

Chapter 731 - We're Not Sharing

We're Not Sharing

At first, Yang Chen assumed Lin Ruoxi had her presents tucked away in her red Bentley. However, upon seeing the vehicle, he realized that that was not the case.

A white Ford F350 pickup truck was parked in a corner. It was an intimidating vehicle, to say the least.

Ford's F-series pickups were American icons representing the hardy American spirit. It had ample horsepower and was designed with hard gold and aluminum platings.

They were very common in America as many farmers used them for work. Since the turnover rate was low, and it could only be imported, even the cheapest models cost at least a million yuan.

There were about ten huge boxes sitting at the back of the truck.

Is she really going to give these kids a whole pickup truck full of gifts?!? thought Yang Chen.

Lin Ruoxi bit her lip, embarrassed at his expressions. She said gently, "When I used to go alone in the past, it had always been a difficult process. However, with you here, I can finally use the pickup. I've had security get this car from my garage and I've bought the gifts. All we need to do is deliver the goods. I'm not good at driving huge cars, so I need you to be my driver.

"No problem." Yang Chen sighed. "I used to drive cars like this often, but this would be my first time driving one in a city."

Lin Ruoxi quickly added, "If you like it, I have a Dodge RAM and Nissan Titan in my garage. They're all the latest pickup models, I'll give them to you. You've been driving that BMW for a year anyway."

"Why would I drive a pickup to work?" Yang Chen rolled his eyes, taking the car keys from Lin Ruoxi.

Lin Ruoxi mumbled under breath after he'd turned away. She was about to give him a car! Did that really warrant an eye roll?

The engine roared to life. Both of them soon left the parking lot. According to Lin Ruoxi's plan, they were supposed to have lunch before heading to the orphanage.

"What do you want to eat?" asked Yang Chen.

Lin Ruoxi stroked her chin, thinking. "Let's go for something simple. I don't want to wait too long."

"Then let's go for a small restaurant?"

She frowned. "Can we eat somewhere cleaner?" At the mention of small restaurants, she recalled the last time she had lobsters with Yang Chen at one. The greasy, dirty experience made her very uncomfortable.

He shrugged. "Then you suggest a place. I'm all yours today."

"I don't care." Lin Ruoxi huffed, then started thinking. When she suddenly thought of a place, she asked softly, "What about... Let's go to my new rice ball franchise, I haven't eaten there before..."

Lin Ruoxi's face reddened. She'd been craving for them for a while now, but she didn't have the guts to eat there alone. She was their boss, after all. How weird would it be to eat there alone.

Now that she had company, she didn't care if it was lunchtime. She just wanted to chew some glutinous rice balls.

Yang Chen seemed to understand. He nodded, smiling, then said, "That's alright. I'm curious to try your franchise rice balls too."

When she heard him agree, Lin Ruoxi's smile bloomed like a flower as she nodded vigorously.

Yang Chen marveled at how easy it was to satisfy this woman.

At the same time, Yang Chen thought it was time to visit Aunt Xiang's Sichuan restaurant to meet Ma Guifang. Dragging out the issue with Mo Qianni would only make it worse for both parties.

Naturally, he couldn't bring this up to Lin Ruoxi.

Lin Ruoxi had invested in a total of three franchises, all called 'Zhao's Glutinous Rice Balls'. This shop was quite well-known in the Zhonghai area, but Lin Ruoxi still hired a designer to design a logo for the brand. It was a fat, pink pig. An adorable mascot was the key to a female customer's heart!

All three shops were situated in malls owned by Lin Ruoxi. Within Zhonghai itself, Lin Ruoxi owned at least ten malls. She'd always been a low-key person, so she never micromanaged these malls. Needless to say, not many people knew of her controlling interests in these businesses!

After driving for half an hour, they arrived at the Zhonghai Trade Tower. This building had ten underground floors of shops, restaurants, etc. while all the floors above ground were reserved for offices.

When they entered the building, Yang Chen asked curiously, "Ruoxi, do Yu Lei's assets include these malls?"

"Of course not," said Lin Ruoxi plainly. "These are all results of my investment in shares. I bought them all from their original owners myself, there's no need to force it into the company's assets."

Yang Chen's jaw dropped. Smiling, he said, "That would mean, even if Yu Lei ever filed for bankruptcy, you'd still be a rich little lady."

Lin Ruoxi gave him the side eye. "It's not your first day with me. You think I wouldn't have a safety blanket for myself?"

Yang Chen nodded solemnly. Lin Ruoxi would never put all her eggs in one basket.

"When my grandmother handed Yu Lei to me, these malls weren't mine. However, I have been buying a lot of shares these few years, sometimes to the detriment of their management. I still hold controlling interest though, so nobody can do much about it."

So this is why she always maintains her own company shares at around ninety percent. "Then why did you buy so much property? You like playing the role of a landlord?"

Lin Ruoxi looked pleased with herself. “No, it’s far from that! My goal is to buy out the entirety of Zhonghai’s busiest street! Every building I walk past would be mine! I’m working towards this goal right now!”

Yang Chen’s face froze, then he smiled timidly, “That wouldn’t happen to be your dream, would it?”

“It has always been,” said Lin Ruoxi, forgetting herself, “To me, being a real estate mogul in a big city is an awesome thing. Think about it. When the entire street belongs to me, I can decide which brands get to be there, and I can bring all my favorite brands in, and kick the brands I dislike out. I can take whatever I want from any shop, then make subtractions off their rent. The entire street would be my playground!”

He touched his face, muttering, “Your dream really isn’t cute at all.”

Soon, they arrived at Zhao’s Glutinous Rice Balls.

Yang Chen was shocked to see a very long queue in front of the shop. It was impressively popular.

A few staff were busy collecting payments and packing food, while another few were making fresh glutinous rice balls inside. Although they weren’t as sophisticated as what Mr Zhao once made, with the creativity of the young staff, they sold a huge variety of rice balls that attracted the girls and children.

Yang Chen didn’t know to laugh or cry when he saw a hello kitty print on the rice ball packaging. It was the exact theme and color of Lin Ruoxi’s room!

There were two huge TV screens hanging in the shop that were playing two very popular Korean dramas. Although they were muted, it still attracted many customers.

Yang Chen slapped his head. *Didn’t Ruoxi once mention doing something like this in passing? You mean to say she actually did it?!*

Next to him was Lin Ruoxi, who’d completely forgotten why she was there as she watched the very shop she’d planned in action. Her eyes were shining, glued to the drama playing on the television!

Yang Chen coughed a few times, waking Lin Ruoxi from her daze. “I’ll buy some for you, which flavors do you want?”

Lin Ruoxi noticed she was embarrassing herself, but she couldn’t tear her eyes away from the screen. She said softly, “All of them.”

“Huh?” Yang Chen stopped for a second. There were twenty to thirty different flavors in the shop, and every riceball was as big as a tennis ball. He frowned. “That’s too many. Are you sure you can finish everything?”

Lin Ruoxi’s head hung so low her chin touched her chest, she muttered, “I—I want to bring some home. Yo—you can buy some for yourself and we’re not sharing!”

Chapter 732 - Lanlan

Lanlan

The glutinous rice ball feast left Lin Ruoxi contented and full.

If it was not for the philanthropy routine placed upon them, Yang Chen was certain that they would procrastinate till dusk.

As he watched her chow down on those extra-large glutinous rice balls, Yang Chen could only wonder how many rice balls could fit into one human, but nonetheless he sat by patiently as she indulged in her guilty pleasure. When Lin Ruoxi finally finished, they immediately drove towards the orphanage.

All those presents were unsurprisingly prepared for more than one orphanage.

They made continuous trips to three different orphanages, which were all located by the suburban areas of Zhonghai. Every time they arrived at one, Lin Ruoxi would hop off the car, have a little meet and greet with the children before introducing them to new games as they mingled together.

As for Yang Chen, he was clearly just there as free labor, as he diligently brought boxes by boxes of toys and snacks into the center. When it came to distribution however, the job landed solely into Lin Ruoxi's lap. Most notably because the children were hardly fond of Yang Chen and his seemingly cold appearance.

Yang Chen wanted to offer hugs to the kids, hopefully to at least build his attractiveness with the children, only to fail miserably. They were worried that this uncle was going to do bad things to them.

Seeing how bad he fared with the kids, the staff in the orphanages along with Lin Ruoxi burst into laughter.

Yang Chen was visibly frustrated, but to see Lin Ruoxi happier than usual, he understood that it was all worth it in the end. Understanding his own physique as far superior from a mortal, he had to find a way to boost the physiques of his women just to even have a chance of pregnancy. Otherwise, not only would he leave Lin Ruoxi with nothing but a dream, Guo Xuehua and Wang Ma would only continue to grow more frustrated at not being able to have a grandchild.

The last orphanage was exactly the one funded and built by Guo Xuehua, the one that Lin Ruoxi frequents, called New Hope.

As they stepped foot into the courtyard, the kids that were playing tag instantly halted their game as they gushed towards Lin Ruoxi, screaming and shouting in excitement.

Lin Ruoxi herself too was visibly excited to play with the kids. Her fatigue vanished into thin air as she took the role of 'mother hen' amongst the children who played as chicks and eagle.

[Eagle and Chicks is a very common Chinese game. Read about it [here](#).]

Yang Chen made himself useful by taking the remaining boxes into the backyard, only to meet the orphanage's person in-charge, President Cha, along the way as she expressed her gratitude. "Thank you so much for your effort. We have only ladies here, glad that you are here to help!"

To meet President Cha was like meeting an old acquaintance, not to mention that Zhenxiu was brought up by this graceful old woman. Yang Chen definitely did not miss the chance of expressing his utmost respect.

"It's not a problem. The least I could do is hard labor tasks. These kids don't seem to take too kindly to me haha." Yang Chen self-deprecatingly joked. "Oh, by the way, did my mom stop by recently?"

President Cha was aware that Yang Chen and Lin Ruoxi was the son and daughter-in-law of Guo Xuehua as she nodded with a bright smile. "She came by earlier. She's usually busiest on days like these, just a pit-stop before she went on to other orphanages. She even managed to inform me that Zhenxiu was about to take the college entrance examination so she couldn't visit until it's over. Madam Guo really is an attentive person."

Yang Chen was a little touched as he nodded. Soon after, he was looking around for a spot to take a break before heading home. Right at that moment, he noticed a little silhouette by the corner of his gaze as she stood by the entrance of the orphanage.

It was a little girl presumably three to four years of age, dressed in a light blue polka dot one-piece dress with her chubby little legs exposed. Her hair was as black as ink in the shape of an adorable mushroom cut, her fair and chubby little face was innocent and adorable as her bubbly eyes seemed clear as glass.

The girl just stood there by the gate, with the absence of joy as she blankly stared at Lin Ruoxi amongst the other children from afar.

Amidst the pure innocence of a child, something much deeper lurked in her gaze.

Yang Chen winced his eyes as he felt something peculiar about this child, yet he was unable to tell what was off about her. He was mesmerized by her presence, unfazed by her porcelain face, but for something he could not explain.

"President Cha, that child, is she part of the orphanage?" Yang Chen questioned the elder by his side.

President Cha turned her gaze towards his fixation and instantaneously felt a sense of affection as she proclaimed. "Oh, isn't she such a pretty little thing? I wonder which family she comes from, she looks just like a masterpiece. Well, of course, she's not from here, look at her outfit. She probably comes from a well to do family with much to spare. Maybe her parents were just passing by with her, and she was attracted by the sounds of other children."

Yang Chen nodded. As he grabbed some snacks, prepared to approach the child, an elegant woman who appeared to be her caretaker came by the little girl, held onto her hand, and took her away.

Even when she was being pulled away, the child had her gaze fixated on Lin Ruoxi.

"I guess that kid really likes Ruoxi a bunch huh, well it's no surprise at this point I guess," President Cha mentioned.

Yang Chen giggled as he thought the same. Regardless of how his assumptions go, there just isn't any reason that little girl would have any specific emotions towards Lin Ruoxi, it very much could just be his wild predictions.

That slight encounter was then almost immediately brushed off by Yang Chen as he chatted with President Cha to pass the time.

Not too far away from the orphanage was a quaint tea parlor, right there was that elegant little pixie from before that was happily hopping up a fleet of seemingly worn out wooden stairs.

"Miss Lanlan, you must be careful. Don't trip on... my gosh, my..."

The caretaker nervously followed the girl from behind, fearing for her life that the child would fall and injure herself.

The child however excitedly dashed up the stairs as her floral dress fluttered in the wind. She silently ran towards a tea table by the balcony, agilely hurled herself onto a chair, grabbed herself a cooled off cup of tea, and instantaneously started gulping down.

On the opposite corner of the table was an elegant, good-looking man, dressed in a striped polo shirt with a bead necklace on one hand and a paper fan on the other. He exuded an aura of maturity and wisdom. He gently moved the fan as he lovingly watched the girl gulp down on her tea before he gently replied, "Lanlan, you didn't bully other kids again, did you?"

The little girl by the name of Lanlan placed the teacup down as she gloomily replied, "Grandpa, there's this aunty who looks just like my mom."

The little girl was emotionless, completely unamused despite her melodious voice.

Anyone present would be astonished to hear the little girl referring to the middle-aged man as her 'grandpa', and would be amazed at the self-maintenance of this man seemingly in his thirties.

The man turned towards the caretaker who was huffing and puffing as he enquired the cause and effect of her anxiety.

The caretaker cracked a smile as she gasped for air. "Sir, Miss Lanlan saw a really pretty woman over at the orphanage playing with the kids and thought she looked just like her mother."

After he was aware of the situation, the man went silent for a moment before he flipped his paper fan and stoically explained, "Lanlan, Grandpa understands that you miss your mother. But I've said time and time again, your mother has gone to a faraway place and cannot return. As for your dad, when the time is right I'll take you to meet him. When that day comes, you will have a new father and mot—"

"Lanlan has a mummy, and Lanlan's mummy will never leave Lanlan alone!" Displeased, the child opened her pupils wide as she pouted.

The man halted his words as he lightly sighed, he reached out towards her head and stroked her hair. "Alright, alright, Lanlan's mummy will surely come back. It's Grandpa's fault this time."

Lanlan puffed up her cheeks as she appeared to have forgiven him, but was still unamused as she lifted her chubby hands and went straight for a green bean cake, before immediately binging on it.

As he watched upon her chubby face as she was munching down on the cake, he felt a little apologetic towards her as he gently questioned, "Lanlan, we're going to stay here in Zhonghai from now on. How are you liking it?"

Lanlan blinked as she tried to grasp the situation, before she whispered, "Grandpa, you said you were going to take me to meet Daddy. Now that we're staying here, does this mean Daddy is here?"

The man was caught off-guard as he gave a bitter smile. "Oh, you little munchkin."

"Then why won't you take me to see Daddy?" The child tilted her head coyly.

The man appeared rather frustrated as he tapped on his head with the now folded paper fan. "Oh Lanlan, Grandpa will do what's best for you and your dad too. That means that there will be some waiting to do on your part, alright?"

Lanlan blankly stared at him, before she calmly nodded her head.

The caretaker by their side witnessed her obedience and got choked up from her emotions as she wiped her tears.

After a little more than half an hour, Yang Chen and Lin Ruoxi bid farewell to President Cha as they left the orphanage. In a blink of an eye it was already dusk, and they were aware that the elders were waiting at home for dinner to commence.

Yang Chen subconsciously opened the car door on the passenger side to allow Lin Ruoxi to enter first. As he was moving towards his side of the car, a thought sparked in his head.

Yang Chen lifted his head and stared across the far end of the street, which was where the tea parlor was located, which prompted him to frown from thought.

"What happened? Did you meet an acquaintance?" Lin Ruoxi asked with much curiosity.

As he came back to his senses, Yang Chen cracked a smile and replied, "Nope, just trying out my new stoic look."

"Pfft. Let's go, Mom's probably waiting for us back home," Lin Ruoxi responded as she rolled her eyes at him.

Yang Chen teasingly replied, "You might as well just say that you want to continue snacking on the glutinous rice balls as your main reason."

Lin Ruoxi didn't bother to reply as she turned towards the window. Despite her looking unamused, her ears had gotten visibly red, exposing her true intentions...

Chapter 733 - The Enraged Wife

The Enraged Wife

As June rolled around, so did the rain.

The scenery that it brought was surely a sight to behold, but for those who preferred the dry weather, it was not a welcome change.

Fortunately, it brought about a refreshing change in weather from the immense heat just weeks before.

On a business street over at Zhonghai, the air was filled with the scent of oil and smoke as a result of the savory dishes served by the local eateries. The huge neon signs lit up the street, stretching as far as the eye can see.

Rush hour soon commenced, and amongst the crowd was a young man in a short-sleeved shirt paired with trousers of two-thirds length, looking through modest eateries one by one. He arrived at a modest Szechuan eatery, which led him to pause for a few moments before finally deciding to enter.

It was naturally Yang Chen's intention to stop by after work to talk to Ma Guifang about Mo Qianni's situation.

Yang Chen was confident that regardless of how mad Ma Guifang was back then, time could have only watered down her anger. He believed it was just a matter of time before she gave in.

As he stepped foot into the eatery, Madam Xiang that had gotten noticeably more plump than the last time they met was right at the counter busy tapping onto a calculator, understandably tabulating checks and balances. She was visibly excited by Yang Chen's surprise visit. "Oh, Yang Chen, you came! I bet you're looking for Guifang right?"

Yang Chen gave his salutations before he continued with a smile. "Madam Xiang, have you seen my mother-in-law then?" Yang Chen noticed that his target was nowhere in sight.

"Oh she's just busy helping out the kitchen, I'll go get her." Madam Xiang put down the calculator and was about to make her way into the kitchen, before Yang Chen halted her. "It's alright, I'll go, don't worry about it."

Madam Xiang understood his intentions as she agreed without opposition.

Yang Chen was slightly uneasy but nonetheless went into the kitchen with a smile on his face. He instantly picked up a pungent combination of vegetables with raw meats. It was nothing he couldn't handle however. His focus went straight to the one person busy slicing vegetables at the innermost corner of the kitchen. "Mother."

Ma Guifang at the time was busy cutting up some vegetables. She turned to look, only to realize that it was Yang Chen, which led to her reply filled with conflicted emotions. "Why are you here?"

"Hehe, nothing much. I just thought the sudden change in weather might've affected your health so I thought to stop by and pay you a visit," Yang Chen replied with a bit of sweet talk.

"I'm fine, you can go now." Ma Guifang brushed it off as she proceeded with cutting vegetables.

Yang Chen clearly had no intention to leave just like that as he licked his lips before he mentioned, "Erm... about that, I need to talk about Qianni."

"There's nothing to talk about between us. Everything that I need to say was said. I even brought myself to apologize to Boss Lin." Ma Guifang was quick to emphasize.

Yang Chen forced a smile as he replied, "How can it end like that? Regardless of your reasons, I can't just leave Qianni, not like that. If I abandon her as a result of your disapproval, then I would have disgraced her decision to choose me in the first place! I want to make it clear to you, Mother, that I can convince you that I will never mistreat Qianni."

Ma Guifang rebuked. "Never mistreat her you say? You have a wife for god's sake! Unless you divorce Boss Lin, there is no chance that I would let you take my daughter's hand! I will never have her as the third wheel in a relationship, no matter how much fame and fortune you can give her. It will never happen under my watch!"

Yang Chen was stupefied to witness Ma Guifang's resolution towards this matter. He tacklessly scratched on the back of his neck before producing an awkward chuckle. "Mother, think about it. Your

insistence on this matter would only put all of us in a bad position don't you think? It wouldn't hurt if you just hold your horses and try observing through a period of time, would it?"

"I'm telling you one last time Yang Chen, do not call me 'Mother' ever again! I don't have a son-in-law and you will never be one!" Ma Guifang glared at him. "I'm drawing the line there for both your sakes! I don't care how you see this, or how messed up your life is, but I want the best for my daughter. This is not the best for her! Is that clear enough for you?"

"Alright, let's not talk about this for now." Yang Chen was truly exhibiting the extent of his thick-skinned prowess as he walked towards Ma Guifang's back as he chuckled, "Mother, I guess your back must be tired from all that work, why don't I—"

"Don't touch me!"

Ma Guifang taunted before she held onto her cutting knife and pointed it straight at Yang Chen's nose!

"Yang Chen! I'm warning you one last time, don't even try to change my mind. I will bet my life to make sure my daughter will never be a third wheeler! If you push me anymore I would even marry her off to some beggar on the streets!"

Yang Chen was dumbfounded. Facing Ma Guifang that was filled with rage, he felt himself getting weaker as he stood.

This is the mother of his lover, and despite all his persuasions, he understood clearly that all she was doing was for her daughter to be in a legitimate marriage, to never have to share her love with someone else.

As a result, regardless of her furious and powerful rants, Yang Chen could not bear to argue, understanding that he was the one at fault.

Ma Guifang was not An Zaihuan, nor Ning Guangyao. She was best described as a normal villager. Some might even argue that she was illiterate.

But despite her insignificant grand scheme of things, Yang Chen had never dared infuriate her or go behind her back.

A senior should be respected, not because of their age, or their knowledge and experience, but because of their selflessness towards the younger generations.

In Yang Chen's eyes, a woman of her caliber was one he held in the highest regards.

Yang Chen was frustrated but he made sure it was concealed within as he earnestly pleaded, "I'm not going to give up. I understand that you're still mad today, and that's okay. I'll come back another day. Your daughter is not one to make rash decisions on matters like this. Don't you trust her judgment?"

Yang Chen's strategy was simple. *My presence might infuriate you today, tomorrow, or even the day after. But if I continue to keep this up, I'm sure one day I would definitely win your approval!*

Ma Guifang was red as a tomato, but nonetheless kept her silence.

Right at this moment, over at the main hall of the eatery, a high-pitched voice echoed throughout the place. "Ma Guifang! Come out right now!"

Yang Chen was about to leave the kitchen before, but was now dumbfounded by the sheer animosity of the voice!

Ma Guifang turned pale as she placed the cutting knife down the chopping board. She wiped her hands on the apron and after a moment of thought, went out for a look.

Yang Chen followed closely behind, cautious at the potential ramifications of the situation. This person might be here to pick a bone with his mother-in-law, which could also be the perfect opportunity for him to prove his worth.

As they approached the front of the eatery, a plump woman, her hands on her waist, stood there with enlarged eyes and flared nostrils. Suffice to say, she was extremely furious about something.

Madam Xiang by the sidelines was in manic, seemingly terrified of this woman before her eyes as she could be seen choking on her own words.

Behind the menacing woman was a bald middle-aged man, comparatively skinnier, trying to calm the raging woman down. "What are you doing? Let's go back now, don't bring about more trouble to Xiang and her restaurant anymore alright? These are all our neighbors for god's sake."

The woman sneered as she glared at her husband, and upon seeing Ma Guifang's appearance, started her fiery rant. "Ma Guifang, well aren't you a sight to behold!"

Ma Guifang was seen with a warm smile as she too went up to that woman as she patiently asked, "Madam Zhou, what do you mean by that may I ask?"

"Huh?! How dare you ask me what all this means?"

And as Madam Zhou broke into laughter, she abruptly lifted her hand and went straight for a tight slap on Ma Guifang's cheek!

SMACK!

A loud slap rang out as one side of Ma Guifang's face was soon covered in a red print. She held onto it as she zoned out, almost as if that smack left her out of focus.

Yang Chen was not expecting the sudden turn of events. It was an act that had caught him completely off-guard, leaving him to deal with the aftermath. He was instantly fueled with rage!

How could someone assault his mother-in-law to his face? If Mo Qianni caught wind of this incident, she'd hate him to no end!

If this had happened behind closed doors, Yang Chen would've already returned the favor two-fold. But he managed to keep his temper in check as he went before Ma Guifang and stared the hostile lady dead in the eye. "You better have a good reason for hitting my mother-in-law, or I'll lay waste on that nasty looking face of yours!"

Yang Chen's interference immediately made the enraged wife reconsider her actions. But she bounced back soon after and sneered, "Oh, I see. Ma Guifang's son-in-law is here today too huh? What? If you want to stand up for her, here's your chance!"

Chapter 734: Drama At The Door

This was Yang Chen's first time meeting an angry suburban woman. He was clueless as to how he should react.

"You had it coming..."

Yang Chen was about to make a move but Ma Guifang shouted from behind, "Yang Chen! Move!"

She pulled Yang Chen away angrily, scolding him. "This is none of your business! Go home! When did I become your mother-in-law? We're not even related!"

Yang Chen was puzzled at what had just happened. A woman was hurting her and she was angry at him?

"Mother, how can you still stop me when she's acting like this?!" demanded Yang Chen, so furious his voice shook.

The other woman huffed. "So this worthless toenail isn't even a son-in-law. Is he chasing your daughter? Oh well, I guess the slut doesn't fall too far from the tree."

Yang Chen was about to act when Ma Guifang stopped him again. She turned, then said solemnly, "Madam Zhou, I think you might've made a mistake regarding his identity. But could you please leave my daughter out of this?"

Yang Chen was going crazy watching their back and forth. Since when did he halt and heed the words of a lady like Ma Guifang? But times had changed and so did he. He couldn't be too unreasonable, nor could he cause too much drama. The only thing he could do was wait and see.

"Yeah, honey, it's really not what you think..." added the old man.

"Shut up!" Madam Zhou frowned. "You still think it's a joke?! Ever since this bitch started working here, you've been coming here all the time to give her onions, garlic, tofu, and if she didn't come to our shop to ask for something, you'd worry if she was sick! I've been your wife for more than a decade. Why haven't you ever asked if I am well?!"

Mr Zhou's face reddened. Exasperated, he then explained, "Honey, it's not like that. Guifang came here alone all the way from Sichuan, and she doesn't have a husband to care for her. I was just trying to help. Why have you jumped to such extreme conclusions?"

"Doesn't she have a daughter? What makes you think she needs your help?!" Madam Zhou's mouth curled. "She's a single woman without men around her, and so much prettier than a fat old lady like me. Do you think I don't know what you're thinking? I've ignored all the times you'd bring her little plates of vegetables. But today was enough. I saw you take out a whole plate of pork ribs for her! I'm not even dead and you're already trying to court other women!"

"I... Sigh, the weather has been terrible lately. Guifang didn't look too well, so I thought she'd feel better with some soup. I... I really didn't..." stuttered Mr Zhou awkwardly.

Aunt Xiang quickly added, "Madam Zhou, I think you've made a mistake. Guifang had to borrow some vegetables because we didn't have enough here. What about this, I'll go next time. Or I'll get my husband to go. What do you think? Guifang isn't what you think she is..."

"Xiang, we've known each other for so many years. Don't you lie to me like that," exclaimed Madam Zhou in fury. "Ask yourselves, ever since Ma Guifang started working in this street, how many stupid old men from the shops have already fancied her?! If she truly never meant it, why do so many people still talk about her? Would you believe it if I said people from the other shops would still come to visit even if you didn't let her out of this shop?!"

Aunt Xiang was speechless. She turned stiffly to look at Ma Guifang.

It was obvious people had been gossiping about Ma Guifang for quite a while now. Everyone secretly knew why Aunt Xiang's shop had suddenly become so popular.

Ma Guifang paled. Her eyes brimmed with tears, but she would never let them fall. It was even sadder to watch her like this.

Yang Chen suddenly remembered something...

The last time he visited Ma Guifang, she was coincidentally borrowing vegetables from the shop next door. He did think Ma Guifang looked upset when she returned, but he didn't ask.

The shop owner she borrowed from was somebody named Zhou...

It looked like Ma Guifang had already suffered abuse the last time she visited, hence her awful mood.

However, she had always been a strong woman and was very appreciative of this chance to work. She probably never brought this up or Mo Qianni would never let her work here.

Ma Guifang was Mo Qianni's mother. One could already imagine how beautiful she was when she was younger. Although she'd been through a lot of suffering, with deep wrinkles around her eyes, she still retained the grace of a middle-aged woman. It was easy to understand why she was so attractive to these older men.

She took a deep breath. Forcing a smile, she said, "Madam Zhou, I do not claim to be a pure person, but I will not stoop so low as to break someone else's marriage. Let me make this clear, there is nothing between me and Mr Zhou. Our customers have received pork ribs from his shop in the past. I'm not from here and I might not be educated, but I only want to earn a little so I wouldn't have to rely on my daughter. If you really do not wish to see me, I'll look for a job somewhere else. What do you think?"

When Madam Zhou heard how gently Ma Guifang spoke to her, she couldn't possibly stay upset anymore. She glared coldly, then said, "You said it yourself. We'll put this matter aside. It's up to you if you want to change your job. I won't make a big deal out of this because I don't want to embarrass Xiang here. However, Ma Guifang, let me remind you that there are many women on this street who share similar opinions too. Avoid borrowing things from our shop as much as possible!"

Ma Guifang nodded gratefully. "I know, thank you Madam Zhou. I'll be more careful."

Madam Zhou had calmed down by now. She left dragging Mr Zhou behind her. He was so scared he didn't even look at Ma Guifang. It was a pitiful sight.

When the couple left, Aunt Xiang sighed in relief. She said to Ma Guifang sadly, “Guifang, I’m so sorry for what just happened. Madam Zhou has no filter. She hit you because she was angry. She’s not evil or anything. Honestly, she’s much better than some of those who gossip behind your back.”

Ma Guifang smiled. “It’s fine, it’s not like I can’t take it. I’ve survived so many hardships in the past. Don’t worry.”

Aunt Xiang shook her head and sighed, turning around to continue doing the restaurant’s accounts.

Ma Guifang turned around and glanced at Yang Chen. “Come with me.”

Yang Chen followed her, furious. He wanted to hit Madam Zhou but he was also afraid of Ma Guifang so he couldn’t do anything.

It was when they’d reached a quiet piece of land behind the kitchen when Ma Guifang stopped to ask, “What? You look even worse than me, and I was the one who got slapped.”

Yang Chen’s jaw tightened as he avoided Ma Guifang’s gaze. Of course, he was upset. He was even contemplating going over to slap Madam Zhou later. Shout all you want, but why did you have to hit my mother-in-law? he thought.

Yang Chen’s jaw dropped, “You mean there are other people here who hit you?”

Ma Guifang sighed. Rubbing her cheek, she said, “Ever since my first husband, Qianni’s father, died, I was married to Zhang Fugui. During those times, I was beaten up a few times by the women in the village. One slap is nothing. Zhang Fugui was a gambler, he spent his time causing trouble in the streets so he was rarely home. I was alone in the village, I couldn’t avoid coming into contact with some of the villagers. They always thought I was coming for their husbands, and they were all uneducated so throwing punches was very normal.”

“How could they do this to you...” Yang Chen clenched his fist, his heart aching.

How much compassion did this lady have, to laugh at her past like this?

Chapter 735 Let Go

“Mom.” Yang Chen didn’t care if Ma Guifang didn’t like him calling her that. He could barely remain calm at this moment. “Nobody should ever hit you for whatever reason. If anyone touches you, I’ll break their bones!”

Ma Guifang laughed gently. “Sigh, I knew you’d be angry, my child. That’s why I brought you here to listen to my side of the story.”

Yang Chen exclaimed, indignant, “You mean I’m supposed to just stand by and do nothing while people hit you for the most absurd reasons?”

“How would taking revenge help? You can hit one person. But that would only stop their mouths. What makes you so sure that you can silence everyone? And even if you could, you will never be able to change their train of thought.”

Ma Guifang's face darkened. "Yang Chen, let me tell you this. You can never control what other people think. Madam Zhou accused me, shouted at me, and even hit me. That made sense to her. To her, it was the right thing to do. Although my heart aches, and I feel wronged, I know it's just how it is."

"Mom, why do you just accept this? Why don't you fight back?" Yang Chen shook his head. He didn't understand.

Ma Guifang fell silent, then said very slowly, "Because, I am a lonely widow without a man."

He forgot to breathe. Yang Chen stared at the woman in shock, her words breaking his heart like a million stones.

"It's true. Single women attract trouble. Whether or not I live in the village or in the city, the same trouble follows me everywhere I go. As long as I am a widow without a man I call a 'husband', they will look at me weirdly." She then continued with a low voice, "I have fought back in the past. I wanted desperately to prove that I was an innocent person but as long as I was without a man, it had proven to be futile. Alternatively, I could wait until I'm too old to be wanted. Then, they might trust me."

Yang Chen's nose ran. The woman before him had hidden so much pain in her heart. Her path had been rough, and her troubles seemed endless.

"Yang Chen, now, do you understand why I can never let my daughter be with you?" asked Ma Guifang emotionally.

Yang Chen's heart shuddered. He couldn't say a word.

Her eyes were filled with grief and pity. She continued, "The most important person in my life is my daughter. I know exactly what I've been through. If a woman doesn't have a beautiful marriage or an honest husband, her life would be ruined. The whispers down the street and the odd stares would be too painful for her to bear!

"I can barely see the light at the end of the tunnel, and I have way too many scars. How can I, in my right mind, send my daughter down the exact same path I led?"

"She won't!" Yang Chen quickly shook his head, "I won't let any harm come to Qianni, Mom..."

"Stop talking right now!" interrupted Ma Guifang. "You still don't understand a single word I said! Perhaps you think it's because you have the riches and power to protect Mo Qianni. However, do you think riches and all these would mean happiness?"

"You're both still very young. Have you ever thought what would happen when you're both in your thirties? What would people say if she was still not married and without a child? Or if she did have a child but she wasn't married, what would happen to the child? How would people treat my daughter? How would the other kids treat Qianni's child?"

"Young couples in love like you might not think of these, but as a mother, I have lived through and seen all this happen in my life.

"Yang Chen, don't you see it yet? The prettier the woman, the more gossip she would attract if she doesn't have an honest husband by her side when she gets older.

“Therefore, if Qianni can’t be a legal wife on paper, then you should stop pursuing her. There’ll be a few years of pain at most but this too shall pass. A few years of suffering is better than a lifetime of pain!”

Her emotional words shook Yang Chen to his core. He was utterly speechless.

Ma Guifang finally couldn’t hold her tears back anymore. Rubbing her tears, she smiled sadly and whispered, “Yang Chen, I’ve always known you were a good one or I wouldn’t have asked your mother to meet us both. Perhaps it’s because you’ve been raised in a huge clan, and you’re no ordinary person either. This might seem like a small issue to you.

“However, our Qianni is just a regular girl. No matter how strong she is, she’s still a girl. She can’t stay in your orbit forever, she needs to have her own life, her own friends and career. She needs to be out in the real world. She won’t be able to hide from everyone forever.

“You both might not mind now, but it doesn’t mean your children won’t. Be honest with yourself. Would you want her to face so much pain, just for her to greet you at the end of a long day?”

It had never occurred to Yang Chen. Upon closer inspection, perhaps he had been avoiding the topic altogether.

Did he make a mistake? Was letting Qianni go the best option for her future?

Looking at the tearful Ma Guifang, Yang Chen wasn’t so sure anymore.

Ma Guifang sighed deeply, then wiped her eyes dry. “I know you’ll be sad for a while, but it’s for the best. Do you think the Lin clan would tolerate another woman? I may be uneducated, but I am not as dumb to think such a capable woman who runs a huge company would take this well. Qianni is working under her too, so conflict is bound to happen. For the sake of your family’s happiness, you should learn how to let go.”

“Let go?” Yang Chen laughed bitterly, “Letting go is harder than pursuing a person.”

She smiled, then patted his shoulder. “Think about it. I’ll never change my mind because I am still a foreigner here. I will never gamble with my daughter’s life. I hope you’ll understand.”

Ma Guifang immediately started to prepare dishes for the night, and Yang Chen walked out of the restaurant.

The sky was darkening, and the rain had stopped.

Yang Chen walked alone on the streets. Street lamps shone and the crowds were loud but his mind was silent.

After walking a while, Yang Chen still couldn’t sort out his emotions. He was about to walk to his car when he stopped at a turn into a narrow alley.

It was filled with rotting trash. Most of which a week old or more by his guess.

A female beggar, wrapped in a carpet, squatted in a corner. She was munching on a very dirty bun.

The beggar’s messy hair was dripping and her shoes were muddy. She looked like the type who’d be chased out by shopkeepers.

Yang Chen frowned. Although the beggar was filthy, he could still recognize her from her features.

She also noticed someone was blocking the light at the end of the alley, so she raised her head slowly. Through her hair, she recognized Yang Chen and she panicked.

“You... Why are you...” Her hand shook, dropping the bun.

Yang Chen didn’t pity her the least. This woman deserved to be reduced to this position. Her heartless cruelty had almost killed Lin Ruoxi and himself, so it was only right she had to endure such suffering.

Yang Chen was about to ignore her and leave, but he saw a cripple walking towards himself. He was drenched. He looked at Yang Chen, puzzled, then immediately turned into the alley.

Squatting in front of Luo Cuishan, he took a few coins out of a tattered pouch. The cripple snickered, saying, “Looks like we’ll have breakfast tomorrow! I thought the rain would hamper the begging, but I didn’t expect to get even more.”

Luo Cuishan didn’t respond. Cripple realized Luo Cuishan was getting emotional. Her eyes filled with rage and suppressed fear as if she didn’t dare to look at the stranger standing at the end of the alley...

Chapter 736 No Reason

Cripple thought carefully about the situation while looking suspiciously at Yang Chen. Then, he looked up angrily and yelled, “Hey, what are you looking at?! Haven’t you seen people like us before?! I’ll beat you up if you stare for one more second!”

He even waved his pouch threateningly at Yang Chen!

Yang Chen turned to look at Cripple. “So you’re the reason she’s still alive.”

Cripple huffed, “Why do you care?”

“Of course I do.” Yang Chen studied Cripple from head to toe, then continued, “Because I was the one who made her like this.”

Cripple felt uncomfortable as if the man’s gaze pierced through his soul.

“Wha—what do you mean?” He was starting to get worried but showed no fear on his face.

Yang Chen shrugged. “I wanted this woman to hit rock bottom. But you feeding her is quite the opposite, don’t you think?”

Luo Cuishan was shaking now, venomous hate festering in the depths of her heart out of desperation and bitterness. She still didn’t dare to look at Yang Chen, because the horrors this man had brought were far from anything she could imagine!

Cripple eyed the shaking woman. His eyes flashed in rage. He then clenched his jaw and puffed his chest before saying, “So what?! I like giving her food! What are you going to do about it?! You can break my good leg and I’ll still crawl to beg for food, I might even roll!”

As Cripple shouted, he looked like a sickly wolf yapping at a majestic lion, refusing to back down!

Luo Cuishan finally looked up, teary-eyed, to see the man who couldn’t even lift a leg stand up for her.

Yang Chen was now very amused. He grinned and asked, "Who is she to you? Why are you protecting her?"

Cripple replied, indignant, "Because I can! No reason!"

"You like her?" asked Yang Chen mischievously.

Cripple's expression froze. Stiffly, he asked, "And what about it?"

Yang Chen understood now. He nodded and replied, "I understand... Alright, I'll leave but please heed my warning. You've made steps that you will never be able to retrace. After all, you only have one leg."

Cripple's heart shuddered. "Be careful? Of her? I gave her food and water, you think she'd harm me? Look at you, treating a woman like this! I might not be a good person, but at least I'm not as cruel as you!"

Yang Chen pursed his lips, smirking. "I never said you need to be careful of her." He pointed at his own nose. "You need to be careful, of me."

Cripple gulped, then laughed, "You think you can scare me?"

"We'll see." Yang Chen turned around. As he walked, he warned, "I just want to say, I don't just scare people..."

After watching Yang Chen leave, Luo Cuishan slowly looked up at the young homeless man. He was at least twenty years younger than herself. "Why are you doing this?"

"What?" Cripple was puzzled.

"Why did you feed me, give me water, and even stand up for me?" Her eyes searched for an answer behind strands of dirty hair.

Cripple looked away. "Why does it matter? I just wanted to."

"Are you pitying me?" She snorted coldly. "I don't need your pity."

"Pity? Haha..." Cripple laughed, "I am a beggar and a cripple. If anything, you should pity me. You still have both hands and feet with you, why would I care?"

She was stunned.

He continued, "Why are you so suspicious? I just wanted to do something nice, that's it! If you think it's annoying, just tell me!"

When he finished, he looked frustrated. He limped out of the alley without turning back, as if he couldn't stand to spend another minute with Luo Cuishan.

She was sat, stunned for a moment. Then, she wiped away two streams of tears she didn't know were there.

She looked down at the bun she dropped on the ground, then picked it up carefully. She swept some dirt off then, with shaking hands, brought the bun to her mouth.

Grey clouds gathered above the city of Zhonghai. The rain which was pouring down didn't seem to let up.

During Yang Chen's drive home, he did not give too much thought about Luo Cuishan and Cripple. To kill or not to kill? For a character like Cripple, it wouldn't make much difference. He might attract even more trouble being alive. Yang Chen felt like Ning Guangyao would be uncomfortable if he knew Luo Cuishan was living like this. Yang Chen didn't like him either. He was a father who didn't even want his daughter.

Yang Chen's mind was replaying little moments he once shared with Mo Qianni. Her kindness, her resilience, her focus, and her determination were all etched deeply into his mind.

Let go? How could he?

However, Ma Guifang's words worried him. Could he really provide her the life she deserved?

Legally, it shouldn't be too difficult to make her his wife. They only had to change their nationalities on paper. However, how would people treat her?

Yang Chen didn't think it would be easy to bring his women to another country either. Their family ties and lifestyle would be obstacles. The women didn't live for him either, they had their own lives.

When he thought of how Ma Guifang was bullied, and couldn't even stand up for herself, his heart ached. He felt true fear that one day Mo Qianni would be treated the same.

The deeper the love, the more painful it is when problems arise.

Soon, he arrived home. Yang Chen opened the door to the smell of cooked food. He was taking off his shirt when Lin Ruoxi, wearing a light-blue spaghetti-strap dress and a pink cartoon apron, slowly brought a huge pot out.

Zhenxiu had bought that apron one day after school, saying it was a present for Lin Ruoxi. Although she kept it, she didn't dare to wear it. However, it looked like she was in a very good mood recently. Thus, ignoring the weird looks from Yang Chen and Zhenxiu, she wore this bright apron cheerfully.

"Let me." Yang Chen took the pot from his wife's hands, placing it firmly on the table.

She pouted. "It's so hot, didn't you feel anything?"

Yang Chen smiled. "Then darling, do you want to cool them down?" He brought his hands to her lips.

Lin Ruoxi avoided him as her face started to turn red. "You just got home and you're already causing trouble. Wash your hands, let's eat."

Zhenxiu came down the steps. She had a few days till her college entrance exams, and she didn't have to go to school anymore. She wanted to rest a little before going to battle.

The meals at home had been huge feasts lately. Zhenxiu was fed so well she was slowly gaining weight.

The family ate dinner happily. Zhenxiu told a few jokes, while Yang Chen added to her stories. He even slipped in a few innuendos in front of the elders, causing Lin Ruoxi to kick him under the table!

Yang Chen was enjoying the increasing closeness he felt with Lin Ruoxi. Although they weren't sharing a room, which was Yang Chen's idea, they would start sleeping together after the wedding. Being the man of the house, he couldn't change his mind.

However, he couldn't help but imagine how dinner looked like at Mo Qianni's house. Did she eat with Rose and Ma Guifang? Was it just the three of them?

In his own future, would he ever have Mo Qianni by his side, sharing a warm dinner with the family?

Yang Chen grew sadder thinking of all the conflicts. He was too selfish. He still felt lonely although he had so many women around him. It didn't seem to make a difference if the person he loved had him by her side or not.

He'd always taken other women's purity and their youth, but he felt like he had nothing to give them. It was like this with Mo Qianni, with Rose, An Xin, Liu Mingyu. How could anything physical fill the hole in his heart?

After dinner, Yang Chen went upstairs alone after saying he wanted to watch the soccer match. The four women downstairs were confused as the match hadn't even started yet!

As he entered the room, he walked to the balcony. Looking up at the silent night sky, he did nothing.

Soon, someone knocked on the door. It was Guo Xuehua.

Seeing her son standing solemnly on the balcony, Guo Xuehua sighed. She walked up to him. "I could see something was troubling you at dinner. Do you mind telling your mother about it?"

"You saw right through me."

"A mother doesn't use her eyes to look at her child, she uses her heart," said Guo Xuehua, rolling her eyes.

He nodded. "Your heart..."

Yang Chen didn't try to hide his troubles either. He told her everything that happened with Ma Guifang. When he finished, he rubbed his temples, "Mom, I'm a mess. I don't know what to do, have I really been harming Qianni?"

Guo Xuehua's eyes blurred. "Guifang hasn't had it easy. I can understand why she's so sensitive to you being with Qianni. However, if we're talking about feelings, even as a mother, I cannot make decisions for you. Yang Chen, from a woman's perspective, if you don't think this through, how could you bring a bright future as an honest husband, to the kid? Like what Guifang said, she'd rather you suffer for a while, then let her child suffer a lifetime."

Yang Chen fell silent. Although he had expected it, he was still disappointed when Guo Xuehua said it.

"Qianni... is not like the rest of us," Guo Xuehua advised patiently. "She's not like Rose, who is very independent and she couldn't care less about society. And that An Xin girl was from a rich clan too, so she has an open-minded personality. She doesn't need to care about the rules either. For Qianni... she's just a regular girl from a regular family. She will care about what people think, about what is right in

society's eyes. To be your lover, perhaps An Xin and Rose wouldn't mind, but it wouldn't be the same with Qianni."

Chapter 737 - My Name

My Name

After listening to Guo Xuehua's patient explanation, Yang Chen slowly calmed down.

It was true. Among the women by his side, Mo Qianni was the most regular of them all. If their relationship continued, in the long run, she would be hit the hardest.

Liu Mingyu was about to be the lady boss of the Green Dragon Society, managing the society's business affairs. Rose and An Xin were among the elites of society, the commoners would never touch them. It was the same for Tang Wan and the Cai sisters too. Even if he wasn't there, they might not marry, or marry someone just to join houses. They did not need to consider the social norms and values.

While Yang Chen struggled internally, on the other side of the wall in the other bungalow, Rose was dragging Mo Qianni, who'd just finished her dinner, into her room.

Both girls were only wearing their favorite light nightgowns, fresh from the shower, smelling like soap. They were tall and full and all in all very attractive.

Mo Qianni was pressed against a desk in the bedroom by Rose, facing a list of documents on an open laptop. She pouted, clearly upset. "Rose, please let me go. I've had a long day, why do I still have to help you now?"

Rose smiled and then bit her best friend's earlobe gently.

"Ouch!" Mo Qianni exclaimed before moving her face away, "What are you doing?!"

"Qianni, just help me, please! You know I've never been to university, and you've learned finance. You can even manage so much of Yu Lei's assets. It wouldn't take you too long to deal with this report.? I'll make sure you sleep well tonight if you help me." Rose's eyes shone as she smirked mischievously.

Mo Qianni was almost crying at this point. "This is a threat! I don't need your company tonight. Promise me, if I finish this, you won't disturb me tonight!"

"So is that a yes?" asked Rose, delighted as her plan had worked.

Mo Qianni frustratedly said, "It's so easy for you to bully me. Then again, the last time you messed around under my covers, my mother found out and she punished me!"

Rose didn't understand, her beautiful eyes filled with questions. "Why did Aunt Ma punish you? I'm not a man, can't I play with my best friend?"

"Stop it! You know my mother is still very conservative. It would've been fine if it was just sleeping. But don't you think it was starting to cross the line when you went under my dress?" Mo Qianni glared at her.

Rose stuck out her tongue, then shook Mo Qianni's arm coaxingly. She gave in.

Both girls had lived together for a while now, so they'd gotten as close as sisters. Since Ma Guifang's arrival, she was like Rose's godmother, and the three were closer than ever. However, they rarely talked about Yang Chen in case it triggered Ma Guifang.

When Mo Qianni was hard at work, again, someone knocked on her door. She heard Ma Guifang ask, "My dear, are you in Rose's room?"

Mo Qianni got up immediately. "Yes, Mom. Do you need anything?"

"I want to talk to you," said Ma Guifang.

Mo Qianni ran out immediately, without even looking back. Rose stood alone facing the computer in frustration.

After following her mother downstairs, Mo Qianni asked curiously, "Mom, is everything alright? You look very serious."

Ma Guifang took a long look at her daughter, then asked gently, "Have you been listening to my advice?"

Mo Qianni averted her eyes. She understood that her mother was asking if she had contacted Yang Chen lately.

Before the incident at Yu Lei, in the heat of romance, both of them had vowed to stay together for the rest of their lives. She felt guilty. She half-stuttered to make out a grunt, not daring to confirm nor deny.

Ma Guifang's gaze turned cold. "Hmph! I knew you wouldn't listen and be a good girl! Such an ungrateful child!"

Mo Qianni teared up and whined, "Mom... we only met for a meal..."

"What, you mean you would've done more than that?!" Ma Guifang's breath was labored. After a while, she finally continued, "Today, the little brat Yang Chen, visited me."

Mo Qianni's heart shuddered. A little afraid, but even more curious, she asked, "He... What did he say?"

"Hmph, what else? He didn't want me to come between you both, to let you get all up in each other's faces." Ma Guifang frowned.

"Then Mom, you..."

"Of course I didn't agree!" Ma Guifang hit the table. "My dear, I have already made it very clear to him today, you being with him will only have a painful ending. You're still young, but a few more years down the road and it would be irreversible. I convinced him today, I think he would seriously consider breaking up with you. You are not to see him, do not let him change his mind!"

"Mom!"

Mo Qianni shot up, tearful and desperate. "How could you?!"

If Ma Guifang had successfully convinced Yang Chen to consider breaking up, Mo Qianni didn't want to know what horrible things she must have said. She couldn't control herself, so she shot up and shouted.

“What do you mean how could I? I have every right to do so!” declared Ma Guifang. “You are my daughter. It is my job to protect and give only the best to you. As a mother, I do everything for your own good. Can’t you see what I am doing here?! No matter how good Yang Chen is, he cannot be loyal and be your one and only. As a woman, you don’t have to marry the richest man, but you need the man who makes you the happiest!”

Mo Qianni paled, taking a step back. Her leg hit the chair. “I know. Ever since the second I decided to love him, I have never thought about how much he could give me. I want him, not happiness.”

“You...” Ma Guifang was so furious she couldn’t speak. As if her heart was bleeding, she asked, “My child, how can you be so naive?!”

“I love you Mom, but feelings go beyond anything I have ever faced up till now. I will eventually have to make my own decisions. Unless he personally says he wants to leave me, I will never give up.” Mo Qianni wiped her tears, looking like she’d made a decision. She turned to walk upstairs.

Ma Guifang sat on her chair, deflated. Tears flowed as she watched her daughter turn her back.

Back in her room, Mo Qianni let out a long sigh, calming the fire in her beating heart. When she was calm enough, she took her phone from the table. After a moment of hesitation, she dialed Yang Chen’s number.

At this point, Yang Chen was sitting on his bed with a laptop in his lap. He was browsing through world news to kill time, pushing all thoughts out of his head.

Suddenly, his phone on the nightstand vibrated. Upon seeing it was Mo Qianni, his brows furrowed.

In the past, he would’ve picked up immediately. Now, he was afraid.

After almost twenty seconds, Yang Chen finally answered. Forcing a smile, he joked, “You must be pretty free to be able to call me.”

Yang Chen immediately scolded himself for being stupid. It was after working hours, of course she was free!

Mo Qianni was sitting on her bed, pulling the sheets up. She could feel the difference in Yang Chen’s tone. It was a little more foreign, a little further, like he was distracted.

He... Was he really considering it?? she thought.

Mo Qianni pulled her thoughts away from the negativity, forcing herself to say, “What? Can’t I just call? Haven’t you missed me?”

“Heh...” he laughed a little, “Of course... I was a little surprised, that is all.”

She pursed her lips, falling silent for a moment. “I... heard from Mom that you visited her today.”

“Yeah,” came the reply in a low voice.

“Don’t take it to heart, I’ll be fine. I really am. She is just too worried about me, and she isn’t very familiar with your situation. I think everything will get better with time...” she blurted nervously.

However, Yang Chen could only feel her desperation to comfort herself. Everything felt increasingly wrong, and he felt increasingly guilty.

While he was thinking of something to say, a black pirate symbol popped up on the bottom left of his screen. It was a video call request...

He frowned. What was so important for Makedon to personally call and disturb his rest?

Yang Chen didn't believe his own subordinates wouldn't know how to consider the time difference.

"Qianni, I have something to do. I have to go." Yang Chen still didn't know what to say, so he could only end the call hurriedly to accept the video call.

Mo Qianni sat all alone in the room, her face paled as she heard him hang up.

"He... called me Qianni... My name..." Mo Qianni muttered to herself, then smiled sadly. Tears flowed down her cheeks.

On the other side, Yang Chen didn't have time to think about Mo Qianni. After accepting the video call, he saw a bald Makedon with a complicated expression on his face. "Your Majesty Pluto, were you too bored after not killing anyone for two years? Why did you destroy the American fleet entirely?"

Chapter 738 - My Motto

My Motto

The American fleet? Destroyed?

Yang Chen was now very confused. Frowning, he asked, "Makedon, what is this nonsense? What did I do which even I am not privy to?"

Makedon was surprised at his response. He smiled bitterly and said, "Your Majesty Pluto, we've been friends for a very long time. There's no need to hide matters like these from one another. The American Navy headquarters even has a video of you caught in the act. It's as clear as day who the figure is in the video."

Yang Chen was getting more confused by the second. "Come on, I really don't know what you're talking about! Tell me!"

Makedon became worried. He scratched his bald head. "You really don't?"

"No shit! You haven't explained a thing, how would I know!" Yang Chen had a bad feeling. He was panicking now.

"Then... it really wasn't you?" asked Makedon in disbelief.

Makedon gulped, then muttered, "This is weird. Half an hour ago, the American fleet that retreated from Southeast Asia was destroyed. This was the same fleet that was in conflict with China, the one with a Nimitz-class aircraft carrier and twenty ships carrying two thousand navy soldiers. They were destroyed by someone who looked exactly like you. The worst part was that it all went down in under a minute. The aircraft carrier and ships were all distorted and broken, immediately sinking into the depths of the ocean. The people..."

One minute? Yang Chen was shocked. "You mean, the person looked exactly like me and had spatial powers?"

"Yes, Your Majesty Pluto." Makedon didn't believe him, so he said, "I don't understand how someone who looks like you and has spatial powers could exist. Without the ability to distort space, he wouldn't have been able to destroy the fleet in one minute."

"Wait!" Yang Chen frowned. "You said you have a video?"

"That's right. Before everything, a nearby ship had recorded the incident. This was received by the American military. I saw it from stolen reports, realized it was you and called..."

"Send it to me. I'll have a look myself," said Yang Chen in a low voice.

Makedon quickly sent the file without a word.

A video showing the night sky started playing soon after. After a moment, a dark silhouette appeared.

The ships shone their spotlights on the figure. It immediately became clear who the figure was!

Yang Chen shuddered. He couldn't believe his eyes. It was a young man who looked exactly like himself?!

He was wearing ordinary clothes, not unlike someone who was going for a walk. However, he was levitating mid-air with an annoyed expression on his face.

You could just make out the man's face but in the next second, his face twisted into a chilling smile. He stuck a finger out, then gently hooked a finger.

The sound of metal bending and breaking filled the video. The hull of the ship seemed to have twisted, then folded inwards on itself!

It looked like the man was folding the ship in half!

Soon, the camera on the ship was damaged. The video blurred before it ended.

Yang Chen turned the video off. His face was expressionless but his mind was racing with a million questions.

Makedon asked cautiously, "Your Majesty Pluto... That... wasn't you?"

"No."

"Then..."

"That was definitely space manipulation." Yang Chen didn't wait for Makedon's question, then added, "But that man is definitely not me. I can't explain why he looks like me though."

Makedon thought for a moment. "Could it be a clone? Ah... That wouldn't be right. If it were a clone, how could someone steal your DNA without you knowing? It doesn't make sense that the clone would be able to manipulate space too!"

Yang Chen rubbed his forehead. "You can't just clone me with my genes. My body is not ordinary since it was exposed to the divine light.

"You might not have known, but I have always wondered if people could steal my tissues to clone a terrifying bio-weapon. However, research showed that the possibility of it was very low. That's because they would need my blood to even have a chance. The blood has to be fresh, and it cannot get in contact with air. That's just to retain some viable cell samples.

"How likely do you think it is for someone to obtain my blood without my knowledge?"

Makedon was stunned. He thought hard for a moment, then shook his head. "It would be very difficult indeed. Getting you to even bleed would be impossible, let alone hiding it from you."

"It's not important now. If they could clone my body, it might not have my spatial manipulation powers. And that man obviously had his own consciousness, he wasn't just a bioweapon," said Yang Chen, feeling a headache coming on.

Makedon paled, then said worriedly, "Your Pluto Majesty, we need to do something. This person has spatial manipulation powers but doesn't respect the Treaty of Gods. He destroyed an entire fleet himself, and he looked exactly like you. If they can't find him, that means..."

"That means all his crimes will be tied to me. It is not possible for me to gather enough evidence to defend myself." Yang Chen smiled bitterly. "It will be tough to shift the blame. I don't even know what this guy wants, nor do I know where to start looking."

Makedon wiped his sweat. "I had to contact you because the American navy and our central bureau of investigation are already in contact. The Americans are furious because they think you're protecting the Chinese government. The Americans have already made the step to retreat from Southeast Asia within these two days, and their fleet had just set up an emergency camp in the middle of the Pacific ocean. Now, the fleet has been destroyed and they lost two thousand naval soldiers. They think you're trying to tip the scales in the Chinese army's favor by using your spatial powers.

"Hmph, leave politics out of this for now. But that fellow, he broke the treaty in broad daylight by using his spatial powers. I think the rest would already know about it. If I don't make a public statement soon, I'll be under attack." He laughed miserably and sighed. "It's too bad he used the most common tricks. If he'd used a technique that was a little more unique, then the blame would probably not fall on me."

"Would the American military know other gods? Would they ask the other gods to attack you?" asked Makedon, puzzled.

Yang Chen laughed, "They wouldn't need to ask. That woman Christine is still in the US, and the rest would definitely have their own network. It wouldn't be a stretch to say that the secret organizations in every country would have their own spies reporting to them. They'll find out sooner or later."

Makedon understood. It was true. Any self-aware god, no matter their daytime identity, they would actively get updates from international secret organizations if they were willing. It was like how Yang Chen had him and Sauron for important updates like this one. The other gods would definitely have their hidden network.

Yang Chen thought for a moment. "Alright, you calm the people down. This is a matter which I will deal with personally. I need to go to the place to survey the wreck. Perhaps there'll be clues."

"Yes, I understand. I'll give you the coordinates immediately." Makedon sent a coordinate and ended the call.

Yang Chen glanced at the numbers, then closed his laptop. He changed, then decided to teleport to the Pacific Ocean.

However, his phone vibrated. He smiled bitterly yet again. It was Li Dun from Beijing. He must have called to inquire on behalf of the Li clan.

"I don't care if you believe it, but that was not me," said Yang Chen immediately after he picked up.

Li Dun was stunned for a moment, then snickered. "Well you work in mysterious ways, Yang Chen. I too believe that it is not you. Even if it was, you wouldn't be so careless as to reveal your identity so easily. However... the old man in my clan is enraged. The American government is demanding an explanation.

"This matter has been put under control for now. But the Chinese government and military are like ants on a hot pan as no one can defeat the American military. Hongmeng would never personally interfere with mortal wars, and... I'm telling you this as a friend. If that really was you, Yang Chen, who destroyed the fleet, you've broken the Treaty of Gods. You'll be attacked by the rest..."

"You don't believe me?" Yang Chen laughed bitterly. This man was beating around the bush, but it was obvious he still suspected Yang Chen.

Li Dun immediately defended himself, "No! Do I, Li Dun, look like that kind of person?! 'No betrayals' have always been my motto! Of course, I do Yang Chen! The problem is, it's no use if I believe you. You need them to believe you too! If this goes on... there'll be misunderstandings and Hongmeng might even reveal themselves to attack you. Ah... Although you aren't that close with them, according to this situation, it looks like you did cross many lines to interfere with the mortal world. The Americans have lost two thousand lives for nothing."

"You don't need to say anymore. I'm going to the site now to see for myself, we'll definitely find something. Think about it. What good would doing something like this bring to me? It could escalate conflicts between China and America, then trigger the next world war. Then would I lead a happy life after that?"

"Heh, be careful. To be honest, no matter how angry anyone is, they still can't do much about you. The only problem we face right now is the financial war the Americans could wage against us and our economy. That's why we must cut all relations with you. Please don't blame us, I really want to help but I'm only a small minister. The one making the decisions is the boss," said Li Dun, still confused.

Yang Chen was angry enough to be blamed for something he didn't do, and this man was about to cut ties with him. The worst thing was, he never wanted 'ties' with anyone in the first place! Why would he even want them to burden himself?!

"Hmph, I would've dealt with it alone anyway. Don't worry, no matter what, I won't make you all take the blame. Then again, if something happens, you still have Hongmeng. The ones who will die in war will be the commoners, you Li's don't have to worry about your progeny," Yang Chen hung up.

Li Dun shouted a few 'hey's but in the end, he could only hang up on his side, frustrated.

At this moment, Li Moshen, who'd been listening to his grandson's phone call in the study turned around to ask, "What did he mean?"

"What else? He said we don't need to worry and he'll deal with it." Li Dun pursed his lips. "These measures are too extreme in my opinion. We should be nicer. You asking me to do this will make it very hard for me to face Yang Chen again."

Li Moshen walked over to glance at the cloudy night sky, sighing. "You've seen the video. The man was Yang Chen without a doubt. Then, General Cai, a respected man, also indirectly agreed with us. That meant that even as Yang Chen's father-in-law he couldn't be sure it wasn't Yang Chen. No matter how useful Yang Chen would be to us in the future, he is a problem right now. The enemies he would attract aren't opponents we can easily defeat anymore. We have no choice but to state where we stand very clearly."

"This is very sketchy. If Yang Chen really wanted to attack, he would've destroyed them a long time ago when he went to capture An Zaihuan. Why would he want to attack only when they've retreated from Southeast Asia?" said Li Dun, frustrated.

Li Moshen huffed. "People like us wouldn't know. Only Yang Chen himself can face such an enemy..."

Chapter 739 - Lies

Lies

Above the vast ocean, the night sky was scattered with an abundance of stars. The air was damp with the mist from the sea.

Under the night sky, waves rose and crashed against one another in perfect harmony.

From a blinding light that emerged out of nowhere, came a young man dressed in a white short-sleeved shirt and a loose pair of brown cargo pants.

The temperature above the sea at night was easily in the sub-zero territory, but the youth was seemingly unfazed as he casually hovered above it.

This man was naturally the one who, after several continuous teleportations, eventually made it to his target destination over the Pacific. He was none other than Yang Chen.

Yang Chen finally identified the coordinates given by Makedon, but he didn't hurry to investigate the scene. Instead, he was carefully observing the sky above him as he gradually zoned out.

Despite the recent maneuvering of his cultivations, there had yet to be any repercussions to his actions. But Yang Chen somehow felt an ominous feeling lurking about as if something unpleasant was bound to happen.

It was the insecurities that came along with his legendary cultivation.

Just like his previous trip from Beijing back to Zhonghai, he could have teleported in an instant, but instead he went with the safe bet to take a flight.

During his previous excursion to the Philippines however, he was hardly affected by the sense of insecurity. But his trip across the globe this time left him in quite a unique circumstance.

Yang Chen hesitated for a moment before he made up his mind to pay Yan Sanniang a visit after the situation was handled with. *Could it be a side effect that anyone within the same level would achieve? If it isn't, then I might have made some mistakes throughout my journey,* he thought.

After all, Yang Chen had achieved his current stage of cultivation in the absence of mentorship.

He shook his head in uncertainty as he sighed, eventually deciding to brush it off for now as he turned his gaze back towards sea level, looking for hints that might just save him from a world of trouble.

Even in the dark of night, Yang Chen had a vision no different from that of the day.

Upon this stretch of the ocean were tens of nautical miles covered with sunken American artillery and machinery, most of which were deep on the seabed.

With this kind of destruction, it was safe to assume that there were no survivors in this ordeal. Just the explosion of the destroyer alone would trigger its nuclear core, along with the several nuclear warheads onboard. The chain reaction of that single event was enough to wipe the entire fleet out.

Destruction on this scale was conducted in just within a minute, once again proving the devastating consequences of the unsealed spatial powers, along with a constant reminder of the necessity of self-concealment by the gods.

Yang Chen deduced certain things before moving on to his next location—the position of the destroyer frigates. He ultimately concluded that it was exactly on the American base of Pearl Harbour, and the reason his imposter chose this spot in the middle of the ocean was none other than to brand him as the scapegoat of this incident.

Otherwise, if Pearl Harbour were to be ambushed again, all hell would certainly break loose once more!

After all, it was a frontline military base America had built with the most advanced technologies they could afford. If someone were to destroy it, it was safe to assume that they were going to retaliate!

The main idea of this ambush nonetheless was that there was hardly any commercial ships around this maritime route. It was the perfect spot for a destroyer blockade on these waters, which made it clear to Yang Chen that the imposter was clearly targeting him specifically.

Yang Chen unleashed his spiritual awareness across the ocean, hoping to pick up the slightest hints. After all, every divine space manipulation was conducted under the same formula, albeit with drastically different details. It was a concept similar to an ID card.

Unfortunately, after searching for nearly an hour, no sign of divine power was found.

Could my only option be to pay a visit and explain my alibi? That I was just chilling back home? But how likely is it that they would accept such a half-assed excuse?

Just when Yang Chen was stuck in a dilemma, out of the blue, a familiar aura approached from the east.

A blonde lady in an extravagant black-laced dress appeared. Her bare feet were as white as snow, exposed in the air. Her posture was alluring yet elegant as she walked through a crack in the night sky. Upon meeting Yang Chen, she questioned, "It wasn't you, was it?"

The surprise guest was Christen who had rushed to the scene. Her outfit would suggest that she came from a gala of sorts, only to abandon it midway along with her missing heels.

Yang Chen felt touched by her effort. Whether or not she was dispatched with orders from her superiors, she chose to believe him without second doubt, which proved that this straight-to-the-tongue beauty was also a reliable one.

"Do you think I'm that lame to stir up this mess even when I have enough problems to deal with just from running among my wife and my lovers? I don't have the attention span to pick a bone with the American navy, only to break the rules of the Treaty of Gods and have you and Hongmeng to all come at me!" Yang Chen ranted.

Christen gave a sigh of relief before she turned back to all smiles. "Well, that makes sense. You're not dumb enough to do something like this. Besides, if you were trying to vent you'd never be caught on camera."

All of a sudden, Christen seemed to have picked up something from Yang Chen's words as she questioned in shock, "You knew about Hongmeng?"

Yang Chen was puzzled at her question but instantly recalled that excluding the previous Master Pluto, Christen, the siblings of the Cromwell clan, and Ares, they had never once mentioned of the war between Hongmeng and the gods tens of thousands of years ago.

Back when Yan Sanniang was narrating the bloodiest part of their history, he concluded that it must've been a painful history for Christen and the rest for them to keep it hidden from the world all these years.

"We have indeed met many decades ago, but our interactions are few and scarce. Besides, the incident was millennia ago. I believe it's about time you let go of your grudge against them," Yang Chen said with a smile.

Christen's facial expressions instantly changed as she sneered, "What do you know? Hades, now that you are one of us, you should support our side of things. Next time you meet anyone from Hongmeng, don't let them get away easily!

"Those pathetic scumbags. The only thing they are experts in is hiding within the depths of China like a turtle within its shell. If they were half as good as they claim to be, they would come out and fight! If it wasn't for their despicable scam, Zeus and Athena would've laid them to waste!"

Christen was uncharacteristically furious. Her usual elegance was replaced with surging waves of rage and anger.

Meanwhile, Yang Chen was filled with a head-full of questions, as he seemed to be overwhelmed from the sudden change in narration. "What you're saying is... that a couple of millennia ago, it was Hongmeng that was clearly overwhelmed?"

“Of course not!” Christen frowned as she turned her focus towards Yang Chen. “You seem to know about the incident back then. But what made you think we were on the losing side?”

Yang Chen was terrified as he stared at the look on Christen’s face. She definitely looked like she wasn’t lying. Why would she? But Yan Sanniang’s narration was quite the opposite as she said that the gods were heavily pressured. If not for the generosity of the Hongmeng ancestors, the gods would have never been spared. It would seem that Yan Sanniang had been twisting the truth all this time!

Christen frowned and laughed disdainfully. “Well I guess it seems like that’s the case huh. Did the people from Hongmeng tell you that we lost?”

Yang Chen contemplated before shaking his head. “I don’t really know if my source could be considered a part of Hongmeng. But based on her level of cultivation, having broken through Xiantian Full Cycle, she calls the stage ‘Soul Forming’.”

“Not bad,” Christen stoically replied. “Let me fill in the gaps in her story. It is common knowledge that the surviving members of Hongmeng are only those who have been around for centuries.

“Even though I might not have cultivated the Chinese martial arts, I know that any person from Houtian that could breakthrough Xiantian and then Xiantian Full Cycle, can become a member of Hongmeng. Their stage is called Soul Forming. But there’s only an infinitely minute chance that they get to the next level called ‘Tribulation Passing’.

“I could recall the first time we stepped foot on Earth. At that time, Hongmeng had yet to be established, and there were less than ten people who had made it into the Tribulation Passing stage. They were the only ones that could put up a fight with Zeus and Athena. The others were hardly considered threats to them!”

“What?!” Yang Chen was astonished. Christen’s narration of the events was completely different from the one he had heard from Yan Sanniang!

According to Christen, the war tens of thousands of years ago was a balanced fight at best. It wasn’t even close to being the one-sided battle that Yan Sanniang had described!

Christen shook her head in dismay. “Hades, the reason I had kept this from you all this while, was to avoid any unnecessary arguments about our dark past. But seeing as though you have been fooled by their lies, I took it upon myself to reveal the truth to you.

Chapter 740 - Poseidon

Poseidon

Yang Chen sighed and shook his head. “I get it now. History is just propaganda for both sides. Both sides only narrate what benefits them. Maybe that person wasn’t lying. She just might’ve been told the story in that way. Perhaps that version of the story has been passed down for generations within Hongmeng. Their own ‘victory in history’.”

“Well you’re right in that sense. Everything you were told is just a bunch of nonsense.” Christen was not buying it. “Maybe, just maybe, among the pioneering generation of China, there really was a presence far exceeding our imagination.

“However, when we first arrived here on Earth tens of thousands of years ago, the spiritual energy on Earth was already at its trenches.

“The Hongmeng cultivators at that time were hardly even close to their ancestors. At best, they could only reach Tribulation Passing. There might be tens of thousands of them, but so was the case for us. Why would we be afraid of them?”

“Besides, the twelve of us main gods could reincarnate for as long as the universe exists. As for the Chinese cultivators, once they’re dead, they’re gone. With so many things making them so insignificant to us, why would we still fear them?”

Yang Chen frowned as doubt clouded his mind. “Wait, but that’s not right. The last time I took on Ares I actually broke his frozen space with True Qi. It seems evident that Chinese martial arts could actually retain the laws of space.

“How then could you feel that the odds are still in your favor? Furthermore, now that I’ve broken through Xiantian Full Cycle, I feel that my True Qi has far improved from what I had felt before. I’m not talking about multiples of one or two, I’m talking about the laws of space not even being a threat to me anymore. You were saying that there were dozens of original Hongmeng members at Tribulation Passing, so it only made sense if their cultivations were beyond mine. Were Zeus and Athena really that much more powerful than them?”

Christen suspiciously glared at Yang Chen. “Hades, from whom exactly did you get this bunch of garbage from?”

“What do you mean?” Yang Chen felt slightly uneasy from the gaze from that woman.

“Hmph.” Christen snorted and rolled her eyes. “You truly underestimate yourself Hades. I’m just going to ask you this one question. The cultivation in which you practise, how many alive are capable of that?”

Yang Chen took to himself to have a deep thought, recalling what Abbess Yun Miao once said. “Well I was told that... the martial arts I’m cultivating is called Endless Resolve Restoration Scripture originating from Shushan. Ever since its existence, there have been only a handful of people who have cultivated it due to the high requirements in physique quality and understanding. After the elder who had guided me passed away, I’m certain that I’m the only one alive practising this technique.”

“Exactly,” Christen replied. “You assume every form of martial arts in China has the same power level. Even among the same Soul Forming stage, there exists potent and inferior forms of martial arts. The technique you practise is far superior to nearly all other forms. This also means that your starting line has already exceeded most cultivators in the Soul Forming stage. Did you really think that breaking Ares’ spatial powers is that easy? That everyone in your level could do it?”

“So what you are trying to say is that... even if we’re all in the same stage, be it Soul Forming or Tribulation Passing, our capabilities can differ vastly?” Yang Chen was instantly enlightened by her explanation.

How did I miss that? It makes sense. Even if there are countless stages in the realm of cultivators, being in the same stage doesn’t necessarily mean our power levels are similar, does it?!

The art of battle was not solely dependent on one's cultivation level. There were other factors such as skill, precision and strategy!

After a sharp reminder by Christen, Yang Chen led himself to an eventual discovery, that he had always seen cultivation stages and combat ability as one and the same!

But it was hardly Yang Chen's fault for his misunderstandings. After all, while Ling Xuzi and Yan Sanniang were both in the Soul Forming stage, they simultaneously possessing adept power levels.

That was directly correlated with Ling Xuzi's appointed position as a Hongmeng Messenger, as well as Yan Sanniang's role as the private protection for Yang Gongming.

But it was exactly because of that, Yang Chen had always thought that all cultivators in the Soul Forming stage were equal. He realized that it was Yan Sanniang herself who had yet to see the bigger picture!

Christen casually continued, "Hades, let me tell you this. Tens of thousands of years ago, eighty percent of the cultivators within the Soul Forming stage had only but mediocre power levels. Their True Yuan could only be described to be more or less that of the space powers of our divine citizens. Many a time they'd utilise the elements of nature to put up a fight against us, but truthfully, only a few hundred at most would actually deal any level of threat towards the twelve of us main gods.

"But seriously though, I can't believe you were stupid enough to believe that we were the losing side. If that was actually the case, why would the Chinese ancestors draw the line within the borders of China and surrender the rest of the planet to us? It was obviously because they were aware that a prolonged war would benefit neither side, which prompted them to acknowledge our arrival. It all makes sense, doesn't it?"

Yang Chen nodded. It was undeniable that his prior knowledge on this incident was hardly logical. Back when Yan Sanniang explained the story, he genuinely never brought himself to interpret the narration.

As for the reason the main gods were never reincarnated as a Chinese citizen, it was undoubtedly to evade a reincarnation upon their 'sworn enemies'. Furthermore, the offsprings from the mortal flesh with the humans were never found within the grounds of China. A perfect example was Judy from Blue Storm, the one who was slaughtered at the hands of Yang Chen. She was in fact a descendant of Christen from one of her many reincarnations.

Since he was already in deep thought about the whole scenario, he was immediately caught with a tricky incident, as he frustratedly asked, "If that's the case, why did Ares find my martial arts peculiar and foreign back when I was sparring with him? Hadn't he been fighting since millennia ago?"

"He did? Then what did you say to him?"

"I said... it was a form of Chinese martial arts." Yang Chen, upon finishing his sentence, instantly discovered a certain something as he burst into laughter. "Oh I see it now. The cultivators you all had interacted with were at bare minimum of the Soul Forming stage. They all use True Yuan, while during my fight with Ares, all I could cultivate was True Qi which feels and sounds different."

Dumbfounded, Christen stared at Yang Chen as if he was a different person. "Hades, do you mean that... the technique you practise, even before it reached the status of True Yuan, managed to break through Ares' frozen space?"

“What do you think? Pretty good right?”

Christen bit on her lip as she replied with a tinge of jealousy, “Well it’s pretty decent to say the least, even amongst the legendary Tribulation Passing cultivators. I can say hardly anyone possesses a combat style as mighty as yours. It really does prove the point that your starting point is much higher than anyone else’s.”

As she was praising him, a flash of distress raced across her face as she stomped her foot in mid air. “No! Hades, there is little doubt that you’ll eventually reach the Tribulation Passing stage, and by then you could potentially start inflicting harm on Zeus and Athena. You are not allowed to turn on us, you hear me? I’m asking you to stay neutral at the very least.”

Yang Chen was confused. “Why do you keep bringing up Zeus and Athena, are they really that terrifying?”

Christen sighed as she stoically explained, “All I can say to you is, amongst the twelve main gods, Ares might have a lust for blood and war, but at the end of the day, he is undeniably the weakest of us. He was included amongst us only by the skin of his teeth. He hopes to hide it by picking fights with people. It’s the only way he can keep people from underestimating him. Next up, would be me, my power level is close to Ares’.

“The last time I told you that you had impressive comprehension about the laws of space, I was clearly calling a bluff, because I didn’t think it’d be a good idea to break your confidence. I didn’t want you to lose faith. But the truth is, the gap between all twelve of us are indeed leagues apart.

“As for the remaining gods, the two you’ve met, Apollo and Diana, are far ahead of us too. They just never felt the need to show it in your presence.

“It was without mention the mastery of the preceding Hades, along with Poseidon and few others. As for Zeus and Athena, like I’ve been mentioning thus far, if it was not for Hongmeng’s despicable scheme, a head-to-head battle would ultimately overwhelm them, and China without a doubt would be in our hands.”

Yang Chen’s heart sunk. He understood that tonight had been a valuable exposition in his favor, but it undoubtedly struck a huge hit in his confidence. He started laughing softly. “I’d never have imagined that our spatial powers had nearly the same advancement potential as Chinese martial arts.

“Even with the assistance of any divine weaponry, it would still be the laws of space, wouldn’t it? I’m sure you know that when a cultivator breaks through the Soul Forming stage, it would mean that they have ‘gone beyond the three realms’, exceeding the bindings of space. How would you deal any damage to them then?”

Just when Christen was about to explain, her facial expression turned ugly. “Neptune?”

Yang Chen too felt a force of energy vigorously vibrating from east and west. It was clearly the commanding presence of a god, and it was nothing like he had ever experienced.

Neptune... wouldn't that be... POSEIDON?!

“The newly appointed Hades, since you don’t seem to be too fond of the ‘laws of space’, why don’t we have a duel? Let me show you what the laws of space truly are...”