

Immortal 1281

Chapter 1281: Unknown Region

After they left the tomb, the group headed to a tavern in the nearest town for some rest. Qiao Heng was injured quite badly, so he quickly withdrew to his room to rest.

Princess Suolun sought out Zu An. When she found him, she said, "So the young master was the mysterious person who defeated the Golden Crown Crown Prince. No wonder you were unwilling to expose your identity earlier."

Her features were like jade, her eyes pure like water. When she spoke, her smile was truly gorgeous. Paired with the fair skin of the Demon race and her stunning figure, even Zu An, who was used to being around beauties, had to admit that the woman was extremely alluring.

Zu An gave her an apologetic smile. "This is the fiend race's territory, after all, so it isn't too convenient. I hope the princess can overlook that."

Princess Suolun had a hopeful expression as she asked, "Then can the young master talk about it now?" Seeing that he was still a bit hesitant, she smiled gently and said, "For better or for worse, we are now friends who have gone through danger together, right? Could it be that you are not even willing to tell me your name? Worry not. Since we are friends, I will not tell any of the others about your identity."

"That's not what I'm worried about..." Zu An said, then chuckled and told her his name. He was actually more worried that Yu Yanluo would misunderstand and think he was flirting with her. However, after thinking about it, he had a clear conscience anyway so what did he have to worry about?

"Zu An?" Princess Suolun mouthed his name, making sure to remember it well. A happy expression appeared on her face as she said, "This name is quite special. My name is Suolun Shi. In the future, you are welcome to visit the Demon Race as a guest anytime. Even though I do not represent the Demon Race, I can represent the Suolun clan. No matter where you are, the young master will always be our Suolun clan's most distinguished guest."

Zu An was a bit surprised. Based on her tone, it seemed her status in the clan was quite special. He nodded toward her with a smile, saying, "I will definitely visit the Demon Race when I have a chance in the future."

Princess Suolun pursed her lips. She hesitated, but eventually said, "Is the young master going to accompany the Medusa Queen and attend the Fiend Emperor's great assembly?"

"I'll travel with her for some time, but I might not go to the Fiend King Court with her," Zu An replied. There was no need to hide that either.

When Princess Suolun, she first sighed in relief, but then a hint of regret entered her expression. "Young master's choice to not go to the Fiend King Court is wise. Even though I might come off a bit rude if I say this, you defeated the Golden Crow Crown Prince, and the crown prince is next in line to become the Fiend Emperor. No matter how generous the Fiend Emperor is, there is no way he would be completely disinterested in that matter. He might very well use you as an example in front of all of the fiend races."

“Thank you for your concern, princess,” Zu An replied. That was the conclusion Yu Yanluo and the others had come to as well. He had to admit that Princess Suolun did indeed have good intentions. “Even though this Golden Crow Crown Prince’s strength is decent, though, it isn’t to a point that he can convince everyone with his power alone. The Fiend Emperor can act in his place while he’s still alive, but once the emperor passes away, will the different clans really bow down to him?”

“The current Golden Crow Crown Prince’s strength is indeed not enough. However, the young master might not know that the successive generations of Fiend Emperors have always carried out an inheritance ceremony. Before the previous Fiend Emperor passes on, he will pass all of his cultivation onto the next Fiend Emperor. At that time, the Golden Crow Crown Prince will naturally be able to convince everyone with his strength,” Princess Suolun explained.

Zu An was stunned, saying, “Looks like I’ll have to be careful the next time I run into the Golden Crow Crown Prince.” If this guy inherits all of the Fiend Emperor’s cultivation, like hell I’ll still fight him.

Princess Suolun smiled and said, “Indeed, you need to be more careful. However, there is no need for you to feel too worried either. Once he becomes the Fiend Emperor, he will have quite a bit on his plate and will not be able to leave the Fiend King Court that easily. There is even less of a chance of him seeking you out on the human side. After all, there is still the human emperor there.

Even though Zu An understood that reasoning, he still didn’t feel too happy about having to avoid someone he had beat up before in the future.

After some hesitation, Princess Suolun continued, “The human territory is quite large. Where does the young master normally reside?”

Zu An couldn’t help but chuckle. He asked, “What, does the princess want to find me on the human side?” However, he immediately regretted saying that. Didn’t I already agree to be a respectable man? What the heck am I teasing her for?

Princess Suolun was stunned, and blushed. However, she reacted quickly and said, “Yes. I heard that the human world is beautiful and vast, so I have always wanted to visit, but never had the chance. I cannot help but feel a bit nervous at the thought of doing so. Now that I finally have an acquaintance who can be a guide, of course I need to seek you out.”

Her eyes were normally lovely and expressive, but as she spoke, her expression was clear, as if to suggest that she didn’t have any other intentions.

Zu An had to admit that this woman was quite smart, neutralizing the awkwardness so naturally. At the same time, she had even expressed sufficient goodwill. He said, “I’ll most likely be in the capital. There is a chance of me being in Brightmoon or Cloudcenter City too, though.”

Princess Suolun nodded, silently memorizing the details. After a short period of idle chatter, she got up to leave. She said, “Thank you again for your life saving kindness, young master. However, I have matters to attend to now, so I must leave first.”

Zu An was a bit surprised, but he didn’t keep her. He said, “I wish you a safe journey.”

Princess Suolun bowed and said, “We will meet again if fate wills it.”

She left in a confident and natural manner, even though she actually wanted to share more time with Zu An. It wasn't because she really did like him, but rather that any great clan would want to rope in such a strong individual. Furthermore, she had indeed developed a good impression of him from their experiences together.

Still, she also knew that Zu An had many beauties at his side already. Approaching him would only produce the opposite result, so she had decided to withdraw gracefully instead. Either way, they would have a chance of meeting again in the human territory in the future.

Not long after Princess Suolun left, Princess Changning came over enthusiastically. She even brought over many fiend race specialties for Zu An to try. Zu An couldn't just refuse such kindness, so he could only accept it.

Meanwhile, Yun Jianyue was about to talk to Zu An about something. However, she saw Suolun Shi visit him, and then Kong Nanjing went over immediately after, leaving her quite annoyed. She shot Yu Yanluo a look and asked, "Are you not going to control your man? Those women have been going in and out of his room so easily. Is it a public toilet or something?"

Yu Yanluo's expression froze a bit. Only a while later did she say, "Big Sister Yun, you should control him yourself."

Yun Jianyue frowned and replied, "I'm not even his woman, so why would I do that?"

Yu Yanluo said calmly, "There are so many women seeking out Ah Zu, which proves his charm. Doesn't that mean I have great insight and chose a great man?"

Yun Jianyue almost choked from Yu Yanluo's indifferent act. She could only take out her anger on Yan Xuehen off to the side, snapping, "What are you laughing at?!"

Yan Xuehen said calmly, "I am laughing because someone is getting all worked up for nothing."

"Stone cold woman, are you looking for a beating?!" Yun Jianyue exclaimed. The two of them began to fight again. However, Yan Xuehen was clearly on the losing end and was soon pushed down.

Just then, the door opened with a groan and Zu An walked in. When he saw the scene, he looked stunned.

Both of the women's faces turned red. Such a stance really wasn't all that elegant, so they both got up and sorted out their clothes.

Yu Yanluo chuckled inwardly, but she still asked, "Why did things end so quickly?"

Zu An had a strange expression. Why did those words sound so misleading? He replied, "I don't know either. It might be because she got annoyed by how I kept asking about Kong Nanwu."

He had gotten acquainted with the Peacock race when he was in Cloudcenter City. Back then, Kong Qing had given up so quickly because of Kong Nanwu, so the three women knew about her existence.

"This Princess Changning's temper is indeed quite poor," Yu Yanluo said, shaking her head. She didn't want to talk too much behind someone else's back and stopped there, however. She asked, "Right, what

was that treasure map Lord Sui gave you about? Big Sister Yun has been wondering about it. If you still don't take it out, she might go crazy."

"That's nonsense!" Yun Jianyue exclaimed, but she felt a bit guilty. "Don't make it sound as if you guys don't want to know either."

Zu An chuckled and said, "I haven't had time to look at it yet either." He took out the map afterward. He couldn't tell what kind of leather it was made out of, but it felt like a material that wouldn't be easily damaged.

The three women moved over. Their fragrances wafted over him; each was truly beautiful in its own way. However, their expressions quickly changed when they saw the contents. They exclaimed, "An Unknown Region!"

Chapter 1282: Mutual Suspicion

The so-called treasure map recorded the location of an Unknown Region. However, it didn't say in detail which Unknown Region it was.

Zu An was surprised when he saw their reaction. He asked, "You all know about Unknown Regions?"

Right after he transmigrated to this world and unlocked the Keyboard System, it had told him that he had to gather the secret manuals in the twelve Unknown Regions.

At first, he had asked Chu Chuyan about it, but she hadn't said a thing. She had even told him not to look into those places. However, later on when they got closer, he forgot to ask her more about the matter. The two grandmasters definitely knew more details, though.

Sure enough, Yan Xuehen explained, "By now, you have probably already realized that this world is full of secret dungeons. Such dungeons are very likely to be entirely different from our world. People have suspected that they were left behind by extraordinary ancient figures, and that they might be those individuals' cultivation dwellings.

"Of course, there is a chance that these dungeons are connected to other worlds in the universe. Because this concept touches upon the laws of space and time, we have only been able to gain pitiful fragments of understanding.

"These dungeons often carry opportunities and great treasures, and they are very suitable for cultivators to train in. If one can keep access to a dungeon all to oneself, that often signifies the rise of a sect or clan.

"What people have all accepted to be the case is that the larger the dungeon, the more dangerous it often is. At the same time, it could mean more abundant rewards. Furthermore, there have long been some ancient legends that state that there are twelve Unknown Regions. Within them are all kinds of miraculous skills and treasures. If one obtains one of them, one might even be able to obtain eternal life."

Zu An's expression grew strange. Aren't these legends a bit exaggerated? I've already been to quite a few of these dungeons, but they aren't anything impossible to deal with.

Yan Xuehen naturally didn't know what he was thinking and continued, "However, no one knows the twelve mysterious dungeons' locations. No one even knows their names. Even so, as time went on, those blessed with fortune were occasionally able to enter them, but not a single person was able to come out alive.

"The friends and relatives of those experts searched for those dungeons through the clues that were left behind, but they were unable to find anything. It was almost as if those dungeons could move on their own, and in completely unpredictable ways. That is why they were called the Unknown Regions."

Yun Jianyue added, "It's not that no one was able to come out alive. A few decades ago, for the sake of immortality, the emperor Zhao Han used the entire country's strength to search for these Unknown Regions. Later on, he happened to find out some information about an Unknown Region named Xi Qi. He sent out all of his trusted aides to search for a method of immortality in the dungeon, but those strong cultivators were entirely wiped out, and they were never heard of again.

"Only recently did we learn that a eunuch escaped alive back then, but he coveted the skill they found and wanted to take it for himself. As such, he concealed his identity while living in Brightmoon City. Unfortunately, the emperor had long since been investigating this matter, and so in the end, he still couldn't escape death."

Afterward, the women all looked at Zu An. After all, that matter had caused a huge uproar. The emperor had even had Zu An brought to the capital.

Zu An looked a bit embarrassed as he said, "You all look as if you're about to swallow me up or something. I'm a bit scared..."

Yun Jianyue rolled her eyes and said, "You know, you really need a good beating. We're not even like that shitty emperor Zhao Han who's about to die. We're just a bit curious whether those rumors were true, okay?"

Zu An nodded and replied, "It's not too far from what you've said. The only inconsistency is that I don't sense the power of immortality from the Phoenix Nirvana Sutra."

The women all had expressions of relief when they heard the one directly involved personally dispel their doubts.

Yan Xuehen said with a sigh, "No wonder even though you are still so young, your cultivation has far exceeded all other geniuses I know of. It looks as if these Unknown Region methods are indeed quite miraculous."

Zu An was stunned. He asked, "Is it that special? Why do I feel as if everyone around me has higher cultivation?"

Yan Xuehen choked. This guy already had everything, and yet he was still pretending he didn't have much! She replied, "Many of those you have encountered are from the older generation. Even if they are from the same generation, they have cultivated for far longer than you."

She had learned from her disciple that this guy had just been just an ordinary person who didn't know how to cultivate when he first entered the Chu Manor. In just under three years, he had already reached

his current level! Such speed was enough to make geniuses from ancient times look pitiful, and yet he was still unsatisfied!

“Since you really have the Phoenix Nirvana Sutra, I am even more curious as to why the emperor would spare you,” Yan Xuehen added. She had met the emperor a few times. He was always domineering, and with how overbearingly the court treated the different sects, she really didn’t like him.

Even Yu Yanluo was now curious. She had helped Zu An ask for mercy, but even she hadn’t had much confidence in herself.

“It’s because the Phoenix Nirvana Sutra’s cultivation is special, so there’s no way the emperor can restart and cultivate it. Besides, he saw the contents of the Phoenix Nirvana Sutra and decided that the immortality from the legends was fake, which is why he let me go,” Zu An said. He naturally couldn’t talk about how the emperor planned to use him to mess with King Qi.

The women seemed to have suddenly understood when they heard the explanation. Only Yun Jianyue was suspicious. She asked, “Would someone like you really give the Phoenix Nirvana Sutra to that shitty emperor?”

Zu An winked, then replied with a chuckle, “What do you think?”

Yun Jianyue stirred. She was about to ask something else when Yan Xuehen interrupted her, saying in dissatisfaction, “You know what kind of cultivation the emperor has best. How could a fake manual possibly deceive him? You should not make things hard for him.”

Yun Jianyue harrumphed. “Yeah, yeah, you’re the good girl, I’m the bad one.”

After they talked for a while longer, their attention quickly returned to the map. Yan Xuehen and Yun Jianyue were well-versed in various fields, but they were still completely stumped by the different markings on the map, as if they had never seen such terrain before. If they didn’t even know where the place was, there was even less of a chance that Zu An would know.

However, Yu Yanluo couldn’t take her eyes off the map. She eventually said, “This seems to be a map of the area near the Fiend King Court.”

“What?!” the others all cried out in shock.

Yu Yanluo gave it another look, confirming it again. “Yes, this is a map of the Fiend King Court. Because of my Medusa lineage, I’ve spent some time researching intelligence about the fiend races. Later, in those days we spent in the Snake Race, I looked up some more information. This map indeed illustrates the mountains and rivers of the Fiend King Court.”

She subconsciously realized something after saying that and quickly said to Zu An, “Ah Zu, the Fiend King Court is too dangerous for you. The Fiend Emperor will probably take revenge for the crown prince, and he won’t let you go.”

Yan Xuehen and Yun Jianyue also advised him, “Indeed, and Unknown Regions are too dangerous. Apart from that eunuch, no one has ever been able to escape alive. Furthermore, even that eunuch didn’t meet a good ending.”

"But even though the Unknown Regions are dangerous, they're not as ridiculous as everyone makes them sound. It's not like I haven't been in them before," Zu An said, feigning modesty.

"You are still too young, so you have not really fully experienced what kind of danger they represent. Even our White Jade Sect had outstanding seniors who searched the Unknown Regions, yet in the end, they vanished without a trace," Yan Xuehen said.

"Indeed. Our Holy Sect had some sect masters who perished in Unknown Regions too," Yun Jianyue added.

The two grandmasters suddenly realized something halfway through their sentences. They both couldn't help but cry out at the same time, "What?! You've gone to Unknown Regions before?"

Zu An nodded and replied, "Yeah, did I not tell you guys?" He added inwardly, And more than one, at that.

When the women saw how he was clearly showing off, and yet was pretending to remain low-profile, they began to grit their teeth. It really did match this guy's usual style. However, they couldn't be bothered to deal with that. They quickly asked, "Which Unknown Regions have you gone to? Hurry and tell us your experiences!"

Their expressions were all incredibly eager. Even the usually cold and indifferent Yan Xuehen looked like a little girl who had been completely captivated.

"It's actually not even that big of a deal, though. I just fought an ancient earth immortal, and some immortal monsters..." Zu An began. However, the more he downplayed things, the more it drove the women insane. Eventually, he gave them a rough account of his experiences; however, it was too vague and broad, so it wasn't enough to satisfy them.

Yun Jianyue thought to herself, Could it be that he couldn't say some things because there are too many people around right now?

I guess that makes sense. This stone cold woman was trying to kill him not too long ago, and she has the huge White Jade Sect behind her. If news of this got out, it would bring him a lot of trouble. I'll have to eventually find a chance to ask him about it at another time.

Yan Xuehen had similar thoughts. That witch's Devil Sect uses any means, fair or foul, so he was probably worried that he might be exploited by her, right? It seems I need to find another chance to ask him in private. Even so, there was always the worry of something happening if she met him in private.

Out of the three women, only Yu Yanluo was completely calm. She could just find any time to ask him about it when they were alone.

However, she still felt a bit of a grudge. You can just tell me about these things! Why are you telling those two too? One has the White Jade Sect behind her, while the other is from the Devil Sect. They can't make decisions purely based on their own interests.

Even though they had all been getting along recently, that didn't mean they were really sisters. They might even sell out Zu An!

Chapter 1283: Fatal Call

After a while, Zu An said, "Unknown Regions are extremely important to me. I have my own reasons for going there, so even if it's dangerous, I have to make this trip to the Fiend King Court." He looked at Yan Xuehen and Yun Jianyue, then continued, "The two of you are injured, so you shouldn't take the risk with me."

Yun Jianyue directly refused, saying, "You aren't even scared of the Fiend Emperor's revenge? I'm the respected Devil Sect Master. Don't tell me I'm worse than you? Besides, Unknown Regions are incredibly appealing to any cultivator. If I don't get to see it for myself, I might regret it for the rest of my life."

Yan Xuehen said approvingly, "Indeed. The path of cultivation is to advance courageously; how can we be scared at every turn and remain overcautious? That witch and I have already been stuck at our current cultivation ranks for a long time, and we have never seen any sign of a breakthrough. Who knows, there might be some room for growth in the Unknown Region."

Zu An got a headache when he heard the firmness in Yan Xuehen's voice. He replied, "Big Sis Yun is one thing, but your injuries are so serious. Isn't it too dangerous for you to blindly enter an Unknown Region?"

Yan Xuehen said with a serious expression, "If my dao leads me to death, then so be it!"

When he saw how resolute Yan Xuehen's expression was, and how there was practically a pure and holy glow emanating from her face, Zu An became momentarily stunned. No wonder these two were able to rise up above their peers and become grandmasters. Such persistence was definitely not something most people could display.

Yu Yanluo's expression became strange. Before, they kept saying that they were going to accompany me to the Fiend King Court, but then later, after considering how they couldn't win against the Fiend Emperor, they decided to leave halfway. But now that they've heard Ah Zu is going into an Unknown Region, which is clearly even more dangerous, they're going to go with him instead? Are they really going because of the Unknown Region, or are they going for Ah Zu?

Both Yun Jianyue and Yan Xuehen were extremely excited because they were going to an Unknown Region. They didn't want to waste a single second and went back to their rooms to treat their injuries. The more they could recover, the better. At first, they had felt a bit of contempt for the deity-grade ki stone fragments because they were around another woman's body, but that wasn't the case at all anymore. They absorbed the ki inside to help with their injuries.

Yan Xuehen even considered asking Zu An to help her with her injuries. However, when she recalled the embarrassment she had experienced, she was still too embarrassed to ask in the end.

Yu Yanluo was quite happy, however. She and Zu An finally had some time to themselves. With the other two women present all the time, even though they did get along well, she couldn't really be intimate with Zu An at all.

"We can finally get some rest," Yu Yanluo said as she stretched her body out lazily, her wonderful figure in full view. Then, she leaned into Zu An's embrace.

Zu An had already been pent up from the previous battles. With such a soft and gentle beauty whom countless men yearned for day and night in his arms, and now that she was even teasing him, he quickly got worked up, lowering his head to kiss her.

Yu Yanluo groaned. "Mmm, so annoying... I just wanted to talk to you..." Despite what she said, she received him warmly. Her body seemed to have completely melted.

Since Yan Xuehen and Yun Jianyue had always been around them, and before that they had been in Bluefield Country, it had been rare for them to have the chance to be intimate with each other. Furthermore, after witnessing Lord Sui and Madam Yu's love for each other, Yu Yanluo only wanted to cherish what she had right now. Her passion was quickly ignited to the limit.

However, when Zu An carried her over to the bed, she still became a bit shy. She said, "It's still daytime..."

"For something like this, does it matter whether it's day or night?" Zu An replied with a chuckle. Even as he finished speaking, he had already undone her waistband.

Yu Yanluo's face was completely red. Her eyes were watery as she said, "But Big Sister Yan and Big Sister Yun are next door. They'll hear us."

"It's fine. They're injured, and they're currently focused on their treatment, so they won't hear us," Zu An said reassuringly.

Yu Yanluo was about to say something else when her entire body trembled. She almost cried out in alarm and hit him resentfully. This guy really didn't know how to be gentle at all...

She bit her lip. In the end, however, she was still worried. With a wave of her hand, a painting scroll surrounded them. If the two grandmasters had been at their peak, it would have been completely useless, but with their condition, it was probably fine.

When he saw several lifelike maids depicted on the scroll, Zu An was stunned. He asked, "Do you like being seen by others like this?"

"I just picked a random scroll! Isn't it your fault for being in too much of a hurry?" Yu Yanluo protested, feeling so wronged that she was about to cry. She immediately looked for another scroll.

Zu An stopped her, saying, "No, this is fine too. You should draw some other interesting things in the future, such as large mirrors or something."

Yu Yanluo was confused at first, but then she gradually realized what was going on. She bit down lightly on Zu An's shoulder out of embarrassment. Where did this guy even learn all of this stuff?

There's no way it was Chu First Miss. You can tell just from her master that there's no way she would do such things.

Don't tell me Sect Master Yun's disciple taught him? She's always bragging about her disciple's fully developed charm technique...

She continued to think to herself like that, becoming more and more puzzled.

However, as the two embraced each other, they suddenly felt a vibration.

Yu Yanluo's entire body stiffened. Zu An whispered in her ear, "What is it?"

"Someone is contacting me with a recording mirror," Yu Yanluo said, taking out a recording mirror from her clothes. A trace of redness appeared on her face, perhaps from shyness or excitement; it made her look even more captivating than usual.

"Just ignore it," Zu An replied roughly. Who in the world is calling at a time like this? Do you have no tact at all?

"Okay..." Yu Yanluo didn't want to be disturbed at present either. She turned off the recording mirror. However, the vibration began again, as if it wouldn't stop until she picked it up.

Zu An wanted to just throw the recording mirror out, but Yu Yanluo suddenly thought of something. She said to herself, "Someone who knows my recording mirror's runes, and would contact me at this sort of time... Don't tell me..."

Zu An realized something and took the mirror from her. Sure enough, it was Sang Hong's symbol. He immediately began to sweat buckets. The recording mirror consumed a tremendous amount of ki stones, and Sang Hong didn't have a huge clan behind him. He was normally extremely reluctant to use them, let alone to call continuously like this, so it was definitely a dire matter. As such, he quickly accepted the call.

Yu Yanluo almost screamed out loud. She quickly pulled up the covers to hide herself. However, Zu An gestured for her to relax, as no one else would be able to see her from such an angle. Still, even though Yu Yanluo knew that, it was still hard for her to hide her embarrassment.

Thus, Zu An appeased the beauty with one hand while holding the mirror with the other. He looked at the familiar face in the mirror and asked, "Respected uncle, what is the matter?"

"Why did you hang up on my call just now?" Sang Hong asked, looking somewhat unhappy. He had had to use up a lot of ki stones to call several times.

"There was something important, so it was inconvenient for me to pick it up," Zu An said with an embarrassed chuckle. He did his best to look normal.

Yu Yanluo quickly covered her own mouth, while giving him a pinch. This guy was just way too daring!

"What are you doing? Why are you covered in sweat?" Sang Hong asked curiously.

"I was exercising. I've reached a critical juncture in my training," Zu An explained with an embarrassed smile.

"Right now, everything else is secondary. The most important thing is what's happening on my side," Sang Hong said. He released a long sigh, looking extremely anxious.

"What is it?" Zu An asked, jumping in fright. After all, Sang Hong was usually a shrewd and deep thinker. He was someone who wouldn't be fazed even if Mount Tai collapsed before him. Judging from how alarmed he was, something major had definitely happened.

Sang Hong replied, "I don't know how that guy Xu Yu managed to do it, but he announced everything that happened in the capital to the higher authorities. Right now, there are rumors everywhere in the capital, saying that you secretly rescued Yu Yanluo, and that's why you've been missing this entire time. They say you betrayed the human race and fled to the fiend race territory."

Zu An and Yu Yanluo's expressions grew a bit strange, because that wasn't a rumor. They really were together in the fiend race territory.

Sang Hong continued, "His Majesty couldn't stand the court's commotion, so he declared that in order to prove your innocence, the Court Administrator would call Cloudcenter through a recording mirror to confirm whether you've already betrayed us." He was so nervous that he talked in circles for a while. Eventually, he said, "I can't use the Embroidered Envoy's secret mission to muddle my way through anymore. Tomorrow, things might... They might just..."

"It would be great if you could appear tomorrow and get rid of all of the rumors..." he began. However, his expression filled with disappointment before he even finished his sentence. "Forget it. You're all the way over in the fiend race territory right now. How could you possibly rush back in a single day? I should think about how to take care of those back home once you're deemed a traitor."

Chapter 1284: An Exception for Him

Something stirred within Zu An. He quickly asked, "When will the meeting be held tomorrow?"

"It should be after the morning court finishes, I reckon. First, they'll have a routine conversation about the nation's military affairs, and their final topic will be you," Sang Hong said with a deep sigh. No matter how resourceful he was, he was still at his wits' end.

Zu An calculated some things, then said, "Respected uncle, please help me stall for some time. I might be able to rush back."

Sang Hong was shocked. He replied, "It would take at least a few months to return to Cloudcenter Commandery if you were fast, and otherwise, it might even take half a year. How could you possibly return that easily?"

He had learned from their previous call that there was a shortcut tunnel in the Cloudcenter mines. But after the earthquake, the entire mine had already collapsed. Cloudcenter's government had been focused on cleaning up the mines the entire time. It was only because the Yu clan had evacuated everyone ahead of time that there weren't too many casualties.

However, the situation in the mines wasn't too optimistic. It would take a few years at least to restore the mines to their normal state, or even a few decades. He knew better than anyone that it was already impossible to use the formations in the depths of the mines to cross over to the fiend race territories.

Zu An said seriously, "Don't worry, I have a way."

Sang Hong wanted to say something else, but his expression suddenly changed. He said, "That old fox Xu Yu is here. I can't let him know about our conversation, so that's all for now." His face disappeared from the recording mirror's reflection; he had clearly ended the call on his side.

When she saw Zu An put the mirror away, Yu Yanluo could no longer hold on. She grabbed Zu An like an octopus, her entire body shaking continuously.

What had happened just then really was too shocking for her! Fear, shame, and other such emotions had welled up, making her countless times more sensitive than usual.

Zu An sucked in air between his teeth. He had to admit that the Medusa's body was simply incredible. When she was aroused, she could soften even the hardest of well-tempered steel.

...

The two embraced each other. Only after a while did Yu Yanluo calm down. However, she couldn't hold in her embarrassment, protesting, "It's all your fault. I almost passed out from fright just now."

Zu An looked at her with a smile. He gently wiped the sweat on her forehead, thinking to himself that the recording mirror had actually managed to mimic the function of a cellphone.

Yu Yanluo felt more and more annoyed when she saw his mischievous expression. She bit down on him to vent out a bit of her resentment. Then, she asked worriedly, "What are you going to do about Cloudcenter Commandery's situation? If there's really nothing you can do, you can just stay with the Snake race for now. You can be the Snake race's king, and I'll assist you."

Zu An gave her cheek a kiss when he sensed her concern. He replied, "It might have been impossible to deal with before, as the distance between this place and Cloudcenter Commandery was too far. I now have the Wind Fire Wheels, though, so it's not completely impossible for me to fly back."

Yu Yanluo said with a hint of envy, "That Lady Shang really is good to you. She gave you all of her own nephew's treasures."

Zu An chuckled in embarrassment and didn't comment.

However, Yu Yanluo wasn't a normal person, so she quickly suppressed those thoughts. She got up to get dressed while urging Zu An, "Hurry and get up. Even if you have the Wind Fire Wheels, you might not be able to get there in time within a single day. You have to seize every moment."

At any other time, Zu An would definitely enjoy the beautiful sight of her dressing herself. However, the situation was indeed pressing, so he didn't dare to show any carelessness. The two of them quickly put on their clothes.

Yu Yanluo said, "You should pass on a message to Sect Masters Yun and Yan. If you suddenly leave, I won't be able to explain things to them." At the same time, she thought to herself that it felt more and more as if they were only staying because of him.

Zu An figured that made sense as well. He went with her to seek out the two of them.

Yun Jianyue said unhappily, "I've finally reached a crucial point in my recovery, but now you've disturbed me. If you don't have a proper explanation, I might just smash your head in."

Yu Yanluo was speechless. This woman really was a fierce one... Still, compared to her ferocious reputation and how she dealt with others, this was still comparatively gentler.

Yan Xuehen gave Yu Yanluo a look, asking, "Hm? Why is your face so red?"

Yu Yanluo's heart pounded crazily. She was scared that they might notice something and quickly explained, "I just learned that something major was happening over at Cloudcenter Commandery, so I was a bit nervous and worried."

Even though Yan Xuehen and Yun Jianyue were knowledgeable, they were complete amateurs in romance. Even though Yun Jianyue was proficient in charm techniques, that was only on paper. Sure enough, she was easily fooled.

"Did something happen in Cloudcenter Commandery?" Yan Xuehen and Yun Jianyue asked, realizing that this wasn't a small matter from how serious the other two's expressions were.

Zu An gave them a rough summary of the situation. The two of them quickly understood how grave the matter was.

"Tomorrow, you'll be interrogated in the court through a recording mirror?" Yun Jianyue harrumphed. "You've worked your ass off in Cloudcenter Commandery, and yet that shitty emperor is just going to abandon you after getting what he wanted. Who cares about a stupid court like that anymore? Just come over to our Devil Sect, I'll make you a saint who rules over tens of thousands of people."

Before Zu An had a chance to reply, Yan Xuehen scolded Yun Jianyue, "Do you wish for the whole world to be in chaos? He managed to gain his cultivation at such a young age, and he has excellent connections in the Eastern Palace. These are outstanding prospects. Why are you telling him to become a scoundrel like you?"

If anyone else dared to call Yun Jianyue a scoundrel, she would have properly taught that person what it meant to be the Devil Sect Master. However, this matter was related to Zu An's future, so she knew that unless he had no way out, joining the Holy Sect was indeed not the best choice. She replied, "Hmph, then what do you think we should do?"

Yan Xuehen frowned. This situation was quite troublesome, but her thoughts moved quickly. She asked, "Can your Wind Fire Wheels take you back to Cloudcenter Commandery?"

Zu An was startled. He nodded and said, "Indeed, that was my plan. That's why I came here to say goodbye to the two of you. I might be gone for a few days."

Yan Xuehen thought for a bit, then said, "This place is too far from Cloudcenter Commandery. You should move soon, or else you might not make it in time."

"Okay," Zu An replied. He knew that as well. He only had a bit more than a day, so rushing back in time wouldn't be easy at all.

He cupped his hands and was about to leave when Yu Yanluo called out to him. "Wait!" She then bowed toward Yan Xuehen and asked, "Big Sister Yan, may I be so bold as to ask a favor?"

Yan Xuehen quickly said, "You are being too polite. Just tell me if there is something. I will try my utmost as long as I can do it."

Based on their interactions as of late, it was clear that even though they weren't actually sisters, they were at least friends. They also appreciated each other's company. Of course, Yan Xuehen had tried to

kill Yu Yanluo before, so she still had a guilty conscience. She had long since been thinking about how to make things up to her.

Yu Yanluo thus said, "I want to ask big sister to accompany Ah Zu back."

Zu An was bewildered.

"What?" the other women exclaimed, also surprised. They could never have expected her to suddenly make such a request.

Yu Yanluo explained, "There are too many suspicions surrounding Ah Zu in Cloudcenter Commandery, and he did save me. Furthermore, he ruined King Qi's great plan, which had already been in the works for many years. King Qi's men definitely won't let him go.

"Even if he returns to Cloudcenter Commandery tomorrow, it definitely won't go smoothly. Whether it's Xu Yu or King Qi, those old foxes won't leave the matter at that. They have more than enough methods to frame Ah Zu. In that kind of situation, Ah Zu will just be making this great trip only to walk into a trap.

"If Big Sister Yan accompanies him, though, it should be different. Your status has always been extraordinary, and you're also one of the leaders of the righteous faction. If you can act as a guarantor for him, naturally, no one will believe Xu Yu and King Qi's lies."

Yan Xuehen hesitated before saying, "But he did save you and come to the fiend race territory. Don't tell me you want me to lie..."

She cultivated the Unshakable Daoist Manual, and her status was special. She always paid close attention to her words and actions, and had never spoken a lie. That was part of why she had such an acclaimed reputation.

Yun Jianyue raised her brows and remarked, "What, don't tell me you're not willing to help out?"

Yan Xuehen gave Zu An a look. Speaking a single lie for him wasn't completely out of the question. However, she said, "That is not my intention. The main problem is that I am seriously injured right now and cannot fly. I fear that I cannot go with him."

Yu Yanluo opened her mouth, but she was too embarrassed to speak up. It was instead Yun Jianyue who said frankly, "What's so hard about that? Those Wind Fire Wheels seem sturdy enough. Just have Ah Zu carry you back. It's not as if he hasn't carried you before."

Chapter 1285: Senior's Lesson

"Witch, what did you say?!" Yan Xuehen exclaimed, her brows shooting up.

"The two of you have already gone that far, so why are you getting so worked up over what I said?" Yun Jianyue retorted. She had always disliked Yan Xuehen's pure and indifferent act, so she always liked to annoy the other woman. She always felt extremely happy whenever she saw her rival act out of character.

Yu Yanluo felt a bit guilty because of what had just happened. Is Yun Jianyue indirectly criticizing me...

When she saw the pink blush appear on Yan Xuehen's white jade-like skin, she had to admit that this woman really was pretty.

If she hadn't been known for pursuing the dao of mental purity, making others all think she would never blush like this, the title of number one beauty might not have fallen to me so easily.

And then there's Yun Jianyue. Even though she's a bit fierce, she really is ridiculously beautiful for no reason. Both of these women have already become grandmasters, and yet they're also this pretty. Can you two leave something for the rest of us, please?

At that instant, she even began to wonder if asking Yan Xuehen to accompany her own man was a mistake. Still, the most important thing was ensuring Zu An's safety. Everything else could come after.

"If you are so enthusiastic, why not go back with him?" Yan Xuehen snapped. Because of the 'Love Is More Solid than Gold' skill, and the various intimate interactions they'd had, she knew very clearly that she couldn't afford to get any closer to him.

"I really wouldn't mind it that much, but those court bastards all think of me as some traitorous monster. If I went back with Ah Zu, wouldn't I just be harming him instead?" Yun Jianyue replied, then looked Yan Xuehen up and down. "You're different, though. You've earned quite a good reputation from your operations in the last few years. From what I know, more than half of the court are your fans, always following behind you and calling you their goddess. They'll definitely believe what you say."

She felt a bit jealous after saying that. Their cultivation was clearly around the same, and their appearances and figures were also on the same level, and yet why was their treatment so completely different?

Yan Xuehen knew she was on good terms with many officials, but with her natural disposition, she preferred peace and quiet. She rarely interacted with them.

But that isn't the most important thing. The most important thing is that...

She gave Zu An a look and just happened to meet his gaze. She lowered her head guiltily and said apologetically, "Of course I am willing to help, but men and women should be separated, and time is pressing. Carrying a second person might affect your speed."

That was already a tactful refusal. Zu An smiled and didn't force the issue.

He was about to reply when Yun Jianyue said, "You cultivate the heartless dao; when have you ever had any notion of the difference between men and women? Don't tell me..."

Yan Xuehen was flustered and retorted, "What heartless dao?! I cultivate the emotionless dao!"

"Either way, it's more or less the same from our perspective," Yun Jianyue replied casually, not thinking too much of it. She said, "You would never have worried about something like this before."

"It is not entirely out of the question because the situation is dire," Yan Xuehen said. She didn't dare to argue that point for fear of the other two really noticing something. "Even if he were alone, however, it would be hard for him to arrive before tomorrow with such a distance, and I would instead become a burden."

Yun Jianyue rolled her eyes and replied, "You're so slim; how much could you even weigh? The Wind Fire Wheels are a heaven-grade weapon, okay? What difference would your insignificant weight make?"

Yan Xuehen was speechless. She could only give Zu An a pleading look, her eyes full of expectation and hope that he would help her out of this situation.

However, Zu An nodded and said, "What Big Sister Yun said is right. It actually doesn't matter that much."

Yan Xuehen was speechless. She hadn't expected him to say that at all. She was completely stunned.

"Then it's decided. You two should hurry along so you can come back sooner," Yun Jianyue said. She yawned, as if she would soon go back to sleep.

Yu Yanluo greeted Yan Xuehen, saying, "I'll be troubling Big Sister Yan."

After the mood had already become that way, it was already too embarrassing for Yan Xuehen to refuse. She could only say, "Then... Alright."

Because the matter was too urgent, they didn't waste any more time. They quickly got ready to leave. Zu An took out the Wind Fire Wheels.

Yan Xuehen asked, somewhat hesitantly, "Can we ride on one each?"

"I fear that isn't possible." Zu An shook his head. "These two are a pair and can't be used separately."

Yan Xuehen's mouth opened, and she looked hesitant and conflicted.

Zu An said, "I'll carry you on my back. That way, it'll be a bit easier."

Yan Xuehen bit her lip. She knew that was the most suitable method at the moment. A princess carry would be too dubious, and Zu An would get tired from doing that the entire trip. Meanwhile, embracing each other was too intimate. The only option she could accept was being carried on his back. It wasn't as if she hadn't been carried on his back before, either. When she saw him squat in front of her, she blushed, but she still climbed on.

Zu An's hands supported Yan Xuehen's thighs as he lifted her onto his back. Then, he got onto the Wind Fire Wheels. After using them a few times, he was already extremely proficient at maintaining his balance on them. Besides, he had already tried riding with two people back in Bluefield Country with Tushan Yu, which was why he knew that having an extra person wouldn't hinder him much.

He turned around to say goodbye to Yu Yanluo and Yun Jianyue, saying, "I'll hurry back once I take care of things. The two of you need to be careful and take care of yourselves."

Yun Jianyue rolled her eyes and said, "You were still sucking on milk while I was already making a name for myself. Just take care of that stone cold woman; her condition isn't all that good. I'll need a proper explanation from you if I find even a hair missing when you two come back."

Zu An couldn't help but grumble, "Don't you pluck her hair often?"

Yan Xuehen was really embarrassed and pinched him. She hadn't expected him to have even seen how Yun Jianyue bullied her in private.

Yun Jianyue instead said confidently, "Even if she's going to be bullied, it has to be by me, and not a brat like you."

Yan Xuehen said through clenched teeth. "You witch, once I recover, I will definitely beat you so badly your face turns completely red!"

Yun Jianyue didn't seem to care that much. She said, "Our cultivation has always been similar. Even if you do recover, it won't be all that realistic for you to beat me. That is, unless you just happen to find me when I'm seriously injured, but you're in better condition. That's why you'll never be able to avenge the suffering you went through here."

Yan Xuehen was really bitter and angry, but she knew that Yun Jianyue was speaking the truth. She thought, It's all Zu An's fault. If I hadn't run into him, why would I be bullied by my nemesis like this?

"Enough, it's already getting late. We're heading out," Zu An said, blowing Yu Yanluo a kiss. He didn't dare to remain after seeing that the two of them were about to start arguing again.

Yu Yanluo's face was a bit red. She thought, This guy is blowing a kiss toward me in front of two grandmasters? Do you think they're blind? However, she could only hold those thoughts in. She said, "After staying here for a bit longer, we'll head out again. Our itinerary going toward the Fiend King Court is also quite tight, so we'll continue along while waiting for you. Either way, you have the Wind Fire Wheels, so you can travel quickly."

"Got it!" Zu An replied, waving toward them. He got on the Wind Fire Wheels, then rushed into the air.

"Ah~" Yan Xuehen cried out in alarm. She instinctively held onto Zu An's neck.

"What is it?" Zu An was worried that there might be something wrong with her body.

"It is nothing. It is just that I never felt like this before when I flew on my own, but now, when I look down, I actually feel a bit scared," Yan Xuehen said, feeling a bit embarrassed.

"You're injured right now, so of course you don't feel safe," Zu An said with a chuckle. "I didn't expect a grandmaster to have such a cute side too."

"Cute?" Yan Xuehen replied as mind went blank. Even after so many years, this was the first time someone had described her in such a way. However, she quickly reacted and said with a straight face, "Please act more decently. I am like half a master to you, and strictly speaking, I am your senior. How can you be this cheeky?"

She had long since been thinking about how she would be able to associate with Zu An in the future. Apart from avoiding him as much as possible, a relationship between master and disciple seemed to be the most suitable pretext. Even if there was some physical contact, it wasn't that big of a deal for a junior taking care of a senior, right?

"Senior?" Zu An replied with a grin. He deliberately accelerated fiercely, then pretended to have lost his footing and stumbled a few times. He even made a few turns, but just as he was about to fall down, he always regained his footing again at the last second.

"Ah..." Even Yan Xuehen, who was normally cold and indifferent, was now so scared she screamed endlessly and instinctively grabbed onto him firmly.

When they finally regained their balance, Zu An said apologetically, "Sorry, I'm not too used to riding together with someone else."

At that point, however, he was sighing in amazement inside. When he had been chatting with others in the forums of his previous world, he had always felt that there was no way someone could be so slim, and yet still have such a crazy figure. And yet, Yan Xuehen was a perfect example of that! Considering the great waves he had felt from moving and suddenly stopping... No wonder so many people liked to ride motorcycles to pick up women!

Yan Xuehen wasn't stupid. She became extremely embarrassed, protesting, "You did that on purpose!"

Chapter 1286: Heaven's Will

Zu An said with a straight face, "Big Sister Yan, I really wasn't too used to carrying someone just yet!"

Yan Xuehen was so angry she clenched her teeth when she saw him say such nonsense with a deadly earnest expression. However, there was nothing she could do, and she could only lecture him. "Ah Zu, I am your half master. You cannot shame your master and let down your ancestors."

She felt a bit of regret as soon as she spoke. Wasn't her tone a bit too serious? But it's this guy's fault for bullying me!

She decided to set some boundaries between them to prevent more future trouble from happening.

"Riding your master and ancestors? I'm not that kind of person at all!" Zu An said while sticking out his chest. "Besides, I haven't agreed to become your disciple yet, right?"[1]

Yan Xuehen felt that his pronunciation was a bit strange, but she didn't think too much of it. She replied, "You have already learned my Unshakable Daoist Manual, and I am Chuyan's master. What is so hard about just calling me master?"

She felt a mysterious sense of guilt when she mentioned her disciple. If my disciple knew about the things that happened between me and this man, how would she look at me then...

Zu An chuckled. "Weren't you opposed to my relationship with Chuyan?"

Yan Xuehen blushed, thinking, I definitely seemed dead set on breaking them up before... However, she replied, "Would it even matter if I disapproved? It is not as if you would listen to me anyway."

She had to admit that after the time they had spent together, she had already begun to acknowledge both Zu An's talent and strength, and more importantly his character. Of course, it would be better if he didn't have so many girls around him. Even so, there was no way she could bring herself to say that she agreed to their marriage out loud. A grandmaster still had her pride.

Still, Zu An had already sensed the implied meaning of her words. He couldn't help but smile happily. For some reason, that smile annoyed Yan Xuehen a little.

Suddenly, she frowned, because she sensed that his hands seemed to be shifting backward. Of course, judging from their previous time together, she believed he wasn't doing it on purpose. It was probably because they were moving around and he didn't want her to fall that he had grabbed her.

Even so, they had already begun flying normally again, and yet she could still sense the heat coming from his hands. She hesitated. If she spoke up to warn him now, wouldn't it be a bit too forceful? Then it would just embarrass both of them. As such, she could only try to divert her attention and say, "Even though your Wind Fire Wheels have no offensive capabilities, their flight ability really is useful. No wonder they were considered heaven-grade based on function alone."

Zu An said in agreement, "Indeed, it's like having a private airplane. No, it's even faster than an airplane."

"A private airplane?" Yan Xuehen asked, confused.

Zu An could only explain in a way she could understand. "I often dream of a world filled with all sorts of unfamiliar things. Even though the people of that world can't cultivate, they can use science and technology to accomplish things similar to what cultivators can do. Their so-called airplanes are similar to large birds, or perhaps the Golden Crow Crown Prince's war chariot..."

When she heard what he said, Yan Xuehen was gradually sucked into the description of that mysterious world. She completely forgot the awkwardness his hands had brought her. She remarked, "Those sound similar to the effects the runes and formations of this world can bring about."

Zu An nodded in agreement. The first time he had seen rune formations, he had thought that he was looking at an integrated circuit.

"Something that can allow common people to fly... That world really is magical. It would be extremely hard for us to achieve that. The costs would be too high," Yan Xuehen said, sighing in amazement. Her beautiful eyes were filled with longing for that world.

When he heard the compassion in her voice, Zu An thought to himself, This woman isn't as cold and detached as she seems on the surface. It's all because of that damned Unshakable Daoist Manual.

Now that I think about it, my wife Chuyan used to be pretty cold too. She was probably affected by that technique. But her inside was really warm...

He frowned when he thought of that. What kind of nonsense am I thinking?

Still, once those thoughts began, he could no longer stop his mind from wandering. He could feel the soft and gentle body of the beauty behind him, and he couldn't help but start to compare her with Chuyan.

He had to admit that they were clearly master and disciple; and yet, why were they so similar... It wasn't just their appearances that were similar, but rather their personalities and the impression they left others with.

Of course, Yan Xuehen had a more mature presence. After all, she was a grandmaster and had already been famous for a long time. She had a natural air of eminent and unapproachable prestige. However, after what had happened as of late, she had already completely fallen into the secular world. Only Zu An could see the side of her that was like a young lady.

"What are you thinking about?" Yan Xuehen asked, noticing that Zu An had suddenly stopped talking.

"It's nothing," Zu An replied, his face heating up. He quickly accelerated forward.

Yan Xuehen's arms were wrapped around Zu An's neck. She could see the side of his face up close, as well as the skin around his neck. If she lowered her head a bit, she could even kiss him. That was why she could clearly sense his face turning red, as well as the waves of astonishing heat coming from his body.

Don't tell me that because we're touching each other, he....

Yan Xuehen's heart began to pound crazily when she thought of that. Her fair skin turned bright red.

...

Both of their thoughts began to wander. Just like that, however, they peacefully flew along.

Along the way, some beasts and fiends flew by. Zu An didn't want to waste any time, however, so he either avoided them preemptively or just rushed directly past.

Even Yan Xuehen was starting to feel amazed by the Wind Fire Wheels' speed. After all, a grandmaster could fly, and perhaps they might be able to fly faster than the Wind Fire Wheels for a short period, but they couldn't maintain it forever. Ever since the two of them had left the small town, the Wind Fire Wheels had been flying at an extremely high speed for many hours.

Zu An was about to go crazy from not saying anything for several hours. He quickly found another topic to chat about.

Yan Xuehen had been feeling extremely uncomfortable too. Her body only became more sensitive when they stopped talking, so she couldn't help but think about all sorts of things. It was a good idea to chat a bit to distract herself.

At first, she asked about the world in Zu An's so-called dream. Later, Zu An began to ask more about her, particularly things about her childhood. Yan Xuehen was a bit alarmed at first; the events from her childhood were so distant that she no longer had a strong impression of them. However, guided by Zu An, she gradually began to remember everything.

She initially felt that apart from eating and sleeping, she had only cultivated. It was far from being as incredible as the world Zu An had described. However, Zu An somehow always managed to discover something new about her childhood stories by looking at them from a different perspective.

Just like that, they chatted as they flew. They became more familiar with each other's past, and so they subconsciously began feeling closer and closer.

Just then, they vaguely saw the outline of the Great Snowy Mountain on the horizon. Yan Xuehen's expression became serious as she said, "You absolutely cannot go through Great Snowy Mountain using the main path. You need to find a way to get around it."

"Why?" Zu An asked. The reason he had chosen this direction was because it was the shortest route. If they hadn't gone through the Great Snowy Mountain, and had instead passed through Desolate City the way they had initially planned, there was no way they would be able to make it to Cloudcenter Commandery by the next morning.

"The Great Snowy Mountain is well-known as a dangerous restricted area," Yan Xuehen explained with a sigh. "Ever since ancient times, countless strong individuals have entered the Great Snowy Mountain,

only to never leave alive. However, the longer that remains true, the more mysterious the region seems. Many people suspect that there are great treasures inside, while some suspect that there is a secret of immortality hidden within. That is why many stunning cultivators with profound skills believe they are special and enter the Great Snowy Mountain one after another.”

“And not a single one of them has been able to return alive?” Zu An asked. He remembered hearing the rumors regarding the Great Snowy Mountain when he was in Cloudcenter Commandery.

“That is not entirely true. Currently, only one person is known to have come out alive,” Yan Xuehen replied.

“Who?”

“Emperor Zhao Han.”

Zu An was speechless.

Yan Xuehen seemed to be reminiscing as she explained, “Back then, Zhao Han was already unrivaled beneath the heavens. He sent people in search of any clues pertaining to immortality, so of course he would not let a dangerous area like the Great Snowy Mountain go. Others might not dare to enter, but he had no such misgivings. He entered, and left safely. At the time, that shocked the entire world. Many people thought that meant the Great Snowy Mountain was not that dangerous, so another batch of experts went in. And yet, again, not a single one came back out.”

“Looks like Zhao Han is special after all. He was actually able to enter and exit a restricted area like this so easily,” Zu An said, feeling a bit of pressure. The two of them were going to have a falling-out sooner or later. What was he going to do then?

Yan Xuehen shook her head and said, “People all believe it was easy for him, but according to the White Jade Sect’s information, he seemed to be injured when he came out, and his injuries were not light either. After he returned to the capital, he rested for several years. There are even rumors that the reason why his heaven and man deterioration happened so early, apart from the dao wounds he sustained from his battle against the Fiend Emperor in his early years, might be because he had his foundation damaged in his trip to the Great Snowy Mountain.”

“What?!” Zu An exclaimed in total shock.

Even an invincible earth immortal had suffered such injuries after visiting the Great Snowy Mountain, and there were so many strong individuals buried there. He wasn’t so arrogant as to think that he would be the exception.

“Is this heaven’s will?” he said somewhat dejectedly. It seemed that his odds of making it back to Cloudcenter Commandery on time were slim.

Chapter 1287: Accidentally Stumbling Into the Very Center

Zu An thought in irritation, If you knew it was going to be like this, why didn’t you tell me ahead of time? We came all the way here for nothing! It’s already too late to change the route now.

Yan Xuehen said, “Even though it is dangerous in the depths of the Great Snowy Mountain, we can try to go around the side.”

Zu An still had some misgivings. He asked, "Aren't the borders dangerous? Why did I hear that the edge of the Great Snowy Mountain was also extremely dangerous, and that people absolutely can't go there?"

Yan Xuehen replied, "The border of the Great Snowy Mountain is also extremely dangerous, but that is just for ordinary people. With your cultivation and strength, even though there will still be a certain degree of danger, it should be tolerable."

Who is he kidding? This guy could even exchange blows with me, and he even defeated a several-thousand-year-old monster last night. This amount of strength is already enough.

Zu An sighed in relief when he heard her say that. He replied, "Alright, then we'll give it a try."

He definitely didn't want to fail the journey and be marked as a traitor. If that happened, he would have to hide in the fiend race territory and flee for the rest of his life. He still had his own people back in the human territory, so how could he just leave them behind?

"Do you see that mountain peak that resembles a finger? We should approach from that side," Yan Xuehen said.

Zu An was a bit surprised, asking, "You know the way?"

Yan Xuehen explained, "In the past, in order to understand the essence of the Snowflake Sword better, I wanted to find a place of ice and snow to go into seclusion. The Great Snowy Mountain seemed to be the most suitable location. At first, I felt that I should not go since even the emperor had been injured, but in the end, I was unable to hold myself back. Fortunately, I sensed a terrifying aura not long after heading inside, so I decisively withdrew." She couldn't help but release a sigh as she recalled the past.

"It was something even you felt was terrifying?" Zu An asked in surprise.

"Indeed. Back then, I even sensed the aura of death, which was why I left quickly," Yan Xuehen said. Even though cultivators usually focused on advancing boldly, continuing even though it meant inevitable death was just pure stupidity.

Zu An didn't dare to be negligent when he heard that. He placed his full attention on the task at hand. Thus, he gradually approached the Great Snowy Mountain by following the directions Yan Xuehen pointed out. Under the sun's illumination, the distant mountain peak flickered with golden light. As he drew a bit closer to the mountain, he could even see the silhouettes of what seemed to be pavilions and kiosks, resembling one of the legendary imperial courts.

Zu An thought to himself, No wonder so many people say there's a great treasure in the Great Snowy Mountain. This place was clearly special!

It was called the Great Snowy Mountain, but it was actually a snowy mountain range that stretched into the distance with no end in sight. There was no way to make a detour around it. Fortunately, with Yan Xuehen's guidance, the two cut across by heading toward the tallest, finger-shaped peak in the distance.

When they entered the range of the snowy mountain, the surrounding temperature suddenly plummeted. Yan Xuehen shivered. It was clear that in her condition, it was hard for her to deal with such a degree of cold.

Zu An supported her while holding her hand, sending warm energy into her body. Yan Xuehen blushed, but she didn't refuse. Either way, this wasn't the first time, and she was already used to it. However, she still warned him, "You should not waste your strength on me. There might be danger at any time."

Zu An smiled and replied, "What if you freeze? To me, that's the greatest danger."

Yan Xuehen was stunned. When she saw Zu An turn around and show her a warm smile, she felt as if something had struck her heart.

...

As the two of them headed in deeper, frigid winds and snow began howling through the air viciously, battering them and slashing across their bodies like blades. A real blizzard had begun.

Both of them felt a prickling sensation all over their bodies, and some cuts even appeared on their clothes. Zu An was shocked, quickly using his body to block the wind and snow for Yan Xuehen.

Yan Xuehen merely hid on Zu An's back like a kitten. Suddenly, he felt as if the surroundings had fallen silent. Her grandmaster senses were extremely sharp, so she realized that Zu An had not only used her body to cover for her, but also used his ki to form a protective shield around her. Because of that, however, his own body was completely unprotected. Bit by bit, his clothes began to be shredded, and bloody gashes quickly appeared on his body.

Yan Xuehen was alarmed, exclaiming, "You should hurry and protect yourself! I will be fine as long as I am behind you."

Zu An chuckled and replied, "It isn't because I don't have enough ki that I didn't protect myself, but rather because I'm saving it to deal with any possible dangers that might pop up. Don't worry. I'm pretty thick-skinned." In order to comfort her, he even raised his hand for her to see. Even though there were some wounds on his arms, those wounds recovered at an astonishing speed.

Yan Xuehen had fought against him once, and after staying around him for so long, she knew he had astonishing regenerative abilities. No matter how great his regenerative powers were, though, being hurt and continuously healing those wounds again and again had to be extremely painful, right?

Just how does he manage to seem completely unaffected? He's probably putting on a smile and joking around out of concern for me, right?

Is this the so-called duty of a man...

Yan Xuehen felt a bit absent-minded.

...

Zu An continued to carry Yan Xuehen on his back as he pushed through the difficult blizzard. The wind and snow gradually became more and more powerful. The clothes on his body had long since been cut into tatters, to the point that it was likely more appropriate to call them strips of cloth.

When she saw his body, Yan Xuehen didn't feel the slightest bit of shame. She only felt endless distress and worry. She quickly said, "This storm is strange. The faster you go, the more powerfully it acts against

you. I have never heard of anyone who could speed through Great Snowy Mountain. You should try and slow down, and also lower the altitude a bit.”

Zu An realized something when he heard that. He lowered his speed, and sure enough, the strength of the wind and snow fell quite a bit. When he lowered his Wind Fire Wheels until they were only two to three meters above ground, the blizzard practically became negligible.

Only then did he notice that there was already a thick layer of ice covering the Wind Fire Wheels. Even the flames were extremely faint, as if they might go out at any time. He quickly summoned the Flame Blade to melt the ice and snow on their surface. Then, he said in relief, “Thank goodness I had a knowledgeable grandmaster with me. Otherwise, if I charged straight in, I might have been hacked to pieces by that blizzard.”

Yan Xuehen replied, “Based on what I have just seen, the natural laws of the Great Snowy Mountain seem to be different. The strength of the wind and snow changes depending on the power of the intruder. The more you resist, the greater the speed and the greater the rebound will be. I wonder just how such an intricate layout came to be, and whether it was naturally created or if someone created it. If it is the latter, that really is inconceivable...”

Zu An chuckled and replied, “The fact that you could see through these principles makes you extremely formidable too.”

Yan Xuehen’s face turned a bit red when she heard him praise her. She looked away somewhat and said, “Hurry and change your clothes. The way you look right now... is far too provocative.” Previously, she had felt terrible when she saw the blizzard cutting him. Now, she was a bit embarrassed.

Zu An lowered his head and saw that there were only a few cloth strips left on him. They didn’t even cover up much. He didn’t feel that embarrassed, however. He took out a set of new clothes and changed into them while saying, “I’ve let you see me naked again. We’re even now, right? To be honest, I think you’re even winning a bit.”

Yan Xuehen was bewildered. She felt extremely embarrassed as she thought, Can you even call this kind of thing winning?

She was just about to react when her eyes suddenly narrowed. She looked into the distance, wondering, “What is that?”

Zu An followed Yan Xuehen’s gaze and saw a frozen sculpture that flickered with a strange light.

The two of them walked over and saw a frozen person inside. He was an elder. Even though his hair was completely white, his skin still appeared to be healthy and glowing. His body didn’t have any decrepit signs of age, and the clothes he wore were garments ordinary people would have no right to wear. Even after his death, his figure still gave off a hint of pressure.

Zu An was about to say something when Yan Xuehen cried out in alarm, “Martial uncle?”

Zu An was confused. He asked, “Didn’t you say you came here before?”

Yan Xuehen looked around her. The unfamiliar scenery made her visibly confused. Then, she thought of a possibility, and her expression changed greatly. She said, "Oh no. We might have gone the wrong way because of the blizzard and accidentally stumbled into the very center of the Great Snowy Mountain."

Chapter 1288: Snow Lady

Zu An frowned. He recalled what they had just gone through and said, "That shouldn't be the case, though. I always flew according to your instructions and didn't go the wrong way."

Yan Xuehen explained, "There was probably something wrong with that snowstorm. Apart from being extremely cold, it also has the ability to interfere with one's sense of direction. We thought we were heading in one direction, but we were actually going in a different one." She gave the corpse a look and continued, "When I came here before, this frozen body definitely wasn't here."

"You said that this was your martial uncle?" Zu An asked as he carefully inspected the body. The clothing of the one in the ice did indeed resemble the White Jade Sect's style.

Yan Xuehen nodded and replied, "This is why I told you all of that earlier. My martial uncle went missing when I was rather young. At the time, he said that he was already nearing the end of his life, so he would be going to seek out his own opportunities. From then on, however, he never returned. I did not expect him to have lost his life here."

Zu An thought to himself that it made sense. After all, there were too many legends surrounding the Great Snowy Mountain. Countless individuals had entered the area, refusing to believe in superstition; however, in the end, they always failed.

Zu An thought for a bit and asked, "What was your martial uncle's cultivation level?"

Yan Xuehen began trying to recall the past, eventually answering, "I did not spend too much time with my martial uncle, I only remember that he was quite strict and somewhat fierce. As for his cultivation, he was definitely at the grandmaster rank when he was at his peak, but because of his old age when he left White Jade Sect, his strength dropped somewhat. Even if he could not maintain his grandmaster rank strength, however, he would still be much stronger than ordinary master rank cultivators."

Zu An's expression turned grave as he remarked, "Even someone so strong couldn't escape being frozen into a statue here..."

A hint of worry appeared on Yan Xuehen's face too, and she added, "He should not have been frozen by that blizzard just now. If even I could discern the essence of its principles, with his knowledge and experience, there is no way he would have been unable to."

The two of them discussed the subject with each other for a while. They couldn't see a single wound on the body of Yan Xuehen's martial uncle, nor were there any signs of poisoning. They couldn't tell what the cause of death was at all.

They couldn't just assume he froze to death, right? A cultivator of his level had such powerful internal energy; how could he possibly have frozen to death? Even if the Great Snowy Mountain's wind and snow were terrifying, that was still impossible.

"Should we bury him?" Zu An asked considerately. After all, this was Yan Xuehen's martial uncle.

Yan Xuehen shook her head and said, "There is no need. The White Jade Sect has always pursued the natural dao. Right now, martial uncle has the heavens as his cover and the earth as his mat; it is better than resting in pitch darkness."

Zu An had a strange expression. A corpse in the wilderness can even be described in such a nice way? If he hadn't known Yan Xuehen for a long time already, he might have assumed she was merely being callous. However, that was indeed the White Jade Sect's style. Even Chuyan had a similarly cold demeanor.

Looks like this Unshakable Daoist Manual really is a bit ridiculous. I'll have to warm them up a bit somehow and make them more human.

Yan Xuehen bowed toward the sculpture. Zu An instinctively did so as well. However, Yan Xuehen became extremely embarrassed, asking, "I am greeting my senior; why are you greeting him too?"

With Zu An doing the same, it almost felt as if they were a married couple asking a senior for his blessings. Of course, if anyone else had done so, she wouldn't think such wayward thoughts, but her relationship with Zu An was just too hard to describe.

Zu An was dumbfounded. He replied, "If this is your senior, he's my senior too. What's the big deal with greeting him?"

"What do you mean, my senior is your senior?"

"Don't you consider yourself my master? Shouldn't I bow to the martial uncle of my master?"

"So you're acknowledging that I'm your master now?"

"Not at all."

...

The two of them argued back and forth with each other. Yan Xuehen was a bit surprised with herself. She usually preferred peace and quiet. Even if she encountered something she didn't like, she definitely wouldn't waste her time arguing with someone. And yet, after she met Zu An, all of her habits had completely changed.

The two chatted while walking. Suddenly, they stopped, seeing many more remains before them. The corpses' outfits were all different, and some were even dressed in the fiend races' style. However, judging from their remaining traces of auras, even the weakest of them was at the master rank.

Yan Xuehen's expression changed a bit. She remarked, "Even though I do not recognize them, judging from the energy left within them, they were either sect masters from major sects or the leaders of powerful clans... This is bad. We need to get out of here."

These were all the best of the best, to the extent that based on the traces left behind, they hadn't been any weaker than Yan Xuehen at her peak. The fact that so many experts had died proved that she and Zu An had gone in the wrong direction. Zu An likewise shared her desire to leave.

Suddenly, however, snow began to surge all around them again, and the temperature dropped sharply once more. Forget about Yan Xuehen; even Zu An, who was vigorous and full of energy, felt his teeth begin to clatter.

Just then, a vague outline appeared in the distance through the wind and snow; it was a woman's figure. She was dressed in plain white clothes, without any colors or decorations. Her outfit was loosely bound by a silk band, fully displaying her slender waist and wonderful figure. The only regretful thing was that there was snow swirling around her head, preventing anyone from seeing her appearance. However, the two could still tell that she was definitely a beauty.

The woman raised her hand toward them, and although she didn't speak, a mysterious voice rang out.

"Save me..."

Zu An grabbed Yan Xuehen's hand and ran. Even though he had a bad track record with such things, he wasn't stupid. What kind of joke is this? What kind of place is this? This is the freaking forbidden Great Snowy Mountain! How could there possibly be a delicate woman roaming these mountains, waiting for someone to save her?

Yan Xuehen gave him a look of admiration. She had actually been worried that after seeing her figure, this perverted guy would end up having tender-hearted thoughts.

When the white-clad woman saw that her trick had failed, she dropped the act. Her aura surged powerfully, and she turned into a whirling tornado that chased after the two of them.

The terrifying pressure immediately made Zu An's skin go numb. He exclaimed, "An earth immortal?"

Yan Xuehen was stunned too. She also used ice and snow, but the power the other woman exuded was far greater than what she could muster at her peak. A resolute expression appeared on her face and said, "You should run on your own. I will help you stall for a bit. Otherwise, we will just die together."

Against an earth immortal, there wasn't much of a chance for Zu An away alone, let alone while carrying a burden like her.

However, not only did Zu An not let go, he even picked her up in a princess carry, then summoned the Wind Fire Wheels to flee in the opposite direction with everything he had.

"We won't be able to get away! We'll both die if you don't let go right now!" Yan Xuehen exclaimed.

"Then we'll just die together!" Zu An replied with a firm expression.

Yan Xuehen opened her mouth, but this time, nothing came out. As she lay in his embrace, she could see his resolute and steadfast expression. Her restless heart mysteriously calmed down. She thought, This is fine as well. In these vast Great Snowy Mountains, there's no point in worrying about the customs and morals of this world. It's not as if I can't accept dying with him here...

However, Zu An had no intention of dying here at all, and frantically tried to escape on the Wind Fire Wheels. However, they were already at their limit. The swirling blizzard only drew closer and closer. As the distance between them closed, their clothes, faces, and even hair were covered in frost.

Several times, the Wind Fire Wheels seemed on the verge of being extinguished. They could only continue because Zu An used his phoenix flames to continuously fuel them. Even so, more and more ice gradually appeared on the Wind Fire Wheels. Their once-blazing flames were reduced to embers, and even those were on the verge of being extinguished.

The two of them felt as if the blood in their bodies was about to freeze over. In comparison, the uncomfortable blizzard they had previously experienced in the sky was like child's play. They finally understood why all of those powerful individuals had all been frozen to death without any wounds on their bodies. This mysterious blizzard was precisely what had frozen them.

Zu An began using the Sunflower Phantasm repeatedly, along with Grandgale's instantaneous movement technique. That prevented the two of them from being caught immediately. It was all thanks to the fact that he had pulled Mo Xi and gotten her skill, which helped him greatly shorten the cooldown time of Grandgale and let him use it so many times in a row. Even so, after using every tool he had, and yet the frightening blizzard was only getting closer and closer.

"It's so hot!" Yan Xuehen exclaimed as she began to tug at her own clothes, almost as if she wanted to remove them. Her injuries were so severe that she was nowhere near strong enough to resist the cold at all.

When surrounded by extremely low temperatures, people wouldn't feel cold and want to put on clothes; rather, because their internal temperature was still higher than that of the surrounding air, they would instinctively feel hot and want to take off their clothes. That was why so many frozen corpses in the Great Snowy Mountain were completely naked.

Of course, if Zu An hadn't been fleeing quickly, Yan Xuehen might have already been frozen into a statue before even having the chance to reach such a state. However, Zu An couldn't spare the attention to look after her. The whirling snowstorm was within a few meters of him. They would be swallowed up in less than a second.

Zu An clenched his teeth. He activated the Star Shattering Imprint, successfully raising his strength tenfold in an instant. Then, he crushed the Last Breath Talisman that Xie Daoyun had given him when he left the capital. After that, he activated his Keyboard Come skill, yelling, "Send us a thousand li away!"

As soon as he spoke, the two of them instantly vanished from the area.

The snowstorm ravaged the area they had just been in. When it discovered that it had lost its targets, it began to disperse eventually. Only a white-clad woman stood there, confused.

Chapter 1289: Dao Wound

Meanwhile, Zu An and Yan Xuehen both appeared a thousand miles away. Unfortunately, however, they were still surrounded by a snowy expanse. They hadn't broken free from the Great Snowy Mountain.

For an earth immortal, or even for a grandmaster, a few dozen or even a hundred li wouldn't be a great distance at all. The short chase that had just occurred had already covered nearly a thousand li. That was why Zu An had needed to move a thousand li away.

For earth immortals, a thousand li was nothing. If the woman knew which direction to chase in, there was no way the two of them could have escaped from her. Zu An had only been able to gamble on the

fact that the woman didn't know where he was. With such a large area to search, she likely wouldn't be able to find them for quite some time.

It was clear that Zu An's bet had paid off. The white-clad woman seemed to be apprehensive towards something, or perhaps was merely unwilling to leave her own territory, as she hadn't chased after them.

However, the price Zu An had paid was equally great. He could handle moving a dozen li away with Keyboard Come, but just then, he had used it to instantly travel a thousand li. He had absolutely been gambling with his life!

He did know that, though. Even though he had already condensed a soul, which offset many of the negative effects of Keyboard Come, leaping a thousand li definitely wasn't something his soul could handle. That was why, at that instant, he had first used the Star Shattering Imprint to raise his strength tenfold.

He and Yun Jianyue had discussed the details of the Star Shattering Imprint extensively during the trip. A beginner could naturally only increase their offensive power tenfold; however, someone who had mastered the skill could raise not only their attack power, but also their overall strength tenfold for a moment. However, Yun Jianyue had strictly warned him that the burden on his body would be great too, and that not even she could use such a skill at will. Afterward, the user's body would be left in extremely poor condition even if they didn't die. That was why it wasn't supposed to be used outside of a truly desperate situation.

Still, Zu An was different from ordinary people. His body had been refined by the Primordial Origin Sutra several times. In some ways, his body was already even tougher than that of a giant dragon. He had been severely injured after using the skill, but the damage was still barely within acceptable limits.

Comparatively speaking, his soul was much more brittle, and using Keyboard Come placed the greatest burden on it. When he was weaker, he hadn't had a condensed soul to offset the rebound, so the effects had been applied directly to his body. Now that he had done so, the skill had to go through his soul first. However, if his soul broke down, his body would also be reduced to nothingness.

Those were the conclusions he had reached after talking to Mi Li about the subject in the past. Calling her his master hadn't been in vain at all.

With that knowledge, he had decided to pay the price with his body instead, using the Star Shattering Imprint to forcibly raise his soul's strength tenfold. Then, he could use his soul to face the rebound of Keyboard Come. Of course, he had also known that even if his soul was strengthened tenfold, it probably wouldn't be able to withstand the rebound of traveling a thousand li regardless. As such, he had used all of his trump cards.

During the crown prince's test in the academy's secret dungeon, the Last Breath Talisman that Xie Daoyun had given him had enabled him to survive against the emperor's soul fragment. When he left the capital, Xie Daoyun had been worried about his safety in Cloudcenter Commandery, so she had given him another Last Breath Talisman. It was something she had requested from her master, so it was likely even more effective than the previous one. Surprisingly, however, Zu An hadn't needed to use it yet even though he had encountered all sorts of dangers, due to the rapid pace at which his strength grew.

The Last Breath Talisman was normally used to defend against an enemy attack, so Zu An hadn't known it would be useful for Keyboard Come's rebound; at this point, however, he was already committed to trying everything he could. He also tossed all of the remaining Soul Return Pills he had gotten from Divine Physician Ji into his mouth, as well as the Lesser Return Pill Murong Qinghe had given him, Sang Qian's Millennium Blood Moon Essence, and all sorts of other medicines into his mouth. He knew that once the rebound hit, he definitely wouldn't have time to eat them.

After completing that process, he could only submit to the will of heaven.

Even though she was injured, Yan Xuehen was a grandmaster, and she was also the sect master of the White Jade Sect. She had quite a few hidden trump cards of her own. After breaking free from the terrifying snow lady's range of influence, her mind had gradually recovered. All sorts of treasures shone across her body, and the ice and snow covering her began to melt. Only then did she find out that her clothes weren't in order at all. It seemed she had begun taking them off when she wasn't in her right mind due to the extreme cold.

However, she couldn't be bothered to deal with that. Instead, she looked at Zu An with worry, saying, "Ah Zu, you..."

She had seen Zu An use Keyboard Come when they were in Cloudcenter Commandery's mines, and she also knew that the skill had a powerful backlash. The previous time, he had used it to move a mere dozen li away. And yet, this time, they had traveled a thousand li in an instant? She didn't even dare to think of the consequences.

Zu An gave her a smile. Before he could even say anything, however, he screamed miserably. He clutched his head and howled in pain. The surface of his skin even began to crack apart, trails of blood seeping out. The sight of it was extremely terrifying.

At that instant, the Last Breath Talisman in his hands instantly shattered. Apart from that, the peacock feather he had gotten from Kong Nanwu also burned up into ashes. He hadn't known that the feather actually had such a use, but he didn't have the time to think about it. At that moment, he only felt as if his entire head might explode.

"Ah Zu!" Yan Xuehen exclaimed.

She didn't even have time to sort out her messy clothes and rushed over to check Zu An's condition. As soon as she touched his body, her mood immediately sank. The energies within Zu An's body were beyond a mess; she had never seen such serious injuries before in her entire life. If it had been anyone else, such injuries would already have ended their life.

Even so, Zu An's condition wasn't much better. His skin continuously cracked apart, leaking blood. Perhaps due to his Primordial Origin Sutra, the wounds gradually healed, but they kept bursting open once more just as quickly as they recovered. Eventually, his recovery speed started being unable to keep up with the rate of collapse.

Yan Xuehen knew that the cracks weren't normal external or internal injuries, but rather a dao wound. They represented a breakdown of laws and natural order. If they remained untreated, Zu An's body would completely break apart and scatter. Thus, she immediately took out some pills. Her greatest

medicines, the Ice Heart Pills, had already been used up; however, White Jade Sect was still immensely powerful. She had many other excellent medicines that would make countless smaller sects go crazy.

Unfortunately, for Zu An's injuries, those kinds of medicines were insufficient.

Yan Xuehen once thought that she had already fully achieved the unshakable daoist state. And yet, as she saw Zu An clutch his head while screaming in pain, as well as the way his body was continuously breaking down, she felt as if her heart were being twisted.

She was a grandmaster, someone who flaunted her status as someone widely-read and knowledgeable. In this situation, however, she discovered that she actually couldn't help him at all. In despair, tears began to pour down her cheeks, sparkling brightly as they splashed on Zu An's face.

Suddenly, she thought of something when she saw her own tears falling. She took out a jade bottle, the Prime Souldew they had obtained from the tomb. It could seal someone in stasis for thousands of years, preventing their body from perishing while keeping them in a dormant state. Just that trace of Prime Souldew clearly wasn't enough to seal up Zu An's entire body, but it could help him stabilize his fracturing soul and body.

Thus, Yan Xuehen raised his head and fed him the Prime Souldew. It was something Zu An had given her and Yun Jianyue, and had been temporarily left in her care. Still, she believed that Yun Jianyue would be willing to use it to save Zu An.

By that point, Zu An had already lost consciousness from the pain. He could only struggle instinctively, and definitely couldn't drink the Prime Souldew on his own. However, there hadn't been much to begin with, and the thought of wasting even a single drop was unbearable. Yan Xuehen didn't know just how much of the Prime Souldew was needed to stop Zu An's body from breaking down, so she obviously didn't dare to waste any at all.

She bit her lip, but after a moment of hesitation, she poured the Prime Souldew into her own mouth, then lowered her head to kiss Zu An's lips. Then, she gently parted his teeth with her tongue to push the medicine in.

Perhaps the Prime Souldew really was effective, as it seemed to ease Zu An's pain a bit. His body instinctively sucked in the life-saving liquid.

Yan Xuehen had been entirely focused on saving him at first and hadn't had any other thoughts, but just then, her cheeks became bright red.

Chapter 1290: Returning from Death's Door

Still, the most important thing at the moment was Zu An's injuries. After a bit of hesitation, Yan Xuehen decided to follow it through to the end. She wouldn't even have dared to think of such a thing before. She could only keep trying to convince herself that she was only doing it to save a life.

However, she realized that if it had been anyone else, even if it were to save them, she definitely wouldn't have agreed to such a method.

A while later, she finally raised her head again with difficulty. She saw the unconscious Zu An lick his lips, as if he still wasn't fully satisfied yet. Yan Xuehen was both embarrassed and inexplicably amused. Why does he seem like a child?

She looked at the Prime Souldew that was left in the bottle for a moment. She clenched her lips, and after a sigh, she poured it into her mouth again, lowering herself to feed it to him again. When their lips met again, her heart began beating crazily. She felt as if even her soul had begun shaking.

She remembered how, when her disciple Chu Chuyan had first talked to her about the matter of love, she couldn't understand how that girl, who was incredibly talented and had boundless prospects, could possibly give up seeking the great heavenly dao to be completely taken in by love instead. And yet Chu Chuyan, who had always respected her greatly, had retorted that she didn't understand love.

At the time, Yan Xuehen hadn't gotten angry. She, who had already entered the unshakable daoist state, practically never had such negative emotions. She had instead begun to discuss what love was with her disciple.

Back then, Chu Chuyan had said that she would think of Zu An whenever she couldn't see him, and when she did see him, she would always worry about her relationship with him. Whenever their bodies made contact, even if they just held hands, she could feel a kind of trembling within her very soul.

Yan Xuehen had scoffed at all of those things, and even said that the reason Chu Chuyan had such thoughts was that her mastery over the Unshakable Daoist Manual wasn't high enough. Now that she was personally experiencing the feeling her disciple had spoken of, however, she wondered... Could it be that so-called love?

In reality, for grandmasters like her who dominated the world, love wasn't anything that threatening or dangerous. In fact, when she was younger, she had even considered letting herself experience it once. She would experience it, then let it go. With that, perhaps she would even be able to reach a higher level of the Unshakable Daoist Manual.

However, she had never encountered any man who met her standards. Choosing a random man to experience such a thing was even more out of the question. In the end, she had relied on her aptitude and temperament to reach the unshakable realm.

In recent years, her cultivation had stagnated, which had made her think of the matter once more. Unfortunately, she had long since achieved the unshakable state. There had been no way any man would catch her eye before, and afterward, there was even less of a chance of that happening. Zu An's appearance had actually been a completely unexpected outlier.

In the past, she might have been happy to experience such a thing. She would have simply used the situation to experience a period of pure and honest love as a secular form of mental cultivation. That would have filled in the final missing experience of her life, which could allow her cultivation to experience another breakthrough after having stagnated for so many years.

Unfortunately, Zu An was her disciple's man. No matter what angle she looked at it from, such thoughts weren't permitted. Still, that was just how life worked. Sometimes, what one feared the most would be what happened. The more she had tried to stop herself, the closer their relationship had become. Now that such feelings had emerged, they could only become even more powerful.

At the very least, there was no human society in the Great Snowy Mountain forbidden area; there were no taboos and rules. That made Yan Xuehen relax a lot. However, the top priority at the moment was to save Zu An's life. Yan Xuehen fed him the same way a few more times, eventually giving Zu An every last drop of the Prime Souldew.

With that, Zu An's pained expression eased a bit, and the wounds all over his body gradually stabilized. It seemed as if the Prime Souldew's sealing effects had been activated. At the very least, his condition didn't seem to be worsening. However, that was it. Yan Xuehen still had to find another way to save him.

"It's so hot..." Zu An suddenly groaned. As a result, he began to tug at his clothes, as if he would only feel better once he removed his clothes.

Yan Xuehen frowned. She quickly reached out her hand to check his condition, but immediately drew back when she touched his skin. It was way too cold! She was an ice element cultivator herself; her Snowflake Sword and other such skills were able to cover the world in snow. And yet, she still couldn't stand that cold. The snow woman's frighteningly cold energy had seeped into his body.

Previously, the rebound of Keyboard Come was so severe that the effects of the cold energy hadn't shown. Now that the rebound had been suppressed, that extreme cold appeared in its place. Indeed, as the saying went, when it rains, it pours!

Yan Xuehen felt a bit powerless. She had already felt helpless against the rebound's dao wounds. Now, the lethal cold poison left behind by the snow lady had taken its place. She knew Zu An's condition would only worsen if they stayed outside amid the wind and snow. Thus, she quickly wrapped one arm around his shoulder while supporting his body. Then, she began to search around for a place to take shelter in. Even though she was injured, cultivators were tough to begin with. She could still handle a single person's weight.

She looked around and eventually noticed a valley in the distance. The wind and snow there seemed to be a bit weaker. She couldn't be bothered to worry about whether there were any dangers there anymore, and thus began to walk over while carrying Zu An.

"It's so hot..." Zu An moaned, and the sound of tearing clothes followed.

Yan Xuehen turned around and saw that Zu An had already instinctively torn apart some of his collar. She couldn't help but exclaim in panic, "Don't take it all off! It's all an illusion!"

She had also entered a similar state earlier. Fortunately, the White Jade Sect was a powerful sect, so she had some life-saving treasures. Furthermore, they had already left the snow lady's range of influence, which had allowed her mind to clear. Unfortunately, those treasures were single-use consumables, so she couldn't use them for Zu An.

Furthermore, in order to protect her, Zu An had taken on most of the snow lady's blizzard himself. At that moment, the cold inside him was much more intense than what had afflicted Yan Xuehen previously. If Zu An hadn't been proficient in the fire element, and if he hadn't had a phoenix-like flame in him, all of his blood might already have frozen solid.

Yan Xuehen wasn't thinking of all that, though. She took him tightly into his embrace, trying to use her own body temperature to warm him up. Unfortunately, her slight warmth was like pouring a cup of water on a burning cart. She only began to feel so cold that she shivered all over. She thought to herself that, if just holding him already made her feel so cold, just how horrible did it have to be for him?

She turned around, but then jumped in fright. Zu An's brows and hair were already covered in a layer of frost, while a thin layer of ice was beginning to form across his entire body. His complexion wasn't as rosy as before, but instead an ashen gray. If not for the fact that she could still feel his faint heartbeat, she would have thought that he had already frozen to death.

"Don't give up," Yan Xuehen said. Tears fell from her eyes, freezing into icicles before hitting the ground. She did her best to send her ki into Zu An's body to try and preserve his life.

In her normal state, delivering ki that way would be extremely easy for her. However, as she was injured, she found it extremely difficult. Only a tiny trickle of ki flowed, and when it entered Zu An's body, it was quickly devoured by the cold energy within. However, she still struggled to continue the process, even if the cold also entered her body and made her shiver all over.

Meanwhile, their distance from the valley, which would normally have felt short, now seemed insurmountable. Still, after walking for a long time, Yan Xuehen finally reached it while carrying Zu An. As she entered, the wind and snow immediately weakened. She even felt a wave of heat in front of her.

Yan Xuehen raised her head and was overjoyed to discover that there was a cave not too far away. The heat came from within.

Is there someone inside? she thought worriedly. How could anything that existed in these Great Snowy Mountains be kind? Who knew, it might just be something similar to the snow lady. Still, she couldn't waste time with those concerns. If she waited any longer, Zu An could end up really being frozen into a statue.

She carried Zu An to the cave with great difficulty. Luckily, there was no one inside. The reason why she had felt hot air was because there were hot springs of varying sizes present!

At that instant, she didn't even dare to believe her eyes. She thought it was an illusion she was seeing before death. She pinched herself hard, and only then did she realize that it was all actually real.

"Ah Zu, we're saved!" Yan Xuehen cried excitedly to Zu An, but he didn't respond at all, leaving her incredibly worried. She didn't dare to waste any more time and jumped into a hot spring with him.