

Honoured 651

Chapter 651: Two twisted women [2]

"Huh?"

Velnorah hurriedly stood up, looking at the man in front of her, "Tian... what are you doing here?"

With a chuckle, Zhao Tian stepped forward and hugged her "I thought you would miss me, so I came here to see you." Read latest chapters on NovelBin.Côm

Velnorah was dumbfounded and hurriedly hugged him back, burying her face into his neck "Tian..."

Zhao Tian smiled as he placed a kiss on her head.

Fei Lingxi's ring was still connected to his dorm room the last time she came out, so when she used her ring along with him, he was easily teleported to his room in the dorm.

A soft sigh escaped Velnorah's lips, feeling the warmth from his body "I indeed missed you... more than you realize."

Zhao Tian hugged her closer "Maybe it's the blood bond you created.. I felt like you were missing me, so I came here as fast as I could."

A smile appeared on Velnorah's lips upon hearing this "Thank you Tian, I love you so much..."

...

"Haa... Haa..."

As their lips parted, Elvoria's breaths came in soft gasps, her cheeks flushed a delicate shade of pink under the moon's glow.

She leaned back slightly, letting Selena's fingertips brush against her collarbone, tracing the curve with a deliberate tenderness.

"You always know how to leave me breathless," Elvoria murmured, her voice laced with vulnerability that she rarely allowed to surface.

Selena leaned in, their foreheads touching as her hands found their way to Elvoria's waist, pulling her closer until their bodies were pressed together once more.

"Elvoria..." Selena whispered, her lips grazing against Elvoria's, teasing her with the promise of another kiss.

Elvoria's hands roamed, her fingertips trailing along Selena's spine, feeling the slight arch of her back as she responded to the kiss.

Selena broke the kiss first, her lips brushing against Elvoria's jawline "By the way... what are you doing here? In the capital, I thought you would be near the Jade Eclipse sect."

Upon hearing this, Elvoria grinned "I heard that Velnorah got herself a Vryienne... so I wanted to make him mine and want to see the despair in Velnorah's eyes."

Selena smirked as she licked her lips "Hoh, I see... seems like that little daughter of yours has stepped into adulthood."

Elvoria's face churned in disgust "Don't even call her my daughter... I only love you, if only you could impregnate, I would gladly accept our daughter and raise it."

"That Velnorah is such a disgrace to me."

Selena arched an eyebrow as she leaned back slightly, letting her fingers trail lazily along Elvoria's arm. "You've always been dramatic, my dear."

Elvoria's crimson eyes narrowed, a flicker of irritation passing through them "I'm not being dramatic. That girl has been nothing but a thorn in my side since the day she was born. Everything about her reminds me of my past... of my failures."

Selena tilted her head, a knowing smirk playing at her lips. "And yet, you can't seem to leave her alone, can you? Watching her every move, meddling in her life, even now..."

Elvoria's expression darkened as she reached out, clutching Selena's throat "Don't mistake my curiosity for care. Velnorah is nothing to me, Selena. Nothing."

"I only want to see her crumble, to strip away everything she holds dear until she's left with nothing but despair."

Selena chuckled softly despite the tight hold on her throat "Ahh... don't choke me."

Elvoria pulled back her hand with a giggle "That so-called Vryienne is just a man, Selena. A man like any other."

"I'll break him just as easily, and when I do, I'll make him mine. Then I'll parade him in front of Velnorah and watch as the light in her eyes dies."

Selena sighed, shaking her head with a bemused smile. "You never change, do you? Always so dramatic, always so cruel. It's why I love you, you know."

At that, Elvoria's expression softened and she reached out, cupping Selena's face in her hands, her thumbs gently brushing against her cheeks. "You're the only one I care about, Selena. The only one I've ever loved. If I could..."

She trailed off, her voice trembling slightly before she took a steadying breath. "If I could make you mine completely, if I could bear a child with you... I'd give up everything else without a second thought."

Selena's gaze softened, and she leaned into Elvoria's touch, her hands coming to rest on her lover's waist. "You're such a fool, Elvoria."

Elvoria just sighed and asked "How long will it take before the Patriarch arranges the machines? Yesterday was a great day to attack since Ji Shuang was not in the sect."

Hearing this, Selena rolled her eyes "Even though Ji Shuang is not there, there is still Yan Zijin... she is still a force to reckon with."

"Well, we are not going all out; we just want to plunder and get our revenge for our father."

"And get back our Brynnhilder."

"Hmm, we will soon begin our attack once the machines are ready."

...

Morning arrived in the Jade Eclipse Star, the golden rays of sunlight streaming through the lattice windows, casting intricate patterns on the wooden floor of the room.

Zhao Tian sat on the edge of the bed, his tender eyes gazing at Velnorah, who lay peacefully among the silken sheets.

Her delicate features were bathed in the warm glow of the morning sun, her monochrome gray-black hair splayed around her head.

Zhao Tian's heart held a hint of reluctance... he didn't want to leave, not after seeing her like this.

'Seems like she is still worried about something, but she is not saying about that to me.'

He leaned forward, brushing a stray strand of hair from her face with a gentle hand.

His touch was light, careful not to wake her, but Velnorah stirred slightly, her lashes fluttering as she opened her eyes.

"Zhao Tian..." her voice was soft, still laced with sleep.

She blinked up at him, and her lips curved into a faint smile.

"I didn't mean to wake you," Zhao Tian said, his voice low and soothing. "Rest a little longer."

Velnorah reached out, her hand finding his.

Her fingers were slender, warm against his palm. "You're leaving?" she asked quietly, her eyes holding a mix of understanding and a touch of sadness.

Zhao Tian nodded, leaning closer so their foreheads touched. "I still have some matters to take care of,"

Velnorah's gaze softened further as she looked up at him "Please come whenever you have time like this. Being with you feels.. very peaceful."

Zhao Tian's lips quirked upward as he cupped her cheek, his thumb brushing against her smooth skin. "I surely will."

He leaned in, pressing a soft, lingering kiss to her lips.

Velnorah responded, her hand sliding up to rest against his chest.

When he pulled back, their eyes met, and for a moment, neither spoke.

"Stay safe," Velnorah finally said, her voice a little firmer now, though her tone remained gentle.

"I will. And I'll be back before you know it."

She nodded, "Mhm..."

Zhao Tian stood, his hand lingering on hers for a moment longer before he finally let go.

As he walked to the door, he glanced back, looking at her one last time.

Velnorah had sat up now, the sheets pooling around her waist as she watched him with a small, soft smile.

"Take care, Tian."

Chapter 652: Cute little fox!

Zhao Tian quickly returned to his dorm and entered the artifact.

However, sensing that his women are all bathing in the lake, he appeared there.

As Zhao Tian stepped into the serene grove surrounding the lake, he paused for a moment to look at the scene.

His gaze softened as he spotted Xia Shenyi gracefully swimming to the center, her long hair gliding like silk in the water.

Fei Lingxi and Fei Ziyu were near the edge, engrossed in a splash battle that had water shimmering like tiny crystals in the air.

Li Jia floated lazily, while Shi Yixian sat on a rock at the lake's edge as she dipped her toes into the water.

And then there was Yao Lian, her fox ears twitching as she swirled playfully in her humanoid form.

Unable to resist the peaceful moment, he began to undo his robes.

Yao Lian was the first to notice him... before she turned her gaze toward him, her fox ears perking up in surprise.

She blinked, her eyes widening as she registered what he was doing.

"W-What? Master?!" Yao Lian stammered, her cheeks tinting a deep red as she instinctively transformed into her fox form with a soft puff of energy.

"What are you doing? Can't you see we're bathing here?"

Zhao Tian chuckled lightly, "I see that."

"Then don't strip!" Yao Lian squeaked, trying to avert her eyes while her bushy tail swished furiously behind her.

"There are women here! Have some shame!"

Her words trailed off as she peeked back and saw him continue undressing without hesitation.

Her jaw dropped, and her thoughts scrambled.

She quickly buried her face in her paws, her muffled voice escaping in a panic. "M-Master, stop! This isn't proper!"

Fei Lingxi, hearing the commotion, turned to see what was happening, "Lian'er, what's wrong? You've seen him shirtless before."

"That's not the point!" Yao Lian yelped, peeking out just enough to catch a glimpse... and immediately regretting it.

Her gaze darted away, but her flustered muttering continued. "Why does he have to... why here... and why is it so... no, wait, I shouldn't be looking!"

Xia Shenyi rolled her eyes "Don't act innocent, you pipsqueak. I have noticed you peeking at Zhao Tian while he was having sex with his women."

Hearing this, the fox's ears turned red "That.. I was just curious about the mating procesaahhh..."

The fox blinked looking at his dick 'O-Oh.. it was so big when he was in heat and was roughly mating with woman.'

'But now.. it has gone smaller.. so whenever he is in heat, it gets b-big?'

Yao Lian hurriedly swam to the edge of the lake, her fox ears twitching nervously.

As her paws touched the soft grassland, she leaped onto the shore, shaking the water droplets from her fur.

"I am leaving..."

As she was about to run, Zhao Tian stopped her "Wait."

Huh? Yao Lian's body froze and she turned her head "Master?"

He walked close to her and spoke "Turn to your human form."

"E-Eh?" Yao Lian's voice hitched, her tail bristling slightly.

"You... want me to transform? Here? In front of you? Are you crazy, Master?"

Her cheeks flushed a deep crimson as she added, "You just want to see me naked, don't you? You perverted, shameless..."

-- Zhao Tian stared at her blankly "You can just show your back to me, hiding your private regions."

My back? She muttered nervously, glancing down at her paws.

Seeing her hesitation, Zhao Tian's tone softened. "Lian, trust me. I need to examine something."

After a long moment of silence, Yao Lian finally nodded, albeit reluctantly. "Fine..." she mumbled, turning her back to him.

Taking a deep breath, her body shimmered with a faint golden glow as she shifted into her human form.

Her long, silky pink hair fell gracefully down her back, glistening with the remnants of water from the lake.

Her delicate shoulders and smooth skin were partially obscured by her hair, but her toned and shapely figure was impossible to miss.

Her tail, soft and plush, swayed slightly behind her, its base nestled just above her well-sculpted ass.

But the one he was more curious about was... her tail.

'Ohhh...'

Looking at the base of her tail which was attached to her back just above her asscheeks.

Yao Lian wiggled her tail nervously, her cheeks burning bright red as she stammered, "Y-Y-You're looking, aren't you? You perverted Master! You've already seen enough, right? Can I leave now?"

"Wait, Lian"

He stepped closer, his hand reaching out toward her tail.

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Before she could protest, his fingers brushed against the soft fur, and he gently grasped it.

"Wh-What are you doing?!" Yao Lian yelped, jerking forward slightly in surprise.

Her tail swayed furiously in his grasp as she turned her head over her shoulder to glare at him, her fox ears twitching furiously. "Let go of my tail! That's.. t-that's sensitive!"

Zhao Tian chuckled softly, "Relax. I'm just curious about how it works,"

His fingers traced the soft fur, marveling at its texture. "It's... surprisingly warm. Almost like it's alive in its own way."

"It is alive!" Yao Lian snapped, her face growing redder with every passing second.

"The tailbone is connected to my spine, so it feels like it's a part of me... a very personal part of me! You can't just grab it without asking!"

Zhao Tian hummed thoughtfully, his fingers brushing near the base of her tail. "I see. So, it's directly tied to your nervous system? Fascinating."

"F-Fascinating?!" Yao Lian sputtered...

"What's so fascinating about my tail? It's just... a tail."

Zhao Tian ignored her protests, his attention focused entirely on the way her tail reacted to his touch. "It's more than just a tail,"

"It's an extension of your body, and it's clearly tied to your emotions. The way it bristles when you're angry or sways when you're nervous..."

Yao Lian groaned, burying her face in her hands. "Master, please! Can we stop talking about my tail? This is so embarrassing..."

Zhao Tian finally released her tail, stepping back with a satisfied nod. "Alright, I'm done. You can relax now."

She turned around, her face still flushed as she glared at him. "You're unbelievable, you know that?" she muttered, crossing her arms over her chest.

"Next time, ask before you grab someone's tail!"

Zhao Tian chuckled, his expression softening as he met her gaze. "I'll keep that in mind. Thank you for indulging my curiosity, Lian."

Yao Lian huffed, her ears twitching as she turned to leave. "You're lucky I'm loyal to you, Master. Anyone else would've gotten a tail slap for that."

As she walked away, Zhao Tian watched her with a small smile.

"She's quite the character," he murmured to himself before heading back toward the lake.

Glancing back at the women in the lake, he smiled and joined them.

Chapter 653: Brynnhilder?

A few more days passed-

In the past few days, Zhao Tian mostly spent time in the Imperial palace with Lan Shuqin and Zhou Hanyue or coming back to the Sect to spend some time with Velnorah or Yao Jing.

"Hmm... I have already noticed that the vampires and even the evil sect Coven of Black Hearts are on the move."

Sitting on the couch in the chamber of the Sect's main hall, Ji Shuang spoke as she glanced at Zhao Tian and Yao Jing, who were sitting opposite her.

"I've already noticed their presence around our star. If they haven't struck yet, it's only because they're waiting for the right opportunity."

"And even if we find these evil sect members within our sect, it would be hard to completely exterminate them."

Ji Shuang had a thoughtful look on her face as she spoke "So with the vampires on cahoots with the Evil sect... I think they are aiming for our Sect after all."

Hearing this, Yao Jing was quite confused "But why are they targeting the Sect? If they want to take over our star, they would aim for the Jade Emperor and destroy the capital first."

With a shake of her head, Ji Shuang spoke with a bitter smile "Our sect indeed has some history with the Vampires."

Yao Jing blinked her eyes in confusion "Eh?"

Nodding her head, Ji Shuang spoke, "Decades ago... my father, the previous Sect master of this sect went on a rampage and hunted the vampires relentlessly."

H-Huh? Yao Jing was taken aback "Why..."

Ji Shuang's expression darkened. "Because my mother was killed by a vampire. A high-ranking one. She was drained of life in front of my father's eyes."

"After her death," Ji Shuang continued, "...my father didn't stop at mere vengeance. He went further, killing not just the one responsible but countless others, including the Patriarch of the Vampire High Star at that time."

"And during that rampage, he took something... a weapon of immeasurable value to the vampires. A weapon they would give anything to retrieve: Brynnhilder."

Zhao Tian's gaze narrowed "Brynnhilder?"

Ji Shuang glanced at him, "Brynnhilder is no ordinary weapon. It was forged from the core of a dying star by the ancestors of the vampires... a relic of their greatest age. It grants its wielder power over pure astral energy, an energy that borders on divine."

Yao Jing raised an eyebrow "Why would your father take it, Sister Shuang?"

Ji Shuang's expression grew cold. "To deny them their strength. After the death of my mother, he vowed to sever the vampires' power at its roots."

"Taking Brynnhilder was the final step. But its loss left a wound that has festered for decades. And it seems like they've returned, seeking to reclaim what they lost."

Zhao Tian had a contemplative gaze hearing all of this.

With a sigh, Ji Shuang spoke "What makes it worse is that Brynnhilder isn't just a weapon. You can say... it's the life core of the vampires."

Hm? Zhao Tian raised an eyebrow "What do you mean by that.. Sect master?"

Ji Shuang spoke with a dry smile "I said the Brynnhilder was forged from the core of a dying star, right? It was the first star the vampire race originated."

"The star's core is essential for the longevity of the vampire race."

"But since the star was dying, the ancestors of vampires destroyed that star and created the Brynnhilder with that core as they moved to a different star."

"Without the core, their lifespans have begun to dwindle. Entire noble houses are withering away."

After hearing this, Yao Jing asked "But if the Brynnhilder is this dangerous, why not just destroy it? Surely your father must have considered that."

With a shake of her head, Ji Shuang replied "No, its just simply powerful that my Father couldn't even destroy it."

Ji Shuang's gaze flickered over to Zhao Tian as she continued "But there's one other thing you should know."

"There's a second component to Brynnhilder... a sigil. It's known as the Key of the Hemlock Graven. My father hid it separately from the weapon, to ensure no one could ever fully unlock Brynnhilder's power."

Yao Jing tilted her head. "And where's the sigil now?"

Ji Shuang hesitated, then said slowly, "It was entrusted to the Jade Imperial Family."

Yao Jing's gaze squinted "So if they ever attacked, the vampires and the Coven wouldn't just target the sect. They'll target the Imperial Palace as well."

Ji Shuang nodded. "And the sigil's location is even more perilous. The last records indicate it was sealed within the palace's Sanctuary... a chamber that requires the bloodline of the Emperor to unlock."

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With a thoughtful nod, Zhao Tian asked, "I wonder why the evil sect is allying with the vampires. What benefits do they gain from destroying the sect? Do you have any personal grudges against them?"

Ji Shuang shook her head. "No... maybe the evil sect just wants to see the destruction of our sect? Or maybe they want to plunder the resources within our sect."

Yao Jing let out a deep sigh "So we don't know when they will attack us."

"They might attack us anytime and we always need to be on guard."

"Yeah, we always need to be cautious."

...

woosh Yan Zijin moved first, closing the distance with a burst of speed.

Her palm shot out toward Zhao Tian's chest, a feint that quickly turned into a sweeping kick aimed at his ribs.

Zhao Tian sidestepped, narrowly avoiding the blow, and countered with a sharp jab aimed at her shoulder.

She twisted her body to avoid his strike, catching his wrist in one hand and pulling him off balance.

With a flick of her foot, she aimed for his shin, but Zhao reacted quickly, leaping backward and freeing himself from her grip.

"Not bad," she remarked, resetting her stance.

"But your footwork is sloppy. Keep moving or you'll become a stationary target."

As he attempted a roundhouse kick, she ducked low, spinning beneath it and delivering a sharp elbow strike to his side.

The impact made him stumble, but he quickly regained his footing.

She suddenly switched from defense to offense, her movements blurring as she attacked.

A rapid series of punches drove Zhao Tian back, forcing him to block desperately.

She followed up with a spinning kick aimed at his temple.

He ducked just in time, the wind from her strike brushing against his ear.

"Too slow..." she admonished, her voice sharp as she closed the distance.

Her fist shot out toward his stomach, but Zhao twisted his torso, letting the punch graze past him.

He grabbed her wrist, attempting to lock her arm, but she countered by dropping her weight and twisting free.

In one fluid motion, she swept his legs out from under him.

thud Zhao hit the ground hard, but before she could capitalize, he rolled to the side and sprang to his feet.

With a nod of approval, Yan Zijin spoke in her usual indifferent tone "Even though in the past few days, I could only give less amount of training... you are catching up very quick."

"And is it after two days that you are going to the great Tianhe forest?"

Zhao Tian nodded his head "Yeah..."

Yan Zijin's gaze squinted upon hearing this "Mhm, once you return, I will check your physique's refinement."

"Now, go to the cave."

Zhao Tian smiled dryly and nodded his head "Yes, Master."

Chapter 654: Training!

As Zhao Tian followed Yan Zijin, the wind brushed through the trees around them and soon both of them reached the cave.

The entrance to the gravity cave loomed ahead, carved into the side of a jagged cliff.

It radiated an oppressive energy and Yan Zijin paused at the entrance as she turned her gaze to Zhao Tian.

"Remember," she said, her voice as cold as ever, "the gravity inside the cave increases in layers. I'll only guide you up for some layers. Beyond that, it's up to you."

Zhao Tian nodded, "Yes, Master."

Her lips curved into the faintest hint of a smile. "You'll need more than your best."

She stepped inside without another word, and Zhao Tian followed.

The air inside the cave was dense, pressing against his chest with every step.

The further they walked, the heavier it became, as if invisible chains were over his shoulders.

By the time they reached the first layer, Zhao Tian's breathing had already grown heavier.

Yan Zijin stopped, turning to face him. "Drop into a stance."

He complied instantly, lowering himself into a combat stance.

The pressure was intense, making even standing hard for him.

Yan Zijin watched him for a moment before she snapped her fingers.

A burst of energy shot from her hand, slamming into his abdomen.

thoom Zhao Tian staggered but didn't fall, gritting his teeth as he steadied himself.

"Good. Your core strength has improved," she said, as she reached out and touched his abdomen.

"But your reactions are still too slow."

Without warning, she lashed out with a kick aimed at his side.

Zhao Tian twisted, narrowly dodging the blow, but the movement was sluggish under the weight of the cave's gravity.

Yan Zijin didn't let up and followed the kick with a flurry of punches.

Each attack forced him to move faster and dodge, despite the crushing force bearing down on him.

"Focus!" she uttered as her fist grazed his jaw.

"If you can't adapt to this pressure, you won't survive in intense fights."

Zhao Tian grunted, dodging another strike and counter-attacking with a punch of his own.

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Yan Zijin easily deflected it as her hand disappeared like a blur "Better, but not good enough."

She stepped back, her eyes narrowing. "The second layer will be good for you. Follow me."

Without hesitation, Zhao Tian followed her deeper into the cave and he felt the air and the pressure getting thicker in the cave.

When they reached the second layer, Zhao Tian's body crouched a little because of the intense weight, his breaths coming in shallow gasps.

"Haa.. Haa..."

Yan Zijin stood before him, unbothered by the weight of the cave and crossed her arms, waiting.

"Stand."

He forced himself to his feet, his legs trembling under the strain.

Yan Zijin stepped closer, "This is where you'll train. Your body needs to adapt to this weight, or you'll crumble under real pressure. Understand?"

Zhao Tian nodded, "Yes, Master."

She gestured to the center of the chamber "Begin with the Thousand Steps of Iron Will. Don't stop until I say so."

Zhao Tian moved to the center and began the grueling exercise.

"Urghh..."

Each step felt like dragging a mountain, his muscles screaming in protest.

But he didn't stop as Yan Zijin watched him like a hawk, her sharp eyes catching noticing his every move.

"Keep your back straight," she snapped when he began to hunch forward.

"You'll only hurt yourself if your posture collapses."

Minutes turned into hours...

Sweat poured down Zhao Tian's face as he took deep breaths.

But despite the pain, he pushed forward, step after excruciating step.

When he finally completed the exercise, he collapsed to his knees, his chest heaving.

Yan Zijin approached him, her expression as indifferent as ever "You lasted longer than I expected,"

"But you're still far from ready."

She crouched beside him, placing a hand on his shoulder "Rest for five minutes. Then we move to the next drill."

Zhao Tian looked up at her, exhaustion written across his face, "Yes, Master."

...

As the training ended, Yan Zijin looked at Zhao Tian who was lying on the floor taking heavy breaths as his chest rose up and down.

Without a word, she stepped closer and crouched beside him "Tian..."

He opened his eyes, glancing at her through the haze of exhaustion.

Yan Zijin gently placed a hand on his shoulder, steadying him as she helped him sit upright.

"Don't use your light energy to heal..."

Zhao Tian nodded weakly, acknowledging her words.

She slipped his arm over her shoulder, wrapping her other arm around his waist to support him as she helped him to his feet.

"Come with me," she said, her voice softer now. "I'll relieve your muscles."

Zhao Tian was too worn out to argue, simply nodding as she led him away from the training cave and toward the training ground chambers.

Zhao Tian couldn't help but notice the faint fragrance of jasmine lingering around Yan Zijin as she was very close to him.

When they reached the training ground chambers, Yan Zijin pushed the door open with her free hand and led him inside.

The room was simple but well-kept, its design reflecting Yan Zijin's disciplined nature.

A low bed rested in the center, surrounded by shelves and a small table neatly arranged with ointments, cloths, and tools.

She guided Zhao Tian to the bed, her movements careful as she helped him sit down before gently laying him back against the cool sheets.

With a sigh she spoke "I also give Yun Xi the same training.. after training, she is not allowed to use her light energy. I will relieve her muscles by myself."

She reached for a ceramic jar of ointment on the nearby table, "Even though she has the light element, Yun Xi uses her hands to fight and possesses extraordinary physical strength. I've taught her to rely on her body as much as her abilities. You will learn to do the same."

She stepped closer, her fingers lightly brushing the hem of his robes. "I will remove this."

Zhao Tian nodded faintly and shifted slightly to make it easier for her, and she slipped his upper robes off, revealing the taut, lean muscles of his chest and torso.

Yan Zijin positioned herself beside Zhao Tian, her indifferent gaze softening just slightly as she observed the tension etched across his body.

Without a word, she dipped her fingers into the herbal ointment, its faint glow and earthy aroma filling the room.

She started at his shoulders, her fingertips pressing firmly into the dense knots of muscle.

"Haa..." Zhao Tian inhaled sharply as the initial pressure sent a sharp jolt through his body, but the ache quickly ebbed, replaced by a spreading warmth that seemed to seep into his very bones.

Yan Zijin's hands moved in smooth, circular motions, her thumbs kneading into the tension with a controlled force.

"Your shoulders carry too much strain," she murmured.

"You're forcing strength from the wrong places. Let the energy flow naturally... don't resist it."

Zhao Tian managed a weak nod, his breath hitching as her hands moved to the base of his neck.

Her thumbs pressed into the sides, working out the stiffness that had built up over hours of grueling training.

Each movement felt purposeful, her expertise evident as she worked on muscles he hadn't even realized were sore.

"Tell me if you feel something feels wrong.. because I have never worked with male bodies before, so there might be slight variations..."

Zhao Tian managed a weak nod as she continued her work.

She shifted slightly, leaning closer as she worked her way down his upper arms.

Her palms ran along the length of his biceps, applying firm, even pressure that eased the rigidity.

When her fingers reached his forearms, she took his hand in hers, gently stretching his arm out to better access the strained muscles.

She shifted slightly, leaning closer as she worked her way down his upper arms.

Her palms ran along the length of his biceps, applying firm, even pressure that eased the rigidity.

When her fingers reached his forearms, she took his hand in hers, gently stretching his arm out to better access the strained muscles.

Her hands moved to his palms, her thumbs pressing into the center before sliding outward in slow, deliberate strokes.

She repeated the process on each finger, coaxing the stiffness from his joints with meticulous care.

By the time she finished with his arms, they felt lighter, as if the weight of his fatigue had been lifted.

"Lie back,"

Zhao Tian complied, his head resting on the pillow as she shifted her attention to his chest.

Her hands moved with practiced confidence, her fingers gliding over the taut muscles.

She worked along the lines of his pectorals, her thumbs pressing into the center before sweeping outward in broad, soothing strokes.

"This area takes more strain than you realize,"

"Every movement you make starts here. Keep it strong, but don't let it become rigid."

As she spoke, she moved to his sides, her fingers tracing the contours of his ribs.

She applied gentle pressure, her touch firm enough to ease the tension but careful not to aggravate the soreness.

Yan Zijin leaned back slightly, dipping her fingers into the ointment again before moving to his abdomen.

Her hands pressed into the hardened muscles, her thumbs working in small, circular motions.

The herbal balm's soothing warmth seemed to amplify her efforts, spreading a calming heat through his core.

By the time she finished, Zhao Tian felt as though his entire body had been rejuvenated.

Yan Zijin wiped her hands clean with a cloth.

"Rest, your body needs time to recover. Tomorrow, we'll push harder."

As she stood, her gaze lingered on him for a moment, a rare flicker of warmth in her usually indifferent expression. "You've done well, Zhao Tian. Don't let that go to waste."

Zhao Tian stared at the ceiling as he closed his eyes 'This training is hard... and I need to go to the forest 2 days later.'

Chapter 655: Its cold!

The night was silent except for the rustling breeze of snow from the snow forest outside as the extreme cold seeped into the tent.

Yao Jing sat quietly on the edge of the mattress, her arms wrapped around herself, the chill still clinging to her despite the fire's warmth.

She glanced at Zhao Tian, who stood by the brazier "Its colder than the last time we came here, don't you think?"

Zhao Tian turned to her and smiled "Yeah..."

With a tilt of her head, she asked "You are going to stand there and stare all night? Or shall we sleep?"

Chuckling, he moved close to her "Seems like it's too cold for you..."

She narrowed her eyes at him but didn't move as he crouched in front of her, his gaze dropping briefly to the delicate ties of her robe.

His fingers brushed against hers as he reached for the knot.

Hm? Yao Jing raised an eyebrow "You are going to remove my clothes?"

With a nod, he replied "Yeah... I know a way of warming you up."

"I can do it myself," she muttered, her cheeks warming despite the cold.

Zhao Tian just smiled "I'm sure you can, but where's the fun in that?"

Her breath caught slightly as the cool air brushed her shoulders when the fabric slipped away.

Yao Jing rolled her eyes but didn't push him away as he removed her outer robe, leaving her in a thin undergarment.

As she was sitting on the mattress, he couldn't pull the robe further below her waist "Jing'er, raise your ass a little."

Hm?

Seeing the situation, Yao Jing smirked and raised both of her legs, placing them on both sides of his shoulders.

Zhao Tian froze for a moment, but his surprise quickly gave way to a low chuckle. "Well, that's one way to help."

Using his shoulders as support, Yao Jing raised her hips, allowing the robe to slide smoothly down her waist.

The fabric pooled around her thighs, leaving her legs bare to the warm glow of the brazier.

Then, with a playful glint in her eye, she moved her right foot, gently pressing it against his face. "You like this, don't you?"

Zhao Tian tilted his head slightly, his eyes meeting hers with amusement. "Now you're just showing off," he replied, his hands resting on her calf to steady her.

Yao Jing leaned back further, her smirk deepening. "Admit it," she said, her toes brushing against his lips.

"You like it, don't you?"

Zhao Tian let out a soft laugh, and he didn't answer immediately.

Instead, he leaned forward and pressed a kiss to her toes, his lips brushing lightly against her skin.

"I like every part of your body, Jing'er,"

His hands slid gently down her leg, his fingers tracing the contours of her ankle before resting on her knee.

"From your toes to your stubborn little smirk."

Zhao Tian's gaze lingered on her as he spoke, the warmth in his tone sending a flush up Yao Jing's neck.

His hands moved with deliberate care, tracing her ankle before sliding lower, his fingertips brushing the arch of her foot.

Her smirk wavered slightly, replaced by a flicker of uncertainty as she watched him. "You don't need to-" Enjoy more content from NovelBin.Côm

The blush on Yao Jing's face deepened as she didn't expect him to be this sincere "Shameless..."

"Mngh~" Yao Jing inhaled sharply as he lowered his head, pressing a soft kiss to the top of her foot.

Before she could say anything further, he kissed her again, this time letting his lips linger.

His warm breath against her skin sent a tingling sensation through her.

Slowly, he pressed kisses along the length of her foot...

"Hngh~" Yao Jing's cheeks burned, but she didn't pull away.

Instead, she let herself sink into the moment, the intimacy of his actions both overwhelming and strangely comforting.

Her hands clenched the blanket beneath her as his lips trailed back up to her toes, his tongue flicking out to trace one gently.

"Haa..." She let out a soft gasp, her body tensing slightly before relaxing again.

Zhao Tian's smile deepened at her reaction, his kisses becoming bolder as he licked along the curve of her toes, his tongue warm and smooth against her skin.

His hands held her foot steady, his fingers massaging lightly as he continued.

The heat of the brazier seemed to pale in comparison to the warmth spreading through Yao Jing.

She bit her lip, her breath ragged as she watched him, unable to tear her gaze away.

Zhao Tian, usually so teasing and bold, had shifted into a quiet intensity that left her both flustered and fascinated.

When he finally looked up at her, his lips curling into a small, knowing smile.

"See?" he said, his voice soft but teasing. "Told you I like every part of you."

Yao Jing hurriedly retracted her legs, tucking them beneath her as her face burned crimson.

She pulled the blanket up, attempting to shield herself from his gaze, though the fabric did little to hide her flustered state.

"I-Idiot..."

Zhao Tian chuckled softly, leaning back slightly to give her space, though his eyes never left her.
"Idiot, am I?"

Yao Jing shot him a glare "You.. you were-"

"Taking care of you? You looked cold.. so I was helping you warm up."

"I wasn't cold!!"

Zhao Tian' raised an eyebrow, his expression turning playful as he leaned closer, closing the gap between them.

"Oh? So you're saying you didn't enjoy it? Not even a little?"

H-Huh? Her breath hitched as he came closer, the heat of his presence making it impossible to focus.

"I-I didn't say that," she stammered, her words fumbling as she tried to look anywhere but at him.

Zhao Tian chuckled again, his fingers lightly brushing against hers as he tilted his head, "You're adorable when you're flustered, you know that?"

"I'm not flustered!" she snapped, though her cheeks only deepened in color as she spoke.

"Right," he said, clearly unconvinced.

He leaned in even closer his nose brushing against hers as his voice dropped to a whisper. "Then why are you trembling, Jing'er?"

Her breath caught, her pulse pounding in her ears as she felt the warmth of his breath on her skin.

"Tian, you—"

Before she could finish, he kissed her, and the tension between them melted away as she found herself leaning into him without thinking.

When he finally pulled back, his gaze met hers, a mixture of affection and playfulness in his expression. "See?" he murmured, his thumb gently brushing against her cheek.

"You're trembling."

Yao Jing huffed, though her heart wasn't in it.

She reached up and lightly smacked Zhao Tian's shoulder, though her lips betrayed her with a soft smile. "Brat," she murmured, her voice tinged with fondness, "remove your clothes and come hug me. It's cold."

Zhao Tian chuckled and quickly removed his clothes as he joined her in the mattresses, pulling the blankets to cover them up.

His arms wrapped around her, drawing her closer until their bodies were pressed together.

Yao Jing sighed softly, her breath warm against his neck as she embraced him.

Her arms slid around him, holding him tightly as if she could trap the warmth between them and banish the chill completely.

Zhao Tian's hands moved with deliberate care, his fingers brushing against her skin as they found the edges of her undergarment.

He paused briefly, as if waiting for her to stop him, but when she said nothing, he continued.

With a gentle pull, he removed the thin fabric, letting it slip away to leave her naked beneath the blankets.

The warmth of their bodies melded together as they lay in silence.

Zhao Tian lowered his head, his breath grazing her skin as he pressed his face against her breasts.

"I love you, Master,"

Yao Jing's fingers found their way to his hair, her touch light as she began to run them through the dark strands.

Her other hand rested against his back, tracing soothing patterns over his skin.

She didn't respond immediately, letting the silence stretch between them as she absorbed the warmth of his confession.

Yao Jing shifted slightly, her legs tangling with his beneath the blankets as she rested her chin lightly atop his head "I love you too, dear..."

Chapter 656: Second stage of refinement!

Three days passed-

"Hmmm... Golden Heart Ginseng, Scarlet Vitality Root, Serpent Vine, Spider Lily..."

Inside the small, warmly lit tent, Yao Jing sat comfortably on Zhao Tian's lap, her petite body leaning against his broad chest.

Before them there is a small table lined with carefully arranged medicinal herbs.

Yao Jing furrowed her brows slightly, her delicate fingers brushing over the paper in her hand.

She checked and rechecked the list of medicinal ingredients, her lips moving softly as she whispered the names of the herbs, her voice like a gentle melody to Zhao Tian's ears.

After finishing her count, she nodded in satisfaction and smiled faintly, her dimples deepening. "Everything seems to be here. Now..."

She glanced at the paper again, tapping it thoughtfully. "Let's check the order they should go into the pot."

Zhao Tian, who was hugging her from behind, sat silently, letting the warmth of her body seep into his skin.

"You know," he murmured softly, his breath warm against her ear, "watching you work so seriously makes me want to keep you on my lap forever."

Yao Jing's hand, which had been pointing at an ingredient on the table, faltered for a moment.

A faint blush crept up her cheeks, but she ignored him, pretending to stay focused. "Don't distract me, Tian'er."

"Yes.. yes... Master."

A few minutes later, Yao Jing stood up gracefully from his lap, brushing off imaginary dust from her robes.

She extended her hand to him. "Come on, we still have work to do. The water must be hot enough by now."

Zhao Tian stretched his arm lazily, allowing her to grab his hand and pull him up.

Instead of letting go immediately, Yao Jing tightened her grip and pulled him a step closer.

"Tian'er," she murmured, leaning forward to press a quick kiss to his lips.

Before he could recover, she smirked. "That's to motivate you. Now, stop staring like an idiot and move.

Zhao Tian chuckled, his eyes softening as he followed her. "Motivated already."

She shot him a look over her shoulder as they stepped out of the tent into the cool night air, where a pot of water was already steaming gently over a controlled fire.

"Alright, Tian'er," Yao Jing said, turning to face him.

"You'll need to strip down."

With a nod, Zhao Tian began to remove his clothes and Yao Jing turned her back to him, pretending to focus on the herbs, though her ears burned at the sound of fabric rustling behind her.

Once his robe fell to the ground, Zhao Tian stood bare-chested under the moonlight, his well-defined muscles gleaming faintly.

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Yao Jing glanced over her shoulder, her eyes briefly meeting his before darting away.

She cleared her throat, "Get in the tub."

Zhao Tian stepped toward the wooden tub, the warmth of the water brushing against his skin as he climbed in.

"Haa..." He let out a soft sigh as he sank into the steaming bath, the heat soothing his muscles.

"Comfortable?" Yao Jing asked, stepping closer with a handful of herbs in her hands.

"Very," he replied, leaning back against the edge of the tub and closing his eyes.

"Though it would be even better if you joined me."

Yao Jing scoffed lightly, though her lips curved into a small smile. "Nice try, Tian'er. This bath is for you, not me."

She crouched beside the tub, carefully holding the first herb between her fingers. "This goes in first," she murmured, more to herself than to him.

She dropped the herb into the water, watching as it sank slowly, its golden hue spreading like ripples in the heat.

Zhao Tian opened one eye, watching her intently. "You look so serious. It's adorable."

"Focus," she replied, brushing a strand of hair behind her ear.

Her fingers reached for the next ingredient—Scarlet Vitality Root—which she placed into the water with equal care.

The water began to change, taking on a faint reddish tint that swirled together with the golden hue.

Zhao Tian shifted slightly, the warmth of the bath intensifying as the medicinal properties began to take effect.

"You'll feel a bit of heat soon," Yao Jing explained as she added the next herb.

"Don't fight it. Let it flow through you."

Zhao Tian nodded, his gaze never leaving her face. "Mhm."

Yao Jing paused, her hand hovering over the next herb.

She sighed, shaking her head as she dropped the Spider Lily into the water.

Its crimson petals unfolded like a delicate bloom, spreading a faint floral aroma.

The mixture of herbs created a vibrant mix of colors and scents, the water bubbling faintly as its potency increased.

Zhao Tian leaned his head back, letting the heat soak into his skin, his body tingling as the medicinal energy coursed through him.

"Feeling it now?" Yao Jing asked, her tone softer as she knelt beside him, her fingers gently brushing against his arm to check his temperature.

She leaned in further, pressing a soft kiss to his forehead, her lips lingering for a moment before pulling back. "Now behave, Tian'er, and let the herbs do their work."

Zhao Tian smiled, his eyes closing as he let himself sink further into the bath. "Yeah..."

For a while, the only sounds were the bubbling of the water and the occasional rustle of herbs as Yao Jing continued to monitor the process.

...

As the effects began to stabilize, Yao Jing knelt beside the tub, carefully observing his complexion.

She dipped her hand into the water briefly, testing the temperature. "It's time to get out, Tian'er. The herbs have done their part."

"Now, up you go before the water cools down too much."

He nodded and pushed himself up, the water cascading down his muscular frame in shimmering rivulets.

The heat from the bath left steam rising from his skin, and for a moment, he stood there, completely naked except for the underwear.

Yao Jing's cheeks flushed a delicate shade of pink, but she quickly composed herself, grabbing a thick cloth from nearby. "Stand still. You'll catch a chill if you don't dry off properly."

He spread his arms slightly. "By all means, Jing'er. Take your time."

She huffed, her hands steady despite her racing heart as she began to pat his shoulders dry.

The cloth moved down his arms and chest gently...

She continued her work, moving the cloth across his back, then down to his abdomen.

Her fingers brushed against his skin as she dried him...

Zhao Tian didn't make it easier for her.

Every so often, he shifted slightly, deliberately leaning into her touch or tilting his head to watch her reaction.

She moved lower, drying his legs "Stop fidgeting, or I'll leave you half-dried."

When she finally finished drying his legs, she stood up, the cloth clutched tightly in her hands. "There. All done."

But Zhao Tian didn't step back.

Instead, he reached out, his hand catching her wrist. "Not yet," he murmured, his voice softer now.

"Not yet?" she muttered as he gently pulled her closer.

"You missed a spot," he whispered, leaning in so his lips were just a breath away from hers.

Her heart raced, but she refused to let him get the upper hand entirely.

She raised an eyebrow, her free hand poking his chest. "Is that so? Where?"

Gently grasping her hand, she guided his hand to his crotch and pressed his dick against her palm.

'As I thought...' Yao Jing's lips twitched and to get back at him, she slid her hand inside his underwear, grasping his dick.

E-Eh? Zhao Tian was surprised, as he didn't expect her to really go for it.

With a smirk, she grabbed his dick strongly, making him wince "Jing'er.. be delicate there..."

She raised her right hand, pinching his cheek "You should be less horny with your Master.."

Her fingers twisted around his cock and Zhao Tian smiled dryly "Ok, Ok.. let it go..."

Chuckling, she retracted her hand and licked her palm "Alright, I will let you go..."

As she turned around to walk to the tent, Zhao Tian gave a sharp spank on her ass, making her twitch in pain.

"Y-You.. brat!"

With a grin, he hugged her from behind as his hands went upward, squeezing her breasts over her clothes "Jing'er.. The day I fuck you.. I won't let you get out of bed for two days."

Yao Jing squirmed in his arms but hearing his threat made her chuckle "Threatening me with a good time?"

"Hahaha..."

She turned her head, pecking his lips "Enough of the jokes.. let's go back to the Sect."

Chapter 657: I am dead?

"Hmm.."

Standing before Zhao Tian's half-naked figure, Yan Zijin's gaze lingered on him, her delicate brows furrowing slightly as she scanned his physique.

Her eyes narrowed in thought, and without hesitation, she stepped closer. Her fingers, slender and cool to the touch, reached out to rest on his chest.

The sudden contact sent a jolt of warmth through him, though he remained still, watching her every move with a subtle smile tugging at his lips.

"Your physique has grown stronger,"

"The medicinal bath has worked wonders. I can feel the difference."

She traced the contours of his chest, her fingers brushing over the firm ridges of muscle that rippled beneath her touch.

Zhao Tian smiled in his heart, as this is the second refinement process in the total of nine refinement processes, with the first Honoured One left in her notes.

He really wants to do all nine refinements quickly, but he can't.

As it was stated in the notes, after every refinement, the body must be given time to stabilize and cool down, allowing the changes to settle before proceeding further.

That's why he did the second refinement a month after the first refinement.

"You're quiet," Yan Zijin said suddenly, pulling him from his thoughts.

Her fingers trailed down from his chest to his abdomen, where the taut muscles flexed instinctively under her touch.

Her lips curled into a faint smile. "Were you just going to stand there and let me inspect you without saying a word?"

Eh? Zhao Tian showed a smile "Well you were inspecting so seriously.. so I didn't disturb you."

She moved her hands to his shoulders, her fingers gently kneading the firm muscle there. "I have to be serious. This refinement process isn't something to take lightly. I need to make sure your body is adapting properly."

"And what do you think?" he asked, as her hands moved along his arms, her touch firm but careful.

"I think..." Yan Zijin's voice trailed off as she stepped behind him, her hands sliding down his back, tracing the lines of his muscles. Experience tales with NovelBin.Côm

Her fingertips pressed lightly against his shoulder blades before trailing down to the small of his back. "...your body is responding perfectly. The medicinal properties have seeped into every inch of you."

She moved back around to face him, her eyes locking onto his. "Your strength has increased significantly since the last refinement."

Her lips pressed into a thin line as she continued her examination, her fingers gliding over the defined muscles of his arms and chest once more. "You said there are nine refinement stages with the notes you follow, right?"

"And you need rest before doing the next refinement..."

He nodded, "Yeah... I really want to do the next refinement, but I can't.."

Yan Zijin shook her head, her fingers flicking his forehead lightly, startling him. "Don't get reckless, Tian. The notes were clear for a reason. If you rush, your body could collapse under the strain."

"I know," he said, smiling faintly. "That's why I have you to keep me in check, isn't it?"

Her hand rested on his chest again, this time lingering longer than necessary.

The heat of his skin seeped into her palm, and she could feel the strength. "You're so sure of yourself," she murmured, her voice softer now.

...

Next day...

Walking towards a door, Zhao Tian raised his hand and knocked on it "Shuqin..."

In the next instant, the doors flung open and Zhao Tian was startled to see the anxious face of Zhou Hanyue.

Huh? What is she doing in Shuqin's room?

Looking at Zhao Tian's face, Zhou Hanyue's eyes trembled as tears moistened her eyes.

Why is she crying?

before he could say anything, she raised her hand and swung it towards his face to slap him.

Hm? Zhao Tian deftly caught her wrist, his gaze narrowing "Why are you angry..."

Zhou Hanyue tried to twist her hand out of his grip but seeing that she couldn't, she raised her left arm and punched his abdomen.

Receiving the punch, Zhao Tian just stared at her blankly "What the hell are you even doing?"

Zhou Hanyue pushed him away with trembling hands as she hurriedly stormed from there to her own room without even looking back.

What the fuck is even happening?

Totally confused by her action, Zhao Tian looked at Lan Shuqin, who was standing inside the room as tears moistened down her cheeks.

He hurriedly entered in, his voice laced with concern "Shuqin.. what happened?"

Lan Shuqin trembled as she tried to wipe away her tears, but they kept coming.

Her shoulders shook as she whispered, "We... we thought you were dead."

Huh? "Why would I.. die?"

"B-Because you have been missing for five days...."

Zhao Tian let out a sigh and replied "I just went to the Tianhe forest..."

Lan Shuqin stared at him in disbelief, her tears still flowing despite herself. "You should have told us!" she cried, her voice rising with exasperation.

"Do you have any idea what we went through?"

Zhao Tian's gaze softened as he took a step closer to her. "Shuqin, I didn't mean to make you worry. It wasn't my intention,"

Her body sagged slightly, the tension in her shoulders easing as relief began to seep in.

She wiped her face with the sleeve of her robe. "You don't understand... Lady Hanyue..."

Lan Shuqin hesitated, glancing toward the door as if afraid Zhou Hanyue might overhear.

Finally, she spoke, "She's been blaming herself. She thought her curse was the reason for your disappearance... for your death."

Zhao Tian's eyes widened slightly 'So that's why...'

He hurriedly walked to Zhou Hanyue's room and knocked on the door "Hanyue... hear me out. I wasn't trying to worry."

"I just went to the Tianhe forest, sorry I didn't tell you about that."

He didn't receive an answer from the other side but he knew his words must have reached her ears.

With a sigh, he turned to Lan Shuqin "Shuqin..."

Lan Shuqin gave a faint bow "Master Tian.. I know you have been flying between your Sect and the Imperial palace for the past few days."

"But if you are taking long trips, please do tell me..."

He nodded his head "Mhm, I will tell you next time.. so you don't have to worry."

Hearing this, a smile bloomed on her face "Thank you, Master Tian... Lady Hanyue must also be relieved now."

Seeing her smile calmed his heart and he gave a nod "Yeah..."

...

The next day...

The streets of the Capital bustled with life, filled with the chatter of merchants calling out their wares, the clatter of horse-drawn carriages, and the laughter of children darting through the crowds.

Walking through the streets of the Capital city, a faint blush streaked across Lan Shuqin's cheeks, who was walking beside Zhao Tian.

"Master Tian... you don't have to apologize with an outing."

Looking at her, Zhao Tian smiled "You are always inside the palace, so I thought... a little outing might help you get some air."

Lan Shuqin hesitated, looking down at her feet as they continued walking. "I mean..." she trailed off, stealing a glance at the passersby.

Everywhere she looked, people's eyes seemed to be drawn to Zhao Tian.

Men and women alike stared openly at him, some with admiration, others with envy.

His tall figure, and effortless charm made it impossible for him to blend into a crowd.

Normal people don't know that Zhao Tian is actually the Husband of Zhou Hanyue as noble and some notable figures were the only ones who were invited for the wedding.

'But still... this is embarrassing...'

Huh? However, Zhao Tian who was walking beside Lan Shuqin felt a powerful gaze on him and his eyes narrowed 'Someone is spying on me...'

Chapter 658: A small outing!

Zhao Tian who was walking beside Lan Shuqin felt a powerful gaze on him and his eyes narrowed 'Someone is spying on me...'

'Maybe they are the ones killing the people close to Hanyue... to make her feel despair.'

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'And now they are targeting me?'

He reached out and gently grasped Lan Shuqin's hand, bringing her close to him "Stay close to me..."

Lan Shuqin was startled but she didn't say anything and let him hold her hand as they walked through the streets.

However, noticing the shift in his demeanor, she leaned forward and whispered in concern "What happened, Master Tian?"

Forcing a smile, he shook his head "Nothing... For the time being, stay close to me..."

As he spoke, he slid his fingers, intertwining with her fingers.

H-Huh? This made her blush and she lowered her gaze, too flustered to speak.

Despite her embarrassment, she didn't pull away and silently matched his pace, her heart pounding erratically.

Meanwhile, Zhao Tian's gaze turned to the left and looked at the roof of a specific building 'Are they there...?'

But in the next instant, he felt the presence disappearing.

His gaze squinted 'It might be dangerous to have Shuqin with me if I confronted them...'

The streets were alive with the chatter of vendors and the laughter of children darting between stalls.

Brightly colored lanterns hung overhead, casting warm hues on the cobblestones.

Lan Shuqin also noticed that Zhao Tian is somewhat tense 'Is something wrong?'

As they walked, they passed a shop displaying elegant robes and finely stitched garments.

Lan Shuqin's gaze lingered on a pale blue dress embroidered with silver threads, the fabric shimmering like water under the sunlight.

"Do you like it?" Zhao Tian who was watching her asked breaking her out of her thoughts.

She blinked, startled by his sudden question "I... It's beautiful, but—"

Before she could finish, Zhao Tian was already stepping into the shop, pulling her along.

"W-What.. Master.. wait..."

The shopkeeper, a cheerful woman with gray hair, greeted them warmly. "Welcome! Looking for something special today?"

Zhao Tian gestured toward the blue dress in the window. "That one. Could you bring it over?"

Lan Shuqin tugged lightly on his sleeve. "You don't have to..."

Looking at her, he replied with a smile "I want to,"

The shopkeeper returned with the dress, holding it up for Lan Shuqin to see. "This would suit you perfectly, young lady. The fabric is enchanted silk...."

Lan Shuqin hesitated, her fingers brushing against the fabric. "It's... too much. I can't..."

'And it looks so expensive, it would definitely won't look good on me...'

Zhao Tian tilted his head, a teasing glint in his eyes. "Are you saying my taste is bad?"

H-Huh? Lan Shuqin was taken aback and hurriedly shook her head "N-No! That's not what I meant!" she stammered, her face turning red.

"Then try it on," he said with a faint smile, gesturing toward the fitting room.

Reluctantly, she stepped into the fitting room with the pale blue robes in her hand.

Moments later, she stepped out, the dress flowing elegantly around her.

The soft blue fabric accentuated her fair skin, and the silver embroidery seemed to dance with every movement.

Zhao Tian's gaze softened looking at the beautiful dress on her "It suits you,"

Lan Shuqin's face grew even warmer, and she glanced away, mumbling, "Thank you..."

But Zhao Tian wasn't done.

As Lan Shuqin admired the dress in the mirror, he began selecting other garments... a deep green robe, a soft lavender shawl, and a simple yet elegant set of everyday attire.

Lan Shuqin who was looking herself in mirror was confused to see Zhao Tian speaking with the woman 'What is he..'

As she walked near him, she was dumbfounded to see the woman taking a lot of beautiful clothes and arranging them.

'Don't tell me...'

"Master Tian!" she protested, watching him pile items onto the counter.

"This is too much!"

He shrugged and pointed at another one, asking the shopkeeper to take that "You'll need them."

Getting exasperated, she asked "For what?"

"For when we go out like this. Or when we attend formal events. Or when you just feel like dressing up."

She opened her mouth to argue but stopped when she saw the smile on his lips.

She couldn't bring herself to refuse his rare gesture of care.

After paying for the clothes, Zhao Tian handed the neatly wrapped packages to her and asked her to store in her storage ring.

Looking at the ring in her finger, she clutched her palm gently and asked "Where to next.. Master Tian?"

"Maybe we can get some food..."

The sweet aroma of caramelized sugar and roasted nuts wrapped around them as they approached the food stall.

Lanterns hung overhead, their warm light flickering against the vibrant displays of candied fruits, pastries, and sizzling skewers.

Zhao Tian's eyes looked around, eventually stopping at the vibrant red of candied hawthorn berries.

Without a word, he picked up a stick and handed it to Lan Shuqin.

She blinked in surprise before taking it gingerly in her hands.

Zhao Tian grabbed a small pouch of roasted chestnuts from the vendor and offered the man a few coins.

Lan Shuqin hesitated, the glossy crimson berries glistening in the light.

She took a tentative bite, her teeth breaking through the sugary coating to reveal the tartness of the hawthorn.

Her eyes widened in delight, and a smile bloomed on her lips.

"It's delicious!" she exclaimed, turning to Zhao Tian with genuine enthusiasm.

He watched her quietly, his lips curling into a smile "I thought you would like it."

Lan Shuqin, emboldened by the sweetness of the moment, held the stick toward him. "Try one."

He shook his head with a light chuckle. "I will pass."

"Oh, come on," she teased bringing it closer to his lips.

"You can't hand me something so good and not try it yourself. Here." She leaned closer, holding the stick near his face.

Zhao Tian sighed and slowly, he leaned in, his lips brushing against the candied surface as he took a bite.

He leaned back, chewing thoughtfully.

"Well?" she asked, tilting her head with a smile.

"It's... sweet,"

"See? You like it!" she said triumphantly, taking another bite herself.

Zhao Tian chuckled, shaking his head.

Lan Shuqin's eyes sparkled as she gestured to his bag of roasted chestnuts. "What about those? Aren't you going to share?"

Zhao Tian peeled another chestnut and held it out to her. "Here."

Instead of taking it with her hands, she leaned forward, capturing it with her lips.

Her boldness surprised even herself, and a faint blush crept across her cheeks as she chewed.

Zhao Tian raised an eyebrow, clearly amused. "That was... unexpected."

"You said to stay close to you," she quipped, trying to mask her embarrassment with humor.

"Hahaha..."

They continued walking, sharing bites of the candied fruit and roasted chestnuts as the lanterns overhead swayed in the evening breeze.

The streets continued to hum, vendors calling out their wares and laughter rippling through the crowd.

Zhao Tian and Lan Shuqin strolled side by side, the glow of lanterns casting soft shadows across their faces.

Zhao Tian's eyes drifted to a small stall tucked between a blacksmith's forge and an apothecary.

Its modest display was filled with delicate trinkets... bracelets, necklaces, and rings, all gleaming under the warm light.

Among the array, one piece caught his attention: a silver bracelet, thin and elegant, inlaid with tiny blue gemstones.

Lan Shuqin, lost in the rhythm of the street, didn't notice when he stopped.

Hm? She turned back to him, her brow furrowing slightly. "Is something wrong?"

"Wait a minute..."

Zhao Tian approached the stall and the vendor, an older man, straightened up, sensing a customer.

"That bracelet," Zhao Tian said as he gestured to the silver piece.

The vendor quickly retrieved it, holding it out for inspection. "You have a good eye, young man. This bracelet is crafted from spirit-forged silver and set with gemstones imbued with a calming aura."

Zhao Tian glanced at the bracelet, then at Lan Shuqin.

Without hesitation, he took out High grade astral stones "I'll take it."

"Wait!" Lan Shuqin who was watching him, stepping closer. "What are you doing?"

Before she could argue, Zhao Tian handed the payment to the vendor, who smiled knowingly and wrapped the bracelet in a fine cloth.

Zhao Tian accepted the package and turned back to Lan Shuqin.

"Hold out your hand,"

She hesitated, her cheeks coloring. "I can't accept this..."

With a sigh, he asked "You didn't like it? maybe we can buy another one..."

Hearing this, Lan Shuqin hurriedly shook her head "No, No.. not that..."

"Then, hold out your hand."

Slowly, she extended her wrist, her fingers trembling slightly.

Zhao Tian unwrapped the bracelet and gently he clasped it around her wrist, his fingertips brushing against her skin.

The silver gleamed under the lantern light, the blue gemstones catching the glow and reflecting it in soft hues.

"Master Tian..." Lan Shuqin began...

"It's nothing extravagant," he said casually, stepping back to admire how the bracelet looked on her.

"But it suits you."

She stared at the bracelet, her heart swelling with emotions she couldn't quite put into words.

Her fingers traced the smooth silver and the cool gemstones. "You didn't have to..."

"I wanted to," he replied looking at her smile.

Lan Shuqin's cheeks turned a deeper shade of pink, but she managed a small smile.

The vendor, who had been silently observing, chuckled. "You make a fine pair. The bracelet looks like it was made for her."

Lan Shuqin's face grew even warmer, and she glanced away, her fingers fiddling with the edge of her sleeve.

Zhao Tian, on the other hand, gave the vendor a nod before turning back to the street.

"Let's go, Shuqin."

As they resumed their walk, Lan Shuqin couldn't help but steal glances at him, her heart beating a little faster each time.

She tightened her grip on the bracelet, feeling its cool weight against her skin.

"Thank you..." she said softly, her voice nearly drowned out by the chatter around them.

Zhao Tian who was focused on pinpointing the strong presence couldn't hear her.

Eh? Lan Shuqin blinked her eyes realizing that he didn't hear her and chuckled in her heart.

'He is cute...'

Chapter 659: Stalker [1]

Hearing a little rustle outside, Zhou Hanyue stood up from the couch and walked to the door.

She slightly opened the door and peeked into the hallway to see what was happening.

There she saw Zhao Tian and Lan Shuqin entering her room and Lan Shuqin is also wearing fancy clothes.

A trace of annoyance flickered in her eyes...

She wasn't entirely sure why she is annoyed, but it disappeared as quickly as it came, replaced by a heavy sigh that escaped her lips.

"Seems like they have finished their small date..."

She returned to the couch, sinking into its familiar comfort.

Her fingers absently traced the edge of a small, worn pendant hanging around her neck—a keepsake from a time long gone.

"He seems like a good guy,"

Her lips curved into a faint, bittersweet smile. "Too good, maybe."

Her fingers tightened around the pendant, the sharp edges pressing into her skin as memories flooded her mind.

Faces flashed before her—smiling, vibrant faces that had once brought her joy.

And then the pain followed, as she remembered how each of them had faded away, leaving her with nothing but guilt and sorrow.

"It's better this way," she said, her tone hardening as if trying to convince herself.

"It's better if I don't get close to him. Or else..."

Her voice faltered, her gaze dropping to the pendant.

The faint glow of the light reflected off its surface, but she could almost see the bloodstains it had once bore...

"Or else he'll die too."

Zhou Hanyue leaned her head back against the couch, her eyes closing as she tried to push the thoughts away.

For a brief moment, she allowed herself to wonder what it might feel like to be free from her curse.

To walk beside someone like Zhao Tian without the fear of losing him.

To laugh and share moments as Lan Shuqin had done tonight.

But the thought was fleeting, and she shook her head, as if trying to banish it entirely.

"No,"

"It's not worth the risk. It's better to stay away."

And yet, despite her resolve, she couldn't stop the small, fragile part of her heart from wondering...

What if?

...

After leaving Lan Shuqin in her room, Zhao Tian stepped outside, walking through the courtyard
'The presence stopped following me when I came near to the palace. So Palace is a safe place...'

'If I go to a place where no one else is there, I can lure them out...'

With such thought, he quickly dashed into the air and continued his small walk through the streets in the evening.

'There it is...'

Suddenly his gaze narrowed and he looked towards a building's roof.

There he saw a silhouette of someone but in the next instant, it disappeared.

Without hesitation, he changed direction and flew toward a more isolated part of the city.

This area was different. The buildings here are destroyed and crumbling ruins.

Weeds pushed through cracked stone, and the air carried a faint scent of decay.

Zhao Tian landed softly, his feet touching the ground without a sound.

His sharp eyes scanned the surroundings...

The broken windows, and the jagged edges of collapsed structures—this is an abandoned part of the city.

'Now whoever it is will show up and no one will get into the crossfire.'

slessh In the next instant, something dashed toward Zhao Tian and he instinctively moved his neck as the sharp object missed his neck by mere inches.

The red blade brushed past him and struck a ruined building behind, blasting the building to pieces.
thoom

Hearing faint footsteps, he turned his gaze to look at the cloaked figure walking towards him.

Zhao Tian felt his nerves tingling and his gaze squinted 'Strong... Stronger as Shenyi? No. maybe stronger than her...'

"You have been stalking me for a while now... are you the one killing the people close to Hanyue to make it look like a curse?"

The figure tilted its head and let out a soft chuckle "Hanyue? That Cursed Princess? What about her?"

Hearing the voice, the frown on Zhao Tian's face deepened 'A woman?'

The woman took two steps forward as she spoke coquettishly "Well, I have been wanting to meet you... but you are always within the palace, so I didn't get the chance to meet you."

As Zhao Tian opened his lips to speak, he quickly dove under another attack and saw the red blade drizzling past his face.

He quickly jumped back, creating a small distance between them.

'Fuck... I got no choice but to use my domain, Arcane Enclave.'

As he spoke, he used his domain and the space and time 10 meters around him shifted.

Huh? The woman's gaze squinted 'The aura around him... changed; it is denser now.. what happened and I can feel a weight on my body.'

'Is this some kind of gravity technique?...'

Zhao Tian's breathing steadied as the faint glow of his Arcane Enclave enveloped the space around him and he took a sword from his storage ring.

Dust particles froze mid-air, their movement sluggish as if time itself were resisting.

A faint shimmer of light bent around the edges of his domain, marking its boundaries with a distortion.

The cloaked woman stood at the edge of this altered reality, her crimson eyes narrowing in curiosity.

She flexed her fingers, and thin tendrils of blood began to flow from her fingertips.

"Impressive, but let's see how well it holds up."

Without warning, the tendrils of blood, shot forward, twisting and converging toward Zhao Tian like a storm of crimson whips.

sleesh *sleesh*

Zhao Tian reacted instantly.

His domain slowed the incoming tendrils, their movements appearing as if they were fighting against time.

With a swift motion, Zhao Tian sidestepped the first tendril, his sword flashing as he severed it mid-air.

The tendril dissolved into droplets, which evaporated before touching the ground.

But more followed.

The woman's laughter rang out. "Hahahaha... Not bad... but you're not fast enough to dodge them all."

Three more tendrils came at him simultaneously, interweaving through the air in erratic patterns to confuse him.

Zhao Tian's eyes glowed faintly as he focused.

The spatial distortion of his Arcane Enclave enhanced his perception, allowing him to read their trajectories with precision.

sleesh With a sharp movement, he spun his blade in a wide arc, cutting through two tendrils while narrowly avoiding the third, which grazed his shoulder.

The fabric of his robe tore, and a faint line of blood appeared on his skin.

His gaze flickered around at the blood technique she just used "I see now. You are... a vampire?"

The woman smiled, stepping deeper into his domain. "You don't like vampires?"

She raised her hand, and the ground beneath them began to tremble.

Pools of blood seeped up from the cracks in the earth, forming a crimson haze that covered the area.

Zhao Tian felt the weight of her aura press against his own domain, creating a clash of energies that sent sparks of red and gold crackling through the air.

sleesh Suddenly, spikes of hardened blood erupted from the ground beneath Zhao Tian, aiming to impale him.

He jumped back, flipping mid-air to avoid the attack, but more spikes followed one after another.

They seemed to anticipate his movements, forcing him to twist and contort in the air to dodge.

Landing with a *thud* Zhao Tian drove his sword into the ground, channeling his domain's energy.

A pulse of spatial distortion rippled outward, shattering the spikes nearest to him.

'Haa... My body is light and I can move much better now. This feels good...'

Chapter 660: Stalker [2]

Zhao Tian steadied himself as the crimson haze surrounding them thickened, and the oppressive energy from the cloaked woman seemed to seep into his bones.

He tightened his grip on his sword, his muscles taut with tension.

The woman let out another chuckle, her voice dripping with mockery. "Light on your feet, aren't you? Let's see how long you can dance."

She flicked her wrist, and the blood haze spiraled around her, forming razor-sharp shards that hovered in the air like floating daggers.

swoosh

The first shard zipped toward Zhao Tian, followed by a dozen more one after another.

sleesh He ducked, twisted, and deflected as best as he could, his blade moving like a blur as it intercepted the relentless barrage.

clang *clang*

Yet, as he focused on one shard, another struck him from an unexpected angle, grazing his arm.

"Urgh..." The sting of pain barely registered in his mind before a larger shard slammed into his chest, sending him crashing into a ruined building.

THOOOM Continue reading at NovelBin.Côm

The force of the impact shattered stone and wood, burying Zhao Tian under a heap of debris.

Dust clouded the air as chunks of rubble tumbled down, and for a moment, all was silent.

The woman tilted her head, a smile playing on her lips. "Don't tell me that's all you've got? I haven't even gotten serious yet..."

Breaking the rubble, Zhao Tian stepped out, blood dripping from a cut above his eyebrow.

His robe was torn and his body was bruised 'The impact behind her attack is too huge...'

Gripping the sword tightly, he spat a mouthful of blood and glanced at the cloaked figure.

With a flick of his wrist, he sent a pulse of space energy in his Arcane Enclave, the distortion rippling outward and forcing the blood shards in his vicinity to disintegrate.

And in the next instant, he dashed forward.

But the woman was ready.

As a red glint passed through her eyes, the blood haze around her condensed into a massive, writhing tendril that lashed out like a whip.

THWACK

Before he could react, the tendril struck him square in the side, sending him flying through the air.

BOOOM He crashed into another building, the walls crumbling under the force of his body.

Coughing, Zhao Tian struggled to his feet, gripping his side where the tendril had hit.

The pain was sharp, radiating through his ribs.

'Haa.. she is really strong, since the battle began, she hasn't moved from her place.'

"You're resilient," she muttered, stepping closer.

"But how long can you keep this up? That gravity technique or whatever... it is impressive, but it's not enough to overcome me."

swoosh He lunged at her, closing the distance in an instant.

A blue glint flickered across his eyes and he swung his blade, aiming for her neck, but the woman's movements were unnaturally quick.

She twisted to the side, her cloak billowing as she dodged his strike.

A burst of blood erupted from the ground beneath him, striking him on his chest and sending him skidding across the battlefield.

THOOM His back slammed into a broken pillar, the impact knocking the wind out of him.

"Urghh..."

The woman didn't let up. She raised her hand, and spikes of blood rained down from above like a crimson storm.

Zhao Tian rolled to the side, narrowly avoiding getting stabbed.

One spike grazed his leg, tearing through his flesh and making him grunt in pain.

"Hrgh..."

"You're too slow," the woman teased, her voice echoing through the battlefield.

Zhao Tian's vision blurred for a moment as he tried to push through the pain.

The woman raised both hands, and the blood haze swirled around her, coalescing into a massive red snake that loomed over the battlefield.

Its eyes glowed like rubies, and as it opened its mouth, its fangs dripped with liquid crimson.

Zhao Tian's grip on his sword tightened looking at the enormous snake.

HISS With a loud hiss, the blood serpent lunged at him as its massive jaws opened widely.

Zhao Tian dashed to the side, narrowly avoiding being swallowed whole.

THOOM The serpent crashed into the ground where he had stood, the impact shaking the earth and sending debris flying in all directions.

Zhao Tian used the moment to counter as he used the space energy within his domain to turn the snake into a meaty paste.

SPLASH

But instead of dissipating, the serpent reformed, its body knitting itself back together in an instant.

"Futile."

The serpent coiled around Zhao Tian, its massive body constricting him.

'Shit...' He struggled against its crushing grip.

The woman let out a giggle "I told you, you are no match to-huh?"

But as she blinked her eyes, she was startled to see that Zhao Tian had disappeared from the snake's grasp.

'Where di-'

sleesh In the next instant, her eyes widened in shock looking at the sharp blade plunging right to her face.

'Wha-?'

She hurriedly turned her head to the side but the blade grazed past her cheek, drawing a thin line of blood.

'Huh?'

Before she could even recover, Zhao Tian appeared in front of her and grabbed her head, smashing his knee right into her face.

splash Because of the powerful impact, her nose burst open as blood splashed around.

'What the hell?'

Zhao Tian spun mid air, delivering a kick to the side of her face sending her dashing into the debris.

THOOM

Wiping the blood from his eyebrow, his eyes squinted 'My short-distance teleportation really helps me to do surprise attacks...'

'But.. still, that woman is not going all out... and if she were serious, I might catch up with her, but to defeat her...'

'I need a powerful technique to deal a good amount of damage.'

From the debris, the cloaked woman rose, wiping blood from her split lip with a furious glint in her crimson eyes. "You..." she hissed.

"You're full of surprises, aren't you?"

Now that her cloak is removed, Zhao Tian can look at her face and his gaze furrowed looking at her crimson eyes and long black hair.

Elvoria tilted her head in amusement "What? You fell in love with me?"