

# Realms In The Firmament

## Chapter 26: The Investigation begins

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Retracting his finger, Ye Xiao stared at the cracks which he had just created and felt that it was unbelievable.

He couldn't believe that he had caused such significant damage with just a tap of his finger!

He had just casually used the power of the gelid qi a little bit. That was all!

He stayed silent for a while and let out a sigh.

"This power of the gelid qi could be a nice protection for me." Ye Xiao realized this and got lost in thoughts, "But... what should I do next..."

Meanwhile, he vaguely heard some noises coming from outside the front door.

The next moment the steward ran over in a hurry, "My lord, the government office of Chen-Xing City has sent some people. They want to ask you to cooperate with them to investigate a case. I think it must be the case of Mu Cheng-Bai's death."

Ye Xiao remained calm as he spoke, "Let them in. Lead them to the antechamber and bring them some tea."

The steward nodded his head and hurried off.

Ye Xiao preened himself a bit and then walked to the antechamber. As he stepped into the antechamber, he saw three men in official uniforms sitting there and drinking tea. The three of them gave off an uncomfortable feeling, as if they were a little restrained and nervous.

After all this is the house of the Northern General and they were about to make an investigation against the young lord of this place...

Every man who served in the house was an experienced ex-soldier. When they learnt about the purpose of these three officers, their normal gaze naturally turned into something more intimidating, as they quickly started emitting a strong sense of killing intent.

The expressions in their eyes were... unfriendly.

The three officers were terrified. They felt like they had come across a bunch of hungry tigers. They were very uncomfortable and nearly started to shiver. It was truly not easy for them to sit there instead of rushing out.

Beads of sweat had started to appear on their foreheads unknowingly and they really felt like they would lose the control of their bladder at any moment.

When Ye Xiao leisurely arrived, they felt extremely relieved and thanked the gods!

“Lord Ye!” One of the officers stood up instantly, but as he did he felt his knees go weak, so he immediately sat back down on the chair. He had been resisting the killing intent released by those ex-soldiers and had nearly used up all of his energy, so when he suddenly stood up, he had become completely powerless.

“What is it?” Ye Xiao paced over lightly as if floating in the air and then sat on the chair. He sat down, semi-lying like he had no spine and raised one of his legs up. While everybody thought that he would cross his legs, he just laid the leg right on the armrest and let it dangle.

Apparently he looked perfectly abhorrent without any presence. His eyes were dim and spiritless and he had a voluptuary look.

The officer sighed in his mind and thought, “Look at this brat... I really don’t know what to say. It was truly a disaster for the general to have a son like him.”

“Yes, lord Ye. We are just following orders and have absolutely no intention of offending you.” The officer said meekly, “There is a case that we need to ask you about.”

“Fine. Say it.” Ye Xiao tilted his head lazily and started to dig the dirt from under his nails.

“Well... Mu Cheng-Bai... Young lord Mu was murdered. I think you should know about this...”

“Mu Cheng-Bai? Who is that? Do I know him?” Ye Xiao raised his head and looked confused.

He actually was audacious enough to ask who Mu Cheng-Bai was... Everyone felt like Ye Xiao was trying to tell a bad joke.

“Eh-hem...” The officer, who turned out to be the leader of the three, showed a stunned look on his face and coughed, “Well I’d like to tell you... Mu Cheng-Bai was the man with whom you fought several days ago... It is said that you were very brave that day and that you had actually beat him up. Very admirable...”

Ye Xiao pretended that he took a tumble, “Oh that bastard! He was trying to steal from me. He deserved to be punched... Hmm? What? He’s dead? Nice! Who killed him? I would like to reward the killer...”

Then he showed an interested look, “Hmmm wait. You are here to ask me about it now... Aha, did I kill the bastard? Oh I see... That day after I beat him up, he got home and his internal injury turned heavier, and then he died, right? That means... I am the one who killed him? Ahahahaha, I have improved again! I am so strong...”

He sounded completely narcissistic and showed no trace of nervousness.

The officer was left speechless and coughed again, “You are mistaken... That afternoon somebody found him dead in the forest... That’s all...”

“What? I did not kill him?” Ye Xiao sighed disappointedly and then got angry, “Fxxk it! Why wasn’t it me? That bastard had seriously pissed me off and I really wanted to arrange a group of mercenaries to go and kill him! Humph! How dare he! He should know who is taking charge here in Chen-Xing City! He should know how great I am and what a mistake it is to mess with me! He was digging over the king’s head and dragging teeth from a tiger’s mouth! It is really too easy for him to die like this!”

The officer was stunned and thought, “You really dare talking! That was the heir of the Mu clan and the brother-in-law of the crown prince! Who’s the wrong guy to mess with? You actually talk so big... If he was alive, you would be the one to get killed. Now you are actually saying that... it is too easy for him to die like this...”

He then licked his lips and was preparing to speak, but Ye Xiao continued to say angrily, “Nice kill! Do you know who did it? Have you found him? I will reward him. He did help me a lot! He has saved my precious time. How could I not reward him?”

The three officers were all speechless and thought, “Why are we here with you if we have already found the murderer?”

“Please, my lord, tell me about the fight from that day in details. We will need to report it to the upper office.” The officer smiled bitterly and finally told him of their purpose.

“Report? What report? You don’t think I killed the guy, do you?” Ye Xiao squinted his eyes, “I did want to kill him badly, but somebody took it over... Humph, if the bastard wasn’t dead yet, I must kill him myself!”

The officers were left speechless again.

Then they tried very hard to persuade him and the steward helped them a little bit, so Ye Xiao reluctantly described the details of what had happened that day. When he was describing how he punched Mu Cheng-Bai, he was in such high spirits that he actually

stood up and started reliving the fight. He vividly showed them how he punched, kicked, dodged, jumped and landed on Mu Cheng-Bai...

He represented the story like it was an extremely wonderful duel between two supreme masters.

All in all, he tried to depict a tale where he, lord Ye, had been fighting doggedly and unyieldingly and he was a super powerful, handsome and elegant world-class expert cultivator... while Mu Cheng-Bai had been beaten up like a drowning dog, and finally the great lord Ye had showed mercy to him and let him keep his pathetic little life...

Everyone felt like sweating when hearing his story!

Who didn't know that he escaped, like a dog with his tail between his legs, from that fight?

He was so shameless that he described himself like a great hero... They completely looked down on him within their hearts!

"I see... We understand it all now. We will report this to the upper office right now." The officer was so awkward that he asked to leave right away.

"Hold on! What are you in a hurry for? I am not done yet..." Lord Ye was just on a roll. How could he let them get away?

"We already have a clear picture about this whole ordeal... Lord Ye you are a diligent man, I think it is better for you to go and get some rest..." The officers then rushed out of the General's House, like escaping from death, while shouting, "We will have to bother you another time, young lord Ye..."

"Urh... Fine. Take care." Ye Xiao didn't move at all and was still lying on the chair.

The servants let the three officers out and then everyone left the antechamber except for the steward.

"It is so weird." The steward frowned, "I thought that they would at least take you away for the investigation, but they actually just asked some questions here, in your house. Why would they operate like this..."

Ye Xiao humphed and said peacefully, "It is just the balance of political powers. Now the other princes are all grown up and every of them is eyeing the throne... There are two of them who are holding and developing powerful forces already in both the government and the martial clans... The crown prince is at the risk of losing his crown. How could he possibly mess with such a powerful military force like us, just for a dead brother-in-law?"

“Furthermore, we have the kick-ass rumor spreading out there.” The steward added and smiled.

Ye Xiao nodded, “True. For the crown prince... Mu Cheng-Bai was a brother-in-law when he was alive, but he is just a dead body now that he is dead. That’s all... Hiahia, hiahiahia...”

He sneered and said no more, instead he went straight back to his backyard to continue his cultivation.

“Something still doesn’t feel right though...” The steward stopped smiling and murmured, “The crown prince surely wouldn’t let this go so easily... Could there be another strike coming from him?”

He spoke nervously with his hands clasped behind his back, “The message to the general should’ve gotten through Huang-Long Guan and reached the desert by now. The message will get to the general in two days tops. And it will take at least another six days to get his reply... If anything goes wrong during these eight days...”

He sighed deeply and got out the room hurriedly. He told the guards to increase the security, especially at night, and to stay vigilant...

“Those from the government may be restrained and scrupulous, but those from the martial clans... they are truly impossible to defend against effectively...” His eyes showed anxiety.

“The next few months should be filled with chaotic events.”

The steward who always showed a calm demeanor now felt his hands full of cold sweat. He truly felt insecure about keeping his young master safe.

## **Chapter 27: The Mystery In White**

The rumor was still causing unrest within the capital.

But while all this was happening, an oddly isolated courtyard house seemed to be completely unaffected by the chaos outside.

This courtyard house was located at the central area of the capital. It wouldn’t be a lie if one was to say that in here an inch of land was worth a bar of gold.

This courtyard house was built within a pervasive bamboo forest, which was surrounded by a small continuous mountain range on three sides. This meant that the house could only be approached from a single direction.

People who could purchase such land must have very powerful background and an infinite amount of wealth. The person who did purchase it had actually turned twenty percent of the land into small mountains and seventy percent into a bamboo forest. And he had only used the remaining ten percent to build a sequestered courtyard house.

The extravagant spending done by this person was really shocking!

But using a fortune wisely almost always brings about a considerable return!

In the courtyard, the wind was blowing gently causing the bamboo forest to peacefully rustle. Bringing about a sense of serenity, like a poetic illusion.

At the moment, along with the wind in the forest, there was a distinct ringing sound from a string instrument; it was as if the sound was coming from from the heavens.

The sound should have been contained within the heavens, but it was actually being heard in the mortal world!

In the courtyard, there stood a zither on its stand. A man in a white robe was sitting in a wheelchair, and his fingers were dancing on the strings of the zither. The melodious sound of the zither was floating around like a gentle stream.

A stick of incense was alight in front of the zither stand. Continuous caesious smoke was rising slowly and then circling in the air until it scattered.

There were two girls in white standing behind the man.

It looked like a wonderful painting, the three of them; one was sitting while two were standing in this beautiful scenery.

Even if a large group of enemies came over right now, they would not have the heart to break this scene.

The breeze was gently caressing their soft robes.

Suddenly a figure in black with blue stripes flashed in the forest. A man crossed the forest like the wind and stepped on the floor ever so lightly. Although the man was moving peacefully, he must be in extreme haste, as he had moved very fast. However, when he saw the scene in front of him, he said nothing and stood aside silently. He didn't even make a sound when he breathed.

He didn't dare to take deep breaths because he was afraid to disturb the peace of this scene.

Although an unexpected individual had arrived, the man in white kept his calm demeanor. His face was fair like white jade. He looked lost in the music. His fingers

were moving really fast but they seemed extremely comfortable on the zither. His eyes were nearly closed and his pretty eyebrows were naturally stretching to his sideburns. It looked like he hadn't noticed the man who had rushed through his forest and into his courtyard and was now standing in front of him.

- Zeng! - Finally, the last note was heard, as the old man stopped playing the zither. Meanwhile, the magical music from the zither was still lingering around in the air.

The man in white put his hand down slowly and took a deep breath. He closed his eyes and looked up, letting his long black hair sweep down naturally.

The man in black stepped forward preparing to talk, but the man in white stretched his hand forward and waved lightly.

The man in black humbly stepped back.

After a long silence, the man in white opened his eyes and spoke peacefully, "Everything in the universe has a soul. My zither stopped; it means that the soul of the song I was playing is gone. To feel the sound's soul connect with our souls... is respecting all livings... and is also respecting ourselves greatly."

"It should not be interrupted at that moment." The man in white smiled peacefully, "So, no matter what emergent problems you have, you shall wait."

"Yes, my lord." The man in black looked humbled as he lowered his head admiringly.

This man in black had actually reached the peak of the Grade of Diyuan. Counting out the top-class cultivators in the superior martial sects, no cultivators in the mortal world could beat him, but he was actually acting like an inferior servant in front of the man in white.

He acted so humble, but he looked to be in high spirits, sincere, and even honored!

It seemed like, being a servant to this man in white, was the best thing and the biggest achievement of his life!

"Now you can talk." The man in white sat still and retracted his hand to his side with a smile, and then one of the girls handed him a white silk napkin. The man in white took the napkin and rubbed his hands before he handed it back.

He didn't even look at the girl, but the girl was acting very humble as she took the napkin with both of her hands.

"It is about Mu Cheng-Bai from the Mu clan. He has died in the capital and it is said that Ye Xiao did this. This case is still causing disturbances in the capital. The Mu clan has

even sent out their strongest forces to Chen-Xing City for an investigation.” The man in black said with his head low.

“Hmm?” The man in white put his hands on his belly and nodded.

“There are many doubts in the case of Mu Cheng-Bai’s death, but it is certain that the murderer can not be Ye Xiao! So... I am afraid that the Mu clan has fallen into a trap this time. Normally, the Mu clan are not outwitted to this extent...” The man in black reported, “First of all, Ye Xiao is only a foppish fool who would never have the capability to kill Mu Cheng-Bai; let alone that there were two superior guards. It was impossible for him to kill three guys who were at the Grade of Renyuan... Secondly...”

He stated eight doubts along with his analysis, and every single one of them seemed very clear and reasonable.

The man in white was listening silently the whole time until the man in black finished. And then he said, “They all sound reasonable...”

The man in black showed excitement in his face, and his face even turned a little red, “Thank you for your praise, my lord!”

“But...” The man in white curled his mouth and smiled, “Everything you said was based on one assumption. It is... that the murderer can not be Ye Xiao.”

“If the murderer really turns out to be Ye Xiao, everything you have said will become nonsense. And we may fall into the trap of taking endless risk because of this little mistake you may have made... You know why? Because if we don’t consider Ye Xiao to be a suspect and he would actually turn out to be the murderer, then we would have investigated others for sure... Then we would never be able to find out who it was... And then what? Then we would keep suspecting one expert cultivator after another and make more and more enemies. We might insist that this was the logical thing to do, but even so, everyone we would offend would turn out to be innocent... That means that we would have created endless mortal enmities!”

The man in white gazed at the man in black peacefully.

“But...” The man in black was sweating, “This Ye Xiao is truly lame... Everyone knows it... It is a common opinion...”

“Oh? Everyone knows it?” The man in white smiled again, “Does a common opinion make it the truth? Do you really know about Ye Xiao’s capabilities? Did you watch him grow up? Or have you tested him on your own?”

“I... I... No... I haven’t.” The man in black was stunned.



“So, when Mu Cheng-Bai died, were you there and did you see the real murderer?” The man in white was still smiling.

“Well... No...” The man in black was starting to feel small.

“Well then, how do you know Ye Xiao can or can not kill Mu Cheng-Bai and did or did not kill him?” The man in white frowned.

“...” The man in black was left speechless.

“There are only things which you haven’t thought of; there is nothing you can’t deal with. There are so many things you don’t know about, and yet you have already made your judgment...” The man in white spoke peacefully, “Unwise.”

“Yes, my lord.” The man in black was completely drenched in sweat, “You are right, my lord.”

“Why couldn’t Ye Xiao kill Mu Cheng-Bai? Why didn’t he kill Mu Cheng-Bai? Why could Mu Cheng-Bai not die in a foppish fool’s hand?” The man in white raised his eyelids and spoke peacefully, “There is no absolute in our world. Even if the chance of him killing Mu Cheng-Bai is one percent or lower, that still doesn’t make it impossible and it simply means, that he could actually be the murderer!”

It was a little bit cryptic, but the man in black got the point.

“Well then... about this case, what should I do? Please, show me the right direction.” The man in black kept his head low as he asked respectfully.

“Add fuel to the fire.” The man in white smiled softly, “The more people that die, the better. People from the Mu clan, people from the Crown Prince’s Palace and people from the government... It doesn’t matter how many of them die. But, Ye Xiao should stay alive.”

“What... Why?” The man in black was totally confused.

His master had just said that Ye Xiao was a suspect, so he had no idea why Ye Xiao couldn’t die.

“If Ye Xiao died, this case would be over. What happened would be tossed aside and it’d be soon forgotten.” The man in white sneered weirdly, “It is truly not a good situation to be at peace.”

“Yes, my lord.” The man in black said.

“Well, no matter who the Mu clan has sent this time, I want them all to die!” The man in white smiled softly, “They can be killed by people from other clans, from the General’s

House, from where the princes stays or even from the martial sects... Hei-Jiu [1], do you understand?"

"Yes, my lord!" The man in black – Hei-Jiu cupped his hands.

"By the way... About collecting information from the large clans and the missions about the other two kingdoms and the grassland, how are you getting along?" The man in white smiled softly and asked, "I have waited an extra day already. Are you trying to keep me waiting?!"

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[1] Hei-Jiu : This name literally translates to Dark-nine. So this name should be something like a secret agent code name and is unlikely to be his actual name.

## Chapter 28: You Will Never Escape My Hatred

"I have already received some information." The man in black kept his head lowered and spoke nervously, "Our men have already reached some sources and they are now following your instructions. Your plan is truly brilliant. It is only a matter of time before we hear some good news,"

The man in white nodded, "Fair enough. I hope that you will not let me down."

The man in black was sweating profusely and answered loudly, "We won't let you down, my lord!"

The man in white laughed and made a gesture. The girls behind him stepped forward and started to push the man's wheelchair to lead him away.

This mysterious white robed man turned out to be a disabled person.

"My lord, about Ye Xiao..." The man in black asked hurriedly.

The man in white, who was sitting on the wheelchair, didn't even look back as he said, "When the violent disturbance comes, we won't need Ye Xiao anymore, do we?"

"You are right." The man in black felt inspired.

The man in white entered the house, which was located in the center of the courtyard house.

Suddenly, shadows appeared and started quivering, and then - Puff! - the courtyard house suddenly vanished. In fact, the bamboo trees suddenly started to move like they

could actually walk, and the countless bamboo trees had quickly covered every open space where the courtyard was mere seconds ago.

Instantly, the open space, that was previously occupied by the courtyard house, became part of the bamboo forest. This place had actually fully integrated into the bamboo forest.

A faint voice appeared and sighed, "My Camouflage Array of Inversing Five Elements is still imperfect... If only it could be soundproof... and keep the sound, smell and spiritual energy inside from being detected from the outside... it becomes the perfect Anti-location Array..." These words must've originated from the mysterious man in white.

One of the girls, Wan-Er spoke softly, "Master, the auction of the supreme dan beads..."

"Go!" The man in white spoke gently, "At least get three beads back to me. Supreme dan beads with dan clouds is something that even I have never seen before."

Wan-Er was astonished, "Master, maybe there are less than three beads at the auction... Maybe there is only one bead."

"There must be over three." The man in white said confidently.

Their voices had now completely disappeared.

The man in black crouched and then he flew up. He flew away and also disappeared.

...

Since the conversation with the three officers, it had been rather quiet around Ye Xiao. Everything was moving along peacefully.

Ye Xiao was free but he stayed at home. He was seizing every minute he had to cultivate with concentration. He was converting all the qi in his body into gelid qi to further improve his strength.

During this time, he had found a pleasant surprise. The scorching qi that had appeared alongside the gelid qi didn't really disappear. Instead, it hid inside his Jing and Mai all over his body. Although it was weak, it still existed.

In other words, the two kinds of qi that were brought by cultivating the East-rising Purple Qi were working together; one showed on the outside, while the other was quietly working on the inside. That also meant that the present level of East-rising Purple Qi contained two skills. He needed to practice both of them.

Because of this, he worked even harder.

He used to have some spare time in a day to drink some tea, but now he didn't want that anymore.

He was either reading or cultivating. He was like the creme a la creme of a group of good students.

The steward felt excited because of this. He thought that the young lord had finally grown up and had completely transformed. He felt that the general would be overjoyed if he were to see this...

The steward was right, but not in the way he had intended. His young master had indeed transformed, but in a different way!

Zuo Wu-Ji and Lan Lang-Lang had come to Ye Xiao twice, but Ye Xiao had driven them away multiple times, "Piss off! You foppish black sheep, don't disturb me from becoming a supreme cultivator. Go on with your own businesses!"

Zuo Wu-Ji and Lan Lang-Lang felt speechless for his fanfaronade.

"Such a bastard. He actually called himself a supreme cultivator..."

"He must be daydreaming!"

"I say he never woke up!"

"I really want to punch him, but I fear that I can't beat him. We are no match for him even though he isn't a supreme cultivator, I am afraid..."

"He'll beat the crap out of us!"

"It is fine that he daydreamed, but he actually dared to say we are foppish black sheep..."

"That's true. Like he isn't one of us..."

"We obviously are in the same boat. Wasn't it the older one laughing at the younger?!"

"Of course! We are the 'three lords'. We are even walking side by side."

"Humph! The foppish fool, I will beat him up eventually."

"Right! We can't let him leave the glorious 'three lords'."

"Wait and see! Humph!"

"Humph!"

...

It was possible to kick the two of them out of the house, but there was someone else that couldn't be driven away, no matter how hard Ye Xiao had tried.

Most importantly, this one had a whip in her hand, which was purposely given by Ye Xiao's father to sexually discipline... Oh no, strictly discipline Ye Xiao.

That's right! She was our adorable Princess Ye-Yue!

Su Ye-Yue.

Her dad was the only prince with a non-royal surname in the Kingdom of Chen. To be honored with the title of prince, he must have obtained great merits and should hold great power!

He was Prince Hua-Yang who had three sons and a daughter. He didn't particularly care about his sons. Instead, his daughter Su Ye-Yue received all the care in his heart and was like an apple in his eye. Naturally the girl received special treatment, it seemed like her father feared that she was like something that would melt when he had it in his mouth and something that would drop when he held it in his hands. He truly spoiled her very much.

It was said that when he named the girl, he gathered every single great scholar in his house to help him think about her name. Finally he took the concept of 'When the world revived, the moon shined in the night sky' so that it represented the surname and the given name perfectly [1].

Thus, she got the name Su Ye-Yue.

It was lucky that, even though Princess Ye-Yue was spoiled a lot, she didn't have an overbearing personality. It made it easier for Ye Xiao to accept her...

However, at the moment, all Ye Xiao could think of when she stared at him, was how he could quickly get as far away from her as possible.

It was the feeling of a guilty conscience.

This kind of guilt was technically from the experiences that he had obtained during his previous life.

During his previous life, the Xiao Monarch was very powerful and had an unfathomable cultivation base. He laughed and was considered to be the most elegant within the firmament. However, he was cultivating the Pure Yang Martial Arts, so he stayed single in order to retain the purity of a male virgin.

In his previous life, he had missed out on so many beautiful girls. And those girls had all deeply fallen in love with him...

But all that Ye Xiao could do was to watch them. So he always showed a cold-hearted and uninterested look in his eyes, which had hurt more girls than he could count.

When they left him despairingly, one after another, Ye Xiao could only turn his back on them and sigh deeply in his heart.

Now that Su Ye-Yue, his legal fiancée, was looking at him with her beautiful eyes, Ye Xiao felt his heart racing.

He nearly ran away because of his usual practices.

In fact, there was another girl's face showing in his mind – a girl with beautiful and sad eyes. It was like her face popped up blocking his sight and looking at him with tears of love and mourning.

“You...”

Ye Xiao reached out his hand and murmured.

But he was only able to say one word before he recovered from the trance. He laughed at himself and showed a little loneliness on his face.

...

It was in the Qing-Yun Realm.

There was a palace with clouds and fog floating in the air. It was silent and solemn.

In the backyard of the grand palace, there was a grave that looked new.

An entire piece of Qing-Yun Purple Jade that was three-meters wide and ten meters high was used as a gravestone! A piece of Qing-Yun Purple Jade, which would make countless people fight for it was actually just being used as a simple gravestone!

A sword light suddenly flashed rapidly.

Purple sparks bursting out on the surface of the Qing-Yun Purple Jade!

Some broken tiny pieces of the jade fell on the floor.

Six words appeared, which were carved deeply on the gravestone.

“笑尽天下英雄!” (To laugh at all heroes in the firmament!)

That sword light stopped immediately. The owner of the sword sighed and turned around to leave for the room on the top floor of the palace, and as she moved, she quickly disappeared from view.

It was in this room.

A girl that had a perfect slim body and was wearing a silk veil on her face silently admired the calligraphy on the wall for a long time, until she eventually closed her beautiful eyes. Two lines of tears coursed down her cheeks.

“I will avenge you!”

“Even though you never admitted you were my husband, but... I have decided to be your wife! I would stick with you ceaselessly if you were still alive and I will avenge you if you die!”

“Now that you are dead, how do you say ‘no’ to me? Could you actually stop me widowing myself? Ye Xiao, you bastard! I hate you! I hate you! I will hate you in all of my next lives!”

She might have said something with hate, but more tears were quickly dropping down from her eyes to the floor. The sword that was stabbing in the floor was quivering, like it was going along with its master’s emotions of love and hate, like it was eager for a piquant killing!

On the wall, there was not only the sword, but also the calligraphy. The beautiful girl was looking at the calligraphy lovingly.

The writing on the calligraphy was like a flying dragon and dancing birds; it showed unrestraint.

The main lines were:

‘一生惧见红颜泪；谨慎莫伤美人心；待到飘然消失日，化作天边不羁云！’

(To escape from the tear of the beauty; to prevent hurting her heart. When the death comes one day, to turn into an unrestrained cloud!)

There was a smaller line below,

‘今生有悔，害你形单影只；若有来生，许你四海八荒。’

(I regret, that I let you be solitary; if there is a next life, I promise I will accompany you to travel the world.)

The name of the author inscribed was ‘叶笑’ (Ye Xiao).

The girl in white looked at the calligraphy with tears in her eyes, and felt inconsolable, “You liar! You promised me your next life! There is no such thing!”

“You didn’t want to hurt a girl’s heart, but you have already hurt me so much!”

“You wanted to become an unrestrained cloud when you died... Now that you are dead, where is my unrestrained cloud, huh?”

“Liar! Liar! Liar! You are a terrible liar!”

She turned around and laid her head and arms on the table, once again started to wail.

“Today is your first seven [2]. I will wear mourning attire for you for seventy-five days and stay here to keep your grave for a year.” The girl stood up slowly and wiped her tears, murmuring, “After a year, I will carry my sword to avenge you! With such hatred, I will never let them go unless I die!”

...

“What’s wrong? Are you unwell?” Su Ye-Yue saw that Ye Xiao was lost in his own world, so she reached her hand out and waved it in front of him, “Hey, don’t make such a terrible look. What are you doing?”

Ye Xiao hurriedly drew back his mind, struck a decent pose and coughed, “What are you doing here?”

[1] About her name Su Ye-Yue, the surname is Su and the given name is Ye-Yue. Su (苏) can represent ‘revive’ (复苏), and Ye-Yue (夜月) means the moon (月) at night (夜).

[2] First seven: It is believed in China that when people die, the soul will come back at the seventh day after their death, and the family will prepare meals for them.

## Chapter 29: Humph! You Are So Annoying~!

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“Hmm? Can’t I come?” Su Ye-Yue got a little angry when she heard Ye Xiao. She wrinkled her little pretty nose and said, “Sooner or later, it will become my house too! I will be the vice-chairman here! I am here to check my residence in advance! Can’t I do that? Listen to you. You don’t want me to be here from deep within your heart, do you?”



She humphed and started to twist the whip in her hands. She squinted at Ye Xiao with a look like 'I will whip you to death, if you ever dare to piss me off again'.

She intentionally showed a dark look to Ye Xiao, but it turned out to be so adorable that he didn't even feel the least bit threatened.

He had not been in the mood, but she had actually amused him. The words she said, 'will become my house too', 'the vice-chairman', 'check my residence in advance'... he found them really funny.

As she had behaved like this, maybe Su Ye-Yue actually didn't feel any antipathy towards Ye Xiao. Maybe she had already given in to her fate, so she cared no more about it, but it revealed her true personality.

"Heyyy, what are you talking about?" Ye Xiao tried to comfort her, "How could I possibly not welcome you? I am super happy that you came to my house. Oh no, our house."

"Humph!" Su Ye-Yue acted like the boss of the house and walked around Ye Xiao, holding her head high with her wrinkled nose, and then she snuffled a bit and asked interestedly, "Oh, Xiao-Xiao, how come you smell so good? What are you carrying with you?!"

"What are you talking about? I don't have anything on me!" Ye Xiao contested her claims, but he knew clearly about the origin of his pleasant fragrance.

The reason why he smelled so good was quite simple. He had accomplished ablution of the muscles and bones twice with his body, so most of the impurities in his body had been cleared. His body was pure like a newborn child's body, so it certainly smelled good.

"Yes! You definitely do!" Su Ye-Yue was quite certain about this fact, as she took a closer look at Ye Xiao and smelled him around. Then she murmured with confusion, "It is not the smell of perfumes for girls... And it is not the smell of a flower... and... Oh? Oh!!"

She found that she was too close to Ye Xiao, and then she looked up and saw Ye Xiao looking at her with a complacent smile. The pretty face and his soft eyes were really close to her. She could even feel his breath!

She was so shocked that she screamed. She immediately jumped away from him and felt her heart racing. Her pretty face turned red. She suddenly felt awkward and didn't know what to do. She was flustered and embarrassed at the same time. She would have liked to turn around and run out of the house, but she found herself unable to move her legs. Instead, she realized that she would rather stay here than leave.

Ye Xiao felt warmth spreading in his heart, and said softly, "What an adorable little girl."

Su Ye-Yue felt her face quickly heating up as her original beautiful pale white skin quickly obtained a deep shade of red. She managed to stutter out a few words, “Y... you... you... you are just slightly older than me! Humph, how dare you speak to me with a tone of seniority! I... If you... y... you speak like that again, I... I... I wi... will punch you down!”

Ye Xiao laughed out loud carelessly. He felt pleased from the bottom of his heart.

Hearing his voice and smelling his scent made Su Ye-Yue’s heart beat even faster. The blush on her face didn’t vanish; it became even more obvious and cute.

She suddenly came out with a thought that this guy was to become her husband in the future...

He was to become her husband...

This thought had appeared in her mind and was actually lingering around for a long time. She just couldn’t help but feel even more embarrassed.

Before now, Su Ye-Yue had simply regarded Ye Xiao as her playmate and a man she had been loathly engaged to. Their fates were intertwined because she couldn’t disobey her parents. That was it and that was all.

However, at this moment, the thought of him becoming her ‘husband’ that appeared in her mind had truly surprised this vivacious girl.

She lowered her head and stayed quiet for quite a while. When she finally raised her head, she found that Ye Xiao was now sitting on the chair across her and that he was actually focussing on reading a book.

She finally felt relaxed and felt lucky that he didn’t seem to notice her.

But she couldn’t help but be a little bit upset as well. She was wondering why he wasn’t looking at her at all.

Then she took a few steps ahead and softly sat in front of him, and observed his pretty face. A long time passed in the silence.

After reading the book for a while, Ye Xiao stopped to rest and only now realized that Su Ye-Yue actually hadn’t left. He looked up and saw that she was laying her elbows on the table and bracing her lower jaw. She was looking at him quietly and calmly.

He felt puzzled, and asked gently, “Are you ok?”

Maybe because Ye Xiao had spoken gently, she wasn't startled. She was still calm, and a little bit absent-minded as she murmured, "Xiao-Xiao... You have changed a lot recently..."

"I have changed a lot? Have I?" Ye Xiao frowned.

"Yes... Yes, you have..." She tilted her head and thoughtfully said, "Your outer appearance hasn't changed... But you used to be very annoying, which made me want to punch you down all the time... As for now... the annoying part is gone... Instead, you are..."

She frowned and tried to organize proper words to clearly describe her feelings. After a while she continued, "...like... You are composed and credible now... Why is that? And you look like you have many things hidden in your mind, like there are so many stories in your head... That is weird."

Ye Xiao lifted his eyebrows and smiled.

Changed? Of course he had changed! It would be weird if he had not.

If this Ye Xiao was still the departed Ye Xiao, not the Xiao Monarch, that would be a massive problem!

Anyway, he had to admit that girls' instincts are really frightful.

Su Ye-Yue was a princess, so things that usually happened to normal girls would never happen to her. However, the annoyance she had felt in the departed Ye Xiao was the natural reaction of every normal girl had towards the foppish fools.

Ye Xiao realized that sometimes even a tiny action could let people notice his changed personality. He felt that he really needed to seriously think about this.

He had always been free and alone in his previous life, traveling around the world with laughter.

However, everything was different now. If he showed the personality of the Xiao Monarch in this present life... people would wonder how he turned into a solitary man from a foppish teenage boy...

Even in this mortal world, there could be people who would regard him as a threat and were able to easily kill him.

Maybe he should show himself as a foppish fool in people's faces, so that it could become his perfect disguise.

Besides, after living for such a long time, Ye Xiao clearly knew that he had mostly lived wrong in his previous life.

Every bit of affection he had received had actually made him understand, but he actually felt like he understood nothing.

He was always confused about it.

Could it be... that he had to go through all the troubles in heaven and hell before he could become successful?

So he was thinking, "Maybe I should try to get into a relationship?"

The reason he had stayed away from relationships till now was due to him practicing the Pure Yang Martial Arts.

"The disturbance you have caused this time is really serious. Although you didn't kill Mu Cheng-Bai, but all of the existing evidences are pointing at you." Su Ye-Yue expressed her anxiousness.

Su Ye-Yue had not cared about this case before, because she had not thought that it would matter whether Ye Xiao would die or not; she would have probably felt nothing more than a little pity. However, she cared for him now.

Even she herself didn't know how and why her mind had changed.

Someone she hadn't cared about before, had suddenly become important to her. How?!

"You're in a truly dangerous situation." She lovingly looked at Ye Xiao.

"Hmm. I know." Ye Xiao nodded, "I am afraid I really am getting into a perilous position... The princes are fighting for the throne; the noble clans are interfering; the supreme dan beads have shown up; the reclusive martial sects are back to the world... The thing regarding me has happened during all these events, so maybe I will be the blasting fuse to the bursts of the battles..."

"That is true... What will you do next?" Su Ye-Yue asked worriedly, "I can ask my dad to send a team of guards to protect you and lead you out of the capital to the north. You can get away from this mess."

Ye Xiao replied after thinking for a while, "A man should stand straight up in the world. How can I keep escaping from troubles. The more dangerous the situation is, the more I can get trained. If I can get through this, it will definitely be a reform of me. A danger is also an opportunity. If I can't get through it... then there won't be any big accomplishments in my life. I will be a useless fool who is unable to protect the one who he cares for and who cares for him."

Ye Xiao smiled, "I am too young. I haven't been through anything that will make me regret when I die. So if I die, I die."

When he said so, he suddenly thought of a pair of eyes he had seen before, which looked exactly the same like the eyes that were looking at him right now.

He felt sad. Then he sighed.

Su Ye-Yue's face suddenly turned red again.

She started to think,

"What... What does he mean? Of course, the 'Get through this' part is understandable. The 'can't get through' part... The one who he cares for and who cares for him... Who is the one he was talking about? 'Too young', 'haven't been through anything that...' What was he talking about? Could it be... Could it be me?"

She suddenly felt the accompaniment of gongs and drums in her mind that her heart nearly beat out from her chest. She felt shyness, happiness and sweetness at the same time. She tried her best to humph strongly, in case she got ludicrous, and then she spoke like a peevish child, "Oh, come on. This has nothing to do with me, I guess... Oh, you are just talking nonsense again... Come on! I am leaving. I won't hear your balderdash. You are so annoying~!"

She then stood up and literally skipped to the door.

But in fact, she looked like she was... escaping!

## **Chapter 30: An Assassin At Night**

"Erh?" Ye Xiao was shocked. When he opened his eyes, Su Ye-Yue was no longer around. He could only hear a shy voice, "Little Soya [1]! Let's go! Let's get out of the house of the man who speaks honeyed words..."

She had managed to escape from his clutches.

He heard the guards talk, but he couldn't make out what they were talking about, and then they stopped.

"Yes of course... This has nothing to do with her... I never said that it did... (dialogue continued from chapter 29)" Ye Xiao rubbed his head and murmured, "Why did she suddenly become shy and run away... What's wrong with her?"

He was confused and murmured, "Oh girls... Their thoughts are truly baffling..."

The steward came over in a hurry and noticed that Su Ye-Yue had left. He felt relieved and grabbed onto Ye Xiao's arm, "My lord! People from the Mu clan have reached the entrance of the capital! They are now doing the blood sacrifice outside the south gate. It is said that... They are holding 77 white flags and 22 blood flags in total!"

Ye Xiao was confused, "Blood sacrifice? White flags? Blood flags? What the hell are those?"

The steward was in such a hurry that he stomped his foot out of frustration before answering, "You don't know? It is a 'ninety-nine'! The 77 white flags mean mourning and the 22 blood flags mean that they are unwilling to give up! There are 99 flags in total, and that means they will never consider any compromise! No matter how long it will take, they are unwilling to give up!"

Ye Xiao rolled his eyelids, "So what?"

Hearing Ye Xiao's words, the steward became dumbfounded.

Ye Xiao stretched himself leisurely, "Time for bed... Words like 'unwilling to give up' sound really horrible. I am so scared and it makes me feel sleepy... I am so terrified... So I think I need to sleep so as to hide from reality."

The steward was shocked as he watched his young master leave leisurely. He was rendered speechless and felt like there was a storm howling in his mind. When he was just considering forgetting about their relationship and beating Ye Xiao up, Ye Xiao had already closed the door in his face. After a while, snoring sounds resounded throughout the mansion...

"I am truly..." The steward couldn't find words to complete this sentence. He was extremely worried but he couldn't do a thing about it, so he finally stomped his feet on the floor and then left.

...

It was deep into the night.

The steward had stayed awake the entire time.

The capital was enshrouded in a tense atmosphere at this moment.

However, nobody knew that in a vast bamboo forest, there was a man with a clear sight quietly observing the capital.

It seemed that all the birds in the capital were arriving at this forest to set up their nests. The birds flew to the bamboo forest from all directions one after another. The silent bamboo forest had turned unusually noisy.

The man in white waved his hand quietly and those birds all gathered in the sky over his head.

They didn't just keep flying. Instead, they stopped on his hand one after another. It was truly a marvelous spectacle. The birds left small wax beads in his hand one after another.

"Master, you should get some rest. Just let Xiu-Er and me do this job." A girl in white walked over lightly and spoke softly.

"It's better I do it myself when I am able to." The man in white smiled softly, "Wan-Er, you two must be tired after all these years. You should relax sometimes. Don't worry. Such an easy job won't exhaust me. Besides, to do some works is a way for me to practice. It is good for me."

Wan-Er smiled, "As long as you stay with us, we won't feel tired. I understand that you want to practice more, but your legs... We are worried about you."

The man in white smiled peacefully, "It is my unavoidable fate. Everything will be ok and I just need to get over it. This period of time is actually the perfect time for me to improve myself. It affects my ultimate mission which I have to complete in the future. Don't worry. I will be fine. I have gotten over it long ago... really!"

"Ok." Wan-Er replied with a sweet smile, and then she covered him in the pure white cotton cloak which she had brought.

As she was preparing to leave, the man in white spoke to her in a low voice, "Wan-Er, do you notice that the name 'Ye Xiao' sounds odd?"

"Odd?" Wan-Er frowned.

She thought that his question was weird. The word was especially weird – 'odd'!

"You may not know about it. This name is very interesting." The man in white smiled peacefully and spoke as if deep in his thoughts, "What a pity..."

His eyes slightly rolled up and he looked into the distant sky through the bamboo trees. After a long time, he sighed, "What a pity!"

"A pity?" Wan-Er was confused and her crystal-like eyes were wide-open.

But the man stopped his daydreaming so that he could read the information attentively.

"The first storm will soon reach the capital... And will also be the first storm of my life..." The man in white murmured, "Who could experience the storms of the world with me by my side?"

He looked really lonely, as if the loneliness was from extracted from the bottom of his heart. A sense of coldness had formed within him.

It was the kind of coldness felt when one was at the top of the world, a coldness that nobody else could withstand.

He said to Wan-Er, "Let the Nine Black-dressers [2] stay focussed on every movement in the General's House. If something goes wrong, make sure they do any -and everything necessary!"

Wan-Er quickly agreed and left.

...

The city was meant to be bustling tonight.

A lot of people entered the Chen-Xing City through every entrance!

People from the martial sects, the unattached cultivators and the tyrants from everywhere were all quietly making their way to the city.

The security in the house of Ye was strengthened.

After the princess left, eight guards had arrived from the Palace of Hua-Yang. They'd joined the security group immediately after arrival.

The steward was well prepared. He had actually brought a bizarre knife with him.

The 36 blood guards felt surprised when they saw the knife. They looked at each other and found nothing to say. These guards, who usually expressed no emotions, were unexpectedly showing their excitement.

They hadn't seen the God-Slayer's Knife for so many years. This night... would certainly become an interesting night for them.

The night had fallen and the sky was at its darkest.

The whole capital was enshrouded by the darkness.

But the darkness tonight was different from the usual one. There was a depressing feeling contained inside it, which had quickly spread all over the capital.

Tonight, even the common people could sense the danger in the air. They all closed their windows and had gone to bed early.



The royal guards sensed it too, even though they had no idea what was actually going on. They paid more attentions tonight, like there were horrible enemies coming for them.

It was finally midnight.

It was silent in Ye Xiao's room. The snoring had stopped. It seemed like he was deeply asleep.

The steward sighed and murmured, "He actually sleeps like he is dead. Oh my good lord. Should I say that you are unperturbed like an experienced general... or heartless like a hoodlum? Gosh..."

He truly felt that he was unable to see through this young lord's heart.

The young lord was sometimes smart with personal control, but mostly he was just a foppish lad, a fool – a complete fool!

In the sky, the wind howled weirdly.

The steward stood on the roof of the house and saw some figures flying over.

The white belt on those figures' waists were obvious, even dazzling in the dark.

The steward narrowed his eyes.

He felt the white color to be too dazzling.

The crown prince did stop the actions considering the fight for the throne, but he had allowed the Mu clan to deal with Ye Xiao independently. It actually became more troublesome for the Ye clan.

People from the Mu clan were obviously crazy. They didn't care whether Ye Xiao was the true murderer or not. Neither did they care whether Ye Xiao had the capability to kill Mu Cheng-Bai or not.

They cared about nothing.

They simply wanted to kill Ye Xiao!

It was totally unreasonable.

What was even more unreasonable was that they were actually going through with it; they were actually trying to kill Ye Xiao tonight!

The steward was absolutely livid. And the people who were getting closer now had proven this fact. The Mu clan had been standing high above the masses for so long that they treated people like ants which they could kill freely without any consequences...

From each direction of the east, the south, the west and the north, there were two figures flying over, and they were about to step on the bounding wall of the General's House.

The steward yelled, "Who are you? Halt, all of you! You are not allowed to violate the territory of the General's House!"

A sneering laughter came from the west. A man in the west side said, "Where is the foppish lad? Tell him to come out and prepare for death! We will just think of this as a food taken at night." Harsh laughter penetrated the General Ye's house.

For the Mu clan, which was one of the eight noble clans, to fight against a general's family was definitely an easy job. They didn't have any respect for them at all.

These men might not be the main force of the Mu clan, because the Ye clan was not strong enough to warrant the use of their main force. But these men were more than strong enough to play the bullies in the capital.

The steward was furious and spoke with a cold voice, "You are here to have some food late at night, right? You have to know that the food in our place requires one to have strong teeth. It would be a shame if you guys get your teeth broken!"

The man replied with a sneer, "My teeth are steel-like. It is just a trivial Northern General's House. What could be so tough that could break my teeth!" He waved his hand and shouted, "Go! Go get our food!"

"Yes!" The other seven men answered at the same time.

The next moment, the seven figures turned into seven sword lights. The lights suddenly flashed in the sky and flew fast into the house.

The steward's pupils constricted at once and he shouted his orders, "Stop them!"

The 36 blood guards who had been waiting for a long time answered affirmatively to the steward and immediately prepared to fly up to start the sanguinary fight!

Their enemies were from the famous Mu clan. Although they were not the core force of the Mu clan, they were still extraordinary fighters. The steward and the guards really felt insecure about this battle, but none of them ever thought of backing off!

However, the next moment, everyone was stunned by what happened!

[1] Little Soya: It must be the name of Su Ye-Yue's pet - it may be a dog or a cat.

[2] Nine Black-dressers: It seems there are nine men in black, and Hei-Jiu must be one of them.