

## **E Monarch 181**

### Chapter 181 – Masters in Confrontation

The Third Elder's face was clearly reflecting his confidence now that his two brothers were standing next to him. Their biggest enemy tonight was Shi Chang Xiao, but as long as the three of them were together, they were sure that they wouldn't fall short of him; however, the present situation had become far more volatile than they had initially expected!

Firstly, the strength of the man in the black mask was unpredictable, but moreover, they weren't just opposed by Shi Chang Xiao alone, but the Solitary Falcon as well. On top of that, several of the Li Wu Bei's disciples had also shown up, and then the Yu Tang Empire's Imperial Teacher Fei Meng Chen also had a squad of six Sky Xuan experts standing behind him!

This situation was most unexpected!

Moreover, this situation was extremely delicate.

The weakest in strength amongst them all was Jun Mo Xie, who was audaciously and arrogantly eyeing the others while holding the Peak Level Nine Xuan Core in his hands. The three Elders from the Silver Blizzard City were standing on one end, while Fei Meng Chen was standing on the other. As the periphery of the battlefield extended, the Solitary Falcon and Shi Chang Xiao were stationed confrontationally.

The ten determined disciple of the Li Wu Bei, and the six Sky Xuan assistants of Shi Chang Xiao were standing in the outer most encirclement! The weakest amongst this entire line up was at least as strong as the peak of Earth Xuan.

Standing in the middle of such encirclement was a matter of honor and prestige, but also a matter of grave desperation. However Jun Mo Xie's mind was only brimming with excitement.

Finally all the competitors have arrived in one place!

Now, it's time for me to throw away this Xuan Core and run!

I may not be able to fight in this battle, but I'm definitely the best when it comes to escaping out of here!

Jun Mo Xie's eyes flickered since he was just about to move into action, but then he suddenly changed his mind since he saw four flickering lights approaching from a distance at a very fast pace.

Out of these four individuals, Jun Mo Xie could actually recognize two!

Xiao Han, and Mu Xue Tong!

There was a young, crooked-nosed man beside Xiao Han, while Mu Xue Tong seemed to be accompanying a picturesque white-robed maiden; her hair were white like the clouds, her skin was as white as snow, and her face was delicate and beautiful. Her big round eyes seemed quite excited at the sight of this gathering of peerless experts.

They arrived in a few moments; Mu Xue Tong quickly extended his arm and pulled out an umbrella, and placed above the young maiden's head. There was a picture of a black bear on the umbrella's surface.....

The three Elders of the Silver Blizzard City starting whining inwardly the moment they saw her approaching. Ah, why did she have to come here when we're in so much trouble already! Is no one going to take pity on our life today?

Another bolt of lightning illuminated the sky for a moment, clearly exposing the nervous faces of everyone present.

Shi Chang Xiao's eye scanned the entire gathering, but eventually came to a halt upon the Solitary Falcon's face: "Falcon, do you really want this Xuan Core? I have always believed that there is only one man amongst us all who doesn't care about materialistic objects.... And that man is you; the Solitary Falcon!"

As long as he was able to convince the Solitary Falcon to stay out, the Xuan Core was his for the taking! Shi Chang Xiao was sure of being able to fight away anyone one else; even the three Elders of the Silver Blizzard City!

“Nonsense! This Xuan Core is such a rare item, so what’s so surprising about my interest in it? Don’t you want it too? Did you just come out in the rain for a bath?” the Solitary Falcon smiled in ridicule: “Shi Chang Xiao! You’re such a disappointment! I’ve come here all this way to fight you; and since you and your stinking arrogance have showed up here today, I’m going to have some fun!”

Shi Chang Xiao started fuming with anger!

Do you really believe that I’m a madman like you who thinks that fighting is fun? Ah, first you consider yourself to be one of the ‘Eight Great Masters’ and then you start talking like a scoundrel in the middle of a town?

Besides, couldn’t you have picked a better timing for pulling me away for a fight? Do you think I’m in a comfortable position here? What am I supposed to do about that Xuan Core, huh?

“Ha ha, who wants that Xuan Core? I’ve nothing to do with that Xuan Core!” the Solitary Falcon looked skywards and laughed out loudly. Then he looked around and started counting the number of Spirit Xuan experts present..... One... two.. three... four.....this looks like a fun game today!

“Falcon, if you sit out today, then I’ll agree to fight you on any day in the future!” Shi Chang Xiao smiled coldly as his expressionless eyes stared at the Solitary Falcon through the dense cover of rain: “I’m well aware that this Xuan Core has never been your goal, and I’m more than willing to give you a chance to face me later!”

“To hell with your bargain! You’re only offering this chance for the sake of this Xuan Core! I have no alliance with you, so why should I listen to your request?! I want to fight you today; what option do you have, ah?” The Solitary Falcon stared right back at Shi Chang Xiao, showing no signs of weakness.

Even though the two men were at the peak of the Spirit Xuan realm, but it was evident from their ranking in the list of the ‘Eight Great Masters’ that the Solitary Falcon was marginally weaker than Shi Chang Xiao. However, if the two men actually started battling each other, then there would still be no winner or loser unless the two men decided to battle till only one survived!

Therefore, if the Solitary Falcon was hell-bent on battling Shi Chang Xiao, then the latter would have no other option but to face him in vain!

These 'Eight Great Masters' were practically unbeatable in battle, so much so that even if two or more people were confronted against each other, neither man was sure to lose since either man was capable of escaping away at any time during the fight!

The opportunity of grabbing this Xuan Core could best be described as a 'fleeting' one at the moment, and in case one of the competitors entered into a long drawn battle against an equal, then he was sure to miss out on the Xuan Core!

Especially when Fei Meng Chen and the three Elders of the Silver Blizzard City were eying the prize as well!

Even those Sky Xuan experts, who were no more than ants in the eyes of these Spirit Xuan experts, were looking determined to obtain the Xuan Core!

Moreover, sounds of movement had been coming from a distance for quite some time now. Several more people had been hastily making their way towards the source of the Xuan Core, and these people weren't just limited to Spirit Xuan experts; several Sky Xuan experts, Earth Xuan experts, Jade Xuan experts, and even Gold Xuan experts had burst into action from the distant parts of the city. Since there was an abundance of high-level experts at the center of his scene, most of these people were planning on waiting at a safe distance to investigate and observe the situation; neither stepping forward, nor retreating. They were obviously waiting for an opportunity to steal the treasure, and had long forgotten the limitation of their own strength in the lust for this prize.

The Solitary Falcon's cold eyes scanned the distance through the curtains of rain, seeing everyone regardless of their distance from the main scene; then, he suddenly looked upwards and shouted. His roar filled the sky, almost like the sound of a thunderbolt would have, while the effect of his wild howl suppressed the hearts and desires of many experts in an instant!

Some of the weaker experts amongst these approaching or hiding ones instantly sensed the danger, and their hearts and brain started urging them to scuttle away, while some even stopped in their steads out of fear as their faces went pale from the fear of facing the terror behind this voice!

"I am the Solitary Falcon! And I'm standing opposite to Shi Chang Xiao!" The Solitary Falcon laughed loudly: "For those who've overestimated themselves: act sensibly, or else I'll be happy to knock some into you!"

Almost all of these approaching experts froze in their steads!

Who would have thought that two amongst the 'Eight Great Masters' would actually arrive in the Tian Xiang City on the same day?!

Snatching the Xuan Core from the hands of these two men? What's the difference between that and death? This thought emerged in the minds of several people, and they immediately sighed, turned away, and disappeared into the rain; and away from this competition for the Xuan Core.

However, there were several who refused to return. So what if you guys are actually Spirit Xuan experts? Can't we just wait for you and Shi Chang Xiao to beat each other up, and then steal the Xuan Core when you're lying dead?

There were several who were carrying this idea in their minds.

"That man is the 'Solitary Falcon'? One of the 'Eight Great Masters' of the Xuan Xuan continent? He's so fierce.... and so calm at the same time....." That delicate looking maiden asked in a mischievous sounding tone.

Mu Xue Tong, who was standing beside her, sighed deeply, and replied with a wry smile: "Little Princess, this really isn't the time to be here..... it is too dangerous."

"Mu Xue Tong, are you incapable of protecting the Little Princess?" Xiao Han laughed: "If you're so scared of being here, then why don't you just hand over the responsibility of her protection to me? You're obviously a spineless man!"

Mu Xue Tong grunted as he replied: "The Solitary Falcon and Shi Chang Xiao are present here; if our Silver Blizzard City actually manages to get the Xuan Core, then these two men will likely turn hostile... even the three Elders may not be able to fight those two guys off..... don't you think that we'll end up

getting our heads smashed in then? Can't you see the number of advanced Xuan experts here? Do you really think that a Sky Xuan expert is capable of beating them all?! Idiot!"

Mu Xue Tong's words were obviously very sensible; the strength of the men gathered here was simply too high for a Sky Xuan expert to be lingering around alone; in case a battle actually broke out here, then the result was sure to be a very tragic one.... It was needless to mention the possible fate of Xiao Han, a mere Sky Xuan-base expert, when the fate of the Spirit Xuan experts such as the Third, The Sixth and the Ninth Elder wasn't certain to be very safe....

Xiao Han furiously opened his mouth to ridicule his companion as he scanned the surroundings, but then realized that enormity of the situation, palpitated, and finally swallowed down a mouthful of saliva in silence.

The situation on the field was extremely delicate at the moment; the Xuan Core was in the hands of Jun Mo Xie, who was standing in the middle of the encirclement.... The first layer of encirclement was composed of several opposing parties with the weakest member of the layer being a Sky Xuan expert! The outermost layer consisted of about sixteen more experts, the weakest being an Earth Xuan expert; the strength of the final layer may not be as high in merit, but their sheer number was quite impressive!

This was obviously the most high-ended line-up that Jun Mo Xie had ever seen, in fact, this sort of an opposition was bound to give anyone a headache; even Yun Bei Chen!

However, even though there were so many powerful individuals and groups in this gathering.... No one had the courage to make the first move!

With two peak Spirit Xuan experts facing each other confrontationally, who would have the courage to make a move?

The entire situation was delicate placed in a balance! And such a balance was not good for Jun Mo Xie's interests! He obviously needed to break it!

So I guess it's time to start this 'Battle Royale', ah.

Chapter 182 – The Xuan Core changes hands

Li Wu Bei's ten disciples were simply waiting along the outer periphery for the Three Elders of Silver Blizzard City, the Solitary Falcon, and Shi Chang Xiao to move into action. As long as these five men started fighting, this ten man team would immediately make a move for the Xuan Core, and would then try to escape with it.

They were well aware that they wouldn't be able to fight against some of the best warriors in the world, but were extremely confident that they could succeed in snatching the Xuan Core and escape thereafter, owing to the virtue of their combined strength and team work!

The three Elders of the Silver Blizzard City were thinking the exact same thing, and were waiting for Shi Chang Xiao and Solitary Falcon to start fighting. The moment these two masters started engaging each other in combat, they would no longer be able to obstruct them. The only remaining threat would be Fei Meng Chen, who alone wouldn't be able to stop them from procuring the Xuan Core.

Shi Chang Xiao was caught up in his own dilemma; he was the strongest individual on the scene, and even had seven more experts to assist him if needed. However, he was also aware of the strength of the other parties involved, and was well aware that he couldn't neglect any side's challenge. He could understand that in case he started the fight, then the balance of power would shift against him, and therefore he needed to wait for someone else to start the battle!

Moreover, Solitary Falcon's presence had made the situation even harder for him. Even though he was sure of being able to defeat the Solitary Falcon in battle, he was also aware that he wouldn't be able to grab the Xuan Core in case he was forced into a battle with the man! What's the point of it all if I don't get the Xuan Core? I'm not here for sightseeing.....

Especially now that there are so many experts present on the scene..... even if I am guaranteed to come out of this battle unharmed, the same cannot be presumed for the rest of my team. If a battle breaks out between this mix of powerful experts, then not all of my companions are assured to come out alive. If all my companions end up dying in this battle, then even winning the Xuan Core wouldn't be enough to compensate the loss!

And then there's the situation surrounding the Solitary Falcon's interests.... He's obviously not here for the Xuan Core... moreover, he's alone, and has nothing to lose... he's a war-seeking madman just looking for a good fight.... I'm afraid that he won't let this opportunity slip by.

Even though Shi Chang Xiao was trying very hard to figure out a solution, he still hadn't been able to thus far!

As far as the other Peak Spirit Xuan was concerned, all these people have gathered here for the Xuan Core's sake, and they would all prefer avoiding a fight...unlike me. In case someone was able to snatch that Xuan Core from that Black-masked man's hands, then this will turn into a long-drawn chase, and Shi Chang Xiao is very highly unlikely to pay any attention to me if that happens.

As a result, even though all the parties were quite strong in their own merits, but no one was willing to make the first move.

A husky, ice-cold voice suddenly rang: "Damn it, have all you blockheads been paralyzed or something? Get a move on! I've almost caught a cold because of this rain. Even women aren't so afraid of getting in a fight!"

These audacious words infuriated everyone present. Generally speaking, words were rarely enough to instigate these men, but these bold and courageous words did the trick beautifully!

Everyone's eyes immediately shifted towards the source of the sound, and were rather surprised to realize that it was coming from the center of the encirclement where that black-masked man was standing and shouting excitedly, while his fingers were pointed at the two Peak Spirit Xuan experts.

What's this guy thinking.... He's obviously incapable of defending the Xuan Core, and even then he's intentionally provoking everyone..... is he just ignorant and bold, or simply an idiot?!

"Shut up!" five or six people shouted out at the same time as their nostrils flared up in anger.

"Let me teach you a lesson!" the Solitary Falcon was naturally angrier than anyone else by nature, and flashed forward. His body moved at a ghostly speed and was soon upon the black-masked man's, while his hand was stretched out in order to slap the guy across the face. I've got to teach this moron a lesson! He should know his place!

The third Elder of the Silver Blizzard City stared nervously.



The Solitary Falcon had inevitably started the fight!

The others weren't aware of what the Third Elder had witnessed earlier. This guy is no ordinary man.... even the Solitary Falcon won't be able to defeat him very easily. And in case I'm still underestimating this guy, then I simply can't fathom the Solitary Falcon's fate!

This black-masked man is most likely some super-being; or at least a very high-level mysterious expert!

The thought of those changing Xuan color lights were still sending shivers down the Third Elder's heart! He was well aware that his own Xuan Qi was nowhere near capable of pulling off such stunts! In fact, forget about his own strength, even Han Feng Xue wasn't powerful enough to do something like that!

However, the Third Elder was also aware that he wouldn't be able to deal with the Solitary Falcon, and hence didn't mind the fact that his enemy was walking into a trap, which would most likely result in misfortune for the said-man. He simply stood there and waited for the Solitary Falcon to get the shock!

However.....

The mysterious black-masked man frantically tried to dodge instead, "Pop!" a crisp sound was issued as the Solitary Falcon's hand slapped the man's chest, "Ah!... I ....." the man cried out in fear as his body was sent out flying in the air, almost like a broken kite as he started shouting: "Help ah..... somebody save me... spare my life....."

Everyone was left shell-shocked! Each pair of eyes were practically coming out of their sockets at the moment, What is going on?! He was acting so boldly..... like he was a peerless expert, and now he's actually screaming for help.....

The most surprising part was that this black-masked man had actually gotten rid of the Xuan Core in the hope of blocking the strike, and had been unable to retrieve it before flying out under the effect of the strike.....and now that Xuan Core was slowly falling into the Solitary Falcon's hands.....

The Solitary Falcon suddenly felt an enormous and surging Xuan Qi field falling into his hands, and he suddenly found his fingers subconsciously clutching the Xuan Core.

He had never expected that his slap would actually land on the man's body! That masked-man had been holding the Xuan Core in his hands, and had been standing in the middle of so many peerless experts in a very calm and composed manner for a very long time now. Moreover, he had even managed to muster the courage to openly and brazenly curse everyone present, including his own self and Shi Chang Xiao. The Solitary Falcon was expecting this man to be an expert in his own merit.

Truth be told, the Solitary Falcon hadn't attacked this man in order to procure the Xuan Core, but because he desired to combat this mysterious expert. In fact, contrary to looking down upon this man, the Solitary Falcon had been rating him very highly!

Thus, the Solitary Falcon had concealed his other hand behind his back, and was preparing to use it to strike the man once the man had blocked his first strike.

This hidden palm strike was an extremely powerful and dangerous one.

But compared to this hidden strike, the first strike was only a superficial one, and was only intended to divert the man's attention rather than sending him flying in the air!

The Solitary Falcon was left completely confused to see that black-masked man flying out under the effect of his strike, that was too easy, wasn't it? I thought he was going to be a very good opponent.... But he turned out to be completely useless!

Then, he gently raised his hand and looked at the Xuan Core he was undeservedly holding in his hands; it was a while before he was able to find his words: "I.....huh!"

Out of all the people who had gathered here, the Solitary Falcon was the only who wasn't seeking the Xuan Core, and now, by a hilarious twist of fate...beyond all expectations, he was the one in possession of the Xuan Core!

And he had succeeded in doing so with too much ease!

This change of events had left even everyone startled; so much so that even Shi Chang Xiao's mouth was hung open in shock!

Who would have actually thought that the black-masked man would turn out to be a silver colored wax candle?!

Even wax candles don't melt before a certain temperature.... This man is far too useless for that comparison!

Even though the Solitary Falcon was one of the 'Eight Great Masters', his strike was so superficial that anyone present could have blocked it with ease!

As a result, everyone was left repenting their fate!

Naturally, no one would dare to attack the Solitary Falcon in haste; not even Shi Chang Xiao. Attacking this man in haste would be tantamount to courting one's death!

As a result, everyone's eyes followed after the flying shadow of that mysterious and useless man, hoping that he would land in front of them so that they could beat and cut him to pieces. Their faces were clearly reflecting their hatred for the man!

Damn it! He was actually completely powerless? Ah.... I lost my opportunity because of him!

I wish I had attacked that man instead of the Solitary Falcon! ...he was too easy a target!

As the eyes of everyone stared after his flying body, the black-masked man quietly and suddenly disappeared into thin air!

Was this kid made of paper.... Did he actually die in just one strike?

A large human body had just disappeared into thin air in front of two Peak Spirit Xuan experts, four Spirit Xuan experts, almost twenty Sky Xuan experts, and a few Earth Xuan peaks! And they were all under the impression that it was due to the Solitary Falcon's attack!

"Snap!" A crisp and clear sound was issued.

No one had yet been able to recover from this first shock as their eyes subconsciously refocused to origination point of this new sound, and found its destination in the Silver Blizzard City's Third Elder's direction, who had just extended his arm and had managed to slap his own face!

The crisp, loud, and melodious sound had come as music to several ears!

Now what?

The Sixth and the Ninth Elder came forward and asked in a concerned tone: "What happened Third Bother?"

The Third, the Sixth and the Ninth Elder had always maintained a very good relation, and an even better understanding!

"Uh.... Nothing.... Too many mosquitos here." The Third Elder replied in an embarrassing tone.

Some people practically fainted on the spot!

Rain is pouring down on a late autumn evening; the Solitary Falcon is holding the Xuan Core at the moment; and he's more worried about the mosquitoes.....?! Since when did mosquitoes become so dangerous?

Little could anyone imagine the plight of the Third Elder's heart!

Chapter 183 – Qing Han's fury

That guy was nothing! I had him to myself earlier, I just needed to extend my arm and grab that Xuan Core.... And then I could have easily returned to the Silver Blizzard City.... I would have been able to achieve my target so easily!

I can't believe I allowed that guy to fool me!

I knew that such a feat wasn't possible... those changing Xuan Qi colors didn't make any sense... how did I get fooled by it?

I'm the world's biggest idiot ah! Damn it! Damn me.....

Whilst the Third Elder was busy repenting and redressing his mistakes, all the other experts were nervously staring at the Solitary Falcon, afraid that in case he decided to flee from the spot with all his strength then no one would be able to catch up with him; not even Shi Chang Xiao!

Shi Chang Xiao furiously roared, and then suddenly plunged into the sky like a soaring dragon: "Falcon! You wanted to fight me ah? Let's fight!"

Raindrops started scattering away from his body under the effect of his enormous Xuan Qi, and started crashing against the faces of the other people present!

The Solitary Falcon laughed loudly as he tucked the Xuan Core into his robes: "Good, let's go!" he stretched out his arms like a hawk and his body started to rise up in the sky as well!

The two Peak Spirit Xuan masters had formally acknowledged their confrontation!

Fei Meng Chen, the Three Elders of the Silver Blizzard City, Shi Chang Xiao's six helpers, and Li Wu Bei's ten disciples simultaneously leaped into the sky, and flashed forward at ghostly speeds; all of them converged at one point: The Solitary Falcon!

The Solitary Falcon laughed as he roared: "This is going to be fun!" He didn't hold anything back, 'bang', a loud explosion sounded as fragments of his Xuan Qi burst out of his body, and sent everyone scattering and flying outwards. The Solitary Falcon remained standing his ground, upright... ready for a battle!

~ The Jun Residence ~

Guan Qing Han's mind was heavy with thoughts as she walked towards her courtyard. The events of this day had been like a pipe-dream for her; her heart had felt absolute desperation and desolation at one moment, and the next moment she was left feeling happy and content.

Although my own father abandoned me in my hour of need, but since I have such a great Uncle, and such an amazing Brother-in-law, why should I be afraid of anything? It's like Mo Xie said..... a life of shame has no meaning!

Is the Xue Hun Manor really invincible? Even if they really are undefeatable.... They can only kill us..... and I won't have to worry about the complexities of this world in my death; so why should I fear death!

"I couldn't have imagined that he would have such a heroic spirit within him. He has proved that he is a true son of the Jun Family! And he had proved that he is Mo You's younger brother. If Mo You was here today.... Would he have made the same choice? Yes, of course... there's no doubt about it."

Qing Han's heart wasn't feeling as uncomfortable thinking about Mo You as it used to... the pain of her heart seemed a bit... very distant now.....

She was walking with her head down, and didn't realize that she was almost about to bump into a person.

A burly figure was standing in front of her courtyard's doorstep.

This man was her biological father; Guan Dong Liu!

Guan Dong Liu's clothes were drenched since he had been standing in the rain for quite a while now. Even though his face was cold, his sad eyes were enough to express the pain of his heart as he looked at his daughter, but was unable to say anything to her.

Qing Han stared back at him in silence, unable to find any words to start a conversation with, and hence this father-daughter duo stood motionlessly in the rain, caught in a strange and wordless world of their own desolation.

A bolt of lightning lit up the courtyard for a split second, revealing the traces of sadness and concern on Guan Dong Liu's face.

Guan Qing Han was suddenly reminded of her childhood days, and how her father used to worry about her well-being, and suddenly her heart turned soft. Her ice-cold expression melted in an instant as she opened her mouth and whispered: "Daddy....."

"Qing Han, do you blame your daddy?" Guan Dong Liu looked at his daughter through the rain which was pouring over his head.

Qing Han blankly shook her head as an empty feeling overtook her heart.

"I don't blame you, father." She deliriously raved, "You're my father; but before that.... you're Guan Family's master. And as the master of the family, you have to bear the burden of thousands of lives and their fates on your shoulder. I understand the problem of your position, daddy....."

Guan Dong Liu sighed as he sadly bowed his head, but then raised his head again, revealing his pain-stricken but firm eyes: "Qing Han, your father obviously feels sorry for you, however, if I ever had a chance to go back in time and.....I... I....."

Guan Dong Liu's deep eyes were clearly exposing the intense struggle which was taking place inside his heart as he finally finished his sentence: "..... I would still make the same choice! Since I'm the master of the family.... I will probably never be able to be a good father to you, but I ....."

Guan Qing Han shook her head: " ..... Don't say that... don't...." she suddenly realized that her father was getting wet in the rain, and quickly said: "Daddy, let's go inside and talk."

"No, let's talk right here... in the rain. At least I feel sober in the rain..... I have a lot of things to say, but I don't know if I'll be able to say them if we go inside!" Guan Dong Liu smiled bitterly: "About the Xue Hun Manor and this entire matter..... even though it won't matter now, but there are a few more things that I thought that you should know....."

Guan Qing Han sighed and said: "Please tell me father....."

“At the time when we received that proposal from the Xue Hun manor, several Elders advised me to agree to the proposal immediately.” Guan Dong Liu painfully closed his eyes and looked upwards at the sky, unable to look at his daughter’s pale face anymore, “We aren’t capable of provoking the Xue Hun Manor, but in case you were to marry Li Teng Yun, then our family would have been able to build a good relationship with them and we would have been able to climb up the ladders, which not only would not have brought the family any harm, but would have worked out in the Family’s best interests.....”

Guan Qing Han softly bit her lips, and grunted while her eyes started to deepen with anger; the previous ice-cold expression of her face had been restored now.

“There were two separate opinions on this matter within our house as well; Qing Bo has always been ambitious, and has wanted to dominate the entire south-east region as well, and thus he urged me to respond in agreement.” Guan Dong Liu’s voice became even softer: “Qing Yue and your mother insisted that I don’t agree to the proposal; your mother..... Your mother has been bathing her face in tears every day since.....”

Qing Han’s delicate body started shivering, and tears gushed out of her eyes while her shoulders sunk in.

“Later, the Xue Hun manor put forth another condition.” Guan Dong Liu was gazing at a distance: “They added that even though you will be married into their family, you wouldn’t receive the title of the ‘first wife’, but you would still receive the same treatment otherwise. Qing Bo met with Li Jue Tian to counter this proposal, but he was denied!”

Guan Dong Liu’s tone of speech was enough to indicate his sorrows: “Thereafter, Qing Bo, Qing Yue, and I travelled to the Tian Xiang City to talk to you.....”

“I don’t even know what I am in the eyes of the family..... a commodity? Or perhaps a bargaining chip? Something they can just trade for the family’s growth? Is that all I am?!”

Qing Han smiled desolately: “I didn’t object when these two families decided to get engaged! Although I didn’t know about Mo You’s heroic temperament then, and I didn’t know if he would ever shame or humiliate me, but I still couldn’t object either way; because this decision was the Family’s to make, and I wasn’t given a choice. After I met him three times, I realized that he was very noble man, and I started liking his nature. And I was indeed very pleased with the family for making this decision, and I was very grateful to you for arranging this marriage.....”



Guan Dong Liu seemed to be aware of what she was going to say, and hence he just bowed his head down.

“But later when Mo You died for the country... he died a hero! And yes, I would have spent a lifetime as his widow! And even though I was already prepared to spend my life as his widow, and even though I was already preparing to convince you and mother about it, along with the Elders of the family; at that time, the Elders actually unanimously decided that I should spend my life as a widow in the Jun Family! The reason being that the Guan Family didn’t want to lose the Jun Family’s patronage! Being the Guan Family’s daughter, I was used as an investment!”

Guan Qing Han laughed in mockery: “At that time, even though they tried to force me into it, I didn’t object because I wanted to do the same anyway.... But I was doing it in the memory of my husband, whereas the Family was simply using me as a bargaining chip... a tool to maintain the relationship between the two families! I had never felt so ashamed in my entire life!”

“Shamed! A girl’s most beautiful dream had been shattered, but even then her widowhood was being used to as a commodity by her family!”

“Father, as yourself, how many times has the Guan Family used the Jun Family’s influence and assistance to expand their control and business in these last few years?! And now that the wind is going against us, and there’s another Family, more powerful than the Jun Family, the Elders of the Guan Family have actually immediately agreed to change their stance? And now they are asking me to remarry?!”

“Daddy, what kind of reasoning is this? Isn’t it enough for them to force me into marriage once? Aren’t I someone else’s daughter now? And moreover, I’m the daughter-in-law of their own benefactors! And now they want to sell their benefactor’s daughter as well?!”

Chapter 184 – I want to act as a father

A strange fusion of anger and sadness made up Qing Han’s tone.

“Even though I’m spending my life as a widow in the Jun Family, I’m still given the status of a ‘daughter-in-law’. But if I marry into the Li Family, then I will become a concubine! If Yun Bei Chen takes a shine to me someday, then the Li Family will simply send me off to him to be his concubine.... Slaves don’t have

opinions; they are slaves! And the Guan Family will probably approve of it as well because Yun Bei Chen is more powerful than Li Jue Tian, and an alliance with him will be more beneficial for the Guan Family!”

“The head of the Family will still be thinking about the family?! Daddy, how could our family have no shame at all?! How can they not see my dishonor! I would rather live in the Jun Family as a widowed daughter-in-law than live a life of such shame! And never for such shameless people’s cause!”

“I would rather let the Guan Family die as heroes before I allow a useless bunch of white-haired old men to beg the powers of this world for pity!”

Guan Qing Han’s final sentence almost exploded out of her mouth.

Guan Dong Liu stood blankly staring at his daughter, his face reveling in the pain of this conversation. Even though his body was still as burly as ever, but his body-language didn’t reflect it.

He had no answer for his daughter’s sharp words; none at all. His heart was riddled with guilt and shame, and he started biting his teeth as a painful spasm overtook his entire body!

“As a daughter, I just want to know what my father has planned for now.....” Guan Qing Han looked at her father again; her voice sounded even more desolate, weak, but was still showing her anger.....

“Jun Wu Yi has already answered that question!” Guan Dong Liu smiled sadly: “As things are at the moment..... even if we withdraw this marriage, we’ll only be able to send you to the Li Family over the corpses of the Jun Family!”

Guan Dong Liu exposed a self-deprecating smile: “I may be Guan Dong Liu.... The master of the Guan Family.... But I can’t touch the Jun Family.... Or the Li Family.”

“Moreover, it is as you said earlier.... The Jun Family is our benefactor, and I will not kick my benefactor in the teeth!”

Guan Dong Liu’s voice suddenly strengthened up: “This was my decision; I decided to renounce my own daughter for the welfare of my family! I didn’t even act when the Jun Family decided to rise up to

protect you! I agreed to allow the Xue Hun Manor to insult and dishonor my daughter! I've wronged you for a lifetime.... Because I chose to look at the future of the family first, but now I want to....."

"I want to act as a father!" Guan Dong Liu's face stiffened up, and his blood-red eyes started to shine while his pupils dilated.

"I want to act as father again!"

Guan Dong Liu's heart suddenly felt a burst of ease as he stated this sentence; almost as if he had suddenly unloaded a heavy burden off his heart!

Screw life and death!

That Jun boy was right.... If a family has no backbone, then they will just linger around the death's door for ever... what's the point of such a survival?!

"Daddy!" Guan Qing Han's entire body vibrated as she looked at her father again; but with a pleasantly surprised look in her eyes this time.

Guan Dong Liu smiled profoundly as he nodded: "Qing Han, the Jun aren't the only men in this world; the Guan are also men!"

Guan Qing Han's face exposed a proud look as she spoke up: "I never knew that my father would have such an indomitable spirit inside him....."

Guan Dong Liu forced a wry smile as he said: "Your little Brother-in-law's curse was surely very ruthless, but thanks to him.... Your father now understands that there are a few things in this world that are more important than the 'big picture'."

He laughed twice, but then asked in a confused tone: "You've told me a lot about him, but your young brother-in-law is nothing like the debauchee you said he was?"

Guan Qing Han's face suddenly reddened as she was unable to find her words again: "Daddy... don't make fun of me..... he's changed a lot recently... he's nothing like the guy he used to be earlier.... He's become a real man now."

Guan Dong Liu smiled playfully: "Is that so? So because he scolded your dad, you've suddenly started to respect him?"

Guan Qing Han suddenly reverted back to being a spoilt young girl again, and started throwing tantrums: "I hate you daddy!"

Guan Dong Liu broke into laughter.

"Daddy, come in else you'll catch a cold in this autumn rain." Guan Qing Han suddenly realized her father's plight.

"Ah, and now you're finally caring about me? The rain has already seeped into your daddy's old bones now." Guan Dong Liu laughed jokingly: "However, this rain was good for me! It won me back my daughter's heart and it also woke me up from my slumber.... I was about to trade my own daughter's innocence for my family's survival..... such a survival was no better than life anyway." He finished his sentence, looked at his daughter lovingly once again, and then turned around.

His burly body braved through the rain and wind, one step at a time, but each step was stable and firm!

Guan Qing Han's eyes blurred once again.....

A few meters away, Jun Wu Yi was standing quietly in a corner with rigid line creasing his face. He smiled to himself as he said in an undertone: "Guan Dong Liu, you've only been Guan Dong Liu to me till now.... but now you're a qualified father, and an iron-blooded man in my eyes!"

His eyes gazed at a distance through the curtains of rain: "Jun Mo Xie left at such a weird timing.....Why do I feel that something big is about to happen? Why hasn't he returned yet? I don't know what to do with my nephew... he's really strange... I allowed him to work free of my authority, but he becomes more mysterious with each passing day!"

He sighed as light flashed from his body, and then he disappeared without a trace.

.....

The black-masked man, young master Jun had flown out of the encirclement under the effect of the Solitary Falcon's strike, but had managed to conveniently drop the Xuan Core into his attacker's hand before being thrown away.

His body was almost about to ram into a tree, but Jun Mo Xie immediately used the Yin Yang escape method and disappeared in front of everyone's eyes, and resurfaced away from everyone's notice. He was sitting clutching his chest at the moment.

After all, he had been struck by a Peak Spirit Xuan! Even though the Solitary Falcon's strike was only a superficial one in his eyes, but his strike was still powerful enough to cause extreme discomfort to Jun Mo Xie's body, and had left him with a feeling of nausea.

Even though Jun Mo Xie wasn't injured very seriously, but his body was still under a shock!

Damn that Falcon! I'm going to get back at him for this one day! Jun Mo Xie was silently cursing the man as he watched the fight unfold in front of his eyes!

Jun Mo Xie continued to watch the fight from a distance with a frowning face, while his mouth would mummer in silence from time to time, I never intended to cause such a big battle.....

Jun Mo Xie hadn't actually intended on starting such a fierce battle, and had only planned on causing some chaos at the most. His main intention was to check his idea surrounding the 'Xuan Core fakes' for future use.

Of course, had this matter surrounding the Xue Hun Manor not surfaced at this time, then Jun Mo Xie would have planned this more carefully, and would have waited until he was ready with a foolproof plan instead. Moreover, he would have also waited for more experts to gather in the city before making this move. After all, this hasty occurrence of the Xuan Core so shortly after its theft was more likely to raise skepticism in the minds of most people.

But the affair surrounding the Xue Hun Manor had disrupted Jun Mo Xie's plans, and although the threat from the Li Family wasn't very imminent, but it was like that bomb in one's backside which could detonate at any time. Therefore, Jun Mo Xie threw out this fake Xuan Core ahead of scheduled time, and was now left with no other option but to watch it bear an undesired fruit. Had he delayed the plan any further, then it could have hindered the safety of the Guan and the Jun Family.

At the moment, Shi Chang Xiao was preparing to launch an attack on the Solitary Falcon, whilst keeping his guard against the three Elders of the Silver Blizzard City, who were also lingering around the Solitary Falcon, same as the ten disciples of the Li Wu Bei, and the six Sky Xuan helping hands of Shi Chang Xiao. They were all circling him from a distance with no man willing to go any closer without a backup.

They weren't exactly afraid of his high Xuan Qi, but more of his expertise in general. The man in the middle of the encirclement was so quick that no expert lesser than a Sky Xuan peak was capable of lasting against him for more than a second.

The ten disciples of Li Wu Bei, whom Li You Ran had invited to contest for this Xuan Core seemed more than willing to confront these two supreme beings without any traces of fear in their eyes; in fact, they looked rather confident at the moment!

Since the speed of the fighters was too fast, Jun Mo Xie was only vaguely able to see their shadows, but couldn't tell the men apart.

Suddenly, almost a dozen figures converged to attack the Solitary Falcon again. Solitary Falcon's Xuan Qi burst out of his body as he fearlessly shouted: "Come!" then, his body arched strangely like a hawk in mid-air as he first dodged Shi Chang Xiao's attack, and then rotated mid-air again, and kicked-out!

Shi Chang Xiao was forced to recoil backwards!

And, Shi Chang Xiao was left roaring furiously!

Although he was the first one to launch an attack, but he was a Peak Spirit Xuan at the end of the day! Moreover, he was ranked above the Solitary Falcon! If he was unable to kill the Solitary Falcon in this siege, then the rumors would start spreading that he was beneath the Solitary Falcon; especially considering that he had other people assisting him!

The bad name that this one rumor would bring would be.... Irredeemable!

After all, people would only ask one thing: why did he allow so many shrimps to intervene in a battle between two whales?

#### Chapter 185 – A tragedy of exceptional speed

Shi Chang Xiao grunted; his powerful voice resounded through the sky, and it seemed as if it had startled the rain. It appeared as if an invisible wave had hammered the pouring rain away from his body, and towards the rest of the crowd.....

Shi Chang Xiao had just been repelled by the Solitary Falcon's counter-attack, and had been forced to retreat a short distance. However, he had immediately extended his arms and had cast out this new and strange move almost immediately.....

Everyone felt a strange nip in the air, and immediately retreated backwards, and away from the Solitary Falcon's body due this extremely strange feeling!

Shi Chang Xiao powerful move wasn't intended to hurt the Solitary Falcon, but only to ward off the other experts away from him, and succeeded in carrying his plan out to perfection since the other experts were too afraid to get caught in the scope of his fierce move, and were forced to retreat.

Two silhouettes swiftly drifted away to a tree about forty or fifty feet away from the center of the combat, and quietly positioned themselves on its top branch amidst this chaotic movement.

The Hongjun Pagoda was still revolving at full speed and was still providing energy to Jun Mo Xie's body as he tried to recover from the shock of the Solitary Falcon's strike. Jun Mo Xie almost jumped up the moment he saw this action taking place on the battlefield: finally! My plan can already be considered half-successful, but I still don't know if.....

Shi Chang Xiao's angry and powerful strike had sent everyone scuttling away to safety, so much so that even the three Elders of the Silver Blizzard City, all Spirit Xuan experts in their own merit had decided to retreat immediately; even Li Wu Bei's disciples were left with no choice but to retreat since they also

knew that weren't capable of facing a Peak Spirit Xuan's explosive strength head-on, and were forced to resign into blankly staring at each other in despair.

The remaining Spirit Xuan expert, Fei Meng Chen wasn't looking any better either. He had also been targeting striking the Solitary Falcon like everyone else, and was only a fingertip away when Shi Chang Xiao's violent strike forced him to retreat backwards due to fear of injury. Even though he managed to escape unharmed, he was still left cursing his subordinate in authority.

But the most unfortunate was the sixth brother amongst the ten acquaintances of Li You Ran!

Because his speed was too quick!

He had rushed in like everyone else to take advantage of the situation; however, the man was even faster than the three Elders of the Silver Blizzard City and Fei Meng Chen; the man was actually faster than Spirit Xuan experts! Li Wu Bei must have indeed been proud of his disciple's speed and agility!

But therein lay his biggest mistake..... he was too fast!

He was almost upon the Solitary Falcon at the time when Shi Chang Xiao went berserk, forcing his unknowing backups, the four Spirit Xuan experts away from the Solitary Falcon!

Because he was too fast, he was somehow able to escape Shi Chang Xiao's attack's scope; but inwards rather than outwards!

Because he was too fast, he was now placed in the same vacuum zone as the Solitary Falcon and Shi Chang Xiao; alone, without any backups! And to make matters worse, he was so quick that he had actually managed to reach the Solitary Falcon before anyone else, and simply had no place to go now!

At this moment, even though his mind had already started to panic from the surprise of the situation, but his hands were still moving in their previously intended direction, and were nimbly making their into the Solitary Falcon's pocket.....



An exceptional trait may not always be the best thing..... this exceptionally agile man was an excellent example of this truth!

Solitary Falcon was obviously very disappointed by Shi Chang Xiao's move, which had forced everyone to drop their plan of attacking him, and then he suddenly realized that one bold and fearless hand was reaching into his pocket to extract the Xuan Core! This obviously made the Solitary Falcon angrier!

If any man from the entire Xuan Xuan continent was ever successfully able to pick-pocket one of the 'Eight Great Masters'..... This news would bring the Solitary Falcon more shame than actually dying in battle facing a weaker man; it would turn him into a laughing stock!

If it hadn't been for Shi Chang Xiao's intervention, this exceptionally fast man would have actually been able to succeed in his attempt undetected! He had selected the most appropriate time to execute this stealth move; his timing was nothing short of perfection!

Moreover, once he had succeeded, he could have easily escaped away since the only person who would notice this theft, the Solitary Falcon, would have been forced to repel four Spirit Xuan experts! '..... one of the 'Eight Great Masters' was robbed by a pick-pocket.... This news would have shocked the entire world!'

Hence, one could obviously understand the Solitary Falcon's rage.....

The Sixth Brother was obviously aware of his own exceptional speed, and knew that he was even faster than an average Peak Sky Xuan expert, but he was completely unaware that the Solitary Falcon was as fast..... in his own league. The only difference was.... The Solitary Falcon was a Peak Spirit Xuan expert!

He was only vaguely able to see Solitary Falcon's hand extending to grab his wrist, which was followed by a snapping sound made by his shattering hand, post which the Solitary Falcon released his wrist and then slapped his waist, and then moved his hand upwards to tilt the man's head backwards. The usually agile and nimble man wasn't even able to offer even a shred-worth's resistance in front of the Solitary Falcon's speed and strength, and ended up turning into a punching doll for the Solitary Falcon.

The Solitary Falcon was completely indifferent to the life and death of such sideshows, and simply threw the death body, sending it spinning like a windmill in the direction of deceased's remaining companions.

The nine people reached out to grab their falling brother, but the rotation speed of their brother's dead body was too fast from them to catch him, and several of these nine men were sent flying down to the ground under the force of the collision, along with their dead companion. The dead body of the Sixth Brother fell to the ground and continued to spin on the ground for a while, splashing and spraying the water in all directions like a beautiful and colorful fountain before finally coming to a stop under the effect of the friction from the turf underneath!

His companions quickly approached their fallen comrade, and were left shrieking angrily after seeing the plight of their brother's body.

It can be awfully difficult to imagine the dead body of a man spinning like a windmill; but it was even worse to see it after it had stopped spinning!

His arms had been broken in more than seventy eight places under the effect of the Solitary Falcon's powerful grip; his legs had been folded backwards since the slap on his waist had completely shattered his hip bone, along with his Dan Tian, while his head was turned backwards. Even if the man had survived these strikes, he would have been left worse than paralyzed!

There is no problem with courage as it is, or with hoping to take advantage of a situation, but the one rash mistake that this man had made was that: he hadn't been able to interpret that he was contesting against a man far beyond his league.

The leader of the platoon, Lei Jian Hong howled in grief and indignation, stood up and thundered: "Solitary Falcon! You're ruthless! And since you've killed our brother, we will see to it that you die an even worse death!"

The Solitary Falcon obviously wasn't in a very good mood at the moment, and therefore cursed back: "Go to your mother! This guy dared to offend me, and so he deserves what he got! If you also dare to annoy me, then Li Wu Bei will lose more disciples today!"

The hearts of the remaining nine people puffed up with rage, but they suppressed their anger anyway. There was nothing they could do against this man right now. In case they attacked him as recklessly as their brother had, then the Solitary Falcon was more than capable of killing all nine of them as well. Naturally, their best plan of action would be to temporarily endure the pain of their loss, and then slowly channel that anger into plotting their revenge.

Moreover, it was rather obvious that offending the sanctity a Peak Spirit Xuan would come with a considerable price to pay!

“Falcon, this fight is too boring, it’s not as much fun as you and me alone. So how about you and I join hands and sort these guys out first, and then we can go and find some quite place. I’ll let you enjoy a good ‘Three days and three nights’ worth of fighting, and you can give me that Xuan Core in return.... What do you say?” Shi Chang Xiao’s one sentence turned everyone’s faces pale with fright!

If these two Peak Spirit Xuan masters joined hands, then no one apart from the Three Elders of the Silver Blizzard City would have any chances of escaping their combined strength; even Fei Meng Chen, a Spirit Xuan expert wouldn’t be an exception.

After all he was only one man, and wouldn’t be able to escape the combined wrath of two men who were both far more powerful than himself.

The Solitary Falcon laughed as his eyes slowly started turning in a circle, scanning the bodies of all the men, who had already started to step back in fear. As they saw the sharp and blood-thirsty eyes of the Solitary Falcon, some people even started preparing to drop their weapons so they could turn around and run in full force at a moment’s notice.

The Solitary Falcon started laughing even louder: “Shi Chang Xiao, do you really think I’m stupid enough to help you and your men kill everyone here so that you and your men could get this Xuan Core from me later on with ease?! If I help you kill everyone first, then you and your men will be able to take this Xuan Core from me in a heartbeat, but if I don’t... then I can still enjoy a good fight.”

Solitary Falcon’s argument immediately woke everyone with a start; in case the Solitary Falcon and Shi Chang Xiao reached an agreement, then these two Peak Spirit Xuan masters would easily be able to annihilate everyone present on the scene; they may not even spare the lives of Shi Chang Xiao’s own comrades. Later however, even though the Solitary Falcon would prove out to be weaker than Shi Chang Xiao in their one-on-one combat, he wouldn’t mind paying the Xuan Core as a price for a good and satisfying fight; especially considering the fact that he would be guaranteed to survive the fight since he could escape the lone Peak Spirit Xuan master at any time!

In fact, this meant that Shi Chang Xiao would earn far more than the Xuan Core in this deal. It was evident that some of the best experts from all over the continent had gathered to contest for this Xuan Core, and the deaths of these men would be enough to shake the entire power structure of their backing organizations, which would prove out to be a priceless gift for the Shen Ci Empire’s Emperor.

And thus, using the Solitary Falcon's assistance to slaughter so many powerful experts could even earn Shi Chang Xiao the title of the Shen Ci Empire's Imperial State Teacher!