

Firmament 61

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Chapter 61: Return

They had only started searching earlier this morning, but the reports impeaching General Lan had already piled up on the king's desk!

The king was of course furious about it, "Lan! Keep your baby son under control! Otherwise, I will use my law to do it for you!"

The Lan Clan was frightened, so they hurriedly sent people to drag their young lord back home.

As Lan Lang-Lang was being dragged home, he struggled with his legs swinging and he kept shouting, "Get off me! I am looking for Xiao Xiao..."

Zuo Wu-Ji was totally disdainful of his foolish acts: [It is just simply searching for someone, and you can actually make things look like you are confiscating somebody's property... Your head should have been cut off...]

The Prince Hua-Yang's house also heard that people were looking for Ye Xiao. The young princess immediately gave her order and the guards in the house all got out to help search in the capital.

Three forces were working together in order to find Ye Xiao.

The young princess, Su Ye-Yue, hurried over to Ye Xiao's house with her maid.

"Found him?"

"Why have you still not found him yet?"

"Is there anything bad happening to him?"

"Is it possible that he's simply having too much fun at a brothel? So much that he can't even get himself to leave? Follow my lead!"

The girl gave her order with a shout and the brothels in the capital were all in bad luck. Every brothel was broken into and searched. All the clients were kicked out of their rooms and stood in a line in the gardens...

The clients were all disgraced. However, they felt less embarrassed when they saw that everyone else was naked too. What was there to feel ashamed about, when everyone looked the same...

At the beginning, they instinctively raised their hands to cover their faces, because they could be identified by their face. They thought it was better to cover the face, as the rest of their bodies were usually no different with others. However, after a while, some of them looked around and stopped covering their faces. Instead, they started to cover their crotches with shame. It turned out they were not entirely the same in some places of their body and the difference was very obvious.

Of course, some other guys also stopped covering their faces, but they didn't cover their crotches either. They actually acted like they were swaggering around by standing there with legs astride. They looked

proud. There were difference between two men not only in their faces, but also in some special place, and the difference was also very obvious...

Ahem, what exactly was so obvious? (I surely have no idea what it is, as I am an innocent person... I don't understand what this is all about...)

While the disturbance was spreading in the capital...

The young lord, Ye Xiao, that everybody was looking for, finally returned.

On his way back, he found a silent place and reverted back to his true face. Although there were wounds on his face, Wen-Ren Chu-Chu hadn't hit him too heavily after all. Besides, the East-rising Purple Qi was truly a remarkable martial art. With its help, all of his wounds were nearly healed...

So the Xiao Monarch still retained his decency more or less...

Once he stepped in the street in front of his house, he heard a large amount of people cheering!

"The young lord is back! Our young lord is back!"

Those were his servants that were cheering.

"Lord Ye is back! Lord Ye is back!"

That was from the people of Zuo Xiang Fu and the people of the Palace of Hua-Yang.

"Thank god this fella is back. I can finally seize peace..."

That was from some other people. They felt lucky. They couldn't resist feeling lucky; after he was missing, their houses had been searched dozens of times every single day...

Who could bear such annoyance?

Whenever those people searching for Ye Xiao entered their houses, their doors would be opened with a thunderous sound and they would be forced to squat down.

That was really such an unbearable memory...

When Su Ye-Yue heard that Ye Xiao was back, she rushed out like a whirlwind and stood at the door akimbo, shouting angrily, "Where were you and what have you been doing! Bastard! Come over! I will teach you some lesson for real!"

Ye Xiao felt warm in his heart.

The girl was shouting with anger, but in her voice, her concern was easily discerned.

Besides, while shouting, her eyes had already turned red, and her mouth was twitching; it looked like she was about to cry...

At this moment, she was truly adorable!

Watching Ye Xiao walking over leisurely, she felt truly surprised, as she felt like she had recovered everything that she had lost. She suddenly rushed down from the doorsteps. Her small figure was about to run into Ye Xiao's arms. However, without any reason, she suddenly stopped!

She stopped at the place about half a meter away from Ye Xiao and looked at him. She spoke, "You... You are not a ghost, are you?"

She reached her hand to touch his body and then his face. She felt the warmth of his body and suddenly shouted, "You didn't die!"

She jumped up high.

And then the tears started to flow down.

These last two days, in which Ye Xiao had been missing, had truly been terrifying for this girl.

She had pretended to be calm at the beginning until she could no longer do so. Then she went out to search with her men, but she couldn't find anything.

In fact, although nobody gave up searching, most of the people had long lost hope!

Usually, they wouldn't worry. They knew that Ye Xiao could completely lose track of time while he was fooling around outside.

However, this time, it had been right when the Mu Clan was in the capital!

His biggest enemy was right outside, preparing to kill him!

In people's minds, Ye Xiao's disappearance must have something to do with the Mu Clan. However, those people of the Mu Clan were all dead... Ye Xiao was still missing!

They had searched the entire capital, but they had actually failed to find even a single clue.

Except assuming the worst situation, they didn't know what else to think.

When they were about to lose their hopes... He actually showed up from the corner of the street. He actually walked over calmly and leisurely.

The surprise brought by his appearance actually made people freak out.

"What are you talking about? Why would I die? I am totally fine!" Ye Xiao touched his nose and said. His heart felt warm. Although it was at dusk and the sun was setting, he actually felt good about the afterglow.

A feeling of 'is it the close affection of the world' filled his heart.

"In such a special time, why were you still fooling around? Where the hell have you been?!" The princess who had just relaxed suddenly stopped feeling joyful; some negative emotions that were caused by the extreme anxiousness totally exploded. She shouted fiercely, "Do you even know what a special moment it is right now! Do you know we have nearly gone mad trying to find you! Do you know how dangerous it is! Do you know how much I care about you... Do you know..."

She shouted loudly while swinging her hands; almost half of the street could hear her clearly.

And then she suddenly paused. She stopped shouting. The next moment, she cried loudly. "WAH!" She jumped into Ye Xiao's arms and held him tight. She quivered because of crying.

With a beauty in his arms, Ye Xiao turned stiff. His hands were hanging in the air and he didn't know what to do.

A man with an EQ of zero was exactly like that; he completely had no idea how to deal with such situations!

A beauty threw herself on him... He hadn't experienced such a thing before - in both of his lives... Instantly, he felt anxiety overtaking him. He wanted to push her away, but felt as if it was wrong to do so... In fact, he felt a certain hint of warmth in his heart, as her actions had really moved him.

The next moment, a thought that had never occurred to him appeared in his mind: [In my present life, I am no longer cultivating the Pure Yang Martial Art. I don't need to fear that thing...]

And then he kept his arms open and watched Su Ye-Yue weeping in his arms. Her tears and snots were on his clothes, but he had a feeling of tender affection. He slowly... furled his arms.

Eventually, he held the small body in his arms slowly and firmly.

It was unprecedented; that was truly his first time in both his two lives to hold a woman so completely and so earnestly!

At this moment, his heart was beating wildly.

At the same time, a happy feeling of 'possession' filled his heart.

That feeling was new and touching for him. It was a feeling that he couldn't let go and didn't want to let go. (Ahem. It is exactly what I felt when I first held my wife...)

Su Ye-Yue cried for a long time until she realized she was weeping in Ye Xiao's arms. She hastily pushed his arms away and wiped her eyes. She didn't dare to raise her head, as she spoke with her face blushed, "Where am I..."

And then she turned around and ran into the house like a rabbit with her head low.

It was truly a scene of the saying: 'keep silence like a virgin, run like a running rabbit'. It was no doubt that the girl was a virgin; but the so-known Xiao Monarch was... also a virgin!

[TL note: 'keep silence like a virgin, run like a running rabbit' the literal translation of 静若处子 · 动若脱兔.]

The girl actually felt embarrassed...

Ye Xiao shouted behind her, "Watch out! Watch your step! Don't run onto the wall..."

The voice of Su Ye-Yue with shame and anger came immediately, "None of your business!" And then she disappeared.

The onlookers laughed with kindness. They even felt inspired by the pure affection between them.

"Off you guys..." Ye Xiao swung his hand casually, "Yes, I am back. I am fine... Heh heh heh... Be off now please. Everything's fine."

The steward hurriedly gave an order to a guard, "Go to the house of Lan and tell Lord Lan Lang-Lang that our Lord Ye Xiao is back... Tell him not to worry."

The guard nodded his head and hurriedly left.

What if nobody informed Lan Lang-Lang?! How many more stupid things could he possibly come up with...

Zuo Wu-Ji stepped forward and laughed, "Xiao Xiao, now that you are back and safe, I guess I should just be off then. If not... hahahahaha... I am afraid I would get beaten up hard."

He made a weird laughter with an undetermined meaning. He then waved his hand and left with his men.

After seeing his best friend leave, Ye Xiao entered the house. The steward had his usual bright smile on his face until Ye Xiao entered, when his face instantly darkened, "My lord, your wounds..."

Ye Xiao swung his hand, "Nothing serious. I was captured. It took me quite some effort to get back..."

"Who dared to do so?" The steward turned furious.

[So even when there is no Mu Clan, there is still another force after our young lord?! This is something that should definitely be looked into more closely.]

"Hmm. About that... You don't need to worry..." Ye Xiao spoke, "I have turned them into friends. No. In fact, they weren't hostile to me at the beginning. Anyway, they are most likely off the capital already. It isn't worth mentioning anymore."

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Chapter 62: The Genius Girl

Since Ye Xiao had said so, the steward didn't think that he should keep asking, so he just said, "My lord, do you know... those men of the Mu Clan are all dead..."

Ye Xiao promptly turned his head and exclaimed, "What? All dead? What's going on exactly? Do you know who did it?"

"It is confirmed." The steward frowned, "It must be the most mysterious organization in the world, the House of the Chaotic Storm... No one was left alive and they even left some words for the world to see... It seems that the House of the Chaotic Storm is deliberately going against the Mu Clan?"

Ye Xiao immediately realized something.

[It seems that Xiu Of The Heavens has really done it!]

She had actually done it without any reservations; she had completely wiped out the members of the Mu Clan that had entered the capital. She was decisive, heartless, cruel and powerful, all at the same time...

It really scared Ye Xiao.

“The House of the Chaotic Storm, which many thought to be only a myth, have really surfaced.” Ye Xiao murmured. His eyes lit up, as he recalled the day when he had chased those men to the mountain...

The bamboo forest...

It must have something to do with the House of the Chaotic Storm.

[Sometime in the future, when the sky is clear and dry, I'll take some gasoline and burn that bloody bamboo forest down... Let me see what can be lured out of it...]

When he returned to his garden, he saw Su Ye-Yue sitting in the pavilion, resting her jaw on her hands. She was gazing at the moon in the sky.

Ye Xiao walked over gently and sat opposite to her.

The girl looked at the moon and said, “Xiao Xiao, do you ever wonder... if there are people on the moon?”

Ye Xiao replied, “I suppose so. According to the myths, a goddess lives there, Chang-Er, right?”

The girl answered with a ‘hmm’ and said, “Xiao Xiao, you got me so worried.”

Ye Xiao smiled warmly, “Don’t worry. Who am I? I’ll always be ok.”

Su Ye-Yue nodded softly and said, “You’re fine now... But, I was really scared...”

She became silent for a while, before suddenly speaking out in high spirits, “Xiao Xiao, you didn’t go to the auction the other day! What a pity! I was there and it not only opened my eyes, I even gained something. It is a book, the Sword Art Of Feng-Hua. It’s a marvelous sword technique! I can be a superior cultivator from now on...”

“The Sword Art Of Feng-Hua? Is it really that powerful?” Ye Xiao frowned, “Let me have a look.”

Generally, this kind of request was inappropriate. If Steward Song was present, he would’ve definitely stopped him straight away. The martial art books that were qualified enough to be sold at the high-level auction of the Ling-Bao Hall were at least high-grade books. Anyway, he was still the Xiao Monarch inside, so he only intended to identify the book. Even with his greedy eyes, he wouldn’t spare it a glance. As for the girl...

Of course she wouldn’t mind.

She grinned before producing a book from inside her clothes and giving it to Ye Xiao. Only now did Ye Xiao notice the elegant sword placed on the stone chair beside her.

[It seems that the girl is really interested in martial arts. I wonder whether the book is the complete version or if it’s only an unfinished work.] Ye Xiao wondered and asked, “Yue, what level have you reached in your cultivation?”

Su Ye-Yue turned a bit bashful as she answered, “About the 7th level of the Grade of Ren-Yuan...”

“Level 7. The Grade of Ren-Yuan...” Ye Xiao nodded and felt a bit surprised. As a spoiled princess in the Palace of Hua-Yang, she had actually reached the seventh level of the Grade of Ren-yuan. This was already quite impressive. So he said, “Did you start cultivating since you were a kid?”

“Nah...” Su Ye-Yue hesitated, but she decided to continue, “My father has been fighting on the battlefield his entire life, so he didn’t want me to learn any martial arts. He thinks that a girl lacks delicacy if she decides to practice any kind of martial arts. I have always been interested in it though. Since two years ago, I started to learn something from the guards of my house... Well, I have to keep it a secret and not let my father notice. So I am doing ‘three days fishing, two days drying nets’ [1]; I only practice occasionally. Sigh... It is a pity that the guard who taught me the cultivating method died in a battle not long after the last lesson...”

Ye Xiao was shocked!

[What?

Two years ago?

Taught by a guard?

Practiced secretly?

‘Three days fishing, two days drying nets’?!

And she actually reached the seventh level of the Grade of Ren-Yuan in two years?

Is she a monster or something?]

With a record like that, she could be counted as a person having a fine aptitude but not outstanding in the Qing-Yun Realm. However, they were living in the Land of Han-Yang. With such an achievement, it might not be enough to call her a genius among geniuses!

And she was cultivating without her parent’s permission; she practiced secretly; she cultivated from time to time...

That meant no one was guiding her!

At the first place, the guard that had been teaching her had already died in battle... That meant the guard only had an average aptitude in cultivation. How could the cultivating method used by such a man be any good?

Under all these negative conditions, she had been cultivating on her own and had actually achieved the seventh level of the Grade of Ren-Yuan.

This was just inconceivable!

The Xiao Monarch was really astonished!

He nearly wanted to believe that the person in front of him was a monster!

“What’s wrong?” Su Ye-Yue noticed that Ye Xiao had become silent, so she hastily asked, “Am I too slow? Am I too weak? My father had always said that I have no talent in cultivation, that I am not qualified for cultivation...”

Ye Xiao’s mouth quivered, [What? No talent in cultivation? Not qualified for cultivation?

What the hell... If you are not qualified for cultivation, there won’t be any people qualified for cultivation.]

Ye Xiao wasn’t born in a noble clan in his previous life; he had been an orphan. After he had luckily gained the Pure Yang Martial Art, his cultivation speed was praised as ‘one day, a thousand miles’[2] by his master. He had even been compared to a peerless genius that was seen once every ten thousand years!

However, now that he learned about Su Ye-Yue, he finally realized that there was always someone better in the world. Su Ye-Yue’s aptitude should be at least superior to his aptitude in his previous life.

“I think cultivation suits you.” The Xiao Monarch said, “Come on. Let me check your aptitude.”

After speaking, he immediately held her hands.

Honestly, he really had no intention to take advantage of her. He just wanted to know more about the monster-like genius sitting in front of him!

Her hands were cool and soft like jade. The East-rising Purple Qi instantly operated and a tiny but long stream of spiritual power ran around her entire Jing and Mai.

And then Ye Xiao loosened her hands and laughed bitterly.

He laughed bitterly out of amazement and self-mockery. If he had already been a genius that was rarely seen in even ten thousand years, then how were people to describe her aptitude? Rarely seen monster? Immoral and against nature itself? He couldn’t believe that her aptitude was much better than what he had expected.

In terms of aptitude, she was better than Ye Xiao in his previous life, and she was no less than the outstanding Wen-Ren Chu-Chu that he had just met - in fact, she was even better than Wen-Ren Chu-Chu. However, she’d never had a good teacher and had been cultivating all by herself. She had gone through many unnecessary paths that had damaged her Jing and Mai...

However, this damage was almost negligible in Ye Xiao’s eyes.

[“Female body of Spiritual Yin. Natural-born superior Jing and Mai. Bones of pure Yin. The Jing and Mai are like rivers. This body is totally a perfect body for a cultivator...”] Ye Xiao sighed, [“If a person like her was in the Qing-Yun Realm, even the two super sects will fight so hard to have her as their inheritor! The interesting thing is that in the Land of Han-Yang, her father actually forbids her from cultivating, and he has told her that she was unqualified for cultivation...”]

This time, Ye Xiao had truly understood several words: a reckless waste of god's good gifts, the pearls were covered by dust![3]

This was mind blowing!

“Close your eyes. I will give you a present...” Ye Xiao spoke gently.

“What present?” She was embarrassed and happy at the same time. It was the first time she would receive something from Ye Xiao. She closed her eyes as he told her to.

“Open your mouth.”

“Ahh~”

The next moment, she felt warmth within her mouth as a round dan bead was placed on her tongue. It quickly dissolved into a fluid and passed through her throat and went into her stomach. She was flurried and suddenly felt a fragrance spread inside her mouth. When she was about to carefully taste it, the fluid had already turned into some kind of hot qi, which was flowing throughout her entire body, including her Jing and Mai.

She felt an indescribable sense of comfort spreading all throughout her body.

She immediately opened her eyes, “Wow? It feels so good! What was it? Why was it so tasty? Do you have more?”

Apparently, she wanted a second bite after enjoying the taste.

It was understandable for a little girl to have such an idea! However, she didn’t know that all the negative influence in her Jing and Mai had completely vanished after eating that tiny dan bead!

In fact, it had even strengthened her!

Ye Xiao could only smile bitterly.

He asked her to close her eyes and then he placed a Pei-Yuan Dan Bead into her mouth in order to help her wipe the illnesses inside her body. He had good intentions, but the girl actually wanted to eat the dan beads like sweets. That was a bit over the top. Although he was capable of providing her with more of these ‘sweets’ since he had the powerful Spaces under his control, it would still be quite a waste.

“No. That’s the only one.” Ye Xiao threw his hands high up in the air.

At the moment, there were still some things he couldn’t let the girl know.

If the girl had a big mouth and spread the information about, there would never be another day of peace for him.

“So tasty.” Su Ye-Yue licked her lips to enjoy the endless aftertastes and regrettably said, “If there are more of this kind of tasty beans, then I can eat eighty or a hundred everyday... I would never think that it is too much.”

Ye Xiao was speechless. [Taking the undeserved gain for granted; what a girl.

Eighty or a hundred everyday?

That is truly...]

The next moment, the girl suddenly frowned, “Oh no. Pain in my belly...” She jumped up and looked around, “No no no no no...” And then she left rapidly.

Ye Xiao furrowed his brows; he had actually forgotten about this...

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Chapter 63: Silly Girl; The Sword Art Of Feng-Hua

The Pei-Yuan Dan Bead would not only clean the impurities inside her body, it would also strengthen her organs... Su Ye-Yue felt a sharp pain in her belly almost immediately; it was quite a quick reaction. It was proof that her aptitude for cultivation was exceptional.

After all, what she experienced was not the ablution of muscles and bones.

In the time it took for an incense stick to burn, faint footsteps indicated Su Ye-Yue's return. She groaned and complained, "Xiao Xiao... you had given me a cathartic pill, right? It seriously made me feel ill..."

"No, I didn't. Take some rest and you will be fine. You will feel refreshed in just a seconds..." Ye Xiao smiled as he spoke.

He wasn't just comforting her. She had suddenly expelled a massive amount of impurities from her body. It would surely cause her body functions to be disrupted for a short period of time, but it was a part of the self-adjustment process. After a few hours, the process would end, and all the discomfort would be dispelled. Afterwards, the advantages of expelling the impurities would become evident.

"Well, I better go home then... My stomach feels really terrible. It won't look decent if I stayed here." Su Ye-Yue answered faintly.

"Don't worry. Just spend the night over here." Ye Xiao persuaded her, "I have already sent my men to inform your father. Besides, I won't be at ease if you were to go back like this."

She was looking really ill at the beginning, but when she heard Ye Xiao's words, she immediately felt a little refreshed. She gave a grin so wide that her canines became visible, "Are you really worried about me?"

If it was Wen-Ren Chu-Chu who was asked to stay overnight, she would instantly become worried about her reputation. This girl, on the other hand, was actually concerned about his sincerity. Ye Xiao sweated and nodded, "Yes. I do."

"Fair enough." Su Ye-Yue's mind was pure like crystal water. She didn't even think of how inappropriate it would be if she were to stay overnight. Instead, she spoke happily, "Then you should quickly prepare a room for me... I am going to rest. And I also need to take a bath. I should go to bed quickly, as I am so tired and sleepy."

As she had been anxious during the past few days, she was indeed exhausted.

...

It was midnight.

Ye Xiao sat on his bed, legs-crossed as usual, operating the East-rising Purple Qi. He was concentrating on his cultivation. This time, he was controlling the scorching hot power of the East-rising Purple Qi, so his entire body was shrouded by a mist of hot qi.

After the preparation was completed, he took out three pieces of the Sky Crystal Sand, which he had purchased in the auction, and held them in his hand.

The dense, scorching hot power of the East-rising Purple Qi suddenly gathered at the center of his palm!

Ye Xiao felt like he was creating a micro-sun in the palm of his hand.

Beads of sweat started to gather on his forehead as he rapidly operated the energy with all of his efforts, trying to complete this micro-sun as soon as possible.

The pieces of Sky Crystal Sand laying in his hand were slowly rotating, while they were being enveloped by the scorching hot power of the East-rising Purple Qi. It could be faintly seen that, while the Sky Crystal Sand pieces had turned red hot, they were not really melting.

It was unbelievable that the Real Soul Fire, which originated from the East-rising Purple Qi, and was the top-class power in the world, actually failed to melt the Sky Crystal Sand!

[TL note: It seems the scorching hot power he was using in his hand is called the Real Soul Fire (真元之火).]

Ye Xiao breathed out in a rush and his entire body felt weak. He stopped operating the martial art and returned the Sky Crystal Sand pieces. He murmured, "My cultivation is insufficient... I am unable to melt it."

His plan this time was to melt the Sky Crystal Sand pieces and create a weapon for himself that he could properly use in his current condition. However, in spite of doing his best, it still couldn't be done and he had to give up.

"To melt the Sky Crystal Sand, in terms of the general martial arts, even for the extremely high-level fire-attribute martial arts, would require a cultivator to be at the eighth level of the Grade of Diyuán at the very least. However, the East-rising Purple Qi is not some random martial art... Even though I failed this time, I think that I will be able to melt the Sky Crystal Sand once I reach the third level..."

Ye Xiao breathed out, "I can do nothing at the moment after all... I have no choice but to wait till I reach the third level of the Grade of Diyuán and see what happens then."

He then grabbed the book of Sword Art of Feng-Hua that Su Ye-Yue had purchased in the auction. After examining it, he felt a bit speechless.

It was exactly what he had expected. This book of the Sword Art of Feng-Hua was only a fragmented version, as the missing information would amount to far more than 'just a bit'...

If she had followed this book to practice, with her peerless aptitude, she might achieve a lot, but eventually, she would most likely stop improving after reaching the Grade of Tianyuan. Plus, it was possible that certain long lasting side effects would appear.

"Well, let me complete it for you." Ye Xiao had travelled all over the world, so his understanding of martial arts was truly broad and profound. There were so many books of martial arts imprinted in his brain. The Sword Art of Feng-Hua wasn't some high-class sword play method. Let alone the fragmented book, even if it was the full version, it would merely be one of the 'first grade' level books.

No matter what, it was surely far from 'supreme'.

However, he had to complete the book with the Sword Art of Feng-Hua as the base. Otherwise, if it drew attention, he would become the target of everyone's greed!

Ye Xiao was always cautious about it.

After he finished the book, Ye Xiao thought for quite a while and then integrated a copy of 'Scripture of Yin' into it.

Among all the arts known by Ye Xiao, it was the premier martial art for girls to practice.

...

The next morning, Su Ye-Yue, who had spent all night in General Ye's house, jumped over to Ye Xiao with a face filled with excitement and surprise.

"Xiao Xiao!" She leaned towards Ye Xiao and exclaimed, "Look at me! Look at me!"

"What's wrong?" Ye Xiao looked at her pretty face with a 'What are you talking about?' look on his face. He felt confused.

"Ahhya... You pig!" Su Ye-Yue pouted, and then she was back in good-spirits as she again pointed to her own face and said, "Look at me again carefully. Take a closer look."

Ye Xiao carefully inspected her face and said, "Why don't you tell me what exactly is going on?"

This remark caused Su Ye-Yue to feel discouraged and spoke angrily, "Haven't you noticed that my facial skin has become better?"

Ye Xiao shook his head blankly, "No, I haven't. Is it really better now?"

Su Ye-Yue immediately felt depressed.

She woke up early this morning to freshen and dress herself up, but when she looked into the mirror, she noticed that something was different - really different. She found that her skin had acquired a rosy glow, as it was both pink and white. She felt that she had become extremely beautiful, to the point where she wasn't even sure if she was awake or dreaming.

Most importantly, there used to be some dark spots on her face, but at that moment, they had completely vanished.

Facing such an astonishing change, she was naturally extremely excited, so she rushed to Ye Xiao in order to show off. However, she wouldn't have imagined that this guy would actually fail to notice any difference...

"You are a complete moron!" She was really upset.

However, she was also thinking: [How come after sleeping here for just one night, my face has become so beautiful? Could it be... Could Ye Xiao's house actually be a wonderful place for beautification?]

Although she didn't speak out, she had made up her mind: [In the future, I will definitely come here to sleep as often as I can.]

Humph! It is going to be my home sooner or later!]

She grabbed her copy of Sword Art of Feng-Hua quickly and hung her head low and left grouchily.

She wasn't aware that changes had been made to her incomplete copy of the Sword Art of Feng-Hua. Although Ye Xiao hadn't completely changed everything, he had changed a massive amount of details...

In fact, after she had gained the Sword Art of Feng-Hua, before she had time to check it out carefully, news of Ye Xiao's disappearance reached her ears. That was also the reason why she kept the book with her all the time.

If she had read it even once, with her eidetic memory, she wouldn't really need to keep it by her side. So even though she would read it and practice with it, she would never find out that the contents had been changed.

At the moment, a voice from outside reported, "My lord, people from the Palace of Hua-Yang have arrived, and they are saying that they have come with the order to take the princess back."

"Ok then." Ye Xiao answered casually.

A long time after the girl left the house of Ye, Ye Xiao started panicking: [Oh no! Am I going to be caught telling a lie?]

Last night, Ye Xiao told her that he had sent people to inform the Palace of Hua-Yang about her staying overnight. In fact, he had never done that...

...

When she went back to the palace, without a doubt, she was severely scolded.

"That was not presentable. That was unacceptable!" Prince Hua-Yang was furious. He was utterly frustrated as if his most precious treasure was snatched by someone else. He scolded her while stomping his feet, "You are an unmarried girl. You had actually stayed overnight in your intended husband's house... You, you... you... you damn girl. You are trying to piss me off! Are you not?!"

She kept her head low as she listened to him, but her expression showed indifference.

[Dad is always like this. He likes to make a fuss.]

"You. You are going to completely disgrace me!" Prince Hua-Yang paced around trying to find some tool for punishment, but how could he bear to see any of these tools being used on his precious daughter? So, eventually, he felt his anger and depression reaching new heights; his pace became faster.

After a long time, she stood up and patted down the dirt on her knees, and then went into the inner house with a smile on her face...

Prince Hua-Yang gave out a long sigh. He felt that he was incompetent and had failed as a father. He had scolded his daughter severely, but had only made her smile...

"Mom, let me tell you a big secret." Su Ye-Yue cuddled in her mother's arms and spoke in a whisper.

"What big secret?" The old princess asked with interest.

“Well the secret is... I had slept overnight in Xiao Xiao’s house. This morning when I woke up, I found my skin had become delicately smooth...” Su Ye-Yue started flattering herself, “Mom, look at my face. Isn’t it much more exquisite? Isn’t it smoother? My facial skin is much better, isn’t it? That is a big secret, isn’t it?!”

After the old princess heard the big secret, her expression changed quickly. She stared at her daughter with a pale face. It was as if she had been struck by lightning, “Slept overnight... Skin became better? That, that...”

The princess was quite well informed. She naturally knew that generally, before a girl got married, her skin would not be in the best condition.

The time that a girl's skin became radiant was right after she got married and was moistened by the rain and dew... The several years following that was the period of time when a girl was in her most beautiful condition.

Now that she heard Su Ye-Yue say so, the thoughts of the princess went in the wrong direction: [This silly girl hadn’t come home for a whole night. Did she actually do that thing with that guy Ye Xiao?

That, that... that... Damn it...]

“What exactly did you two do?” The princess turned green in the face, “You you... You damn girl! How dare you do such a disgraceful thing! You are going to piss me off to death...”

Su Ye-Yue was surprised after seeing her mother’s reaction. Her eyes were wide open and she looked very confused, “What disgraceful thing? I... I didn’t...”

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Chapter 64: It’s Predetermined; Here Comes The Trouble

No matter what explanation the silly girl gave, the old princess still checked her body. Finally, she realized that things were unlike what she had imagined; her thoughts had gone astray from too much worry...

Now, she felt relieved.

[However... Humph!

Her skin turned so exquisite after staying over for just one night...Even if that kind of ‘thing’ didn’t happen, other things must have definitely happened...Otherwise, how can a girl suddenly become so radiant?

If these ‘other things’ kept on happening, then that thing, which I am most concerned about, will happen eventually...

Although the two kids have already been engaged for a long time... such laughable things should never be allowed to happen!]

The old princess made up her mind.

Therefore, it didn’t come as a surprise to anyone when Su Ye-Yue was grounded.

She had been raising hell in her room for days, but still failed to get rid of the restrictions. She was extremely upset!

She had never thought that she would actually be grounded, not even in her dreams.

And of course, she didn't know that... it was purely because of that single sentence which she had said to show off.

She get to know about this... in the very distant future...

...

It was inside the bamboo forest enclosed by the mountains.

"Xiu-Er has made a reckless move this time. Please punish me." Xiu-Er, who was dressed in white, lowered her head and stood in front of the man who was also dressed in white, and was sitting on a wheelchair.

The man in white sighed with his eyes half-closed and said, "Xiu-Er... Your actions have done a lot of damage to our plan this time... The Mu Clan has suffered greatly from this event. Now, they will never dare to return to the capital, even if we don't take the initiative to attack them."

Xiu-Er kept her head low, "Yes."

"However, that Mu Zi-He actually dared to abuse you. He deserved this. It was righteous that he died." The man in white smile blandly, "Whatever. I had been planning to make use of the event involving the house of Ye to produce some disturbances in this world... Now that this plan has been suspended, it doesn't really seem to be a bad development."

"Yes."

"But your actions have really helped the house of Ye. It has given the house of Ye a relief from being deeply troubled and helpless..." The man in white frowned, "What happened... superficially speaking, it seems everything was reasonably driven with some coincidences... But I feel that there was someone acting as a go-between, adding fuel to the fire, so as to make sure that this would happen."

Xiu-Er kept her head low and spoke, "If there was truly someone doing so, it must be that guy, Feng Zhi-Ling."

"Feng Zhi-Ling..." The man in white smiled blandly, "Investigate him thoroughly!"

"Yes."

"By the way, pay attention to the war affairs of the three kingdoms. Instigate the war as soon as possible." The man in white spoke with a profound look in his eyes, "As long as we, the House of the Chaotic Storm shows up, the overthrowing of the royal court must follow... This time, you revealed our identity. Maybe it was destiny..."

"Only the removal of the dynasties can produce enough bloodshed to bolster my recovery... Seize the opportunity."

"Yes."

“Xiu-Er, you take charge of instigating the problems between the three kingdoms, make the war start as soon as possible.”

“Yes.”

“Wan-Er.”

“Yes, master.”

“After the auction, those dan-makers would have gone back to their sects by now, right?”

“Yes. You are speculating things accurately, master.”

“Hmm. But most of the other people from those sects haven’t gone back, right?”

“Yes.”

“These men are staying here so that they can associate with the noble clans or even the royal clan, right?”

“Yes. You have sharp eyes, master.”

“This is not something special. These guys would never turn back without gaining some profits every time they leave their territories. These noble clans, officials and royal clans are exactly those who could offer them the profits they want.”

There seemed to be a sense of disdain on his face. He sneered as he continued, “In fact, this world is truly weird. The noble clans regard the royal clan as a foolish entity, while those sects think that the people of the noble clans are fools. In the meantime, the royal clan considers the other two to be fools. It is like a bunch of fools playing a recurrent stupid game...”

“The noble clans are using the royal clan. They are using the power of the royal clan to ensure their lifestyle and the continuation of their bloodlines... In their eyes, the royal clan is nothing but a tool that they can manipulate as they please...”

“The sects think that the noble clans have no future... that they are still struggling to continue their bloodlines... since they have been struggling for thousands of years for nothing but the continuity of their ethnicity... So the noble clans are fools in the sects’ eyes.”

“The royal clan think that they are holding supreme power and when it’s needed, they can unite with the noble clans to fight against the sects, or use the sects to suppress the noble clans. They think that they could get an advantage from both sides, and claim the maximum profit for themselves. So they see both the sects and the noble clans as tools and fools...”

“However, in my opinion... In this world, these three stupid forces are merely maintaining the stupid balance...”

He spoke blandly, but had a profound look in his eyes, “So, as long as the unstable balance is broken, it will instantly turn into a situation where the current dynasty will be suppressed... No matter what, the present situation in the Land of Han-Yang is destined to lose its balance.”

“A new dynasty will definitely rise and naturally, the previous dynasty will fall!”

After talking so much, he seemed a bit tired, so he leaned on his wheelchair and spoke slowly, "How to break the balance... Wan-Er, it's up to you."

"Yes, master. The maid understands."

"Hmm, have you settled on a plan?"

"The maid knows that as long as we kill one or two of the important characters of those sects that are in the capital... and plant some false trails... then the balance of the sects will be broken. Afterwards, we will draw the noble clans into the disturbance within the sects. When that happens, the royal clan will surely become involved... After that, no matter what the consequence will be, the balance will surely be broken, and massive cracks would have shown up for us to exploit."

"However, only after the end result can we decide our next move."

The man in white nodded with satisfaction, "Your strategy is quite good. That is how it should be. However, you missed something. There are still wise men in the royal clan. The royal clan is the source of all disasters..."

He spoke with his eyes half-closed, "As for the present Kingdom of Chen, the ruling king is a bit too old... and the crown prince is a bit too impatient... because the other two princes have grown up and are ready to do something..."

"The disturbance should begin with this. It was the most..."

When speaking about this, he suddenly stopped and didn't continue.

But Wan-Er's eyes lit up when she spoke, "Yes. Thank you for the enlightenment, master. The maid knows what to do now."

"Hmm. Don't call yourself 'the maid' in front of me from now on. I feel uncomfortable hearing that." The man in white looked at Wan-Er and Xiu-Er gently and said, "Just use your names."

Ecstasy flashed in both of their eyes at the same time. A blush appeared on their cheeks, as they answered, "Wan-Er/Xiu-Er complies with your wish."

"Break the balance, then the dynasty changes. In a very short time, a new balance will be formed..." The man in white observed the clouds floating up in the sky and spoke blandly, "Disturbance, it is as simple as that."

...

While all this was going on, on the other side of the capital, Ye Xiao was wasting no time in order to cultivate.

...

The capital was a lot more peaceful. The Prince's Palace stopped seeking further troubles. As for the Crown Princess, since the death of those people from the Mu Clan, she had been completely silent...

On the surface, it seemed that everything had been settled down and all the conflicts had reached a conclusion.

However, there was one place that was still enveloped in chaos.

The Ling-Bao Hall Salesroom!

People including Guan Wan-Shan were so worried that they almost wanted to hang themselves!

Everyone wore an anxious expression.

The big boss of Ling-Bao Hall had actually come to the Chen-Xing City.

The first thing Wan Zheng-Hao said when he arrived in front of the salesroom was, "My Cosmic Hades... You didn't sell it, right?"

He asked it in haste!

It was an extremely urgent issue!

He didn't even give any conventional greetings to Guan Wan-Shan. He just walked in front of him and started asking questions.

Guan Wan-Shan was immediately dumbfounded.

[What does the big boss mean with that?

We didn't even want to introduce it to the auction in the first place. It was you who demanded us to try to sell it out in every big auction. We had to sell it out no matter what price it cost... in case it humiliates you.

Now we just got this 'hot potato' sold, yet you came right away to ask such a question.

What does it mean?]

"It has been sold." He composed himself and answered gingerly.

"Sold?" The big boss Wan Zheng-Hao's body quivered a little and his face suddenly turned pale. At this moment, he felt like he was about to lose control of his bowels.

"To whom?" A man in black closely following the big boss suddenly stepped forward and asked indifferently.

This man had never accompanied the big boss before.

So people felt strange when they saw him.

But when he spoke, the big boss quivered a bit. Even his expression became terrified.

Was this guy in a much higher social position than the big boss?

Then who was this guy?

"It was the man who took out the supreme dan... He bought the Cosmic Hades..." Guan Wan-Shan was perceptive and realized the seriousness of this situation, "His name is Feng Zhi-Ling..."

He had just finished his words when he saw the big boss's fat body quivering. The big boss's white fat face suddenly turned grey.

“That is over...”

The man in black beside him frowned and asked, “Can we still find that guy now?”

“Yes. We absolutely can.” Guan Wan-Shan confidently answered, “Because, after the auction, he didn’t take all the money he had earned. He saved most of it in the salesroom... Even if he doesn’t come to sell his supreme dan anymore, he will definitely come to collect the money.”

Guan Wan-Shan smiled blandly, “Nobody will give up such a big amount of money. Besides, he is short of money at the moment, so he won’t give it up.”

Wan Zheng-Hao and the man in black sighed with relief at the same time. They laughed and spoke in a chorus, “That’s good. That’s good!”

“Well since it’s like this, I think we should live in Chen-Xing City for some time. We can leave whenever we get back the Cosmic Hades.” The man in black made a decision straight away.

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Chapter 65: Cultivate With Great Concentration

The big boss nodded, his action resembling a chicken pecking grains, “Yes, yes, yes.”

And then they all entered the salesroom.

While walking, the man in black casually inquired, “The Cosmic Hades, what price was it sold for?”

Guan Wan-Shan answered humbly, “250 thousand.”

“250 thousand?” The man in black was stunned. He showed an extremely weird smile and asked, “Gold?”

“Ahem. Not gold. Silver.” Guan Wan-Shan replied.

“Khoff Khak Khak Khak...” The man in black had a coughing fit. The continuous coughs made his face turn red. After coughing for a while, he started to laugh loudly.

Wan Zheng-Hao’s big fat face suddenly turned into the color of a pork’s liver!

“Brilliant! Truly brilliant!” The man in black gave a thumbs up and raised it to the nose of Wan Zheng-Hao, “Even selling the entire Land of Han-Yang would never be enough to exchange for half of that Cosmic Hades, yet you sold it for just 250 thousand silver bars... Wan Zheng-Hao, in the entire universe, only you can absolutely claim the title of the super No.1 black sheep! You cannot decline to shoulder this title because you fully deserve it!”

Wan Zheng-Hao felt humiliated and his face was completely red. He felt too ashamed to show his face, and so, he had no choice other than to lower his head.

However, the man in black clearly didn’t want to let it go.

“Such thoughtless wastage is obviously indescribable and tremendous.” The man in black shook his head and sighed, “It is a dissipation that could lead to chaos and darkness! It is really a high-class dissipation that could darken the moon and stars!”

Behind him, Guan Wan-Shan, who was following them up the stairs, happened to overhear this conversation. His sight turned dark as he sat heavily on the stone step.

[What did I hear?

Was it an illusion? Were my ears out of order? Or am I actually dreaming!]

....

Ye Xiao surely wasn't aware that the salesroom would be waiting for him and had set up a massive trap ready to be sprung at any time. At the same time, he had planned to return to the salesroom and claim his money after everything settled down.

As of now, he was cultivating like a madman. After all, it was of utmost importance that his strength improves.

Since he had some free time, he kept devouring all kinds of knowledge.

As for the strange Space inside his body, he was using it extremely efficiently!

There was another reason why he was working so hard. In the last few days, he had realized something, something that was so serious that he didn't know whether it was good or bad.

Because of this 'something', he was more unwilling to go out.

Because...

Inside the Sky Space, the Cosmic Hades, which was recently added, was truly powerful. It was way too powerful. The frost qi it was emitting was getting thicker and thicker, showing no signs of dissipation. Because it was too powerful, it had already made a severe impact on the other Spaces.

The nine Spaces, by their nature, always restricted each other. The spaces complemented each other and it maintained a delicate balance. However, if one of them was far too powerful, to the point that it was beyond the summation of the power of the other eight, the balance would naturally be nonexistent. And right now, that was exactly what was happening. The Sky Space was too powerful and it seriously broke the balance of the Spaces.

Ye Xiao clearly felt that the other Spaces were showing signs of suppression.

Together, the eight Spaces actually failed to match the power of the frost qi released by the Cosmic Hades.

If the situation kept on proceeding in this direction, where only the Sky Space remained powerful and the other Spaces became unable to restrict it, the balance between them would be completely broken. There could only be a single outcome — the Sky Space, which held the frost attribute, would absorb the other Spaces.

This was without a doubt the last thing that Ye Xiao wanted to happen. With no other options available, he had to personally enter the Spaces and use the blue gelid qi of the East-rising Purple qi as the temporary bridge to transport the frost qi of the Cosmic Hades to the outer world!

[No matter how overbearing you are, you're just some frost qi of the Cosmic Hades, I will get you out of my endless Spaces to the outer world. After that, you won't be able to destroy my Spaces anymore, will you!]

He had no choices left, except for one last option. With the experience from his previous life, he knew that it was rather risky to do so. The East-rising Purple qi was the marvelous martial art created by the nature of heaven and earth, but Ye Xiao was inferior in cultivation at the moment. He doesn't have the least bit of certainty whether he could withstand the frost qi of the Cosmic Hades.

That was some incredible power that even the other eight Spaces together could not compete against. Besides, even if the East-rising Purple qi was extremely powerful and could withstand the frost qi, during the transporting, it was Ye Xiao's body which needed to bear the impact of acting as the temporary carrier and bridge. With the current condition of his body, could he bear with it for long enough?

However, Ye Xiao could only put all these thoughts aside. The current situation was so serious that his only option was to take this risk!

In fact, it started out as a smooth process when he began drawing out the frost qi.

More than that, after being extremely frightened, Ye Xiao was so astonished that he nearly dropped his jaws to the ground.

The East-rising Purple qi was truly domineering. The powerful frost qi didn't have any influence on it. Moreover, after Ye Xiao drew out the frost qi and started transferring it inside his Jing and Mai, he realized something...

[What the hell!

How come my gelid qi shows signs of improvement?

The improvement is tiny, inconspicuous, but it certainly has improved for real!

Is it really possible for such a good thing to happen?]

While he was feeling surprised, he casually drew more of the frost qi and tried to test his observation.

Unexpectedly something changed. - Boom!- The Spaces 'found' this 'outlet', pushing all the accumulated frost qi towards this point.

What happened was that Ye Xiao became the only path to lighten the pressure produced by the frost qi.

Ye Xiao's original intention was to join in and gradually release the pressure on the other eight Spaces. He was trying to draw away the frost qi gradually and steadily, however, perhaps the other eight Spaces were too exhausted after being pressured by the Sky Space, that they, without any delay, started to push the frost qi to the outlet they just discovered.

This was killing Ye Xiao. He suddenly felt like he had fallen into a ten thousand year old ice cave. He was almost frozen into an ice sculpture.

However, in such an extremely cold atmosphere, he suddenly realized that the East-rising Purple qi had actually become more active!

The entirety of his Jing and Mai also began operating automatically!

The frost qi released by the Cosmic Hades could actually enhance the cultivation of his gelid qi by a massive amount!

When Ye Xiao realised this, he was instantly overjoyed. He entered the super intense full-cultivating mode during which he would neither eat nor drink. In order to do so, he 'invaded and occupied' the watchtower of the house of Ye!

Because the territory of General Ye lacked any tall trees. The top of the watchtower was the place which was the closest to the sun.

Ye Xiao gave the order that he would temporarily take over a sentry post on the watchtower.

Everyday after that, as a precaution against getting recognized by others, he would wear the clothes worn by the guards' and sit in the watchtower with his legs crossed!

He enjoyed the sunlight at daytime and absorbed the nimbus of the moon at night.

He kept on cultivating throughout the day and night without rest!

After a few days, all of the people in the Chen-Xing City felt that this summer had lost its heat.

The powers of Yin and Yang complemented each other.

Things would develop in a certain direction when the situation became extreme; the power of Yang rose when the power of Yin reached an extreme.

Under the great influence of the frost qi and Ye Xiao's intake of heat through the sun, the strength of the East-rising Purple qi reached an abnormal level!

The frost qi inside the Spaces rushed into his Jing and Mai with a crazy impetus, even the Yang qi from the world rushed into him with identical frenzy!

Usually, when he cultivated the gelid qi, he needed to absorb the Yang qi into his body and use some martial art method to transform it, but now, he didn't need to do that anymore.

Now that he had skipped the most demanding step, he just concentrated on absorbing the Yang qi to defuse the frost qi. With that, his cultivation was truly boosted at a tremendous pace!

Along with the massive increase of the Yin qi, the Yang qi increased at the same time. With the exceptional East-rising Purple qi, there was bound to be no disharmony of Yin and Yang. The gelid qi improved rapidly and the power of Yang increased along with it. The power of Yang was never left behind that of the Yin at any time.

After Ye Xiao entered the Spaces and took action, it only took one day to free the nine Spaces from imbalance and breakdown and restore the usual balance. The extra gelid qi kept flowing through Ye Xiao's Jing and Mai!

He just felt like his body was a repeating... Hmm, in the modern world, it would be a repeating progress bar.

The first level of the Grade of Diyuan!

The progress bar was slowly filling up, but at a visible speed. Gradually... it reached the middle, and then the end...

-BOOM!- He felt like his body had turned into some nebula; he felt weightless and comfortable.

And then another line in his Jing and Mai was suddenly split wide open. The second progress bar which represented the second level of the Grade of Diyuan appeared along with it. And then it slowly filled up... to the middle... the end... - BOOM! -

Level 3!

When it got to level 3, the rate of improvement became slower.

Ye Xiao was fully concentrating on cultivation. He cared about nothing else, but only on operating the martial art to boost his cultivation.

In the house of Ye, the steward stood in the sunlight with his hands on the back. He looked up and watched the young lord on the watchtower. There was a gratified look on his face.

[The young lord may have not achieved success in either wisdom or martial arts, but, at least he knows he should work hard now. That is a wonderful sign.

He is not going to be a civil officer as his father wants him to, but if he works hard enough in martial arts, maybe he will achieve something in the future.

If the General comes to know of this, he will certainly be delighted.]

"Is the meal ready for the young lord? Bring up more restorative food."

"Oh he has finished the last one? That is good."

"Have you delivered the water up to him yet?"

"Anyone who dares to be lazy will be punished severely!"

...

For people in the Chen-Xing City, this summer was extremely comfortable.

Usually, when the most scorching days in the year came, the whole Chen-Xing City turned into a huge stove; it could likely burn some fat out of the people.

As for this year... Ha ha. It was actually neither hot nor cold. It was perfect!

Nobody knew that the heat was mostly transformed into energy by the East-rising Purple qi.

This went on continuously for ten days.

Ye Xiao had been concentrating in cultivating.

He kept cultivating day and night with no rest.

.....

Realms In The Firmament

Chapter 66: The Mess Was Coming

The little princess was grounded, hence, she was unable to come and meet him. But Zuo Wu-Ji didn't come, and neither did Lan Lang-Lang. That was a bit odd.

Ye Xiao stretched himself.

After cultivating for ten days without taking any breaks, the extra frost qi in the Spaces had been mostly absorbed by Ye Xiao. Indeed, because of this, the dominant Sky Space had become meeker...

Ye Xiao knew that the depletion of the frost qi must be stopped before it's too late; he had already used more than enough.

He decided to let the frost qi in the Sky Space go unchecked for the time being and wait a couple of days for it to accumulate. It wouldn't be too late to collect it when it once again starts to run wild.

He stood up and slowly got down from the watchtower.

The steward came to meet him right away, "My lord, how is it? You should have surmounted the fourth level of the Grade of Renyuan, right?"

In fact, Ye Xiao had been stuck in the third level of the Grade of Renyuan for the past several years. The steward asked him in an encouraging fashion because he didn't want to hurt the young lord's confidence. [Surmount? How is it possible to break through so quickly? People have spent many years and still haven't managed a breakthrough for this single level.]

[Fourth level of the Grade of Renyuan?]

Ye Xiao's lips quivered oddly and he said, "Hmm. More or less. I am about to reach level 4."

The steward was greatly gratified and smiled, "You have been working so hard these days. In fact, to cultivate, it requires a process of alternating work with rest and it also needs to proceed step by step. So take a good rest tonight."

The steward didn't know that although he was talking about the Grade of Renyuan, his young lord was talking about... the Grade of Diyuan.

Although they were both talking about level 4, the difference between the two levels was like heaven and earth... If Ye Xiao had told him straightaway that he was about to reach the fourth level of the Grade of Diyuan, maybe the steward would have just passed out right away.

"Were there any unusual movements in the capital?" Ye Xiao asked.

"Hmm. Have some food for now. I will tell you what happened one by one after you eat." The steward said with a smile on his face.

"Hmm. Uncle Song, join me for the meal." Ye Xiao replied with a smile.

"Ok. Ok." Steward Song was delighted.

"These days, the situation has been quite sensitive inside the Capital."

The steward spoke while he was drinking.

Ye Xiao was surprised to notice that the steward drank in a weird way. He held the cup with two fingers and picked it up casually and naturally. No movement was made by his throat and no sound of drinking was heard, yet one cup of liquor was finished quickly and elegantly. After that, he casually filled his cup once more and drank it in one shot...

His speed of drinking was shockingly fast, but the way he drank was extremely elegant.

The elegance in the way he drank made the Xiao Monarch feel a bit jealous. He had been a man of alcohol, a hardcore drinker in his previous life. He has naturally tasted a lot of good liquors, but speaking of the drinking culture he had, the elegant and lambent way Steward Song drank was something he could never achieve. Even if he tried imitating him, it was rather possible that he would likely 'draw a tiger into a dog' [1].

"Sensitive? What does that mean?" Ye Xiao felt that this steward of his family was absolutely not just some simple retired soldier. He must definitely have some special background.

Firstly, he was perceptive; Secondly, he was elegant. Just with the way he drank, without systematic training and a subtle influence of past generations, he would never be able to show such a natural, noble demeanor...

Thirdly, he was mysterious. He never talked about his past... Fourthly, regarding his cultivation, even Ye Xiao couldn't see through him.

There were many cultivation levels for the cultivators in the world. Generally, when a cultivator wasn't using his martial arts, it would be quite difficult to see his level or strength. Only when he showed his martial arts, would his true strength be revealed.

A few martial arts existed which could be used to conceal the cultivators' cultivation levels.

These kinds of martial arts didn't have the functions of nourishing growth, improving cultivation, curing wounds or injuring the enemies, but it was still quite useful in confusing and disturbing the enemies.

Once a person cultivated such a martial art, he could hide his energy and conceal his strength to a certain extent. He could prevent the enemies from knowing his true strength so he could gain an element of surprise during a fight and sometimes, it could even help him turn the tide of a losing battle and alter the result.

Only some supreme experts, through their experience and perception for danger, could estimate the enemies' cultivation before they have made any movements. The Xiao Monarch could surely do that. No matter what level the enemy was and how hard he tried to cover his strength, as long as he was in a lower level than the Xiao Monarch, his strength would be revealed with just a glance.

However, Ye Xiao couldn't estimate the true cultivation strength of the steward.

Although he had the same sight like in his previous life, he couldn't see through the steward at all. The only explanation was that the steward was at a much higher level than Ye Xiao.

After all, Ye Xiao's shortcoming was his poor cultivation strength; it was only at the third level of the Grade of Diyu.

“Yes. Sensitive.” The steward who was drinking in a rather elegant way, continued gulping drinks one after the other. It was as if he was holding the cup but never putting it down. “The king must be suffering a serious headache. The battle for the crown among the princes must have possibly started during the auction. However, the king is helpless and can do nothing about it.”

“Oh. I’d love to hear more.” Ye Xiao urged the steward to continue.

He truly had never thought about this before.

He might have experienced a lot, but he knew very little about the game played in the royal court of the mortal world. His knowledge regarding politics was next to nothing. This was an irrefutable fact that he had led a significantly different life compared to the mortals.

“The king has always been supporting the crown prince and was using the second and the third prince as the grinders to sharpen him. He always encourages the two younger princes to fight against the crown prince, but absolutely prevents them from becoming more powerful than the crown prince. Grinders are only grinders after all. If the knife is tested excessively and breaks, it would go against the original intention of the grinding.”

“Although the king kept on giving some hope to the other princes, making them think that they may have the chance to sit on the throne, he never really considered them as candidates to take the throne. There was never any doubt, the throne was meant only for the crown prince.”

“That is the politics of the kingdom.” The steward smiled.

“Politics...” Ye Xiao murmured.

“The king has great talent and bold vision. That is undeniable. But he is unhealthy. That is the weakest point of all his plans. He had won the War of Eight Kings in the past, truly an incredible man. However... although the crown prince is also talented, he lacks experience. It is easy for him to safeguard the heritage, but if he wants to carry forward the king’s plan of expanding the territory and obtaining the dominant position in this world, it is completely impossible.”

“So in order to train the crown prince, he raises the other two princes to oppose him. He wants to make the crown prince feel threatened, forcing him to work harder to improve. But the king always keeps the competition within the proper limits to ‘prevent the grinders from breaking the knife’ and also to ‘keep the knife from consuming the grinders’ too soon... The balance has always been well maintained by the king.”

Ye Xiao nodded slowly.

Yes, throughout history, that was what the kings would do.

However, there were not many of them that could control the balance well.

It seemed like the ruling king of the Kingdom of Chen was really a wise king.

“However, a few years ago, there was an accident that interrupted the grand plan of the king. It broke the balance. It was... that the crown prince had met a girl. The girl and the crown prince fell in love at first sight. The girl is from the Mu Clan, one of the eight noble clans. Although she is not the child of the patriarch, she is still the daughter of the second most important person in the Mu Clan.”

“The king always took precautions against the three clans that settled in the Kingdom of Chen, so he was naturally against the marriage. However, he had no legitimate reasons to stop this one. If he blocked it deliberately, it would not only hurt the relationship between the father and son, but it will also create an awkward situation whenever he faced the Mu Clan. After all, the Mu Clan is one of the eight noble clans; it is not something the king could easily deal with...”

“With no other choice, he had to approve the marriage and let the girl be the crown princess. From then on, the power of the crown prince suddenly expanded, and it made the other two princes completely lose power to strike back.”

“But the two princes didn’t sit still and await death. The throne has always fascinated people. Even though they only had little hope, they were not willing to let it go. The crown prince’s marriage had suddenly diminished their powers, and guided the noble clans to a way where they could also expand their power... Thus, they sought out the other two noble clans in the Kingdom of Chen, and each of them proposed to one of their daughters... Among the three princes, the balance was restored. However, the balance was no longer firm; it was fragile.”

“In the old days, under the control of the ruling king, whenever balance between them became skewed due to one of them becoming too strong, the ruling king would naturally suppress the stronger party. However, right now, the control of the ruling king on the situation has been lacking. Once the situation becomes imbalanced, it will definitely lead to a huge crisis where all sides might collapse.”

“In fact, for a long time, because of the wariness of the ruling king, although the noble clans were rich and world-shaking, they hardly reached the level of authority commanded by the royal power. Yet, at that time, the king’s sons actually went to them of their own initiatives... So the noble clans rather enjoyed it. It was exactly what they had dreamed about; they were like a fish which returned to clean waters. Even if they didn’t have daughters, they would try to make up some, let alone when there were lots of pretty girls in the noble clans.”

“So the crown prince disappointed the king at that time, because the noble clans had all entered into the royal family. Moreover, he only had three sons, and now they were all sons-in-laws to the noble clans...”

“This event had produced great chaos in the recent past... And now, everything seemed peaceful.”

“The king has made a great effort to define the powers of his three sons and distribute it. Now, it has become organized enough to make everything back to normal... That means the crown prince became a little bit stronger while the other two princes became slightly weaker. Only when the two princes work together could they have the chance to match the crown prince; it was a subtle balance. When the king was about to sigh with relief... suddenly, the auction popped up without any signs.”

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Chapter 67: The Golden Purple Blood!

The steward sneered and said, “I can fully imagine that our king is very anxious to tear that Feng guy, who instigated this auction, into bits and pieces...”

“Why? What relates him to to the royal feud?” Ye Xiao asked with confusion.

“Because... There are certain relations between the eight noble clans and the sects. Both of them dislike each other, and since the noble clans have already entered into the core of the royal power, the sects naturally wouldn’t feel reconciled... By a lucky coincidence, there were precious items on sale in the auction, so the sects seized the chance and sent their important members to come and settle in the capital in a legitimate way...”

“Otherwise... Even though it was the supreme dan, how could it possibly make those men like Xiao Mo-Yan, Meng Wu-Fei and Li Chang-Qing come here? The machinations behind this event were really profound.”

Ye Xiao nodded and answered with a ‘hmm’.

Steward Song’s analysis was incisive and it taught Ye Xiao a lot. However, what he cared about the most was something else.

His steward was truly not an ordinary man, as he really didn’t seem respectful to the king. How could such a man be ordinary!

“If that was all that happened, it was fine... But the Mu Clan, who the crown prince depends on as if they are the Great Wall to him, actually messed with the unfathomable force, House of the Chaotic Storm, at this important moment... and their people got killed. They suffered a crushing defeat and a major decrease in their power. I believe that the Mu Clan wouldn’t dare to take any reckless actions within the near future. They also have to worry about how to apologize to the House of the Chaotic Storm at the same time...”

“Therefore, the crown prince’s power was doomed to be reduced badly. The other two princes definitely wouldn’t let go of this opportunity, so they took advantage of the situation... The sects entered and settled in the capital. The royal court had just turned peaceful and then it once again returned into a chaotic situation... The king’s worry is really no surprise!”

“I see...” Ye Xiao nodded with indifference, but in his mind he couldn’t help feeling dumbfounded.

[Shit! I casually took out some garbage dan beads and it actually influenced the affairs of the kingdom like that?

That... That is a bit too inconceivable...]

“That is the current situation in the capital, an extremely delicate and horrible balance.” When Steward Song said this, he had already drunk about fifteen or sixteen cups, but his face was still not too red or too pale, as it still looked rather normal. He was a really good drinker.

“Now, the situation is like this. But because of the king’s intentional interference, both the court officials and the military officers, especially the first class officials and the main officials in the military are all holding a watch-and-see attitude. However, since the king’s health is getting worse, the watch-and-see attitude will change gradually. Once the king’s health deteriorates too much, heh heh...”

Steward Song sneered and said, “Well, these are just the inner factors... The Kingdom of Chen... Heh heh. It is bound to be unsafe.”

Ye Xiao asked, “Other than the inner factors, are there really other factors?”

“Of course.”

The Steward drank another cup of liquor, “Now, the other two kingdoms are ready to do something big. They recently made frequent military strength reassignments, and conducted many military rehearsals... Heh heh, there is something you don’t know. To conduct one military rehearsal, it will need a huge amount of money. If they are not truly ready to start a war, they must be very stupid to do that so often. A war is basically a money game.”

“In fact, there are lots of signs proving my hypothesis. Basically, the price of all the goods in the market are rising. The increase isn’t big, in fact, it’s rising rather slowly. However, they are still rising. This upward price trend started ten days ago. Food, salt, meat, metal, steel, wood and plants... Everything is becoming more expensive.”

The steward’s eyes thoughtfully lit up, “About ten days ago, we went to purchase food. It was 8 wen [1] for 500 grams of rice. Nine days ago, it was 8 wen and 5 li [2]. Six days ago, it reached 9 wen. Today, the price has reached 11 wen... Within ten days, it rose by 3 wen! It is only rice yet the price has already risen by more than 30 percent of the base price.”

“At first, I thought it was just a single case, but then I went out and looked around. I discovered that it was not only rice. All the other items in the market are also rising in price. Among them, steel was the most insane. Generally, for 1 kilogram of steel it only costs 1 wen, but now it is 3 wen per 500 grams... Moreover, if you want to buy bulks of steel, you can’t get that much... It seems like restrictions have been put in place...”

“All these items are necessary for human survival. To bring this in the big picture... Unless somebody is suddenly stockpiling goods, the price would never rise like this... All the kingdoms have been in peace for the past several years. The citizens have been living affluently. Natural and manmade disasters have seldom happened. Yet now the stockpile has suddenly happened. Why? It is obviously nothing else but...”

The steward drank another one and sighed, “War is coming...”

“Erh.” Ye Xiao didn’t say a word.

“Another important reason is that... The House of the Chaotic Storm showed up again!” The steward tittered, “In three thousand years, the House of the Chaotic Storm has shown up nine times... Every time it showed up, it led to a change. A change in the situation of the whole land!”

“During the change, the whole land will be unified, and then the House of the Chaotic Storm will disappear... Yet no more than a hundred years later, the situation of unification will break down again. At this time, rivaling warlords will battle over the land, which will lead to a situation of fragmentation. And then after some battles, it will turn into several kingdoms... They will be too fearful to mess with each other so they will be in peace. That is just like the current situation...”

“After that balanced situation appears, in no more than a 100 years, the House of the Chaotic Storm will show up again. After that... Everything will start to rise in price... And then... War will break out. Until, eventually, one of the kingdoms will rule all the land...”

“It is the ninth time the House of the Chaotic Storm has shown up.” Steward Song finally showed signs of getting drunk on his face, but his eyes were getting clearer, “The ninth time within the last three thousand years.”

“So that is what it is.” Ye Xiao was enlightened.

“And the extremely mysterious person, Master Bai, who is nearly someone from a myth, has shown up nine times. Every time, it was Master Bai!” The steward finally cursed, “Other than a legend, I’d rather say he is an immortal monster!”

Ye Xiao was stunned.

“So that Wan Of The Clouds and Xiu Of The Heavens have also lived for thousands years. Are they not monsters too?”

“They are also monsters! They should all be monsters!” The steward nodded heavily.

Ye Xiao felt shocked after hearing that.

The steward didn’t know, but Ye Xiao knew that those men in black, who came to the house of Ye the other night, were actually from the House of the Chaotic Storm!

Was he going to fight against some monsters this time?

If he was the previous Xiao Monarch, they weren’t worth even a second of his time. However, now the roles were reversed. For the House of the Chaotic Storm, Ye Xiao should be equal to an ant!

He wasn’t even worthy to be compared with an ant.

“So if the war comes, it must involve the whole world... As my dad is the Northern General... Isn’t he going to be the first to be affected?” Ye Xiao asked.

When he spoke out ‘my dad’, he didn’t feel conflicted.

A few days earlier, the steward said something to him, “When you were born, you had inadequate natural endowment. You were also badly injured because of an accident, and your Jing and Mai were blocked. Your father spent everything to save your life and tried to make you healthy like normal people, but he failed. At the end, the king said that he had a medical material that could save you, but he had a request. He wanted your father to become his sworn brother and guard the northern territory for twenty years!”

At that time, Ye Xiao was only sixteen.

That was to say, after spending all his properties, his father had sold the best twenty years of his youth for his son!

For such a gesture, even though the one who made it wasn’t his real father, Ye Xiao still felt touched. This was the same kind of feeling that a real son would’ve felt for his father!

Speaking of that, Ye Xiao had been an orphan in his previous life. He had been longing for this kind of affection, this parental love, for a long time.

This time, he was lucky to have a second life and gain the love he longed for, so he naturally cherished it even more.

“That is not quite so.” The pride showed up in the steward’s eyes, “I believe that in the Land of Han-Yang, there is absolutely no one that could threaten my brother’s life! Even if everyone in this world dies, you father will live well unharmed!”

Ye Xiao was shocked when he heard that.

‘There is absolutely no one that could threaten my brother’s life’!

‘My brother’!

He finally knew what had caused his concern: [This Steward Song who has been working as a servant in my house is actually my father’s sworn brother!]

However, a sworn brother like Steward Song and a sworn brother like the king were incomparable, as they represented two completely different things to his father.

Steward Song must be drunk, so he leaked out something.

Ye Xiao didn’t know why, but he suddenly felt like the family he was staying at was filled with mysteries.

Besides, why did the steward trust his father so much? Even if he was a top-class superior cultivator in the Grandmaster levels of Tianyuan, dying in a battle of million-men armies wouldn’t be a strange thing, right?

Where did such confidence come from?

Could his ‘adopted’ father be much stronger than that? If so, he must be over the cultivation limit of this realm, right? That simply couldn’t be right!

The steward was drunk. He laughed with self-mockery, “Ahee... I am drunk. I am actually drunk. I haven’t been drunk in a long time... You father, my brother strictly forbids me from drinking, but I am so happy today... So I really want to drink some. Xiao boy, don’t tell your father that I drank. Don’t even think about telling him I am drunk. Do you understand!”

Ye Xiao was stunned when he heard him.

[What the hell. You really can’t reason with a drunk man. He was acting as a servant at the beginning, but now he is admonishing me with the tone of an elder. And he even called me ‘Xiao boy’, what the hell is that...]

Steward Song’s face suddenly turned unusually red and his breath became heavier. After a few slight coughs, he suddenly coughed heavily!

After a long time, he lowered his head and turned it around. He spat out something on a handkerchief.

Apparently, he didn’t want Ye Xiao to see this.

However, although Ye Xiao was not at a high cultivation level, his eyes were as sharp as they used to be in his previous life. He had already seen some of it.

His pupils suddenly shrank.

Golden purple!

The blood that the steward spat out was actually golden purple blood!

Realms In The Firmament

Chapter 68: The Golden Mai Palm!

In fact, the steward hadn't spat out some regular spit; he had actually spat out some... Golden purple blood!

"The Golden Mai Palm!"

In Ye Xiao's mind, the name of this technique emerged; he was astonished.

The Golden Mai Palm. Ye Xiao had seen it in his previous life for hundreds of times!

Because in his previous life, the Zi-Yang Mount, one of the three factions who had hunted him down, was famous for its Golden Mai Palm!

In the Qing-Yun Realm, they were the only group who could use it; there was no others!

It was the specialty of the Zi-Yang Mount.

The Golden Mai Palm had vigorous and firm palm strength; it was grandly powerful. It could break stones into pieces, but that was just normal. The real horror of this technique was the viciousness hidden inside it.

When one was struck by the Golden Mai Palm, the power would sneak into his Jing and Mai like burning fire. It would produce some golden material inside the Jing and Mai. This golden material was like a living thing. It was extremely difficult to dispel. It would infect the energy of the body to strengthen itself, while it would also continue to turn the blood into golden blood. If it didn't get dispelled soon, in the future, it would lead to severe complications; the victim was almost doomed to die.

How could a person live on when all of his organs turned gold?

Of course he would die instantly!

Steward Song, who was now in front of Ye Xiao, was actually a victim of the Golden Mai Palm, and he had actually endured a feeble existence till now. There were only two explanations for that: First, the one who had attacked him hadn't cultivated into a higher level of the Golden Mai Palm; the internal injury he had left had been expanding gradually, and now it was overstepping Steward Song's limit bit by bit.

Second, there was some efficacious medicine continuing his life; it was slowing down the organs from becoming golden.

However, after being hit by the Golden Mai Palm, if he couldn't acquire the special antidote, his cultivation would drop slowly because of the infection. Even a great superior cultivator would become an ordinary person who had little strength bit by bit. Once his veins could no longer bear the effect of the Golden Mai Palm, he would die anyway.

Yet Steward Song, who was in front of Ye Xiao, had obviously almost reached his limit.

Alcohol was the major taboo for whoever was hit by the Golden Mai Palm!

Because the golden material that had infected the body would run strangely! Once it ran too strangely, the victim would never have the chance to survive!

Yet Steward Song had drunk so much liquor today.

Ye Xiao's eyes lit up and he said, "I felt tired suddenly... It must be my lack of good rests these days. Uncle Song, how about we call it a day now?"

Steward Song nodded but said nothing. What Ye Xiao said was exactly something he needed. To drink more today, he was afraid that he would truly lose control. He was about to spit out blood for the second time soon.

Ye Xiao left without any hesitation; he turned around and walked away.

...

It was midnight.

Steward Song's body was curled-up while lying on his bed. He was covering his mouth as he coughed. In his eyes, there was slight hint of sorrow.

[The young lord is sixteen now. That means I have been suffering this injury for sixteen years, right?

Finally, I can't suppress it anymore!

In sixteen years, my cultivation have been dropping till. Now, it is getting faster. Last month, I was still in the sixth level of the Grade of Diyuan, yet now, it is first level of the Grade of Diyuan.

After drinking so much tonight... maybe tomorrow it will drop to the Grade of Renyuan. Or maybe I don't have a tomorrow anymore...]

He smiled bitterly and murmured, "This is my life... Rising up so high and then falling down rapidly. Heh heh..."

He coughed, and finally spat out some purple golden blood again. He felt his entire body was faint and he could clearly sense that his qi was scattering bit by bit...

"I better sleep now... I don't have many days like this anymore." The steward was lying in bed closing his eyes as he murmured, "Brother... If that day comes, could you come back and watch me go..."

While thinking about that, a sound suddenly echoed. - Shoot! - Somebody entered the room through the window.

The steward stood up on the floor right away. Although he was suffering from both injury and tiredness, he didn't lose his wariness. Before he could sound a warning and alert the guards, he felt someone pressing his shoulder. - BANG! - He passed out.

Steward Song only had one thought right before he passed out: [This night stalker moves neatly and weirdly, but his cultivation is no higher than level 4 of the Grade of Diyuan. In the noontide of my

prosperity, I could blow him to death with just a single breath. Yet now I am in his hand and can do nothing but give myself in...]

...

Ye Xiao stood by the bed looking at the fainted steward and sighed gently.

He reached his hand on the steward's wrist and operated his martial art to check the steward's pulse.

"As expected, he was hit by the Golden Mai Palm, and it was the Golden Mai Palm of middle level. Whoever can create such injury, even in the Zi-Yang Mount, he must at least be one of the major disciples..."

"As a conservative estimation, it has been ten years after he was hit by the Golden Mai Palm..."

Ye Xiao couldn't help frowning slightly.

"If my cultivation reaches the Grade of Tianyuan at the moment, I can surely cure him. But now... I lack the power to do so even though I really want to." Ye Xiao had dealt with the Golden Mai Palm for many times in his previous life, so he certainly knew how to cure it.

He knew every way to cure it; even without the special antidote, there were still ample of ways to deal with it.

However, this place is not the Qing-Yun Realm; there weren't any of those required medicines here.

Generally, if his cultivation was high enough, he could cure it anyway, but it was not. He was nearly helpless.

At present, Steward Song's cultivation and body conditions had all dropped to their lowest. After no more than half month, he would die. There was not much time left; that was the biggest problem right now!

"Even though I will do it with my utmost, it will only slightly improve his situation. Luckily, I have reached level 3 of the Grade of Diyuan after cultivating for 10 days, otherwise, I really could do nothing but helplessly watch him..."

Ye Xiao frowned. He took out a Pei-Yuan Dan Bead and put it into the steward's mouth. He made sure the dan bead had been pushed down through his throat. After that, he put his hand on the back of the steward and operated the gelid power to draw out the scorching power of the Golden Mai Palm.

Bit by bit, it was being absorbed into his palm.

The Zi-Yang Mount was holding the sway over the world with the Golden Mai Palm. It was surely because this technique was shockingly powerful and extremely vicious, but at the same time, it was also because nobody was able to defuse the Golden Mai Palm. Countless sects and countless cultivation masters were trying to resolve the Golden Mai Palm but failed eventually.

However, Ye Xiao had fought against the Zi-Yang Mount for many times, so he had coincidentally figured out the secret of the Golden Mai Palm. In fact, when the Zi-Yang Mount had tried their best hunting Ye

Xiao, it was partly because Ye Xiao had figured out their secret. If he revealed the secret to the public, the Zi-Yang Mount's power and reputation would absolutely decrease.

Whoever was hit by the Golden Mai Palm, those golden material would appear inside his body. Meanwhile, his organs would become golden bit by bit. People all thought that this technique should be attuned with gold attribute. They thought the cultivator could absorb some special metallic materials into the palm and attack with it. Thus, they focused on reducing the golden material and slowing the organ from becoming golden, but they weren't aware that it was only a camouflage.

The Golden Mai Palm was no gold attribute technique at all; it was fire attribute. The golden material, which appeared after the attack, was merely the outcome of the Golden Mai Palm's power burning the Jing and Mai. Its power would linger around for a long time, transforming the victim's blood, vigor, and cultivation into its own motive power. If one could not dispel the power of the Golden Mai Palm after being struck, the Golden Mai Palm would continually strengthen itself.

As for some superior cultivators who cultivated the Golden Mai Palm, they could instantly make the opponent's organs become golden with a single strike. It was simply just speeding the process up by countless times. So when people were fixated on eradicating the golden materials and slowing down the process of becoming golden, they failed to realize that these actions would only cure its symptoms; in fact, this was far from the proper treatment.

In fact, it was quite a coincidence when Ye Xiao discovered how to deal with the Golden Mai Palm in his previous life. In that day when he came across a man of the Zi-Yang Mount, he was hit by the Golden Mai Palm. After being hit, the injury expanded rather fast, so he tried his best operating the Pure Yang Martial Art to resist it. Coincidentally, he found that his Pure Yang Martial Art actually could assimilate the power of the Golden Mai Palm.

He was enlightened; he noticed the Golden Mai Palm was a fire attribute technique. When one thing was learned, a hundred similar things would also be uncovered. As long as the major direction was confirmed, it was naturally an easy job to cure it. Since then, Ye Xiao had seized many solutions to resist the Golden Mai Palm.

He was weak at the moment and couldn't cure it efficiently, but he now had a more specific solution than those he had learned in his previous life. The two extremities of ice and fire were the most effective treatment to the Golden Mai Palm. The one with the opposite attribute absorbed, while the one with the same attribute digested. That made a perfect pair!

He tested this solution with great caution; he didn't dare to be reckless. He just absorbed a little bit of the power of the Golden Mai Palm, but surprisingly after the hot power was absorbed and ran around his Jing and Mai, it actually turned into his scorching power - one of his two extreme powers.

Ye Xiao was thrilled.

He was surprised that the assimilation went so smoothly; it was even smoother than when he was cultivating the Pure Yang Martial Art. It practically skipped the process of the assimilation. It felt like his scorching power was the ocean and the hot power from the Golden Mai Palm was only a little stream. It was merely the stream flowing into the ocean; it really wasn't worth mentioning!

[It turns out dispelling the power of the Golden Mai Palm... can bring me such a benefit. That is a sweet surprise.]

He dared not to neglect it, so he hurried operating the martial art, absorbing the hot power.

He didn't stopped until the moon indicated it was late. He murmured, "The hot power of the Golden Mai Palm inside the Jing and Mai has been absorbed clean... But the power that has already gotten into the organs and dantian is impossible to dispel. Not with my current condition..."

He gritted his teeth, took out one of the only two Bone Ablutionary Dan Beads and put it into the steward's mouth.

And then he began to operate the martial art again!

When it was dawn, Ye Xiao left quietly.

The result of this rescue was better than expected. Although he didn't cure the disease radically, he had already suppressed the elementary power of the Golden Mai Palm into the deepest place of the steward's dantian! The hot power of the Golden Mai Palm that was flowing around the steward's body had all been absorbed by Ye Xiao. There only remained the deeply hidden elementary power which was impossible to dispel.

That meant from then on, there would be no more problem with the steward's body; the injury could never deteriorate.

...

Realms In The Firmament

Chapter 69: War In The South; Disturbance In The Capital

What was most important was that from now on, Steward Song could recover his cultivation on his own, and he could also use his own cultivation to resist the hot power of the Golden Mai Palm.

Through a conservative estimation, the effects of the Golden Mai Palm wouldn't show up within the next three years.

"After three years..." Ye Xiao looked at his palm where a golden purple mark was fading away. He sneered, "... By then I will need the slightest effort to cure the effect of the Golden Mai Palm!"

He had cured the loyal Steward Song and didn't expose himself. In fact, he had even improved his cultivation.

That was something like 'a good man deserved some good luck', right?!

Ye Xiao felt relaxed and sweetly fell asleep, of course, in his own bedroom.

...

The next morning!

The steward slowly woke up.

“Hmm. It has been a long time since I slept so well! Eh... I am alive? How come I didn't die?” The steward felt extremely weird. He hurriedly checked himself, but couldn't find any sign of a wound.

Then he turned over quickly and tried to sit up. However, when he was turning over, he suddenly stopped. This was an extremely awkward position!

His eyes showed an expression of astonishment.

Because... He felt that the sickening hot power, which had been running through his Jing and Mai and had tortured him for the last 16 years, had completely vanished!

- PAH! - The steward immediately heavily slapped himself!

[This must be a dream. It is always easy to wake up from a good dream. Whether I am dead or not, it is not a good thing to remain in a dream forever. Come on, I need to wake up!]

That slap was truly solid and had left a firm mark on his face. He could even count a couple of stars in his vision, as he had nearly hit his teeth out of his mouth.

“It hurts me to death... Am I actually not dreaming?” The steward touched his cheek and felt the buzz in his ear that was caused by the slap. He instantly regretted his previous action, “Why did I slap so hard... Hmm... That power...”

He tried operating the elemental qi in his dantian. - Boom!- He felt the spiritual power in his dantian suddenly rose and rushed out like a furious billow!

At the moment, the bones of his body were suddenly crackling!

His Jing and Mai had been left uncultivated for the past 16 years, yet they had suddenly regained their vigor. They expanded tidily to allow the long lost spiritual power to rush into them. The brisk qi kept rushing out, as all of his hair suddenly stood straight up!

- Pooh! -

He opened his mouth and this time, he spat out a true phlegm.

He reached his hands and looked at them. His hands were now full of energy...

“Miracle! What a miracle!” His hands were shaking while his body was quivering.

Suddenly, two streams of tears rolled down his cheeks, “I thought... I thought there was no hope left for me in this lifetime. I thought that all I could do was to stay here in my big brother's house and act as a steward... Yet suddenly, I have fully recovered... The bloody power of the Golden Mai Palm has completely vanished!”

“I can't believe that I, Song Jue, can have such luck today!”

“Although my cultivation today was completely different from 16 years ago, and I can only use 10 percent of it... I can still exert the level 9 of the Grade of Diyuan... In the Land of Han-Yang, this is definitely enough for me. Besides, while cultivating more, my original cultivation will come back to me bit by bit.”

“Finally, I, Song Jue, will have the day to enact my revenge!”

His eyes were filled with tears.

After a long time, he finally calmed down, “But... what is really going on? Who was that guy last night?”

Last night, Song Jue hadn't been able to see the guy's face. He had also failed to see the guy's outline before he was knocked unconscious.

So he had felt full of despair and shame.

But as for now, he only felt grateful, endlessly grateful.

“It must be the guy last night who treated my injury caused by the Golden Mai Palm...” Song Jue was grateful, “This guy is my lifesaver... But why did he do that? Why did he save me? How did he know I was hit by the Golden Mai Palm? And how could he dispel the power of the Golden Mai Palm which has been known as impossible to dispel? Even though I only had a short moment to feel his strength, I am sure he was only in the third or fourth level of the Grade of Diyu. How was he capable to deal with it...”

There were so many questions emerging inside Song Jue's mind.

They became abstruse knots in his heart.

However, the happiness of surviving from the clutches of death had immediately overtaken everything else.

“As long as I am still alive, there will be the day I repay this immense favor.”

“Since the mysterious benefactor of mine showed up here, he shouldn't just disappear like this. He must be here for something... I just need to patiently wait. He will show up again. If there is anything he wants me to do, then I will make sure to do it.”

“However, if he asks me to do something against my big brother, I will kill myself right away, returning my life to him.” Song Jue thought so and instantly felt relieved.

“Humph! Now that I have recovered a part of my cultivation, while I am guarding the house of Ye, I would like to know what kind of morons would dare to mess with us!”

He humphed through his nose, as he was full of pride!

Ever since they had gotten up this morning, the guards of the house of Ye had seen their Master Steward smiling. He usually looked rather sullen, but currently, he was in an exceptionally good mood.

They really didn't know what kind of joyous event had happened to their Master Steward.

He tapped on the shoulder of everyone who passed by and chatted with them, he was even full of smiles.

It made these old soldiers, who had used to fight between millions of troops and had survived after hundreds of battles, to feel extremely flattered.

Some of them even murmured in their minds, “That killing god... Has he suddenly lost his mind? He must have woken up without a mind! Why is he so weird... Is he haunted by ghosts? I think we need to splash

some black dog blood [1] on him... What the hell. His smile gave me goose bumps, it also chilled my backbone. That is exactly what they call thrillingness.”

After Ye Xiao got up, he washed his face roughly and rushed up to the watchtower to enjoy the power of the East-rising Purple Qi.

On a day, the best time for cultivating the East-rising Purple Qi was the early morning when the sun had just started rising.

At that moment, the pure yang purple qi around the world would be at its thickest and purest!

Certainly, Ye Xiao wouldn't let that good chance go.

When he was preparing to go, the steward had already been waiting for him at the door. He was smiling... while his face was glowing with a healthy color.

Of course, Ye Xiao knew why he was so happy and so aglow. He also knew, that if he was held up by the steward, he would lose the entire morning...

“Erh... I, I, I... I am ur that those wow hahaha *&)(&^...” Ye Xiao talked balderdash and rushed by the steward like the wind. He ran towards the watchtower before the steward was able to utter a single word.

“What does that mean?” The steward rubbed his head. He was puzzled by Ye Xiao's actions.

...

When Ye Xiao got down from the watchtower, the steward rushed forward, “My lord, something is wrong. Something has happened in the south.”

“The south?” Ye Xiao was a bit shocked. He thought that the steward was about to tell him about the recovery of his cultivation, however, something about the south had suddenly popped up. His father was the Northern General, so he didn't understand why the south would matter to the house of Ye.

“The war has begun in the south. The report arrived at the capital this morning. The battle started five days ago...” The steward frowned, “This time, the Southern Barbarians and the Kingdom of Jin-Yang are cooperating... I am afraid that General Lan is in danger.”

“General Lan? Lan Lang-Lang's father?” Ye Xiao frowned.

[I see. It is about the Lord Lan's father. I suppose, that that does matter to me somehow.]

“Yes, the battle suddenly bursted out... General Lan was unprepared. He is nearly surrounded from three directions. He is now in a terrible situation.” The steward frowned, “It all depends on the king's decision now...”

“What about the north?” Ye Xiao asked.

“The great general is there. It is as stable as a mountain!” The steward raised his head proudly.

“Ahem...”

Ye Xiao sighed.

[How on earth did this sightless confidence develop?]

“Even though something weird has happened in the south, there is nothing we can do to help, right...”
Ye Xiao spoke strangely, “Could I be recruited to the battlefield? That couldn’t be possible, right?”

The steward was left speechless, and at the same time, he was slightly amused.

[I believe the king would rather send ten thousand rats to battle than you, the foppish young lord!]

“It is not that.” The steward twitched his mouth a bit and said, “The current situation is, besides the main force of the royal court, there is only one group that can be deployed... But if these men leave for battle, our situation will become very dangerous. So I think I need to warn you about it.”

“Oh? Men from where? Are they really so close to us?” Ye Xiao asked.

“They belong to Prince Hua-Yang!” The steward spoke in a deep voice, “This battle concerns the life and death of this kingdom. Now that General Lan can’t save the situation on his own. There is only one man who can save it. That is the No.1 in the military of the Kingdom of Chen - the Military God of Chen, Prince Hua-Yang!”

“General Ye has been guarding the north throughout the years. All of his families and his soldiers are all in the capital, including us. It is the same with General Lan. We are all under the watch of Prince Hua-Yang... If he really leaves for battle, then in the next period of time, when someone breaks the balance of the royal power, families of the military forces will become the disadvantaged groups...”

Ye Xiao was shocked. Prince Hua-Yang, father of Su Ye-Yue, prospective father-in-law of Ye Xiao. It was said that he was a big fellow. Ye Xiao didn’t know that all the families of the military were living under his favor!

If so, this Prince Hua-Yang, the Military God of Chen was really an honest man. Ye Xiao’s heart became filled with respect for this man.

“So, during these days, you better don’t go out, in case you fall in trouble once again.” The steward had talked for such a long time before he finally arrived at this point.

“So it is like this. I see.” Ye Xiao felt relieved and boasted clapping his chest, “Uncle Song, don’t worry! I have been greatly awakened these days. I will definitely stay safe and sound here at home. I would never get into any kind of trouble!”

Song Jue’s mouth twitched again.

Hearing this, he suddenly felt pain in his balls [2].

[That little prick really dares to broast. What ‘greatly awakening’. What ‘stay fine’... Last time you swore you wouldn’t get into any trouble, you have killed the brother-in-law of the crown prince...

Now you gave me another promise like you did last time. And you even added something like ‘greatly awakened’. Why don’t you go and fool yourself with that...

If I were to trust you on that... Then I must have spent all my years living like a stupid dog...]

.....

Realms In The Firmament

Chapter 70: Assassination On The Street

"I couldn't discipline you before. I wanted to, but was unable." The steward threatened, "But from now on, if you dare to run wild again, I will spank your ass to pieces. You tell me whether I dare to or not!"

That was spoken in a fierce tone.

That was no longer the tone of a steward talking to his master; it was the tone of an uncle talking to his nephew.

Apparently, when Song Jue was weak, he felt that he was incapable of protecting Ye Xiao and couldn't be someone he could depend on. He felt that he didn't deserve the title of 'uncle', so he just let Ye Xiao do whatever he wanted.

But right now, Steward Song's cultivation had returned. He felt that he had become freaking awesome!

[If anyone dares to mess with my nephew, I will kill him!]

The enormous self-confidence he lost in the recent years had returned.

'I wanted to, but was unable' perfectly described the sentiments he felt deep within his heart.

Now that he wanted to and was completely capable of fulfilling his duties, naturally, he would make up for what he had failed to do in the past, including protecting Ye Xiao, be the one he could rely on and of course, disciplining him!

Ye Xiao laughed and said, "Uncle Song. Please relax. Am I the kind of person who keeps on making trouble?"

The steward rolled his eyes.

[How come this sounds so familiar? Damn it. He said the same words again!

If you are not the kind who keeps on making trouble... then who on earth is?

You are certainly the ancestor of that sort!

You are a demon who keeps on making trouble!]

...

Ye Xiao was holding on to a massive amount of money at the moment. He was totally a rich guy. He couldn't suppress the urge to spend money anymore, so he rushed out anyway. This time, he specifically went to the place where metallic materials were being sold...

Since the price of metal was currently on the rise, he would have to pay a high price if he wanted to buy anything. But he also understood something else: usually, precisely when everything was rising in value that rare items show up!

The reason why the businessmen hoarded goods was to gain maximum profits during such times!

Thus, this time when Ye Xiao went out, he brought all his savings with him.

He was shopping crazily across the entire street!

But apparently, the results of his shopping spree wasn't satisfactory. Although he had spent almost 200 thousand silver bars, the amount of items in the Gold Space only increased by a small amount. They weighed less than 2.5 kilograms.

This result made Ye Xiao depressed. Those so called 'Soul of Irons', 'Hundred-tempered Steel', 'Stone from The Heaven'... They had powerful names, each scarier than last, but the essence absorbed from them was almost negligible.

Even the lot of them together could only release a tiny amount of metallic qi...

What a massive waste of resources!

After the shopping, the monarch's face was filled with impatience as he walked aimlessly around the marketplace. If it wasn't for the sun that was brightly shining down on him, warming his body and slightly increasing the power of the East-Rising Purple Qi, he would have most likely flipped out by now.

[I had come out with great hope.

But after spending thousands, I only got such a small gain?

Is it because I have received too much these past few days that I have spent all my luck?!

While thinking of nonsense and mixing with the crowd, he noticed that the crowd was quickly becoming denser. It seemed like there were lots of people rushing in.

He frowned and looked towards the street corner.

[How come so many people are crowding over there?]

At the street corner, a carriage had arrived, bearing a sign which read 'Divine Arms Mill'!

It was not a small carriage at all, but it wasn't big enough to cause the street to become congested either. However, there were lots of people surrounding the carriage with eager looks and burning eyes.

Those people who were surrounding the carriage were all cultivators. Some of them were citizens of the martial world, some of them were government officers, and some of them were well-dressed - they must be the men of the noble clans...

Divine Arms Mill!

The No.1 weapon producer in the Land of Han-Yang!

According to the tales, among the top-ten legendary swords in the Land of Han-Yang, six were produced by the Divine Arms Mill!

These famous weapons could cut through iron as if it was mud!

They could easily chop through gold and jade!

Since the Divine Arms Mill had arrived at the capital, it was no surprise that it had aroused a commotion!

Ye Xiao's eyes lit up and he thought, [It is fine that I haven't found any decent metallic material. Since I don't have a proper weapon at the moment, if I can buy a good sword to become my temporary weapon, then that would be good.]

So he followed the crowd walking towards the Divine Arms Mill.

In Ye Xiao's eyes, even if he could get a top-quality weapon in the Land of Han-Yang, it wouldn't be worthy of being held in his hands. He would only use it temporarily. When an opportunity would arise, he would definitely replace it.

While he walked, he suddenly felt a killing intent fiercely smashing against his body. A serious danger was rapidly approaching him from all directions!

[Assassins?!]

Ye Xiao was astonished.

[Under the light of the day, on a nearly impenetrable street that is densely crowded, I am actually encountering an assassination squad!] Ye Xiao collected his thoughts quickly: [Coming out here was a completely random idea. How long have these assassins been stalking me?]

He had no doubt that this was a long-term assassination plan!

Four waves of cold wind approached from his front, back, left and right!

They were like poisonous snakes hiding in the grass, charging like lightning through the crowd.

This was a perfect killing trap.

Ye Xiao confirmed the targets with only a single glance. There were four men; all dressed in grey ordinary cultivator suits. They were inconspicuous. In fact... when the Divine Arms Mill arrived, Ye Xiao happened to be here shopping...

[It must have nothing to do with the Divine Arms Mill, because they definitely had no idea that I would be here. The only possibility is that someone has been planning on dealing with me for some time!

Who might it be?]

The danger was quickly closing in on him. Finally, four cold beams of light were revealed under their clothes, before simultaneously shooting towards him.

They were aiming at the his chest, the back, the left subcostal and the right subcostal...

Four men, in the cover of the noisy crowd, attacked him fiercely at the same time!

Four swords, all filled with killing intent!

Such clever tactics; such a ruthless assault! In this world, if it was used against an ordinary cultivator of the Grade of Diyuan, even if he was at level 6, it would have definitely succeeded.

The eyes of the four assassins were filled with cruelty and the satisfaction of success. In their eyes, the Ye Xiao was already a dead man!

It was impossible for him to escape this attack.

A sneer showed up on the corner of Ye Xiao's mouth. He lowered his head and rapidly stepped forward. And then he leaned towards his side. The four swords stabbed into his body at the same time. - SWISH!-

The front, the back, the left and the right. The strange thing was that... the four swords all went through the gap between his skin and the clothes. They made eight holes in his clothes!

Yet his body was totally unharmed!

How skillful!

It was as if his body was being held up by the four swords, but the deadly sharp blades were unable to make a single cut on his skin!

Before the four men were able to notice that, Ye Xiao had already reached out his hand and gripped the wrist of the man in front of him. And then as he squeezed, the gelid power suddenly controlled the entire body of the man; the man couldn't even open his mouth.

The very next moment, three thin ice knives flew out without a trace.

The three men who were on the left, the right and the back of Ye Xiao felt a pleasant coolness before they suddenly stopped their rushing bodies. Their eyes were filled with disbelief.

Ever so slowly, their bodies started to collapse onto the ground.

Ye Xiao always knew how this fight would end. He didn't even look back. He just shook his body and the four swords silently returned. They flew back into the clothes of the four guys, exactly where they had previously hidden their weapons.

He didn't just stop there; he held up the man in front of him. The four holes on his clothes, which was made from fine silk, were totally unnoticeable.

He casually held up the guy in front of him and blew on top of his head. And then, the man's hair became grey...

It almost seemed like he had turned into someone else, as both of them seemed to be whispering with lowered heads. They almost resembled two close friends, who were happily conversing with each other, before unhurriedly departing from the crowd...

The way they departed seemed leisurely and elegant.

Behind them, people were shouting, "Don't push! Don't push, all of you! The Divine Arms Mill is right there. They are not going to run away... Just bring enough money. Pushing and squeezing won't help anyway if you don't have the money..."

The three dead bodies hadn't actually fallen on the floor yet; they were still in the process of falling.

Finally...

-POOF!-

One of the bodies fell to the ground.

“Don’t push already! Someone fell down...” People shouted.

“Another one fell... Damn it! I told you not to push... Don’t step on people...”

“With such weak body strength, he actually squeezed in here to buy divine weapons. For what?”

“Exactly! Exactly...”

When people were complaining disdainfully, one of them noticed that none of the three men actually were attempting to get back up, they didn’t even struggle! So he reached his hand out to check their pulse, but he failed to find one, as the bodies had already turned cold. He suddenly quivered and nearly passed out from fear. He cried with a voice that sounded inhuman, “Arh arh arh... Death... There are three men that have been pushed to death...”

“You are spouting fxxking nonsense. I have seen situations much worse than today and people didn’t die being pushed.”

“Eh... Arh arh... They are dead for real...”

“What the hell! How come these three fellas stopped breathing? Are they really dead...”

After knowing there were dead men amongst them, - Shoot! - the crowd scattered. Suddenly, an empty circle formed within the crowd. Three men curled up on the floor. There were no wounds on their bodies, yet they didn’t breathe.

It somehow looked like they were dead because of being pushed too heavily.

When that scene was revealed, people felt frightened. - Shraff!- In an instant, people dispersed like the receding tide. [Shit! It is acceptable that I failed to buy some weapon, but hell no, don’t get me in a lawsuit. We are in the capital right now...]

“None of my business...”

“I didn’t push at all...”

“Oh shoot, somebody died for real.”

“What the hell. Were they made from bean dregs? Really? Died from being pushed?”

“Scared the shit out of me. Better hurry off.”

“I still want a divine weapon...”

“You want shit! The officers are coming right away. If you get caught, even if you don’t die, three layers of your skin will be ripped off! Hurry up!”

“Hurry. Don’t get me involve this shit hole...”

“Gosh...”

Within seconds, all the people on the street had seemingly vanished. The entire street had suddenly become desolate... Except for the three bodies, who remained crooked in their original postures...

No signs of wounds; no stain of blood.