

E Monarch 346

Chapter 346: Li Teng Yun's Persecution

"Well... I had just gone for a casual stroll. And, I hadn't gone very far." Jun Mo Xie turned his gaze from his four uncles, slipped-away into the shadows, and disappeared without a trace.

[I can only tell you that I went for a stroll into the forest yesterday. What a joke! I had a very cheerful and friendly chat with seven Xuan Beast King. And, I've come to a mutual agreement with them. We have unanimously reached a mutually beneficial agreement to cooperate...]

The four men looked at each other. [You went for a stroll? You brat, this is your first time in this city! You're a stranger here! So, where did you go for a stroll? And, can one go for a stroll that lasts for a day and a night?]

[You didn't go far? You could've gone far enough to visit Tian Xiang City by now! You brat, don't you know that we four brothers were worried to death?] However, Jun Mo Xie had returned, and didn't wish to discuss his whereabouts. In any case, he had returned safe and sound. So, the four elder men were in no mood to inquire further. Moreover, Jun Wu Yi was aware that his nephew possessed special powers, and not only in name at that. They were presently in Southern Heaven City. But, he wouldn't have been too worried if his nephew had gone missing for two to three days in Tian Xiang City.

However, the four men genuinely hadn't realized that Jun Mo Xie hadn't gone very far. He had only gone to the core of the Tian Fa forest for a stroll. And, that stroll had materialized into the collection of some precious herbs, the molestation of a little creature, and what not...

The expressions of the four men changed. They shook their head, and followed in. The four had been worried this entire time. But, their hearts were at ease now. The battle would start the next day. So, everyone's mind was preoccupied with it. They had decided to take a quick rest. The next day was to be a serious one. It was at this moment that a soldier suddenly came with a message — Xue Hun Manor's Li Teng Yun had come to pay a visit.

Jun Wu Yi then muttered irresolutely, "Invite him in!"

The Third Master Jun had been thinking about the meeting of the heads of the families. It had taken place in the morning, and Jun Wu Yi had been designated the supreme commander for the decisive battle. That is... he had been chosen as the leader of the team that would throw their lives away.

However, the Xue Hun Manor had then proposed their Third Master as a candidate to replace Jun Wu Yi for the Supreme Commander's position... that too at a point when the heads of every family had nearly reached the conclusion of the matter; this had left everyone baffled.

The so-called 'Supreme Commander' would have no real authority. He would have no hope for a victory in this battle. In fact, the Commander would be a scapegoat in defeat, and would only go out to die in this hopeless battle. Moreover, the said-man would also have to protect his own side from the animosity-ridden plots of his opposing factions. Hence, this was truly an arduous and thankless job. Therefore, no one could understand what Li Jue Tian was thinking. Why would he send the Third Master from his family — someone with a Spirit Xuan cultivation — to be a replacement-scapegoat for the number-one contender Jun Wu Yi? Wouldn't it be too great a pity...?

However, this suggestion had come from the top expert of the coalition. So, no one dared to overrule it that lightly. Therefore, the position of the Supreme Commander had been temporarily shelved. But, the selection of the Commander would only be done amidst two people — that unfortunate Third Master of the Xue Hun Manor, and Jun Wu Yi.

And, Li Teng Yun had presumably showed-up to discuss that matter.

The powerful families had also decided to send some powerful experts to the battle in the pre-preparatory meeting for the battle. The co-originators of this evil plot — the Xue Hun Manor and the Silver Blizzard City — didn't dare to defer from this idea either. This entire plan to push Jun Wu Yi into a desperate situation was theirs from the beginning. After all, they were the ones who wanted to push him into this pit of fire. So, wouldn't the entire world sneer at them if no one was sent from their side?

Everyone knew that the chances of victory were quite slim in this battle. In fact, they had 'almost' no chances. However, they still had to send someone... even if they were sending the-said individuals to their deaths!

Jun Wu Yi and the Dongfang Family would go in. So, the Duanmu and the Sikong Family would run the bank to mediate. The Silver Blizzard City decided to send three of their elders — the Third, Sixth and Ninth. The two Sky Xuan experts — Mu Xue Tong and Xiao Han — would also accompany them along with the 'Seven Swords' of the Silver Blizzard City. This was nearly seventy percent of the full strength

that had arrived here from the Silver City. In fact, their contribution had been nothing less than generous on the face of it.

After all, sending the three elders wouldn't be sufficient in its own. The Seven Swords were Silver Blizzard City's greatest force, but their power would be reduced rather considerably if they weren't together. So, they'd all have to go. Mu Xue Tong and Xiao Han were the two unlucky ones. Several peak experts had gathered here. So, two Sky Xuan experts weren't considered much in this context.

However, this was also one of Silver Blizzard City's schemes. Sending great manpower would mean that they would be safer since they could all look out for each other. Therefore, they wouldn't be likely to meet with their deaths... even if they suffered a defeat in the battle. And, the Silver City wouldn't suffer too much as a result of this. However, going with less manpower could mean throwing the lives away of those who were sent to battle...

As for the remaining experts of the Silver Blizzard City — the Second, Fifth and the Eighth elders — they wouldn't be going. There was a feud between Xiao Bu Yu and the Dongfang Family. Therefore, he naturally wouldn't join the rest. It would be extremely misfortunate if an internal conflict were to arise due to his presence...

Xiao Bu Yu was Silver City's lead on this assignment. And, it was rather mature of him to make this decision when one comes to think of it. There were certainly many grudges and resentments between them and the Dongfang Family. However, the current crisis could mean that humanity's end was looming close. So, it was important to act against opening old quarrels given the current scenario.

The Duanmu and the Sikong Family had friendly relations with the three Dongfang brothers. So, they invariably stood on the Jun Family's side when they saw Dongfang Wen Qing stand beside them.

Xue Hun Manor also decided to dispatch a massive force. In fact, they had dispatched over half their manpower. This included three-hundred Jade Xuan experts, one-hundred Earth Xuan experts, thirty Sky Xuan experts, and five Spirit Xuan experts. The Xue Hun Manor's team was the strongest amongst the gathered forces.

The weakest contingent hailed from the Baili Family. They had decided to dispatch two Sky Xuan experts along with the Jade Xuan Baili Luo Yun. This decision made the other families sigh in the secrecy of their hearts. And, this also made everyone look down on them somewhat...

[It's too short-sighted of the Baili Family to treat such a young genius like this...]

[No matter what level of hatred or enmities may have driven this family against this unique genius... they should've rather expelled Baili Luo Yun from the family as the most severe punishment instead of doing this!]

[Baili Luo Yun might even become a loner in society-at-large if they had expelled him. But, he would still have his family name – Baili. He would then remain a member of the Baili Family in the eyes of society. Moreover, he would've become a Spirit Xuan expert... or maybe even a Great Master if they had given him a dozen or so years to train!]

[Baili Luo Yun could've become the patron of the Baili Family then. Resentment may still have remained between Baili Luo Yun and the Baili Family in that case. But, any person wishing to mess with the Baili Family would still have to think about Baili Luo Yun's reaction. He would at least be a virtual threat! And, the unnoticeable Baili Family would've then been able to change the tide, and would've risen in the society when that time came!]

However, the Baili Family simply couldn't wait to get rid of this person. In fact, they were almost impatient to bring that rare genius to death. This left everyone to look at the Baili Family's decision-making abilities with disdain. [You're a powerful family. So, how can you not read the situation? How can you be so short-sighted? What will you gain by this?]

Some people even started to assert that the Baili Family had started to decline... and was even done for!

Jun Wu Yi — the Supreme Commander who had lead twenty-thousand men to the Southern Heaven City — would only lead around three-hundred men of his own to this battle. And, two-hundred of these men were Jade Xuan experts. The remaining were mostly at the Earth Xuan realm. In fact, most of the assembled experts were the ones who had been sent by Tian Xiang's influential families to protect their Young Masters.

Jun Wu Yi had clearly understood the Emperor's intentions in the manner he had singled out these people. [The many Young Masters of the various families will be well protected, and won't face a mishap. But, my life is surely foreordained for doom!]

The families of the capital city were quite scattered. And, he probably desired to use this time to reorganize them. Their strength wasn't exactly that great when compared to the rest of the world. Yet, they were considered quite powerful inside the city. After all, even monkeys can become the kings when there are no tigers in the mountains.

However, the families' powers would be crippled if a majority of these men died here. And, these men were accompanying the precious treasures of each family. So, they would certainly be left to feel indignant if too many of these 'bodyguards' were to die. Moreover, these Young Masters would return home to their siblings later. They would then notice that everything would be settled and calm. This would drive them mad. And, everything would then change — whether it would be a gripe for power, or schemes for toppling the family's line of succession. And, this would eventually weaken every major family.

This step-by-step degradation scheme's genius had to be attributed to the Emperor. He would be able to hold the powerful families together in his hands in this manner. There could've come a time when the heads of the powerful families may have united to take a stand against the Emperor. But, that scenario would vanish in thin air as a result of this scheme.

This was a great and far-reaching scheme. In fact, it was an excellent and exquisite plan.

The Emperor's far-sighted plan was already at play at that time.

The Third Master Jun was immersed in these thoughts when Li Teng Yun walked-in in his excessively 'jingly' attire. His clothes were decorated with flowers, and gave-off a shiny-bright radiance. In fact, he looked like a 'walking lighthouse'. Jun Wu Yi and the three Dongfang brothers were flabbergasted. [This brat is too coquettish!]

He would be a live target for any assassin. The said-killer could make it work even if he had bad aim. He would only need to throw his weapon at the shiny light, and that alone would be enough to make his target gurgle blood.

Li Teng Yun entered with two experts in tow. He cupped his hands, and looked rather arrogant as he said, "I've come to pay a visit, Commander Jun. I request the Commander doesn't mind this intrusion."

"The Young Master is too courteous." Jun Wu Yi remained calm and maintained etiquette, "Yet, I don't know why you've come here. To what do I owe this meet?"

Li Teng Yun chuckled gently. He then looked around. The young man was about to speak-up... but he stopped himself.

The three Dongfang brothers smiled. They were aware that he had some apprehensions. So, they excused themselves, and retired. But, Jun Mo Xie walked-in from behind the cloth flap just as his three uncles left. However, the shadows of two other people remained hidden behind the flap. These two individuals were Guan Qing Han, and Dugu Xiao Yi.

Jun Mo Xie and Guan Qing Han had suspected the reason behind Li Teng Yun's visit. And hence, they had walked-in in advance. Dugu Xiao Yi had naturally followed after them.

"Everyone present here is family. So, the Young Master Li Teng Yun can speak freely," Jun Wu Yi smiled faintly. The faint yet cold glint in Li Teng Yun's eyes had somewhat revealed his intentions. And, Jun Wu Yi was no fool. So, he had guessed the reason behind Li Teng Yun's visit.

"This Young Master will speak openly if that's the case," Li Teng Yun smiled. His eyes had a look of great confidence in them. The just-arrived Jun Mo Xie wasn't important in his eyes. In fact, he wouldn't even care if the entire Jun Family were present there. After all, the Jun Family was nothing in front of the monster that his Xue Hun Manor was...

"This Young Master had gone to Tian Xiang City for sight-seeing some time ago. He had then met Young Lady Guan Qing Han by chance, and was startled by her celestial beauty. I've been yearning for her day-and-night ever since. Not a day goes by when I don't think of her."

Li Teng Yun smiled gracefully and continued, "It's said that the Young Lady Guan Qing Han has been living as a widow in the Jun Family for many years. In fact, her status is still that of the Jun Family's daughter-in-law — married to the eldest of the Jun Family's Third Generation... he he... but we all know that the said-marriage isn't valid. In fact, it's a marriage in name only. So, this Young Master has come to the Third Master Jun to ask for the Young Lady's freedom so that we can have a splendid marriage. Wouldn't it be the best for both the sides?"

"My Xue Hun Manor will also reciprocate if you agree and give your well-wishes," Li Teng Yun waved his hand to stop Jun Wu Yi from interrupting as he continued, "The Third Master Jun must be aware that my Xue Hun Manor has agreed to my proposition for candidature over the command of the forces for the decisive battle tomorrow. Everyone knows that this decisive battle is no ordinary battle. You'd have to face high-level Xuan Beasts. A single misstep could result in a miserable fate if one's not careful. Commander Jun is a great general. Your Xuan cultivation is... he he he... is obviously outstanding as well. This Li Teng Yun genuinely admires that about you. However, Commander Jun has been disabled for several years. We may have to square-up against the high-level Xuan Beasts in this battle. And, you must know that you won't be very fortunate if you were to go there..."

Jun Wu Yi looked down. He didn't wish to show his rage. Then, he spoke in a lowered voice, "The Manor's Young Master's purpose to arrive here certainly isn't limited to a chat about his worry for this Jun's life. Speak your real intention!"

"Well, I shall talk plainly since the Commander Jun is in haste. You won't need to throw your life away if you agree to my request!"

Li Teng Yun seemed tired, and put-up his point rather directly, "Our Xue Hun Manor will take a strong stance, and we will forcibly take the position of the Supreme Commander. We won't let any harm come to the Jun Family's reputation. The Jun Family will be safe from the Xuan Beasts' attack under our wing. Moreover, we will also try our best to mediate with the Silver City in order to prevent them from stabbing you in the back."

Li Teng Yun's eyes had basically turned into slits by now. His expression changed as he spoke, "And, this Young Master knows of the Jun Family's apprehensions. But, we won't create any problems for Commander Jun. And, the Jun Family only has to part with one woman in exchange. Moreover, they shall only be parting with a woman they have no relations with."

"Is that what the Young Master Li means? ...that this woman has no worth?" Jun Mo Xie suddenly spoke-up in between.

"This one woman... he he... the Third Young Master's words aren't in-keeping with his family's identity. And, this is very surprising to me." Li Teng Yun looked up coldly as he said, "How much value do women have in this world? They eventually rely on the husband's merit even if they accomplish something. It's like our families exchange mates for our horses, or dogs, or... he he... a few women. That isn't usually a big deal, right? They are mere toys; nothing more. There's no need to make a fuss about it."

"Mere toys...?" Jun Wu Yi's voice was cold. In fact, it was as cold as the winds that blow on a snow-capped mountain. "Is this your condition, Young Master Li?"

"I'm making a great offer in good faith, and the Commander is still unsatisfied?" Li Teng Yun had recognized the coldness in Jun Wu Yi's voice. He had also noticed the menacing glint in Jun Wu Yi's eyes, and the threatening texture of his tone. "Think properly, Commander Jun. You will probably die tomorrow if you refuse this gesture I've made with good will. You will have to face those crazy beasts that are anyway unmatched foes. Moreover, you will also have to contend with others whom you can't hope to match. A mere woman in-exchange for your life and the peace of the entire Jun Family! I'm sure that one who understands this situation will know what choice to make. Moreover, this arrangement will bring the said-woman great happiness. You're faced with two roads that determine life and death, Commander. Will you choose unwisely?"

"No relation? Guan Qing Han is a part of my family! At least for now... she is!" Jun Wu Yi looked at him coldly. "No outsider shall ever be allowed to disgrace someone once they're a part of the Jun Family. The Young Master needn't worry about the life and death of any from the Jun Family's members... since you're merely a visitor!"

"Don't refuse, Jun Wu Yi! This Young Master has come to speak to you in this matter. But, he has only done so for the benefit of your reputation. Moreover, he has provided such great conditions for your sake. Do you genuinely think you're someone that great?"

Li Teng Yun stood up, and continued in a ruthless tone, "Why should I worry about you if you can't tell the good from the bad, and wish to court death! You will anyway die. So, what's the big deal? You anyway can't stop me from getting Guan Qing Han even if you don't!"

Jun Mo Xie clicked his tongue and said, "Young Master Li is very strange. When has our Jun Family ever asked you to worry about us? And, what status do you have of your own? You're merely the only son of Great Master Jue Tian; that's all. The Young Master of the magnificent Xue Hun Manor; that's all. But, where's the virtue in that? This has indeed widened my outlook! No wonder my sister-in-law doesn't like you. In fact, I'm convinced that no woman will ever like you. And, that's because you don't have a single good thing about you... except for the fact that you are the son of the reputed Second Great Master. The Xue Hun Manor has no future!"

"Very well! You will pay for your words, Jun Mo Xie. Just you wait for your uncle's corpse tomorrow!" Li Teng Yun snorted, flicked his sleeves, and said, "This Young Master disdains the quarrel you've started, Jun Mo Xie. Your Jun Family isn't even fit to haggle with me!"

Jun Mo Xie sneered, "It's difficult to tell who isn't a 'fit' here. I can only see a toad who's trying to eat a swan's meat standing in front of me. What about you?"

"You...!" Li Teng Yun became extremely mad at first. He then suppressed his anger, and coldly stated, "I — Li Teng Yun — desire a woman. And yet, I can't have her?! Jun Mo Xie, you're in the Southern Heaven City. I'd like to see you act like this once you have lost your Third Uncle, and the protection of your three maternal uncles. Tomorrow, it'll be your Third Uncle. Perhaps, it'll be you the day after! Your three Spirit Xuan expert uncles are great, right? Jun Mo Xie, the power you rely on is nothing in my eyes! Let me tell you... a clenched fist is the greatest argument in this world!"

"I know that the clenched fist is the greatest argument! The Xue Hun Manor would've easily defeated the Xuan Beasts if it weren't for their power, right? So, I guess the 'fist' wasn't big enough. And, the Great Master Jue Tian was forced to issue the Supreme order over this, right? But, you're still so arrogant and shameless despite all this?"

Jun Mo Xie then shook his head in a dumbfounded manner, "The Xue Hun Manor is genuinely a lame duck. I guess we will have to wait to see the Manor's funeral day after tomorrow."

"Well, we'll see whose family will have to wait at the funeral, Jun Mo Xie. You'll be the one to wear the mourning clothes, you brat." Li Teng Yun then turned around, and started to walk out. He reached the exit. Then, he suddenly stopped, turned, and asked, "You're sure that you won't regret this, Jun Wu Yi?"

"Get lost!"

That was Jun Wu Yi's answer. That shameless Young Master of the Xue Hun Manor had crossed the limit of his tolerance.

A sharp light flashed in Li Teng Yun's eyes as he snorted and turned away.

"Wait, Young Master Teng Yun!" Jun Mo Xie shouted for Li Teng Yun.

Li Teng Yun turned his head and snorted, "So, you're scared now? Young Master Jun, hurry up and tell your Third Uncle and Grandfather that there's no need to put the Jun Family in trouble because of a single woman. A wise man submits to the circumstances..."

"Ah? Young Master Teng Yun misunderstands Young Master Jun's reason behind asking him to stop. I just intend to remind Young Master Teng Yun of something in the best of interests. Your eyes reveal the oncoming of misfortune. Your left eye is green with youth, but your right one is green with envy. Your face also beckons an oncoming disaster. It's a bloody disaster that will befall in the days to come. But, you can't even run from it. Therefore, you mustn't worry about other people's life and death. You must rather concern yourself with your own safety. I'm only trying to say that... it would be very bad if the father has to watch his son die before his own doom strikes him!"

Then, the Young Master Jun slowly said, "Great Master Jue Tian is way over a hundred years old. I fear his reproductive capabilities won't work anymore. So... take good care of yourself, Young Master."

"You..." Li Teng Yun's nose was almost crooked with anger. He turned his head, and didn't look back as he left.

"Are our troops ready for tomorrow's fight, Third Uncle?" Jun Mo Xie asked.

"Every expert from each family has been selected and readied; except for me. Our Tian Xiang Empire's military strength is the crown of the entire Continent. But, it is considered the weakest in terms of strength amongst those who have gathered here. And, everyone knows this fact. Moreover, I haven't deployed your two-hundred-and-fifty guards, or the high ranking Generals."

Jun Wu Yi smiled faintly, "What's the need to sacrifice so much in a lost battle, right?"

Jun Wu Yi hadn't explained those words, but Jun Mo Xie had understood them rather clearly. Those two-hundred-and-fifty guards would continue to live, and would become the Jun Family's future since Commander Jun would most certainly die. [My death alone should be enough. Why should these men die as well?]

Jun Mo Xie's heart was moved by this. Jun Wu Yi didn't know that the Jun Family wouldn't be touched during the battle the following day. So, he was stubbornly determined to sacrifice his life. He wasn't thinking of himself... but of the Jun Family... even at this juncture.

"Third Uncle..." Jun Mo Xie muttered irresolutely. Then, he spoke-up in a resolute manner, "Nothing can be taken for granted. The outcome of tomorrow's battle is uncertain. But, nothing will happen to you... even if we suffer huge damages. This... I assure you!"

Jun Wu Yi looked at him for a good while before he suddenly smiled and said, "I hope so."

He then suddenly called out after having said that, "Can you come out, Qing Han? Haven't you eavesdropped enough? Come out!"

Guan Qing Han and Dugu Xiao Yi came out with embarrassed expressions. They looked at Jun Wu Yi. And, their expressions changed to that of extreme worry. Especially Guan Qing Han; she was distressed.

Jun Wu Yi coughed, and then became silent. He had conflicting expressions on his face for some time, and remained silent. Then, he finally spoke-up in a hoarse voice, "There are three individuals in front of me today; one is my nephew, and one is the Jun Family's daughter-in-law. And then, there's another person... the Dugu Family's treasured daughter— Dugu Xiao Yi. You represent the Dugu Family. You will be troubled because I — Jun Wu Yi — will make you a witness today!"

Dugu Xiao Yi didn't know what he was about to speak. Jun Wu Yi was apparently about to make a serious decision. So, she subconsciously nodded.

Guan Qing Han guessed what Jun Wu Yi was about to do. So, she cried-out in sadness, "Third Uncle, don't... don't do it!"

Chapter 347: This Thought Shall Remain Immortal in the Realm of this World!

Jun Wu Yi sighed and smiled. Then, he started to shake his head in an exceptionally firmly manner. He then took out a copper token from his bosom. The gems studded on its surface glittered under the moonlight, and revealed the word "Jun". And, the word "Order" was written on the back of the token in accordance to the strict parlance of the era.

It was the Order Token of the Master of the Jun Family.

"This has been handed down from generation to generation. Mo Xie, your grandfather had handed me this token three months ago. And, I — Jun Wu Yi — have been the current head of the Jun Family since then. Whatever decisions I take with this... are the decisions of the Jun Family! No member of the Jun Family can violate my orders! Do you understand?"

Jun Wu Yi finished speaking those heavy words. He then raised the token, and spoke with a cold expression, "Jun Family's Third Generation Daughter-in-law, kneel and heed!"

Guan Qing Han was a bit frightened as she looked at the Third Master Jun. His cold expression allowed no room for negotiation. So, she had no choice but to sigh, take a step forward, and kneel in front of Jun Wu Yi.

"The daughter-in-law is warm and virtuous. Her mannerism and accomplishments are of the highest degree even though she's only twenty. The parents of the senior generation had talked of making a match in the past, and had then settled on a marriage. The Jun Family's cherished Eldest Son of the third generation couldn't consummate the marriage since he unexpectedly died in battle. And, Guan Qing Han has vigorously spent her youth guarding her pure body for the past five years. She has suffered bitter hardships with the intention to preserve the friendships between the two families this entire duration of time. But, my Jun Family can't extend this fallen marriage forever. You were considered as 'married'... without an actual marriage. You are married... yet not married. Moreover, you've been living as a widow. So today, I — Jun Wu Yi, the Master of the Jun Household — grant Guan Qing Han her freedom by the power vested to me by this token of authority. We will no longer have anything to do with any wedding you may celebrate. Dugu Family's Dugu Xiao Yi, and Jun Family's Young Master Jun Mo Xie have borne witness to this. The heavens and the earth have borne witness to this!"

Guan Qing Han had already known what he was about to say. But then, she heard those words come from his mouth... and they came without any hesitation. She heard the words in succession, and her heart ached; her tears fell like the rain.

Dugu Xiao Yi was standing beside her. The little girl's pretty mouth was opened wide. She hadn't expected to be a witness to such a great event!

Jun Wu Yi finished speaking. His face was cold as he turned to Jun Mo Xie, and called out, "Jun Family's third generation's third descendant — Jun Mo Xie! Step forward, and kneel!"

Jun Mo Xie jumped with a scare, "What is it... Third Uncle?"

"Jun Family's third generation's third descendant — Jun Mo Xie! Step forward, and kneel!" Jun Wu Yi repeated sternly.

Jun Mo Xie muttered to himself a couple of times. He had no choice but to reluctantly kneel in such a situation; he felt dispirited.

"Jun Family's third generation's third descendant — Jun Mo Xie! You are tough, open minded, and capable of bearing great responsibility. I — Jun Wu Yi — cede my position as the Jun Family's head to you! Let the heaven and earth bear witness to this!"

Jun Mo Xie had vaguely guessed this outcome. But, he still jumped in a startled when he heard the order. His hands shook as he stood up. "Don't do this Third Uncle! You're still robust, and at the spring of your life! You are still in the prime of your life! So, there's no need to pass it on to me! I... I... don't wish to be the head of the family!"

"Impudence!" Jun Wu Yi glared and scolded, "Any Jun family descendent refusing to follow the orders of the Jun Family's head is considered insubordinate! Are you still going to do it, Jun Mo Xie?"

Jun Mo Xie blinked; he had no way out. He reluctantly took on the responsibility and said, "I know you're worried about tomorrow's battle, Third Uncle. So much so that you've even steeled yourself for death...! But, I've told you that I won't take that order. I'll only perform this duty for the time being. The title of the head of the house will revert to you if you come back safe and sound."

Jun Wu Yi smiled faintly and replied, "I'll leave that to you."

Jun Mo Xie had spoken the truth. Jun Wu Yi was expecting his death in the next day's battle. In fact, he didn't even have the slightest hope of surviving it. And, that worry had incited him to take that decision this evening. Therefore, he had decided to resolve those two issues.

Then, Jun Mo Xie took a solemn vow, and made that guarantee. Jun Wu Yi regarded his nephew's words as those of comfort. How could he take them to be anything else? He expected the other Xuan experts to fly off to the fight like a swarm of bees. This would leave him — the Commander-in-chief — alone in

the open. In fact, they'd probably ignore his fate in the frenzy of this battle. The countless powerful Xuan Beasts would surely charge, and shred him to pieces in this situation!

Furthermore, it was to be expected that the Xue Hun Manor and the Silver Blizzard City's experts would try something underhanded in the confusion of the melee. So, he would effectively have to face aggression from his enemies and his presumed-allies alike. And, he would have to do so with his Sky Xuan cultivation. Even a Spirit Xuan expert wouldn't be able to return alive if he were to face such a situation alone.

"Mo Xie, it'll be great if I can return safe and sound tomorrow. But, the Jun Family will rely on you if I die due to some misfortune." Jun Wu Yi spoke in a tranquil manner. "Your grandfather is very old now. So, you'll have to look after him. Moreover, we have negated Guan Qing Han's marriage. But, she's our family's daughter-in-law. No one shall be allowed to bully her; no matter how much time passes. It won't be a big deal if anyone who does so... dies for it!"

"Yes, I'll never forget it."

Jun Wu Yi let out a long sigh. Then, he looked distant... and very sentimental as he spoke... in fact, it seemed as if he was talking in his sleep, "Also, I have another thing to entrust you with. It is very important. If you ever go to the Silver Blizzard City and meet her... tell her these words I speak..." Jun Wu Yi suddenly stopped talking...

Jun Mo Xie listened to his uncle calmly, and didn't ask any questions. He knew who that 'her' Jun Wu Yi was referring to was. It was that pitiful woman who resided in the snowy peaks. The one who was suffering bitter hardships for his love... She was also the cause of the entirety of these calamities — Han Yan Yao.

However, the matter with Han Yan Yao was quite complicated in Jun Mo Xie's mind. This was because no tragedy would've occurred if it weren't for her. [You were the Young Lady of the Silver Blizzard City! Why did you go out to the secular world to amuse yourself? Why was there a need to lead my uncle on? Didn't you know that your marriage had been set since your childhood days?]

[Xiao Han's methods of handling things are extremely wretched. But, thinking from his point of view... which man would willingly allow himself to be cuckolded? What kind of a man would sit idly if his fiancée of ten years wanted to run away with an unfamiliar man? This matter would be unbearable for any man! Who wouldn't go mad because of it?

However, Jun Mo Xie also knew that no one could give a sermon on love; it was an unreasonable emotion. It could turn the wisest of men into fools if they were struck by it. Even two people who would stay guarded and restrained would form an intimate relationship. And, who could say why such a thing happens?

What could he say about love? He could see that Jun Wu Yi and Han Yan Yao had been suffering for ten years. And yet, they still held their silly love through those bitter hardships... even if they lived far apart. Couldn't something like this move an individual whose heart was made of stone?

Jun Mo Xie knew that there was a storm raging in his Third Uncle's heart with regards to that matter. And, that vivid experience was making him go through an emotional rollercoaster at the time.

The words that he was about to give him for Han Yan Yao were perhaps what Jun Wu Yi had felt for her over those years.

Jun Wu Yi gasped his breath out after a while. He was seemingly sighing. But, that sigh seemed to be related to his lingering attachments. The corners of his mouth rose as he displayed a mournful smile. Yet, it turned extremely tender and sweet as he slowly said, "The grudges are unforgettable, but so are you. I'm love-struck, but only for you. I may travel to hell, but I shall still keep a dream. This thought... shall remain immortal... in the realms of this world!"

Dugu Xiao Yi suddenly burst out crying, and started to choke on her tears.

Guan Qing Han's pretty face was also full of tears.

They knew of his past rather distinctly. And, hearing Jun Wu Yi state those words left them to shed tears of sadness. Those verses were enough to express how deep the love between Jun Wu Yi and Han Yan Yao was. The two women felt touched, and their hearts softened. They felt overwhelming sadness in their hearts at the state of his despair.

"The grudges are unforgettable, but so are you. I'm love-struck, but only for you. I may travel to hell, but I shall still keep a dream. This thought shall remain immortal in the realms of this world!"

[I still love you despite the tragedies that have happened. And, I am now going to hell for you. But, I still believe that I won't forget you... whether I go to heaven or hell. I will never forget you! This thought will remain with me forever.]

This was 'love unchanged by life or death'! Any other oath or pledge would pale in comparison to this love.

Jun Mo Xie's heart was suddenly shaken inside after he listened to those words spoken by his Third Uncle.

Those feelings of love and hate in his uncle's heart were strong and touching. That meagerly worded verse had admittedly made Jun Mo Xie realize that his uncle's love would remain unchanged and steady till death. But, he understood its other meaning as well...

"The grudges are unforgettable, but so are you." The grudges had been unexpectedly mentioned before the rest of the verse. The grudges were clearly central in Jun Wu Yi's mind. The grudges regarding the death of his two elder brothers, and two nephews had been nagging at his heart from the beginning.

He couldn't forget what had happened even if got 'her'! He simply couldn't forget it!

This was the biggest disease that had plagued his heart.

"I'll remember it. Rest assured, Third Uncle." He had originally planned to divulge his secret to Jun Wu Yi to make him feel relieved. He would at most have to weave another bunch of lies to cover-up. He would have said that his Mysterious Master and the Lord of Tian Fa were good friends... and so on...

However, he changed his mind after he realized those two meanings. Jun Wu Yi had steeled himself for death. And, this desire had already been rooted deeply in his heart. He would still feel ashamed even after he had gotten revenge for his brothers and nephews. He would still feel very guilty. In fact, he would still feel guilty if he got Han Yan Yao. This emotion would never allow him to be happy. He was destined to be tormented for the remainder of his life.

One could easily dispel others' torment. But, dispelling the torment at the depth of one's own heart was like bashing one's head against the wall; it couldn't be done.

It didn't matter if Jun Wu Yi remained a cripple for his entire life... or lived apart from his lover for the entirety of it without any chances of meeting her again. There would still be that unparalleled lifelong enmity, and it would continue to bore down upon Jun Wu Yi. In fact, it wouldn't even let him breathe. And, that was merely the external pressure. It couldn't compare to what he felt in the depths of his heart...

Every person in the Jun Family — whether it was Jun Zhan Tian or Jun Mo Xie — could only take pity on the Third Master Jun. Even the deceased Jun Wu Hui wouldn't ever blame his third younger brother. But, the only person in the Jun Family who didn't realize this... the only person who would never realize this... was Jun Wu Yi!

Chapter 348: Don't Snatch My Husband!

Perhaps it had been foreordained by the underworld. Even the Gods must have pitied such an unfortunate man. This was a time of crisis, and danger lurked around every nook in the Southern Heaven City; a strong murderous intention prevailed in the vicinity. In fact, even a chance to make a close escape seemed bleak. Therefore, Jun Wu Yi was convinced that he would die, and that there was no hope for him. However, this danger had been pre-empted by Jun Mo Xie's mediation. And so, Jun Wu Yi would return unhurt.

In fact, Jun Wu Yi needn't even worry about a sneaky stab in the back. It was guaranteed that he'd be fine, and would return safe and sound.

However, the Third Master Jun didn't know about any of this. So, he was sure that he would die in the battle the following day. But, going through mortal danger, and surviving a near-death situation could possibly result in a huge change in his attitude. Therefore, this was perhaps an opportune turn of events. And, maybe it was better that he didn't know about these turn of events.

A person who dies, and is given a new lease on life would no longer harbor the same strong and inflexible aspiration to die. They would feel as if they owed something to life. Therefore, they would look at the future with a lot of enthusiasm, and wouldn't wish to part with life very easily anymore.

This was a subtle psychological phenomenon.

Jun Mo Xie had realized that his Third Uncle needed to feel that premonition of death. Therefore, he didn't say anything to dispel it. In fact, he even spoke a few words to stimulate him.

"Those grudges... what do you wish to speak about them, Third Uncle?" Jun Mo Xie asked.

[Third Uncle has anyway decided to go over a cliff. So, I might as well add some more fire to it. That'd help him to vent it out in a proper manner. He'll feel much more relaxed tomorrow since he'd have vented it all out.]

[Anyway, these high and dangerous cliffs have already been secured with excellent safety provisions.]

"What I wanted to say regarding those grudges is..." Jun Wu Yi gave him a profound look, "...that they will be avenged. But Mo Xie, you must promise me something. I won't be able to go with an easy heart if you don't."

"What is it? Please tell me, Uncle!" Jun Mo Xie replied.

"I know your strength has already far-exceeded my imagination. But, I still want you to promise that you won't try to take revenge before your strength has reached the level of a Supreme Master. You will consign the entirety of the Jun Family to damnation if you do so. The responsibility of the entire Jun Family rests on your shoulders now. You mustn't disappoint me by any means!"

Jun Wu Yi's eyebrows shot up. There was a lot of anguish on his face. He continued to speak with a deep sense of bitterness and hatred, "Jun Mo Xie, given your wit and talent... I'm sure that the day you take revenge isn't far. So, remember me — your Third Uncle — when you've become strong enough. I don't even wish for a dog or a chicken from the Xiao Family to survive! I desire the entirety of it to be consigned to eternal damnation!"

Jun Wu Yi gnashed his teeth. His usually calm and benevolent face looked very sinister and ruthless. It was justifiable to kill an enemy as per his morals. But, he had always believed in the principle that carrying out a vendetta against a woman or child was a crime. This was his usual belief. But, he had stated that he didn't even wish the dogs and the chickens to survive... he wanted damnation for all of them. His hatred for the Silver City's Xiao Family had already reached such extremes!

"I will, Uncle. The Xiao Family's destruction has been decided. It's like you said — that day isn't far," Jun Mo Xie also gnashed his teeth as he replied in a vicious manner. He then added, "You can go with peace of mind, Third Uncle."

Guan Qing Han wasn't happy to hear those words. Her face still had tear stains as her long and shapely eyebrows shot up. [Jun Mo Xie, you bastard... how could you say such a thing...?! What do you mean by "go with peace of mind"? What are you even saying?]

Even Dugu Xiao Yi was unhappy with it. She pouted her lips as she looked at Jun Mo Xie. Her expression was also ill-favored.

Jun Mo Xie raised his hand in surrender... [This matter has emotionally touched you women... but, I didn't risk the provocation of this matter. You think I would've tried to fabricate such a tense atmosphere? I wasn't prepared for this. And, who would be more worried about my uncle's safety than me?]

Jun Wu Yi then smiled, "Guan Qing Han, you're not the Jun Family's daughter-in-law anymore. But, will you be willing to be my Jun Family's daughter?"

"Third Uncle?" Guan Qing Han was startled, but her spirits lifted a bit. She had been feeling miserable due to the annulment of her marriage. This meant that she'd have to return to the household to the Guan Family. And then, she'd have to go to the Xue Hun Manor to keep them happy. She was willing to make this sacrifice since she didn't know what else she could do.

In contrast, she would have liked to face any suffering or loneliness at the Jun Family if she were given a choice. It was needless to say that she didn't wish to marry that scoundrel Li Teng Yun. Her loathing for him had increased a great deal when she heard him from behind the flaps some time ago. Merely glancing at such a scum had been very loathsome for her. So, what could one possibly say about the prospect of marrying him, and staying with him for a lifetime...?

Guan Qing Han listened to Jun Wu Yi, and realized that his original intention wasn't to have nothing to do with her. He was merely replacing the method to give her the Family's protection. She couldn't help but be extremely moved.

"Qing Han, I — Jun Wu Yi — would like to take you as my adopted daughter if you agree to it. I probably don't have long to live. But, Qing Han will still be considered a part of the Jun Family. And, any man will be repaid with a flood of blood by my Jun Family if he dares to wrong you. Even your birthing Guan Family shan't be an exception to this."

Jun Wu Yi snorted coldly after he said that.

Guan Qin Han's lips trembled. Her delicate body shuddered violently. However, she didn't hesitate as she slowly knelt, and knocked her forehead heavily on the ground. She then spoke, "Daughter Qing Han pays her respects to Godfather."

"Good! Good! Good!" Jun Wu Yi was extremely glad. He even exclaimed thrice. Then, he took out a jade pendant, and handed it to her. "Qing Han, your godfather is giving you this pendant. It is the symbol of the Jun Household. Take this, and remember that you're not only the daughter of the Guan Family anymore... but you're also the daughter of the Jun Family. So, the Guan Family will have to consult with our Jun Family regarding your marriage!"

Guan Qing Han took the jade pendant. The words "Qing Han is our descendant" were engraved on its smooth and glossy surface. Moreover, it had been done in Jun Zhan Tian's handwriting. So, it was obvious that this had been prepared well in advance. This entire matter wasn't something which had taken place in haste. Guan Qing Han seemed puzzled as she raised her head, and looked at Jun Wu Yi.

"Ha ha, this jade pendant had been commissioned by your grandfather a few years ago. Your grandfather had said then, 'Annul Guan Qing Han's marriage. She won't be the daughter-in-law of our family once that happens. But, she'll be our daughter!' And, I'm fulfilling that old man's wish today." Jun Wu Yi chuckled and continued, "Qing Han, everyone could see your suffering. We wouldn't let you waste your entire life. And, no man will ever be allowed to shame you as long as even one man from the Jun Household lives!"

Jun Wu Yi let out a long sigh after he said that. He then continued, "Today has passed. And, there is that battle tomorrow. So, I don't know if I will see another day after that. Also... there isn't any need to tell you that... he he... ever since you joined the family... Mo Xie... he he... has acted a bit... but, you were constraint by your position as his elder sister-in-law. But, those worldly restrictions don't stop you two anymore..."

He gave a dry smile, and didn't speak further. However, his meaning was understood by the other three... as clear as day.

This had shocked the other three individuals to the extreme. The three hadn't understood Jun Wu Yi at first. But, he had then shot a quick and secretive glance at Dugu Xiao Yi after he had finished speaking.

[This is for you to decide Mo Xie. But, I can still give you a suggestion, right? Do you wish to let go of this beauty, or do you wish to light two firecrackers with one flame. You could kill two birds with one stone. But, that depends on what you choose... I probably won't be around to witness it anyway...]

[I've spoken these tabooed words today after great difficulty. And, I've lost all respect in your eyes as your Third Uncle! How could I have spoken something like this unless I had known that I wouldn't survive in tomorrow's battle? You're my elder brother's son. So, I've replaced him when it comes to taking control of the task of matchmaking for his son. But, to have targeted my dead nephew's woman as my living nephew's wife... and that too someone I've just adopted as a daughter... It's unpleasant to hear... no matter what else it might be. You must understand that saying this was even harder than dying, okay?]

Jun Mo Xie looked at his uncle dumbfounded. [Third Uncle, you dug up this dredge for your nephew? You're thinking about this one day before the decisive battle? I don't admire you for the thoughts you harbor at the brink of your death. But, I do admire you for the courage to say them out loud!]

Guan Qing Han's entire body started to tremble. Her pretty face had turned red. The redness had also reached her neck. In fact, her tiny white earlobe was red as well; bright red. She felt extremely embarrassed as she shot accusatory stares to her side. Her mouth was opened as big as a hippopotamus as she glanced at Jun Mo Xie. But, she hung her head low after a moment.

Dugu Xiao Yi was standing beside them. It was like she had been struck by lightning. Her eyes were opened wide, and her lovely face had become deathly pale; no traces of blood were left in it.

[I'm being referred to as a witness, right? And heavens, I have witnessed! But, why do I feel that I will never witness marital bliss? What's this feeling called?]

The little girl started to worry about her personal gains and losses. And, she became extremely nervous thereafter. She looked at Guan Wing Han, and the look in her eyes changed. That benevolent and kind-hearted spirit of an elder sister had turned into a malevolent and frightening existence in a moment's time. [She wants to take my man away!]

Every matter was open for discussion; except for this one.

The little girl was furious. She rolled her eyes, and exerted the entirety of her strength to think of countermeasures.

Dugu Xiao Yi had been very delighted this entire time since she was the only one who knew of Jun Mo Xie's good personality. Everyone else regarded him as a lecher, hoodlum, bully, debauchee and a skirt-chaser.

The little girl had always felt very pleased with this fact. It was like someone was happy since they possessed a secret stash of treasure. She obviously couldn't speak that thought out loud. [Everyone would try to snatch him away if they got to know about it. Brother Mo Xie is mine! He's meant for me alone!]

Therefore, Dugu Xiao Yi had feelings of extreme tenderness towards Jun Mo Xie. She wanted to make him her own... and, as soon as possible! She knew that gold always finds a way to shine. So, she wouldn't be able to monopolize him if others found out about this. She wanted to keep him all to herself until he was no good for anyone else. [But, what is this old man saying...]

Princess Ling Meng had suddenly come up with that blood oath that day. The motive was different, but it had still startled Dugu Xiao Yi. However, she was very fortunate since Jun Mo Xie felt nothing for her. So, that was still an acceptable thing. There was another reason why Dugu Xiao Yi was determined to accompany Jun Mo Xie to the Southern Heaven City...

As the saying goes — 'those who strike first... gain the advantage'. It would've been too late if the Princess decided to get serious, and got the Emperor to sign an Imperial Decree for the marriage.

So, she had painstakingly formulated a plan to garner his affections. And, her plan required Guan Qing Han's assistance in order to enhance her chances of success. But, her plan was suddenly struck by thunder from the clear sky when she heard Third Uncle Jun refer to Jun Mo Xie and Guan Qing Han as a couple. The hen had changed into a duck... the helper had transformed into a rival. This had resulted in her becoming worse-off than she had started. She had become the victim of her own ingenuity.

[How is this possible?]

"This won't do!" Dugu Xiao Yi started to get angrier with every passing moment. Her tiny chest started to fill with righteous indignation as she thought about it. And then, she unexpectedly roared out loud. Her voice was loud and fierce. In fact, it was very fierce and very loud. It shook the entire tent, and buzzed as it echoed for a while.

The other three individuals were given a fright by her roar, and jumped startled before they looked at her.

Dugu Xiao Yi couldn't be shy in this moment. She scrambled and stepped forward. She then clutched Jun Mo Xie's arm, and declared, "He's mine, and mine alone! You can't snatch him away in marriage!"

Then, she suddenly felt wronged after she had spoken that. She then started to sob incessantly, and wept as she spoke, "I've been eyeing him for a long time. How can you snatch him away from me? He's mine, and mine alone! I won't let you take him away..."

Chapter 349: The Hero Won't Be Alone!

Dugu Xiao Yi's tone was that of a child whose candy had been snatched away. Or... like that of a child who had been waiting under a tree for a fruit to ripen for half a year. But then, a two people suddenly come up, and take a look at the fruit... and start to discuss how to distribute the fruit amongst themselves while completely ignoring the waiting child.

[They've forgotten about me!]

She had been driven mad, and felt wronged.

Jun Wu Yi and the other two stared wide eyed, and broke into laughter almost at the same time. The actions of this little girl were too adorable. She had completely driven-off the heavy load on Jun Wu Yi's mind, and the embarrassment that Guan Qing Han had initially felt.

The three individuals were staring at her. So, Dugu Xiao Yi couldn't help but react. She pouted, and proclaimed whilst seething with rage, "Mine!"

She finished speaking, and realized that she had completely forgotten her manners. Not to mention that she and Jun Mo Xie weren't even engaged. And so, she was in no position to make such thoughtless remarks. Moreover, the Third Master Jun was most-probably approaching the end of his life. This was another reason for her to not make such a ruckus. Plus, she had done this while acting as a witness. So, she really shouldn't have done that at that point.

Moreover, were those words sure indicators of his marriage to his elder sister-in-law? She had also forgotten her status as the only daughter of the Dugu Family.

He little girl couldn't help her face turning red with embarrassment. She quickly released her hold on Jun Mo Xie's arm. She bit her lip, and stood embarrassed for a bit. The little girl had no idea what she could do to remedy it.

The little girl opened her mouth, but didn't know what to say. Jun Wu Yi, Guan Qing Han and Jun Mo Xie didn't know what to do to smooth things over either. The three people had been shaken by the thunderous and valiant actions of the little girl, and hadn't yet recovered from it.

The four people stared at each other wide eyed for a while; it was a deadlock. Then, the little girl screeched like a bird. She then covered her face — which was now hot with embarrassment — and rushed out like she was being chased by a dog. And then, a loud "Thump!" was heard. Though, no one knew what she hit.

"Mo Xie... ha ha... you've got quite the charm. To draw the treasure of the Dugu Family to become jealous for your affection is quite exceptional!"

Jun Wu Yi smiled in a jubilant manner. Guan Qing Han may be undecided, but he could clearly see that the Dugu girl already had deep feelings for his nephew. He could obviously let go of any worry he might've had for his nephew's marriage. Moreover, one couldn't forget about the little girl's family background. The two families were well matched in terms of social status as well. The Emperor may be against their family. But, even the Emperor would have to consider his actions better if the Jun and the Dugu Family were connected by marriage. His nephew's good deeds had been harmonious. So, the Uncle would go to the otherworld with a smile... even if his body would turn into a bloody corpse the next day. The only thing was that... it was probably a tough scenario where he'd be able to drink at his nephew's wedding.

The Young Master Jun was also quite embarrassed. He opened his mouth several times to speak. But, he was unable to say even half a word. He genuinely didn't know when he had become that little girl's private property. He eventually had no choice but to spread his hands and shrug his shoulders. It looked like he would cry as he forced a smile, and spoke-up with a lot of difficulty, "I look handsome... this isn't my problem... how can I be guilty?"

Guan Qing Han's felt her face turn cold again. She snorted, and stayed silent for a while. Then, her face suddenly became red. In fact, it had started to resemble a bright red cloud.

Jun Wu Yi smiled in an elated manner. He also felt that he hadn't acted with the dignity of the elder generation. More so since it involved his recently adopted daughter... He smiled in an awkward manner, and waved his hands as he spoke, "You go back. I wish to think about tomorrow's battle in silence."

Jun Mo Xie and Guan Qing Han looked at each other, and retreated. The Young Master Jun wanted to say something to Guan Qing Han, but she disappeared without a shadow as they went out of the tent since the expression on her face had become even more shy and anxious.

Jun Mo Xie let out a long sigh, and looked up at the moon in the sky. He then assumed an annoying and narcissistic attitude. Then, he lowered his head, and spoke in a coquettish and muffled manner, "I'm able to make such beauties fall for me. My spotless personality makes beautiful women blush. These women wish to elope with me." He walked forward, and returned to his tent while continually narrating narcissistic accounts of himself on the way.

Inside the tent...

Jun Wu Yi flicked his sleeve, and extinguished the lights inside the tent. The tent went pitch black. The soft moonlight started to come in after a while. The wicks of the recently extinguished candles still glowed orange. A slight smoke still rose from them... only to dissipate in the air above.

The black clothed Jun Wu Yi's silhouette slowly got concealed in the darkness. But, it remained motionless...

The three Dongfang brothers put their hands on their swords while they stood outside. They remained motionless, and didn't utter a single word. They had decided to accompany their younger brother in silence.

That night was perhaps the last night of Jun Wu Yi's life... the Third Master Jun's last night amongst the living! Their blood-brother was going to go far into the netherworld. He would then be away from those who were close to him. But, the hero wouldn't be lonely when he was at the end of the road.

[We will keep him company!]

Guan Qing Han stood not too far from Jun Wu Yi's tent. Tears flowed down her beautiful face in silence. She stood there motionless, and didn't dare to utter a word.

[Uncle... Godfather, you won't be alone tonight.]

Her first evening as his daughter might've also been her last evening as one...

The entire field was quiet. A group of soldiers came from the Tian Xiang's army. They wore helmets, and were 'armored and armed to the teeth'. They stood tall and straight like pikes outside the tent in an orderly formation. They were real men, and their eyes had a fervent feel to them. So much so that everyone tried their best to reduce the sound of their breathing...

These men had come to fight a battle. So, they could've been asked to throw-away their lives in the process. But, the commander of their army had chosen to sacrifice only his own self.

[The Commander will go to battle tomorrow.]

[But, we will keep him company tonight!]

[The Commander shouldn't be alone! The hero shouldn't be alone!]

The Blood General was an Idol for the army. This illustrious name was engraved in the military men's hearts like his elder brother Jun Wu Hui's name was — the White Commander! They had become immortal in their hearts!

And so had their achievements...

The Legend of the Blood General's achievements!

The beautiful and serene moonlight slowly rose and spread throughout the sky. It splendidly bathed the mountains and forests surrounding the Southern Heaven City. However, no one knew how many men's blood would spill in the battle the next day.

A faint silhouette suddenly swept in-and-out of the tent, and disappeared into the air... in fact, it seemed as if it had melted into it. The three Spirit Xuan Dongfang brothers had been station close by. They could faintly feel that something had moved above their heads. However, they were stunned to find no trace of anything...

Jun Wu Yi was in the tent. He had also noticed it very faintly. But, he didn't care; he didn't care at all.

It might've been a top assassin who had been sent to kill him. But, what's the worse that could've happened even then? He was already going down the road to the underworld and his demise the next day. So, what was the big deal?

Therefore, he didn't care about it.

And, the others weren't even aware of the traces of that movement.

Jun Mo Xie finally dazzled past the last person he wanted to save in the battle, and returned the small bottle back inside his pocket. [I hope Long Crane's bottle works. I'll have to work against a strong tide to save everyone if it doesn't.]

[But, wouldn't it be a nice surprise if Third Uncle returns safe and sound when he's expected to be done for?]

The glowing moon eventually set, and the east gradually became brighter.

The light of dawn has always followed darkness.

Jun Wu Yi slowly stood up. Then, he took two steps, and hesitantly sat down on his wheelchair. His legs had become fine by now. The movement and skills he hadn't been able to employ for the past ten years had been restored. But, he couldn't show it to everyone else at that point of time since it would mean endless trouble for his Jun Family if he did. Therefore, he would have to close his eyes and die with a contended heart in this manner only!

[The outcome will anyway be the same since I'm faced with such high-level Xuan Beasts. I will die one way or the other. So... what's the use of creating unnecessary accusations and troubles for my family...]

He slowly turned his wheelchair. Then, he motioned with his right hand. And, the ancestral sword flew through the air, and came to his hand. He opened the flaps and went out. But, something happened outside. This left him startled. In fact, it had given him a bit of a fright.

Even the usually calm and collected Jun Wu Yi was scared by the terrifying scene outside.

The Dongfang brothers were standing outside. They had been waiting for Jun WU Yi. Dangfang Wen Qing smiled as he quickly walked behind him, and started to push the wheelchair. There was a huge crowd on both the sides. Nearly 20,000 officers and men were stationed on the two sides. They stood silently in an orderly manner. They looked at him with reverence as their eyes redden with emotions.

Jun Wu Yi's eyes also somewhat redden as he said, "What's all this? Everyone ought to leave. It's not like we're parting forever! So, why all this?"

No one moved an inch. What 'not parting forever'? They knew everything!

Jun Wu Yi was silent for a while. His eyes looked at each and every familiar face on his sides. The Commander's expression was complicated. His expression then became steady as he softly commanded, "The men who shall go to war today — step forward!"

Three-hundred men stood out in an orderly manner at Jun Wu Yi's command. There were a few who hesitated a bit at first. But, they finally refused to turn back, and fell into formation. So, there was now a large square behind Jun Wu Yi.

Dongfang Wen Qing slowly pushed the wheelchair, and the three-hundred men behind them followed after with large strides. They were moving away when a loud shout interrupted their procession, "Wait!"

Jun Mo Xie had a solemn expression on his face as he waved his hand, "How can we not have wine when we send-off the brave heroes of Tian Xiang to war?! I have the best quality wine to match the occasion! Mo Xie wishes the gentlemen a safe and prosperous battle, and hopes that everyone returns in glory!"

Someone appeared from behind Jun Mo Xie; this individual held a wine jar. Others appeared and handed cups to everyone. Then, the wine was poured into everyone's cups.

There was a sense of regret in the depth of Jun Mo Xie's eyes. He may have had some conflict with a few of those men, but they now stood resolutely behind his uncle. Moreover, they stood with pride even though they knew that they were about to die. In fact, not a single one of them had cowered.

That was sufficient to earn Jun Mo Xie's respect.

They stood unchanged in the face of such adversity — whether they had been good men or bad. And, this made them heroes! In fact, only such a man can be called a Hero!

Heroes don't have good or bad personalities!

[But, I'm sorry! I could've saved you! It would've been easy for me. But, I can't do it! People must die in a battle. Even more so in a battle we're about to lose...]

[For Third Uncle's sake... For Jun Family's sake — I can't save you!]

[I'm sorry!]

Chapter 350: Internal Strife

Jun Mo Xie raised his wine cup, and drained it with closed eyes. He remembered a poem and couldn't help but sing, "What is today's death? It's tough to fight the battles of life. This is just the plot of the deceased from the past. The Kings of Hell beheads many a banners!"

Then, there was a "BANG!"... Jun Mo Xie had thrown his cup down. His body appeared tall and lofty as he sat atop his horse, and declared, "It's needless to say that the families of you three-hundred men will be taken care of by the Jun Family from now. Whether in their old age... or their marriage... they can count on our family as long as a Jun still lives! I — Jun Mo Xie — won't allow a single one of them to be wronged!"

"Many thanks, Young Master Jun! We will return this favor from the Jun Family in the next life!" The faces of all the three-hundred men were grateful. They had steeled themselves for the decisive battle. But, not only because of the lofty and heroic Jun Wu Yi... but because of martial law as well! Their parents, their children, their wives... their entire families would suffer from the stigma of their cowardly reputation if they became scared in face of battle. So, they had to keep their head up. The situation was extremely difficult, but they simply couldn't refute.

However, they were afraid of dying in the end. The great and towering heroes may have met their fates with dignity... and without any complaints since ancient times. But, they hadn't necessarily desired to die. And, it was the same for those ordinary men at this moment.

However, they felt like they were going to die for a "bosom friend" when they heard Jun Mo Xie speak! They knew that they would die in the decisive battle ahead. And, they couldn't help but wonder about their families in this moment. However, the person they had looked at with the most dislike had become the source of their comfort. And, his solemn promise had left them to feel relieved.

What does a man live his life for? For whose sake does he toil and labor so hard? What does he fight those bloody battles for? He does it for his parents, wife and children. The thoughts of glory and wealth take a back seat... especially before a final battle to the death.

The only thing they felt anxious about was the family they were leaving behind. But, Jun Mo Xie had promised to deal with the issue. They were unaware that he had made that decision due to the feeling of guilt. But, they still felt assured.

They would face death with a peaceful mind!

The three-hundred men then took a knee, and drained their cups. Then, they gave Jun Mo Xie a profound look before they got up to their feet. They then went their way... without turning... or even looking back.

"This is just the plot of the deceased from the past. The Kings of Hell beheads many a banners!" Jun Wu Yi laughed and continued, "This is a good poem. There are indeed countless of my good brothers there!"

Then, he ordered in a low voice, "Move!"

Twenty-thousand cavalry men dismounted, kneeled, and spoke in unison, "We pay great respects to the commander! May he return safely, and with glory!"

"May he return safely, and with glory!" these words made Jun Wu Yi's body stiff. But, he didn't turn to look. The three Dongfang brothers' bodies were straight as a ramrod as they slowly pushed his wheelchair forward...

Faint sobs could be heard behind them. The twenty-thousand kneeling soldiers couldn't get up.

The Southern Heaven City's war banners fluttered.

A force of four-thousand was silently waiting at the city gates in formation. Jun Wu Yi was on his wheelchair; he looked tranquil. Whether he would live or died... was irrelevant. He had already disregarded the thoughts of his life and death.

Xiao Han and the others also stood in formation. They gave Jun Wu Yi a meaningful look. Their clever trick had succeeded. So, they looked complacent at the moment. That thorn in the back wouldn't be so lucky that day... no matter what! They needn't act themselves since this plot had worked in the coy of the most legitimate excuse. He would now be forced to go into danger, and wouldn't return from this road!

Li Jue Tian, Solitary Falcon, Lei Wu Bei, Shi Chang Xiao, Feng Juan Yun stood not too far from there. Those five men looked into the distant from their side. Li Teng Yun and the others from every powerful family stood behind them as spectators of the battle. Each individual had a differed expression on their face. They obviously had different thoughts going through their minds.

"Are the odds of today's battle genuinely unknown?" Feng Juan Yun graced black clothes, black hair and black scabbard on his body. He stood as straight as a javelin as he looked at the tranquil Jun Wu Yi who was at the head of the formation. He felt sorry in his heart. [Such an excellent man of his generation will die before my eyes, and I still can't do a thing to help!]

"There's no scope of any odds!" Solitary Falcon's face was gloomy. And, his eyes had hint of anger that was already teetering on the edge of fury. He was on the verge of exploding. He had never harbored an iota of respect for Li Jue Tian. But, his resentment towards that man had reached a point of extremity at this juncture. That day was the first time that these two men who had been rivals for half their lives — Solitary Falcon and Feng Juan Yun — were of the same opinion.

Shi Chang Xiao stood on the side. He also had an expression of eventuality on his face. Lei Wu Bei stood stoned face. And, Li Jue Tian stood with his hands behind his back. His expression was tranquil. But, he was brimming with the arrogance. This showed his belief that only he reigned unbridled and supreme.

Li Jue Tian regarded himself as impervious; other people's point of view didn't matter to him. [I will decide whether my way of handling things is brilliant or dishonorable! I will take out anyone who refuses me! Even if you're a Great Master of equal fame... it doesn't matter to me! I'll fix you the moment you dare open your mouth! The clenched fist is the strongest argument!]

Feng Juan Yun sighed.

He suddenly became determined to become the strongest Great Master. The man couldn't understand this strange feeling. But, he was sick of Li Jue Tian's conduct. [In what way is his bearing that of the second strongest man in the world? He's overbearing when he hides his flaws, and acts in a tyrannical manner! There isn't a single good thing about him... except for his earth-shattering strength!]

Moreover, Feng Juan Yun couldn't tolerate the collaboration between the Xue Hun Manor and the Silver Blizzard City in this matter. [How could they decide to settle personal grudges at such a critical point of time?]

[You are aware that this battle will decide the future interactions between the Xuan experts of this continent and the Tian Fa forest! Yet... you're conspiring at such an important juncture to entrap that man into leading the troops. Moreover, you're even rushing to save your own high-ranking members! Where is your conscience? Where's your morality?]

[Moreover, Li Jue Tian and the Silver Blizzard City have enough power to individually retreat to safety if the Xuan Beasts win this war against the humans. But, the lives of millions of the general public will be in grave danger if this uprising makes its way to the inland!]

[It will be a huge calamity! This Li Jue Tian and the other Spirit Xuan experts can't see it? The Silver Blizzard City may retreat to the top of the mountains, and distance itself from everything. But, it can't hope to stay away from the outside world eternally!]

Feng Juan Yun was a lone and free swordsman. But, his cold exterior hid a warm heart, and a chivalrous personality. He didn't indulge in crafty plots. Nor did he use his strength to bully the weak. Such lowly tricks and schemes weren't fit for a hero in his mind. He couldn't tolerate them at all.

[What's the point of being a Great Master if one has such a temperament? Wouldn't the name of the Great Masters be blackened if we lose this war, and this catastrophe travels thousands of miles inland? How will we shed this infamy off? How will the Great Master rise to fame after this?]

"How would I know the odds of life and death in this battle? Oh.... just let those four-thousand go fight, and risk their lives? What can we do, right? So, let's just look at the drama, right?"

Feng Juan Yun sneered and continued, "I came from afar to help in the fight for the Southern Heaven City! Even the common folk around the world have lent their strength. And, the Xue Hun Manor has only sent its henchmen. Why don't you send me to fight? You have only sent some Sky and Earth Xuan experts. What's the use of that?"

He was a proud man, and had already endured a lot. But, he couldn't endure it any longer at that point. In fact, this man would've spoken candidly even if he were in front of the Emperor.

"What is the use... I'm afraid that isn't for you to decide, Feng Juan Yun. And, my Xue Hun Manor can't use a high-level expert like yourself in place of a lackey!"

Li Jue Tian crossed his hands behind his back. He didn't even turn as he softly spoke, "Brother Feng can voluntarily leave if he finds this unpleasant or wrong. And, he's wholly welcome if he feels that I have been mistaken, and feels like teaching me a lesson for it!"

"I don't have the capability to teach Great Master Tian. I know this." Feng Juan Yun replied coldly, "I don't wish to teach you a lesson." His meaning had been clearly implied in his words... 'I will have to go looking for my teeth if I attacked you.'

"Feng Juan Yun, I respect you as a Great Master! But, you're still not happy with what you've got! Who do you think you are? Who do you think this is? Since when did you have the guts to be so unreasonable in front of my father?" Li Teng Yun stomped his foot, and shouted from behind.

Feng Juan Yun's expression became as cold as ice.

"Bang!" Li Teng Yun went flying, and somersaulting. His face had swollen.

"You impudent bastard! Are you calling Feng Juan Yun's name into question?" Two figures had flitted into action. But, the attack had been the Solitary Falcon's doing. He was the only one who could catch up to Feng Juan Yun's speed in that gathering.

He had seen Feng Juan Yun's hand move, and had understood the discouraging outcome of it. Therefore, he rushed to slap Li Teng Yun first. In fact, he had already struck Li Teng Yun by the time Feng Juan Yun's hand reached the top his sword's hilt.

Who was Feng Juan Yun? Was he someone Li Teng Yun could insult? Li Teng Yun was the son of the second Great Master. But, he was like an ant in Feng Juan Yun's eyes. Jun Mo Xie would've perhaps used an ancient poem to describe Feng Juan Yun, "Kill a man every ten steps. And, no one will be left after a thousand miles."

No one in this world would've been able to save Li Teng Yun if Feng Juan Yun's hand had reached his sword's hilt unless the Solitary Falcon hadn't moved into action. Even Li Jue Tian couldn't have helped his own son! Feng Juan Yun had the strength of a Great Master once he had his sword in his hand. No other sword could've saved Li Teng Yun if he had attacked.

Solitary Falcon took action, and taught Li Teng Yun a lesson. He not only saved the boy's life in doing so, but he also saved Feng Juan Yun's life. After all, Li Jue Tian would've chased him around to kill him if he had killed Li Teng Yun. Then, Feng Juan Yun's life would've ended as well.

The trade would've ended with Feng Juan Yun life for Li Teng Yun's. But, that lowlife scoundrel wasn't worth it!

Solitary Falcon and Feng Juan Yun had been fighting each other for decades, but had slowly recognized each other's worth over the years. They had become natural friends as a result; despite the fact that they were rivals. Therefore, it was only natural for Solitary Falcon to diffuse the situation in his stead.

The other person who had moved into action was Shi Chang Xiao; contrary to what everyone would've expected. He had thought of the same thing that the Solitary Falcon had. In fact, he had gone one step further. The alliance would've collapsed if two Great Masters were to start fighting against each other. It wouldn't bode well for the mainland's sake if the allied forces were to witness an internal strife, and collapse as a result. It was just that Shi Chang Xiao was a step behind the Solitary Falcon in terms of speed.