

## Full-Level 791

### Chapter 791: Birthday Banquet

Ye Yikun's birthday was fast approaching. Representing the Huangfu family were Huangfu Ruiling and Ye Leng'an.

Several elders in the family were quite surprised by Huangfu Ruiling's decision. They hadn't expected the family head to choose to attend Ye Yikun's birthday celebration.

Typically, the family head avoided such occasions. Normally, the duty fell to the Grand Elder or other elders. Besides, the relationship between the Huangfu and Ye families wasn't exactly amicable. It was unexpected for the family head to rush back with his future wife, Miss Ye, just to attend.

Despite the many questions, Huangfu Ruiling's authority silenced any objections.

With their invitations in hand, Huangfu Ruiling and Ye Leng'an arrived at the Ye residence.

Seeing them, the butler immediately left his post at the door and hurried inside.

Though the butler was unsure of Ye Leng'an's relationship with the Ye family, Huangfu Ruiling's status was undeniable. His presence debunked rumors of discord between the two families. Naturally, the butler should inform the old master and the current family head immediately to prevent any potential mishaps. Otherwise, he would truly bear the blame if anything were to go wrong.

Meanwhile, Ye Yikun was in the main hall. Despite being over five hundred years old, he still appeared remarkably energetic. This was likely attributed to his profound cultivation level.

He was dressed in a dark red robe, exuding vitality and a dignified demeanor, yet there was still a hint of a gentle smile on his face. This softened his overall appearance, making him seem less stern.

The main hall buzzed with activity as guests gathered. Yet, the focus remained on Ye Yikun's sons and grandchildren, especially Murong Xingrui, who, despite being unrelated, stood by Ye Wanwan like a devoted guardian.

This garnered envy towards Ye Wanwan from many present.

Murong Xingrui was not just a member of the Murong family's direct line; he was also the favored heir of the current Murong family. This meant that in the future, Murong Xingrui would be the head of the Murong family, and thus, Ye Wanwan would become the matriarch of the Murong family.

Many women present couldn't help but envy and begrudge Ye Wanwan. Although this was the Hidden World where strength reigned supreme, as a woman, the best path forward was to marry a good husband.

Murong Xingrui not only had a bright future ahead of him, but he was also boldly by Ye Wanwan's side now, showing just how much he valued her.

With such an outstanding future son-in-law, it was no wonder Ye Hongxuan and Lian Mengzhu were beaming with joy!

Despite the calm in the main hall, the butler's arrival disrupted the peace.

Ye Yikun's frown didn't escape notice as the butler rushed over with important news.

"Master Huangfu and his fiancée are here, waiting outside," the butler reported.

The imminent arrival demanded immediate attention, despite any inconvenience it caused.

"Leng'an is here," said Lian Mengzhu, pleasantly surprised. "Where is she? I'll go meet her."

Previously, she and her husband had personally gone to find Ye Leng'an. Unfortunately, the latter didn't budge at all. Because of this, she was still very saddened.

Unexpectedly, there was a silver lining. Ye Leng'an, who she had thought wouldn't come, actually came on her father's birthday. Did this imply that, in Ye Leng'an's heart, there wasn't as much resistance as it seemed on the surface? If that was really the case, could she also hope that Ye Leng'an would return to the Ye family one day?

Just thinking about these things, her heart couldn't help but blaze with excitement.

Ye Hongxuan's quiet joy was evident, as was Ye Yikun's mixed feelings.

"Since they're here, Hongxuan, go welcome them. Since he is the patriarch of the Huangfu family, we must maintain decorum."

Despite Ye Leng'an's earlier reluctance, her presence, along with Huangfu Ruiling's, was a welcome development.

Indeed, Ye Leng'an's return could mean a union between the Ye and Huangfu families, bolstering the Ye family's fortunes.

With Ye Yikun's approval, Ye Hongxuan and Lian Mengzhu wasted no time in greeting their guests, leaving Ye Wanwan behind.

As her adoptive parents hurried away, Ye Wanwan couldn't help but feel a pang of uncertainty.

Although her parents continued to treat her with the same affection as always, and she remained in the Ye family, enjoying all the resources it offered, even advancing her cultivation with her grandfather's assistance, she couldn't shake the deep-seated understanding within her. Everything had changed. Without the backing of blood ties, she felt that her world was built on shaky ground.

Chapter 792: Her Surprising Attendance

"Wanwan, what's wrong?" Murong Xingrui noticed that Ye Wanwan's mood seemed a little off and immediately asked with concern. "Are you feeling unwell?"

He genuinely liked Ye Wanwan. Otherwise, he wouldn't have insisted on continuing the engagement with her after the family competition incident. However, after spending some time together, he felt like he didn't really understand her. He even questioned whether he truly liked her or if it was just an old obsession.

Regardless, they were already engaged. Their engagement wasn't just between them but also between their families. Moreover...

Looking at Ye Wanwan beside him, Murong Xingrui had to admit that in the Hidden World, few could compare to her beauty. Not to mention, she was also exceptionally talented in cultivation, and she was an alchemist.

Except for the slight damage to her family's reputation from the Family Competition, she was outstanding in every aspect. Having such a future wife would undoubtedly be beneficial to him.

"I'm fine." Ye Wanwan smiled at Murong Xingrui. "I was just lost in thought. Sorry for making you worry."

"That's good." Murong Xingrui nodded with a smile, then looked towards the door and said, "I really didn't expect the head of the Huangfu family to come in person today. Usually, it's just the elders who attend. Your grandfather's reputation is indeed substantial!"

When Murong Xingrui mentioned Huangfu Ruiling, Ye Wanwan's expression briefly turned unnatural.

Because every mention of Huangfu Ruiling reminded her of Ye Leng'an. Despite her grandfather's support, she feared her true identity would be revealed. If Murong Xingrui discovered she didn't have the bloodline of the Ye family, she didn't know how he would react.

Just the thought of Ye Leng'an filled her with rage. She blamed Lian Zixin for not taking more decisive action when she decided to switch children. If Ye Leng'an had died back then, none of this would have happened.

Now that Ye Leng'an had resurfaced, she felt like everything she had could be taken away from her. Especially now that she knew Huangfu Ruiling and Huangfu Ling were the same person, her hatred for Ye Leng'an intensified.

She had been the one to pursue Huangfu Ruiling first, but Ye Leng'an had stolen him away. If she had been the one engaged to Huangfu Ruiling, she would have had nothing to fear. Even if her true identity was exposed, she wouldn't worry.

Although her parents hadn't said anything, it was evident they still harbored feelings for Ye Leng'an. They even hoped Ye Leng'an would return to the family.

As for her grandfather, he was indeed on her side, but his ambiguous stance made her wary. If Ye Leng'an truly returned to the family, her situation would be even more difficult. Even her marriage to the Murong family could be affected.

"Wanwan, why are you lost in thought again?" Murong Xingrui frowned and gently patted her shoulder. "You seem oddly behaved today. Are you sure you're not feeling unwell?"

"I'm really fine." Ye Wanwan quickly forced a smile. "I've just been tired from helping with Grandfather's birthday preparations lately, that's all."

Hearing this, Murong Xingrui understood. He then advised, "You should rest properly. You were seriously injured not long ago. Although you've recovered, you still need time to recuperate. Otherwise, it might harm your health."

"I understand." Ye Wanwan smiled faintly, her impatience evident in her eyes. "Don't worry, I'm an alchemist and knowledgeable in medicine."

Murong Xingrui nodded and didn't press further.

Meanwhile, Ye Hongxuan and Lian Mengzhu had already left swiftly. However, halfway there, they encountered Huangfu Ruiling and Ye Leng'an.

The couple walked hand in hand, exuding an otherworldly charm that drew everyone's attention.

But to Lian Mengzhu, only Ye Leng'an mattered. As Ye Leng'an approached, she felt a bit nervous, recalling their last unpleasant encounter. She didn't know what to say.

Fortunately, Ye Hongxuan quickly joined her. He glanced at Ye Leng'an and said with a complicated expression, "I didn't expect you to attend the birthday banquet today."

Ye Leng'an's previous rejection had surprised him when he heard she was coming.

Nevertheless, it was a good sign that she was here. It showed she wasn't as cold-hearted as she seemed.

"Wasn't the invitation sent by the Ye family?" Ye Leng'an spoke frankly, showing no guilt as if it were a trivial matter. "Since you invited us, it's only natural for our Huangfu family to come and offer our good wishes, right?"

Her words made it clear that she was representing the Huangfu family today, and it had nothing to do with their previous persuasion attempts.

Ye Hongxuan and Lian Mengzhu understood her deliberate attempt to distance herself from them.

But they weren't heartbroken. They knew it was rare enough for Ye Leng'an to come today. As for the rest, they didn't want to push it and knew they couldn't force it.

Huangfu Ruiling glanced at the two and said coldly, "Master Ye, shall we go in?"

Chapter 793: When Enemies Met, Hatred Ensued

His cold words, coupled with an expressionless face, seemed to instantly chill the air several degrees. Those around couldn't help but shiver involuntarily.

Ye Hongxuan stood motionless, his expression soured. He hadn't anticipated Huangfu Ruiling's lack of respect. After all, he was Ye Leng'an's biological father and Huangfu Ruiling's future father-in-law.

Huangfu Ruiling was fully aware of this. Considering Ye Leng'an's relationship with Ye Hongxuan, he should have shown more courtesy, shouldn't he?

However, most people around were unaware of the truth. So, seeing Huangfu Ruiling's attitude didn't come as a surprise. After all, although he rarely appeared, his cold nature was well known.

Observing Ye Hongxuan's displeased demeanor, Ye Leng'an knew his inner conflict. She sneered and spoke, "Master Ye, is there anything else?"

If Huangfu Ruiling's attitude irked Ye Hongxuan, then Ye Leng'an's distant demeanor exacerbated it.

Yet, despite his myriad emotions, Ye Hongxuan couldn't afford to reveal them in front of so many people. He managed a forced smile and said, "Since Master Huangfu honors us with your presence, we naturally should show our hospitality. Please, Master Huangfu, come in!"

With that, he took the lead.

Lian Mengzhu's intense gaze remained fixed on Ye Leng'an, reflecting a mixture of affection, guilt, and the pain of Ye Leng'an's refusal to acknowledge her.

Sensing Lian Mengzhu's burning gaze, Ye Leng'an couldn't help but furrow her brow.

She disliked Lian Mengzhu's gaze as if she owed her something. There was no clear right or wrong in this matter, as the root cause was Lian Zixin's jealousy. However, since Lian Mengzhu had chosen Ye Wanwan, she shouldn't have played the victim before her. It wouldn't induce guilt, only irritation.

Perceiving Ye Leng'an's thoughts, Huangfu Ruiling pulled her aside, blocking Lian Mengzhu's view. Then, he shot Lian Mengzhu a warning glance.

Lian Mengzhu's gaze, initially fixed on Ye Leng'an, was suddenly blocked. When she looked up, she met Huangfu Ruiling's cold, warning eyes. She held her breath and immediately averted her gaze, but her racing heart betrayed her composure.

Despite Huangfu Ruiling's younger age, his imposing aura intimidated her. Yet, this was to be expected, given his position as the head of the Huangfu family and his superior cultivation.

Seeing Huangfu Ruiling defend Ye Leng'an, Lian Mengzhu felt a mix of joy and sorrow. His stance reflected Ye Leng'an's.

If Ye Leng'an truly regarded her as a mother, Huangfu Ruiling wouldn't disregard her like this. She pondered how she could earn Ye Leng'an's acknowledgment.

Each person present harbored their own motives.

As thoughts swirled, Ye Hongxuan and Lian Mengzhu led Huangfu Ruiling and Ye Leng'an to the main hall.

Upon entering, Ye Leng'an spotted Ye Yikun seated at the head.

Ye Yikun appeared rejuvenated, indicating his recovery from previous injuries. Yet, this was expected. Huangfu Ruiling hadn't dealt a fatal blow last time, and the Ye family was proficient in alchemy.

Upon their arrival, they felt Ye Yikun's scrutinizing gaze, devoid of any lingering resentment.

Witnessing this, Ye Leng'an couldn't help but smirk inwardly.

It seemed Ye Yikun hadn't held a grudge against them for past events, but it wasn't due to magnanimity.

She knew that if Huangfu Ruiling's identity hadn't been exposed, if the Huangfu family's influence hadn't been formidable, they wouldn't even qualify to be here. And Ye Yikun wouldn't spare them due to their previous grievances.

Of course, she didn't overlook Ye Wanwan standing beside Ye Yikun.

Seeing Ye Wanwan, she was momentarily stunned. At this moment, Ye Wanwan appeared anything but haggard; she positively glowed.

She had personally destroyed Ye Wanwan's dantian, so she understood the consequences. Under normal circumstances, even with ample medicinal pills, Ye Wanwan couldn't have recovered to this extent.

Yet, not only had Ye Wanwan fully recuperated, but her cultivation had also improved. Something was amiss. However, Ye Wanwan's aura was unstable, suggesting she had resorted to unorthodox means to advance her cultivation.

Ye Leng'an approached Huangfu Ruiling and whispered, "What do you think Ye Wanwan did to recover and advance her cultivation? Her aura is truly unstable."

"Undoubtedly dishonorable methods." Huangfu Ruiling frowned. "I wonder if any harmful means were employed."

A glint of darkness flickered in Ye Leng'an's eyes. "It seems a thorough investigation is warranted."

As Huangfu Ruiling and Ye Leng'an conversed discreetly, many guests observed. Some envied the close bond between the engaged couple, while others harbored jealousy and resentment.

Among them was Ye Wanwan, consumed by hatred. From the moment she laid eyes on Ye Leng'an, every fiber of her being screamed for vengeance.

The hatred intensified when the enemies met face to face.

The animosity between her and Ye Leng'an transcended mere enmity. It had escalated to a life-and-death vendetta. She remembered every single thing Ye Leng'an had ever done to her, and it was all etched deep in her heart.

Chapter 794: Dilemma

The humiliation she endured at the auction, the agony of her dantian shattering, these pains were etched in Ye Wanwan's heart. Given the chance, she wouldn't let Ye Leng'an off the hook.

However, she wasn't naive. Her current cultivation level was no match for Ye Leng'an's, plus Ye Leng'an had Huangfu Ruiling backing her. She couldn't touch Ye Leng'an at the moment. So, swallowing her pride was her only option.

Furthermore, she had to play nice with Ye Leng'an.

Knowing Ye Leng'an would never care for her flattery, she'd be the one to suffer in the end. If her adoptive parents witnessed it, they'd feel sorry for her.

Only by continuously enduring could she make her adoptive parents completely disillusioned with Ye Leng'an. Only then could she firmly secure her position as the Ye family's young lady.

With these thoughts in mind, Ye Wanwan composed herself and approached Ye Leng'an with a bright smile. "Sister, you're here! Grandfather has been waiting for you for quite some time."

Witnessing this scene, onlookers couldn't help but speculate about the connection between Ye Leng'an and the Ye family.

Ye Yikun noticed Ye Wanwan's actions but stayed silent. Perhaps Ye Wanwan's actions had struck a chord with him.

Due to previous conflicts, he couldn't bow down to Ye Leng'an now.

However, Ye Leng'an's status was extraordinary as Huangfu Ruiling's fiancée. With the Huangfu family winning the Family Competition, they gained priority in mining the spirit stone mine for five years. The Huangfu family was already showing signs of becoming the top clan.

If Ye Leng'an returned to the Ye family now, it would benefit them greatly. However, repairing their relationship wasn't easy. If Ye Wanwan extended an olive branch first, it'd be the best choice.

Unfortunately, reality didn't align with Ye Yikun's intentions.

"Sister?" Ye Leng'an's lips curved slightly, a hint of disdain in her tone. "Who are you calling? I don't recall having a sister! I didn't even know who my parents were. How could I possibly have a sister?"

These casual words caused several people's expressions to drastically change.

Ye Hongxuan and Lian Mengzhu's faces turned pale.

Especially at the mention of her unknown parents, a hint of pain flickered in their eyes. They wanted to speak up as Ye Leng'an's parents, but the situation prevented them from doing so.

Otherwise, Ye Wanwan would suffer greatly. Moreover, Murong Xingrui was present. If they couldn't explain themselves and Wanwan's engagement was affected, it would be disastrous.

Though Ye Leng'an was their daughter, Wanwan was also their daughter. They had to consider Wanwan's feelings.

Ye Yikun's expression darkened as he looked at Ye Leng'an, his gaze filled with coldness.

Indeed, even with the bloodline of the Ye family, not being raised within it made her unable to represent the family properly. When Ye Leng'an returned to the Ye family in the future, proper guidance would be necessary. Otherwise, it would only bring shame to the whole family.

Ye Wanwan's smile became strained. She looked aggrieved but apologized to Ye Leng'an. "I'm sorry, Miss Ye. I just thought it would bring us closer. I didn't mean any harm. Please forgive me."

Her appeasing demeanor evoked sympathy.

It stood in stark contrast to Ye Leng'an's aggressiveness.

Unable to bear seeing his fiancée wronged, Murong Xingrui stepped forward, facing Ye Leng'an with anger. "Miss Ye, Wanwan meant well. Why be so aggressive?"

Though unsure of the grudge between Ye Leng'an and Wanwan, Wanwan was his fiancée. Naturally, he had to defend her.

Moreover, Ye Leng'an was too rude. Wanwan had been kind, and there was nothing wrong with her actions. What right did Ye Leng'an have to say such things?

"What's it to you?" Ye Leng'an glanced at Murong Xingrui, indifferent. "Can't you see that Ye Wanwan herself has no issue? Do you need to intervene?"

"Wanwan is my fiancée. Her problems are mine," Murong Xingrui asserted protectively. "Treating her this way, as her fiancé, I have every right to stand up for her."

Understanding the situation, Ye Leng'an's eyes flickered. Blinking, she continued, "So what if you're her fiancé? Haven't you seen it? She thinks she misspoke. What right do you have to call me aggressive? Since the principal party hasn't spoken, others should refrain from meddling. Or..."

There was a wicked gleam in Ye Leng'an's eyes as she looked at Ye Wanwan. Smiling brightly, she suggested, "Ye Wanwan, why don't you clarify if there was any issue with my attitude just now? Or would you like to explain our relationship to him?"

Seeing Ye Leng'an's smile, Ye Wanwan's heart skipped a beat. Indeed, what she said put her in a predicament.

Now, no matter her response, it seemed wrong. Supporting Murong Xingrui would prompt Ye Leng'an to reveal everything, jeopardizing her future in the Hidden World. Conversely, siding against Murong Xingrui would offend him, potentially straining their relationship.

Everyone awaited Ye Wanwan's reply.

"Enough," Ye Hongxuan interjected, standing up. "Today is Father's birthday. Let's just enjoy ourselves. As for other matters, let's not dwell on them."

Chapter 795: Feeling Unwelcome

As soon as these words were spoken, the temperature around Huangfu Ruiling dropped visibly, causing an evident chill to permeate the entire room. This abrupt change left everyone puzzled, as in their eyes, Ye Hongxuan's actions seemed justified. After all, Ye Wanwan was his biological daughter, so it was only natural for him to protect her.

Moreover, it was the birthday of Old Master Ye. While Ye Leng'an, as the fiancée of Master Huangfu, was an esteemed guest, it wasn't appropriate for her to be so assertive on someone else's turf.

"Master Ye is indeed a devoted father!" Huangfu Ruiling remarked, his tone carrying a hint of coldness as he looked at Ye Hongxuan. "One can't help but wonder if your daughter is fortunate or unfortunate to have a father like you."

Although Ye Leng'an seemed indifferent to Ye Hongxuan, his actions clearly incensed Huangfu Ruiling. While verbally expressing the desire to reconcile with An'an and hoping for her return to the Ye family, his actions leaned towards defending Ye Wanwan at every turn. If that was the case, he should refrain from assuming the role of a father in front of An'an and avoid eliciting disgust.



Most bystanders were perplexed by Huangfu Ruiling's words, unable to decipher his intentions. However, his evident displeasure discouraged anyone from challenging him further.

In contrast to Huangfu Ruiling's demeanor, Ye Leng'an remained composed, showing no sign of agitation. She disregarded Ye Hongxuan's protective stance towards Ye Wanwan and the subtle provocations directed at her, unfazed by the situation.

Only those who cared would feel distressed by Ye Hongxuan's actions. Yet, Ye Leng'an harbored no sentiments towards him. If not for their blood ties, they might not have crossed paths at all. Hence, Ye Hongxuan's words failed to evoke any emotion in her.

Huangfu Ruiling's remark caught Ye Hongxuan off guard, prompting him to furrow his brows. He saw no fault in his words, merely wishing to prevent further escalation of the situation.

"It's nothing more than ensuring the celebration proceeds smoothly on Father's birthday," Lian Mengzhu chimed in, attempting to defuse the tension. "As juniors, we wish to bring joy to Father's festivities. If anything has caused you discomfort, we apologize."

Observing Ye Hongxuan and Lian Mengzhu's indifference, Huangfu Ruiling's eyes flashed with a cold gleam. However, before he could voice his thoughts, he felt a tug on his sleeve.

Ye Leng'an's gesture silenced Huangfu Ruiling, who refrained from speaking further under her signal.

After Huangfu Ruiling's silence, Ye Leng'an turned her gaze back to Ye Hongxuan. With a faint smile, she advised, "Master Ye, while I understand your desire to protect your daughter, perhaps you should focus on guiding her to avoid provoking me. I believe you're well aware of my temper. Should she provoke me again, even I can't guarantee my reaction."

At her words, Ye Hongxuan, Lian Mengzhu, and Ye Wanwan stiffened, recalling Ye Leng'an's ruthless act of crippling Ye Wanwan's dantian.

Especially Ye Wanwan, who couldn't help but shiver at the memory.

The agony of her shattered dantian and the subsequent recovery surpassed comprehension. The excruciating pain inflicted by Ye Leng'an haunted her, instilling a sense of dread whenever she reminisced about it.

Observing Ye Wanwan's reaction, Ye Leng'an nodded in satisfaction.

"Miss Ye, arrogance begets downfall."

At that moment, an elderly voice interjected, none other than Ye Yikun. With narrowed eyes and a sharp gaze, he addressed Ye Leng'an, "Today marks my birthday. Do you deem your actions appropriate?"

While Ye Leng'an's return promised benefits for the Ye family, it didn't excuse her audacious behavior. Especially on such an auspicious occasion, her insolence as his granddaughter was unforgivable.

Upon her return, he would ensure she learned the proper etiquette.

“I find nothing inappropriate in my actions today.” Ye Leng’an shrugged, indifferent to Ye Yikun’s reproach. “Moreover, didn’t Ye Wanwan bring this upon herself? Outsiders may not understand our relationship, but surely you do. She addressed me so casually as ‘sister.’ Are you certain it wasn’t a provocation?”

Unaware of Ye Yikun’s thoughts, she continued, expressing her disdain. If she knew, she would have retorted immediately. What audacity it took to presume to teach her manners!

Upon hearing Ye Leng’an’s words, Ye Wanwan’s pupils contracted, and then she hurriedly spoke up to explain, “I really didn’t mean anything else, I just wanted to get close to Miss Ye. I...”

Ye Wanwan’s panicked explanation evoked sympathy, while Ye Leng’an’s aggressive demeanor irked some bystanders.

Facing such a situation, an ordinary person would undoubtedly panic. Yet, Ye Leng’an remained composed, looking at Ye Yikun directly, continuing, “Old Master Ye, may I infer that the Ye family does not welcome our presence here?”

#### Chapter 796: An Apology

Although it was just a simple sentence, it was enough to change Ye Yikun’s expression.

Ye Leng’an’s simple words had already elevated this matter to the relationship between the two families. If he were to say something unwelcoming, it would be an admission in front of everyone that the Ye family and the Huangfu family had severed ties.

With the Ye family in decline and the Huangfu family flourishing, any news of discord between the two would undoubtedly harm the Ye family more than the Huangfu family.

“Wanwan,” Ye Yikun gritted his teeth and ordered, “You misspoke just now. Apologize to Master Huangfu and Miss Ye.”

Ye Wanwan wasn’t surprised by Ye Yikun’s decision. Gritting her teeth, she turned to Ye Leng’an and bowed, saying, “Miss Ye, I apologize for causing you distress. It was not intentional. I apologize to you and ask for your forgiveness. Please, be gracious and pardon my unintended offense.”

Murong Xingrui felt uncomfortable seeing his fiancée adopt such a humble stance. Nevertheless, his disdain for Ye Leng’an outweighed any discomfort. The awe he once felt at the sight of Ye Leng’an had vanished, replaced by antipathy.

If it hadn’t been for Ye Wanwan firmly grasping his hand to prevent any action, and considering this was primarily a matter concerning the Ye family that he should have refrained from intervening too much in, he would have already stepped in to defend Ye Wanwan.

Ye Hongxuan and Lian Mengzhu, witnessing Ye Wanwan’s distress, couldn’t help but feel a pang of sympathy. Looking towards Ye Leng’an, their gazes involuntarily carried a hint of reproach.

Clearly, they all felt Ye Leng’an was making a mountain out of a molehill. It was a trivial matter blown out of proportion, an obvious slight against Wanwan.

Although Wanwan had occupied her seat, ultimately, it wasn't her fault! Moreover, despite their earnest pleas, she refused to return to the Ye family. So why persist in targeting Wanwan like this?

As Ye Wanwan bent to apologize, a smug smile graced her lips, unnoticed by all.

Knowing Ye Hongxuan and Lian Mengzhu, her adoptive parents, all too well, she was confident that if she played the martyr, they would stand by her. Eventually, Ye Leng'an would only grow more distant from them. The ultimate victor would be her.

Thus, momentary grievance mattered little. The one who laughs last was the most formidable.

Ye Leng'an paid no heed to Ye Hongxuan and Lian Mengzhu's censure. Fixing her gaze on Ye Wanwan, she parted her lips lightly, her words chilling, "I am petty, so I won't be magnanimous, nor will I forgive you. Ye Wanwan, here's some advice: don't mess with me in the future. Otherwise, you'll find out what I'm capable of. When the time comes, I fear you won't be able to handle it."

Under normal circumstances, one might choose to forgive, if only to appear magnanimous. However, who would have thought Ye Leng'an would act so recklessly, directly confronting Ye Wanwan?

Ye Wanwan clearly hadn't expected such a response from Ye Leng'an. Nonetheless, at this point, she could only bow her head and humble herself, saying, "I'll remember."

Ye Leng'an nodded, looking satisfied.

Ye Wanwan was seething with anger.

At this moment, Ye Yikun's expression soured.

What Ye Leng'an had done at his birthday banquet was a slap in the face. While it seemed directed at Ye Wanwan on the surface, it was also a challenge to him!

If not for Huangfu Ruiling's watchful eye, he would have disciplined this troublemaker long ago.

The birthday banquet continued.

However, thanks to Ye Leng'an's earlier outburst, although the festivities continued, they were overshadowed by a layer of gloom.

The banquet proceeded in a lively manner. Huangfu Ruiling and Ye Leng'an were seated close to the main table.

Despite his disdain for Ye Leng'an due to the previous conflict, Ye Yikun couldn't disregard the Huangfu family's status. Hence, he couldn't seat Huangfu Ruiling and Ye Leng'an too remotely, lest it be seen as a direct challenge to the Huangfu family.

At that point, they would truly be unable to mend fences and might instead make enemies.

Although this was the Hidden World, many things here were akin to the mortal world.

For this occasion, the Ye family had opted for a traditional Chinese banquet style.

Once the festivities began, Huangfu Ruiling and Ye Leng'an acted as though nothing had occurred. They mingled with other guests, presenting their gifts to the Ye family before returning to their seats.

Subsequently, calm prevailed, as if the earlier conflicts had never transpired.

Similarly, Ye Leng'an's demeanor towards the Ye family was distant, as if she were merely an ordinary guest attending the banquet.

Ye Hongxuan and Lian Mengzhu had hoped for an opportunity to speak with Ye Leng'an but found none. Moreover, they feared their actions might arouse suspicion.

Should Wanwan's identity be exposed, how would she cope? Especially on a day like today, with Murong Xingrui present, there could be no room for error.

Wanwan had already suffered enough today. As parents, they couldn't afford to show bias and neglect her situation.

After the banquet, Huangfu Ruiling and Ye Leng'an departed without delay, returning to the Huangfu family.

After a brief refreshment, they adjourned to the courtyard to enjoy some tea.

Accepting the teacup from Huangfu Ruiling, Ye Leng'an took a sip before speaking, "I took the opportunity to visit the Ye family today but found nothing unusual. However, I detected a faint scent of blood in Ye Wanwan's courtyard."

During the banquet, she had slipped away to investigate discreetly, evading the Ye family's scrutiny.

"A scent of blood?" Huangfu Ruiling frowned. "Perhaps from Ye Wanwan's previous injury?"

"I'm uncertain." Ye Leng'an shook her head. "However, Ye Wanwan's recovery seems peculiar. You witnessed it today – her cultivation is highly unstable. There's definitely more to this than meets the eye."

Chapter 797: Blood Ties

"If we suspect foul play, then it's best to let the enforcement team investigate thoroughly," Huangfu Ruiling said casually. "If indeed any underhanded methods or harmful actions were used, they must be dealt with accordingly."

Ye Leng'an nodded in agreement and added, "While the Ye family is known for alchemy, it's highly unlikely they possess pills with such effects. However, whether lives were endangered remains uncertain."

Acknowledging this, Huangfu Ruiling turned to Ye Leng'an. "I'll visit the enforcement team tomorrow, and the day after, we'll return to the mortal world."

Ye Leng'an voiced no objections. She rose from her seat, stretched lazily, and replied, "That's fine. I'll stay here tomorrow to refine a batch of pills."

Despite the serene atmosphere, tensions brewed within the Ye family.

In the study room, Ye Yikun sat sternly, accompanied by Ye Hongxuan, Lian Mengzhu, and Ye Wanwan. Others, including members of the second branch, had been dismissed. Though filled with questions, they dared not speak under Ye Yikun's command.

Ye Yikun remained silent, and so did the rest, fearful to break the quietude. The study became eerily tranquil, almost unsettling.

After a while, Ye Yikun finally spoke, addressing Ye Hongxuan and Lian Mengzhu with a serious tone. "What are your thoughts on Ye Leng'an?"

This question left Ye Hongxuan and Lian Mengzhu exchanging helpless glances. They hesitated to respond.

For them, answering was daunting. Their decisions were not their own; they lay with Ye Leng'an.

Despite Ye Leng'an's presence, her reluctance to return was evident from her actions. Though biological, their relationship lacked nurture and years of bonding.

At the mention of Ye Leng'an, Ye Wanwan's gaze darkened, revealing a trace of resentment. She truly didn't want Ye Leng'an to return to the Ye family. She understood deep down that although her parents stood by her side now because of her feigned vulnerability, if Ye Leng'an were to return, it was uncertain whose side they would take.

In comparison, Ye Leng'an had a significant advantage: the blood of the Ye family flowed within her veins. Therefore, if Ye Leng'an were to come back, it would undoubtedly have a profound impact on her.

Unable to voice her concerns, Ye Wanwan remained silent, aware that her status forbade any input.

Observing their hesitance, Ye Yikun's expression soured, his tone growing impatient. "Are you mute? Did you not hear my question?"

"We..." Ye Hongxuan began cautiously, "We're not avoiding the question. Leng'an seems resistant. Despite our efforts, she remains unmoved."

"She's your daughter," Ye Yikun reminded sharply, eyeing Ye Hongxuan and his wife. "Do you intend to let her wander indefinitely? And do you truly wish to miss her wedding?"

The implications struck Ye Hongxuan and Lian Mengzhu hard. The possibility was unsettling.

During Ye Leng'an's engagement to Huangfu Ruiling, they were not even invited, let alone considered as parents. They had to impose themselves.

Ye Yikun's unwavering gaze bore into Ye Hongxuan and Lian Mengzhu. "Blood ties endure. Ye Leng'an is your daughter. If you humble yourselves, she may relent."

Their resolve wavered under Ye Yikun's words.

"We'll try to mend things with Leng'an and convince her to return," Ye Hongxuan promised.

“Good.” Ye Yikun nodded. “Act swiftly. Rumors suggest the quality of the spirit stone mine is promising. If Leng’an returns and fosters ties with the Huangfu family, it could benefit the Ye family.”

Ye Yikun’s words momentarily stunned both Ye Hongxuan and Lian Mengzhu. However, they weren’t overly surprised. They understood their father’s character well, so it was natural for them to realize that his urgent insistence on finding a way to bring Ye Leng’an back was driven by potential gains.

Nevertheless, even if their father hadn’t mentioned it, they genuinely wanted their biological daughter to return. Of course, they wouldn’t overlook their adopted daughter, Wanwan. After all, they had raised her, and they would undoubtedly treat both daughters equally.

“Pay heed to Leng’an.” Ye Yikun fixed his sharp gaze on Lian Mengzhu. “And don’t go soft on Lian Zixin and the Yan family!”

Though addressed collectively, his words targeted Lian Mengzhu, the root cause of their predicament.

Years of leniency towards her sister, Lian Zixin, had led to this situation.

Lian Mengzhu shuddered, vowing, “Rest assured, Father. I won’t falter with Lian Zixin. Our ties are severed, and I’ll never acknowledge her again.”

Her words dripped with apprehension.

Chapter 798: Get Married as Soon as Possible

Lian Mengzhu kept her head down, avoiding any eye contact with Ye Yikun. Yet, she could keenly sense his piercing gaze upon her. Uncertain whether her response would appease him, she dared not lift her gaze.

Though she was the victim in this matter, the perpetrator was her own biological sister. Hence, she fretted over the possibility of her father redirecting his anger towards her.

Her heart seethed with hatred towards Lian Zixin. The events orchestrated by her sister had led to a decade-long separation from her biological daughter, jeopardizing her standing within the Ye family. All the kindness she had extended to Lian Zixin over the years seemed utterly wasted.

Ye Yikun remained silent, observing Lian Mengzhu intently.

This only heightened Lian Mengzhu’s mental strain, leaving her feeling fragile and unsteady.

Ye Hongxuan’s eyes brimmed with concern as he watched his wife’s distress. Yet, under his father’s watchful eye, he was powerless to intervene.

After a prolonged silence, Ye Yikun withdrew his gaze. “If you’re certain, then so be it.”

A sigh of relief escaped Lian Mengzhu.

Shifting the conversation to Ye Wanwan, Ye Yikun asked, “How are things between you and Xingrui?”

While the alliance with Ye Leng'an and the Huangfu family was crucial, the union between Ye Wanwan and the Murong family could not be overlooked.

Facing Ye Yikun's inquiry, Ye Wanwan remained composed. "Xingrui and I get along quite well. He treats me kindly, but..."

At this point, Ye Wanwan hesitated, meeting Ye Yikun's gaze with a troubled expression. "After today's events, Xingrui is confused about the relationship between our Ye family and Ye Leng'an. He probed me several times when I saw him off. Yet, I'm unsure how to respond."

Ye Yikun furrowed his brows. After a moment's contemplation, he spoke, "Tell him the truth: you and Ye Leng'an were twins, separated because of Lian Zixin's jealousy. This is an internal matter of the Ye family, kept under wraps."

He had intended to reveal this publicly once Ye Leng'an returned.

This approach would legitimize Ye Leng'an's identity without tarnishing Ye Wanwan's reputation. It was a solution that served dual purposes.

Grateful for Ye Yikun's response, Ye Wanwan's eyes gleamed with relief. "Understood, Grandfather."

Though she knew the Ye family wouldn't forsake her, her grandfather's persistent desire for Ye Leng'an's return was undeniably pressure-inducing. She feared Ye Leng'an's return might expose her true identity. Yet, with her grandfather's endorsement, she found solace.

Ye Yikun nodded, then continued, "Although your engagement with Xingrui is recent, I must caution you. Despite appearances, unforeseen changes may occur in the future. Your marriage with Xingrui is no exception."

"Father," Ye Hongxuan interjected, alarmed, "Wanwan is still young. How could she..."

He grasped the implication behind his father's words. His father hoped Wanwan and Murong Xingrui would marry as soon as possible.

In the Hidden World, higher cultivation often delayed marriage. Cultivators in the Hidden World were different from ordinary people in the mortal world; maintaining youth wasn't a challenge with sufficient cultivation. Cultivators could live up to two to three hundred years, or even longer with higher cultivation.

Hence, they seldom married early. Most considered marriage after reaching a century of age.

But Ye Wanwan was merely a teenager. How could she marry so soon?

Lian Mengzhu's expression soured, clearly opposed to the idea. She didn't want her daughter to marry at such a tender age.

"Wanwan is indeed young." Ye Yikun remained composed. "But Xingrui is already in his seventies. Even if they marry now, it's acceptable. Besides, this concerns Wanwan. Let her decide."

Murong Xingrui's age exceeded Ye Yikun's by several decades, a common occurrence in the Hidden World. Some even surpassed a hundred years. Long lifespans in the Hidden World made such differences insignificant.

All eyes turned to Ye Wanwan, awaiting her response.

Though her expression flickered, Ye Wanwan swiftly regained composure. “Understood, Grandfather. I’ll urge the Murong family to propose marriage promptly.”

The Murong family must initiate the proposal; otherwise, the Ye family would appear hasty.

Initially resistant to her grandfather’s suggestion, Ye Wanwan found merit upon reflection.

Even if Ye Leng’an returned, announcing them as twins wouldn’t jeopardize her status.

Yet, no wall was impervious.

If her true identity surfaced, the Murong family’s response was uncertain. But if she and Murong Xingrui were married, even if the Murong family knew, as long as the Ye family acknowledged her identity, she’d retain her position as the matriarch of the Murong family.

After a brief deliberation, she assented.

“Wanwan!” Ye Hongxuan was incredulous. Frowning, he protested, “Do you understand what you’re agreeing to? You’re still so young! How could you marry so soon?”

Their longstanding bond couldn’t be disregarded. He cared deeply for his daughter, Ye Wanwan. Thus, her agreement left him vehemently opposed.

After all, Ye Wanwan was too young for marriage.

Chapter 799: Understanding the Current Situation

“Father, I’m not a child anymore. Getting married is something natural.” Ye Wanwan was firm. “Besides, Xingrui and I love each other. Wanting to be together forever is normal, isn’t it?”

While she appreciated her father’s concern, she wouldn’t compromise on this matter. It was about her future, and she needed to plan it carefully.

Moreover, since her grandfather had brought it up at this time, it was more of an announcement than a discussion. She couldn’t refuse, nor did she want to.

“Wanwan, we need to think about this carefully.” Lian Mengzhu expressed concern. “You’re still young. You’re not at the age to talk about marriage. If Xingrui truly likes you, he wouldn’t mind waiting. Why make things difficult for yourself?”

Ye Wanwan remained silent, but her expression showed her determination.

Seeing Ye Wanwan’s resolve, Lian Mengzhu wanted to continue persuading her. However, before she could speak, she was interrupted.

“Shut up.” Ye Yikun raised his head, his cold gaze on Lian Mengzhu. “Didn’t I already say? Let Wanwan decide for herself. Do you not understand my words, or do you not respect me?”



His words chilled Lian Mengzhu to the core. She felt cold all over, suppressing any trembling.

“Father, I’m sorry for my words,” Lian Mengzhu apologized immediately. She had been too focused on Wanwan’s well-being and almost forgot that her father had initiated this conversation. Her attempts to persuade Wanwan were clearly opposing her father’s wishes. Given her recent actions, her father’s dissatisfaction was understandable. Continuing to oppose him could lead to dire consequences.

Ye Yikun snorted, then turned to Ye Wanwan with satisfaction. “Since you’ve made your decision, find a way to resolve it soon. Xingrui’s affection may not last forever. Plan for yourself to avoid disappointment.”

“Understood, Grandfather.” Ye Wanwan nodded.

She understood her grandfather’s hint: take advantage of Xingrui’s current affection to expedite marriage. It was the most foolproof approach.

Ye Yikun was pleased with Ye Wanwan’s understanding. He glanced at Ye Hongxuan and Lian Mengzhu. “Wanwan has a plan. As her parents, support her. Also, find time to deal with Ye Leng’an’s situation! She’s your daughter. Surely you don’t want her to never call you ‘mom and dad’?”

His words pierced Ye Hongxuan and Lian Mengzhu’s hearts.

The next day, Huangfu Ruiling went to the enforcement team, while Ye Leng’an stayed to refine pills.

The elders were delighted. Miss Ye had promised that the pills she refined would remain with the Huangfu family.

Although the Huangfu family had alchemists, none matched Miss Ye’s skill. Her high-grade pills with excellent effects were a significant asset to the Huangfu family!

Ye Leng’an spent the entire day in the alchemy room, not even taking breaks for meals. It wasn’t until Huangfu Ruiling returned that she realized it was late.

“You’re back!”

Ye Leng’an had just stored a bottle of pills when Huangfu Ruiling entered. After stowing the pills away, she approached Huangfu Ruiling. “Everything’s settled!”

Glancing outside, she was surprised. “It’s so late already?”

Seeing Ye Leng’an’s appearance, Huangfu Ruiling frowned. “Have you been in the alchemy room all day?”

Sensing Huangfu Ruiling’s displeasure, Ye Leng’an felt guilty but then regained confidence. “Yes! There were times when I spent several days in a row there! As an alchemist, I naturally devote myself to refining pills. Forgetting time is normal!”

Observing Ye Leng’an, Huangfu Ruiling felt helpless. He reached out, patting her head, then sighed. “I’m just worried about you. I’m not against your alchemy, but I want you to rest.”

If Huangfu Ruiling had been firm, Ye Leng'an would have exploded. But his softened tone reignited her guilt. She stammered, "I didn't mean to. I was just too focused, that's why I lost track of time. I promise to be more careful next time."

Though Ye Leng'an sounded confident, Huangfu Ruiling remained skeptical. However, he knew that being too strict would only upset her. So, he smiled and shook his head. "Alright, I trust you."

Despite his words, he resolved to supervise Ye Leng'an's next session. If he couldn't, he'd find someone who could. Neglecting one's health for too long would have consequences, no matter how robust the body was.

Ye Leng'an nodded. "Okay, I understand."

Moving closer, she took Huangfu Ruiling's hand. "I haven't eaten all day. Even if I'm not hungry, I want to eat. You must have been busy too. Let's eat together!"

Huangfu Ruiling tapped Ye Leng'an's nose, smiling helplessly. "I knew you'd say that. I had food prepared when I returned. It should be in the courtyard now. Let's go!"

Ye Leng'an chuckled, then tiptoed to plant a kiss on Huangfu Ruiling's cheek. "You're the best."

Chapter 800: Her Changes

Ye Leng'an returned to the dormitory carrying a large bag of items.

After the end of the National Day holiday, she had taken several days off. Upon returning from her break, she went back to the dormitory. The items she carried were souvenirs bought during her trip to the small town. Though her interactions with her dorm mates were somewhat casual, observing certain social niceties was still necessary.

As she entered the dormitory, she found her three other roommates present.

The sight of Ye Leng'an's return caught the others off guard. Clearly, they hadn't expected her to come back at this moment.

"Welcome back, Leng'an!" Zhu Bixuan exclaimed with delight, though she couldn't help but add a few complaints. "Where have you been all this time? I missed you so much, you know."

Zhu Bixuan's friendly demeanor wasn't surprising to Ye Leng'an. Setting the bag down on the table, Ye Leng'an smiled and explained, "I went on a trip during the holiday, but ran into some unexpected issues and had to take a few days off. I brought back some local specialties from my trip. Feel free to share them!"

"You're too kind, Leng'an," Zhu Bixuan cheered, wasting no time in inspecting the contents of the bag.

Zhou Cui'an and Ling Weiwei joined in as well.

Observing her three roommates, Ye Leng'an couldn't help but feel a tinge of surprise. She hadn't anticipated such significant changes after just a few days apart.

Zhu Bixuan remained unchanged, her carefree demeanor intact. All her emotions were transparent, and she remained straightforward without a hint of artifice.

However, Ling Weiwei appeared different. Previously aloof, she seemed to have shed some of her arrogance and was gradually integrating into the dormitory.

But it was Zhou Cui'an who had undergone the most striking transformation. From a simple rural girl upon her arrival, she had now embraced a modern urban style. Her previous wardrobe had vanished, replaced by trendy attire, and even her hairstyle had undergone a makeover.

Ye Leng'an couldn't help but feel that just a few days away had brought about such profound changes.

Observing Zhou Cui'an, Zhu Bixuan smiled and commented, "Surprised, Leng'an? When I returned to the dormitory after the holiday, I was also taken aback by Cui'an's new look. I almost thought I mistook her for someone else!"

"The change is quite remarkable," Ye Leng'an replied with a smile. "But you look great like this."

"Right? You think so too, don't you?" Zhu Bixuan exclaimed excitedly. "I share the same opinion."

However, she quickly realized her words might have been misconstrued. Hastily turning to Zhou Cui'an, she clarified, "Cui'an, I didn't mean to imply you weren't attractive before. I just think you look even better now. I...I mean...well, I can't quite explain it, but you truly look much better than before."

"I understand what you mean," Zhou Cui'an replied with a smile. "Perhaps my change caught you off guard. But I won't dwell on it. Besides, I think I look good like this."

The part-time job had afforded her a salary she'd never dreamed of before. In just a few days, she had earned tens of thousands of yuan.

In the past, she had struggled to scrape together even her tuition fees. Yet now, in just a few days, she had earned enough to cover her entire university tuition. Of course, this was partly due to the commission from Ye Leng'an's order. Otherwise, she wouldn't have earned so much.

Previously, she would have immediately saved such earnings for tuition and living expenses, with some sent back home. However, inexplicably, she found herself drawn to the branded clothing stores. Unable to resist, she indulged in trying on clothes.

Initially, she had only wanted to browse. Yet, when she adorned herself in those fashionable garments, she felt a newfound sense of belonging among her dorm mates. She realized she, too, was worthy of such attire – perhaps even more so, having earned the money herself.

Coupled with the flattering remarks from the sales staff, she found herself making purchases in a daze.

Upon leaving the store, regret washed over her. However, the admiring glances from passersby seemed to validate her actions.

Thus, despite spending a substantial sum in just a few days, seeing the astonished looks from her roommates and classmates at the end of the holiday made her feel justified.

Furthermore, if she could earn so much in one go, she was certain she could earn even more in the future. She viewed her current expenditures as an investment.

Reflecting on this, she deemed it worthwhile to have spent tens of thousands in just a few days.

Observing Zhou Cui'an, Ye Leng'an smiled but refrained from commenting.

She sensed that Zhou Cui'an's change went beyond appearance – it was a shift in mentality.

Whether this change was for better or worse remained uncertain.

Moreover, she felt she had played a role in this transformation. After all, her lavish spending in the luxury store had earned Zhou Cui'an a significant commission.