

E Monarch 146

Chapter 146 – The Envoys from two countries

“I’m a bit confused, what did I do?” Jun Mo Xie scratched his hair: “Then how should I address you?”

“Well, you know!” Dugu Xiao Yi stomped her feet: I’ve never seen such an idiot!

“I know?” Jun Mo Xie frowned as he pondered, but then noticed a sudden and slight movement as Dugu Xiao Yi parted her fingers, which were covering her eyes, in order to secretly watch Jun Mo Xie.

Jun Mo Xie finally started to understand: Ah, now it seems that our relationship is changing. I was trying to teach her, so now our relationship is changing to that of a master and student..... “Little girl is now my disciple; hurry and get up, your master is waiting to teach you an exquisite knife law.”

“You’re no teacher of mine!” Dugu Xiao Yi didn’t jump up the way he was expecting her to; instead, she extended her foot and stomped on his. Moreover, she didn’t stop here, and went on to stomp on his feet a few more times: “What makes you think that you’re qualified enough to be my teacher?!”

Jun Mo Xie was caught completely off guard since he had never expected his student to act so outrageously. He winced and said: “.....respect your teacher!”

“Teacher my ass! Respect my ass! You think that you can use this ‘knife law’ lie to exploit me? I’m telling you.... I don’t want to learn your stupid knife law; you’re just a scoundrel! Nothing more!” Dugu Xiao Yi seemed so infuriated that it appeared as if she’d pounce on him with her claws and tear him to pieces! I’m angry! You’re a bad guy! And a blockhead! You’re such a stupid, unromantic idiot!

“This is ridiculous! How am I a scoundrel? And how am I bad guy?!” Jun Mo Xie was completely flabbergasted, and couldn’t help thinking; this is a big injustice..... the previous Mo Xie was a bad guy; but I’ve been nothing short of a savior for the Jun Family... why should I have to bear this.....

I really don’t know what this girl is up to..... I just helped her little pet evolve, and then I gave her such a good knife, and now I’m even trying to teach her a great knife technique, but she’s still saying these

things to me.... This is unfair! I already told her that the kiss was an accident! And it's not like this was the first time she's kissed a guy, and even if it was her first time, then it was my first as well... so it's really me who's at a loss here....

Wait a minute?! Is she thinking that I'm interested in her because I kissed her? Jun Mo Xie's entire body shivered as he realized that the body of a female starts to mature at the age of sixteen as opposed to their male counterparts.....

I hope not.... I haven't had enough of my bachelor days yet.....

"Never mind then, quickly teach me the knife law! I hope that you know one, and weren't just bragging!" She stomped on his foot again grumpily, and then bit her lips; even though she wanted to leave, she didn't. She had managed to arrange a meeting with him after facing a lot of difficulty, and even then her seven brothers had accompanied her.....

I have no idea when we'll be able to meet again.... But this idiot.....Dugu Xiao Yi almost felt like weeping: this idiot.... He, he kissed me..... even my parents have never kissed me on my lips, and..... And on top of that, since he's such a renowned debauchee, I'm sure that he's kissed plenty of women before; this was certainly not his first time.....

Even though Dugu Xiao Yi was behaving like a normal teenage girl at the moment, a normal human would still never be able to understand her thoughts!

"You're forcing me to teach you after disrespecting me like that? Do you think I owe you something, or what?" Jun Mo Xie rolled his eyes as he shouted at her.

She stared at him with her big round eyes, which had suddenly become red, and then tears started dripping down from the corner of her eyes: "You're bullying me....." her heart was harboring unbounded grievances: First this bastard kisses me after I gave him my jade pendant, and now he's shouting at me! I have to go; did no one teach this idiot about courting a young woman?

"Well- " Jun Mo Xie sighed loudly, but felt very weak within: God! Why is this girl so hard to keep up with? The Hitman was very experienced in handling all kinds of worldly affairs; in fact, his experience was very, very, very extensive. But courting the heart of a young maiden was almost like Greek to him!

Little White was standing perplexed between the two of them, and was constantly looking from one person to the other. Even the little cub could tell that the two of them were having a fight, but couldn't understand why... or how he could sort it out.

"I want to go..... Uncle Jun.... I'm going to tell my grandfather and Uncle Jun that you are bullying me again.... I hate you! I hate you!" Dugu Xiao Yi burst out crying again, and turned around to leave.

Jun Mo Xie hastily pulled her back: "Hey, don't go.... I made a mistake, okay?"

This was definitely the first time that the Hitman had ever made a confession in both his lives!

"Let go of me! Men and women aren't supposed to touch each other! No one taught you that?" Dugu Xiao Yi puffed her cheeks and tilted her head.

Jun Mo Xie remained silent; but the last time you went about spreading a rumor, your seven brothers landed straight on my doorstep. If you go around crying again, then who knows.... Maybe your grandfather will personally lead his army to my bedroom! Ah, God, what sins did I commit for having to endure such a bitter life?

"Fine, I'll teach you." Jun Mo Xie seemed to be begging for mercy.... Under his own roof!

"Well!" Dugu Xiao Yi grunted heavily: "First be a little sensitive" Jun Mo Xie suddenly realized that his big hand was still holding onto her arm, and couldn't help turn red with embarrassment. Meanwhile, Dugu Xiao Yi's voice had turned extremely soft and shy: "You, you need to release my arm....."

Jun Mo Xie released his hold on her arm, and started scratching his head; I really don't know what this girl is trying to do? In just a matter of a few breaths, her moods have actually transformed back and forth at least five or six times... how can this be normal? It was obviously beyond the comprehension of Jun Mo Xie's intelligence that a person could be capable of shifting their mind frame so much.... And so quickly...

No wonder people often say that women are the world's most difficult animals to comprehend! This remark is certainly true ah!

“Okay, pocket knives have a total of nine strokes.” Jun Mo Xie picked up the pocket knife again, and affixed it to his armpit: “The first one: Pocket Knife soft winnowing.....” Jun Mo Xie was in a hurry to teach her the law at this point so he could quickly send this girl away. Anyway, the law he was teaching was just a pocket knife law, and not a very profound martial law by any means. Keeping this girl here it is just too much of a task.

“The Second stroke:...” “The Third stroke: Pocket Knife dream.....”

Pocket Knife cloud, Pocket Knife Wind dance, Pocket Knife falling thunder, Pocket Knife flash, Pocket Knife Dream ruins, Pocket Knife universe.....

Dugu Xiao Yi seemed to be very gifted and was extremely intelligent as well. On top of that, her memory was so sharp that she actually managed to memorize the entire skill set in just half an hour, even though Jun Mo Xie had taught her some very complex postures. However, just when it seemed that they were done, she suddenly started intentionally messing up the most basic of postures, which she was able to perform perfectly just a few moments ago. Naturally Jun Mo Xie had to approach closer to her body in order to correct her postures; so some amount of physical contact was almost inevitable....

Jun Mo Xie’s body was very tenacious in a physical sense, but he was still dripping sweat while teaching her; meanwhile, Dugu Xiao Yi seemed to be training with high spirits, so much so that her cheeks were flushed.....

From Jun Mo Xie’s point of view, the task was extremely arduous; but from Dugu Xiao Yi’s point of view, the scene was a beautiful romantic sight between two lovers..... however, since Jun Mo Xie’s emotional quotient was close to zero, the hitman was obviously left complaining to the heavens: She is so stupid! Why do I have to teach her the same thing over and over again.....

Just then, an unexpected noise of cannons sounded outside the Jun residence. The almost deafening sound was followed by the sounds of soldiers unmounting their horses and approaching the gates of the Jun residence.

“What’s happening?” they both hesitated, and involuntarily stopped their training. Jun Mo Xie wiped off the sweat from his face. Even though he was inwardly relieved, he felt a bit strange: I was finding this exercise a bit tough, but then how was this girl able to carry on? Is this little girl hiding her strength...? How did I not notice it?

He had already realized that Dugu Xiao Yi was quite intelligent at the time when she had been able to memorize the second stroke in just one attempt, but hadn't figured out that she was intentionally playing the moves wrong at the moment. The whole process hadn't been tiring in the least for her..... how could it have been, the little girl was obviously too busy feeling shy and happy about learning this skill from the man of her dreams.....

It seemed that a difference in state of mind was indeed enough to induce a difference in physical endurance!

"The Yu Tang Empire's State Teacher, Fei Meng Chen is arriving in the Tian Xiang City with his troops. He's already outside the city gates at the moment." Jun Wu Yi was pushed out to the front of the gate by the Dugu Brothers. "Also, he is being accompanied by the famous general of the Yu Tang Empire, Zhao Jian Hun; his Majesty has already sent the great prince to greet them into the city."

The moment Jun Wu Yi spoke the name 'Zhao Jian Hun', a strange light shone in his eyes.

"In addition, the Shen Ci Empire's top Xuan Qi expert is also arriving with his troops, and will coincidentally be arriving today as well. His Majesty will also be sending the other two princes to greet them. His Majesty is making preparations to send out the three princes to meet the envoys from the two countries." Jun Wu Yi smiled faintly.

"His Majesty's arrangements can already be described as pretty good ah." Jun Mo Xie praised loudly. He was well aware that these two envoys were certainly arriving in the Tian Xiang City with ulterior motives, but sending the three princes to receive them in full force was obviously very good thinking on the Emperor's part.

"His Majesty is just experimenting again." Jun Wu Yi smiled again. "It won't be surprising if the Emperor ends up choosing his successor by the time the Capital sees the end of this event."

Jun Mo Xie was somewhat puzzled, and so he asked: "Why do you say that?"

"Diplomacy is a very delicate activity, and one needs to apply just the right amount of pressure at the points. In the eagerness to gain power, all the three princes will try to gain the support of the neighboring Empires, and their attitudes will dictate the future of governance of this country. The

attitudes of the three princes will have a very far reaching effect in the future, so this is going to be a very decisive test for the three of them.”

Chapter 147 – A chance encounter

Jun Wu Yi’s eyes were half shut since he felt a bit intoxicated after clearing his nephew’s doubt. Jun Wu Yi had grown accustomed to being corrected by his young nephew nowadays, and this was a rare event where he had gotten a chance to lend his experience to his nephew.

“Let’s go and watch the show.” Jun Mo Xie squinted his eyes. The three princes were definitely up to no good, and no matter what the king had in mind, he didn’t trust the three princes to do anything favorable for the Jun Family.

The seven brothers of the Dugu Family cheered in unison; Dugu Xiao Yi also nodded while still holding Little White in her arms and then slowly leaned closer to Jun Mo Xie and whispered in his ear: “That whole scene was our secret, right? I will not speak about it to any, and I won’t ask you to either.”

She paused for a second and then continued: “But if there’s anything at all, you will tell me, right?” Jun Mo Xie turned around to look at her. As he looked into the eyes of the young maiden, he sensed a delicate trace of shyness and affection in them, but her eyes still looked firm: I am determined to never harm you, and nor will I ever embarrass you. Her eyes were clearly expressing these words.

At this moment, the warmth of a strange feeling softened Jun Mo Xie’s heart, and he raised his hand to stroke her hair, but didn’t speak anything in reply. There was no need for words here!

Pop! Jun Mo Xie suddenly felt a force on his hand as a big hand slapped his palm aside; Dugu Chong was staring at him red-eyed: “Boy, you think you can treat my sister cheaply whenever you feel like it? If you touch her again then I’ll cut your hand off!”

That mild feeling of warmth which had just smoldered in the hitman’s heart suddenly vanished.

Dugu Xiao Yi watched the sharp transformation in his expression, but could only apologetically smile at him in compensation.

As they moved through the crowded street of the capital, the Dugu Brothers intentionally kept themselves positioned between Jun Mo Xie and their sister. Jun Mo Xie was moving very quickly, and was constantly switching directions, and soon managed to put a distance between himself and the others; soon enough, he disappeared into the crowd.

The young maiden continued to look for Jun Mo Xie for a while, but couldn't find him; she helplessly glanced over at her brothers and pouted in disapproval. Little White on the other hand, had already gone off to sleep in her arms by now. Even though the young cub seemed full of energy after his successful evolution, he was actually very tired since the process had been very difficult and painful. However, since he was very excited, he couldn't help jumping about; but now that things had calmed down from his perspective, he fell into a deep sleep like any other child; a very deep and special sleep.

After successfully blending into the crowd, Jun Mo Xie couldn't help but feel a sense of relaxation. Even though he was only walking forward aimlessly, but he felt as if a great pressure had been lifted off his shoulders since he no longer had that little girl around to bind him down.

Little did the amateur realize that his silhouette had already been imprinted into the mind of the young maiden; and even though that impression wasn't the best, it had certainly left a very deep imprint!

"So, it's that kid again huh. Ha ha, the last we met, you abused me, and then you turned around and left. But today you can't leave." A familiar voice sounded from Jun Mo Xie's left hand side. Jun Mo Xie turned around and saw a middle aged man walking towards him with a smile on his face; the man was being followed by two bodyguards. The man raised his hand to pat Jun Mo Xie's broad but thin and slender shoulders.

The Jun Mo Xie who had previously occupied this body had already damaged the physique of this body to such an extent due to his eating, drinking and 'entertainment' habits that this raw body wasn't worth more than garbage after his exit. After the hitman had taken the command of this corporeal body, even his extensive training and the support of the Hongjun Pagoda were only able to tune the muscle structure of the body. As far as general appearance was concerned, his body still looked very similar to the one which had been left behind by the debauchee.

Jun Mo Xie flashed backwards and escaped his hand. The hitman wasn't accustomed to being touched by random strangers without notice, and was quite surprised to realize that he hadn't acted to launch a reflexive counter attack in return. Jun Mo Xie raised his eyebrows and said: "Neither can you."

Although he had only seen a glimpse of the man, the hitman was quickly able to recall that this was the same man who he had met on that rainy mid-autumn afternoon, when he had ventured out to the little shop. As chance has it.... that was day when Jun Mo Xie had acquired the Peak level Nine Xuan Core.

Today, that very same peak of level nine Xuan Core had attracted a strong external interference, putting the Tian Xiang City in a delicate situation; and coincidentally, he had bumped into that very same man again. Jun Mo Xie just sighed deeply as he wondered, the world really is round... and small.....

"I don't want to." The middle-aged man didn't seem to take any offence to Jun Mo Xie's movement, and laughed: "I wonder why we have met again in world full of so many people, little brother. It seems that we are destined to meet each other by fate."

Jun Mo Xie sensed a hilarious contrast in this situation; he had always used 'destined to meet by fate' phrase to charm Dugu Xiao Yi in order to extract undue advantages, and now this big man was suddenly using the same phrase on him to make unwanted advances; in fact, he almost felt as if he was being molested by this big man. Jun Mo Xie finally understood Dugu Xiao Yi's perspective; but why is a middle-aged man saying this to me? Is he interested in young boys....?

"Since we're destined to meet each other, what should I call you?" Jun Mo Xie knew that he hadn't been in a good mood at the time of their previous encounter, and had inadvertently cursed the man.

"Hmm.... You're trying to dodging the bullet here kid. That day when you came into the Old Song Tavern, you abused this old man, didn't you?" the middle-aged man said out aloud: "You said that my cherished wine wasn't good enough for you, wasn't that an abuse? And then you said that there isn't a man who is worthy of drinking on the same table as you! That sentence clearly indicated that I wasn't qualified enough to keep you company.... That certainly qualifies as an abuse, doesn't it? hmmm...."

Jun Mo Xie inwardly exclaimed twice as he stared at the face of that 'old man'; then looked at the man's body from top to bottom, and guessed that the man was no more than forty.... He's claiming to be an old man? Has the word 'old' lost its value in this world? He's in his thirties.... forty at best... and he's still calling himself an 'old man'? That's a bit weird.....

"Finally willing to admit it?" the middle-aged man smiled slyly: "If you're really sorry, then how do you think you should apologize for it?"

Jun Mo Xie was left speechless, is this person real? Unable to come up with anything else, he said: "I would make amends to you, but being shameless is the style at this time of the year."

"Cough...." The middle-aged man coughed for a second and then broke into a laughter: "Only a real gentleman is capable of cursing another man without making it seem dirty. But how did a young lad such as yourself manage to get away from an old man like me?"

"Ten years could be the same as one, and one year could be the same as ten. If we meet again and I'm the father of seven or eight children by then, then I could also claim to be an old man, but would I really be old? Who can say for sure...." Jun Mo Xie snorted back.

"Ha ha ha..... So be it, but stop teasing me; come and join me for a drink." The middle-aged man laughed heartily, and then started pulling Jun Mo Xie along.

"Do I know you? What makes you think that you can pull me for a drink so casually?" Jun Mo Xie frowned.

"When you meet someone by chance, you always stop for a drink; no matter east or west. Then, why should I care about your identity?" The eccentric middle-aged man smiled: "Since we have agreed that we were destined to meet by fate, then why shouldn't we drink a few cups of wine?!"

"You've got a point!" Jun Mo Xie suddenly felt as if this this guy had an appetite for sly words and he suddenly felt as if he had met someone he could be friends with for the first time in his entire life; naturally Jun Mo Xie was interested in having a drink with that man now.

In fact, the hitman had never made many friends in his previous life either; he had always been a bit of a loner....

"Are you waiting to see Yu Tang's state teacher, Fei Meng Chen's entry into the city?" the middle-aged man smiled subtly.

"Why not? I think that a scene as lively as this one must be looked at; after all, the state teacher of another country is making his entry into ours... it should be a fun sight." Jun Mo Xie smiled merrily.

“Watch the crowd? That’s good, but in the end they are all just a bunch of this Empire’s enemies accompanied by an old bastard, who will now be allowed to openly walk around the city with selfish intentions concealed in their hearts!” the man’s smile seemed to be fading at this point: “Today we are welcoming them, but no matter how enthusiastically we honor them, when the two armies come face to face in war, no one will show any leniency while killing the other! So, what’s the point of such a big charade?!”

“Yu Tang Empire’s state teacher or not, I don’t really care!” the middle-aged man seemed very dissatisfied.

“Well said.” Jun Mo Xie applauded: “That remark itself is enough to drink two cups of wine.”

“You say that the Old Song’s wine isn’t good enough? Have you ever tasted the rarest of their rarest wines?” the middle-aged didn’t seem to be mocking him, and it appeared as if he was genuinely thinking of a very rare and high-quality wine.

Jun Mo Xie chose to keep his head down, and said: “I will not dilute the argument by speaking against something I’ve never experienced; the facts always speak louder than words to a fair mind!” The middle-aged man laughed since he realized that he’d have to prove his argument, and drew Jun Mo Xie along with him.

The gates opened and the Great Prince received the Yu Tang Empire’s state teacher as the guest strode into the city with at least a dozen horses by his side, and rode to the Prince’s side through the welcoming ranks of the City’s royal soldiers, which lined up along the street to greet him. As they strode through the street, the Great Prince maintained a tall and straight posture on his horse back. Seemingly in high-spirits, the Great Prince would often talk and smile with his guest while pointing at the streets, almost as if he was introducing the city to the Yu Tang Empire’s state teacher.

The middle-aged man turned around to look at the Prince one last time, sighed, shook his head, and then turned away.

The Middle-aged man led Jun Mo Xie through some of the narrower alleys of the city, and kept turning left and right on short intervals, almost as if he was extremely familiar with the map of the city, and soon reached the Old Song Tavern. Jun Mo Xie looked at the man’s dressing and wondered, That seemed a bit weird for a man of his status, right? How’s this man so familiar with the trails of this market?

“The last time we met at this Old Song Tavern, you told me that you had tasted better wines... so now quickly bring out that better wine and show it to this old man.” As Jun Mo Xie heard these words, and the manner in which they were spoken, he suddenly felt as if he had been betrayed. His posture seems to resemble that of a hitman looking at the bounty on the head of his employer’s enemy.....

“What? What do you mean by that?” Jun Mo Xie widened his eyes as he stared at the man.

Chapter 148 – It was you!

“I come to the Old Song’s tavern to drink wine. Apart from this, I only have one more hobby; and that’s to taste the best wines in the entire Tian Xiang Empire. I largely appreciated your words the last time we met, and I even went about asking about you in the entire Tian Xiang City in order to find you. When I finally saw your face in the crowd today, I was only obliged to laugh at fate. You told me that you’ve tasted better wines, so now you need to prove it.” The middle-aged man rubbed his hands to conceal the embarrassment on his face. But the look on his face seemed more conspiring than embarrassing to Jun Mo Xie.

Jun Mo Xie was silent for a while; ever since he had come into this world, he had been using other people to extort his needs, but today this middle-aged man had given him a taste of his own medicine. There were tiny clues sprinkled all along, but Jun Mo Xie simply hadn’t been able to spot them.....

This is an insult to my name! The young master Jun simply cannot allow people to find out about this! You pretended to be an ‘old man’, and this young master treated you properly! Why would you do such a thing?!

How do I get out of this situation now?!

The thin middle-aged man hunched a bit and took a few steps backwards as he said: “We have a truly honored guest in our presence today; remember I told you about that youngster the other day but you wouldn’t believe me.... Well, he’s here to save my face, and you’ll finally get to meet him. Come, come out quickly.” The man said these words not to Jun Mo Xie, but to someone else.....

The thick-skinned middle aged man went inside into the back of the shop. As for his two body guards, they had already disappeared from sight and were presumably hidden in the dark somewhere nearby.

Jun Mo Xie's heart hesitated a bit as the middle-aged man returned with a slightly older man since it seemed that he had seen this man before. The feel and the stature of this man wasn't evidently familiar, but Jun Mo Xie still felt a bit strange in his mind. As that man smiled at Jun Mo Xie, the young master Jun started thinking harder about his identity.

"I've heard very highly of your words, and I've thought a lot about these ones in particular: 'the true act of drinking is to drink to one's emotions! Or even to one's thoughts! Pouring wine into one's belly cannot be considered the true act of drinking wine. That is simply the act of wasting good wine!' this sentence of yours won my heart over."

Old Song graciously greeted his guest as he continued to speak: "Obviously, I've been fermenting wine for decades now, and in the world of making wine, no man can boast to be better than me. But you defiled my lifetime's work in one sentence... that is a bit sad...."

"Yes, just pouring wine into one's belly is nothing short of wasting it." Jun Mo Xie looked at the two men as they set a wine jar on his table, but was still unable to tell their real intentions.

"Ha ha, I would like to know why the young man considers it to be a waste of good wine?" Old Song seemed very modest as a ray of light shone through his muddy eyes.

"What is wine?" Jun Mo Xie asked a question: "The hearts of the men in this world love wine, but why? What is the point of wine?"

"What is wine?" Old Song repeated the question to himself, feeling a bit disconsolate. He had just claimed that he was the best wine maker in the world, but then, what is wine? Even he couldn't come up with a good answer to this question. If you say that wine is just another beverage.... Then that's an insult to wine. But beyond that, what is it?

"Wine is an emotion!" Jun Mo Xie switched his tone to a very serious one: "So the act of drinking by that ideology changes with the emotion. If you drink in a merry state of mind, then the wine will make you happy; if one drinks in celebration, then the wine becomes the celebration; if one drinks in a depressed frame of mind, then the wine becomes a broom which sweeps the worry from one's mind, and makes one forget! When one visits a friend or a close confidant, then the wine is a concert. When one says good bye to a friend, the wine becomes a token of farewell! When soldiers drink wine on the battle field, the wine becomes the wine of blood since it will help in killing the enemy!"

“Next comes wine tasting; when one is tasting a wine, the mood of the taster becomes the true taste of the wine.” Jun Mo Xie poured himself a cup and drained it down in one single gulp, and then said with a sparse look on his face: “When wandering uncertain and alone is a faraway land, the wine becomes a flavor of homesickness! When toasted by a stranger in a foreign land, the wine becomes a symbol of a new friendship!”

“Good words, amazing words! Splendid! That was really enlightening, young man!” Old Song and the middle-aged man seemed hooked to this passage, and stared at each other dumbstruck for a while; Old Song was the first one to snap out of the thought and started to praise again.

“What was so enlightening about this phrase?” Jun Mo Xie sneered: “There’s no high-end and low-end wine, I feel that it’s all about the difference in mental state of the drinker! Tasting wine is gentleman’s game, but a real wine taster is one who has drunk with thousands of different people since only then will one be able to taste the different emotions of wine!”

“There are no poor or rich when it comes to drinking wine; regardless of the status of a man, if the man knows how to drink, then they can experience the different flavors of its emotion. If one doesn’t drink with emotion while tasting different wines, then the man only adds to their knowledge of the wine’s effect on the taste buds, but will never be able to feel the wine since they are just devouring a cup with no feelings!”

“So when it comes to the act of tasting wine without feeling any emotion, I can only rate it as second-grade wine drinking since it is not the real act of drinking but just another elegant act. Although one still won’t spoil the name of the wine, but the man will not be a true gentleman to the act of drinking!” Jun Mo Xie stated generously.

The middle-aged man and Old Song seemed as if they both wanted to say something, but both men were strongly refraining from interrupting him, and were patiently listening to his words to get to the bottom of his ideology. However, both men were laughing within their hearts at the words of this juvenile as they inwardly agreed and disagreed to his words at different points, and both men could tell that his words were eluding enough to mean different things to different people.

Jun Mo Xie looked sideways and said: “The act of sampling wine is nothing more than a cliché. Regardless of whether one drinks in a pub over a conversation, or inside a brothel over a pleasurable interaction, or in a mansion with friends, or over a business or a political deal, they drink with emotion, and will still always be superior to wine tasters!”

Both men remained silent after listening to Jun Mo Xie's 'enlightening' words, but nodded slightly as they felt a strange but faint sense of pride: we've been drinking for decades, so we should be regarded as true wine drinkers, right?

The young master Jun wasn't done yet, and extended his two fingers as he gently shook them: "Based on these two terms, your wine would fall into the second-grade....."

"Nonsense!" Old Song was finally infuriated by Jun Mo Xie's words, and thundered out loud to defend his product. We both are confident that I'm the best wine maker in this country; even though your theory is right, but I've steeped decades of my life in making wine, so calling my wine second-grade is surely taking it a little too far!

Jun Mo Xie paid no attention to the two angry men, and continued: "You're still not convinced that your wine is second-rate. You have steeped decades into making and tasting wine; so your seniority in that respect cannot be denied, but this so called wine tasting seniority has a precondition since you do not enjoy the wine. Your wine may be of quality, but since you sell it for the experience and not the emotion, it qualifies as second-rate since the experience itself is insufficient in terms of the true act of drinking wine!"

Jun Mo Xie shook his two stretched-out fingers again: "This is the reason that you believed that I possess a wine which is better than the Old Song Tavern's wine. Based on my knowledge of wine, I can bluntly say that your wine is harsh on the throat since it lacks the emotion."

Even though his passage seemed to be twisting words to force logic, it was already beginning to sell.

"Your words were very rational and opened my eyes to a new horizon; however, when it comes to wine, this Old Song has travelled the world, and it is demeaning to say that my wine is harsh on the throat since that would mean that the other wines are even worse off!" Old Song seemed very displeased since Jun Mo Xie had called his wine second-rate and couldn't help raising his eyebrows in a challenging manner.

I have obviously spent my whole life in making wine, and no one can dare to say that their wine is superior to mine. When it comes to the world of making wine, no one possess the secrets of my wine making, and then this kid is actually calling my wine harsh? Old Song obviously couldn't help being angry, but still couldn't come up with any plausible rebuttals to defend his production since he knew

that even though his wine was better than the majority of other wines in the market, but it wouldn't be surprising if there was one wine which was better in every respect. On top of that, based on Jun Mo Xie's theory, the act of drinking wine had nothing to do with the quality of the wine by itself!

Jun Mo Xie sensed that the man was feeling extreme indignation, so he didn't argue back.

The middle-aged man pricked his ears as he looked from one man to the other, and then he suddenly narrowed his eyes and said: "Old Song, if our little brother can come up with a wine which is a hundred times stronger than yours, then what would you say?"

"I would accept him as my teacher!" Old Song raised his eyebrows again in a challenging manner as he blurted out. At this moment, his entire body was completely straight which seemed to reflect a strong sense of self-confidence and pride!

In addition to his confident and proud posture, there was a trace of sincerity in his body language, almost as if he would really accept a better wine maker as his teacher!

Jun Mo Xie's heart suddenly jumped into action as he instantly confirmed the identity of Old Song! He turned out to be!

Previously, when Jun Mo Xie had resolved the situation at the Huang Hua hall with his uncle, Jun Wu Yi, they had realized that they were being followed by a mysterious Xuan Qi expert, who later turned out to be a Sku Xuan expert! Although Jun Mo Xie's artifice had scared the man away, but this man was still stronger than his uncle, so there was no way that Jun Mo Xie could have ever forgotten about him! After careful analysis, Jun Mo Xie had come to realize that this man was indeed stronger than the likes of Xiao Han, and was only slightly inferior to his grandfather, Jun Zhan Tian!

Who would have ever thought that there could be an association between the Old Song tavern's owner and that Sky Xuan expert?!

While uttering those last few words in a fit of rage, Old Song's mood had inadvertently fluctuated a bit, exuding a mild trace of his Xuan Qi.

Even though this exposed Xuan Qi fledged through the atmosphere in a very small quantity, it was enough for Jun Mo Xie to recognize the association between the two figures, which had now started to coincide in his mind. Like a slow-motion movie, the two silhouettes continued to come closer in his mind, while continuing to resemble each other more and more with every passing frame; every action, and every movement of the two figures continued to repeat in Jun Mo Xie's mind, until the two figures combined to form a whole and became the same person!

I'm certain!

Old Song, it was you!

Chapter 149 – A mysterious master

As he discovered this interesting truth, Jun Mo Xie curved his lips since he hadn't intended on going through with this bet at first. Given his own status in life, picking a fight with someone like Dugu Wudi would be worthy of his status, but was a petty bet against pub owners worth it? The answer was of course no.

However, if the owner of the said pub turned out to be a Sky Xuan expert?

The verdict would obviously be reversed again.

"What is, and what isn't, can be made clear since I have the means to convince you." Jun Mo Xie smiled revealing his white teeth. His mood had suddenly become very good, and he started to stare at Old Song like a hungry wolf stares at a plumb lamb.

Even though Old Song was a Sky Xuan expert, he couldn't help feeling a chill; this kid's eyes are so evil!

"May the best man win! Young man, a bet is a bet, and what will you do if you lose?" the incited middle-aged man looked at Jun Mo Xie. He knew that Old Song wasn't easy to beat, but he also felt that this mysterious boy wasn't ordinary either. Perhaps this bet between these two will turn out to be a very interesting event, but should I be a little scared as well?

If I stay out of their bet and only watch from the sidelines then there shouldn't be any reason to be scared from any trouble, or should there be? A razor sharp light gleamed within the eyes of the middle-aged man.

"If you lose then I only ask that you never demean my wine ever in the future, simply because you're unworthy of beating its quality." Old Song was carefully watching Jun Mo Xie: "Indeed, your standpoint on wine makes a lot of sense, but it doesn't mean that you can insult my wine! This is, after all, is a craft which has been passed down from one generation to the other for centuries, and one shouldn't demerit a wine unless they are capable to fermenting a better one."

"That's settled then!" Jun Mo Xie replied unambiguously. Faced with this bet, he didn't have anything to lose even if he lost the bet.

The middle-aged man seemingly couldn't wait for the contest to start: "And so it is!", "But to be fair, shouldn't there be a witness to assure that the two of you use fair and just means? Otherwise the other person will always feel a bit suspicious. So I believe that there must be a witness present while the two of you ferment your wines; not only should there be a witness..... there should also be a referee and a judge to announce the final results!"

These two seem very fierce about this contest, so I think that neither of them will produce the ordinary stuff. If I get to judge this match, then I would get an opportunity to enjoy both the wines simultaneously. No matter who wins, I will get to taste to excellent wines; this will be a once in a life-time experience!

With this thought going through his mind, the middle-aged man couldn't help feeling elated. Old Song, young man, it's time that I get to taste the best of your wines, ha ha.....

"Great!" Old Song saw the calm and composed look on Jun Mo Xie's face, and suddenly felt a pang of lacking self-confidence inside him, almost as if his soul was subtly telling him that he could lose.

What a joke.... He's just a kid; It's one thing to drink wine, but when it comes to making wine, I have accumulated decades of experience, and if I brew my signature wine, then I how can I lose to him? This thought helped in settling Old Song's heart a bit, but he could still feel a vague sense of defeat... this is a good thing either way! I could ascertain that I'm the best wine maker if I win, but If I lose then I'll find out some new things and I'll be able to take a step in the forward direction....

“Three days from now, I will close my shop early so we can all meet here; how does that sound?” Old Song proposed.

Jun Mo Xie smiled and nodded. His mind was thinking, I don’t know if this mysterious Sky Xuan expert is associated with an organization..... Could he be associated with the Huang Hua Hall? But he said that he’s a fellow human at the time. I had managed to scare him away then, and he had run off quite hastily, so maybe he isn’t working with the Huang Hua Hall..... Jun Mo Xie looked Old Song and smiled slyly.

A less than Silver Xuan novice had managed to fool and scare away a powerful Sky Xuan expert, how could Jun Mo Xie not enjoy knowing this truth?

“A couple of pounds of beef, and two jugs of wine.” A voice unexpectedly echoed from behind, “Also, in three days from now, I will help you in judging the bet!” the categorical nature of this voice was extremely rare, almost as if he was an Emperor who was announcing his decision to his subjects.

His words didn’t sound like an inquiry, they sounds like a decision; certain.

But this was the first time that this voice had been heard inside the pub, and it didn’t belong to the three men present. On top of that, this voice seemed thunderously powerful!

The middle-aged man was a low skilled man, and would certainly not be able to defend himself without his guards, but Old Song was a Sky Xuan expert, whereas Jun Mo Xie’s senses had been amplified by the Hongjun Pagoda and ‘The Art of unlocking the heaven’s fortune’, but this man had somehow been able to conceal his trail for them all. In fact, none of them had even realized when this man had walked into the shop!

At this point, this man was sitting a few feet behind the trio.

The three men turned around simultaneously to look at this unknown man who was sitting around a table at some distance from them. Even though this person was human, it seemed that his back was as erect as a javelin. His face seemed very extraordinary as well, and was devoid of any lines; almost to the point where his face seemed to have been carved out from marble, while being completely devoid of expressions. His long hair was naturally falling over his shoulders unrestrained, and was covering about half of his face.

This man was wearing a black gown, and even though it was just noon at this time, but his face and breath gave out the feeling of an impending night fall!

Neither of three men could tell the age of this man... he could have been thirty, forty, or even fifty.... In fact he could even be eighty, but there was no way of telling his true age.....

This person is a true master, a master of masters; a master at the peak!

One look at the man and Jun Mo Xie had already reached a conclusion! The weather has become very unstable in the Tian Xiang City, and this man seems to be here for the same reason as several others. He is surely here for the Xuan Core, and which ever force is capable of sending such a man, must certainly be a very strong contender for the prize!

In addition to this, Jun Mo Xie could also sense a very familiar atmosphere around this mysterious man – A solitary aura!

This solitary aura seemed to be couple with pride; his loneliness was his arrogance!

Just the way Jun Mo Xie was in his previous incarnation!

Like a lonely wolf in a prairie... although the wolf is lonely, but he'd also fearless; he doesn't want this feeling of loneliness to change since he enjoys it!

"Who are you?" Old Song and the middle-aged man seemed a bit wary all of sudden.

"Someone who loves wine." The man's eyes were downcast and he said lightly: "So, beef and wine please!"

Old Song lowered his gaze as he said: "Dear guest, please wait." And then went inside the shop.

The middle-aged man chuckled and said: "If that's the case, then we'll look forward to seeing you in three days from today." He could already sense that this man was something extraordinary, he seems

like a legendary character from a folklore; if this person says that he will be the judge, then he won't be biased in any way.

Such people don't like being offended and they don't offend others either.

"Little brother, I'll see you in three days. Good bye. Ha ha, don't let this old man down." The middle-aged man laughed as he raised his hand towards Jun Mo Xie, and then turned away.

After he went out, his two body guards came out from hiding, and positioned themselves behind him: "Royal Highness, should we track that youngster to get a better idea of his true identity?"

"No, that's not important." The middle-aged man chuckled, but then his face suddenly became serious: "What about that other man? What do you know about his history?"

"Did a person just walk in? No ah." The two guards glanced at each other, completely puzzled.

"Well, forget it." the middle-aged man's heart was secretly analyzing the situation; my two guards are first class elementary Earth Xuan experts, and are sufficiently strong to defend me from any threats in the capital under normal circumstances. But even though my guards are fairly strong, they didn't even see the shadow of this man when he walked in....

Who is this guy?

~ Old Song's Tavern ~

Jun Mo Xie interestingly looked that man in black, and then suddenly smiled and said: "Is everything okay in the savanna?"

This sentence caught the attention of the man in black, but even then his expression didn't change as he slowly raised his eyes to look at Jun Mo Xie. At this moment, Jun Mo Xie was very surprised to find that this man's eyes seemed as boundless as a sea; like they were as hidden in depth as a starry night-sky! It felt like his eyes could trap a person into feeling a sense of being wanted.

“How can you tell that I come from the savanna?” the man in black asked slowly in an unhurried tone. Each and every word from his mouth came out with precise clarity.

“Your shoes, they don’t belong to this region. And then there’s your belt, the knitting on it is of a unique flax which is found only in the savanna; these two were enough to deduce your origin.” Jun Mo Xie smiled and said down in front of the man.

“These alone are not sufficient.” The man in the black gown was now looking the tabletop in front of him: “And I did not allow you to sit in front of me; and therefore, you do not deserve to!”

“If this isn’t enough, then what about that unique savanna body odor of yours?” Jun Mo Xie smiled: “And then there’s that aura of a solitary wolf around you, can these be enough? I didn’t want to stand, so I obviously sat down. Whether I sit, or lie down, what difference does it make?”

Then Jun Mo Xie switched his tone to sharper note, and said: “As for the subject on qualifications, if I feel that our standards aren’t matching, and if I sense that you aren’t capable of drinking with me, then I will naturally stand up!”

The man in black stared at Jun Mo Xie for a long while, and then suddenly revealed a perfectionist’s smile and said: “Interesting words, I guess it really wouldn’t make a difference if you sit or lie down anyway.”

This man seemed really strange; even though he laughed.... even his laugh reflected a strong sense of loneliness. Although he laughed at Jun Mo Xie’s words, it still seemed like he was just laughing to something else entirely.

At this point, Old Song returned with a jar of wine in one hand, and some beef in the other. He looked at Jun Mo Xie, but didn’t say anything. Then, he set the food down on the table and turned away.

The eyes of the man in black remained fixed at the tabletop as he picked up the jar of wine and devoured it down in one gulp without making sounds. Then, the man said in a faint voice: “Tian Xiang City is quite extraordinary, even a bartender is capable of being a Sky Xuan; good, this is interesting!”

Old Song's entire body started to tremble as a faint blue light flashed from his body; he eventually calmed himself down and said in a hoarse voice: "This old man admires your vision, but I just wish to blend into the city and make an honest living for myself in my late years since no one bothers a bartender for being a Sky Xuan expert....."

The black clothed man replied lightly: "If you wish to brew wine in peace, then that's good and I will not bother you."

Old Song turned around to leave, but then whispered softly as he left: "Thank you for your kindness."

Jun Mo Xie smiled and said: "Old Song, please give me two jugs of wine. Today this young master will make an exception and drink your wine again." Old Song acknowledged his order and went inside the shop. His heart was inwardly surprised at the ease with which this youngster was behaving around this mysterious expert, since he could sense that this mysterious expert was capable of killing them both in a hundred different ways; this guy is behaving very recklessly.

"You will not share my wine?" this time it was the man in black who raised his eyebrows and asked a question.

"I do not take favors from others... if drink your wine then I'll owe you a favor. In this world riddles with debts, the debt of gratitude is the most difficult to repay." Jun Mo Xie smiled casually: "Besides, drinking wine after spending money is more comforting."

"That's reasonable." The man in black replied, and then continued to drink his wine quietly. Then, he wiped his mouth and said: "This wine is really good. Kumis always tastes better with beef...."

[Kumis is fermented from a mare's milk; it's a traditional East Asian wine.]

At this time, Jun Mo Xie's order was also delivered to their table. Jun Mo Xie immediately opened the cork and started to drink. His drinking speed wasn't lesser than the black-clothed man's.

Although both men were sitting on the same table, they were both concentrating on drinking their wines alone.

The man in black was drinking at a fairly slow pace now, but his speed was very consistent, and unhurried. Even his eating speed was very slow, and very casual.

Although he was drinking wine in the company of another man, it seemed as if he had built his own world, and had excluded all elements of the outside world from his conscious altogether.

After drinking seven or eight cups of wine, the man in black suddenly discovered something unexpected. This discovery suddenly elated the impression of the youngster in front by several levels in his eyes.

He was drinking out of loneliness, but the actions of the youngster in front of his eyes seemed even more desolate than his own. Since he was drinking in a solitary manner, he was his own entertainment; but the boy in front didn't even seem to be drinking wine... it appeared as if the youngster was drinking cups of loneliness!

At his mental level, he was drinking wine to distract himself from his solitude, but the boy in front seemed to be enjoying the loneliness! He's able to endure this solitary feeling with such an open-mind that he's actually enjoying it.... what kind of a superior mind does he have?

His mental level... it seems that he's even superior to me?!

Who is this mysterious teenager?

Even though the two men were drinking in a solitary manner on the same table, their charms were mutually exclusive. Even though Jun Mo Xie was able to integrate into this man's world, but the man was finding it extremely hard to enter into Jun Mo Xie's!

A long while later, the man in black was further surprised to realize that he had paying a lot of attention to the boy in front, but the youngster didn't seem to be taking any note of his presence!

It seems that I'm not even present here in his eyes.

The mysterious man's Xuan Qi cultivation level had already transcended to the peak, so he could naturally sense that this young man's Xuan Qi was near-pathetic; given his age, his cultivation level can only be described as ordinary... maybe even trash! I could just kill him by just blowing air!

But then why is such a boy able to maintain this kind of a mind-frame?

Cultivation is easy for children from large families as long as they are sincere and interested in training since they can find good guidance easily. Detoured youngsters are rare, but it shouldn't be this surprising!

However, this kind of mental level is hard to find.... Even a senior military officer is unable to maintain this mindset..... what kind of penance is he concealing in his heart?!

Moreover, he's very young at the moment, but somehow he feels a lot older!

"Kid, you're something special!" The man in black slowly stated.

"Do you still think that I'm not qualified to sit here?" Jun Mo Xie asked without looking up as he continued to focus on his drink.

"In terms of your age, your Xuan Qi is low since your meridians have suffered heavy damages, which is resulting in your abnormal cultivation level. So in terms of Xuan Qi, you're ordinary, but being able to drink alone in front of me while being able to maintain such a mind-frame isn't an ordinary feat; even the most experienced men are unable to do such a thing."

The man in black exposed a rare smiled. "Moreover, it seems that you're even more desolate than I am; but it's very interesting to know that someone could get so lonely at such a young age!"

"We're in the same boat." Jun Mo Xie looked up at him coldly: "You were special enough for me to borrow your desolation, which enabled to me enjoy my drink; but now I'm unable to. If you had continued to drink alone, then I would have continued to enjoy mine, but now that taste has changed, and has become rancid."

Jun Mo Xie stood up and produced a silver coin: "Interesting people can also get boring in time. You really shouldn't have spoken first... there are many curious people in this world, and now you've just added yourself to that list." Jun Mo Xie walked away without looking back again. But before he left, he said a few more words: "Since you've acknowledged my qualification, I must stand up now...."

The man in black suddenly remembered Jun Mo Xie's earlier words: ".....as for the subject on qualifications, if I feel that our standards aren't matching, and if I sense that you aren't capable of drinking with me, then I will naturally stand up!"

The black-clothed man's face immediately changed. Did this kid just imply that I'm not qualified to drink with him?

I am the Solitary Falcon; and ever since I've risen to fame, no one has ever dared to act like this in front of me. And now this boy just implied that I wasn't even qualified to drink with him, and then mocked me right before he left.....

This is a strange felling....

Then the Solitary Falcon recalled what Jun Mo Xie had just said, and started smiling again: We were indeed curious about each other, but then I opened by mouth first. Answering my question could have led to the collapse of his mind frame. If my words disrupted his drinking and upset him, then his actions were plausible.

Boy! Even if you don't know who I am, I will still remember you!

The Solitary Falcon had always been proud and aloof, and had always aimed for the skies; 'the Falcon of the Savanna' had never considered any man to be his equal; he had always despised others, and had always gone about his ways without bothering about the opinions of others. But he never expected that he'd also be looked down upon one day!

There was a big difference in the ages of the two men, and moreover, their Xuan Qi levels were simply beyond comparison, but even then this young man had insulted him....

And after looking down upon him, Jun Mo Xie hadn't even explained his reasons! This had left the man feeling very dejected, and had angered the Solitary Falcon's heart.

After three days, I will return to make trouble for you! We'll see how qualified I am then! The Solitary Falcon laughed inwardly as he continued to eat and drink.

Soon enough I'll have the last laugh!

Jun Mo Xie was walking with a sense of pride in his heart.

The hitman Jun didn't know who that man in black was; neither had Jun Mo Xie been able to understand his true intentions!

In fact, ever since the Jun Mo Xie had laid eyes on the Solitary Falcon, he had figured that the man was something unusual. At the time when the man had successfully identified Old Song's Xuan Qi level, Jun Mo Xie's suspicion had been confirmed. Jun Mo Xie's 'Art of unlocking the Heaven's fortune' was beyond Old Song's comprehension, but the man in black had realized something unusual about Jun Mo Xie. Jun Mo Xie was conversely also able to sense that the man was at least the base of Spirit Xuan realm.

Moreover, Jun Mo Xie could sense a familiar felling of desolation which this man's body was exuding; and then when the two men made eye contact, Jun Mo Xie could feel the composure and pride of his mind.

Obviously Jun Mo Xie had understood that this man had arrived in the Tian Xiang City to seek the Xuan Core, but he had also sensed that this man had another purpose; a purpose which may not revolve around the Xuan Core!

Even though Jun Mo Xie was unable to understand his true intentions, he could sense that the Xuan Core probably didn't have much value to this man....

But nonetheless, it still felt as if the man would try to use all means to procure the Xuan Core!

So in the end, this man was eventually to be driven in Jun Mo Xie's direction in search of the Xuan Core!

Jun Mo Xie had been looking to catch the man's attention without actually attracting interest from him, which is why Jun Mo Xie had choreographed his character very carefully in front of that man. He had intentionally ignored the man, while enjoying his company in order to make the man curious, which would tempt the man into breaking the silence... and eventually he would make the man feel despised....

The eccentric are always odd; so one should always do the opposite of what's expected. Not so proud now, huh? Now I'm more proud than you are! You don't enjoy your solitude? Then you cannot be more desolate than me! I'm the only one in this world who comes from another!

For now, Jun Mo Xie's plan had been successful, and the Solitary Falcon still hadn't realized that the entire scene had been choreographed by Jun Mo Xie....

Therefore, Jun Mo Xie started planning on his course of action for the contest with Old Song in three days' time.....