

Firmament 81

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Chapter 81: Ye Xiao's New Look

The reason why the house had turned scorching hot was quite simple. Ye Xiao was continuously operating the scorching hot power of the East-rising Purple Qi. Even though it was only operated in a small range, the small streams of heat kept spreading and increased the temperature in the house.

However, nobody had time to find out the reason, because there was something else going on in the house at the same time.

All the blood guards were training under the compelling eyes of Song Jue. They were all complaining and sweating and they didn't realize that reason they were sweating so badly was because of Ye Xiao...

A voice had been resounding in the house during the entire night, "Look at your stupid faces. You just have moved for a short while and you are sweating all over. Don't you feel ashamed? Are you still the blood guards? Are you still feeling proud to call yourselves the blood guards? From now on, all of you, kept taking the full-strength training for one month. Next time when I check on you, if you are still this weak, pack your stuffs and get the hell off..."

In fact, with Song Jue's capability, he was able to sense the unusual rise in temperature. It was seriously hot. Yet, he just used it as an excuse to give the guys a lesson...

Besides, as he had been humiliated so bad, he simply wanted to vent his anger to them...

Ye Xiao had been busy till the next morning. He stretched himself and took a deep breath. He looked at the 108 needles and the 12 knives in front of him. Each piece of weaponry was dark and shiny...

The result after the night of hard work was not only remarkable, but also surprising. It took Ye Xiao a lot of effort to develop each needle. At the beginning, every time after he finish one needle, he needed to wait and recover a bit of his qi to continue with the next one.

To melt and temper the Deep Sea Frigid Metal, a continuous flow of energy was required. If he stopped during the development of one needle, it would cause the energy to flow in reverse. The knives were much bigger than needles in scale, so he thought that he couldn't handle them. He was afraid that this one night would not be enough to sharpen them.

Yet after finishing the needles, he became more proficient. He could do the same amount of work by consuming lesser amount of energy. With the enormous amount of qi from the Spaces being sent to him, he had even developed a knife. So he didn't stop and worked on the knives one after another. Finally, he finished all the needles and knives.

The tips of the needles and knives were completed.

Under the light, they were all shining with a cold glow.

They looked like they were made from an inferno to slaughter and seek blood.

They were filled with the aura of extreme danger.

“The Divine Weapons with Demonic Edges finally show up, but that is not finished yet...” Ye Xiao rubbed his jaw and murmured, leaving the sweat dripping down his cheeks, “They still need to be disguised anyway... They are so dark, that if I use them at day time, it would leave traces for sure. That is eye-catching. Really...”

“To make them truly invisible, I am going to need some Colorless Gold... But I don’t have that. Even if I do, I won’t be able to develop them into that stage with my present capability.”

He sighed, “I guess they can stay how they are for now.”

He took off the band that was used to bind his hair and it hang down loosely. There was a mirror in front of him.

He looked into the mirror. He had red lips, white teeth, jade-like pretty face, prominent nose, double-fold eyelids, long eyebrows...

[I am so freaking handsome with the look right now. With my long hair hanging down, I can be the number 1 handsome guy in the world.] Ye Xiao thought. And then he bound his hair into a new hairstyle.

It was a coiled knot on the head that was a little bit askew.

Actually, men were all required to bind their hair decently. They wouldn’t be allowed to show up with hair disheveled. Yet Ye Xiao had tied his hair in a skewed coiled knot and a few strands of hair were hanging down to his neck on his left.

That made him look more like a foppish black sheep than he he was before. It was a look filled with unruliness and evilness.

“It is much better now.” Ye Xiao looked into the mirror and spoke gladly, “That is unique. I shall keep my hair this way... How convenient.”

The Xiao Monarch was not only talking about how the way he bound his hair was convenient.

He picked up the needles and put them into his hair knot from different directions one after one. The needles were dark and his hair was dark too. Not a single piece of the needles could be seen through his hair.

Hidden inside his hair, they were difficult to find. Even the gods wouldn’t notice them. The needles were flawlessly camouflaged.

Ye Xiao bent down, stepped aside, got on the floor, lowered his head, turned his head... He made more than a hundred gestures. For some of them, he used his hands, while most of them were simply moves of the head.

The threads of hair on his head kept fluttering up and down, left and right... There was always some of the threads of hair covering the knot...

“That’s acceptable. With that, I can be sure in anytime anywhere, no matter what I do, nobody will notice when I throw the needles out.” He nodded with satisfaction, “But there are not enough spaces for all the needles... There can only be 12 needles. Rooms must be kept for the knives somehow...”

After that, he cautiously put one needle on the skin of the inside of his left wrist tightly, and then he covered it with something which looked like his skin. Suddenly it looked exactly like his skin, fully covering the needle. Most importantly, there was no embossment of the needle.

That skin-like strange material was something Ye Xiao bought recently when he was hanging around the market. It was normally used to make the skin masks.

The skin masks that were made from this material made people feel uncomfortable wearing them, and they were easy to be exposed. However, on the wrist, this material worked perfectly well. Nobody would notice it.

And then he did the same thing with his right wrist.

And then the left ankle, right ankle, both sides of the waist, each of these place held a needle.

That made it 18 needles hidden on his body.

He then took out 12 of the remaining 90 needles and put them into a small needle bag. He threw the other 78 needles into the Space of Gold.

The needle bag was mostly used as a distraction. The others hidden on his body were for the emergency use if he got into any unexpected situation.

The real killing ones were the 78 needles inside the Spaces. He could hold the needles in hand by only operating his mind. That was the most convenient way to make a strike...

The two of the 12 knives were hidden in his hair while the rests were all kept in the Spaces.

Finally he finished dealing with all these weapons. He started to move, to do actions, until he made sure the needles and knives were completely well covered no matter how he moved. He opened the door to his room and rushed to the watchtower.

Because in fifteen minutes, it would be the time when the purple qi in the whole world would rise. It was the best moment for cultivating the East-Rising Purple Qi and Ye Xiao would never let it fleet away.

Song Jue was just walking toward Ye Xiao. Ye Xiao was preparing to greet him, but he only saw Song Jue walked away from him with his head lowered murmuring, "What else do I still need to do?"

He looked like he was lost in thoughts and walked away...

Ye Xiao nearly bursted into laughing.

The steward, his uncle was now rather hilarious to him. When he was only a steward, he criticized everything about Ye Xiao. Now he was an uncle, yet he ran away when he came across Ye Xiao...

Ye Xiao heard a guard speaking, "Oh, chief. Was that our young master in front of you? Yet you didn't even say hello?"

Song Jue spoke hurriedly, "Oh really? Really? Really... Why didn't I notice? Never mind. I can see him every day. I am busy. You guys are busy..." Then his voice went far away.

Finally, Ye Xiao couldn't help bursting into laughter. [My Uncle Steward is truly adorable.]

If Song Jue could hear Ye Xiao at the moment, he would be embarrassed. Of course he could do nothing about it, but he would definitely vent his anger on the poor blood guard, as the guards were all easy targets to bully.

It was the afternoon. Ye Xiao was going to attend the dinner arranged set by the crown prince.

He didn't consider too much about the meeting. He decided to accept the situation.

The crown prince huh?

In the Xiao Monarch's heart, honestly... that meant nothing. He was just a fart.

As he had said earlier, if the crown prince dared to do anything to him, he would slaughter both him and his wife.

He had nothing to be concerned about.

Why did he need to worry about something like a fart?

The sky quickly turned dark. Ye Xiao rode on his horse, his clothes fluttering, his hair dancing in the wind; He looked dashing. He rode to the Crown Prince's Palace.

On the way to the Crown Prince's, he paused to buy a bag of fruits before continuing his journey.

Lan Lang-Lang happened to show up during his ride and came towards him, "Xiao Xiao, where are you heading?"

Ye Xiao laughed, "The crown prince invited me to dinner. I am going to get a couple of drinks. Are you coming? Did he invite you?"

Lan Lang-Lang was sad, "No, he didn't. Why did he invite you but not me..."

Ye Xiao left.

After travelling a long distance, a guy on a horse came over, "Xiao Xiao, where are you going?"

The guy talked loudly. It was Zuo Wu-Ji.

"The crown prince invites me to dinner. I am going to get some drinks." Ye Xiao shouted.

"Ah?" Zuo Wu-Ji suddenly felt admiring, "The crown prince invites you to dinner? What for?"

There were a lot of people on the street. They all looked to Ye Xiao with admiring eyes, [The crown prince invites him to dinner? No shit!]

Ye Xiao laughed and spoke enrapturing, "You are asking a silly question. The crown prince invited me. Surely he wants to talk with me about some national affairs. Now it is an eventful time for the kingdom. That is obvious."

Zuo Wu-Ji started singing praises, "That so. I am in admiration. Brother Ye is indeed the mainstay of our kingdom."

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Chapter 82: Small Gift to Represent My Respect

Ye Xiao was delighted and asked with a smile, "By the way, did the Crown Prince invite you?"

Zuo Wu-Ji rolled his eyes at Ye Xiao, but his face showed jealousy, "No, he didn't."

Ye Xiao laughed loudly, "He didn't? He didn't invite Lang-Lang too. It seems that the Crown Prince only invited me. Hahahahaha. The Crown Prince sure has sincerity..."

Zuo Wu-Ji's face turned green, "Yes. Yes. He values you a lot..."

"Ahahahahahah..." Ye Xiao stroked his horse and left in a flash.

So, all along his way, everyone came to know that... the son of the great General Ye, Ye Xiao, was invited to dinner by the Crown Prince to discuss some troublesome national affairs.

"Why would the Crown Prince invite that foppish lord for dinner? He is one of the 'three lords in town'. What kind of national affair could the Crown Prince discuss with him..."

"Huh. You don't know shit! He is a foppish fool indeed, but his father, General Ye is not..."

"That's true..."

"The Crown Prince invited Ye Xiao for dinner. Would he be doing this for anything else? You know, although Ye Xiao is a foppish fool, he really has a pretty face..."

"Well that... Heh heh heh... Better not gossip..."

"Oh. It just came out from my heart. We shouldn't gossip indeed. Hahahaha..."

"Er huh. Er huh."

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It was in the Crown Prince's Palace.

The Crown Princess was in a white mourning dress. She was sitting on the chair and her eyes were cold. It made her look pretty and delicate.

"Is Ye Xiao coming soon?" In her eyes, there existed an aura of hostility.

[My brother just died.

He might have perished at the hands of Ye Xiao; maybe not...

But it was because of Ye Xiao after all.

My uncle brought people of my clan to take revenge, yet eight of the men died in the house of Ye.

And then all our men in the capital died outside the city wall. All dead...

With such intense and deep-seated hatred, how could I just let it go!]

"Very soon." The Crown Prince frowned and said, "The truth will be revealed tonight... Take it easy."

"I don't care about the truth. He must die!" The Crown Princess wore an expression of madness, she was desperate for blood. Her pretty face was already a little bit twisted. Her hatred for Ye Xiao had seeped deep into her bones.

"Is it really necessary?!" The Crown Prince was displeased and countered, "We don't know what exactly had happened. It might not be Ye Xiao's fault. Even if he wanted to do those things, he doesn't have that capability."

"I don't care. Even if he didn't do it, I want him dead!" The Crown Princess gritted her teeth.

The Crown Prince held his forehead and frowned. He was annoyed, "You are unbelievable!"

"Would my brother die if not because of him? How would dozens of men from our clan come here if not because of him? If they didn't come, they wouldn't have been killed! If not because of him, how could the four guards of mine die?" The Crown Princess shouted, not at all willing to listen to reason.

The Crown Prince sighed and murmured, "You have gone mad..." He turned around and left.

When he was about to go through the door, a guard reported, "Your highness, Ye Xiao is heading to the Crown Prince's Palace. He is proudly telling everyone on the way that the Crown Prince has invited him for dinner to discuss national affairs... So far, people in every place he has passed has become aware of it now. They all believe that Ye Xiao is coming here to have dinner and discuss national affairs..."

"..."

The Crown Prince heard him and staggered. His face turned green and he cursed in a low voice, "Bastard!"

Behind him, the Crown Princess was opening her mouth. She was also astonished...

[This Ye Xiao is truly surprising, isn't he?

Nothing happened yet, and he had told the world everything.

Now in the whole capital, whoever has ears knows about this news!

I invited you for dinner?!

Yes, fine. Even though I have invited you for dinner, when the hell did I say anything about national affairs? You foppish prick! What national affair could I possibly discuss with you? Are you underestimating my IQ, or are you just a moron?]

The Crown Prince was upset.

"This Ye Xiao is really detestable! Does he think that after he spreads such rumors, we will not do anything to hurt him? Who the hell does he think he is?!" The Crown Princess's face was full of hatred. The killing intent in her voice was undisguised.

"We cannot do anything to him indeed. He is the only son of Ye Nan-Tian. That's enough to be a reason..." The Crown Prince rubbed his head because of a headache.

“So that’s the first reason we cannot do anything to him. The second one is... I am afraid there is a very wise man supporting him. We have to make another plan if we are to go against him!”

The Crown Prince smiled bitterly, “The force of the foppish fool is something we cannot underestimate... He just told something to people and it is causing us trouble...”

Speaking of that, he was suddenly enlightened. A thought entered his mind, [Maybe, Ye Xiao is not really a stupid foppish young lord; in fact he is very smart!]

“The situation is quite clear. People who already know of our attitude towards him certainly know about the purpose of my invitation. Yet for those who barely know the truth, they would certainly hold a question in mind. ‘To cozy up to the son of a great general, what does the Crown Prince intend to do?’ My two younger brothers must be paying attention to us now.”

He smiled, “This Lord Ye made such a move. It is awesome really. On the surface he is showing off that he is invited by me. In fact he was thinking deeper than that. He is getting us into trouble. It can keep him safe. At the same time he can rather enjoy the dinner this time... That is not some ordinary strategy.”

The Crown Princess frowned and spoke lightly, “Enjoy? I will see what a smart guy this Ye Xiao is! I want to see how he can enjoy at our place!”

She spoke with gritted teeth.

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After a while, someone reported.

“Your highness. Ye Xiao is at the gate.”

The Crown Prince was in high spirits and said, “Open the gate. Show Lord Ye in. I will be greeting him in the middle hall.”

The Crown Princess humphed, “I am going too.”

Both of them prepared to greet Ye Xiao. It seemed they were showing great respect to him.

However, they were surely not intending to show respect...

They stood at the entrance to the middle hall and they saw a guy wearing in white coming over from the gate.

Following the guard, he was swinging along. He looked like he was trying to show an attitude of ‘I am calm’, ‘I am handsome’, ‘I am indifferent’. Yet within, he couldn’t help feeling proud.

The Crown Prince and Crown Princess heard the guy’s voice coming over, “I really never thought that the Crown Prince would invite me for dinner. Hahahaha... That is in fact very reasonable. I am standing high in the city right now... I have read much for all my years. I know clearly about tactics and battles. I know all about all about the ancient philosophers. I have always been hiding my talent. That’s all... Hahaha. I thought I lacked scope for my abilities and I should just waste my talent for this life. Yet the

Crown Prince really has a pair of sharp eyes. He can see the best out of the ordinary. He can just find the best man no matter where he is. The real gold will shine anyway. Hahahahaha..."

His voice sounded humble at the beginning. Yet he failed to keep it that way. He had sprouted a pair of wings at the end. One didn't need to look at him; only by hearing what he had said, one could easily imagine what he looked like at the moment.

If he didn't have the two balls between his legs, he would have flown up to the air already...

The Crown Prince's face immediately turned blue.

[You? Read much? Know about tactics and battles?

Hiding your talent?

You are... the best?

Real gold will shine among the shit...

I am the Crown Prince so I am not allowed to curse. But I am about to lose control now!]

The Crown Princess's face was twisting ever so slowly.

[Such a stupid man could really kill my brother?! Or... my brother could die because of him?

That really is an injustice...]

While Ye Xiao came closer, they finally saw the face of the Lord Ye.

He had a hair knot on his head. It seemed he had tried to bind it well, yet it was a bit skew somehow... A little bit skewed though; not a lot...

It looked weird anyway.

He didn't bind up all his hair. He left some threads hanging to his left shoulder. The hair came down along his left cheek, dangling, giving off an aura of wickedness.

The weird hair type had already made the Crown Prince and the Crown Princess feel odd.

The weird hair type was truly... unique in the world!

And then they looked at his face... Hmm. He was handsome, with long eyebrows, big and vigorous eyes, sharp nose, pretty face, small and pink lips on his mouth...

He was dressed in white, which made him look elegant. Hmm. If he was not walking in obvious splayfoot way and swinging his body, he could be much better looking...

"Lord Ye." The Crown Prince raised his hand to show his greeting.

"Ahahaha... The Crown Prince. Your highness. I have heard many praises about you. It is my fortune to finally meet you today." Ye Xiao greeted seriously with a face full of smiles, "It is said that in dangerous situation, it shows the true hearts of men, while in an unstable period, it reveals the loyalty of men. You can invite me for dinner at this troublesome period. There must be something important you want to

discuss with me? Don't worry. I will tell everything I know and give you my true opinions... I will try my best to exclude the difficulty and anxiety, your highness."

He looked rather sincere with a humble voice. He looked like he was in a state of 'a man will die for his bosom friend and I owe you for being understanding and treating me well' kind of attitude.

He raised his hand and showed the bag of fruit to them, "Your highness. There is a small gift for you for this first honored meeting. It is a bag of fruits. The saying is quite good, that when dropping in, one needs a gift for the meeting... Heh heh. I have tried the fruit. They are quite fresh and delicious. Please accept my gift..."

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Chapter 83: To be Shameless to an Incredible Extent!

People in the Crown Prince's Palace became stunned when they saw the cucumbers, grapes and apples in Ye Xiao's hand.

[That...

Do you think you are visiting some normal citizen? You actually brought all these things that are only worth 3 wen as a gift to the great Crown Prince's Palace?

And you actually asked our great Crown Prince... to accept it?

Accept your ass!]

The Crown Prince felt his face become stiff. He wanted to smile, but he couldn't. He forcibly curled his mouth into a painful smile and said, "Please come in, Lord Ye."

"Your highness, you are being conventional by saying that." Ye Xiao laughed brightly. On the other hand, he wasn't being conventional at all. He casually put the fruit basket into a guard's arms and said, "You go. Put them away for the Crown Prince. These are real fine stuff..."

The guard was stunned and stood there doing nothing. He looked at the fruit in his arms and didn't know whether he should take them or not.

Ye Xiao had already turned around to talk to the Crown Prince. He laughed and spoke, "I am here already. Of course I will get in... Hahaha. I wonder what kind of fine liquor you have prepared, your highness..."

With that, he entered the door without hesitation and said, "It is well said that all lands belong to the king and all men should bow to the king... The royal family are the richest people in the world. They have a lot of good liquor, good food, precious animals. I heard that the Crown Prince had invited me to dinner, so I stopped eating since the noon of yesterday... I wanted to save room for today's feast. The gods have truly granted my wish. Hahahaha... I am going to eat till my stomach bursts!"

He paced forward slowly and noticed the presence of the Crown Princess when he got close. He was surprised. He took a deep breath and stared at her pretty face. He praised, "This must be our Crown Princess... Heh heh. Greetings. Our Crown Prince is truly a lucky man. I have heard that the Crown

Princess has been the No. 1 beauty in the capital for a long time. Now as I see her with my own eyes, I have to admit, it is true. She is even more beautiful than described... What a beauty. Heh heh... heh heh heh... You must enjoy your life with such a beautiful wife, your highness..."

While speaking, he looked up and down on the Crown Princess's face with a randy look. It was like he had lost 150 grams in the weight of bones when seeing such a beauty...

After looking at the face, he looked at her boobs. After that, he looked down a bit, inspecting her all the way to her feet, and then looked again from her feet to her face...

He acted like he was choosing a whore in a brothel... Yet he didn't say 'take off your clothes and let me take a close look'. If he had said so, it would have been perfect!

Of course, he had been a virgin for such a long time, so he wasn't able to say that... It was not easy for him to pretend to be a randy guy.

The Crown Princess frowned and finally couldn't bear it. She spoke with disdain, "Lord Ye, please behave yourself."

The Crown Prince was truly unhappy at the moment.

[Why is this guy so sick?

Don't you know who a Crown Princess is? Do you really think you can treat her like that?!!]

Ye Xiao was indifferent. He laughed loudly and spoke to the Crown Princess, "You invited me here. We should be like a family. Your highness, hey hey... You are so pretty..." He looked at her neck and thought, [Her neck is so thin. I can just break it with two fingers, can't I? ...]

The guards standing aside were all pissed when they heard him. Their faces started showing anger and they started releasing an intimidating aura.

[Bastard! Three of our men died because of him and one is missing. Now he has come to the Crown Prince's Palace, yet he actually said those dirty words to our Crown Princess? He is too overweening and unscrupulous!

He is truly bodacious.]

"Lord Ye." A middle-aged man with three long threads of sideburns looked at Ye Xiao sullenly, "This is the Crown Prince's Palace. Please show some respect."

Ye Xiao was still indifferent. He turned his head casually and laughed, "That's fine. That's ok. Please get in, guys. Make yourselves at home." He was telling people to get in, yet he walked into the middle hall before them.

The guards outside the door, the Crown Prince, the Crown Princess and their trusted subordinates were all speechless and felt sullen.

They were all well-informed people and they had seen shameless men, but they had never seen someone who could be so shameless so openly...

This was shamelessness of an incredible level!

It is true that there is always a better man while there is always a higher sky; there is always a man who is more capable and there is always a man who is more shameless!

“A man knows nothing about the height of the sky and the thickness of the land. A shameless and ignorant person.” The middle-aged man shook his head. He felt annoyed that he had to stay with Ye Xiao.

People sighed and nodded. They all felt that it was quite a decrement of their personal value to be ordered to interact such a foppish fool. They wondered what the Crown Prince was thinking...

[Let all the best of us be with Ye Xiao is simply letting the white snow come in contact with a piece of shit...

That is so disappointing!]

Only the oldest man among them reacted differently. He frowned tightly and sighed gently. He was collecting thoughts, [I am afraid this Lord Ye is not ignorant. Nor shameless...

He is extremely confident so that he doesn't see any of us in his eyes. He is unbridled and unruly!]

He was the only one who had such thought. And he didn't think that it was a good time to state it.

So he kept it in his mind, [I should act carefully. I need to observe more... What makes him so arrogant?"]

And then he entered the hall after everyone else.

When everyone was seated, Ye Xiao decided to stir up some trouble.

Ye Xiao looked at the seat that was arranged for him and then stood up. He spoke to a man who sat on one of the host's seats and said, “Could you introduce yourself please?”

“This is the first brain truster of the Crown Prince, the world-shocking Master Guan Zheng-Wen.” A middle-aged man was introduced with a sullen face.

“Er... Pleasure to meet you... And I hope you don't mind please, but who are you?” Ye Xiao changed his target.

“I am Meng Zi-Xiao, just a soldier. I don't think you have heard about me.” Meng Zi-Xiao spoke blandly.

Meng Zi-Xiao was a well-known gifted youth in the Kingdom of Chen. The man had done well in the recruiting tests of the court. He had passed five of the six tests before failing the last one, in which he hadn't pleased the king. So he missed the first place and only got the second. He was rather talented, yet he was grumpy. He always sought revenge even for the smallest grievance. The king didn't like him and so, he wasn't selected to work in the court. However, the Crown Prince had recruited him. He really was a capable man.

As for the words ‘I don't think you have heard about me’, he was being humble in order to be recognized and praised. Deep in his heart he was thinking, [You must have heard of me.]

Yet he had never thought that Ye Xiao would nod and said, “No I haven't... Calling yourself ‘just a soldier’ truly shows your good self-awareness. Heh heh...”

“You! ...” Meng Zi-Xiao suddenly felt his throat plug up. His eyes were wide opened with fury.

[I am just being modest... I didn't expect such a rude reply, did I?]

“Do you mind if I ask you...” Ye Xiao already ignored Meng Zi-Xiao, who was so angry that his face turned purple. He was asking another man already.

With the same way, he had asked all the people at the table. Finally he said, “That is strange... Today the Prince invites me for dinner. And basically I am the only guest here. You all serve here. How come you all sit up there? While I am sitting down here? Is that how the Crown Prince treats his guests? That's really enigmatical!”

He shook head continuously. He looked very displeased by the way the Crown Prince did things. He gave the impression that he was thinking along the lines of ‘he is not a wise man and he doesn't deserve my service...’.

When he said that, all the people sitting there wanted to beat him to death immediately!

[Treat you politely? Are you kidding?]

Enigmatical?

How so?!]

In fact, he had his point. [You are all in the same group and I am the only guest here. I am invited. It is inappropriate to let me sit down here, isn't it?]

Ye Xiao's ‘reasonable’ points had obviously aroused the anger of the people. The Crown Prince's men were all furious and the Crown Prince himself was pissed.

As a Crown Prince, it was a normal to invite capable men for dinner. That was actually quite common. He had invited so many people, yet he never arranged the seats in respect to the relations of host and guests.

The men here were serving the Crown Prince. That was true. In fact, every one of them was a well-known man in some places. They were all extraordinary people. Even the great officers in the court had been seated the same way. It had become an unwritten rule. [You ignorant fool! He is actually choosy about it!]

However, they couldn't speak out their minds. Ye Xiao's argument seemed to be right. Whoever wanted to reason with him would only disgrace himself!

Facing Ye Xiao's speaking, people were all furious, yet no one dared to open the mouth. The situation turned into a waiting game.

People didn't talk, yet it didn't mean Ye Xiao stopped would stop talking too.

“That is really short of sincerity. Truly.” Ye Xiao shook his head and sighed, “I am a guest of the Crown Prince anyway. I am a remarkable talent. I know all about battles and strategies. I know a lot about geography. I have capabilities to bring peace to the kingdom... Yet I didn't even get a decent treatment? What does that mean!”

People were furiously glaring at him. They were pretty upset.

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Chapter 84: Interrogation

Those guys in the hall were all well educated people. They were talkative. They could speak for several hours without a stop. Yet they had lost their voices when it came to speaking against Ye Xiao.

The situation was really hard to handle. It had turned into an awkward and embarrassing situation.

After being quiet for a while, the old man Guan Zheng-Wen stood up and smiled. He spoke with a deep voice, "I was sitting there to have a word with the Crown Prince. Now that I am finished, I should naturally move aside... Lord Ye, this seat is saved for you. We were all seated early and there was no other empty seat. I am too old to stand for a long time, so I sat on your seat. You wouldn't mind, would you? Hahahaha..."

An older ginger was spicier [1]. He had quickly managed to turn the situation around.

Ye Xiao laughed and didn't go on dragging the issue. He just sat on the seat provided without any hesitation.

He now sat less than three meters from the Crown Prince.

He was surely not making trouble without any purpose. He was simply setting himself up to execute the backup plan smoothly, [If you pricks dare to mess with me, I will kill you both instantly without hesitation!]

In the present situation, he wouldn't care much about who he was dealing with.

That seat was the perfect location for him to take action, so it was naturally something he had to seize! He was sure that to attack from this location, even if all the supreme cultivators were to act, they would have no chance to save the Crown Prince!

The other guys didn't know that inside the foppish young lord's mind was a shocking and regicidal idea.

As the situation had been set up as such, these guys could only curse him in their minds and silently take their seats again.

After three rounds of drinks and five courses of meals, the crown prince coughed to draw attention.

Everyone stopped their chopsticks. They knew that the main topic of the night was about to be addressed. They were all quiet as they prepared to listen to the Crown Prince, hoping to see a good show.

However, the Lord Ye was still devouring his food like a beast. He grabbed the food on the table and ate as he wished. His cheeks were plumped. His chopsticks were moving like they were flying on the table. Where ever they arrived, the food would be reduced a lot. It was truly like the locusts destroying the fields.

He was now like a hungry ghost who had been starving for thousands of years and suddenly had a chance to eat, so he ate like a beast.

After the crown prince coughed, it turned silent in the hall, except the strident sound of Ye Xiao chewing...

The guys were all staring at him with undisguised anger in their eyes.

Ye Xiao noticed it and acted like he was enlightened. He stopped chewing and spoke inarticulately, "You... Er. Are you finished? Oh I see... Then I am not going to restrain myself then..."

After saying that, he just stood up to get the dish of meat furthest from him and spoke with satisfaction, "This dish is truly tasty, yet it is too far to reach. I was afraid that I wouldn't have a chance to eat it. Thanks for abdicating..."

The sound of chewing became more strident and annoying...

[Is it correct to use the word 'abdicating' like that?]

The guys felt that they were receiving an 'ear-opening' lesson!

The Crown Prince was embarrassed. He finally spoke, "Lord Ye, I need to speak."

Ye Xiao was stunned, but he still put a piece of meat into his mouth. Then he put down his chopsticks slowly and sat with a serious look. He said, "Since the crown prince wants to speak, guys you should stop eating. You all lack discipline and are disgracing our crown prince, especially in front of a guest, me..."

While speaking, he stretched his neck and swallowed.

The guys wished they could take the plates and throw them at Ye Xiao's face fiercely!

[Who the hell is eating?!

You are the only one who kept on eating, are you not?

Now you actually talked like that to misrepresent the truth!

The food in the General's House should be fine, right? How come they are letting you become such a starving beast?]

The Crown Prince frowned slightly and was lost in thought. He naturally showed an angry look.

The guys were all silent. They felt stressed as if a huge storm was crushing them. What they were fearing was the spirit of a man in a higher position. They couldn't help praising him in their minds, [He indeed is a Crown Prince. Full of the vigor of a ruler.]

Ye Xiao was bored and rolled his eyes. He looked at the fried chicken in front of him. There was a chicken wing and a leg. [I love these kinds of food... The other wing and leg are in my stomach. Well you couldn't fly with only one wing, so I guess I need to eat them both...

Well one foot doesn't allow you to walk, so I should eat the other foot too...]

As for the 'vigor of a king', it meant nothing but fart to Ye Xiao!

He had met so many powerful people in his previous life. Some of them could make everything freeze just by frowning and make mountains fall by humphing.

Their so called 'vigor of a king', compared to those people... was less than a fart!

Ye Xiao hadn't seen those people in a respectful way, so how could he possibly show respect to such an insignificant this-so-called 'vigor of a king'?

The Crown Prince's face was dark and he said, "You all know that things didn't go well in the Crown Prince's Palace. It has been unquiet recently... Many things that shouldn't have happened, happened recently..."

When speaking of that, he sighed and stopped talking.

Meng Zi-Xiao, who sat next to him went along with him and said, "That's true. The position of the Crown Prince was stable at the beginning. However, after all these recent troubles... our powerful support has been disturbed. And it has resulted in many troubles for us. I have no idea what the guilty person is planning..."

When he started to speak, Guan Zheng-Wen was about to say something, but he stopped and just stared at Meng Zi-Xiao, caught off-guard.

It should've been Guan Zheng-Wen's turn to speak and lead the guys to force Ye Xiao into an embarrassing situation by slowly trapping him step by step. But why did Meng Zi-Xiao skip his turn and talk in advance?

As he had started to talk, Guan Zheng-Wen would naturally stop. So he sat down with doubts.

The Crown Prince was also surprised and he frowned.

Another guy sneered, "The guy who has caused all of these events must be overjoyed."

Meng Zi-Xiao spoke blandly, "All these things, since they have all happened, they are nothing but facts. There is always a reason for a phenomenon. There is always a cause and effect. There must be a source of all these... Lord Ye, what's your thought?"

The guys were all talking at the beginning, so they didn't focus on Ye Xiao's face.

After Meng Zi-Xiao spoke his words, the sharp eyes of these guys moved to his face.

Ye Xiao was unaware of their stares. He just nodded and said, "That's right. The force of the Crown Prince's Palace has been damaged lately. There must be a plot against us! Your highness, do you know who is messing with you? As long as you give me his name, I won't care about who he is, I will only go grab him and beat him up to death, so as to comfort you! You have treated me with utmost cordiality tonight. Accept my service as a return gift from me!"

The guys were all stunned. They had lost their words.

Some of them had been rather emotional and angry at the beginning, but they now held their emotions.

[What?

After we talked a lot, you are actually telling us you don't know who that is?

What kind of shitty brain does this guy have?!]

The Crown Prince frowned, but didn't speak.

"Lord Ye, a wise man doesn't need to play foolish." Meng Zi-Xiao looked at Ye Xiao blandly, "That is not interesting. An upright man should never do any dirty deeds. With what you have done, you are disgracing the great General Ye."

"Disgrace?!" A flash of coldness appeared in Ye Xiao's half-closed eyes, "What do you mean?"

"General Ye has been a great hero for his whole life. People know that. However, you have to be aware that... a general is just a general after all. A general doesn't have the power to make a final decision in the Kingdom of Chen."

What he meant was that the king was the most powerful person!

Meng Zi-Xiao's eyes were sharp and his mouth contained a sinister sneer.

What he had said was really offending, but reasonable.

He obviously had put everything on the table to make Ye Xiao unable to escape the topic!

The other guys couldn't help frowning.

[We should talk about the Crown Prince, not the power of the king. You spoke those words to offend Ye Xiao and General Ye at the same time. It was rather reckless. Meng Zi-Xiao has been a calm and smart man in the past. How come he is acting like that today?]

Meng Zi-Xiao was pushing Ye Xiao at the moment because there was bitterness hidden in his heart..

Meng Zi-Xiao had passed five of the six tests in the past. In the last test, his argument was so evil that the king didn't like it. So he didn't win the first place and failed to be a legend, 'The Champion of Six'.

Although he was talented, he had a narrow mind and a cold heart. He didn't accept failure peacefully. After the final test, he spoke offensive words against the king. He indicated that the king was poorly-educated and as blind as a bat to let a stupid person succeed. It should have been a private talk among him and his friends, but it was reported to the king. The king was naturally furious.

The king would not like to see him, so he made an announcement to expel Meng Zi-Xiao and forbade him from taking the tests again.

Meng Zi-Xiao had no opportunity to work in the court, so he planned to join the army. He wanted to succeed in the military area and then enter the court.

At that time, the northern army was famous in its achievements. So it was his first choice.

When he went to Ye Nan-Tian to ask for a position, Ye Nan-Tian coldly rejected him, "You are just a dirty man with a mouth full of schemes who cannot achieve success in either the court or the army. You actually want to join my northern iron army. If I take you in, I would be allowing a pest among my brothers..."

And then he never spoke to Meng Zi-Xiao again and expelled him.

These two events had always been two of the biggest disgraces in Meng Zi-Xiao's heart! Long after that, he was finally introduced to the Crown Prince to be his aide.

He should have been a talented man with an unprecedentedly bright future, yet now, he had become an aide. The difference between these two situations were huge.

He surely didn't dare to speak anything bad about the king, so he decided to relieve his anger on Ye Nan-Tian.

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Chapter 85: The Unruly Smiling Lord [1]

Meng Zi-Xiao thought that his life and his career as an official had been difficult because Ye Nan-Tian had been placing obstacles in his way to make him suffer.

As of this moment, he thought that it was a good chance to take his revenge because it was the Crown Prince's Palace and Ye Xiao was here alone and helpless. That's why he took Guan Zheng-Wen's turn to speak in haste. And naturally, he brought up the past in his heart and seized the chance.

And he had led the conversation to an irrevocable situation.

He seized the chance to deal with Ye Xiao in order to suppress Ye Nan-Tian and let the crown prince have an extremely negative judgement on the house of Ye. Therefore, once the crown prince became king, he would get all the people of the Ye Clan killed... That would be the same as God realizing his wish...

Being challenged like that, Ye Xiao wouldn't be able to bear it. However, if he ran wild, he would be offending the crown prince. If he offended the crown prince, he would be disregarding the royal power. That meant that he would be committing treason!

If so, it would be easy to put any criminal label on him!

However, he was wrong about one thing. Ye Xiao wasn't disposing the royal power; in fact... he never saw the crown prince in his eyes! Besides, Meng Zi-Xiao didn't know how important Ye Nan-Tian was for the king.

Ye Xiao naturally didn't know anything about the story, but he clearly felt that Meng Zi-Xiao had hostility against him since he had arrived. Now that he was messed in such a way, it would be an extremely strange thing if he could still bear it.

Ye Xiao laughed and said, "Meng Zi-Xiao, the nobody, right? It was not your role to say if I am playing a fool or not, and not your place to make any judgement about whether or not I am planning something! You don't have the right to say anything about the royal power. And it is absolutely not your right to judge the great general! Who do you think you are? Believe it or not. If you dare to say any words against my family again, I will throw your dead body to the streets of the capital. Hmm. Maybe not tomorrow. Maybe I am going to do it now!"

“I don’t know whether the great general is good or not, but I am sure about one thing. A man like you is worth less than a dog or a bird for the great general. ‘A man worse than a beast’ [2] is a description that perfectly fits you!”

Ye Xiao smiled and stared at Meng Zi-Xiao peacefully. He spoke blandly, “If someone wants to question me, he should better send a qualified man to do it. Such a nobody, a garbage! How dare you question me? That is just ridiculous! A huge joke! A little garbage who never know how to respect seniority rules. No wonder the king decided never to recruit that somebody!”

“That is truly ‘dog meat can never get on the table’ [3]!” Ye Xiao sneered, “No. It is insulting to dogs to call you a dog! You wouldn’t think that if you are willing to be someone’s dog, your master will surely give you bones, would you?”

“And you threatened me... Even the crown prince didn’t do so. You wouldn’t think that you are better than him, would you? As the crown prince wants to talk to me, he has invited me for dinner... And you are nothing but a little garbage... What the hell! Just shut your mouth already and wave your tails!”

He shouted and all the people kept quiet. The whole hall was in silence!

Nobody would have thought that this Smiling Lord, who was one of the ‘three foppish lords’ actually shouted during the feast that was hosted by the crown prince. He was like a gangster, shooting without any restriction!

He was shouting at the crown prince’s man in front of the crown prince!

Meng Zi-Xiao’s face turned purple as he stared at Ye Xiao fiercely. At this moment, the anger and disgrace in his heart nearly made him want to kill himself!

Ye Xiao’s words, on top of being threatening, was also exposing his intent. And he added unmerciful sneering by saying that he was a dog that wasn’t liked by his master, he was treated even worse than a dog...

Meng Zi-Xiao was furious inside and he nearly couldn’t hold his anger. If he could, he would rip Ye Xiao into pieces so as to calm his anger. However, he only dared to think about it; he absolutely had no guts to do so.

First of all, he was the son of a great general that he couldn’t mess with. Secondly, it was the crown prince’s home and the crown prince was holding a feast. Even though he felt extremely angry, he wouldn’t dare to take any actions before the crown prince gives the order. Thirdly, Ye Xiao wasn’t joking when he threatened him.

It wouldn’t be a difficult thing for the house of Ye to make Meng Zi-Xiao disappear. Even if somebody would find out, nobody would mess with the house of Ye for a dead man!

Meng Zi-Xiao was not the brother-in-law to the crown prince after all.

He was extremely furious, but he could do nothing about it. He could only stare at Ye Xiao fiercely while he spoke, “I will keep your words in mind. There will be a chance in the future for you and for me to meet again. Let’s wait and see then.”

“Look at him...” Ye Xiao pointed him with a finger and laughed loudly, “What a pussy. He was shouted like that, yet what he would do was nothing but remembering... What do you remember? Don’t wait for the future. Meng Zi-Xiao, let me give you an advice today! I believe you will be thankful for what I will teach you today!”

Meng Zi-Xiao spoke fiercely, “I wonder what good advice you would have for me. I ask for it sincerely. I am listening and will never forget it my whole life.”

Ye Xiao casually picked up a chicken leg in front of him and threw it onto Meng Zi-Xiao’s face. It immediately made his face turned oily. Ye Xiao spoke, “The advice is... since you chose to be a dog, you must act like a dog! When you are told to eat, you eat; when you are told not to, you can only watch even if the food was thrown to your face.”

He sneered and spoke blandly, “When you are told to bark, you bark twice; if you bark wrong, you will be ripped out and your skin will be my dish that goes with liquor! Understand? Now get the fxxk off!”

Meng Zi-Xiao was trembling. His face was pale, then it turned red, and then it became pale once again. Obviously, he was feeling extremely terrible.

However, nobody would pity him at the moment.

Because he asked for it.

He thought that the son of Ye Nan-Tian was only a foppish fool so he wanted to humiliate him as a revenge. Yet he would have never thought that surprisingly, such a foppish fool had the capability to deal with him. And it was harsh!

He who wanted to humiliate people got himself humiliated!

It was completely silent!

When they were preparing to question Ye Xiao, he burst in front of everyone in advance.

And it was so violent, so unmerciful, so barbaric!

The chicken leg dropped on the floor from Meng Zi-Xiao’s face. - Pah! - Ye Xiao seemed to feel pity and sighed, “What a good chicken leg. Such a waste throwing it to a dog. Fine. It was cheap anyway...”

Meng Zi-Xiao shouted and rushed out covering his face.

Silence took over the hall once again.

The crown prince kept his face cold all the time before he finally opened his mouth, “Lord Ye Xiao, how sharp your words are; how fierce your methods are. However, what you did happened to be underestimating me, wasn’t it?”

Ye Xiao laughed and said, “You are being sensitive, your highness. I was just helping you for giving your dog a lesson. It was a small favor. No need to mention it. You are very welcome, your highness.”

The crown prince spoke blandly, “Meng Zi-Xiao is not a dog. He is my counselor! He is like my brother!”

When he said that, many of his men felt warm in their hearts.

[He truly is a crown prince. He is so elegant and generous.

With these words, he actually said, we won't be regretting doing anything for him.]

Ye Xiao laughed, "Not a dog? A brother? Oh I see! No offense. How was I supposed to know that such a garbage prick was actually your brother? Hmm... It was 'like a brother'... Well that's close enough! However... Your highness, when I shouted on him, why didn't you stop me? If you stopped me earlier, I would have considered your feelings. Even though I could never see that guy in my eyes, I would have shown him mercy! Hmm. You didn't say anything at all. Can I see it this way? You actually agree with me that he talked in a wrong way. And it pissed you, so you didn't stop me. Right?"

The crown prince seemed angry and was speechless.

"... Moreover, when he ran out, why didn't you let him stay?" Ye Xiao said blandly, "Brother... Is that how you treat your brother?"

Guan Zheng-Wen spoke seriously, "Lord Ye!" His voice was harsh!

"Wait if you want to talk. I haven't finished yet." Ye Xiao spoke blandly, "The crown prince mentioned 'brother', and it made me want to laugh... The two guys who are fighting against you for the throne, are they not your brothers? The biological ones!"

"You fight against each other among your true brothers... Now that you told me Meng Zi-Xiao was your brother! Hey hey... How is this kind of brother compared to your biological brothers? I really have no idea about it!"

Ye Xiao sneered.

He had prepared to fall out with the crown prince, so naturally, he wouldn't care about talking wildly!

What he said had totally destroyed the atmosphere. He talked even more boldly than Meng Zi-Xiao!

It stunned everyone!

[This Ye Xiao is really unscrupulous!]

The crown prince's face was really gloomy.

Was the relation between them completely broken?!

Guan Zheng-Wen trembled.

What Ye Xiao had just said completely ripped off the fictitious mask of the crown prince. Without any reservation!

The guys became silent for a while and then burst with accusations, "What a bastard. How dare you talk like that!"

"The crown prince is kind and just. How could he possibly be like that!"

"You are slandering the crown prince!"

"How dare you, Ye Xiao! You are committing treason!"

Facing the accusations from everyone, Ye Xiao didn't say anything for retort. Guan Zheng-Wen was quiet too. The crown prince was also quiet, looking at Ye Xiao.

Guan Zheng-Wen's eyes were scanning, understanding, and then finally confirming.

The crown prince's eyes were cautious, careful, and... a bit utterly discomfited.

Ye Xiao's eyes were like a deep pool in the autumn, which was silent and extremely profound.

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Chapter 86: The Truth Is Meaningless

"Lord Ye, I have underestimated you." The Crown Prince sighed.

Unexpectedly, after Ye Xiao's speech, the Crown Prince didn't get angry. His first reaction was actually to sigh.

"Maybe because there has never been anyone who has thought highly of me. It was reasonable that you would never think highly of me." Ye Xiao spoke calmly.

"It was my fault after all." The Crown Prince was a bit upset when he spoke.

Yes, he was regretting.

Now he could finally confirm that Ye Xiao... was never the foppish fool described in the rumors.

He had been right. Ye Xiao wasn't stupid at all, instead, he was too smart!

While his actions seemed to be a gangster's willful behavior, in fact, every move was made to approach his goal.

Every move and every word was extremely sharp!

Such an able person who was the son of the second most influential character in the military area, from the General's House, was now standing opposite the Crown Prince.

Step by step, in the Crown Prince's Palace, he was finally turning hostile towards the Crown Prince himself!

There was no other choice but to collide against each other until the winner and loser were determined.

The Crown Prince just realized that since Ye Xiao had arrived, he had indicated his purpose by showing no respect to anyone and talking like a wild man. His attitude had shown that 'I am here to break it down to you'!

Earlier, it had been possible to turn the situation around. It had been more harmonious.

If the Crown Prince could have given up his original plan, he could have mitigated the situation.

Yet he hadn't realized it at all.

Step by step, his men obviously aimed at Ye Xiao, while at the same time, it made Ye Xiao point his sword at the Crown Prince.

At this moment, there was no chance to turn the situation around!

Guan Zheng-Wen sighed. He could understand the regret in the Crown Prince's heart!

There was an extreme sense of loss.

The Crown Prince had once told him a story of the time he had been drinking with his father, the King. the King was happy that day and said something meaningful, "Nan-Tian guarding the north can ensure me twenty years of peace!"

Who was Nan-Tian?

Ye Nan-Tian!

Who was Ye Nan-Tian? Ye Xiao's father!

When the King said that, Ye Nan-Tian had been guarding the north for eight years and it was at peace the whole time.

At that time, the Crown Prince didn't understand the true meaning behind his father's words.

Yet now he knew.

Before Ye Nan-Tian took the north, the north was constantly at conflict with its neighbour. It endured attacks from the Kingdom of Lan-Feng all the time and it had become rather difficult to defend the border. The whole kingdom was in an extremely fragile situation because of the northern affair...

Most of the kingdom's finance resources were used for the war in the north. They were in a terrible situation!

When Ye Nan-Tian took charge of the north, he showed up like a huge mountain that no one could climb over.

From then on, there had been no more suspense to the result of the war in the north!

Those years, the northern affair which had suppressed the King had turned into something he was most proud of!

Ye Nan-Tian could make that happen, but what about Ye Xiao?

The only son of Ye Nan-Tian!

Ye Nan-Tian was knightly, fair and straightforward with formal title and formal flag in his life. Even though he was a typical peerless hero, he could have been framed because of carelessness.

Yet, to them, Ye Xiao seemed invulnerable!

Invulnerable. It was a word which only existed in some compliments or lines of a novel, yet the Crown Prince had related it with Ye Xiao!

Ye Xiao didn't have a heroic complex like his father.

He could act shamelessly, cheekily, wretchedly or dirty. He could be tough, and he could...

All in all, he could use anything to create positive situations for himself!

That was the Crown Prince's new assessment of Ye Xiao right now.

Ye Xiao was an extremely dangerous man!

The Crown Prince even had the feeling, [Father said that 'Nan-Tian guarding the north can ensure me twenty years peace'. If I can recruit Ye Xiao, maybe... there will be no trouble in my future!

What a pity. We have already turned against each other.

The most piteous and annoying thing is that...

I realized the true value of Ye Xiao way after we started fighting against each other!

Becoming an enemy of someone like him is never a wise thing to do. Yet such a stupid thing is exactly what I have just done!]

He looked at Ye Xiao. His heart was completely shaken. Finally, he sighed.

Guan Zheng-Wen also sighed.

He was filled with regret.

[Why couldn't I think about it earlier?

If he really was just a foppish fool, how come he was so vigorous, walking with wild strides in the Crown Prince's Palace?

The son of Ye Nan-Tian. The only son of Ye Nan-Tian. How is it possible for him to be a foppish black sheep!]

"Ye Xiao, I hope that you can give me an explanation." The Crown Prince waved his hand and the others left the table.

A few maids stepped forward and cleaned the table before leaving quickly.

Right now, only Guan Zheng-Wen remained standing besides the Crown Prince.

Ye Xiao frowned, "Explanation? I wonder what sort of explanation you want me to give you."

The Crown Prince laughed. It was a peaceful laughter and he said, "I need to know whether you are involved in the death of Mu Cheng-Bai or not."

His face showed that he was tired and a bit cheesed. He said softly, "In fact... You know, even if you are really a foppish lord, I may not be willing to give up on you... You are of great value... But sometimes, a man has to do something he should, even though he doesn't wish to."

Guan Zheng-Wen showed a bitter smile on his face.

"Especially... When there is a woman interfering... The reason that my woman is interfering is something related to her personal interests, so it becomes something I have to deal with..."

The Crown Prince sighed, "At the moment, if I don't take good care of this thing of hers, I will fail in attempting to do many things in the future... Especially when the woman is the one who sleeps with me all the time and has a powerful background that you couldn't afford to mess with."

Ye Xiao said commiseratively, "I understand what you are saying. I truly do."

"So I want to know the truth." The Crown Prince raised his head and looked at Ye Xiao, "I need an explanation."

Ye Xiao laughed and said sharply, "Truth? Does the truth really matter? When did you ever need any truth. You didn't know the truth earlier, yet you still took action. Even if you found out a proof of me having no relation with it, could you possibly let me free?"

The Crown Prince stayed silent for a while.

"So, the truth. It is nothing but trash that you guys can casually step on!" Ye Xiao sneered, "Your highness. If I tell you that I killed that guy, would you believe me? It's the same if I tell you that I didn't. Would you believe me?"

"All in all, whether I killed him or not, you won't let me go. Am I right?" Ye Xiao sneered, "So. I don't understand what you are thinking. But I know one thing... I know what you want to do!"

"Oh? I wonder what is it that you assume we want to do?" The Crown Prince's eyes were turning sharper.

"You want a rightful, noble, flawless reason to get me killed, so that you can use the reason to lie to my father! A noble man can be cheated by rightful lies. In your minds, my father must be a noble man like that!"

Ye Xiao went straight to the point, "I am still alive, because... you hadn't found that reason yet."

The Crown Prince smiled bitterly.

"As I am standing in the Crown Prince's Palace... I know that you have found the reason now." Ye Xiao's face was distant.

"Yes. You are right. I found it. We got the reason to keep the general out of it." The Crown Prince nodded.

"Hahaha..." Ye Xiao sneered, "I have one question though. Why do you need a reason?"

The Crown Prince frowned, "What do you mean?"

"You took action against me before, many times!! Did you have a reason then? Any proof? No?" Ye Xiao spoke tauntingly, "Yet you still came after me... Yet you need a reason to finally execute me. Isn't it ironic?"

"It's fine. You don't need the reason. If my father want to avenge me when I died, he will never be stopped by a bloody reason." Ye Xiao sneered and looked straight into the Crown Prince's eyes, "I believe in one thing truly... If my father wants to avenge me... I'm afraid that you, the Crown Prince, will never succeed in stopping him."

As a son of a feudal-time general, he had shown an extremely rebellious and regicidal attitude towards the Crown Prince.

Yet he continued speaking, "You know! What I mean to say is that the reason doesn't really matter, don't you think?"

The Crown Prince frowned and coldness flashed in his eyes.

Of course he knew it.

Ye Nan-Tian came to this kingdom to save his son. After that, taking charge as a general was also for the sake of his son, Ye Xiao!

At that time, the King had sworn brotherhood to two men. Two princes with different family names. Others might not know about that, but the Crown Prince knew it for sure.

Ye Nan-Tian had slaughtered thousands of millions of men to get the medicine from Su Ding-Guo in order to save his son's life.

If his son died this day...

Ye Nan-Tian would never be restrained by anything. To kill a Crown Prince, it was not about whether he dared or not, it was only about whether he was willing to!

It was very possible for him to get what he wanted!

As long as he really wanted to!

"So, what you are doing is actually useless and meaningless." Ye Xiao stared right into his eyes and spoke, "Your highness, only the thing you did at the beginning was smart."

The Crown Prince frowned, "The thing I did at the beginning? You mean... Letting the Mu Clan to mess with you?"

Ye Xiao didn't say anything but only smiled, yet his eyes were showing a colder expression.

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Chapter 87: I Don't Want To Fight

Although Ye Xiao remained expressionless, he was still sneering inside.

When he talked about the thing that the Crown Prince had done at the beginning... he was actually talking about the dead 'Ye Xiao' getting poisoned.

However, the Crown Prince seemed to be playing innocent or he had truly misunderstood Ye Xiao's words...

Anyway, Ye Xiao wasn't prepared to let it go.

Only when he had avenged the dead 'Ye Xiao', could he finally satisfy the obsession in his mind.

It wasn't just something which involved the dead 'Ye Xiao', but also something which he himself would have to take care of.

"Meaningless?" The Crown Prince murmured. He suddenly smiled and spoke blandly, "It shouldn't be meaningless. So... This time, I invited you to dinner because I wanted to discuss a solution with you to conclude this business between you and me."

Ye Xiao rolled his eyes and said, "You have invited me to dinner, which means that you must have planned to talk it through. However, there is no need for any discussion at all. I wonder what solution you have in mind now?"

"It is simple. A fight can settle everything once and for all." The Crown Prince rubbed the sides of his head and showed an expression of helplessness, "Basically, I don't want to use this vulgar way to deal with this event. But you know, sometimes, the proper way isn't really enough to settle up some differences. A combat is not an elegant way, but it is the best way when it comes to the present situation."

Ye Xiao nodded and showed understanding, "That's true. The situation is obvious now. Unless you become king, considering my father's great exploits and power, there is no proper way for you to take care of me."

The Crown Prince's eyes were filled with coldness.

The great general and his son were equivalent to a fish bone stuck in his throat. It troubled him so much that he had to destroy it.

Ye Xiao said blandly, "In fact... in spite of what you think about the truth, at the beginning, if your brother-in-law hadn't come and messed with me, he wouldn't have died. He could have been spending his days luxuriously in the capital right now."

After that, he stopped talking.

The Crown Prince spoke blandly, "Lord Ye, there was another way in my mind. It should benefit both your side and mine. Yet we have now blocked all the routes towards that direction. There is only one way left to take."

He turned around, looked at Guan Zheng-Wen and said, "You have to fight against Old Master Guan. After the combat, no matter who wins, it will be the end of all troubles. In fact..."

The Crown Prince looked at Ye Xiao with sincerity and sighed, "Lord Ye, I don't want to mess with our General Ye... As long as I show my attitude to my woman, I believe... she and her men will not cause any more trouble. The dead are gone, they don't need to keep on making troubles, right?"

Ye Xiao frowned and his eyes had already locked onto Guan Zheng-Wen who was standing besides the Crown Prince.

Since the Crown Prince sent off everyone except Guan Zheng-Wen, he had started to pay attention to him. The old man seemed different. The possibility that he was a hidden superior cultivator was very high.

As long as he was here, the Crown Prince would feel safe and fear nothing.

According to Ye Xiao's research, this old man, Guan Zheng-Wen, was well-known in the Kingdom of Chen. On the surface, he was an elegant old man who reads a lot.

Such an old man might be good at talking. His words might be sharp like a knife or a sword, but he seemed useless in combat.

However, to fight against Ye Xiao, the Crown Prince had actually chosen this old man... The Crown Prince naturally wouldn't send his men to death, so this man must be a well-hidden superior cultivator, mustn't he?

Right now, things were not following Ye Xiao's predictions.

Suddenly, Ye Xiao felt the need to employ cautiousness.

Because he... he had failed to notice anything unusual till now.

With his great senses, he had actually failed to feel any sort of threat from this old man. There was only one explanation to that. The only possibility was that this old man's cultivation was way above Ye Xiao's.

And he must be at a higher level than the Grade of Diyuan.

He was at least at... the Grade of Tianyuan.

In other words, Ye Xiao was now facing a superior cultivator of the Grade of Tianyuan. Besides, a man who could stand so close to the Crown Prince all times, a man whom the Crown Prince trusted to such an extent, must have some sort of special abilities.

It was very likely that... this man was a superior cultivator at the Grandmaster Levels of Tianyuan.

A cultivator at the Grandmaster Levels of Tianyuan would be among the most powerful men in the Land of Han-Yang.

Ye Xiao couldn't help cursing in his mind.

[This is really coming across a ghost after a long way in the dark. How come such an old bastard suddenly showed up?]

Guan Zheng-Wen looked at Ye Xiao with a smile on his face, his expression tranquil. He spoke gently, "The Crown Prince is a generous man. He wants to settle our differences in a peaceful way by having a combat. I have to participate by having a fight against Lord Ye to lay the troubles to rest. Lord Ye, we should just go through the motions and finish the combat. You don't need to be cautious. I am old indeed, yet I could still fight for two rounds."

He coughed and continued, "I hope that Lord Ye wouldn't say anything about having no capability in martial arts and words like that... Heh heh. As I have no troubles with my sight, I think your cultivation has reached at least level 9 in the Grade of Renyuan, right? You are only one step away from getting into the Grade of Diyuan... Regarding your young age, you are really a young man with an outstanding ability. A tiger wouldn't truly have a dog son [1] ..."

Ye Xiao spoke blandly, "You are flattering me."

Ye Xiao had hidden his own cultivation capability intentionally. He had operated the Lunisolar Shadow to cover the martial aura of his cultivation. He didn't completely erase his martial aura, yet there were only a handful of people who were capable of discovering it. Guan Zheng-Wen had actually noticed it and found out that he had a good cultivation capability.

Although he didn't find out everything about Ye Xiao and thought that Ye Xiao was only at the ninth level of the Grade of Renyuan, he was still the man who had the best insight amongst everyone Ye Xiao had met in his present life.

The Crown Prince said that he just wanted to end their differences and didn't want to mess with General Ye. Ye Xiao didn't believe any of his words.

[If you really want to make it so easy, why did you invite me to come over for dinner?

If you stop making troubles for me, how could I mess with you?]

When Guan Zheng-Wen said, 'go through the motions', Ye Xiao was disdainful of it.

[If I believe that, I must be... really stupid if I get myself into the fire.

Go through the motions, huh?]

Ye Xiao was thinking, [Maybe it isn't completely a lie. They wouldn't dare to kill me in the Crown Prince's Palace after all. In fact, in order to settle everything, I have to get out of here alive and everything will reach a good end.

That means they will make up a false story that they had never laid their hands on me.

Yet they will absolutely not let me go so easily. All of these people are aiming at getting me killed.

But this is an unresolvable contradiction for them...

The key to solve the contradiction is the words 'go through the motions'.]

"Old Master Guan is right. It is the best situation that we all go through the motions and nobody gets hurt. Since the Crown Prince and Old Master Guan both wish for it, let me go along with your wishes." Ye Xiao played the role of an understanding person and said, "But you are an aged man. An old man who doesn't take pride in his ability to fight. How could I overwork you by fighting. Although my cultivation capability of martial arts is weak, by any chance, if you couldn't hold my attacks, how can I be sure that I won't get you hurt..."

After Ye Xiao spoke, the Crown Prince and Old Master Guan were both stunned.

[What?

What did he say?

He doesn't want to fight against an old man?

Because he doesn't want to accidentally kill an old man?

What? How could he be so shameless?]

Old Master Guan was truly well educated. After being shocked, he immediately said, "It doesn't matter. The Crown Prince has given his word. To end the troubles in this way, I think it will be fine for me to hang on for a few rounds. Let's just go through the motions... Go through the motions..."

Ye Xiao laughed, "No, no, no. We can't have a combat. You are venerable in age. You surely wouldn't mind losing the combat. But I still need to live in the society. If we really have such a combat and people learned of it, the smart ones may understand that it was decided by the noble Crown Prince, but the others will think that I am bullying an old man... Anyway, it is absolutely wrong to have such a combat."

The Crown Prince and Old Master Guan were astonished once again. [What? He could actually swear that black is white [2]. How shameless could he be.]

Old Master Guan spoke in a deep voice, "Lord Ye, it is you who said that it was decided by the Crown Prince. He has given his words. There is no way to change the decision. If I really couldn't bear the attacks of yours, so be it. I won't complain about it..."

Ye Xiao spoke with a smile, "Relax. I surely have an alternative for this. It will neither violate the Crown Prince's decision, nor make us fight in the combat ourselves. You are so aged; how could I possibly hit you. I am always respectful to the elderly..."

Guan Zheng-Wen was angry inside, yet he still had a smile on the surface. He said, "I wonder what solution you have that could kill two birds with one stone. I am willing to listen."

Ye Xiao cheerfully spoke, "It is more than killing two birds with one stone. It actually kills three with one stone. It could even be more birds. My solution will make you satisfied for sure. It is really the most perfect solution"

Guan Zheng-Wen was nearly freaked out because of his shamelessness. He once again spoke in a deep voice, "I am willing to listen."

Ye Xiao said, "My solution will satisfy you. You are well known in the kingdom. To fight in a combat will surely get you hurt. Let's finish the troubles through a verbal combat."

"A verbal combat?"

"A verbal combat goes as follows, I will say one move and explain how I will proceed the move to attack you, and then you will say your move, and explain how you will defend. Or you explain your attack and I will explain how I will defend. The result will come out after all..."

Guan Zheng-Wen and the Crown Prince were both furious.

They were still underestimating how shameless Ye Xiao could be...

[1] A tiger wouldn't have a dog son (虎父无犬子), means a son is as good as his father.

[2] Swear the black is white (黑的说成白的), means persist in saying something to deny the truth.

5th gu of the week.

Translated by: Rain

Edited by: Alpha, Arch

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Chapter 88: The Battle Art Of A Thousand Troops

Ye Xiao was serious, "Let's do it this way and the only thing we need to do is talk. Isn't it much safer than going through the motions?"

"It will never hurt our relations. An old man shouldn't count on his weak strength. I believe you have been feeling weak since long ago. Let's just solve this thing by talking. I don't think there will be anyone saying I am taking advantage of you. After the verbal combat, there will be no more enmity between us. Isn't it a perfect solution..."

Guan Zheng-Wen and the Crown Prince looked at this wretched guy and were left speechless.

[You actually believe that we only want to go through the motions?

Verbal combat?

How on earth did you come up with such an idea?

And after all, it actually turns out that we are the ones taking advantage of you!]

"Heh heh... You have a truly interesting mind. It is a practical way." Guan Zheng-Wen smiled and said, "However, a verbal combat instead of striking seems to be something only women would do... Besides, I have admired your father's martial arts for years. I have always been wanting to learn something real from his official heir..."

"Do we really have to fight?" Ye Xiao frowned.

"It would be better to..." Guan Zheng-Wen had a reluctant look on his face. He actually gave Ye Xiao a hint with his eyes and spoke in a lower voice, "Besides, it could also solve the enmity between you and the Mu Clan. The Crown Princess is already here to watch... No matter what, we need to make it happen for the Crown Prince's sake."

Ye Xiao glanced at the corner of the middle hall and found that the Crown Princess was standing nearby, staring at him.

In her eyes, there was nothing but killing intent.

[Why does this chick stare at me with such hatred in her eyes every time...] Ye Xiao thought, [A Crown Princess, huh. Can't she just show some generosity... I have done nothing but kill her brother. I didn't break into her ancestral graves or kill her whole family. No big deal...]

Thinking of that, he curled his lips.

"Since you insist, then I will have a fight against you." Ye Xiao nodded and smiled, "Take care. Don't wrench your arms or hurt your waist... Hmm. I mean, I am surely not a match to you, so you don't have to be too serious... Heh heh. Let's go through the motions."

It seemed Guan Zheng-Wen didn't understand Ye Xiao's 'warm suggestion' because he was pretty much focused on his own troubles. He only smiled peacefully and spoke gently, "Thank you for your kindness. We both know what we are doing."

The Crown Prince was calm.

The Crown Princess's eyes were filled with delight.

She thought she was finally going to have her revenge and felt excited.

"Please." Guan Zheng-Wen was still acting like an old man who could barely walk steadily. He reached out his hand elegantly and walked out of the middle hall with Ye Xiao.

In the yard, many people were waiting as they stood in a circle.

Obviously, the Crown Prince had arranged for many people to watch the fight as eyewitnesses.

Ye Xiao looked around and discovered many acquaintances.

"Why is Xiao Xiao suddenly participating in a fight?" A voice came over from the crowd, "Were you not invited to dinner by the Crown Prince? Are you not here to discuss some national affairs? How come it has turned into a fight? That... You are really capable at creating trouble, are you not?"

It was Zuo Wu-Ji who spoke.

Ye Xiao looked over and found Lan Lang-Lang and Zuo Wu-Ji standing together. They were both stretching their necks to look at Ye Xiao. Even in the crowd, Lan Lang-Lang's favored-plagued head remained conspicuous.

Lan Lang-Lang and Zuo Wu-Ji were actually part of the crowd too. They must have been invited by the Crown Prince. It was a reasonable thing to do.

If they were not here and Ye Xiao died during the combat, there would be no one who could testify that the Crown Prince was innocent. A stranger's words would be, after all, unbelievable.

In fact, the perfect witnesses were not these two foppish lords. The perfect choice would have been Prince Hua-Yang or Su Ye-Yue. But the Crown Prince would never dare to invite these two, because if any of them were here, a fight would never happen. They would definitely stop them from fighting. So the Crown Prince had no other choices other than inviting these two foppish lords to come.

Lan Lang-Lang and Zuo Wu-Ji were worried for Ye Xiao, so they came without hesitation.

When they saw Ye Xiao coming out, they knew it was true that he would be fighting. They were so worried, and they tried their best to give Ye Xiao some support with their eyes.

Ye Xiao nodded and waved his hand to tell them not to worry.

A group of guards from the Crown Prince's Palace came out and stood in a circle. They separated Ye Xiao and the crowd, creating a spacious fighting ring in the yard.

Ye Xiao couldn't help frowning. His instincts were screaming at him, warning him of danger.

It seemed like he had to abandon his title of a foppish lord from now on.

However, he really didn't want to abandon this charade. He was just having fun in being the foppish Lord Ye...

How could he give up on that title so casually?

But when he looked at his opponent, he couldn't help but laugh, "Hahahahaha..."

It turned out he was not the only one who felt displeased about being watched.

Guan Zheng-Wen was frowning deeply and he looked like he had eaten a piece of shit. He was obviously unhappy.

Apparently, he felt the same as Ye Xiao. He realized that his true capability would be exposed to the public.

And it was worse for him than for Ye Xiao.

He had kept a low profile in his whole life and always showed up as an elegant scholar in front of the public. Everyone knew that he was only good at literature and was pretty weak at fighting...

Yet, as of now, he was forced to expose his cultivation capability...

All the hard work he put in disguising himself was going to be wasted. Besides, if Ye Xiao died after the fight, it wouldn't matter if it took days or months, he would still have died fighting.

And Guan Zheng-Wen would be the guy who had caused his death.

Would Ye Nan-Tian be reasonable if that happened? Even though he would consider not messing with the Crown Prince, he would definitely vent his anger on Guan Zheng-Wen.

Then how could Guan Zheng-Wen defend against Ye Nan-Tian who had an army of experienced soldiers?

[The Crown Prince arranged everything... He is using me as a scapegoat, isn't he...]

Thinking of that, Guan Zheng-Wen felt more uncomfortable.

Yet he could have no regrets regarding the current situation.

With all that had happened already, it was too late for him to step back.

He had no choices left other than fighting.

The story about Ye Nan-Tian singlehandedly fighting an army in the battle was a state secret. It was not known to anyone except a select few. If Guan Zheng-Wen knew the truth, he would be extremely upset.

However, Ye Xiao's laughter had already made him feel worse. Guan Zheng-Wen sighed and said, "Oh. A hero is nothing but a product of his time..."

Ye Xiao realized that there was someone feeling worse than him. He had already achieved a sense of victory in his mind, so he felt delighted. He even spoke to himself with disdain, [What the hell. Since when did I become a man who takes pleasure in other's misfortune. I feel a little bit evil...]

Yet it was really hard for him to suppress his enjoyment after seeing someone having it worse than himself. So, although he was going to face a crisis, he looked happy.

Because Ye Xiao appeared to be delighted, the crowd thought that he was confident. They looked down upon Ye Xiao and thought, [A young man winning a battle against a weak old man. Where is the glory in that?

How shameless... You actually feel happy about it?]

Wang Da-Nian and Meng Zi-Xiao were there too. They knew the true cultivation capability of Guan Zheng-Wen, so they smiled evilly. They happily looked at Ye Xiao, hoping that he would be slaughtered as soon as possible.

Ye Xiao glanced at them. His eyes were full of disdain. He suddenly made a whistle.

It was as if he was calling his dogs.

The next moment, he pointed at Wang Da-Nian and Meng Zi-Xiao and bent the finger.

The meaning was obvious. [You two are just like two dogs.]

“You are a dead...” Their faces suddenly blushed and they were about to shout. They were obviously going to say something like ‘you are a dead meat already’, but before they could say it out, they noticed the Crown Prince’s eyes coldly looking at them, daring them to speak.

They trembled and stopped making any sound. Yet their eyes remained filled with hatred.

“Please, Lord Ye.” Guan Zheng-Wen looked upset, but it was too late for him to retreat now. After all, he had to do what he had to do.

“Please, Old Master Guan.” Ye Xiao stood opposite to him with a calm smile.

The ‘Old Master Guan’ that Ye Xiao used to call him now embarrassed Guan Zheng-Wen, [We are going to fight against each other now. Why do you keep calling me Old Master? Are you addicted to it?]

In front of everyone’s eyes, he casually stood there. Ye Xiao attacked first.

Ye Xiao suddenly rushed forward. He was moving fiercely with the sound of howling wind. His fists were like tigers, and his feet were like dragons. He rushed to Guan Zheng-Wen with a shocking vigor that could frighten ten thousand men.

He only made one move, yet killing intent had already spread throughout the surroundings.

“Dragon In The Battle! That is a move from the Battle Art Of A Thousand Troops.”

In the crowd, there were a few smart ones who shouted out in low voices.

It was popular move in the Kingdom of Chen. It was a fistic martial art that was usually used by the soldiers. It was bold and resolute, giving out a horrific aura. It killed decisively in an obvious way.

As the son of a general, it was just fitting that he would use this martial art. He and this fistic martial art, under the present situation, were a perfect pair.

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Chapter 89: Melting Bone Palm

The Battle Art Of A Thousand Troops was rather powerful when used against groups, but it was a bit inappropriate to use it in a one-on-one fight between cultivators. But Ye Xiao used it anyway.

He didn't hesitate at all. It seemed like he was very adept at using it. So everyone arrived at the same conclusion, [He is proficient at using the Battle Art Of A Thousand Troops, but he doesn't know any other martial arts.]

That was a reasonable assumption.

For a man from the general's family, it was reasonable that he would use such a fistic martial art!

"Good move! How vigorous!" Guan Zheng-Wen kept his hands on the back and turned his emaciated body around. His clothes floated and he casually dodged to a position right beside Ye Xiao. The move seemed slow, but it was actually fast and clear. His pale and thin finger reached out towards Ye Xiao slowly. It was like this finger had broken the limit of time and space. This finger pointed towards Ye Xiao's back.

The dodge and the finger move had already aroused exclamations from the crowd!

In the crowd, there were not only ordinary people like Lan Lang-Lang and Zuo Wu-Ji, but also some experienced and smart men. Although it was just the beginning of the fight between Ye Xiao and Guan Zheng-Wen, it had already become frantic.

It took only an instant to make everybody's eyes wide opened, and a moment later, all their eye-balls dropped and bounced on the floor [1]. They were all extremely astonished...

[What... The famous Old Master Guan actually knows how to fight? And... He seems to be an absolute master.]

This instant transposition was truly a fantastic move. He casually avoided the danger. Ordinary men would be able to use it. And that finger move looked ordinary, but it contained a massive amount of power.

The old man was really good at hiding his capability.

Ye Xiao noticed that finger was getting closer, yet he didn't turn around to defend against it. He suddenly jumped up and rolled his body, and then he made a turning kick. A blast of white whirlwind appeared and he had flew quite a distance forward. - Poof! -

It was another move in the Battle Art Of A Thousand Troops. It was 'Warding A Thousand Troops'!

Guan Zheng-Wen didn't hit Ye Xiao with that finger, yet he didn't change the move either. He leaned his body forward and rushed towards Ye Xiao, chasing him like a ghost. It was as if his slim body was sticking to Ye Xiao.

At that moment, everybody realized that although Lord Ye was able to fight, he would never be a match for the Old Master Guan! He seemed to only know the basic moves of the Battle Arts Of A Thousand Troops. Yet Guan Zheng-Wen had already digested all the martial arts he knew into his fists, palms and fingers. His moves were fluent and free forming...

However, they didn't realize that...

When Guan Zheng-Wen got close to Ye Xiao with an outrageous speed, his two fleshless hands had casually tapped Ye Xiao eighteen times continuously...

Every tap was silent.

Every tap was quick.

Yet, it was like he had never moved his hands.

Ye Xiao flew forward over three meters. And then he shouted and jumped over again in the air. With the sound of a wild wind, he instantly landed on the floor fiercely.

"Beast Leaping of the Battle Art Of A Thousand Troops! Well done!"

In the crowd, Wang Da-Nian applauded. Zuo Wu-Ji and Lan Lang-Lang looked at him, shocked. It was understandable for everyone to applaud, except for Wang Da-Nian!

Wang Da-Nian had enmity with Ye Xiao. He was the man on the Crown Prince's side. He had no reason to applaud Ye Xiao!

Yet it was real that Wang Da-Nian applauded!

That was irrational!

That was against human nature!

Guan Zheng-Wen waved his hands. Ye Xiao was suddenly stopped mid-stride, abruptly halting his rush to Guan Zheng-Wen before slipping and crashing against the floor. The next moment, Guan Zheng-Wen was shaking his head smilingly with his hands on his back, "I am old. I truly am. My ability is not equal to my ambition now. I am useless... Lord Ye, you are young and strong. You are vigorous. Why don't we just let the combat end as it is now?"

Everyone knew that Ye Xiao had lost this fight. Guan Zheng-Wen had shown a decent demeanor.

His casualness had perfectly shown his status as a senior. And he seemed to show mercy to Ye Xiao...

Nobody saw Lord Ye get hurt, right?

Ye Xiao stood up and spoke angrily, "End? What the hell are you talking about! I haven't lost yet! Let's fight again..."

People in the crowd shook their heads. [A foppish lord never changes. He truly has no decency. The old man has shown you mercy. You have already crashed twice... Yet you still don't know how lame you are and you still want a tough fight?

How shameless...]

“You are right. You haven’t lost. Let’s call it even. I am truly too old for this. Let’s say you are concerned and respectful for an old man.” Guan Zheng-Wen laughed.

Ye Xiao humphed and said, “Since you said so, I will show my kindness to an old man. Let’s call it even then! You are really taking advantage of me then...”

With this declaration, the crowd bursted into catcall.

Ye Xiao dusted his clothes and suddenly spoke, “Old Master Guan, it really was not a good fight today. If there is a chance in the future, I will fight against you once again. I hope you can be in your best condition then. Heh heh!”

Ye Xiao laughed and said to the Crown Prince, “Your highness, I have enjoyed a good dinner. Now that the problem has been solved, I think it is time for me to get going.”

The Crown Prince didn’t expect that Ye Xiao would be so understanding. He had been thinking of a way to get him leave, yet Ye Xiao asked to leave himself. So he smiled and replied, “Take care, Lord Ye. We shall get together sometime to discuss the national affairs.”

Ye Xiao laughed, “Sure. When I have the chance, I will come back to enjoy good times with you once again... and your beautiful wife.”

The Crown Prince’s face twitched a bit. [You never forget to molest my wife...] Yet he still smiled and said, “You are always welcome.”

The Crown Princess was a bit angry before her eyes resumed sneering, [Come back again? You are going to die... And you actually tried to take advantage of me... Fine. I shall not be too critical of a man who is about to die.]

Ye Xiao laughed and waved his hand. And then he squeezed out of the crowd with Zuo Wu-Ji and Lan Lang-Lang and left. After he left the crowd, a weird smile appeared on his face, but nobody had noticed it...

...

Guan Zheng-Wen coughed and then walked to the front hall. He was trembling.

The crowd were led by the guards to leave one by one.

The Crown Prince watched Ye Xiao leaving until his silhouette vanished. And then he smiled to everybody and got back to the front hall.

In the front hall, three people remained.

They were the Crown Prince, the Crown Princess and Guan Zheng-Wen.

“Master Guan, how is it?” The Crown Princess couldn’t wait and asked.

The Crown Prince also showed an inquiring expression.

“Your highness... Oh.” Guan Zheng-Wen didn’t answer the question. He sighed, “You have entrapped me so deep...”

The Crown Prince smiled, "Everything is perfect. It is flawless. You don't need to worry. If someday you truly fall into trouble because of what happened today, I will protect you."

Guan Zheng-Wen paused for a while and then sighed. He looked at the expecting eyes of the Crown Princess and spoke in a deep voice, "The Melting Bone Palm... I have managed to drop eighteen solid hits on Ye Xiao... He will be fine for the next few days. But.. after a month, his bones will slowly crumble and he will die when all his bones become broken."

Speaking of that, the wrinkles on his face seemed to become much deeper.

"There won't be any doubts about it, right?" The Crown Princess asked apprehensively.

"This martial art has been my secret for many years... In those years, because it was too vicious, so... I decided to keep it a secret..." Guan Zheng-Wen sighed and said, "Even I myself have no idea how to cure it. So, Ye Xiao is bound to die this time."

The Crown Princess puckered her face into a smile, "You have worked hard, Master Guan."

Guan Zheng-Wen nodded and replied, "My pleasure, your highness."

After that, he frowned and sighed deeply. In his eyes, there was a worry that became bigger and bigger...

He had surely finished the task of the Crown Prince, yet the enmity between him and Ye Nan-Tian had been clearly established.

It was fine if Ye Nan-Tian didn't find out the truth. Otherwise, when Ye Nan-Tian came for him, he was afraid that his whole family would have no chance of... survival!

Now he could only hope that Ye Nan-Tian wouldn't find out...

The promise from the Crown Prince, the old man knew that he really shouldn't count on it!

"Your highness, I have one question about Ye Nan-Tian... What is his history?" He asked the Crown Prince in a low voice. The history about Ye Nan-Tian had been a secret in the Kingdom of Chen.

Ye Nan-Tian had been a mysterious man since he showed up in the kingdom. And then he was suddenly famous and became the second most powerful man in the military. All the political and martial groups were interested in him, yet none of them got to know anything about his past.

As the Crown Prince of the kingdom, he must know something, right?

The Crown Prince responded with a 'hmm' and then stayed silent for a while. And then he said, "I am not very well informed about it. It is said that Ye Nan-Tian was a hunter in the mountains... He coincidentally came across something strange and ate some precious treasure, so he obtained a marvelous strength..."

He was merely talking shit.

He knew nothing about Ye Nan-Tian. In fact, even the king didn't know much about Ye Nan-Tian. The Crown Prince only said that to comfort Guan Zheng-Wen.

Guan Zheng-Wen felt relieved and said, "That's good. That's great."

[He is only a hunter who coincidentally obtained some marvelous strength...

That has nothing to fear then.

If something happens to me, I could simply just kill him secretly. A living Ye Nan-Tian is the general of the Kingdom of Chen, the second powerful man in the military, but a dead Ye Nan-Tian is only a dead man!

With the capability of the Grandmaster Levels of Tian-Yuan, it won't be hard to kill a general, right?]

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Chapter 90: The Furious Song Jue

Ye Xiao left the Crown Prince's Palace with Lan Lang-Lang and Zuo Wu-Ji while talking and laughing. He got home and acted like nothing had ever happened.

Before they parted with each other, Ye Xiao took out a dan bead and gave it to Lan Lang-Lang, "Lang-Lang, take this dan bead. Melt it in warm water and divid the water into three portions. Every morning during sunrise, transfer one portion into a washbowl and use it to wash your head. After three days, your favus will be completely cured."

"Really?!" Lan Lang-Lang opened his crossed eyes with a face filled with astonishment.

"This is about your personal image which will last your whole life. Do you think I would joke about it?" Ye Xiao frowned.

"Hey, hey, hey... Damn! I am thankful even if it doesn't work... The favus truly hurts my handsome appearance. You are right. It is a big thing in my life..." Lan Lang-Lang snatched the dan bead in a hurried motion, "I'll leave you two to talk further. I need to go home now... Hey, hey. I can't wait to wash my head tomorrow... Hahaha. I will no longer need to bear the favus... just three days..."

He scampered and left.

Zuo Wu-Ji was disdainful, "Even without the favus, he still has an obnoxious look, yet he actually finds himself to be handsome... Eww..." He waved his hand and spoke, "If we have nothing more to talk about, I should go home too. I was thinking about having a drink with you but Lan Lang-Lang's antics disgust me... Eww... I need to throw up..."

And then he too left.

Ye Xiao watch both of them leave and then his smile vanished. The extreme coldness deep in his eyes was finally let loose. His hands were in his sleeves and they were balled into tight fists.

[The Crown Prince laid his murderous hands on me after all!

How vicious!

What a scheme!]

Ye Xiao operated the East-rising Purple Qi in the darkness. Accompanied with the cool air of the night, he returned to the General's House.

The steward was concerned as he looked at him. He spoke in a deep voice, "How was it? Did anything happen?"

Ye Xiao hesitated for a while and said, "Nothing. Let's go inside."

The steward followed Ye Xiao to his room with an anxious look, "How was it? What do you mean nothing?"

Ye Xiao grinned, "Nothing special. The Crown Prince let his man attack me with 18 strikes of the Melting Bone Palm. That's all."

"What? Melting Bone Palm? 18 times?!"

The steward was astonished.

The next moment, a mass of blue mist suddenly surged out from his body. It spread in all directions as if it was about to explode. - Boom! - The walls shook when this sinistre aura completely occupied Ye Xiao's room, resulting in multiple cracks!

The mist destroyed the wall and it didn't even stop there. It kept on spreading.

It was like an exploding bomb!

The next moment, the steward turned around and rushed out. His face was twitching. He shouted in fury, "MAR-THAR-FXX-KARRRRR! I will wipe out the Crown Prince's Palace tonight!"

"Wait, wait, wait..." Ye Xiao was shocked by the drastic reaction of the steward and hurriedly grabbed him, "Uncle Song... Calm down..."

"CALM DOWN? CALM DOWN MY ASS!" Song Jue kept shouting while stomping on the floor, "I have had enough in this fxxking Kingdom of Chen! FUXK THE HEAVEN, FUXK THE HELL! If it wasn't for the stupid promise made by Brother Ye, how could we possibly stay in this shitty place! FXXK! Now my brother has promised to guard their kingdom for twenty years, yet his only son has actually been struck 18 times of Melting Bone Palm! Fxxk Chen Xuan-Tian and everybody who shares his bloodline..."

Chen Xuan-Tian was the name of the king of the Kingdom of Chen...

Ye Xiao spoke in a hushed tone, "Uncle Song, lower your voice please... Calm down... Don't be emotional..."

"DON'T BE EMOTIONAL?!" Song Jue stomped his feet and his hair stood on its end, his eyes were bloodshot, "I agreed to be a steward in this house, because I was trying to keep your little shitty ass safe. Now you are standing before me after being hit by 18 strikes of Melting Bone Palm! I, I, I... I am even worse than a stupid tortoise! I, I, I... I am going to slaughter every single man in that bastard's house. I am going to hang everyone in his clan! Otherwise, people will think that I am a weak douchebag!"

Ye Xiao twitched his mouth.

[He is way, way, way too emotional!]

Hang everyone in one's clan... That certainly sounds like something a king would declare using a royal decree... Now he actually wants to hang everyone in the king's clan... That really is something incredible...]

"Uncle Song, chill out please. Listen to me. Would you listen to me first?!" Ye Xiao forcefully dragged Song Jue and made him sit within the dilapidated room.

In fact, it was far worse than a dilapidated room; it was completely in ruins.

Due to all this commotion, the blood guards had heard them and all of them rushed over. One meek voice was heard from outside the door, "Is everything ok, Chief? Is something happening to the young master?"

Before Song Jue could answer, Ye Xiao hurriedly spoke, "No. It's fine. I am all right. Go to bed, all of you. I need to have a private conversation with uncle Song. Heh heh heh heh..."

The walls of his room had fallen, yet he said that everything was fine...

The blood guards were hesitant and unwilling to leave.

Ye Xiao dragged Song Jue and walked out the door to pacify them in person, and then they went to Song Jue's room.

They had just left Ye Xiao's room and then, - BOOM -, the whole room collapsed upon itself...

The blast nearly knocked down Ye Xiao. He hastened his steps.

Song Jue looked back and his face was still expressionless.

It suddenly reminded Ye Xiao of a doggerel and he nearly started to laugh out loud.

He then murmured, "The first time Uncle Song looks back, his ugly face breaks down a building in his sight; the second time Uncle Song looks back, his ugly face cracks the mountain and makes the river reverse its flow; the third time Uncle Song looks back, his ugly face brings forth darkness that causes even ghosts to feel petrified; the fourth time..."(宋大爷一回头·吓倒身后一座楼；宋大爷二回头·山崩地裂水倒流；宋大爷三回头·日月无光鬼神愁；宋大爷四回头.....)

Song Jue said angrily, "Stop. Three times is enough. Those are good lines. When I return to... Hmm. I will use it as my chant... Hmm... Wait, no! It is not a good time for that. I have to send a message to your father right now and tell him to come back quickly. Only when he comes back, will there be a chance to cure the wounds inflicted by the Melting Bone Palm. I hope there is still time. There must be!"

Ye Xiao twitched his mouth a little bit. He had found Uncle Song to be cute; now he confirmed that he was indeed very cute.

He realized that his father's capability was really strong. A man who could cure the wound caused by Melting Bone Palm must have a cultivation capability that was at least better than Guan Zheng-Wen.

When they entered Song Jue's room, Ye Xiao told him the truth at once, "Listen, Uncle Song. My father doesn't need to know. The Melting Bone Palm doesn't work on me. Not at all!"

Song Jue frowned and spoke in a worried tone, "Xiao-Er, it is not something to be joking about. Do you even know what Melting Bone Palm is? It is an extreme nasty martial art... It uses the complete yin power to hurt people. Who ever has been hit by it, unless he knows that he has been hit, he has no way of realizing that he is affected. By the time he gets to know of it, 70 percent of his bones must have already melted away. By then, there is no way for him to get cured. If you don't get the wound cured as soon as possible, I am afraid something really bad is going to happen to you... What people always say about people becoming a heap of minced meat... That is a saying created by the Melting Bone Palm."

"I know. I really do." Ye Xiao spoke calmly, "Uncle Song, to be honest, today, at the Crown Prince's Palace, I thought about killing him or just refuse negotiating with him and running away. They wouldn't dare to hurt me forcibly... But I gave up both thoughts."

"Our strength in the capital is limited. We can't be reckless, really." Ye Xiao paced slowly to the window, "So, even if I can't bear it any more and want to make some trouble, I will need to do it discretely. Since we are facing the royal power, even if we are very proud of our clan, we won't have a good chance to win."

"There are so many men in our house. They could have died because of my reckless actions!" Ye Xiao smiled blandly, "I can't risk all of your lives just for venting my anger."

"So I could only think of something else."

Song Jue was expressionless and silent. His lips were trembling. Obviously, he was still extremely emotional, but he was trying his hardest to calm down.

"So, when I found out about their plan, I knew that they were really on to me this time, but they were fearful. So they tried to use something 'imperceptible' to take my life. There were only a few ways to do so." Ye Xiao raised six of his fingers, "They are Melting Bone Palm, Soft Cloud Fist, Yin Wind Martial Art, Qiong-Hua Ice Mist, Shade Finger Point and... Fatality Martial Art."

"In the whole world, there are only these martial arts that can take my life and remain unnoticeable, soundlessly and slow..." Ye Xiao smiled.

Song Jue was astonished and didn't find any words to say.

Because only four of those six martial arts were known to him.

Song Jue believed that in the Land of Han-Yang, even in the world above it, there were only a handful of people that knew more than he did!

Yet Ye Xiao was actually very familiar with them and just listed these six martial arts loud and clear.

"Hmm. Qiong-Hua Ice Mist and Fatality Martial Art, what are they?" Song Jue frowned, "You have been staying in the house all the time. Even if you did save an old man and he taught you something, he couldn't have taught you more than just a few moves. How do you know so much about martial arts? You actually know some secret martial arts that even I don't know!"

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