

Divine 2291

Chapter 2291 - 2291: Mission 22

Emperor Southern Mist's initial disappointment was brief, and he quickly regained his composure. "This is a positive outcome. The Shen family has proven its worth. I am pleased with your performance and will reward you generously. I will make arrangements for your mother to come and personally receive her reward!"

"Thank you, Your Majesty," Gu Chaoyan responded with a grateful smile.

Emperor Southern Mist's actions were driven by his personal interests and those of the royal family. With Lady You as the sole pill refiner, he needed to ensure a steady supply of pills for himself and the royal princes. Therefore, Lady You's entry into the palace was crucial to receive the reward.

However, all of these events had unfolded according to Gu Chaoyan's meticulous plan. She anticipated this outcome, ensuring that the credit for Lady You's skills would go directly to her, rather than the Shen clan.

Regardless of any further questions the Emperor may have had, he didn't continue the conversation with Shen Lianxue at that moment. Instead, he calmly proceeded towards the back.

With Shen Lianxue, a Martial Warrior of the Fifth Heaven, leading the way, the achievements of those following behind appeared relatively ordinary. After offering some praise, Emperor Southern Mist shifted his focus away.

After evaluating everyone present, Emperor Southern Mist returned to his dragon throne and surveyed the assembly below. "Impressive, truly impressive. Southern Mist is brimming with talent, with each generation surpassing the last. Especially Lady Shen Lianxue of the Shen Family, if you have the time, I invite you to attend court more frequently, interact with the princesses, or engage in conversations with The Queen."

As Emperor Southern Mist uttered these words, many in the audience couldn't help but feel a twinge of envy towards Shen Lianxue.

On Shen Ningyu's face, the expression had already soured considerably.

Why, indeed!

Why did she get such good treatment?

Shen Ningyu seethed with resentment. She turned her gaze towards Qian Ziang, her face breaking into a smile. Fortunately, she had Brother Ziang, who had expressed his desire to marry her. This alone was a far better prospect than what Shen Lianxue had ever dreamed of. Unfortunately for Shen Lianxue, her dreams remained unfulfilled, but Shen Ningyu was determined to seize the opportunity.

Now that the Emperor had evaluated the cultivation and strength of these young individuals, it was the perfect moment to request a marriage.

The Qian Family's promising young talents and an exceptional lady from the Shen Family seeking betrothal would undoubtedly bring great joy to the occasion. Shen Ningyu believed that the King would gladly grant their request.

After all, this was a moment of celebration.

So, Shen Ningyu felt quite optimistic about the situation.

She gazed at Qian Ziang, only to find that he didn't meet her eyes at all. This caused a growing sense of anxiety, and she couldn't help but stomp her foot, hoping to catch Qian Ziang's attention.

However, no matter how she tried to make a sound or attract his notice, he remained oblivious.

What was happening?

In the past, Brother Ziang would always notice even the slightest deviation in her behavior. Why was he completely ignoring her now?

If he didn't speak up soon, the Emperor would soon depart.

Feeling increasingly desperate, Shen Ningyu reluctantly bit the bullet and addressed the Emperor, saying, “Your Majesty.”

“Your Majesty, Young Master Qian wishes to speak with you,” Shen Ningyu finally spoke up.

She had gone to great lengths to set the stage, and now, she was merely waiting for Qian Ziang to reveal the truth.

However, Qian Ziang frowned slightly.

He had easily discerned Shen Ningyu’s ploy and subterfuge earlier, choosing to ignore it because he had no intention of seeking a marriage. Consequently, he had no desire to speak about it.

For the time being, he opted to remain silent.

This was not something he had anticipated..

Chapter 2292 - 2292: Mission 23

Shen Ningyu had displayed surprising audacity by addressing the Emperor directly, putting Qian Ziang in an uncomfortable position. Why hadn’t he realized that Shen Ningyu would go to such lengths to embarrass him? It was evident that she hadn’t considered his feelings at all.

However...

Despite the awkward situation, Qian Ziang had no intention of speaking.

The Emperor of Southern Mist was already beginning to find the situation rather perplexing. Why had Lady Shen brought up Young Master Qian’s matter? What added to the mystery was the fact that Young Master Qian himself appeared entirely clueless about the situation.

“What is it that you wish to say?” Emperor Southern Mist inquired, his confusion evident.

“Your Majesty, there’s nothing to address,” Qian Ziang replied with remarkable composure.

Nothing?

Shen Ningyu’s eyes widened in disbelief.

How could there be nothing?

She had counted on Qian Ziang to fulfill their agreement and personally request the betrothal from the Emperor today.

Why was he not doing it?

Shen Ningyu tried to signal Qian Ziang, fearing that he might have forgotten something crucial.

Qian Ziang couldn’t hide his disgust for Shen Ningyu’s foolish expression.

To him, she was now just another ordinary person. What right did Qian Ziang have to claim her?

Although the Emperor of Southern Mist sensed that something was amiss, since Young Master Qian claimed there was nothing more to discuss, he couldn’t press further. Thus, he departed.

Shen Ningyu attempted to follow the Emperor, a look of urgency on her face.

He was intercepted by the Elders of the Shen family clan.

Shen Ningyu had already suffered some humiliation earlier. If she were to persist in approaching Young Master Qian after he had made it clear that there was no issue, it would further tarnish the Shen family’s reputation. It was only natural for the Elders to intervene and prevent her from causing more embarrassment.

As they left the hall, they planned to discuss this matter privately.

Tears streamed down Shen Ningyu's face as she rushed towards Qian Ziang.

Upon seeing that it was Shen Ningyu, Qian Ziang promptly sidestepped her, his expression conveying a hint of disgust. He had never intended to marry Shen Ningyu, and her behavior in front of the Emperor had left him quite displeased. Now that she was trying to cling to him, Qian Ziang naturally wanted to keep his distance.

Additionally, he was concerned about potential misunderstandings. Given his lack of interest in marrying Shen Ningyu, he didn't want to be the subject of gossip.

Shen Ningyu's attempt to embrace him failed, and she caught sight of Qian Ziang's expression.

This prompted her to cry even more bitterly.

"Brother Ziang, how could you do this to me? Why are you avoiding me? We agreed to propose to the Emperor today, but you said nothing! Boohooohoo," Shen Ningyu sobbed pitifully and forlornly.

The Elders of the Shen family clan refrained from intervening. Firstly, Shen Ningyu was already in tears, and secondly, they also desired an explanation from the Qian Family, so they remained silent.

Qian Ziang wore a displeased frown and responded, "Propose to the Emperor? When did I agree to that? Marriages are arranged by matchmakers. The Qian and Shen Families' elders have not reached any agreement on this matter. It would be inappropriate for me to request it personally. Moreover, the elders of the Qian Family have never expressed any desire for me to be engaged to you.

How could I ask for it?"

"Ningyu, we have grown up together, and our relationship has always been strong. But please understand, I regard you as my sister. I have no intention of marrying you," Qian Ziang explained, his words filled with both rationality and genuine sentiment.

Of course, he wanted to ensure there were no misunderstandings.

After all...

Chapter 2293 - 2293: Mission 24

After all, he intended to proceed with his marriage to Shen Lianxue. Given his plans, it was essential for him to maintain a positive relationship with the Shen family. Consequently, certain clarifications needed to be made. He didn't want the Shen family to misinterpret his intentions or bear any ill will toward him.

The Elders of the Shen family clan heard his explanation.

Indeed, this was the case.

Shen Ningyu had relayed the details to the 500-meter family, but no representatives from the Qian Family had approached her. They had assumed they could simply await the formal betrothal, but it appeared that Young Master Qian didn't share the same sentiment. Shen Ningyu had misunderstood his intentions.

The elders from the 500-meter family found Shen Ningyu's current state rather awkward. They swiftly reined her in, advising, "Ningyu, you're a young lady. What's happening?"

With that, they offered their apologies to the Qian Family's elders.

Meanwhile, Gu Chaoyan had observed the unfolding events in silence. She had previously cautioned Shen Ningyu about this.

Qian Ziang's character left much to be desired. If he could break off an engagement with Shen Lianxue after using her, he might just as easily discard Shen Ningyu after his purposes were served. Regrettably, Shen Ningyu held a high opinion of herself and didn't believe she could be abandoned in such a manner.

Gu Chaoyan shrugged, feeling a sense of helplessness.

With the situation nearing resolution, Shen Lianxue assessed the circumstances and considered departing.

Staying any longer seemed like a waste of her time. When she returned, the events of today would elevate her status within the Shen family, marking the official completion of her mission.

Her next step involved returning to the chaotic spacetime for further cultivation, striving to reach the Paragon level she had always aspired to achieve.

Shen Lianxue had decided to leave.

However, she soon found herself blocked.

It was Qian Ziang, his expression tender and affectionate. "Lianxue, there's something I'd like to discuss with you. Can we have a private conversation?"

Shen Lianxue felt a surge of disgust.

To her surprise, her initial suspicions were proving correct.

Qian Ziang appeared to be drawn to anyone of high value.

It seemed he believed that, as long as he was willing, anyone would gravitate towards him.

His self-assuredness was rather off-putting.

Shen Lianxue regarded him with disdain. "If you have something to say, say it here."

Qian Ziang had wanted a private conversation with Shen Lianxue, believing it would be easier to persuade her that way.

Now that she was reluctant to grant him privacy, Qian Ziang found himself in a dilemma.

“Do you have something to say or not? If not, I’m leaving,” Shen Lianxue said impatiently, unwilling to waste any more time on Qian Nang.

“Yes, yes, of course,” Qian Ziang hurriedly responded. “Lianxue, please don’t be hasty. There are matters I wish to discuss with you today. In the past, I broke off our engagement because you had no cultivation and couldn’t bear the responsibilities of being my wife. But now, you possess cultivation. We’ve been betrothed since our youth, and I’ve already chosen you in my heart. Since the circumstances are now suitable, let’s proceed with the marriage. I, Qian Ziang, will cherish and care for you.” His words brimmed with enthusiasm.

Having spoken his piece, Qian Ziang gazed at Shen Lianxue expectantly. “Lianxue, I initially intended to speak to you in private, but having the elders of the clan as witnesses is just as well. Don’t be shy. It’s merely a formality, as we were betrothed in our youth..”

Chapter 2294 - 2294: Mission 25

Qian Ziang was all smiles.

The elder from the Qian Family chimed in with a smile, “These two youngsters have been companions since their youth.”

The elders of the Shen family clan didn’t hesitate to agree. Forming a marital alliance with the Qian Family had long been a cherished aspiration of the Shen family. Whether it was Shen Ningyu or Shen Lianxue who married into the Qian Family, it made little difference. Both were Shen family members, and the family’s well-being took precedence. Therefore, there was no reason to decline.

Following the Qian Family’s proposal, the elders from the Shen family clan intended to express their thoughts. However, since Lianxue was a young woman, they anticipated that she might hesitate. Allowing her to make the final decision seemed like the natural course of action.

“These two individuals do seem to be a suitable match. In my opinion, perhaps...

Before the elders of the Shen family clan could finish their statement, Gu

Chaoyan interrupted without reservation. “Yes, right, I have to disagree. Qian Ziang, have you ever taken a good look at yourself in the mirror? You are far from my equal. You resemble a troll, and you can’t compare to me in any way. Why on earth should I marry you?”

“Back then, you looked down on me for lacking cultivation and broke off our engagement. Now, you want to propose to me? Is your cultivation even worthy of consideration?” Shen Lianxue retorted firmly.

“Don’t even entertain such thoughts. I won’t entertain them either. Qian Ziang is not worthy of me,” she declared with conviction.

“Since there’s nothing else, let’s go,” Shen Lianxue said resolutely.

With that, Shen Lianxue made her decision.

Qian Ziang, along with the elders from both the Qian and Shen Families, were left in a state of astonishment.

Unwilling?

Not worthy?

Meanwhile, Shen Ningyu had already lost her composure and paid no heed to Shen Lianxue’s response.

The Shen family elder’s expression soured. He didn’t wish to create animosity with the Qian family and therefore approached Shen Lianxue with reproach, saying, “Apologize to Young Master Qian immediately. Watch your words; they have deeply offended the Qian family.”

The Shen family elders grew increasingly anxious when they noticed that so many onlookers had gathered and were discussing the Qian family. If this situation persisted, it could have unfavorable consequences. The Shen family couldn’t afford to antagonize the Qian family.

“Have you just offended the Qian Family?” Gu Chaoyan’s voice carried far, making it apparent to everyone present.

The Shen family elders swiftly tried to muffle her voice.

Their earlier conversation had been hushed, but they hadn’t anticipated that Gu Chaoyan would broadcast it so loudly.

“It’s just the Qian Family. So what if I, Shen Lianxue, offend them? I am a Fifth Heaven martial warrior. I could offend the Li Family or even The Zhang Family, let alone the Qian Family,” Shen Lianxue boldly proclaimed for all to hear.

“My mother has already received alchemy skills from experts from other continents. In Southern Mist Country, only my mother knows how to refine pills. The emperor personally summoned her to the palace to receive the reward.”

“In the future, my mother and I will gain more power, and our pills will become highly sought after. It’s almost inevitable that we may clash with the Qian Family. However, the Qian Family should exercise caution as well. If they provoke me, my mother’s pills will no longer be supplied to them.

Consequently, while everyone else benefits from these pills to enhance their cultivation, the Qian Family will be left stagnant,” Shen Lianxue explained.

“So, how can I, Shen Lianxue, not assert myself?” she continued.

“Furthermore, it’s my sincere opinion that Qian Ziang’s cultivation level is exceedingly low and simply not compatible with mine, Shen Lianxue. I’m merely stating the facts. How have I offended him?” she questioned.

“There are numerous exceptional men in Southern Mist. Is it not my prerogative as Shen Lianxue to be discerning in my choice?” she asserted.

“Of course, of course!! Lady Lianxue, please take our considerations into account,” a group of young men from prominent families chimed in, clearly pleased with her response..

Chapter 2295: Mission 26

They hadn't broken off Lady Lianxue's engagement with anyone.

Among the young men in the crowd, there were some who were considered outstanding. They wondered why Lady Shen Lianxue should be betrothed to Qian Ziang when there were other promising choices available. If they could marry Lady Shen Lianxue, their futures would undoubtedly soar to new heights. The mere thought of it filled them with excitement.

Without hesitation, they openly expressed their interest, taking advantage of the Qian Family's predicament to elevate themselves.

Shen Lianxue observed these individuals. Although she didn't particularly like them, she had no intention of offending them. While it might not matter if she offended the Qian Family, offending too many people could potentially lead to problems for Lady You in the future.

Therefore, Shen Lianxue offered a faint smile and replied, "If I find it appealing, I will naturally consider it."

Her response delighted the group of hopeful suitors.

As the Qian Family witnessed this scene, they grew somewhat apprehensive. They regretted not intervening when Qian Ziang had spoken earlier. The King held Shen Lianxue in high regard, especially in her current state of cultivation, and these individuals seeking her favor would not bode well for the Qian Family's standing in Southern Mist. If they learned that Shen Lianxue harbored animosity towards the Qian Family, it could place them in an uncomfortable position in the future. These people might target the Qian Family in an attempt to gain her favor.

In retrospect, the Qian Family realized their mistake. They should not have allowed Qian Ziang to speak openly in the palace, drawing such attention. If they had to address the matter, it should have been done privately to avoid such an embarrassing situation.

Conversely, the Shen family appeared content and relieved.

Indeed!

Shen Lianxue's stance was justified.

The past might have seen the Shen Family in a subordinate position to the Qian Family, but circumstances had shifted. The Shen Family now boasted a Fifth Heaven martial warrior and possessed the knowledge of alchemical skills. What reason was there to fear or cling to the Qian Family? In their eyes, there was no need whatsoever.

As the Shen family contemplated the situation, they grew increasingly convinced of the rightness of their stance.

Reflecting on their history, the Shen family had grown accustomed to seeking favor from others. In their eagerness, they had momentarily forgotten their newfound strengths and self-sufficiency.

With an air of pride, they declared, "You're absolutely right. With Lianxue's cultivation and her mother's alchemical talents, individuals of such caliber naturally need not consider a family that once terminated her engagement.

There are plenty of exceptional men in Southern Mist. We will take our time in selecting."

Silence followed their proclamation.

"If there's nothing else, we will take our leave."

Silence persisted.

"The Shen family has numerous matters to attend to, and we cannot casually delay them," the Shen family asserted with an air of arrogance before preparing to depart.

With the presence of the Qian Family and Qian Ziang, the Shen Family and Shen Lianxue made their exit.

The elders of the clan were in high spirits. They had concerns about Shen Ningyu potentially causing trouble and disturbing Shen Lianxue, so they arranged a separate carriage for her. The elders squeezed into the carriage, which Shen Lianxue accepted without hesitation.

This arrangement allowed her to complete her mission more effectively.

Upon returning to the palace...

Shen Ningyu was arranged to leave and made a scene, crying and causing a disturbance, which became rather vexing.

Shen Lianxue, on the other hand, was respectfully accommodated within the clan.

In the clan, there was something to discuss.

Moreover, Shen Lianxue was counting on that branch after all. The elders of the clan were worried that if that branch was too prosperous, it would affect the interests of the clan.

After a discussion.

He decided to prepare a good courtyard for Shen Lianxue in the clan and let her move to the clan..

Chapter 2296: Mission 27

In this case, the clan would find themselves slightly more at ease.

They wouldn't allow the branch to become too prosperous, and the person involved would become directly associated with the clan.

Shen Lianxue pondered this and eventually agreed. It wasn't that she believed the people within the clan were superior, but she was well aware that living within the clan would grant her a status within the Shen family. This, in a way, marked the official completion of her mission.

As for Lady You, she was simply asked to relocate to the clan, aligning perfectly with the clan's desires. This arrangement was swiftly put into motion.

When Shen Chengwang discovered this, they had already settled in within the clan. Anxiously, he rushed over, stating, "Why didn't you discuss this with me before moving here? I am the head of the family!"

Shen Lianxue responded candidly, "Living in the residence was less than ideal. The lack of assistance and frequent cold meals made it unbearable. So, we moved here, which is just 500 meters away. The clan's environment is superior."

Shen Chengwang stomped his feet, showing some dissatisfaction, but he couldn't afford to offend the two of them. He sighed and said, "You should have informed me about these matters. I would have certainly handled them for you. Why did you come here? However, if you're willing to stay here, then stay."

Shen Chengwang knew that it was too late to reverse the situation now. If he insisted they return, the clan might still criticize him. So, he decided to go along with it. However, he wanted to know what benefits they brought, with a particular interest in Lady You's skill in refining pills.

"How much have you refined so far? Give it to me first, and I'll distribute it to the children. Don't be naive. While the clan is influential, you're still from our branch. Only when our courtyard thrives will you have a good life. So, the more pills we have in our courtyard, the better, understand?" Shen Chengwang advised.

"No, I've already given all of it to the emperor," Lady You replied bluntly, showing no politeness. "Our lives in the clan are quite comfortable. It's certainly better than in the residence. We're living well here."

Shen Chengwang was momentarily speechless and anxious. He hadn't expected the two of them to be so compliant in the past and now be so oppositional. Furthermore, he hadn't anticipated this situation developing so suddenly. He was unsure of how to proceed.

"Lady You, regardless of how the clan treats you, we are husband and wife. I had initially intended to support you, but I didn't anticipate your move to the clan. This situation is complex," Shen Chengwang said, introducing a solution that he had thought of spontaneously, which hadn't occurred to him previously. But now, it seemed like an option.

Wasn't this what Lady You had been yearning for all these years?

He decided to grant her wish. In the future, things would be simpler. It wouldn't matter if Lian Xue stayed in the clan, but Lady You had to return to the residence. This way, their branch would shine within the Shen family, with numerous advantages.

As he contemplated it, Shen Chengwang felt it was a reasonable decision.

Lady You was initially taken aback. When she hesitated, Shen Chengwang assumed that he had touched a chord with her.

However, after her pause, Lady You responded coldly, "There's no need."

She had no desire to become Shen Chengwang's wife. She understood his motives all too well..

Chapter 2297: Mission 28

It was evident that she had advantages.

Even after he had exhausted all the benefits she provided, he would remain as cold and heartless as ever.

She was acutely aware of the kind of life she had endured alongside Lian Xue for all these years. She had no intention of repeating the same mistake.

Why had she returned to the clan? This was the reason.

Moreover, her plan extended beyond merely staying in the clan.

Her true aim was to seize the right moment to request a divorce from the Emperor.

She yearned to sever all ties with Shen Chengwang.

She aspired to chart her own path for the future.

Given Lady You's strategy, why would she desire the purported position of a wife?

"If there's nothing else, you may leave. Lian Xue has just returned from the palace and needs to rest. Your presence is unsettling her," Lady You declared as she ushered him away, retreating to the inner chambers.

Shen Chengwang stood stupefied.

Could it really be true?

She had no desire for the role of a Madam.

But why?

Then what did she desire?

Could it be that he had been mistaken all along?

Wasn't this an absurd notion?

Shen Chengwang attempted to follow her, only to be halted by the clan's servant girls, who heeded their masters and paid no mind to him. In a fit of anger, Shen Chengwang waved his hand and departed.

Shen Lianxue regarded Lady You with admiration.

Lady You's current demeanor exceeded her expectations; she was entirely different from the gentle woman she had been before. With this change, Shen Lianxue felt reassured about the upcoming mission.

Taking advantage of the moment, Gu Chaoyan began instructing Lady You in the art of crafting elixirs, offering guidance on the process as well as the steps to follow after creating them.

With everything in order, Gu Chaoyan felt a slight sense of relief.

Sensing something amiss, Lady You questioned, “Lian Xue, are you embarking on a long journey? You seem different. There’s no need to rush. Take your time to share your thoughts with me in the future.”

Gu Chaoyan struggled to respond.

After some contemplation, she replied, “It’s nothing. I just want to ensure you leave a favorable impression on the Emperor, so I thought it best to clarify things upfront to avoid any misunderstandings.”

“Mother, don’t dwell on it. Begin practicing with the elixir; I’m going to rest,”

Gu Chaoyan stated.

Turning away, she couldn’t help but harbor some worries.

However, there was no alternative.

Once the mission concluded, she was supposed to depart.

Inside her room, Gu Chaoyan initiated the summoning of the Chaotic Space.

“Have you succeeded? Have I fulfilled my task?” Gu Chaoyan inquired straightforwardly.

After a lengthy pause, the chaotic space eventually responded, “Indeed, you have. You’ve completed your mission.”

Gu Chaoyan let out a sigh of relief.

Reflecting on how much time she had spent here, she realized there were still tasks left to complete. Furthermore, she was eager to refine her skills as swiftly as possible.

“Then, please allow me to return to the Chaotic Space for refinement,” Gu Chaoyan implored impatiently.

For a protracted moment, the chaotic space remained silent.

Subsequently, the aged voice resumed, “By accomplishing this mission, you’ll only be able to enhance your cultivation up to the Paragon Warrior realm. Are you willing to proceed with the mission?”

Having articulated this, the elderly voice appeared somewhat anxious that Gu Chaoyan might decline. Therefore, it added enticingly, “It’s not a challenging endeavor. You only need to devise a method to gain renown in Southern Mist, and the reward from the Chaotic Space will assist you in attaining the status of a Paragon Martial King. What are your thoughts?”

“You’ve already come this far; why not continue?”

Chapter 2298: Mission 29

He appeared to be hopeful that Gu Chaoyan could accomplish the task.

Observing the smug expression on the chaotic space’s “face,” Gu Chaoyan felt a desire to challenge it.

However...

Yet, Gu Chaoyan believed she could handle this task.

The current mission could propel her into the Paragon realm, but she needed to strategize for continuous breakthroughs. Completing this mission would allow her to directly reach the Paragon realm, and with her enhanced cultivation, she could provide a better situation for Lady You. It was a highly advantageous proposition.

Hence, she wasn't at the point of refusing when it came to confronting the Chaotic Space.

She nodded in agreement. "Alright."

The chaotic space beamed with satisfaction. "That's more like it."

Then, it withdrew.

Meanwhile, Gu Chaoyan pondered.

How could she establish herself as a figure of renown in Southern Mist?

This was a substantial challenge, significantly more formidable than earning respect within the Shen family.

So, what was her plan?

Over the past two days, Gu Chaoyan had been grappling with this question.

During this time, Lady You received a summons to the palace.

When Lady You returned, it was already six hours later.

The Shen family's elders were engaged in discussions with her regarding the rewards received from the court, while Gu Chaoyan waited outside to greet her.

The emperor had bestowed numerous rewards upon her, marking a significant occasion. It had been quite some time since the emperor had been so generous.

It was evident just how much prestige Lady You had gained.

The Shen family's elders received the rewards with utmost respect.

Gu Chaoyan was quick to spot Lady You, and she couldn't help but notice that despite receiving a bounty of rewards, Lady You didn't appear particularly joyful. In fact, she seemed somewhat discontented, and Gu Chaoyan couldn't fathom the reason behind it.

"Mother, what's troubling you?" Gu Chaoyan inquired.

Lady You smiled in relief upon realizing that her daughter's concern was not solely about the rewards. "I followed your instructions in front of the emperor. However, after he acquired the pill and acknowledged you as a Martial King, he intends to incite a war with Chengqi. He has requested your leadership in this endeavor. War is an inherently perilous affair, and you are a young woman. Who knows what might transpire? I'm concerned and hesitant to see you involved," Lady You explained, heaving a sigh.

"Fight? Lead the army?" Gu Chaoyan exclaimed, elated. This development

signaled the impending completion of her mission.

"Warfare is fraught with danger; how can you be so thrilled?" Lady You admonished while patting Shen Lianxue, her worry still evident.

"Mom, I've achieved another breakthrough and now stand at the ninth level of the King of Martial Arts. You needn't worry. With this level of cultivation, I can defend myself capably. Furthermore, making a contribution is the best course of action. Once it's accomplished, everything will proceed as planned, and we can depart from the Shen Family," Gu Chaoyan reassured her mother.

Lady You found this reasoning sensible, though she still harbored reservations.

However...

"Why did you choose to break free at that moment?" Lady You couldn't comprehend this aspect.

“The King would be wary of the Shen Family due to my advanced achievements, and he would directly confront Shen Chengwang. If we are separate from the family, the King will be more at ease,” Gu Chaoyan explained with a smile. “It will also provide us with a legitimate reason.”

Lady You nodded, finding the explanation convincing.

“It’s settled then. I will accompany you! Otherwise, I won’t be at ease,” Lady You declared.

“Very well,” Gu Chaoyan agreed without hesitation. With Lady You by her side, she would be safeguarded from harm. If Lady You had concerns, she could always follow her..

Chapter 2299: Mission 30

Although Gu Chaoyan claimed to be at the ninth level of the Martial Arts Realm, in reality, she had already attained the level of a Martial God. In a land where spiritual energy was scarce, a Martial God was nearly invincible and could provide unwavering protection for Lady You.

Moreover...

Gu Chaoyan also harbored a desire to expose Lady You to a broader world. She believed that by doing so, Lady You’s horizons would expand, and she would gradually grow indifferent to the Shen Family.

Lady You smiled upon hearing her daughter’s agreement. “Very well, I’ll accompany you and watch over you. Furthermore, should any complications arise on the battlefield, I will be there to safeguard you.”

“Now, let’s return and make preparations. If possible, we should manufacture more pills,” Lady You swiftly recollected that arrangements needed to be made for their impending deployment to the battlefield.

Gu Chaoyan smiled and nodded.

The two of them were already contemplating their return to make the necessary arrangements.

On the other side, a heated discussion was taking place.

Lady You wished to disengage from these matters and depart, but Shen Chengwang intercepted her. “Lady You, please adjudicate this matter. Share your thoughts on how we should handle it.”

“Logically speaking, since these rewards were bestowed by the palace, they should be sent to our residence since you are my significant other. There’s no justification for you to leave them at the clan. While the clan serves as the governing hub of the Shen family branch, traditionally, only a portion of the acquired wealth is presented to the clan for comparative purposes, not the entire sum. I, Shen Chengwang, am willing to allocate a portion, but it wouldn’t be reasonable to surrender everything to the clan.”

“Lady You, these rewards are rightfully yours. The decision is yours to make, and we will adhere to your judgment.”

“Even though you’re currently residing in the clan, you should still return to the residence whenever you desire. You have the freedom to do as you please at our residence,” Shen Chengwang urgently asserted.

If these possessions were retained within the clan, what significance would there be for Shen Chengwang’s branch? In the foreseeable future, all the advantages and prestige would likely accumulate within the clan, leaving their branch devoid of any benefits.

Deep down, Shen Chengwang possessed an unconscious belief that Lady You would unquestionably be compliant with his wishes.

After Shen Chengwang voiced his concerns, the clan’s elders offered their counsel. “Lady You, these rewards were bestowed upon you by the emperor within the palace. They rightfully belong to you. While you’re residing in the clan, there’s no need to leave these items here. The clan has no claim to them. They are exclusively yours, and you alone are deserving of them.”

Lady You found herself in a dilemma.

Their gazes were fixated on these rewards.

Nonetheless, no one was genuinely considering her feelings.

She had no intention of bestowing these possessions upon anyone else.

Her plan was to take them with her when she ultimately requested permission to depart from the Shen family after achieving victory in the future. For now, they were just temporarily situated there.

However...

The sentiments expressed by the clan's elders were more palatable on the surface.

Lady You pondered for a moment. "I will leave them within the clan for the time being. I can always retrieve them in the future when the time is right."

Upon hearing Lady You's decision, the clan's elders breathed sighs of relief and displayed elation.

Shen Chengwang's countenance betrayed his displeasure.

Why were these possessions left within the clan?

"Lady You!" Shen Chengwang uttered softly, his discontent evident. He was a member of the residence; why hadn't Lady You considered the residence's interests at all?

Since when had any family's concubines been encouraged to reside outside the family?

"If there are no further matters, Lian Xue and I will retire for some rest," Lady

You announced..

Chapter 2300: Mission 31

Lady You paid no heed to what Shen Chengwang was saying; it was as if she didn't take him seriously in the slightest.

'Of course.

Such had been Shen Chengwang's previous attitude towards Lady You and Shen Lianxue, and he had possibly been even more neglectful. Apart from disregarding them, he had permitted others to mistreat them.

Given Shen Chengwang's current disposition, Shen Lianxue felt no sympathy for him whatsoever.

Naturally, the members of the clan disapproved of Shen Chengwang's defiance of the clan's wishes.

At this moment, Shen Chengwang was also disinclined to acknowledge Shen Chengyvang. Instead, she focused on arranging where to store these items. The gifts bestowed by the emperor held special significance.

Lady You, however, wasn't overly concerned about this. She meticulously preserved the list of gifts, intending to match it in the future.

On the morning of the second day following Lady You's return, Shen Lianxue received a summons to the palace.

Gu Chaoyan was well aware that the King of Southern Mist intended to discuss the upcoming war.

In tact, she was confident about prevailing in this matter, so there was no cause for alarm.

"You've arrived," the Emperor of Southern Mist remarked, his attention fixed on something he was studying with his head lowered. Upon hearing footsteps, he spoke without looking up, knowing that Shen Lianxue had arrived.

“Yes, Your Majesty,” Gu Chaoyan responded with a polite bow. She refrained from kneeling as the King of Southern Mist impatiently instructed, “Rise, there’s no need for formalities.’

“Come closer; let me show you this,” the Emperor of Southern Mist requested.

“This is...”

“Your mother must have already informed you about the map of Southern Mist and Chengqi, so I won’t elaborate on that. Let’s focus on this. Chengqi, being larger in territory, naturally possesses greater wealth. Furthermore, Chengqi has a longstanding mountain rich in spiritual energy. This mountain is inhabited by demon beasts, and their demon cores are highly valuable for enhancing cultivation. Consequently, the people of Chengqi have notably stronger cultivation than our Southern Mist, and our borders have been subjected to repeated encroachments.”

“During this period, Chengqi’s actions have become increasingly audacious. The border’s common folk have been adversely affected. Our Southern Mist must take action. Lianxue, take a look. Do you believe in our ability to emerge victorious?” inquired Emperor Southern Mist.

Gu Chaoyan scrutinized the map closely.

The map was rather simplistic, featuring only essential markings. It appeared to have been pieced together through numerous skirmishes.

“What about Chengqi?”

“Currently, Chengqi’s generals are at the Sixth Heaven of the Martial Warrior Realm, which is considered high for Chengqi. However, the distinguishing factor lies in the number of generals at the Martial Warrior Realm. Chengqi boasts four such generals, whereas Southern Mist can’t compete in this regard. Our sole border general is slightly more advanced. We can barely contend with a Fourth Heaven of the Martial Warrior Realm, but we have just one such general! ”

“We can win,” Gu Chaoyan affirmed.

“But is it truly possible?” The Emperor of Southern Mist was evidently filled with a degree of excitement, born from the prospect of victory after enduring prolonged adversity.

“It is indeed possible. Your Majesty might not be aware, but I have already reached the Ninth Heaven of the Martial Warrior Realm. There is no cause for concern when facing Zhan Chengqi’s generals. Moreover, our overall cultivation and military strength might not match Chengqi’s, but we can easily overcome this disadvantage.”

“Examine the map. Chengqi’s terrain is higher, whereas ours is lower. We are inherently disadvantaged in terms of terrain. However, if we strategically utilize the landscape, we can transform our disadvantages into advantages.”

“In what way?”