to himself. Great General Meng's eyes are as sharp as ever.

Although this Zhou Shu is only a mere Forging Apprentice now, from the looks of it, he is indeed a promising talent.

Hmm, you've exposed yourself, haven't you? Yin Wuyou snorted coldly in her heart. How dare you deceive me about those few lines of poetry? I want to see how you explain this General's Order!

In the army, Sun Gongping waved at the hill excitedly.

“Did you see that? My brother came to see me off!” Sun Gongping shouted excitedly at the soldiers beside him. “General’s Order was for me!”

...

Without caring about the reactions of Emperor Yuan Feng and Meng Bai’s army, Zhou Shu descended the hill from the other side. As soon as he descended, his back was already soaked in cold sweat.

He wiped his forehead and let out a long sigh of relief.

I was too careless today.

Originally, he had wanted to send off his big brother and Sun Gongping and create an alibi at the same time. After all, Xiao Zongshui and Zhen Cai were dead, and Zhu Chuanfeng would definitely not let it go.

But he had forgotten that the expedition of an army was no joke.

He had run over without any warning and was almost killed by the army as a spy.

Also, what’s with those guys who can fly?

Great Xia is really full of hidden experts. I can’t be so arrogant next time, Zhou Shu thought.

He had easily killed Xiao Zongshui and Zhen Cai, but this made Zhou Shu feel a little proud.

Now that he thought about it, his cultivation was nowhere close to allowing him to ignore everything.

Return the zither first! Zhou Shu carried the zither and walked toward the capital.

He had stolen this zither from the room of the woman named Hongxiu last night. Now that he was done with it, he should return it to her.

In the brothel, Hongxiu had already woken up.

She felt a little dizzy and couldn’t recall what had happened last night.

Looking at her naked body, Hongxiu was puzzled. Did something really happen last night?

Why don’t I have any impression of it?

Is it because I was overly exhausted?

Her brows furrowed slightly. Suddenly, she noticed that the zither on the table beside her bed was missing.

“Xing’er! Xing’er!” Hongxiu shouted.

A maid came in.

“Where’s my zither?” Hongxiu asked.

The maid Xing’er: “...”

“Miss, someone just found a zither at the entrance. Is it yours?” Xing’er said weakly.

“Oh?” Hongxiu frowned. “When did the young master who stayed in my room last night leave?”

“He left at dawn. Before he left, he told me not to disturb you. He said that you were exhausted last night and wanted you to rest well.” Xing’er blushed.

Hongxiu had a puzzled look on her face. Was I really that exhausted from last night? Why can’t I remember anything?

...

Last night, I slept in the brothel, and in the morning, I went out to send off the army. Even if Zhu Chuanfeng suspects me, he won’t be able to find any evidence, Zhou Shu thought while walking out of the city.

If not for Zhu Chuanfeng’s special status, Zhou Shu really wanted to kill him as well.

Now that he kept him alive, he would definitely continue to plot against him.

But Zhu Chuanfeng was a Grand Craftsman. If such a person died, it would be an earth-shattering matter, and the Imperial Court would definitely investigate it thoroughly.

At that time, Zhou Shu was not confident that he would be able to escape unscathed.

As for people like Xiao Zongshui and Zhen Cai, it was fine if they died. Although the Imperial Court would investigate, they wouldn’t spend too much time on it.

Zhen Cai said that the emperor allowed me to participate in the military parade. If it’s true, I don’t know if I can reject it.

Zhou Shu didn’t want to participate in the military parade. Even if there were rewards, he couldn’t be bothered to participate.

If he had the time, he would rather forge a few more weapons.

The Legendary Armament Canon was much more reliable than the old emperor. As long as he persisted in forging, the rewards would come in droves.

Even if I really did participate and obtained the reward, I would have obtained it with my own abilities. Why should I hand it over to you, Zhu Chuanfeng? Zhou Shu thought.

In Great Xia, the relationship between masters and disciples was an extremely serious matter. A master for a day was a father for life.

If Zhou Shu really did take Zhu Chuanfeng as his master, then his life or death could be decided by a single sentence from Zhu Chuanfeng.

Under these circumstances, Zhou Shu obviously couldn’t take Zhu Chuanfeng as his master, even if he had no other plans!

Moreover, it had already been proven that Zhu Chuanfeng was not a good person!

Now that Zhou Shu had killed Zhu Chuanfeng’s two lackeys, although Zhu Chuanfeng might not be able to find any evidence, he would definitely suspect Zhou Shu as long as he wasn’t stupid.

Zhou Shu had made some arrangements, so he wasn't worried about the official matters.

But Zhu Chuanfeng was clearly a schemer. It was hard to say that he wouldn't use other underhanded methods.

He had to guard against this!

Fortunately, he was still able to resist!

If that old fellow really wants to play dirty, I will make him suffer!

While thinking, Zhou Shu didn't let down his guard.

Fortunately, it was broad daylight. On the way from the capital to the Forging Division workshops, he would occasionally encounter troops from the Forging Division escorting weapons. Zhou Shu didn't encounter any assassins again.

After returning to the 0th Workshop, Zhou Shu immediately saw two figures standing at the workshop's entrance.

"Grand Minister, you're here so early." Zhou Shu walked forward and cupped his hands.

"Early?" Yin Wuyou turned her head and glanced at Zhou Shu. "You call this early?"

"It's alright." Zhou Shu smiled awkwardly. Although the Forging Division workshops didn't have any morning roll call, the Forging Apprentices had already started working at seven in the morning. It was indeed a little late for him, the superintendent, to come at this time.

Yin Wuyou obviously didn't intend to delve deeper into this issue. She asked, "Where did you go this morning?"

"Grand Minister, didn't you see me?" Zhou Shu said. His eyesight was very good. He had seen Yin Wuyou's figure when the army was departing.

If he could see Yin Wuyou, she could definitely see him too.

At the time, he was the dashing person...

"Answer me!" Yin Wuyou lightly chided.

"Alright. I went to send General Meng's army off this morning," Zhou Shu said. A superior, especially a female superior, is the most difficult to deal with!

"Didn't the 0th Workshop supply a batch of weapons for Great General Meng's expedition? I was thinking that everyone's cooperation was rather pleasant. In the interest of reason and justice, I should send the great general off, right?"

"I didn't say you shouldn't go!" Yin Wuyou said.

"Let me ask you again. Who taught you how to play the General's Order today?"

"The rest—"

"The restaurant's storyteller?" Yin Wuyou sneered. "Do you want me to send someone to invite him over so you can confront him face to face?"

"There's no need." Zhou Shu was startled. Why is Yin Wuyou so angry? "General's Order was—"

"Zhou Shu, you'd better think it through before you speak." Yin Wuyou's pretty face turned cold. "What I hate the most is people lying to me!"

"I'm not lying to you." Zhou Shu was confused. "General's Order was taught to me by a white-bearded old man when I was dreaming. He also taught me how to play the zither."

Looking at Yin Wuyou's posture, it seemed that he could no longer use the restaurant's storyteller, so he used another excuse commonly used by transmigrators.

Anyway, there was no way to verify the authenticity of his words.

As expected, Yin Wuyou didn't expect Zhou Shu's response.

"What about the verse 'If time could stop at the moment when we first met'?" Yin Wuyou frowned.

"This was also said by the white-bearded old man. I was afraid that no one would believe me if I said it, so I said I heard it from the restaurant's storyteller. It was indeed my fault," Zhou Shu said with a sincere expression. When talking to certain women, one must not be reasonable.

Yin Wuyou stared straight at Zhou Shu without blinking, as if to see if he was lying.

Zhou Shu spread out his hands with an honest expression. My language teacher was indeed a white-bearded old man. I'm not lying...

After a long while, Yin Wuyou finally spoke. "Alright, I'll believe you for now. Since you can remember such a long General's Order, there's no reason why you can't remember that short poem. Write down the rest of the poem for 'If time could stop at the moment when we first met'."

Zhou Shu: "..."

Yin Wuyou looked up at the sky and continued, "It's nine in the morning now. If you can't write it by three in the afternoon, you can go back to being an apprentice."

With that, she led Haitang away with her head held high.

"Grand Minister, I'm just a blacksmith. You're making things difficult for me," Zhou Shu cried out.

"I'm the grand minister. In the Forging Division, I have the final say.." Yin Wuyou's voice came from afar.

Chapter 72: Unreasonable

Even if the Forging Division is yours, you can't be unreasonable, right? Zhou Shu really wanted to reason with Yin Wuyou.

...

But if he reasoned with his superior, he would be doomed if he won. And if he lost, he would still be doomed.

Especially when his boss was a woman, a beautiful woman!

I'm a blacksmith. Don't you think it looks strange when I recite poetry?

Zhou Shu relied on his own abilities to make a living. Copying poems was definitely not his style!

Forget it. As long as I'm not embarrassed, someone else will be. Isn't it just being a plagiarist? At most, I'll take it as a part-time job... Zhou Shu thought, not taking himself too seriously.

He returned to his room in the 0th Workshop and took a cold shower to wash away the fragrance of cosmetic powder on his body. Then he called Zhang Yibei and the others over to guide them.

Zhang Yibei and Sixth Brother Wu had been living quite well recently. After completing the forging mission assigned by Great General Meng, they hadn't received any new tasks for the past few days.

Zhou Shu only wanted them to hone their forging skills every day in preparation for their next mission.

In fact, even though there was a saying about Forging Apprentices depending on their forging skills, what was more important was secret forging formulas.

Only when one reached the level of a Forging Master could one be considered truly skilled.

The most important aspect of ranked weapons was not the secret formulas. Rather, it was its forging technique. In many cases, even if one possessed the secret forging formula, they wouldn't be able to make a ranked weapon of quality if their forging skills were lacking.

Actually, in most cases, ranked weapons were all unique. Even for Forging Masters, depending on the way they forged, the quality of the ranked weapon might not necessarily be the same all the time.

Sometimes, Zhang Yibei and the others couldn't understand why Zhou Shu kept asking them to hone their forging skills.

They were not Forging Masters. They were just Forging Apprentices.

Their forging skills were already sufficient for apprentices.

Of course, they didn't know that Zhou Shu had lofty aspirations. He wanted the 0th Workshop to have its own name.

For a workshop to have a name, the basic requirement was the number of Forging Masters in the workshop.

Aside from whether Zhou Shu would be able to recruit other Forging Masters, even if he could, the price he would have to pay would be very high.

Instead of that, it would be better to nurture Zhang Yibei and the others to become Forging Masters. Although this wouldn't be easy, if he succeeded, he would be able to obtain a group of loyal Forging Masters. Even if he didn't succeed, he wouldn't lose anything.

So, why not do it?

“Everyone has improved greatly, but we still have to continue working hard,” Zhou Shu said to Zhang Yibei, Sixth Brother Wu, and the others.

“Remember what I said before. Forging is not just about brute force. The techniques involved are equally important.

“Practice well. If you do well, I will make a request to the higher-ups to increase your salary!”

The apprentices cheered. They were very satisfied with their current life, but who would object to an increase in wages?

The Forging Apprentices threw themselves into training. Zhou Shu returned to his backyard and started his forging.

The agreement with Ma Fengzhang should be pushed forward. The mass production of the Spring Embroidered Saber should be put on the agenda!

Zhou Shu started his daily forging work.

To Zhou Shu, he just had to forge 100 of the same weapons for the Legendary Armament Canon. Any more would be useless.

After completing kills, he would receive benefits for only the one hundred weapons recorded.

Now, the Huben Saber, Hundred Refinements Ring Pommel Saber, and Horse Slaying Saber were all full. Unless they were damaged in the future, Zhou Shu would only forge a few to replenish them.

Otherwise, he wouldn’t casually forge these weapons in the future.

Zhang Yibei, Sixth Brother Wu, and the rest were enough for the mass production.

As the superintendent of the 0th Workshop, what he needed to do in the future was technical work.

When I’ve completed forging one hundred Spring Embroidered Sabers, I’ll let Zhang Yibei and the rest start learning how to forge it.

Zhou Shu made a plan.

He had previously promised Ma Fengzhang to supply the Divine Constable Bureau with the Spring Embroidered Sabers, so the mass production of the Spring Embroidered Sabers had to be carried out.

But it was still the same thing as before. Zhou Shu had to first fill up the quota in the Legendary Armament Canon, then send these 100 Spring Embroidered Sabers to the Divine Constable Bureau to increase his own achievements. After that, mass production would take place.

The only reason Zhou Shu chose to stay in the Forging Division was that he wanted to use the Forging Division to make himself stronger. Naturally, he had to make full use of it.

Before he distributed the weapons he forged, how could he mass produce them?

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While Zhou Shu worked diligently to forge the Spring Embroidered Sabers, Zhu Chuanfeng's expression was extremely ugly as he sat within a residence in the capital.

In front of him stood several constables in official uniforms. On the ground, there were two stretchers.

As a Grand Craftsman, Zhu Chuanfeng's status was transcendent. He naturally wouldn't live in a workshop in the suburbs.

"Grandmaster Zhu, these two were found by the moat. When we found them, they were already dead. Someone recognized one of them to be from your residence, so we sent them over for you to identify," a constable said politely.

Zhu Chuanfeng narrowed his eyes as his gaze fell on the two corpses on the ground.

His face was expressionless, but the anger in his heart was enough to destroy everything.

Zhen Cai had followed him for decades. He didn't need to look closely to recognize that the bloated corpse was Zhen Cai!

As for Xiao Zongshui, he was like a dog to him. He didn't care if he lived or died.

Zhu Chuanfeng suppressed his anger and said coldly, "Who's the murderer?"

The constable was stunned for a moment. He shook his head and said, "The matter is still under investigation. There are no injuries on the two of them. Furthermore, after our initial investigation, we found that they didn't drown to death. As for what happened, we have to investigate further."

"Is this how the Divine Constable Bureau does things?" Zhu Chuanfeng's eyes were burning with anger. "People died in the capital in broad daylight, yet now you can't even catch the murderer?! Is this how Ma Fengzhang leads the Divine Constable Bureau?"

Zhu Chuanfeng slammed his palm on the table beside him. With a crack, the mahogany table broke into pieces.

Although Zhu Chuanfeng's Martial Dao cultivation wasn't high, he was still at the seventh rank. In his rage, he gave the few constables a fright.

"Grandmaster Zhu, ever since we found the bodies, we haven't wasted a single moment. We are currently confirming their identities. If they were indeed murdered, Divine Constable Bureau will definitely arrest the murderer," the constable said. He was only a constable. Even if he was a divine constable, he couldn't afford to offend Zhu Chuanfeng.

"I don't want to hear your excuses," Zhu Chuanfeng said coldly. "If you can't catch the murderer, then let the Divine Constable Bureau's divine constables do the work. If not, I will personally go find Ma Fengzhang and question him on the abilities of the Divine Constable Bureau!"

"Grandmaster, please calm down," the constable hurriedly said. "We will definitely intensify our investigations. No matter who the murderer is, we will definitely arrest him!"



Zhu Chuanfeng snorted coldly. "That's for the best! This involves the death of my subordinate, who was a ranked martial artist. You are not qualified. Go back and tell Ma Fengzhang what I said. Have the Divine Constable Bureau send a divine constable to lead the investigation!"

"Yes." Although the constable said this, he was cursing in his heart. What the heck is this? He's even commanding the Divine Constable Bureau to do things? Does he think he's so great just because he's a Grand Craftsman? Who knows how these two people died.

When they found the corpses, the two corpses were tangled together in a mess, and there wasn't a single wound on their bodies. They looked like they had died from the wind...

Zhu Chuanfeng pondered for a moment before saying, "Also, as far as I know, they have some disagreements with the superintendent of the 0th Workshop, Zhou Shu. You investigate him first."

He didn't think that the deaths of Xiao Zongshui and Zhen Cai were Zhou Shu's doing. It was fine if it was Xiao Zongshui, but Zhen Cai was a ninth-rank martial artist. How could Zhou Shu, a mere Forging Apprentice, kill him?

Perhaps the two of them had really encountered some sort of accident.

Zhu Chuanfeng had said this because he wanted to use this opportunity.

After the Divine Constable Bureau arrested Zhou Shu, he would find a suitable opportunity to rescue him. At that time, Zhou Shu would have no choice but to acknowledge him as his master!

"The 0th Workshop? Does the Forging Division have a 0th Workshop?" The constable was at a loss. He didn't know much about the Forging Division, but he knew that there were a total of 108 workshops in the Forging Division. The first 36 workshops were all made up of Forging Masters. This 0th Workshop was ranked before the 1st Workshop?

If that was the case, how could a mere constable like him investigate the superintendent of the 0th Workshop?

Let alone him, even ordinary divine constables of the Divine Constable Bureau were not qualified.

Zhu Chuanfeng glanced at the constable and knew what he was thinking. He snorted and said, "It's not what you think. The 0th Workshop is an ordinary workshop that has just been established by the Forging Division. There are no Forging Masters in it."

"I see." The constable heaved a sigh of relief. If it was an ordinary workshop, then it wouldn't matter.

The superintendent of an ordinary workshop was only a ninth-rank official. His rank wasn't even as high as a constable of the Divine Constable Bureau. It wouldn't be a problem to bring him back for investigation.

"Grandmaster Zhu, don't worry. I'll send people to bring that Zhou Shu back. If the culprit really is him, then the Divine Constable Bureau will definitely punish him and avenge your subordinate."

"Go investigate first." Zhu Chuanfeng waved his hand. "Send someone to inform me after the interrogation. I want to personally ask him why he killed Zhen Cai!"

“Yes,” the constable said while thinking to himself, We haven’t even confirmed anything yet, but you’re already certain that he’s the murderer?

However, he was just a minor character. In front of a Grand Craftsman, he didn’t have much status or reputation to speak of. He would just listen to whatever he said. As for what to do, he would naturally follow the rules of the Divine Constable Bureau.

“Grandmaster, please continue with your work. I still have to take these two corpses away.” The constable bowed. “According to the rules, we still have to examine the corpses.”

Frowning, Zhu Chuanfeng knocked on the armrest of his chair and waved his hand.

The constable got people to lift the stretchers and quickly left. He didn’t want to stay in this lousy place for long!

Chapter 73: I Am Someone With Status

“The Divine Constable Bureau is handling matters. All unrelated individuals, withdraw!”

...

Zhou Shu had just placed the Spring Embroidered Saber he forged into a box when he suddenly heard a clamor outside.

He casually put on a coat and walked out.

When he arrived at the front courtyard, Zhang Yibei and the others were in a confrontation with a few constables dressed in the uniform of the Divine Constable Bureau.

Zhang Yibei and the rest were all holding hammers in their hands as they shouted, “I told you. If you want to see our superintendent, wait here. We will go in and inform him. What right do you have to barge in?”

“Report? I think you want to tell the person inside to escape!” The head constable sneered. “Get out of the way! Otherwise, I’ll treat it as you obstructing official business and kill you without mercy!”

The few constables had their sabers in their hands and were very arrogant.

It was no wonder. The Divine Constable Bureau’s constables were not local constables, and they all had official positions. In terms of rank, they were even higher than Zhou Shu, the workshop superintendent.

Why would they care about a group of Forging Apprentices?

“Stop!” Zhou Shu hurriedly shouted when he saw that a conflict was about to break out between the two sides. Zhang Yibei, Sixth Brother Wu, and the others would definitely be on the losing end.

“Superintendent!”

“Superintendent!”

Zhang Yibei, Sixth Brother Wu, and the others all called out. They took the initiative to make way for Zhou Shu to walk in front of the constables. At the same time, they didn't step back. They continued to hold their hammers and stand guard behind Zhou Shu.

"What are you doing? Put the hammers down and go do whatever you need to do!" Zhou Shu berated.

"They—" Zhang Yibei still wanted to say something, but Zhou Shu was already glaring fiercely at him.

Zhang Yibei wilted and called for his colleagues to return to the factory.

Zhou Shu turned around and said to the constables, "I am the superintendent of this workshop. I am honored by your presence. May I ask what you need?"

"Divine Constable Bureau's Constable Yang Hong." The head constable cupped his hands and said coldly, "You are the 0th Workshop's superintendent, Zhou Shu?"

"It is my honor to meet you." Zhou Shu cupped his hands.

"So, it's you." Yang Hong nodded. "Zhou Shu, you're currently suspected of being involved in a murder case. We need to bring you back to assist in the investigation. Come with us."

Yang Hong waved his hand, and two constables walked out from behind him. The two constables walked behind Zhou Shu and grabbed his arms.

"What are you doing!" Zhang Yibei and the others had yet to enter the factory when they suddenly saw this scene. The Forging Apprentices were instantly enraged. They raised their hammers again and rushed over.

"Zhang Yibei!" Zhou Shu shouted. "Are you trying to rebel! You don't even listen to me? Go back!"

Zhang Yibei stopped in his tracks and appeared to be in a dilemma.

"I'll go with Constable Yang to help with the investigation. Stay here and watch over the workshop. If anyone dares to mess around, get out of the 0th Workshop!" Zhou Shu reprimanded sternly.

Zhang Yibei and the others opened their mouths, but no sound came out.

Zhou Shu turned around and said to Yang Hong, "Constable Yang, let's go. I don't need to be shackled, right?"

Yang Hong narrowed his eyes at Zhou Shu for a moment before waving his hand, indicating for his subordinates to put away the shackles.

"Superintendent Zhou, it's best that you're willing to cooperate. Let's go!" Yang Hong waved his hand and brought a few constables to escort Zhou Shu away.

"Brother Zhang, the superintendent has been taken away by them. What should we do!"

Inside the 0th Workshop, the Forging Apprentices were already in a mess.

Zhang Yibei's brows were tightly furrowed, and his expression was solemn. "The superintendent said that we should look after the workshop. You guys look after the workshop. I'll go and beg the grand minister to save him."

"The grand minister?" Sixth Brother Wu frowned. "Brother Zhang, how are you going to meet the grand minister?"

The grand minister was the boss of the Forging Division. She wasn't someone that apprentices like them could easily meet.

This place was only the Forging Division's workshops. The core Forging Division was within the capital. With Zhang Yibei's status, if he went to the core Forging Division, he probably wouldn't even be able to enter.

"I'll kneel at the entrance of the Forging Division. I'll definitely be able to meet the grand minister somehow!" Zhang Yibei gritted his teeth.

"But the superintendent just said that whoever messes around will be chased out of the 0th Workshop," Sixth Brother Wu said weakly.

"Even if I'm chased out, I want to save the superintendent!" Zhang Yibei said firmly.

"I'll go with you!" A few of the Forging Apprentices raised their hands.

"I'll go alone. There's no point in so many people going together. Follow the superintendent's orders to guard the workshop well and wait for our return!"

After Zhang Yibei finished speaking, he strode out of the 0th Workshop. His actions were like the howling wind and cold running water. He looked like a hero who would never return.

...

Zhou Shu followed Yang Hong and the other constables back to the Divine Constable Bureau. Along the way, Zhou Shu asked calmly, "Constable Yang, may I ask why you arrested me?"

Yang Hong curiously sized up Zhou Shu. Zhou Shu has been completely calm from beginning to end, without the slightest hint of nervousness.

Yang Hong had captured countless people in his life. In his opinion, such a person was either extremely evil or had never done anything wrong.

"You don't know?" Yang Hong asked. At this time, he was already using an interrogation technique.

"What do I know?" Zhou Shu had a puzzled expression as he replied with a question. "I'm just a forger from the Forging Division. I really can't think of any way I can help you."

"Let me ask you. Do you know Xiao Zongshui?" Yang Hong didn't reply and instead asked this question as he stared unblinkingly at Zhou Shu.

"Superintendent Xiao? Of course." Zhou Shu said. "I used to work at Superintendent Xiao's 97th Workshop. He was my boss then. What's wrong with him?"

Yang Hong looked straight into Zhou Shu's eyes, only to see that his eyes were clear, without any signs of falseness.

"Your previous boss? Why do I hear that there was some conflict between the two of you?" Yang Hong said.

"It's true. Is that weird?" Zhou Shu asked. "In the past, I was a Forging Apprentice, and he was the workshop superintendent. What good feelings could a subordinate have for his boss? Isn't it normal to hate him?"

Zhou Shu spoke matter-of-factly. It was a public secret that the Forging Apprentices often cursed the workshop superintendents behind their backs.

It wasn't just the Forging Division. The other government offices were similar.

Zhou Shu's straightforwardness stunned Yang Hong.

That's right. In a place like the Forging Division workshops, how pleasant could the relationship between apprentices and superintendents be?

No, I was almost led astray!

"Let me ask you again. Where were you last night?" Yang Hong asked with wide eyes.

"Last night?" Zhou Shu said hesitantly, "Can I not say it?"

"Hmph! What do you think?" Yang Hong snorted coldly. "At our Divine Constable Bureau, it's not up to you to decide whether to say something or not."

"This is my private matter. It has nothing to do with the Divine Constable Bureau, right?" Zhou Shu said.

"Private matter?" Yang Hong sneered. "Zhou Shu, let me remind you that you're a suspect now. It's best to answer me honestly when I ask you something!"

"Suspect? What did I do? Why am I a suspect?" Zhou Shu asked. "Constable Yang, don't malign me. I took someone else's thing, but I've already returned it."

Yang Hong frowned and asked doubtfully, "What do you mean?"

Zhou Shu realized that he had let his tongue slip. He hurriedly said, "Constable Yang, what are you suspecting about me? You should at least let me know."

"Don't interrupt me. You said that you took someone else's thing. What happened?" Yang Hong berated.

"I just took someone else's zither and played it, but I returned it afterward. This isn't considered stealing, right?" Zhou Shu whispered.

"What nonsense!" Yang Hong said. Thieves were not under the jurisdiction of their Divine Constable Bureau!

If it wasn't for the fact that this murder involved a ranked martial artist, the Divine Constable Bureau wouldn't be investigating it. Ordinary murders were handled by the local authorities.

Even if Zhou Shu really did steal something, he couldn't be bothered.

"Let me ask you. Did you see Xiao Zongshui yesterday?" Yang Hong said coldly.

Zhou Shu looked around. "Constable Yang, is this related to Superintendent Xiao? Is this an official interrogation?"

"Am I asking you, or are you asking me?" Yang Hong glared. "If you don't cooperate obediently, I'll let you have a taste of the Divine Constable Bureau's punishment!"

"Aren't I being very cooperative?" Zhou Shu shrugged. "Constable Yang, you said that I should return to the Divine Constable Bureau with you to cooperate with your investigation, and I followed you without saying anything.

"If this isn't cooperating, do you think you would be able to take me out of the Forging Division workshops?"

"My questions are perfectly reasonable.

"I don't know where you're taking me. I don't even know if you guys are constables of the Divine Constable Bureau. I don't even know what you suspect me of. Is this how the Divine Constable Bureau handles cases?"

Zhou Shu changed from his previous attitude, becoming somewhat unyielding.

"Constable Yang, I, Zhou Shu, am also a person of status. If you want to interrogate me, sure. Get someone of sufficient status to come!"

Zhou Shu's expression turned cold as he said, "If you don't know who to send, go ask Commander Ma, Ma Fengzhang!"

"Haha." Yang Hong was so angry that he laughed. Who does he think our Divine Constable Bureau's great commander is?

It's one thing for Zhu Chuanfeng to insist on looking for Commander Ma. He's a Grand Craftsman after all.

You are just a lowly Forging Apprentice. Do you think you deserve to mention Commander Ma's name?

Does Commander Ma have the time to meddle in the affairs of a mere Forging Apprentice?

"Zhou Shu, seems like you want to do this the hard way." Yang Hong sneered.

"A mere superintendent of a small workshop really thinks he's someone great? Ninth-rank officials can be found everywhere in the capital!

"I've been too kind to you! It seems like you won't be honest unless you receive punishment from the Divine Constable Bureau!

"Since that's the case, I'll do as you wish!" Yang Hong shouted loudly. There were already constables preparing the torture tools.

Zhou Shu's eyes narrowed slightly. "Constable Yang, you are abusing your authority. If Commander Ma finds out, he won't let you off. Don't blame me for not warning you!"

"Is that so?" Yang Hong smiled coldly. "Scaring me? You're still too inexperienced.. I'll ask you one last time. Where were you last night? What did you do? Do you have any witnesses?! Speak!"

#### Chapter 74: Aren't You Cheating Me?

Yang Hong's voice was stern. Coupled with the torture tools the others brought over, most people would have been scared to the point of confessing everything.

...

Zhou Shu wasn't an ordinary person. He didn't take Yang Hong's words seriously at all. Instead, he examined the torture tools excitedly.

"Constable Yang, will you believe me if I tell you?" Zhou Shu said.

"It's up to me whether I believe you or not!" Yang Hong said impatiently.

"That won't do. What if you don't believe me after I tell you? Wouldn't I be at a disadvantage? This matter concerns my reputation, so I must be certain." Zhou Shu shook his head.

Yang Hong exploded. He grabbed a torture device from the floor and said angrily, "Zhou Shu! This is the Divine Constable Bureau! You're a suspect now! What right do you have to be picky?"

"You are just a mere workshop superintendent. Even the grand minister of the Forging Division would have to behave obediently in our Divine Constable Bureau!"

The Divine Constable Bureau was Great Xia's violent law enforcement organization. The Forging Division's grand minister really wasn't much in the Divine Constable Bureau in terms of rank.

Of course, the current grand minister of the Forging Division had another identity—the princess. This identity was much more prestigious than the grand minister of the Forging Division.

"You better confess honestly while I still have the patience. Otherwise, I will make you regret ever being born!" Yang Hong bellowed.

"Constable Yang, you are being unreasonable," Zhou Shu said innocently. "I've already said it several times. You can interrogate me, but at least let me know why you want to interrogate me!"

"Just because I know Xiao Zongshui? What does it have to do with me what that Xiao fellow did?"

"Even if he committed murder and arson, it has nothing to do with me! I am only cooperating with your investigation because I am a good citizen of Great Xia. Don't treat me like a criminal!"

Zhou Shu's attitude was firm. "I now doubt your fairness. If you want to interrogate me, get someone else from the Divine Constable Bureau to do it!"

Zhou Shu stared straight into Yang Hong's eyes without the slightest bit of fear.

What a joke. Zhou Shu even dared to talk business with the Divine Constable Bureau's Commander Ma Fengzhang. Would he be frightened by a constable?

"You don't know what's good for you!" Yang Hong was enraged. He sneered and said, "Constables, punish him!"

Two constables came up and stuffed Zhou Shu's fingers into the torture device.

Zhou Shu didn't resist. This is the Divine Constable Bureau. If I make a move, I will be the one at fault.

Besides, does this count as punishment?

The sixth level of the Golden Bell Shield Technique isn't just for show, okay?

"Constable Yang, you are abusing your authority. I'm going to complain to Commander Ma!" Zhou Shu cried out.

"Go ahead." Yang Hong sneered. "If you can see Commander Ma, I'll let you write my surname upside down!"

Yang Hong's eyes flashed coldly. "Use torture!"

The two constables started to pull the torture device to the sides.

With a creaking sound, Zhou Shu felt the force on his fingers.

At the sixth level of the Golden Bell Shield Technique, Zhou Shu already had a tough body. Even if an ordinary person tried to hurt him with a sharp blade, they wouldn't be able to harm him.

Although these constables had all cultivated the Martial Dao, none of them had entered the ranks. Even if they stabbed Zhou Shu with their sabers, as long as they didn't hit Zhou Shu's vital points, they wouldn't be able to hurt him at all, much less using this torture device.

Zhou Shu's fingers were sturdier than the device!

"Argh." Zhou Shu pretended to cry out. "Constable Yang, let me tell you. I won't let you off easily!"

"Hmph. I, Yang Hong, am just carrying out official business. Do you think I'm afraid of you?" Yang Hong said with a cold snort. "If I'm afraid of you, I won't have to work in the Divine Constable Bureau anymore!"

"Speak. Where were you last night? What did you do? Do you have any witnesses?" Yang Hong shouted.

Yang Hong and Zhu Chuanfeng had nothing to do with each other. So what if he tortured and questioned Zhou Shu in this manner? Zhou Shu was in no position to have any objections.

He was merely handling the case his way.

In this world, there was no technique to speak of when interrogating, and torture was the universal method.

"The Forging Division's grand minister has arrived!"

Before Zhou Shu could speak, a loud shout suddenly came from outside the door.

Yang Hong was slightly stunned. Before he could react, he felt a gust of wind, and a figure appeared in the hall.



Yin Wuyou was wearing martial attire, and her curvaceous figure was undoubtedly revealed. Behind her was the little maid Haitang, and both of their charming faces were covered in frost.

"The Divine Constable Bureau is really impressive!"

Yin Wuyou's gaze fell on Zhou Shu's hands in the torture device, and she snorted coldly. "Shouldn't you inform me before you take anyone from the Forging Division?"

Yang Hong was a little dumbfounded. He bowed mechanically and said, "Constable Yang Hong of the Divine Constable Bureau greets Your Highness the Princess."

The Divine Constable Bureau was well-informed. How could Yang Hong not know who the grand minister of the Forging Division was?

He didn't expect that a mere workshop superintendent would be able to alarm the Forging Division's grand minister.

"Our Divine Constable Bureau invited Zhou Shu back to assist in an investigation, not to arrest—" Yang Hong said weakly.

"Is there a need to torture him if he is just assisting in the investigation?" Yin Wuyou sneered.

"Because he would not cooperate—" Yang Hong said.

"Constable Yang, don't slander me. How am I not cooperating? You came to the Forging Division's workshops, and I followed you back without a word! I still don't know what crime I committed!"

"I would like to hear what a workshop superintendent of my Forging Division has done!" Yin Wuyou's eyes flickered with a cold light.

Yang Hong's back was drenched in cold sweat. He was just investigating an ordinary case. How could it trouble the princess to come here?

"Your Highness—"

"Call me Grand Minister!" Yin Wuyou shouted.

"Grand Minister," Yang Hong said honestly.

"It's like this. This morning, we found two corpses by the moat outside the capital. One was Xiao Zongshui, a workshop superintendent of the Forging Division, and the other was Zhen Cai, a follower of Grand Craftsman Zhu Chuanfeng.

"Because Zhen Cai was a ninth-rank martial artist, the case fell to our Divine Constable Bureau. I am under orders to investigate this case. Because Grandmaster Zhu said that the two victims had some disagreements with Zhou Shu yesterday, I brought him back for questioning.

"He hasn't been able to explain what happened last night. That's why I wanted to punish him."

Yang Hong stammered out the whole story.

"Zhu Chuanfeng told you that Zhou Shu is the murderer?" Yin Wuyou asked with furrowed brows.

Zhu Chuanfeng was a Grand Craftsman, and in name, he was also a member of the Forging Division. But at the Grand Craftsman realm, they were no longer restricted by the Forging Division. Even the grand minister of the Forging Division had to be polite to them.

Of course, Yin Wuyou wasn't just the grand minister of the Forging Division. She wasn't afraid of Zhu Chuanfeng.

"Grandmaster Zhu didn't say that. He only said that Zhou Shu is very suspicious—" Yang Hong didn't dare to say any nonsense in front of Yin Wuyou.

"Is Xiao Zongshui really dead?" Yin Wuyou asked with a frown.

She was not asking Yang Hong, but Haitang behind her.

Haitang shook her head. "I haven't received any news."

Yin Wuyou nodded and didn't say anything else. "No matter what Grandmaster Zhu says, you don't have any evidence to prove that Zhou Shu is the murderer."

"Grand Minister, if there was any evidence, we would have arrested him immediately." Yang Hong had already stabilized. So what if she was the princess? He wasn't abusing the law for personal gain. Everything he did was in accordance with the rules of the Divine Constable Bureau.

"We are investigating the case now.

"I've investigated. Yesterday, Zhou Shu, Xiao Zongshui, and Zhen Cai had a conflict. He has a huge motive for committing the crime."

"Why would I kill them?" Zhou Shu said. "Just because I had a conflict with them yesterday, I became the person who killed them? I also have a conflict with you, Constable Yang. Should I kill you too?"

"Grand Minister, I had a few words with Xiao Zongshui and Zhen Cai yesterday. But it was because Grand Craftsman Zhu Chuanfeng wanted to take me in as his disciple. I felt that my ability was insufficient, so I rejected Grand Craftsman Zhu. Xiao Zongshui and Zhen Cai wanted to persuade me. Do you think it's worthwhile for me to kill them like this?" Zhou Shu said to Yin Wuyou.

"Grand Craftsman Zhu wishes to take you as his disciple?" Yin Wuyou asked in surprise.

Yang Hong's eyes also widened. He was thinking more than Yin Wuyou. Zhu Chuanfeng wanted to accept him as a disciple, but he was rejected in the end. He couldn't hold on to his face, so he wanted to use him to teach Zhou Shu a lesson?

That old thief is despicable! Yang Hong cursed in his heart.

Damn it. Didn't he say Zhou Shu is just an ordinary workshop superintendent?

That Zhu fellow is too much. How can someone he wants to take as a disciple be an ordinary person?

"Yes, but I refused." Zhou Shu nodded.

"I think maybe Xiao Zongshui and Zhen Cai were too aggressive when they tried to persuade me, so Grandmaster Zhu misunderstood," Zhou Shu added.

"Misunderstood?" Yin Wuyou narrowed her eyes.

"Constable Yang, did you hear that?" Yin Wuyou turned to Yang Hong.

"Yes." Yang Hong braced himself and said, "But I still have to ask. Zhou Shu, where were you last night?"

"Zhou Shu, what do you say?" Yin Wuyou said to Zhou Shu indifferently.

"I'm innocent." Zhou Shu shrugged and said innocently, "Last night, I went to Lichun Courtyard with Lieutenant Cheng Yong of the Huben Troops and stayed there overnight..."

Zhou Shu looked embarrassed. "Lieutenant Cheng and the rest were too enthusiastic. I couldn't reject them, so—"

"You don't have to explain yourself to me!" Yin Wuyou said coldly with a frosty expression.

Yang Hong cursed inwardly.

If you f\*cking slept in a brothel last night, just say it.

If you said this earlier, would I still torture you?

Aren't you asking for trouble?

Even I am unhappy now!

"Constable Yang, is this enough to prove Zhou Shu's innocence? Or do we need to find witnesses to prove it?" Yin Wuyou said expressionlessly.

Yang Hong was sweating profusely. Why doesn't the atmosphere feel quite right?

Although he was a little puzzled, he said, "According to the rules, we should call the woman over for questioning."

"Then let's follow the rules!" Yin Wuyou said coldly. "People from my Forging Division can't be wronged by others, nor can their innocence be ambiguous. If you want to investigate, then investigate thoroughly!"

Zhou Shu: "..."

Chapter 75: That Old Thief Misled Me

Things weren't going according to plan.

...

Zhou Shu predicted that Yin Wuyou would come, but he didn't expect her to say that.

What does she mean?

Call Miss Hongxiu over for a confrontation?

Is this necessary?

"Grand Minister, is this necessary?" Zhou Shu whispered. "Last night, I was at Lichun Courtyard. Lieutenant Cheng and his group can testify. When I left this morning, someone saw me. I even borrowed a zither from there."

Zhou Shu couldn't tell what Yin Wuyou was thinking from her expression.

"Humph!" Yin Wuyou harrumphed without even looking at Zhou Shu and said to Yang Hong, "Aren't you investigating a case? What are you waiting for?!"

Yang Hong: "..."

"Alright, I'll get someone to go to Lichun Courtyard to ask." Yang Hong said. Originally, he thought that since the princess had come and Zhou Shu had given his explanation, everything was over.

He didn't expect the princess to be so serious. What else could he do but investigate?

But then again, he had heard that the princess was a generous and wise woman. She did look beautiful, but why did he feel that she was a little petty?

Yang Hong cursed silently and was about to arrange for people to go to Lichun Courtyard to inquire when he suddenly heard Yin Wuyou speak.

"Bring her back to ask. I want to hear how you ask her."

Zhou Shu: "..."

Yang Hong: "..."

"Yes." What else could Yang Hong say?

The grand minister of the Forging Division couldn't interfere with the Divine Constable Bureau's matters, but the princess could.

Yang Hong waved his hand. A constable quick-wittedly ran out and went to bring Miss Hongxiu back.

"The steward of the Mi family, Mi Zhifu, requests an audience."

Just as the constables ran out, a gentle voice sounded outside the door.

Steward Mi? Yang Hong was stunned again. What's going on? Why are all of you coming to my place today?

Yang Hong didn't dare to be negligent and hurried out to welcome him.

Yin Wuyou was also puzzled as to why the steward of the Mi family came, but with her status, she naturally couldn't go out to welcome him.

The moment Yang Hong ran out, not a single constable was left in the Divine Constable Bureau's office. Only Zhou Shu, Yin Wuyou, and Haitang were remaining.

Zhou Shu impolitely moved a chair to Yin Wuyou's side and said solicitously, "Grand Minister, have a seat."

Yin Wuyou glowered at him and harrumphed coldly without saying anything.

Zhou Shu was confused. He looked at Haitang, who gave him a look that said, 'You'd better pray for yourself'!

While talking, Yang Hong walked in with a middle-aged man in his forties.

When the middle-aged man saw Zhou Shu, he quickly stepped forward and arrived in front of Zhou Shu. He bowed deeply and said solemnly, "Second Master, I came late. You have suffered."

The middle-aged man's behavior stunned everyone.

Second master?

What second master?

"Steward Mi, who is your second master?" Yang Hong asked.

Mi Zhifu smiled but didn't answer directly. His gaze landed on Yin Wuyou, and he cupped his hands in greeting. "Mi Zhifu greets Your Highness. I apologize for my rudeness."

Then he looked at Yang Hong with a formal smile on his face. "My second master is Superintendent Zhou Shu.

"Before Master left for battle, he specially instructed me to take good care of Second Master. I didn't expect a mishap to occur on the first day. Second Master, it's my mistake. Second Master, please punish me," Mi Zhifu said to Zhou Shu respectfully.

"Are you my Big Brother's steward?" Zhou Shu looked at Mi Zhifu. He hadn't expected Mi Ziwen to make such an arrangement before leaving for battle. Even he was surprised that Mi Zhifu had come.

Yin Wuyou knew about Zhou Shu and Mi Ziwen becoming sworn brothers. Haitang had been present at the time, and she had informed Yin Wuyou immediately afterward.

But Yin Wuyou didn't expect Mi Ziwen to attach so much importance to Zhou Shu. He had even arranged for his steward to take care of Zhou Shu before setting off.

Yang Hong was the most shocked person present.

What do you mean?

Zhou Shu is the second master of the Mi family?

Isn't his surname Zhou?

What is the meaning of this?

That old thief is despicable!

Yang Hong cursed Zhu Chuanfeng in his heart again.

That old man, what nonsense was he spouting!

Would the second master of the Mi family personally kill a mere workshop superintendent and a ninth-rank follower?

Also, why would the second master of the Mi family be the superintendent of a small workshop?

No, the 0th Workshop, the 0th Workshop!

I'm such a fool!

How could an ordinary person get the Forging Division to specially establish another workshop?

The Mi family obviously played a part in it!

Yang Hong wished he could slap himself.

How careless!

How had he been so foolish as to listen to Zhu Chuanfeng's nonsense and go to the Forging Division's workshops to arrest him?

"That's right. I have always been by Master's side to serve him. Before he left for battle, he repeatedly reminded me to take care of Second Master. I originally planned to go see Second Master tomorrow, but I didn't expect this delay to cause you to suffer."

"It's nothing. Thank you for coming." Zhou Shu waved his hand dismissively.

"Constable Yang, may I know what my second master has done?" Mi Zhifu turned to look at Yang Hong. Although his tone was gentle, his unquestionable aura was stronger than Yin Wuyou's.

"No, no!" Yang Hong shook his head firmly. "Superintendent Zhou didn't commit any crime! We invited him back to help us investigate a case! Superintendent Zhou's suspicion has been cleared, and he can leave now!"

He couldn't even handle a princess, and now the Mi family was here.

Yang Hong was just a lowly constable. Even a divine constable wouldn't be able to withstand this.

"His suspicion has been cleared?" Yin Wuyou suddenly said coldly.

"The witness hasn't arrived yet, so how did his suspicion get cleared?"

"Yang Hong, is this how you handle cases?"

"If the real murderer escapes, can you bear the responsibility?"

Yang Hong: "..."

You're the one who asked me to release him, and you're also the one who asked me to investigate thoroughly. What am I supposed to do? Yang Hong was speechless.

Mi Zhifu also looked at Yin Wuyou in surprise, but he was experienced and didn't oppose her. Instead, he smiled and said, "It's good to investigate thoroughly. My second master cannot be framed."

Mi Zhifu looked at Zhou Shu. "Second Master, what do you think?"

"I've never done anything wrong in my life. My conscience is clear." Zhou Shu shrugged. "I didn't do it, and I'm not afraid of being investigated."

He appeared calm on the surface, but he was entwined in his head.

Last night, Hongxiu was unconscious. This was more or less a loophole.

He couldn't guarantee if the martial artists in this world had any special methods to make Hongxiu reveal the truth.

Mi Zhifu pulled Yang Hong to the side and whispered for a moment before he finally understood what was going on.

Then he walked over to Zhou Shu's side and said in a low voice, "Second Master, don't worry. Nothing will happen to you. No one will be able to wrong you in this world, not even if Zhu Chuanfeng comes personally!"

Mi Zhifu was full of pride. He was confident because he wasn't alone.

The Mi family had a thousand years of history and a deep foundation. Even though Zhu Chuanfeng was a Grand Craftsman, the Mi family wasn't afraid at all.

Zhou Shu nodded. He had never been worried.

He didn't regret killing Xiao Zongshui and Zhen Cai at all.

Even if the matter was exposed, he wasn't afraid. At worst, he would just leave Great Xia.

If he really wanted to leave, unless Great Xia sent out a third-rank grandmaster, who could stop him?

A third-rank grandmaster?

Such martial artists were not easily found everywhere. For a mere workshop superintendent, the Great Xia Imperial Court would have to be crazy to mobilize a third-rank grandmaster.

"Is Superintendent Zhou here?"

While everyone was waiting for the constable to bring Hongxiu over, a voice suddenly sounded outside the door.

For some reason, Yang Hong's heart skipped a beat. Who is it now?

He subconsciously glanced at Zhou Shu. Just who is Zhou Shu?

He was considered well-informed. Why had he never heard of his name? Was his level too low?

Yang Hong fell into deep self-doubt.

Zhou Shu shrugged when he saw Yang Hong looking at him. Why is he looking at me? I don't know who's outside.

"Your Highness, Steward Mi, I'm going out to take a look," Yang Hong said.

Yin Wuyou and Mi Zhifu both nodded.

A moment later, Yang Hong returned with a look of hopelessness. Beside him was a person dressed as a eunuch.

“Eunuch Zhao?” Yin Wuyou was surprised. “Why are you here?”

“Greetings, Your Highness.” Eunuch Zhao chuckled and bowed to Yin Wuyou. “His Majesty ordered me to deliver a decree today. The people from the 0th Workshop said that Superintendent Zhou came here, so I came to find him.”

“A decree?” Yin Wuyou said.

“Yes,” Eunuch Zhao said with a smile. “I am afraid of delaying His Majesty’s matters, so I have to deliver this decree to Superintendent Zhou today.”

While the two conversed, Yang Hong looked up at the sky with tears streaming down his face.

What a sin!

That old thief tricked me!

Even His Majesty has issued a decree. Yet you told me he’s the murderer who killed Xiao Zongshui and Zhen Cai?

What did Xiao Zongshui and Zhen Cai do to have such a great person kill them?

Even if you, Zhu Chuanfeng, failed to accept a disciple and flew into a rage out of humiliation, you shouldn’t cheat me!

F\*ck your ancestors!

“You must be Superintendent Zhou Shu.” Eunuch Zhao looked at Zhou Shu and smiled. “His Majesty has a decree for you. This is urgent. Please accept the decree.”

Accepting a decree was originally a very grand matter. There was even a need to burn incense and set up a table.

But now that they were in the Divine Constable Bureau, these procedures were definitely unrealistic.

Fortunately, Eunuch Zhao didn’t force him to do so. He immediately started reading the imperial decree. “We have recognized that Zhou Shu of the Forging Division has outstanding talent and merits. We specially permit him to participate in Grand Xia’s military parade!”

The imperial decree was very simple, and Eunuch Zhao read it in one breath.

“Superintendent Zhou, His Majesty has high expectations of you. I hope that you will not let down the grace of His Majesty and continue to work hard.”

Eunuch Zhao looked at Zhou Shu and smiled. He rolled up the imperial decree and handed it to Zhou Shu.

Before he could finish doing so, a loud thud resounded. Everyone turned around and saw Yang Hong sitting on the floor.

Everyone: “...”



Tears were streaming down Yang Hong's face as he roared furiously in his head, That old thief misled me!

## Chapter 76: I Have No Intention of Humiliating You

"Constable Yang, are you alright?" Zhou Shu asked with concern.

...

Although Yang Hong had ordered his men to torture him before, Zhou Shu didn't actually hate him that much.

In essence, Yang Hong didn't have any selfish motive. It was just for the sake of handling the case.

To a certain extent, Zhou Shu still had to thank him. For such a fair and impartial constable, people shouldn't doubt the outcome of his investigation.

As long as Yang Hong concluded that he wasn't the murderer, who else could say anything?

"I'm fine!" Yang Hong shouted and jumped up from the floor.

Before he could continue speaking, Eunuch Zhao said, "Oh right. Why is Superintendent Zhou in the Divine Constable Bureau? Did something happen?"

Plop!

Hearing this, Yang Hong, who had just jumped up, sat down on the floor again.

This time, before anyone could ask, he hurriedly got up.

"Misunderstanding, Eunuch Zhao. It's all a misunderstanding." Yang Hong explained, "A workshop superintendent was killed last night. Because Superintendent Zho worked with the murdered superintendent before, I asked him to come back to help with the investigation."

Xiao Zongshui was no longer worthy of a name.

As for Zhen Cai, a dignified ninth-rank martial artist, he was actually not even worthy of mentioning here.

"Superintendent Zhou is suspected of murder?" Eunuch Zhao said seriously, "In that case, I will have to report this to His Majesty."

Yang Hong jumped in fright, his entire body drenched in sweat. Is there a need to alarm His Majesty over such a small case?

If this really alarmed the emperor, regardless of anything else, he would definitely be deemed incompetent in handling this case.

"No, he is not a suspect!" Yang Hong hurriedly said. "We invited Superintendent Zhou back only because he knows the murdered superintendent. We want to know more about the deceased."

"Furthermore, Superintendent Zhou has an alibi for last night. He can't be the murderer!" Yang Hong said firmly.

He was now certain that Zhu Chuanfeng had used him as a tool. Zhou Shu couldn't possibly be the murderer. The second master of the Mi family was someone whom the emperor valued. How could someone with such status possibly kill a mere workshop superintendent and a follower?

Besides, he had an alibi.

Yang Hong didn't even want to interrogate the woman from Lichun Courtyard anymore. Zhou Shu couldn't possibly lie about something like this.

"That's good." Eunuch Zhao nodded. "His Majesty can rest assured since the Divine Constable Bureau is handling the case. I believe that you will definitely be able to find out the truth and not malign the innocent."

Eunuch Zhao wasn't interested in understanding the case. The death of a mere workshop superintendent wasn't enough to arouse his interest.

If not for the coincidence today, he wouldn't even ask.

"Your Highness, there are other matters in the palace. I will take my leave first." Eunuch Zhao bowed respectfully to Yin Wuyou.

Yin Wuyou nodded.

As Eunuch Zhao walked out, he passed by Zhou Shu and chuckled. "Superintendent Zhou, I think very highly of you too. Work hard and do not let His Majesty down."

With that, he left the Divine Constable Bureau with his followers.

It wasn't until Eunuch Zhao left that Yang Hong let out a long sigh of relief. He was the person by the emperor's side. If something went wrong, it would directly reach the Imperial Court. This pressure...

He forgot that Yin Wuyou was also someone who could reach the Imperial Court.

But in comparison, Yang Hong was more afraid of Eunuch Zhao.

"Yang Hong, what are you doing? Why have you not brought back the witness?" Yin Wuyou's displeased voice sounded.

"Soon. Soon," Yang Hong hurriedly replied. He signaled with his eyes for someone to rush over to hurry them.

Although he didn't want to investigate anymore, since the princess didn't want to give up, he decided to go through the motions.

Zhou Shu looked at Yin Wuyou strangely. Why is she being so serious?

Yin Wuyou didn't even look at Zhou Shu. Her expression was as cold as ice as he said, "Zhou Shu, have you done what I asked you to do?"

"Done what?" Zhou Shu was confused.

"Hmph!" Yin Wuyou harrumphed coldly. "You have time to visit brothels, but you don't have time to do proper business? Now that I'm here, if you still can't hand over the poem, then you don't have to hand it over anymore."

Zhou Shu finally realized that the grand minister, the princess, was angry.

Is it that she doesn't like her subordinates visiting brothels?

It makes sense. Which woman would like a man visiting a brothel? Perhaps only women from brothels like it...

But then again, is it really appropriate to mention the poem here?

Could it be that the grand minister is a cultured young woman?

Zhou Shu couldn't figure it out no matter how hard he tried. This was truly a woman's thoughts.

"Okay, let me think. Let me think." Zhou Shu didn't want to anger Yin Wuyou. After all, she was still the grand minister of the Forging Division.

He knew that he could no longer avoid it. He pretended to think for a moment before slowly saying, "If time could stop at the moment when we first met, what caused the sorrow of the painted fan in the autumn wind? Your heart changed in the blink of an eye, but you say it was bound to happen."

"Grand Minister, that's all!" Zhou Shu said. "There's really nothing more!"

"If time could stop at the moment when we first met, what caused the sorrow of the painted fan in the autumn wind? Your heart changed in the blink of an eye, but you say it was bound to happen." Yin Wuyou didn't pay any attention to Zhou Shu. She murmured to herself with an indescribable expression on her face, her eyes filled with splendor.

Then they heard a sigh outside the door.

"Your heart changed in the blink of an eye, but you say it was bound to happen." A female voice sighed deeply. "This poem speaks the heart."

Yin Wuyou looked at the door. "Who's there?!"

"Greetings, everyone. I am Hongxiu from Lichun Courtyard." A woman in red walked in from outside and bowed. "May I know why you have summoned me?"

Hongxiu's gaze fell on Zhou Shu, and a hint of surprise flashed across her face. Then her cheeks flushed slightly, causing her already beautiful face to become even more radiant.

In this room, there was already a beautiful character. In terms of appearance, although Hongxiu was absolutely beautiful, she was far inferior to Yin Wuyou.

But her various charms weren't something a young girl like Yin Wuyou could compare to.

Her arrival attracted Yang Hong's and Mi Zhifu's attention.

Yin Wuyou harrumphed coldly and then asked, "Let me ask you. Did Zhou Shu stay at Lichun Courtyard last night?"

Hongxiu looked at Yin Wuyou in surprise, and astonishment flashed in her eyes.

This woman is too beautiful.

Who is she? Why is she the one speaking in the Divine Constable Bureau?

But seeing that no one reacted, Hongxiu naturally knew what to do.

“Young Master, your name is Zhou Shu?” Hongxiu looked at Zhou Shu in surprise and said very frankly, “Young Master Zhou did stay in my room last night.”

Shameless! Yin Wuyou thought. How can a woman say such words so calmly?!

“I understand,” Yin Wuyou said. “Yang Hong, the matter is already clear. You can release him now.”

She stood up and walked out. While walking, she said without even turning her head, “Zhou Shu, within three months, I want to see the 0th Workshop produce results. If you only know how to frequent brothels and can’t do proper work, then you forget about being a superintendent!”

Yin Wuyou left without even looking back, not bothering to listen to Zhou Shu’s reply at all.

Zhou Shu shrugged. Am I not doing my work properly?

The 0th Workshop just produced the Spring Embroidered Saber.

But it’s fine. You just want to see the 0th Workshop develop new weapons, right?

I don’t need three months to show you the results.

Grand Minister, you’re underestimating me!

Zhou Shu looked at Hongxiu approvingly before looking at Yang Hong. “Constable Yang, can this prove that the murders have nothing to do with me now?”

He had actually been a little worried that she would say that she didn’t know. After all, she had actually been unconscious all last night.

He didn’t expect her to be so cooperative. This was an unexpected surprise.

What else could Yang Hong say?

“You have nothing to do with this indeed,” Yang Hong said. “Please.”

Right now, Yang Hong only wanted to send Zhou Shu out. If such a bigshot stayed here, who knew who else he would attract?

He really couldn’t take it anymore.

Zhou Shu shook his head and said, “There’s no hurry. Constable Yang, is Commander Ma here today? I’ve almost settled the matter we spoke about last time. I want to update him.”

Plop—

Yang Hong fell to the floor once more. If you really know our commander, you should have said so earlier!

You didn't say it, so I thought you were bragging when you wanted to see him!

You're merely a superintendent of a Forging Division workshop. What right do you have to speak to our commander? Just because you're good-looking?

Yang Hong felt that life was meaningless.

...

In the end, Zhou Shu didn't see Ma Fengzhang.

It wasn't because he didn't have the qualifications but because Ma Fengzhang wasn't in the Divine Constable Bureau. He had gone out to handle some matters. As for where he went, it wasn't something a mere constable like Yang Hong could know.

After leaving the Divine Constable Bureau, Zhou Shu was accompanied by two people—Mi Zhifu and Hongxiu, who hadn't left yet for some reason.

Zhou Shu glanced at Hongxiu. "Miss Hongxiu, are you still not going back?"

"Young Master Zhou, are you chasing me away?" Women were all born actresses. Hongxiu looked pitiful when she said this.

Zhou Shu felt a headache coming on. Although he had stripped Hongxiu naked last night, he hadn't taken advantage of her.

With her expression now, those who didn't know would think that he was a heartless man.

Zhou Shu braced himself and said, "No, thank you for what you did today, Miss Hongxiu."

Then his gaze shifted. He pulled Mi Zhifu aside and whispered, "Steward Mi, please lend me some money!"

Without hesitation, Mi Zhifu took out a banknote from his pocket. "Is this enough?"

"Yes!" Zhou Shu didn't even look at it.

He held the banknote in his hand and walked to Hongxiu. "Thank you very much for today, Miss Hongxiu. This is a small gesture of my thanks. Please accept it."

He handed over the banknote.

Hongxiu's expression changed. "Young Master Zhou, do you think I'm not leaving because of money?"

"In your eyes, is Hongxiu just a shameless woman greedy for money?"

A bitter expression appeared on her face. "It makes sense. I'm just a prostitute after all.

"Sorry to bother you. Goodbye."

Hongxiu turned around and left. As she turned around, Zhou Shu saw two streams of tears flowing down her face.

“That’s not what I meant!” Zhou Shu was anxious and grabbed Hongxiu’s arm. “I don’t mean to look down on you! I just... Forget it. I don’t know what to say. Anyway, I don’t have any other intentions.. This banknote is just a simple thank you. I definitely have no intention of insulting you!”

Chapter 77: Good Move, Second Master

“Miss Hongxiu, although you come from a brothel, you have a noble character. In my opinion, you are no worse than those heiresses,” Zhou Shu said.

...

Hongxiu turned her head, tears still on her face. “Young Master, are you telling the truth?”

Hongxiu’s voice was a little shaky. “Hongxiu looks like a willow withering at the approach of autumn. How can I compare to those heiresses? Hongxiu still has this bit of self-awareness.”

“If you look like a willow withering at the approach of autumn, then almost all women in this world will not have to live anymore.” Zhou Shu shook his head.

He was speaking the truth. In his previous life, Hongxiu’s looks would have made her a big star.

As for being born in a brothel, so what?

Weren’t those female celebrities on Earth the same?

Although she knew that Zhou Shu was coaxing her, she was still overjoyed.

“I misunderstood, Young Master,” Hongxiu said weakly.

The tears on her face had yet to dry, and her bashful expression made Zhou Shu look deeply at her.

“A beautiful lady has her beaded curtain raised,

Behind which in deep thoughts she sits with her elegantly thin eyebrows distorted;

I can see moist trails of tears from the corners of her eyes,

I wonder who it is that she harbors resentment toward?”

Zhou Shu couldn’t help reciting this poem.

Mi Zhifu, standing at the side, was dumbfounded. If his master had such moves, wouldn’t his kids be half his height by now? Unlike now, he was almost 30 years old and still single!

Hongxiu’s eyes widened, and her breathing became hurried.

She suddenly covered her face and left.

“Miss Hongxiu, banknote—” Zhou Shu gave himself a tight slap. Who asked you to be so unrestrained?! Why did you recite a poem for no reason? Do you really think that you’re Li Bai?

“A poem by Young Master Zhou is worth more than ten thousand taels of gold.” Hongxiu’s voice came from afar.

Zhou Shu: "..."

More than ten thousand taels of gold?

Poetry is indeed a good tool for freeloading...

Zhou Shu looked at the banknote in his hand. He was wondering if he should return it to Mi Zhifu when Mi Zhifu walked up to him and gave him a thumbs up.

"Good move, Second Master," Mi Zhifu praised sincerely.

"You flatter me," Zhou Shu said humbly.

"Second Master, please enlighten Master in the future. Master's literary talent is also very good, but he doesn't know how to use it in the right place. The Mi family is still waiting for Master to carry on the family line," Mi Zhifu continued.

"What do you mean?" Zhou Shu was interested in the gossip. His big brother, Mi Ziwen, still didn't have a son?

Mi Zhifu whispered something.

A look of realization appeared on Zhou Shu's face as he laughed. "Don't worry. Leave it to me."

"Then, I shall thank Second Master on behalf of Old Master," Mi Zhifu said sincerely.

He kept going on about his master and old master, yet Zhou Shu could actually understand.

"Steward Mi, if there's nothing else, I'll return to the workshop first."

Zhou Shu hesitated for a while before returning the banknote to Mi Zhifu. He had to return what he borrowed.

"Second Master, please wait." Steward Mi didn't reach out to take the banknote. "This banknote was given to Second Master by Master. There's also another matter that I have to trouble Second Master to help me settle."

"Me? What is it?" Zhou Shu glanced at the banknote in his hands and once again felt how wealthy Mi Ziwen was.

The denomination of this banknote was actually 1,000 taels of silver!

Fortunately, Hongxiu didn't accept it just now. Otherwise, it would have been a tremendous loss for him!

This was 1,000 taels of silver!

He had thought it was just one or two hundred taels of silver!

"Second Master, please follow me." Mi Zhifu smiled mysteriously and walked ahead.

Zhou Shu was puzzled and followed.

He wasn't worried that Mi Zhifu would harm him. Not to mention Mi Zhifu's strength, his identity was verified by Yin Wuyou and Yang Hong. He was a genuine steward of the Mi family.

Mi Ziwen was his sworn brother. How could his steward harm him?

Although Zhou Shu hadn't interacted much with this brother that he had easily gotten, he still trusted him.

The main point was that he didn't seem to have any reason to scheme against him. He came from an aristocratic family, and his wealth was comparable to that of a country. He also had a teacher who was the commander of the three armies. He had both money and power. So why would such a person scheme against Zhou Shu?

At least for now, the things that Zhou Shu had shown weren't worth being schemed against.

Zhou Shu followed him without hesitation. Mi Zhifu nodded to himself.

Today, in the Divine Constable Bureau, he had been paying attention to Zhou Shu.

How could he not be curious about his master's sworn brother?

Before coming to the Divine Constable Bureau, Mi Zhifu had been ordered to investigate Zhou Shu. With Mi Ziwen's identity, how could the Mi family let down their guard when someone appeared beside him?

According to the investigation, Zhou Shu was only a slightly talented Forging Apprentice. The Mi family couldn't understand why Mi Ziwen had become sworn brothers with him.

Mi Zhifu was also puzzled before. But after seeing Zhou Shu, he understood.

After a short interaction, he felt that Zhou Shu was definitely someone who could go far.

His master had indeed inherited his teacher's wisdom!

Mi Zhifu brought Zhou Shu two streets away and stopped outside a courtyard.

"Second Master, please." Mi Zhifu pushed open the two doors full of bronze nails and made a gesture of invitation.

"Is this my big brother's home?" Zhou Shu was puzzled. This residence was located in the middle of the capital. From the entrance, it looked quite grand, but it didn't seem to match Mi Ziwen's status.

Logically speaking, given how wealthy the Mi family was, shouldn't the residence be ten times bigger?

"Hasn't my big brother already left for war? Steward, why did you bring me to his residence?" Zhou Shu asked.

"This isn't Master's residence." Mi Zhifu shook his head. "This is yours, Second Master."

"My residence?" Zhou Shu was stunned. A thought he found hard to believe emerged in his mind.

It wasn't easy to live in the capital.

In the imperial capital of Great Xia, the price of such a residence was astronomical.



And it wasn't something that could be bought with money!

"Steward, are you serious?" Zhou Shu looked at Mi Zhifu.

Although his sworn brother gave him money every now and then, and they weren't small sums, Zhou Shu had never thought that he would be so generous.

How could his big brother give away a residence that Zhou Shu could never ever afford in his lifetime?

"Of course," Mi Zhifu said. "I have already prepared the transfer contract, and I have also filed a record with the government. As long as you sign the contract, this residence will be your home in the capital.

"Master's instructions were a little last minute, and time was limited, so the conditions are a bit lacking. I hope you can forgive me, Second Master.

"In addition, Second Master, you have to choose your own servants. I don't know what your preferences are, so I didn't dare to make arrangements.

"Master has instructed that the Mi residence will take care of all the servants' salaries. You don't have to worry about it, Second Master. You can go to the Mi residence to pick out some useful people or buy some people from the market."

Mi Zhifu explained everything slowly. Zhou Shu was stunned when he heard everything.

Not only is he giving a residence to me, but it even comes with servants?

Moreover, the servants' wages will all be taken care of?

Big Brother, are you providing for me?

If more such big brothers come, there will be no need for me to forge weapons.

Wouldn't it be nice to live a life of luxury?

"Steward, this isn't too good, right?" Zhou Shu felt as if he was dreaming. "If Big Brother is so wasteful, won't he anger his family?"

"Of course not." Mi Zhifu smiled. "Master is in charge of the Mi family now. Old Master usually doesn't ask about these things. Besides, this isn't much. I feel that it's too shabby."

Zhou Shu was flabbergasted. This is shabby?

A luxurious mansion within the third ring of the capital with an unlimited number of servants that had their salaries covered for life, how can this be called shabby?

Is poverty limiting my imagination?

Or is it that I'm unable to imagine the happiness of the rich?

"Second Master, if you need anything else, feel free to instruct me." Mi Zhifu smiled. "Before Master went to war, he said that if I didn't take good care of you, he would skin me alive."

"No," Zhou Shu said firmly. "It's all good! Steward Mi, don't worry. If Big Brother is unhappy with you, I will definitely stand on your side.

“You couldn’t have done any better. I’m very satisfied!”

“That’s good.”

Mi Zhifu suddenly slapped his forehead. “Look at me. I almost forgot something so important!”

He carefully took out a booklet from his clothes. “Second Master, you are a Forging Apprentice. This book is a forging technique manual that Master specially found. The forging techniques recorded inside are genuine unique skills of Forging Masters.

“According to my knowledge, there are at least three Forging Apprentices who advanced to Forging Master after studying this forging technique manual.

“Master asked me to hand it over to you, Second Master. I hope that you will be able to advance to Forging Master as soon as possible!”

Mi Zhifu handed the booklet to Zhou Shu with a serious face.

The most important thing for Forging Apprentices was the secret forging formulas. As for Forging Masters, the most important thing was their own skills.

This forging secret technique manual was about weapon forging techniques. It was also the most important thing for Forging Apprentices to advance to Forging Master.

It could be said that if Forging Apprentices were unable to grasp a certain level of forging techniques, they would never be able to become Forging Masters.

True forging techniques were usually kept secret and wouldn’t be taught to others.

Mi Ziwen had actually found such a thing for him!

Zhou Shu once again felt this big brother’s sincerity!

He really treats me as a brother. Otherwise, it would be impossible for him to do all these things.

What about me? What have I done for him?

Zhou Shu began to think seriously. He had never liked owing others, even if Mi Ziwen was his sworn brother.

He thought about what he should give Mi Ziwen as a gift.

Zhou Shu looked at Mi Zhifu. “Steward, let me ask you. How is my brother’s cultivation now?”

“Master’s cultivation is at the fourth rank, only a step away from the third rank,” Mi Zhifu said without hesitation.

“Cultivation at the fourth rank... this is a bit troublesome,” Zhou Shu muttered to himself.

“What did you say, Second Master?” Mi Zhifu was puzzled.

“Nothing.” Zhou Shu shook his head. This matter wasn’t urgent.. In any case, Mi Ziwen’s triumphant return would still take some time. He had to prepare a gift of sufficient quality!

## Chapter 78: The Revolution Has Yet To Succeed

Zhou Shu didn't reject Mi Ziwen's generous gift.

...

They were already sworn brothers, so there was no need to pretend to be polite.

In addition, Zhou Shu didn't think that Mi Ziwen would be at a disadvantage. Once he became a Grand Craftsman, any weapon he casually forged for Mi Ziwen would be worth more than a single residence.

As for becoming a Grand Craftsman, Zhou Shu felt that there was no problem at all.

"Steward Mi, just arrange for a few people to clean up the place," Zhou Shu said without standing on ceremony. "I won't stay here often. I'll have to trouble you to take care of it."

It was quite convenient to have a residence in the capital. At least, he wouldn't have to be in a situation where he had nowhere to go like last night.

Zhou Shu reckoned that he would come to the capital frequently in the future. He had originally planned to buy a residence in the capital, but he had no money temporarily.

Now, Mi Ziwen had solved his big problem.

"Don't worry, Second Master. I will handle it well." Mi Zhifu was a professional steward, and it wasn't a problem.

Zhou Shu looked at the secret forging technique manual in his hand and fell into deep thought.

This manual didn't have much meaning to Zhou Shu.

Zhou Shu's forging techniques all came from the Legendary Armament Canon. As long as a weapon appeared in the Legendary Armament Canon, he would automatically be able to master the relevant forging techniques.

As long as a ranked weapon appeared on the Legendary Armament Canon, Zhou Shu's forging skills would definitely automatically increase to the level of Forging Masters.

Therefore, there was no need for him to learn the secret forging techniques in this manual.

But this manual was very useful for him to nurture Zhang Yibei and the others.

To put it bluntly, there was no problem with Zhou Shu's forging techniques. But there was a problem with how to teach Zhang Yibei and the others.

Now that he had the secret forging technique manual, this problem was solved.

Compared to the residence and servants, I owe Big Brother much more for the secret forging technique manual, Zhou Shu thought.

To him, money was a trivial matter. But the value of the secret forging technique manual was immeasurable. It was something that could produce several Forging Masters.

How to repay Mi Ziwen was a headache.

Mi Ziwen was a fourth-rank martial artist. With his family background, he shouldn't lack any weapons.

Even if Zhou Shu became a Forging Master, ordinary ranked weapons probably wouldn't be able to catch Mi Ziwen's eye.

I can only wait and see. In any case, it will take at least a few months for the army to return.

Zhou Shu temporarily put this matter to the back of his mind. He suddenly thought of something else.  
"Steward Mi, I have something to ask you."

Mi Zhifu was the steward of the Mi family, so he should be very knowledgeable. He might know about this.

"Second Master, please speak," Mi Zhifu said.

"You heard it just now. His Majesty has decreed for me to participate in the so-called military parade."

Mi Zhifu was speechless. Why do I feel that Second Master is very unwilling?

To participate in Great Xia's military parade as a Forging Apprentice was something that many people didn't even dare to imagine.

This second master was really hard to figure out.

"Second Master, you are excellent beyond compare. His Majesty is wise and discerning..." Mi Zhifu said.

Zhou Shu rolled his eyes. Do I want to hear your flattery?

Is there a need for you to say such words?

"Steward Mi, what do you know about Great Xia's military parade? I heard that there are rewards for participating in this parade, right?" Zhou Shu continued asking.

Mi Zhifu nodded. "The so-called military parade is for His Majesty to watch Forging Masters forge on the spot, and His Majesty will reward the winner."

"What is the reward this time?" Zhou Shu asked.

Previously, Zhou Shu had learned from Zhen Cai that Zhu Chuanfeng was willing to use any means possible to take him in as a disciple in order to claim the reward from the military parade for himself.

Although he didn't know why Zhu Chuanfeng was so sure that he would get the reward, the reward was definitely very important to Zhu Chuanfeng.

Now that Zhou Shu and Zhu Chuanfeng had fallen out, he naturally couldn't let his enemy get what he wanted.

Zhou Shu had already decided that no matter what the reward was, he wouldn't let Zhu Chuanfeng have it!

"The reward for this military parade?" Mi Zhifu shook his head. "The rewards for every military parade are different. I'm afraid only His Majesty knows the specifics."

No, Zhu Chuanfeng knows, Zhou Shu thought.

But after he thought about it, Zhu Chuanfeng was a Grand Craftsman after all. It wasn't strange for him to know some inside information.

Even if Mi Zhifu had the support of the Mi family, he couldn't compare to a Grand Craftsman. It was normal that he didn't know.

"Alright." Zhou Shu shook his head. "There's nothing else. Steward Mi, you go ahead. I have to return to the workshop. Our grand minister has lost her temper, so I have to work harder."

Zhou Shu signed his name on the deed Mi Zhifu had brought over. Then he instructed Mi Zhifu to clean up the residence before he went to the 0th Workshop.

Although Zhou Shu wasn't afraid of Yin Wuyou's threats, from his own point of view, he had to speed up his pace of forging.

He had not maxed out the number of Spring Embroidered Sabers yet.

The revolution has yet to succeed. I still have to work hard.

...

Bang!

A porcelain teacup fell heavily to the floor and shattered.

A few maids kept quiet out of fear and stood trembling at the foot of the wall.

Zhu Chuanfeng's face was ashen as he panted heavily.

"Very good! A mere Forging Apprentice actually dares to go against me!" Zhu Chuanfeng said coldly.

"Then, I'll let you see the consequences of opposing me!"

He already knew about what had happened in the Divine Constable Bureau. Yang Hong had come to inform him of the situation personally. At the time, Yang Hong's accusing attitude made Zhu Chuanfeng furious.

If not for his status, he would have easily killed this mere constable of the Divine Constable Bureau!

Now, he had transferred all of his hatred onto Zhou Shu.

Even if that boy surnamed Zhou wanted, he wouldn't be able to kill Zhen Cai. After venting his anger, Zhu Chuanfeng calmed down. There's something strange about this matter. I don't know if Zhen Cai was unlucky enough to encounter an enemy spy or if someone is targeting me!

Cold light flickered in Zhu Chuanfeng's eyes. As a Grand Craftsman, his status was extraordinary. But at the same time, he also had enemies.

If someone is testing me... Zhu Chuanfeng fell into deep thought. I can't delay any longer. I have to make sure nothing goes wrong.

A moment later, he raised his hand and called a few people in. After giving a few instructions, these people left the Zhu residence and went to various places.

...

When Zhou Shu returned to the 0th Workshop, the first thing he saw was Zhang Yibei kneeling at the door, shirtless.

"What kind of show is this?" Zhou Shu asked curiously.

Zhang Yibei lowered his head and shouted, "Superintendent, I didn't listen to your instructions and went out to look for the grand minister. Please punish me."

"Superintendent, we all made this decision together. If you want to punish someone, punish all of us!"

Zhou Shu's expression turned cold. "What? What tricks are you up to? Do you think I won't punish all of you?"

"No, no. You've misunderstood, Superintendent," Zhang Yibei hurriedly said. "I'm the one who disobeyed orders. Whether you want to beat me or kill me, it's all up to you!"

"I haven't even done anything yet, yet you all dare to disobey me?" Zhou Shu snorted. "If you really become Forging Masters, won't you all climb above my head?"

"We wouldn't dare!" The apprentices were terrified.

"No one is allowed to eat today!" Zhou Shu said coldly. "The Huben Sabers, Hundred Refinements Ring Pommel Sabers, and Horse Slaying Sabers, each person is to choose one to forge. If you can't forge it, you are not allowed to sleep!"

Zhou Shu flicked his sleeves and walked straight into the backyard.

Zhang Yibei, Sixth Brother Wu, and the others looked at one another.

"Is the superintendent... punishing us?"

"I guess..." someone said with uncertainty.

No food for a day and to forge a weapon?

Was this considered punishment?

"I guess so," a forging apprentice said uncertainly.

"It must be. I haven't completely mastered the forging methods of these three weapons. I can't forge one in a day by myself," a Forging Apprentice cried out miserably.

The difficulty of forging the Huben Saber, Hundred Refinements Ring Pommel Saber, and Horse Slaying Saber was very high. When Zhang Yibei and the others forged them before, they had instructed others to forge them according to the broken down steps of the forging process.

If they forged independently, the success rate would be ridiculously low.

Being able to succeed once every ten times was already considered very good.

“Stop talking!” Zhang Yibei said loudly. “This is the superintendent’s benevolence! What else are you not satisfied with?”

“To be able to meet such a superintendent, it’s our three lifetimes of fortune! This time, we have indeed disobeyed the superintendent’s orders. Although he is benevolent, this should serve as a warning to us.

“Everyone, there’s no need to discuss anymore. Let’s do as the superintendent says!”

Zhang Yibei took the lead and rushed into the factory. He grabbed his hammer and started forging.

Afterward, the group of Forging Apprentices also grabbed their hammers and threw themselves into forging.

The sound of hammering echoed in the 0th Workshop.

When Zhou Shu, in the backyard, heard the commotion in the front yard, the corners of his mouth curled up slightly.

In truth, he wasn’t angry. Zhang Yibei was worried about his safety, which was why he had taken the risk to go to the Forging Division to find Yin Wuyou. For Zhang Yibei, this was a huge improvement. At the very least, he was no longer that cowardly Forging Apprentice who only obeyed orders. They already had their own thoughts.

This was also why Zhou Shu had always wanted to change them. To him, the Forging Apprentices were all living people, not tools for forging. He didn’t want all the Forging Apprentices under him to become obedient bugs. He hoped that Zhang Yibei and the others would have their own thoughts and opinions.

I’ve given you all a chance. As for how far you can go, it will depend on yourselves, Zhou Shu thought. Then his gaze fell on his smelting furnace.

Let’s get to work and max out the number of Spring Embroidered Sabers as soon as possible!

Zhou Shu was full of energy.

Chapter 79: Naive!

“Superintendent, none of the materials that arrived today are for us.” Zhang Yibei bowed and reported. There was some doubt and anger on his face.

...

“How many days has it been?” Zhou Shu raised his eyebrows.

Ever since the Divine Constable Bureau incident, Zhou Shu had stayed in the Forging Division’s workshops to forge weapons.

After a few days, he had already forged dozens of Spring Embroidered Sabers. The number of Spring Embroidered Sabers on the Legendary Armament Canon was almost full.

He didn’t expect Zhang Yibei to inform him that the materials in the 0th Workshop had been used up, and the new materials were not delivered on time.

The Forging Division's workshops were divided into several departments. For example, Zhang Yibei, Sixth Brother Wu, and other Forging Apprentices worked as front-line workers. Other than that, there were also those who inspected weapons, those who escorted weapons, those who cooked, those who delivered materials, and so on.

The most important material of the Forging Division was naturally iron. In addition, there was also the fuel used for smelting furnaces.

Under normal circumstances, the materials needed by the workshops would be sent to the various workshops on time. In the past, when Zhou Shu was working at the 97th Workshop, he had never been worried about materials.

Even after he became the superintendent of the 0th Workshop, he had never worried about such trivial matters. It had always been Zhang Yibei dealing with the people who transported materials.

"It's the third day," Zhang Yibei replied.

"What did the materials department say?" Zhou Shu asked.

"They didn't say anything. They just said that there weren't enough materials and that we would have to wait," Zhang Yibei said angrily. "If there aren't enough materials, then why don't the other workshops face the same problem? Only our 0th Workshop doesn't have materials!"

"Only the 0th Workshop doesn't have materials?" Zhou Shu frowned.

"Yes," Zhang Yibei said. "I went to the other workshops to take a look. They have sufficient materials."

"Alright, I understand. You may leave." Zhou Shu waved his hand, gesturing for Zhang Yibei to leave.

"Yes, Superintendent," Zhang Yibei said. Before he left, he still asked, "Superintendent, what should everyone do without materials?"

The day-to-day work of Forging Apprentices was forging weapons. Without materials, what would they do?

"Didn't I give you all the martial arts techniques? Practice them all." Zhou Shu waved his hand.

Zhang Yibei acknowledged and returned to the front yard to instruct the other Forging Apprentices.

Other workshops have sufficient materials. Only the 0th Workshop doesn't. After Zhang Yibei left, Zhou Shu tapped the armrest of his chair. Someone is targeting the 0th Workshop.

Zhou Shu wasn't a fool. When he heard Zhang Yibei's words, he knew that there was a problem.

The 0th Workshop didn't need to take on any forging tasks. The materials they consumed every day were nothing compared to the entire Forging Division.

Therefore, it was impossible for them to miss out on the 0th Workshop because they had insufficient materials.

Although Yin Wuyou was a bit angry last time, she wouldn't do something like this, Zhou Shu thought. Not giving materials to the 0th Workshop won't do her any good.



I've never dealt with the material department before, and they wouldn't target me for no reason. Then, there's only one possibility!

Zhu Chuanfeng. Zhou Shu gritted his teeth.

He might not have been kind to others in the Forging Division, but he had never offended anyone. The only person who had a grudge against him was Zhu Chuanfeng!

Zhu Chuanfeng was a Grand Craftsman, and his status in the Forging Division was extraordinary. It wouldn't be difficult for him to cut off the materials of the 0th Workshop.

Does that old thief think he can make me submit just by doing this? Doesn't he know that the 0th Workshop doesn't need to take on any forging tasks? Even if there are no materials, what can he do to me? Zhou Shu snorted coldly.

Actually, cutting off the materials of the 0th Workshop had a huge impact on Zhou Shu.

Although he didn't need to undertake forging tasks, he still needed to try to develop weapons. Trying required materials.

Without materials, how could he develop new weapons?

Of course, this was the normal process of developing weapons. To Zhou Shu, this wasn't a problem.

He didn't even need to try to develop weapons.

But he had to forge enough Spring Embroidered Sabers to fill up the slots. Without materials, how could he forge them?

He still had to forge more than a dozen Spring Embroidered Sabers to hit a hundred!

Damn old thief! Zhou Shu cursed. Zhu Chuanfeng's actions were truly disgusting.

Should I go look for Yin Wuyou?

Zhou Shu rejected his idea himself. If he went to trouble Yin Wuyou over such a small matter, her patience would be exhausted sooner or later.

Besides, if he went to look for the grand minister over such a trivial matter, what would others think of him?

Wouldn't they think that he was unworthy of being the superintendent of the 0th Workshop?

Apart from the grand minister, Zhou Shu really didn't know any of the other big shots of the Forging Division.

Below the Forging Division's grand minister, there were four ministers. Under the ministers, there were also directors and vice directors.

Other workshop superintendents would definitely be familiar with these people.

But Zhou Shu had been directly promoted by Yin Wuyou from a Forging Apprentice to a workshop superintendent. He had never interacted with these people before.

Now that he was in trouble, would they help him if he went to look for them?

Moreover, wasn't Zhu Chuanfeng more influential than him?

This was just a bit of the influence of a Grand Craftsman, but it was enough to put a workshop superintendent in a life-or-death dilemma.

Without materials, he wouldn't be able to complete the forging tasks, which would be a devastating blow to a workshop superintendent.

Even if he reported it to his superiors, the materials department just had to say that they didn't have enough materials. If it dragged on for a few days, which workshop would be able to withstand it?

Trying to make me submit with this method? Zhu Chuanfeng, you're underestimating me! Zhou Shu sneered coldly. Do you think I won't be able to develop new weapons without materials? How naive!

"Zhang Yibei!" Zhou Shu shouted.

"Yes!" Zhang Yibei answered loudly in the front yard. Then the sound of footsteps came as Zhang Yibei ran to Zhou Shu's backyard.

"I'm leaving for a few days. You guys stay in the workshop. If you can't forge weapons, don't stay idle. You can't slack off when it comes to the Martial Dao," Zhou Shu instructed. "Tell everyone that as long as they perform well, I will teach everyone the true art of forging. When the time comes, it won't be impossible to advance to Forging Master."

"Superintendent..." Zhang Yibei's eyes lit up as his voice trembled.

Previously, they had learned some forging techniques from Zhou Shu. At that time, they had learned that in order to become a Forging Master, they had to have a skill inheritance.

Originally, Zhang Yibei had already lost all hope. He didn't expect that Zhou Shu would actually give him hope again.

"The Martial Dao is not to be underestimated. If you can't meet my requirements, then don't even think about it," Zhou Shu said calmly.

"Rest assured, Superintendent! We will do our best!" Zhang Yibei promised loudly.

Zhou Shu nodded without commenting. He put on his jacket and left the 0th Workshop.

Zhang Yibei passed on Zhou Shu's words to the other Forging Apprentices, and they began to cultivate with all their might.

...

Meanwhile, the 97th Workshop welcomed a new workshop superintendent—a young man in his twenties.

The young man stood in the work shed that used to belong to Zhou Shu with a cold smile on his face.

Do you think you can escape the fate of being a peasant just because you've become a workshop superintendent? The young man sneered. Naive! I'll let you see clearly how big the gap is between you and a true Forging Master!

A flame seemed to burn in the young man's eyes. He raised his hand, and the hammer that had fallen in the corner automatically flew into his hand. Then he gently waved it.

With a loud crash, the entire work shed was reduced to ruins.

...

The capital, the Forging Division Headquarters...

Yin Wuyou sat upright in the large hall. Opposite her, almost all the higher-ups of the Forging Division were present.

"Grand Minister, are you going to set a benchmark for the monthly workshop examination?" a middle-aged man said. He was Minister Meng Jinguang of the Forging Division, and he could be considered the second-in-command of the Forging Division.

"Just do it the way you did in the past," Yin Wuyou said.

The monthly examination of the Forging Division's workshops was actually a test of each workshop's performance. Those that failed to complete their tasks would be punished.

This was a tradition of the Forging Division. There were certain rules that Yin Wuyou didn't intend to interfere with too much.

Although she wanted to change the practices of the Forging Division, she didn't want to overthrow everything. At least, the monthly examination of the Forging Division's workshops wasn't a problem for now.

"In the past, it wouldn't have been a problem to follow the usual practice." Meng Jinguang nodded slightly and stroked his beard while speaking slowly. "But the situation this time is slightly different."

"What's different?" Yin Wuyou said.

"Grand Minister, how should we evaluate this 0th Workshop you personally established?"

"Before this, of the 108 workshops of the Forging Division, other than the first 36 which consist of Forging Masters, the other 72 were all treated equally. The evaluation was very simple, and we could carry it out according to the number and quality of the forged weapons.

"However, Grand Minister, you have specially allowed the 0th Workshop not to take on any forging tasks. I'm not sure how to evaluate them," Meng Jinguang said.

"Forgive me for being blunt. But perhaps I'm not at your level, Grand Minister, so I can't see the point of setting up the 0th Workshop."

Yin Wuyou frowned. "Minister Meng, are you questioning me?"

"I wouldn't dare." Meng Jinguang shook his head. There was no fear on his face. Instead, he said seriously, "I just feel that there is no need to set up a workshop to develop standard weapons."

"Are you saying to get rid of the 0th Workshop?" Yin Wuyou sneered.

Meng Jinguang didn't speak, but his intention was clear.

"Grand Minister, I have a suggestion." Another voice broke the deadlock.

"Grand Minister, you set up the 0th Workshop with good intentions, but it's possible that you haven't been in the Forging Division for long and don't know enough about forging," the man said. He almost pointed at Yin Wuyou's nose and said that she was an amateur.

Yin Wuyou's pretty face turned cold as she harrumphed.

The man continued nonchalantly, "My suggestion is to use this monthly examination to let the 0th Workshop prove its value. If the other workshops can do what the 0th Workshop does, then there's no need for it to exist.. On the other hand, if the people of the 0th Workshop can prove that they have more value than the other workshops, then the workshop can continue to exist."

## Chapter 80: Workshop Monthly Examination

The fury in Yin Wuyou's heart was almost uncontrollable.

...

She lowered her eyelids, trying to maintain her poise.

Ever since she became the grand minister, these people had been making things difficult for her.

But everything they did was in accordance with the rules. So even though Yin Wuyou wanted to launch an attack, she had no way of doing so!

For example, during this monthly examination, they clearly wanted to target Yin Wuyou's 0th Workshop. But their excuses were so reasonable that even Yin Wuyou couldn't say anything!

If these people really did it out of public interest, then so be it.

But over the past few years, the Forging Division had become increasingly desolate in their hands, getting worse year after year. If not for this, why would she come to the Forging Division to be the grand minister!

She clearly knew these people were doing nothing in their positions, but she couldn't find a reason to deal with them. This made Yin Wuyou feel extremely aggrieved.

But even as a princess, she couldn't punish ministers of the Imperial Court for no reason.

"Minister Li, your words make sense." Meng Jinguang nodded. "Although there aren't many people in the 0th Workshop, we still need to spend dozens of taels of silver every month. This is not considering the materials provided to them."

“These silver are earned by everyone’s hard work, and they can’t be wasted.”

The few of them spoke one after another, pushing Yin Wuyou back.

Under these circumstances, Yin Wuyou naturally didn’t have to listen to them. The grand minister had the authority.

But if she really did that, the princess’s reputation for being self-opinionated and willful would spread throughout the capital tomorrow.

Yin Wuyou’s eyes narrowed slightly. After a long while, she said coldly, “Since everyone has already reached an agreement, then I will naturally not object.

“In this monthly examination, the 0th Workshop will also take part.”

Yin Wuyou stood up and walked out as she said coldly, “If he can’t prove his worth, then let him go back to being a Forging Apprentice!”

Meng Jinguang and the rest looked at each other and saw the smile on each other’s lips. They won another round.

...

Achoo— Zhou Shu sneezed and rubbed his sore nose. Who’s scolding me?

He was now in his mansion in the capital.

Mi Zhifu was indeed a very considerate steward. In just a few days, he had already arranged for people to clean the residence.

Moreover, all the daily necessities had been purchased. Even eight servants had been arranged to take care of the residence.

What delighted Zhou Shu the most was that Mi Zhifu had actually prepared a forging room for him in the backyard!

Smelting furnaces and all kinds of materials were available!

This made Zhou Shu, who had prepared a full set of materials himself, overjoyed.

As expected of a steward of a big family, he’s so professional!

Zhou Shu had a high opinion of Mi Zhifu. Just based on his position, he knew that he had to prepare a forging room. This was true professionalism.

The 0th Workshop’s materials had been cut off. Under normal circumstances, Zhou Shu should have gone to the materials department to negotiate with them and then been given an excuse. In the end, he would have angrily gone to find his boss. Finally, he might have to go to Zhu Chuanfeng and apologize.

But Zhou Shu did not act according to plan!

If you want to cut off my materials, then so be it.

In any case, the 0th Workshop didn't have any forging tasks. Zhang Yibei and the others also needed to wait until their martial arts had truly reached basic mastery before they could begin learning the skills of forging.

As for developing new weapons, Zhou Shu didn't need to use any materials.

If he couldn't forge weapons in the 0th Workshop, wouldn't it be the same if he did it in his own home?

In any case, there were only a dozen or so Spring Embroidered Sabers left to forge in order to fill up all the slots. At that time, another new weapon would appear in the Legendary Armament Canon.

Zhu Chuanfeng thought that by cutting off the materials of the 0th Workshop, he would be able to hold on to Zhou Shu's life. But what he didn't know was that Zhou Shu and he weren't even on the same level.

The residences in the capital were much better than those in the 0th Workshop.

Although Zhou Shu had designed the 0th Workshop himself, the conditions at the time were limited. Moreover, he had built the workshop according to the model of a factory, so it was naturally incomparable to the luxurious residences in the capital.

The residence Mi Ziwen had given him was basically a garden.

Furthermore, there were people here to serve him, and everything was provided. Besides forging, Zhou Shu didn't have to worry about anything else.

These days were simply too happy.

Since he was in a good mood, he was naturally more efficient.

In just two days, he had finished forging most of the dozen or so Spring Embroidered Sabers.

At this rate, he would only need two more days to unlock the new weapon.

I wonder if it will be a ranked one this time. Zhou Shu was looking forward to it.

Zhu Chuanfeng had schemed against him because he was only a Forging Apprentice.

If Zhou Shu was also a Grand Craftsman, would Zhu Chuanfeng still dare to scheme against him?

At the end of the day, this world was still one where strength spoke.

...

"Is this the place?" Yin Wuyou asked solemnly as she looked at the door in front of her.

"This is the place." Haitang nodded her head like a chick pecking rice. "I went to ask. Superintendent Zhou hasn't returned to the 0th Workshop for several days. It took me a lot of effort to find out that he's here."

"He's only been the superintendent of the workshop for a few days, and he can already afford a residence here?" Yin Wuyou said.

"No, this is a gift from Mi Ziwen," Haitang said.

"What spell did he cast on Mi Ziwen?" Yin Wuyou grumbled. She couldn't understand why Mi Ziwen treated Zhou Shu so well.

It was one thing to become sworn brothers with him, but to give him a residence was a little too much.

"Has he been to Lichun Courtyard recently?" Yin Wuyou suddenly asked.

Haitang was stunned. She didn't know why the princess would ask such a question. She shook her head and replied, "No. After Superintendent Zhou came here, he never went out."

Yin Wuyou nodded. "Knock on the door!"

Haitang walked forward and started banging on the door.

"Second Master, there's someone asking to see you."

Just as Zhou Shu was preparing to begin forging the next Spring Embroidered Saber, an old servant suddenly whispered outside the door.

Zhou Shu stopped and asked doubtfully, "Who is it?"

He didn't have many acquaintances in the capital, and there was not a single person who knew that he lived here. Who would be looking for him at this time?

"I don't know. They didn't reveal their identities," the old servant said respectfully. "They are two women, and they are very beautiful. They should be from an influential family."

"Oh." Zhou Shu nodded. He already knew who came. It made sense. Besides her, who else could find him so easily?

"Go serve her first. I'll come over after changing," Zhou Shu said.

The old servant bowed in acknowledgment.

A bit later, Zhou Shu, who had tidied himself up a little, came to the front hall.

As expected, Yin Wuyou was sitting here with the pretty maid Haitang standing behind her.

"Grand Minister, I apologize for not welcoming you..." Zhou Shu cupped his hands in an exaggerated gesture.

Yin Wuyou rolled her eyes. "Don't use this useless method!"

"You sure know how to find a place to hide. Aren't you worried about the workshop? Did you not hear what I said last time?" Yin Wuyou's face flushed as she angrily glared at Zhou Shu.

"I'm innocent," Zhou Shu said. "Grand Minister, you know the responsibility of the 0th Workshop. We don't have any forging tasks. To be honest, I haven't been to the workshop recently because I'm in seclusion developing a new weapon."

"Really? Have you developed it?" Yin Wuyou sneered.

"Not yet," Zhou Shu said somewhat embarrassedly.

He still needed a few more Spring Embroidered Sabers to fill up the slots, so the next weapon had yet to appear in the Legendary Armament Canon.

“But it will be soon.”

“Soon? You said it will be soon?” Yin Wuyou was furious. “Do you think it’s so easy to develop a new weapon? Do you know how many people are eyeing the 0th Workshop? If you don’t have the ability, then go back to being a Forging Apprentice!”

Zhou Shu was scolded. He was puzzled. What’s wrong with Yin Wuyou?

Is it that time of the month?

Did I offend her?

Zhou Shu waited for Yin Wuyou to finish venting her anger before explaining, “Grand Minister, I’m telling the truth. I’m indeed in seclusion developing a new weapon, and I’m about to succeed.

“Grand Minister, think about it. Have I ever lied to you before? I have never failed in the path of forging,” Zhou Shu said confidently.

Yin Wuyou also realized that she had lost her composure. Previously, she had been holding back her anger at the Forging Division Headquarters. Now, she had seized the opportunity to vent it out. On the other hand, Zhou Shu was somewhat innocent.

Yin Wuyou was a bit embarrassed, but she was too embarrassed to apologize. She could only pretend that nothing happened and nod proudly.

“Zhou Shu, I believe in your abilities. However, I am not the only one in charge of the Forging Division. You still have to show your results. Otherwise, even I will not be able to stop the rumors.

“The monthly examination for the Forging Division workshops is coming soon. If the 0th Workshop can’t produce results by then—”

“Wait,” Zhou Shu interrupted Yin Wuyou. “Grand Minister, I remember we agreed before that I would develop a new weapon within three months.”

“That was my mistake.” Yin Wuyou blushed with shame. “I owe you one. However, you can’t avoid this monthly examination. You have to participate.”

“Is someone causing trouble?” Zhou Shu responded in a deep voice.

“You are thinking too much,” Yin Wuyou said.

“I came here this time to inform you about this matter. In this monthly examination, the 0th Workshop must produce results. Otherwise, there’s no need for the 0th Workshop to exist.

“But don’t worry too much. This is a mistake of mine. Even if the 0th Workshop is gone, I will take responsibility for it.”

“I’m not worried.” Zhou Shu grinned, revealing a row of snow-white teeth. “I am a man who was specially permitted by His Majesty to participate in the military parade.. Even if I’m not a



superintendent, I will still be able to live very well. However, if they want to take the 0th Workshop away from me, that will depend on whether they are capable of doing so!”