

## Immortal 1581

### Chapter 1581 – Appearance of a Great Treasure

Zu An didn't know that the young lady next to him was going through an emotional rollercoaster. When he saw her stare blankly, he nervously asked, "Did it not work?"

He hadn't experienced any soul injuries before, so he wasn't sure whether Feather Mountain's spiritual spring would be effective for such an injury.

"No, ah... I mean, it works, and it works really, really well," Xie Daoyun said, shaking her head briefly before quickly nodding. In that instant, she felt a bit strange. Her thoughts were usually pretty clear, so why was she suddenly feeling so muddle-headed?

"It's good that it's effective," Zu An said, sighing in relief.

Xie Daoyun gave him a look. When she saw him look at her with such a warm and gentle expression, her heart skipped a beat. She lowered her head because her face was heating up.

A while later, she finally summoned the courage to speak. She opened her mouth and was about to say something, but Wang Bolin and Zhang Zijiang had already detained some members of the rebel army and returned, saying, "General, we've captured some of them for interrogation. Their status in the rebel army doesn't seem to be that low."

The situation was way too messy, so there were some unlucky individuals who hadn't gotten away. They had been arrested by the Armed Escort Division after they recovered from their initial shock.

The two deputy generals felt ashamed and embarrassed, so they wanted to at least do something to earn back a bit of favor. As such, they had quickly sifted through the captives and brought a few of the leaders up to Zu An.

When he saw their huge change in expression, Zu An found it a bit comical. However, he didn't make things too difficult for them, saying, "I've troubled the two of you."

"It was no trouble, no trouble at all!" Wang Bolin and Zhang Zijiang replied, sighing inwardly in relief. They had still been really nervous not too long ago, fearing that he would harbor hard feelings and wouldn't forgive them. But now, it seemed that Zu An had already let the previous matters pass.

The two of them suddenly felt a bit of shame. Sir Zu's cultivation was so incredible that they weren't even on the same level. Why would he bother arguing with them? They thought, We were just too superficial.

Zu An's attention shifted to the rebel army leaders. He asked, "Why were you all chasing after Miss Xie?"

The leaders looked at him in fear. This man had just killed so many of their brothers with just a raise of his hand. Compared to him, the legendary bloodthirsty killers from the world of warriors were like little brothers.

"Reply... Replying to sir, at first we received news from some of my brothers that they got into a fight with a pretty girl in the town. We're all from the same mountain, so we naturally had to help them out," one began.

With someone taking the lead, the others all tried to make themselves sound useful.

“But who would have thought that all of the brothers we sent would be beaten up? We all thought it was outrageous! At the same time, we were interested in where that woman... no, that female hero was so formidable, so we sent more people to investigate the situation. But then we suffered another setback again, so more and more people went out when they heard the news. We had to get revenge for our brothers, and we wanted to see her for ourselves...”

Wang Bolin sneered and said, “It was probably because you heard that Miss Xie was pretty.”

Xie Daoyun blushed a bit, looking rather embarrassed. This rebel army had really done a number on her.

“That... That is true too...” the leaders replied. When they saw Zu An’s sharp gaze, they didn’t dare to hide the truth. “In our line of trade, if the subject isn’t money, then it’s women. A chick as pretty as this Lady Xie... Ahem, we’ve never seen a woman as pretty as her before, so a lot of people got excited.”

“But we definitely didn’t participate in it! It was only later that we followed big boss and second boss here.”

“Right, right. We were in the back and didn’t follow the others. The ones in the front suddenly disappeared after that attack, so we were scared silly, and then... and then you guys captured us.”

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When he heard them continuously express their innocence, Zu An remarked, “Isn’t it going a bit too far to send out an entire army after a single woman?”

“It seemed big boss was interested in her, so he gave the order that we had to capture her alive. Weunderlings obviously had to listen to his order,” the group of rebel leaders talked over each other one after another as they tried to explain. In the end, what they were saying was that the fault lay with their boss, and that they were innocent.

Zhang Zijiang said, “This general has heard a bit about Scarface Yang Shen. I have never heard of him being a perverted man. The reason he wanted to capture Lady Xie was probably not out of lust, but rather because he valued her identity as a runemaster. A runemaster is invaluable to an army.”

The rebel leaders seemed to have suddenly seen the light. One said, “I was going to say, big boss doesn’t usually care about these things, and yet he insisted on having this woman. We thought it was because she was too pretty and just happened to suit his tastes.”

Another rebel leader immediately corrected him, “This woman is obviously a goddess, so it’s only natural for us to have misunderstood big boss as having those thoughts.”

The rebel army leaders were used to kissing up during their day to day lives, so they were really good at playing supporting roles. Now, Xie Daoyun was the one feeling embarrassed.

Zu An thought for a long time after he heard that, then suddenly said, “There is another problem. Your Twin Dragon Mountains’ territory isn’t here; it’s quite far from this place. Why did so many of you appear here?”

Wang Bolin and Zhang Zijiang were shocked. They'd had similar suspicions earlier, but they hadn't thought about it for too long. Now that they had time to think about it in more detail, that was indeed strange.

The leaders looked at each other in dismay. They all closed their mouths, no longer as slick-tongued as earlier.

Zu An glowered when he saw that, saying, "Separate them and interrogate them one by one."

Often, interrogating people together wouldn't provide any information. Only if they were separated would they quickly provide the desired results,

Xie Daoyun said, "There's no need for all that trouble. I have some Truth Talismans. If you apply one to them, they'll reply to whatever you ask."

Wang Bolin and Zhang Zijiang's eyes widened. They thought, As expected of Master Yan's disciple; she even had a legendary Truth Talisman.

Still, Xie Daoyun knew that the Truth Talisman had its limitations. It was precious, but its target's cultivation couldn't be too high, and they couldn't be good at controlling mental force. Making such a talisman was difficult too, so it really wasn't all that amazing. It wasn't all that useful normally. The reason she had some was because her master had wanted to train her talisman crafting, so he had made her create the difficult Truth Talisman as practice. That was why she had a few on her.

The rebel army leaders were horrified. They quickly said, "There's no need to go through that much trouble! We'll speak, we'll speak..."

If they were honest, perhaps they would receive lenient treatment, but if they were interrogated like that, they wouldn't have any room for negotiation anymore.

One after another, they gave a rough summary of what had happened. It turned out the Twin Dragon Mountains hadn't been aiming for this place, but rather, were heading toward Yi Commandery. It was rumored that the criminal leader Lu Sanyuan had sent out a great invitation. He had said that a great treasure would appear in Yi Commandery, and he had invited everyone to get together and cooperate in a great undertaking.

"Lu Sanyuan!" Wang Bolin and Zhang Zijiang exclaimed in surprise.

That guy was the most famous among the rebel armies! He was someone who had given his majesty and the court a huge headache. They hadn't expected to end up attracting such a big fish!

Zu An was no stranger to Lu Sanyuan. In the past, when he was arrested and brought to the capital, Lu Sanyuan's rebel army had apparently clashed with the official army.

However, he was more concerned about something else. He asked, "A great treasure is appearing?"

Is it really a treasure, or is the treasure a metaphor for Zhao Han?

## **Chapter 1582: Moving Through the Night**

Both Wang Bolin and Zhang Zijiang were excited to obtain such important information. The danger was worth the risk! If they escorted these criminals back to the capital, it would definitely be a tremendous contribution. It was all thanks to Sir Zu's heroic prowess!

It was natural for their attitudes to change so suddenly. After all, having witnessed Zu An's strength, they had realized how laughable their prior jealousy was. They were never even in the same race to begin with.

Sir Zu's future was limitless; a trifling Armed Escort Division General position wasn't the end point of his career. Once he was promoted, as his former subordinates, they would have a greater chance of replacing him than others. If they didn't cling onto him now, they would be fools.

After asking the bandits a few more things and seeing that they didn't have much more intelligence, the deputy generals decided to regroup with the main army first.

Zu An said to Xie Daoyun, "I heard that you were going to Violet Mountain from your little brother. Our destination this time is also Violet Mountain, so why don't we just travel together? We'll be able to look after each other too."

Xie Daoyun blushed a bit. She knew he was only saying that out of respect for her. Was she qualified to look after him?

"Thank you, big brother Zu," she eventually replied. She really had been frightened badly by the prior events and didn't want something similar to happen again. Staying with the Armed Escort Army was much safer.

Most importantly, I can be together with big brother Zu...

She secretly snuck Zu An a look, her heart pounding.

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Along the way, Wang Bolin and Zhang Zijiang gave their own mounts to Zu An and Xie Daoyun like true lackeys. Even though master rank cultivators could fly, it still consumed a lot of ki and exhausted them.

Zu An thought about Xie Daoyun's condition and decided not to refuse their good intentions. However, Xie Daoyun really was too weak at the moment, and because her mind had been exhausted severely, she swayed from side to side on the horse and almost fell several times. Zu An was really worried, so he decided to put her in front of him and ride the same horse together.

Xie Daoyun instinctively opened her mouth, but in the end, she didn't say anything. When she felt his strong arms, she felt as if streaks of electricity were running through her entire body. Her heart began beating quickly.

"Your health comes first. I hope little sister Daoyun doesn't mind," Zu An said to comfort her.

"I don't mind. Thank you, big brother Zu," Xie Daoyun said, pursing her lips. She had a lot of things to say, but she didn't even know how to start because of how nervous she was feeling.

When she felt his warm and strong body, it gave her a strange sensation of peace. Carried by the horse's rhythmic movements, fatigue overtook her quickly. Her head leaned to one side, and she fell asleep while resting against Zu An's chest.

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When she woke up, she discovered that she was already lying on a bed. She was incredibly shocked! She immediately stood up and removed the covers to look down. When she saw that her clothes were still intact, she sighed in relief. Then, she couldn't help but laugh to herself. What was she worried about? Big brother Zu wasn't that kind of person.

Only then did she have a chance to size up her surroundings. She discovered that she was inside a tent, and it was already dark outside. The Armed Escort Division had probably already set up camp.

She could vaguely make out a bonfire burning outside. There were many soldiers gathered around the bonfire, loudly chatting about something. When she pricked up her ears, she overheard that those who had witnessed Zu An's power during the day seemed to be talking with their companions about how he had defeated a thousand man army. Cries of shock filled the air. It was clear that just hearing about it left them amazed.

When she sensed their adoration for Zu An, Xie Daoyun couldn't help but smile. A proud feeling couldn't help but arise within her. She was stunned when she realized that, though. Why did she feel that way?

Suddenly, the covers moved as Zu An walked in. He said, "Hm? So you were already awake."

Xie Daoyun touched her cheek in embarrassment, replying, "I really acted rather clumsily and let Sir Zu see a poor side of me." A woman from a wealthy family such as her definitely wouldn't meet any guests without getting herself ready, let alone under covers. She felt completely exposed.

Sensing her embarrassment, Zu An laughed and said, "Little sister Daoyun is so pretty. Even though you've just woken up, you're still as beautiful as a sunrise. Why would it be a poor side of you?"

"Actually, when I covered you up, I was wondering whether to remove your outer clothes so you could sleep more comfortably. But when I realized that would be a bit rude, I gave up on the thought. I'm glad I didn't do anything, or else it might have tarnished little sister's reputation and integrity."

"Big brother Zu~" Xie Daoyun quickly protested playfully in response to his teasing. Subsequently, the two of them joked around with each other for a bit. The atmosphere noticeably eased up quite a bit; in the end, she wasn't as shaken up and uncomfortable as before.

"I really have to thank big brother Zu for today, or else the consequences would have been unimaginable," Xie Daoyun said. She wanted to get up and bow toward him, but she realized that she was still under the covers, so she quickly returned to bed.

Zu An indicated that there was no need for her to be so courteous, then said, "To be honest, it's pretty incredible how we were brought together. You left several days before us, and yet we still encountered each other. Actually, Xie Xiu even asked me to take care of you when we met. To that day would come so quickly!"

"Looks like I didn't dote on that brat for nothing," Xie Daoyun said with a grin. She felt a warm sense of being home when she heard that response. However, she suddenly noticed that Zu An's expression was a bit strange, as if there was something he couldn't talk about. She couldn't help but ask, "Big brother Zu, what's wrong?"

Zu An couldn't help but chuckle. He said, "It's just that I remembered what he warned me about before I left. He said I should take care of you, but not take care of you all the way to bed. And yet now, the very first time I met you, I ended up taking care of you in bed."

Xie Daoyun's face quickly turned completely red. She cried, "What kind of nonsense is that damned brat spouting? Big brother Zu is a gentleman; why would you act like a playboy like him? He really is judging a nobleman with the heart of the petty!"

Zu An felt a bit of guilt, because he wasn't really as good as she made him out to be. He asked, "How do you feel right now?"

"Thanks to big brother Zu's spiritual spring, I feel much better than before, but I'm still really tired. My entire body feels especially exhausted," Xie Daoyun said as she rubbed her temples, giving off a hint of delicate beauty.

"Spiritual fatigue isn't so easy to recover from, after all," Zu An said as he carried a plate he had brought inside next to the bed. "You've been on the run for several days in a row, so you must be hungry. Use this chance to eat a bit. Unfortunately, the army doesn't pay much attention to food, so I hope little sister Yun is okay with it."

"I'm not such a finicky person," Xie Daoyun said. When she confirmed that her clothes and pants were intact, she decided to get out of bed. As she saw the plate of food, her eyes lit up. "Barbecue? I've always wanted to eat this, but the people back at home never let me."

"I just casually roasted it, so it might not be to your taste," Zu An said, handing her a lamb rack.

Xie Daoyun began looking for utensils, but when she saw him demonstrate how to eat it, she realized that she was supposed to eat it with her hands. She blushed a bit. That really didn't match a distinguished daughter's behavior.

Still, she actually liked new things, so she just took it with her hands. At first, she cared a bit about how she looked. She ate slowly and even tried to pay attention to what she looked like to Zu An while eating. But in the end, she was no match for her body's honesty. She had been chased for several days in a row and hadn't had time to eat a proper meal. Her stomach was already rumbling with hunger, so she quickly wolfed it down.

The two of them had endless things to talk about. The atmosphere became more and more enthusiastic. However, when Xie Daoyun finished eating, she felt a bit of guilt. She had always been taught not to speak while eating. Just now, however, big brother Zu had seen her behaving crudely.

Ah, that's not even the most important part. I'm together with another man, alone in the same room in the middle of the night. What if later, big brother Zu...

While all kinds of thoughts ran through Xie Daoyun's mind, Zu An said, "Then, I won't disturb little sister's rest. I'll give an order forbidding anyone from entering this place. You should get some rest. I'll be leaving."

When she saw him leave, Xie Daoyun couldn't help but feel a bit disappointed and frustrated. She had been worried that he would do something, wondering whether resisting would ruin their relationship. And yet, now that he had left so directly, it made her question life itself.

Zu An naturally didn't know what she was thinking. When he returned to his own tent, he quickly changed into his Golden Token Eleven outfit. In order to prevent others from associating his two identities, he made sure to have them visibly leave in separate directions.

He had to make a trip to Yi Commandery at night and see if Xiao Jianren had found out anything. At the same time, he needed to make sure that no one suspected that Zu An and Golden Token Eleven were the same people by playing both roles while they were far away from each other.

### **Chapter 1583: Coroner**

Normally, that should have been impossible. Not even a master rank cultivator could travel back and forth over such a long distance in a single night. However, Zu An was different. He had the Wind Fire Wheels to help him, which was practically like a private jet from his previous world... No, the Wind Fire Wheels were even faster than a private jet.

After Zu An made sure all the military affairs of the camp were in place, he warned everyone else not to disturb him in the evening.

After his achievements during the day, his prestige in the army had skyrocketed. The soldiers were all in admiration of him. No wonder General Zu was so formidable; he cultivated so bitterly even at night. They all vowed inwardly not to disturb him.

Just in case, Zu An left Daji behind, dressed in his clothes. Meanwhile, he secretly snuck out. When he found a secluded area, he flew into the sky. After reaching a certain distance away, he took out the Wind Fire Wheels and rushed toward Yi Commandery.

They were close to ten thousand kilometers away from Yi Commandery, so Zu An didn't dare to waste any time and used the Wind Fire Wheels at full output. As he rushed through the sky, he resembled a shooting star. Once he broke through the sound barrier, the air around him became as viscous as water. It was only because of his body's current toughness that he was able to endure the powerful winds. An ordinary cultivator would likely have melted on the spot.

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After flying all night, Zu An finally reached Yi Commandery City in the middle of the night. Even with his current cultivation, he was still a bit exhausted.

He quickly found an opportunity to land. These cities usually had defensive formations, but they weren't that effective against master rank and higher cultivators. Of course, as long as a large-scale enemy force didn't invade, how could a few grandmasters be a threat to such a massive city?

He had passed by Yi Commandery once before on his way to Cloudcenter Commandery, so navigating around wasn't difficult at all. He looked around the city and finally found the secret signal Xiao Jianren had left behind. Fortunately, it was already the dead of night, which saved him a lot of difficulty.

He followed the source of the signal and eventually reached a remote courtyard. He searched around with his divine sense and didn't notice anything strange. Thus, he silently climbed the wall and went inside.

He saw some candles flickering in the distance, accompanied by some dancing human shadows. He was stunned. Why weren't they asleep yet even though it was already so late at night? He felt rather gratified, as Xiao Jianren was still pretty reliable and was no doubt still investigating the case. Once they went back, Zu An planned to make a report to apply for his promotion.

He was about to head in and offer praise when he suddenly heard Xiao Jianren's voice. "Miss Zhang, next time you come to the capital, I'll take you around the overhead walkway. That's the most lively place in the capital, a feeling that's completely different from Yi Commandery's."

"What are you saying, Sir Xiao? If we're going to the capital, we definitely have to taste the capital's delicious food! They sell roast duck wrapped in a flour bun dipped in a special sauce. That's the real deal," came a rather lowly voice from off to the side; it was Dai Seventh.

"Stuff like that roast duck is just for duping foreigners. If we're going to talk about the capital's food, of course it's the charcoal fire pot that's really good, especially the mutton hot pot we enjoy during the winter. That's what really hits the spot," Chen Eighth chimed in.

Zu An was confused. Who was this Lady Zhang they were talking about? Why did their words sound so much like simping?

When he snuck a look, he saw that his three subordinates were currently surrounding a tall and gorgeous woman and trying to woo her. The woman had a tall ponytail and was dressed in tight clothing. Her appearance was neat and tidy, and yet she also had a strong and vigorous air about her. The two perfectly proportioned legs beneath her leather armor, in particular, made one feel that if one could be clasped between them, perhaps the feeling would take them straight to heaven.

The woman's face was beautiful to begin with, and together with her shocking long legs and the heroic air about her appearance, it added even more charm. It was no wonder the three grown men were completely infatuated with her. However, Zu An had sent them here to investigate a case; why were they actually flirting with a woman?

The woman with the tall ponytail seemed a bit uninterested in their enthusiastic wooing. She said, "The reason for my visit is to discuss Sir Seven's case with all of you."

Xiao Jianren laughed and replied, "Work and life need balance, right? Miss Zhang, you're a bit too tense. You might be able to develop a new sense of spirituality if you relax a bit."

Zu An was a bit speechless. The usually wooden and inarticulate Xiao Jianren was actually so good at conversation all of a sudden? Zu An hadn't expected him to actually have this kind of taste.

The ponytailed woman frowned. She was about to say something, but she suddenly sensed something. She suddenly turned toward the entrance and cried, "Show yourself!"



Xiao Jianren and the others were stunned and all turned around. However, when they saw Zu An's figure, their expressions changed greatly. Their smiles faded as they said, "We greet Sir Eleven!"

Zu An said coldly, "All of you really are working hard, still investigating the case so late into the evening."

How could Xiao Jianren and the others not hear the mockery in his voice? They felt guilty and didn't dare to retort. Meanwhile, when the ponytailed woman heard that it was Golden Token Eleven, she sized him up curiously.

After all, there had only been ten Golden Token Envoys for a long time. Every single one of them had been assigned to oversee one area, and they were all influential and critical individuals. And yet, in recent years, a Golden Token Eleven had suddenly appeared. The different rumors she had heard all made that person seem extremely mysterious. It was hard to say what that person's real cultivation rank was.

However, the woman had believed that as he could become one of the Golden Token Envoys, just like her adoptive father, he likely wouldn't be too weak. And yet, now that they'd met, only two words appeared in her mind: That's it?

Even though this person looked pretty well-built, she didn't sense the slightest ki aura from him, and he even seemed to be a bit out of breath. He looked just like a normal person! Could it be that his majesty had ended up just promoting someone randomly from his family? Or had this person relied entirely on his brain and taken the path of intellect?

As he was a Golden Token Envoy, then he definitely had his secrets, so she didn't dare to look down on him and also greeted him. "Golden Token Seven's subordinate, Zhang Zitong, greets Sir Eleven!"

Zu An was stunned. This woman was actually Golden Token Seven's subordinate! She looked like a capable individual. He only had people like the middle-aged Xiao Jianren who had already been stuck at his rank for a long time, while Golden Token Seven had actually found a long-legged hottie. Had he been looking for a subordinate or a freaking secretary?

He had often heard the phrase 'if you have something to do, let the secretary do it; if there's nothing to do, then do her...' He subconsciously began to suspect the woman's relationship with Golden Token Seven, and he even wondered whether Golden Token Seven's death had anything to do with her.

Zhang Zitong was already used to similar looks after so many years, but she still felt rather angry inside.

This guy was staring at my legs right from the get-go, and there's still a bit of a wretched look in his eyes! No wonder Xiao Jianren and the others are like that. If the upper beam isn't straight, the lower beam will be crooked!

You have successfully trolled Zhang Zitong for +250 +250 +250...

Zu An was stunned when he noticed the Rage points coming in, but he could roughly guess why she was angry. Even so, he didn't really take it seriously and just nodded toward her. He turned to Xiao Jianren and said, "I sent you here ahead of time to investigate. Did you obtain any useful information?"

"I did, I did..." Xiao Jianren said guiltily, then took out a file and handed it to him. It was a summary of the most recent discoveries.

Zu An scanned the contents. His expression darkened as he said, "There's not much to see here. This is all you've found after being here for so long?"

Xiao Jianren replied, "Sir Eleven's criticism is well deserved. But this matter really does seem purely like a freak accident. I really couldn't find any holes in their report."

Zu An frowned and said, "Then call over the coroner who autopsied Sir Seven's corpse. I want to personally ask him some things."

Zhang Zitong spoke up just then, saying, "I was the one who carried out the autopsy on Sir Seven."

"You?" Zu An replied, stunned. Even though this woman was outstanding, he hadn't expected her to be a forensic investigator at all.

"Can a coroner not be female?" Zhang Zitong replied, raising her head to look straight at him. "I vow with my reputation and my life on the line that there were absolutely no mistakes in my autopsy report. Even though Sir Seven was my superior, he treated me extremely well. He took me in when I was wandering the streets when I was a child. In my heart, I already considered him my real father. I wish for his killer to be discovered more than anyone else here!"

#### **Chapter 1584: Nowhere to Begin**

When he saw how Zhang Zitong was so worked up that her face was turning a bit red, Zu An asked nonchalantly, "Do you think Sir Seven was murdered?"

"Indeed," Zhang Zitong said with a nod. "Sir Seven was always cautious, and his cultivation was high. How could he possibly lose his footing and drown? Still, the problem is that there were no problems with his corpse at all. All of the evidence suggests he really did die an accidental death." She felt a sense of grief and indignation as she spoke, as if she blamed herself for not being capable enough to get revenge for him.

Zu An looked at Xiao Jianren, asking, "Did you examine Sir Seven's body?"

Xiao Jianren was stunned, replying, "Lady Zhang already examined it..." His entire body trembled halfway through his sentence. He also realized that he had made a mistake.

Zu An gave him a look, thinking, This fella actually made that kind of mistake? Looks like his withered wood really did experience spring again, and he let this woman completely confuse him.

Zhang Zitong wasn't stupid. She quickly responded, "What, are you suspecting me of faking the report?"

"It's nothing more than routine business, Lady Zhang. Please don't mind it too much," Zu An said. He then asked, "Where's Sir Seven's corpse? Don't tell me he's already been buried?"

"Of course not," Zhang Zitong replied, glowering. Despite Zu An's words, it was clear that he already suspected her. It would be strange if she could feel happy in such a situation. She said, "Sir Seven's remains are stored in the house. There are people watching over it right now."

The house she was talking about naturally wasn't the Embroidery House back in the Imperial Palace, but rather the office where the local Embroidered Envoys worked. They were all designed the same way as the Embroidery House in the capital.

Zu An was on a timer tonight, so he immediately cut to the chase, saying, "Let's head over and take a look."

Even though she wasn't happy with being suspected, Zhang Zitong still felt admiration. This Golden Token Eleven was indeed more professional than his subordinates. She quickly led the others to the Embroidered Envoy office in Yi Commandery. The Embroidered Envoys were all moved when they saw Zu An's Golden Token uniform. A Golden Token Envoy had finally arrived! Ever since something happened to Sir Seven, they had become like drifting reeds, every day full of worries and anxiety.

Zhang Zitong quickly brought Zu An's group to the back garden, indicating for the guards to open up the doors. Cold air rushed out from inside. She explained, "I was worried that Sir Seven's remains would decompose, erasing any evidence we could find, so I found a frozen coffin to store him in. Apart from that, I found a runemaster to preserve his corpse with various runes."

Such methods naturally couldn't keep the corpse in its optimal state forever, or else everyone who could do so would. However, keeping the corpse in good condition for a few months wasn't a problem. Zu An walked up to the frozen coffin and gently removed the cover, revealing a shriveled figure lying inside.

He sighed. The body was indeed Golden Token Seven. He had fought alongside Golden Token Seven before when he was passing by Yi Commandery. Even though the other man had worn a mask back then, there was no way to falsify his build and aura. However, this was the first time Zu An saw Golden Token Seven's true appearance. The man had an ordinary face; he was someone who, if thrown into a crowd, wouldn't be given a second look.

Such a face was actually the most suitable for a Golden Token Envoy. After all, if all of them were as handsome as Zu An, they would draw attention wherever they went. How would they even do work?

Zu An reached out to touch Golden Token Seven, then sent in his ki to examine the body's condition. He discovered that there weren't any other injuries, nor were there any signs of poisoning. Of course, he wasn't a specialist in the field. After completing his inspection, he gestured for Xiao Jianren to step forward.

That guy Xiao Jianren was quite a genius; he even knew how to perform autopsies. If not for his usual slowness of speech, he wouldn't have had his talents buried in the Embroidery House for so many years.

Xiao Jianren put on a glove and took out a knife. He bowed toward Golden Token Seven and said, "I apologize for the offense, sir."

Zhang Zitong's eyelids twitched as she muttered, "I already sealed up the wound after examining Sir Seven's body. Now, we're going to do it again... I didn't think Sir Seven would have to go through the suffering of blades even after passing."

Xiao Jianren's hand trembled when he heard what she said, worrying that he would make his goddess unhappy.

Zu An said seriously, "I worked together with Sir Seven before, so I know what kind of person he was very well. I believe he would want to find out who the real murderer was too, and wouldn't mind these kinds of things."

Xiao Jianren felt a bit of relief when he heard Zu An say that. His blade went in and cut open Golden Token Seven's body, carefully examining the insides.

Zhang Zitong couldn't keep watching. As she turned around and walked away, she glanced toward Zu An and asked, "Sir Eleven has worked with Sir Seven before?"

Zu An nodded and replied, "That's right, and it was just a few months ago."

Zhang Zitong was a bit surprised. She hadn't expected these two to have such a relationship. A light flickered in her eyes and she opened her mouth, but in the end, she swallowed her words back down.

Zu An felt his stomach churn as he watched Xiao Jianren work. A forensic investigator's work really wasn't something a normal person could do. He shifted his gaze and asked the ponytailed woman, "Who's the one Sir Seven trusts the most among you guys?"

Zhang Zitong proudly stuck out her chest and replied, "Sir Seven was always introverted and usually kept his distance from people. If he really trusted anyone, it would be me. After all, we were like father and daughter for many years."

"Then did he leave you any statements, or perhaps something like a letter?" Zu An asked. He didn't have any clues at all in this case, leaving him completely lost.

Zhang Zitong shook her head in confusion, replying, "He didn't. Why is Sir Eleven asking that?"

Zu An replied, "The last time I met him, he shared with me that he was investigating an extremely important matter. Based on how nervous he was, it seemed to be really serious, and he said that it could get him in big trouble. Do you have any impression of the huge issue he was talking about?"

Zhang Zitong looked at him in surprise, replying, "I've followed Sir Seven for so many years. Why have I never heard him mentioning something like this?" She looked a bit suspicious as she thought, You've only met with Sir Seven once. If there really was something important, why would he tell you?

Zu An was a bit puzzled when he saw that she wasn't lying from her expression. Is she really telling the truth, or is she just pretending to not know?

If it was the former, why hadn't Golden Token Seven told her? Could it be that he didn't trust her...?

...

Meanwhile, Xiao Jianren had already finished his autopsy. He sealed up the corpse while shaking his head, reporting to Zu An, "The cause of death is without a doubt drowning, and there were no other injuries. There were no signs of being bound or tied up, nor were there any signs of poisoning. Of course, there's a chance that he was fed a drug in a very small amount, which would make it undetectable now that so much time has passed."

When she heard that, Zhang Zitong said decisively, "That's impossible. When I received news of Sir Seven's death, my first suspicion was that he was drugged, then drowned in the water. I immediately focused my investigation on that, but I didn't detect any sign of a drug."

Zu An frowned. There was no way of confirming whether what she said was true or false. If he had known it would be like this, he would have grabbed a few of those Truth Talismans from Xie Daoyun.

However, this woman was an Embroidered Envoy, so a Truth Talisman wouldn't necessarily prove useful anyway.

"Bring me to the location where the accident took place," Zu An said.

"When we found Sir Seven's remains, we searched the Blackwater Pool. There were no suspicious traces," Zhang Zitong replied.

Seeing that Zu An was still unconvinced, she could only bring them over. However, inwardly, she was still unconvinced that there was anything else he could find from the crime scene. It had already been so long; what else could they even find? This guy was completely wasting time.

Is he just going through the motions so he'll have something to report back later?

### **Chapter 1585: Occult Conversation**

After serving as a member of the court for so long, Zhang Zitong had seen all kinds of officials. Many of them clearly didn't do much, and yet always bragged about themselves so others would think they did a lot. It was none other than those kinds of people who did very well in the court, and whenever there were promotions, they had a higher chance of being promoted than others.

Golden Token Eleven appeared to be investigating a lot, but they were all things that other people had already investigated, and he hadn't found out anything new. It was just repeated labor. Thus, Zhang Zitong assumed he was precisely that kind of person, and she was naturally dissatisfied.

Still, he was an Embroidered Envoy. Now that Sir Seven had died, if something serious happened, there would be no one left to protect her. She wasn't so stupid as to show her true thoughts. Unfortunately, she didn't know that Zu An had the Rage system and could deduce her thoughts based on the number of Rage points he received.

Zu An was a bit confused. Why does this woman dislike me so much? Could it be that she really is guilty at heart and doesn't want me to keep investigating?

He left behind the others to look for other clues. However, he took Xiao Jianren and Zhang Zitong with him as they headed to Blackwater Pool. Along the way, he asked without batting an eyelid, "Was there anything strange about Sir Seven before the accident?"

Zhang Zitong replied, "Sir Seven was a habitually silent man, but nothing strange could be seen about him. The only strange part was that he seemed especially busy, as if he had something brooding in his heart."

Zu An continued, "Where was he supposed to go that day for his assignment?"

Zhang Zitong shook her head and replied, "How could we, as subordinates, know of our superior's plans? Embroidered Envoys have always been secretive to begin with, let alone Golden Token Envoys."

Zu An was a bit annoyed. She didn't know a thing! There was no way to get started on this case at all. He asked, "What about things he left behind? Did Sir Seven leave anything behind?"

Before the ponytailed woman could reply, Xiao Jianren handed him a file, saying, "I looked into the things Sir Seven left behind. Everything is recorded here, especially..."

Zu An nodded slightly. It seemed this guy hadn't wasted the entire time flirting. He had still done quite a bit of work.

Xiao Jianren explained all of the items one by one, then said, "These are all some common items that all Embroidered Envoys have. There was nothing strange about them."

Zu An went over the list of items, but didn't say anything.

Even though the city gates were closed, the Embroidered Envoys had a high status. In order to avoid trouble, they didn't even interact with the city defense. They found a secluded place to climb over the walls. Zhang Zitong and Xiao Jianren both took out hooks. Yi Commandery was a big city with defensive formations everywhere. Even though they were Silver Token Envoys, they still couldn't just jump over.

Zu An frowned slightly. He didn't have much time, and couldn't just slowly wait for them. As such, he grabbed their shoulders, then kicked off. The three of them flew over the tall wall.

Zhang Zitong's mouth opened slightly. Judging from his ki aura, or lack thereof, Zu An had clearly seemed no different from an ordinary person, so she had thought that he was either promoted through nepotism or his strength as a scholar. She hadn't expected his cultivation to be so high!

It looks like he's already reached master rank! Doesn't that mean he might be one of the best among the Golden Token Envoys?

Xiao Jianren felt mysteriously satisfied when he saw her shocked expression. It was almost as if the more formidable Sir Eleven was, the more he could bask in his superior's limelight.

Now that he thought about it, Sir Eleven's growth really was fast. When they first met, Sir Eleven's cultivation rank had practically been the lowest out of the Golden Token Envoys. Just how much time had passed before he broke through into the master rank?

"Lead the way. Where is the Blackwater Pool?" Zu An asked. Realizing that a lot of time had already passed, he didn't let them go after jumping over the wall and decided to just fly with the two of them.

"Over... Over there," Zhang Zitong said in embarrassment.

She had always been proud and cold among the Embroidered Envoys. Apart from Sir Seven, she hadn't been too close to anyone. Even though she had worked together with her colleagues before, she'd had almost no physical contact even after so many years. This was the first time she had been so 'intimate' with another man.

However, she couldn't produce even the slightest hint of those kinds of thoughts, because the other man seemed to be focused on the mission, practically looking down on her cultivation. He had grabbed her shoulder as if he were carrying a little chick, which dealt her quite the mental blow.

...

Flying was much faster, and they quickly arrived at a cliff. There was a waterfall there, and they could vaguely make out a misty pool underneath.

"This is the Blackwater Pool," Zhang Zitong said, pointing downward.

She was starting to feel a bit of admiration for Zu An. They had flown for so long, yet he didn't seem red-faced in the slightest. At the very least, in terms of cultivation, his ability was immeasurable. Could it be that her earlier impression of him had been wrong?

Zu An glanced down and saw that the pool was extremely deep. The water was very clear, but looking at it from a distance, it did appear black. He figured that was likely where the name came from.

"Could it be that Sir Seven fell in the stream, and was then swept into the Blackwater Pool?" he wondered as he looked at the waterfall. The water flowed extremely quickly, and the rocks nearby were very slippery. Even cultivators would have a chance of losing their footing.

"I don't think that's too likely," Zhang Zitong said, shaking her head. "Sir Seven didn't have any external marks. No matter how sturdy a cultivator's body was, if they fell from such a height, even if they didn't break any bones, they would have some scrapes and bruises. But when I checked earlier, there weren't any of those."

When he heard that, Zu An took the two of them and jumped straight into the pool below, then muttered, "Sir Seven drowned to death down there? But it doesn't make sense no matter how I think about it..."

Forget about an Embroidered Envoy, not even the lowest-level bronze token would drown that way!

"Are there really no monsters in this Blackwater Pool?" Zu An said while scanning around with his divine sense. However, the Blackwater Pool was too deep, and his divine sense didn't cover that much area underwater. After a certain depth, it didn't reach much further.

"There aren't. If there were any, there's no way our local Embroidered Envoy would have no record of them," Zhang Zitong said, sounding much more respectful.

Xiao Jianren sighed. He had already gotten used to this woman's proud nature. Now that she was acting like this, he actually felt a bit uncomfortable. He thought, If I become a Golden Token Envoy, she'll probably treat me much better too, right...

"Still, I've heard some rumors surrounding Blackwater Pool. People seem to go missing here often," Zu An said.

Zhang Zitong replied, "We looked into all of the recent cases. All of them were because of some murderers or bandits, who blamed those rumors to distract the masses."

Zu An nodded. That was in line with the intelligence he had received before. He asked, "Recent cases? What about older ones?"

Zhang Zitong was a bit hesitant, but she still replied, "Apart from the few cases we investigated, the next oldest case dated back thirty years. I wasn't born yet at that time, and there aren't many members of the Yi Commandery Embroidered Envoy who have been around since then. No one knows what happened. But according to the files, there were some complex cases that didn't have many clues. The ignorant local people thus began to create strange legends."

Zu An frowned. It looked as if the Blackwater Pool really could have some secret inside.

"I'm heading down for a look," he said. He didn't wait for a response and dived straight in. With his Blue Mallard skill, he quickly descended. His figure swiftly disappeared from their line of sight.

When she saw how quickly he moved, Zhang Zitong was frightened, asking, "Will Sir Eleven be okay?"

Blackwater Pool was rather inauspicious, after all; another Golden Token Envoy had drowned there already.

### **Chapter 1586: Witness**

Xiao Jianren stuck out his chest and proudly said, "My boss has been through all kinds of troublesome situations! How can this shallow pool trouble him at all?"

"The Blackwater Pool definitely isn't shallow," Zhang Zitong corrected him. "Still, I doubt he'll find anything. Our men already searched several times underwater, so if there were any clues, they would have already found them a long time ago."

"That's hard to say..." Xiao Jianren began, but even though he was speaking up for his own leader right now, he didn't have much confidence. He had already followed this case for a long time, but he hadn't found any clues at all. If not for the fact that a Golden Token Envoy drowning to death was too strange, he would already have come to the conclusion that this was just an accident too.

...

Meanwhile, Zu An used his Blue Mallard ability to form a water bubble around him, then searched all around the Blackwater Pool.

There was actually quite a large variety of plants and fish inside, but there was nothing wrong. It didn't seem as if there were any evil spirits present. The only thing worth noting was that the water was especially cold. However, it was normal for such deep pools to be a bit cold, especially seeing as it was still the middle of the night.

Zu An looked all around him but didn't see anything strange. As such, he continued down for close to a hundred meters. However, his brows inadvertently furrowed. Wasn't this pool a bit too deep? For normal cultivators, unless they were of the water element, such a depth would already be really difficult for them.

He went down for more than a hundred meters again, then finally arrived at the very bottom. There was no longer any light present at all. He took out a luminescent pearl, and by borrowing the dim light, he discovered that there was silt all around, but no plant life. Occasionally, some animal remains lay strewn in the silt. The area was full of a deathly still sensation. It seemed quite normal for it to look that way, though.

After looking around a bit, Zu An didn't notice anything strange, so he decided to return to the surface. He remembered that he had seen similar kinds of underwater worlds in documentaries before. He hadn't expected to be able to personally experience one in this world.

When he remembered the contents of those documentaries, however, his expression suddenly froze. He immediately stopped, staring at the pool floor. He finally realized what was wrong. In those documentaries, there had always been creatures even in the depths of the ocean. There were all kinds



of strange and grotesquely-shaped fish, bone-eating critters, and other sorts of life. This pool was barely a few hundred meters deep, and yet not even the slightest bit of life was present. It wasn't normal at all!

Thus, Zu An returned to the pool's bottom. He reached out his hand and pressed against the dirt, releasing his aura to investigate the surroundings. His expression suddenly changed. There was still more space underneath the surface! Rather than the bottom of a pond, it looked more like a cover created using a profound formation.

Suddenly, a large hand reached out from the soil, grabbing at his neck. Its skin was a greenish-gray color with veins bulging from it, and it was surrounded by death energy. It was shaped like a human hand, but it was definitely not. Why would a human hand have scales all over it?

Zu An jumped in surprise. He quickly dodged backward, causing the hand to miss. However, it didn't give up and continued to reach out. Zu An's expression grew cold, and a glint flickered amid the dark water, severing the greenish-gray hand. The arm's owner seemed alarmed, instantly returning underground.

Zu An frowned. He looked at the severed hand, but didn't see any blood flow out. Instead, it turned into greenish-black smoke, dissipating completely. He exclaimed in surprise, "Hm?"

Suddenly, more than ten hands suddenly reached out, grabbing toward Zu An from all directions. He didn't have anywhere to evade! Just a single mistake and he would be completely smothered by the interweaving hands!

If I can't dodge, then I won't!

A streak of sword radiance sliced outward, its incredible power hacking the thick and sturdy arms into several pieces. A miserable scream emerged from underground. The voice was extremely sharp and even seemed to have something of a stinging effect on one's mind.

However, Zu An's mind was extremely stable, so he naturally didn't feel fear. He didn't hesitate and rushed straight up before thrusting his sword downward. With the help of Blue Mallard, his mobility underwater wasn't affected at all. As his longsword traveled downward, a wave of blue runes appeared on the surface of the pool's bottom. The formation that had been arranged was clearly coming into effect. However, it broke apart under the Tai'e Sword's power almost instantly.

The silt before Zu An disappeared, replaced with empty space. This was clearly the true bottom of the pool.

"Great immortal, please spare me, please!" a creature begged in a low and small voice, kneeling and repeatedly hitting the ground. It knew it had no choice. Judging from the previous interaction, it already knew it was definitely no match for Zu An. Furthermore, it didn't have any idea why that sword had such a terrifying aura, as if the blade could instantly destroy it at any time.

Zu An was a bit surprised. He had seen so many thick and solid hands that he expected there to be some kind of massive creature living there. He hadn't expected it to be so small. Most importantly, its appearance was way too strange. Its mouth resembled a sharp bird's beak, and its body was as skinny as a monkey's. There was something resembling a tortoiseshell on its back too. It looked a lot like the legendary Japanese creature known as a Kappa.

"What kind of a creature are you?" Zu An directly asked.

"I'm just a little turtle from this Blackwater Pool. I want nothing more than a life detached from worldly affairs. A few centuries ago, I stumbled upon a fortuitous encounter and gained consciousness. That was how I began to cultivate in this pool," the monster respectfully replied.

"Turtle?" Zu An repeated in surprise. He had already been in this world for a long time, so he knew that the Fiend races were different from monsters. The Fiend races had more noble bloodlines. If nothing strange happened, they would naturally be able to take human form.

Meanwhile, monster bloodlines were different. They were no different from ordinary plants and animals. However, some of them developed consciousness through certain opportunities and coincidences; after a long period of cultivation, there was a chance for them to gain humanoid forms too. The Fiend races weren't the same as those monsters. In their opinion, such monsters were just lower-level creatures, even though many evolved monsters weren't weak at all.

Furthermore, monsters usually retained their animal instincts. High-level beasts tended to be just as intelligent as humans; however, these monsters were usually extremely proud of what they were and what they looked like, so they found it disdainful to take human form.

Zu An asked coldly, "So, all of those mysteries of Blackwater Pool were because of you? Just how many people have you harmed over the years?!"

When it saw Zu An's expression grow fierce, the turtle was so scared it began to shudder all over. It protested, "Great immortal has misunderstood! I've already turned over a new leaf! I've only cultivated earnestly in the past century and haven't eaten anyone in that time!"

"So you're admitting that you ate people before?" Zu An retorted coldly.

"I didn't, I didn't!" the turtle cried, constantly waving its hands. "It was just that those people had bad motives and wanted to hurt me, and ended up losing their lives as a result. I felt that it would be a waste to let them go either way, which was why... But I definitely, absolutely never had the intention of proactively harming them!"

"Would a monster like you really be so kind?" Zu An replied, naturally not believing a single thing it said.

"I'm telling the truth! I wanted to become the deity of this Blackwater Pool, so why would I recklessly become some murderous evil being?" the turtle monster quickly explained.

"A water deity?" Zu An repeated, a bit stunned. He felt that things were getting weirder and weirder. At the moment, however, he was more concerned about something else. He asked, "Roughly a month ago, someone dressed similarly to me fell into this Blackwater Pool. Do you have any memory of that?"

"I do! I do!" the turtle monster hurriedly replied with a nod.

"Why did he drown here? Was it because of you?" Zu An asked sternly.

"Ah! He was already dead when he fell into the water, I think?" the turtle monster said with a dumbfounded expression.

## **Chapter 1587: Mysterious Woman**

“Dead?” Zu An repeated, surprised. After all, the evidence had previously stated that Golden Token Seven drowned. If he had died before falling into the water, how could that have escaped the notice of so many Embroidered Envoys who specialized in forensics?

“You’re just trying to make up some excuse to say it has nothing to do with you, right?” Zu An retorted. He had inspected Golden Token Seven himself. That was death by drowning without a doubt, so he naturally didn’t believe the turtle monster. It was probably just scared that Zu An would retaliate if it spoke the truth.

“Absolutely not!” the turtle spirit exclaimed. It pointed toward the sky and vowed, “Even if I harmed some cultivators before, it was all out of self-defense! I’m a kind spirit!”

Zu An sneered. Several greenish-gray hands had suddenly rushed out from the ground. If his cultivation had been a bit lower, he might have already been strangled to death. He couldn’t possibly believe its words.

As if sensing Zu An’s thoughts, the turtle spirit immediately shivered and continued, “Even if I wanted to harm others, I need to absorb the essence of others to benefit my cultivation! What would a dead person do for me? I had no reason to harm him!”

“Absorb their essence?” Zu An repeated, thinking about Mosquito Daoist and Sir Bat. They had been monsters that sucked out the blood essence of others, practicing extremely sinister methods. However, Golden Token Seven hadn’t shown any signs of having his cultivation sucked out.

“I only do it occasionally, I swear! I only retaliate when they try to harm me. Humans aren’t tasty,” the turtle monster quickly explained. “I mainly absorb the sun and moon’s essence to cultivate.”

Zu An suddenly remembered what it had said before. He asked, “What did you mean when you said you wanted to become a water deity?”

The turtle monster explained, “It’s just that the common people nearby began to believe in my existence and offer me incense. As time went on, I eventually became able to borrow the faith of those incense offerings to cultivate, which is much faster than cultivating by absorbing the essence of the sun and moon. For folks like me, we call such circumstances becoming a deity. I’ve only completed half of the process so far. Recently, the nearby people have gradually begun to believe that there’s a mysterious being in Blackwater Pool, and there are some people who occasionally come to offer sacrifices. However, it hasn’t happened on a larger scale yet.”

Zu An glowered, replying, “Aren’t you just deceiving the common people then?”

In ancient times, these kinds of beings were considered evil spirits, which local governments went to great lengths to get rid of.

“Of course not! I planned to return the favor too, providing the land with timely rain and pleasant winds. All I want is peace for everyone!” the turtle monster quickly explained.

“You can affect the weather?” Zu An asked in surprise.

"I'm a water creature, after all. With the help of their faith, it wouldn't be too difficult to send down some rain within a certain range," the turtle monster said, sounding quite proud. "Of course, past that range, I wouldn't be able to do much."

Zu An inwardly clicked his tongue in wonder. He hadn't expected these monsters to have such upgrade paths. Of course, that kind of divine power was vastly different from the upgrade path he imagined, but it did share some resemblance to his previous world's earth deity and river deity stories.

After he heard the details regarding the evolution of a water deity, Zu An gradually started to believe that this turtle really wasn't related to Golden Token Seven's death. He said, "Tell me about what happened that day in detail. If you're a water deity, nothing that happens here in Blackwater Pool should be beyond your notice, right?"

The turtle monster nodded hurriedly and said, "That is indeed the case. Roughly a month ago, I was cultivating in my cave when I suddenly heard the sound of something falling into the water, as if some heavy object had fallen into this pool. I secretly left to take a look, then saw that there was a corpse floating there."

"You're certain that he was already dead at that time?" Zu An asked.

"Of course," the turtle monster replied. "Even though I'm not as incredible as sir immortal, I can at least discern whether someone is alive or dead. Back then, there was also a woman standing there. If I'm not mistaken, she was probably the one who threw him in."

"A woman?" Zu An repeated in surprise. Many possibilities instantly appeared in his mind.

He took out a tree branch and began to draw in the water, quickly reproducing Zhang Zitong's appearance. In order to learn 'Face of a Thousand Identities', he had studied art in depth. He had even received the guidance of Yu Yanluo before, so drawing just couldn't be easier for him. Even though he had only met Zhang Zitong once before, he already remembered all of her distinctive features. At the same time, the Blue Mallard skill allowed him to draw in water just as easily as if it were on paper.

When it saw how lifelike the woman's image was, the turtle monster was shocked. It thought, Are you the water deity or am I? Sir immortal really is unfathomable.

As such, its tone became far more respectful as it said, "Replying to sir immortal, I am not certain. That woman was wrapped in black robes and had a mask over her face. I could not see what she looked like."

"Were there any distinctive features on that woman's body?" Zu An asked.

"There was nothing special of note. Sir immortal must know that under my current circumstances, I do not want too many people to see my true form. As such, I did not dare to get too close back then," the turtle monster replied. It seemed to feel that such a reply wasn't of any value, so in order to not anger him, it did its best to recall everything that happened that night. "Right, I believe that woman said something." It thought for a bit then continued, "I think it was 'The earlier you're found, the better!'"

"The earlier he's found, the better?" Zu An repeated, feeling completely baffled. What did that mean? If the woman had been disposing of a corpse here, why would she hope for him to be found sooner?

He asked more questions. However, he couldn't obtain any new information, and thus said to the turtle monster, "I'll look into what you've told me. You're not allowed to go anywhere in that time, or else I'll kill you once I find you."

The turtle monster nodded and bent down in alarm, replying, "I wouldn't dare to fool sir immortal! Furthermore, I've already spent centuries here, and yet I've only made a little bit of progress in becoming a water deity. If I run away, I'll have to start all over again. I don't have that much time left!"

Zu An nodded. He kicked off the pool bottom, flying out of the Blackwater Pool like a bullet.

Zhang Zitong had been standing by the edge of the pool in boredom, listening to Xiao Jianren's enthusiastic and clumsy efforts to start a conversation. She had felt that time was passing very slowly. When she saw Zu An appear, however, she and Xiao Jianren sighed in relief.

Xiao Jianren quickly walked up and said, "Sir, did you find out anything?"

Zhang Zitong thought, I already sent my men to investigate before. What else could he even find?

Zu An nodded and said, "I did find out some things. Sir Seven wasn't drowned here, but rather elsewhere. Then, his corpse was tossed here."

He sighed inwardly, because he had reflexively assumed that Golden Token Seven had drowned here in Blackwater Pool. All he could say was that the forensic investigators of this generation hadn't developed their methods enough. In his previous world, they could easily have compared the water composition in his lungs with Blackwater Pool's water. They would have immediately noticed a difference.

Zhang Zitong was confused. She couldn't figure out how Zu An had been able to figure something like that out from just a single trip into the water.

"As expected of Sir Eleven, you are profound as always! There is that possibility, indeed. We completely overlooked that before!" Xiao Jianren quickly showered Zu An with praise.

Zu An ignored him and looked at Zhang Zitong, asking, "Where were you on the third evening of last month? Do you have a witness to vouch for your alibi?"

"Are you suspecting me?" Zhang Zitong replied, glowering.

"That night, Sir Seven's corpse was thrown into this pool by a woman," Zu An said, paying close attention to Zhang Zitong's expression as he spoke.

"I was carrying out a mission that night. Those in our line of work usually move in secret; where would I find a witness?!" Zhang Zitong retorted furiously. "Sir Eleven only took a single trip underwater, and yet you found out that Sir Seven was tossed into the water by a woman? Are you really not just making up random stories?!"

## **Chapter 1588: Clues**

It was natural for Zhang Zitong to think that way. After all, her group had already gone underwater several times. Apart from being a bit colder and deeper than usual, there had been nothing else strange about the pool at all. And yet now, this Golden Token Eleven had shown up and accused her of all sorts

of things. After going underwater just once, he had said that some woman had flung Sir Seven's corpse into the pool...

Even if you're going to come up with some lie, you have to make it reasonable, right? Are these things you can find out from an underwater investigation?

It wasn't just her; even Xiao Jianren was a bit doubtful. Is boss sounding her out? But he doesn't seem to be lying...

Zu An said indifferently, "It's not your concern to figure out how I obtained this intelligence; I have my ways. Right now, I advise you to find a way to prove your innocence, then find out if Sir Seven had any dealings with other women." He couldn't tell them all about the turtle monster, limiting what he could say.

"Aren't Sir Eleven's assumptions too outrageous? There's no material evidence or witness testimony. You're telling us to investigate this just based on what you're saying?" Zhang Zitong replied unhappily.

Zu An frowned slightly and snapped, "I'm not holding a discussion with you. This is an order!"

Zhang Zitong's expression changed a bit, but in the end, she could only helplessly lower her head and reply, "Understood!" Even so, anyone could sense the unwillingness in her voice.

Just then, Xiao Jianren said, "Lady Zhang, our leader has never spoken empty words. He definitely has his reasons for saying such things."

Zu An nodded. It seemed this guy hadn't completely lost his head over an infatuation. If Xiao Jianren had continued to speak up for that woman under the circumstances, Zu An would have to question his ability to judge the situation.

A strange expression flickered through Zhang Zitong's eyes, but she didn't say anything else.

"Also, the woman who tossed the corpse in here might not be the killer. However, I can't figure out what her purpose for doing so was," Zu An said with a frown.

"What does sir mean?" Xiao Jianren asked curiously.

"If that woman didn't want anyone to find Sir Seven's corpse, she could have tied a rock to his body and let it sink to the bottom. That way, no one would have been able to find it so quickly," Zu An said seriously. "Furthermore, if they really wanted to destroy any evidence, there would have been all sorts of methods available. She would have had no reason to go through all that trouble and throw him into Blackwater Pool."

This was a world of cultivation, full of people with supernatural abilities. It wasn't as hard to get rid of a corpse as it was in his previous world. There were a multitude of ways to make a corpse disappear; there was no need to go through all of this at all.

The turtle monster had heard a woman say 'The earlier you're found, the better'. Could it be that she had done this so Golden Token Seven's corpse would be found earlier? However, if that was the case, she could have just dumped the corpse near the government office or the downtown area. Wouldn't that be easier? Blackwater Pool was still rather remote.

Too many possibilities flashed through Zu An's mind. However, none of those possibilities had sufficient information to support a conclusion.

Xiao Jianren said in admiration, "Sir really is detailed and meticulous! You were even able to conclude that."

Zhang Zitong's mouth widened. She didn't look down on Xiao Jianren's obsequious attitude, because she was thinking similar thoughts. This man had been able to deduce the most unusual point of this case so quickly! As expected of a Golden Token Envoy.

But just where did he get that information from...

She naturally didn't believe that he had gotten the information from a single trip underwater. She suspected that he had already obtained information from other channels beforehand and that he was only talking about it now.

Zu An glanced toward the horizon. It was already quite late, so he ordered Xiao Jianren to continue the investigation, following the trail he had just found. At the same time, he warned him to be careful of Zhang Zitong. Finally, Xiao Jianren was to investigate if Golden Token Seven had had any involvement with other women in his missions.

Xiao Jianren picked up on Zu An's implied message and asked, "Sir Eleven isn't following us to the city?"

Zu An said, "I still have other issues to investigate, so I won't be traveling with you."

Xiao Jianren nodded. This leader of his has always come and gone mysteriously. However, most Golden Token Envoys were like that, so he didn't really harbor any suspicions.

...

After separating from the other two, Zu An summoned the Wind Fire Wheels and rushed back. He had already used up a lot of time, so he couldn't waste any now.

Along the way, he thought about all the suspicious factors in Golden Token Seven's case. Actually, he would be able to roughly find out what had happened if he just asked Zhuxie Chixin, because previously, Golden Token Seven had already said he had reported his investigation to Zhuxie Chixin.

However, Zhuxie Chixin was also hard to track down, and he hadn't returned to the capital for a long time. Zhao Han hadn't revealed anything about his whereabouts either, so Zu An didn't know what the two of them were plotting.

By the time Zu An returned to camp, the sky was just beginning to brighten. There were already quite a few people moving around. Fortunately, he had already warned Wang Bolin and Zhang Zijiang not to disturb him, so no one had come over to wake him up.

However, he quickly noticed a figure wandering around his tent. He was alarmed, thinking that it was someone with bad intentions. When he saw who it was, though, he sighed in relief. He called out, "What is little sister Daoyun doing?"

"Ah?" the beautiful figure exclaimed, jumping in fright. Xie Daoyun turned around quickly, looking troubled when she saw Zu An. She asked, "Big... Big brother Zu, why are you over there?"

She had drunk Feather Mountain's spiritual spring water the previous day, and after a whole night of sleep, she had already recovered a lot both mentally and spiritually. The first thing she had thought after waking up was that she had really shown Zu An an embarrassing display and wanted to apologize to him, while salvaging his impression of her at the same time.

However, it now seemed a bit awkward for her to be visiting a man's room so early in the morning. She was scared that he would misunderstand. While she was feeling conflicted, Zu An had called out to her from behind, so she was naturally scared.

"I went out for a stroll just now," Zu An said with a smile.

"Did big brother Zu go out to cultivate? No wonder your cultivation is so high, even though you're still so young," Xie Daoyun said, noticing the traces of frost in his hair, and how he looked a bit haggard. Of course, she didn't suspect that he had traveled several thousand kilometers away in a single night.

Zu An knew she had misunderstood, but that was fine, seeing as he didn't have to explain himself further. He asked, "Has your mind recovered a bit?"

"Yes; thank you, big brother Zu," Xie Daoyun replied. Because the wind was fairly strong around them, she gently moved some messy strands of hair behind her ear.

"It's too windy outside. Why don't we go inside and talk more?" Zu An offered, noticing that Xie Daoyun seemed to have put on some makeup today. Her lips were bright red.

"Okay," Xie Daoyun replied. If it were any other man, she would never go into their room like this, but Zu An was different.

Zu An recalled Daji before entering. He and Xie Daoyun chatted for a while inside the tent, sharing information about what had happened as of late. Thinking about Golden Token Seven's case, Zu An feigned casual interest as he asked, "That Truth Talisman of yours is quite incredible. What cultivation rank is it effective against?" He really wanted to find out whether there was something wrong with the tall-ponytailed woman.

When the conversation moved to her area of expertise, Xie Daoyun became excited. She explained the principles behind the creation of the Truth Talisman before concluding, "It's useful against those around the sixth or seventh rank. Still, the human heart is a complicated thing. If you encounter those with strong wills, a Truth Talisman might not be able to do anything, which is also why the court rarely uses them except as an auxiliary tool."

After listening to the explanation, Zu An realized that the talisman wouldn't be too reliable against that woman. Sensing his disappointment, Xie Daoyun considerably asked, "Did Sir Zu encounter something troublesome recently?"

"Not particularly. I was just asking about it out of interest," Zu An replied with a smile.

Xie Daoyun pursed her lips and said, "Then I was the one worrying about nothing. With big brother Zu's current cultivation and status, there probably aren't many things that would be too difficult for you."

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The two of them chatted for a while longer. Zu An discovered that Xie Daoyun really was talented, knowing all sorts of things. As such, he pretended to casually ask about what she thought about the possibility of a strong cultivator being silently killed, while everything looked normal on the outside. Of course, he had to keep the Embroidered Envoy and other such details a secret, but no one else knew about Golden Token Seven's case, so he didn't have to worry about her finding out.

Xie Daoyun just treated it as a regular conversation topic. She thought for a bit and replied, "A powerful water element cultivator could make it look as if that person died by drowning. However, you described the victim as a high-rank cultivator. If there were no traces of fighting on the outside, that wouldn't be too likely.

"Still, I heard my teacher mention that there were certain shamans who excelled in mind control, which can kill without leaving any trace. But ever since the founding of the Zhou Dynasty, that group was practically erased from existence. It's rumored that they went back to live in the forest in seclusion, so not many people know about them. If such an expert participated, doing that would become much easier."

### **Chapter 1589: A New Dawn**

"Shamans?" Zu An repeated, suddenly thinking of someone. Previously, an assassination attempt had been made on him in the capital, and one of the attackers then was a woman named Jia Sili. She had come from the southern border and seemed to be good at spiritual attacks. Back then, she had actually gifted him with a command token.

After the matter, the Embroidered Envoy had looked into her, finding out that she was from the Shaman Sect. However, the shamans usually acted mysteriously, and only rarely did they make an appearance in the world of warriors. As such, Zu An's thoughts hadn't immediately gone in that direction.

In order to not drag Xie Daoyun into the situation, Zu An chatted with her about some other topics. Xie Daoyun felt that she had really been able to show her ability in front of him, so she was in high spirits too. She told him everything she knew.

Zu An asked curiously, "I heard that you came to Violet Mountain to examine the formations? If I recall correctly, the State Teacher is there." His mission would take place in Violet Mountain, so he had naturally done his research on the place beforehand.

Xie Daoyun was a bit hesitant, but when she thought about how Zu An was different from other people, she replied, "My teacher might be a bit worried about the State Teacher..."

When he heard what she said, Zu An was surprised. He really hadn't considered that a point of suspicion before, because the State Teacher had already reached the very peak of his life. Even if the dynasties changed, he would still remain the State Teacher at most. There was no way he could become the emperor, right?

"This is just a preventative measure. The chance of there being something wrong with the State Teacher is extremely low" Xie Daoyun explained.

Zu An voiced his agreement. "Right, I heard that the State Teacher was someone from the daoist sects. Do you know anything about the nine daoist sects?"

After the Great Zhou Dynasty was established, apart from the State Teacher's Righteous Sun Sect, the other sects had all gone into seclusion. Ordinary people didn't know much about them.

In the past, Zu An had felt that this all had nothing to do with him, so he hadn't paid it too much attention. But now that he had work to do at Violet Mountain, he felt that it would still be better if he collected relevant information ahead of time.

Xie Daoyun had studied in the Royal Academy, so she knew a bit more than ordinary people about certain secret information. She explained, "The nine daoist sects were indeed formidable a few centuries ago, but after the Great Zhou Dynasty established its empire, they withdrew into the mountains and forests, no longer maintaining their former glory.

"Actually, it wasn't just the daoist sects. The Devil Sect, Buddhist Sect, Shaman Sect, and other sects ended up that way as well. The court rose above all, and all those with talent went there to become its officials. Few people wanted to work bitterly for a sect. So, after centuries passed, the sects found it harder and harder to maintain their influence. Their reputation thus began to decline as a result. Many of them even disappeared into the great rivers of history.

"In the past, I occasionally heard master mentioning the nine daoist sects. Otherwise, I wouldn't have known all this," Xie Daoyun said. She tried to recall what she had heard, then explained, "The State Teacher's Righteous Sun Sect is rumored to have only been mid-tier when compared to the other nine sects. However, because of his tremendous contributions, once he became the State Teacher, the Righteous Sun Sect rose up with him. Now, they're at their most powerful. For most ordinary people now, it's practically the only daoist sect they know.

"Apart from the Righteous Sun Sect, the one with the greatest prestige should be the White Jade Sect. The White Jade Sect's generations of fairies have always been renowned throughout the world. With their beauty and kindness forming the backbone of their reputation, they've always enjoyed favor, whether it's from the officials or the common people."

The beautiful features of Yan Xuehen and Chu Chuyan appeared in Zu An's mind. He thought to himself, If that sect formed a female idol group, they would definitely be really popular.

"Apart from those two sects, the others and their branches aren't known by common people, but their strength is no lower than the White Jade Sect's. For example, there's the Jedefall Palace, a group whose reputation is on par with the White Jade Sect," Xie Daoyun continued.

Zu An's eyes lit up when he heard that. Big Manman had mentioned that she would take on a master from Jedefall Palace. He hadn't expected it to be one of the nine great sects too.

"Apart from that, there's the Heavenly Sorrow Sect, which is rumored to have thirty-three branches. That sect was indisputably the most powerful a few centuries ago. But several centuries ago, something major seems to have happened. The Heavenly Sorrow Sect suffered serious damage, which caused their strength to decline greatly and forced them to give up their position as the most powerful. But a dying camel is still larger than a horse, so they're still about mid-tier among the nine sects.

"The Kunlun Void Sect is another sect in a similar situation. It apparently experienced a disaster centuries ago that made its strength suddenly deteriorate. It's now become a mid-tier sect, just like the Heavenly Sorrow Sect."

Zu An asked curiously, "Exactly what kind of disaster happened several centuries ago?"

Xie Daoyun shook her head and said with a frown, "That, I don't know. That's something only they know, and the academy doesn't seem to have any records either. I fear that only the important figures of those sects know exactly what happened."

Zu An nodded, expressing his understanding. Xie Daoyun continued, "The five I mentioned were the strongest of the nine sects. Whether in terms of their resources and history or of their strength, they're on the stronger side. The other four sects are substantially inferior; their names are Mount Luofu, Purity Temple, Emptiness Isle, and Supreme Mystery Cave. Very few of their inheritors make an appearance in the world, and in private discussions, those from the academy have begun to wonder whether they've already completely vanished."

Zu An secretly made a note of all the information. He couldn't help but say with a sigh, "I really have to thank little sister Daoyun for all of this. Otherwise, I really wouldn't have had any way of knowing all these secrets."

"I'm glad that I was able to help big brother Zu," Xie Daoyun said, blushing when she heard Zu An thank her. She was clearly extremely happy.

Zhang Zijiang suddenly asked respectfully from outside, "Sir Zu, should we rest for one more day here or...?"

He was worried that Zu An wanted to sleep or cultivate some more, so he didn't dare to mention any military affairs. His voice was quiet too, as if he was scared of disturbing Zu An.

Zu An moved aside the curtains and said, "Let's depart, so as to not delay our task."

"Understood!" Zhang Zijiang replied, sighing in relief. However, he saw Xie Daoyun come out from the tent too. He immediately paled in horror.

I'm finished; I'm done for! I disturbed Sir Zu during his happy time! Is he going to make things hard for me in the future? I'm definitely going to lose to Wang Bolin in the future now...

When she saw his ambiguous expression, Xie Daoyun guessed what kind of misunderstanding Zhang Zijiang had arrived at. She opened her mouth to explain, but she couldn't really bring herself to say anything. While she was hesitating, Zhang Zijiang left guiltily, leaving her alone with her embarrassment and nervousness.

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Then, the Armed Escort Division set out. Xie Daoyun naturally didn't dare to ride on the same horse as Zu An, unlike the previous day. Even so, she discovered that the way the other soldiers looked at her had become a bit strange, and their attitudes toward her had also become more respectful. Xie Daoyun bit her lip; her face was bright red. For some reason, though, she actually didn't hate it all that much. Instead, she felt strangely expectant.

Just like that, a day quickly passed before they set up camp again in the evening. Xie Daoyun nervously sat alone in her tent, wondering whether to let her big brother Zu in if he came to look for her. While

she was wondering about that, however, Zu An never showed up, even as she unknowingly drifted off to sleep.

Meanwhile, Zu An quickly rushed to Yi Commandery, where he found Xiao Jianren and Zhang Zitong discussing something together. He deliberately coughed to get their attention.

"Sir Eleven!" Xiao Jianren greeted him, already used to his boss coming and going mysteriously, but Zhang Zitong jumped in fright.

Zu An asked, "Were there any results from your investigations?"

Xiao Jianren replied, "We already investigated the mission Miss Zhang was a part of; she wasn't lying. Apart from that, we're still looking into the women Sir Seven came into contact with. Currently, there are some clues, but we need a few more days to reach a conclusion."

Zu An nodded to express that he understood. Then, he looked at Zhang Zitong and asked, "Are there any shamans here in Yi Commandery?"

"Shamans?" Zhang Zitong repeated, staring blankly for a moment. Ordinary cultivators wouldn't necessarily even know about the existence of shamans, but she was part of the Embroidered Envoy. She quickly replied, "There are very few shamans in existence. According to what I know, the only one who matches that description might be King Yan Manor's guest."

## **Chapter 1590: Breaking Into the Camp**

"King Yan Manor?" Zu An replied in surprise. Why was King Yan Manor now involved?

Unlike the kings of Chinese history, who had usually been rather idle, this world was full of war. In order to ensure the peace and safety of the empire, they had their own troops and provisions. It wouldn't be wrong to consider them rulers of their own countries. Of course, because Zhao Han was extremely powerful and the court had a great number of talents, they didn't dare to disobey orders from the central palace.

But now, Golden Token Seven's death involved King Yan. If it really had been caused by his side, it would be a complete rebellion. The consequences would be too horrible to imagine.

However, Zu An also quickly realized something. In their previous interaction, Golden Token Seven's mood had been grave. Just what could weigh so heavily on the mind of a Golden Token Envoy who oversaw an entire region, and yet be impossible to find any concrete evidence of or proclaim to the public? Apart from the rebellion of a king, what else could there be? Furthermore, it definitely wasn't a minor issue; it was likely on the level of treason.

When he realized that, Zu An thought gravely. It seems this trip to Violet Mountain is going to be more dangerous than I imagined. He looked at Zhang Zitong and asked, "Do you know anything about that shaman?"

Zhang Zitong shook her head and said with a frown, "I only know that the shaman's surname is Huo. People all call him Sir Huo, but he usually remains in seclusion and rarely shows himself. The information on him is scarce, too. If not for my Embroidered Envoy status, I might not even have known of his existence."

“Sir Huo...” Zu An muttered, quietly storing the name away in his memory.

Zhang Zitong offered, “Why don’t I arrest this Sir Huo for questioning?”

Xiao Jianren was horrified, exclaiming, “You absolutely mustn’t! After all, Sir Huo and Sir Seven having something to do with each other is only a suspicion, and we have no evidence. What if he refuses to admit to it and bites us back? Furthermore, he’s King Yan Manor’s guest. If King Yan files a complaint about us, we’ll all have to bear the consequences!”

Zhang Zitong’s expression changed. In reality, she knew that what he said was true. Furthermore, King Yan didn’t even have to file a complaint. With his influence in Yi Commandery, he could easily make a Silver Token Envoy disappear. Even if he wanted to get back at them in overt ways, King Yan would be seen as being in the right. Still, she just couldn’t stand the fact that there was a suspect right before her eyes, and yet she couldn’t question them at all.

Zu An said seriously, “This matter is indeed pressing, and anything that involves King Yan is a serious issue. I want both of you to try and see if you can obtain more intelligence on Sir Huo over the next few days. If you can find out about his movement patterns, that should be even better. Be careful not to alert them. Furthermore, continue investigating the women Sir Seven has interacted with. Contact me in the same way as usual. I’ll return in a few days.”

They had already found out what they had to look into; the rest would take some time. There was no need for him to rush over every night anymore. To be honest, even he was finding it a bit difficult.

Xiao Jianren was used to Zu An’s sudden appearances and disappearances. Furthermore, whenever his boss appeared, so did new clues, so he only felt admiration and assumed Zu An was investigating other clues elsewhere.

After bidding the two of them farewell, Zu An stepped on the Wind Fire Wheels and hurried back.

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Zu An didn’t use up as much time this trip, so he returned to the camp a bit earlier than before. It was daybreak, the time when people tended to be the sleepest. Zu An had been running around for several days, rarely getting any shut-eye. He wanted to find a chance to get some proper sleep.

He landed near the camp. As he prepared to sneak back in, he suddenly noticed a few figures moving around furtively. He stopped and focused on them, and his expression grew strange. Weren’t they all members of the Twin Dragon Mountain rebel army from before?

Had these people eaten the heart of a bear or something? Just where had they gotten the courage to actually ambush the army’s main camp? Most importantly, what could they even accomplish with their numbers?

Now, even though it was very early in the morning, there was no way the Armed Escort Division would completely drop their guard. In fact, even if the entire rebel army showed up, the odds of their surprise attack succeeding were still practically nonexistent.

However, Zu An’s confusion was soon cleared up. The rebels clearly didn’t dare to attack the camp. Judging from their movements, it looked as if they planned to set fire to the army’s covered wagons.

The rebels took out bows and crossbows, smearing oil over their ammunition. They didn't even dare to get closer to the camp, planning to shoot fire arrows outside.

"All of you, be quiet! We'll all be finished if we're discovered!"

"Do you think I need you to teach me? Where's the fire? Hurry up and take out the fire starters."

"Huh? Where did they go? Did we drop them somewhere?"

They looked around, but why couldn't they find any fire starters?

"Are these what you're looking for?" a voice called from behind them. A hand appeared in front of the rebels, filled with fire starters.

The rebel group was horrified. When had this person taken the fire starters from them? If he had decided to slit their throats, wouldn't they be long dead already?

"Retreat!" they cried, tacitly agreeing to run in different directions so some of them could get away even if they had to sacrifice some unlucky ones.

Unfortunately, their imaginations were too limited. They hadn't expected the other person to be able to simultaneously catch all of them. Zu An used the Heaven Devouring Sutra, and a wave of suction force pulled all of them back.

"Please spare us, great one!" the rebels cried. When had they ever seen such a thing? All of them were ashen-faced as they continued to kowtow for forgiveness.

Zu An asked with a frown, "Why are you trying to set our things on fire?"

Even though the group's cultivation ranks weren't bad by the standards of the rebel army, they had completely bitten off more than they could chew by ambushing such a great camp. Moreover, judging from their appearances, they didn't seem like the sort who weren't afraid of death either.

"We were only acting under orders! We were supposed to create a disturbance here to cover our big boss' movements," the rebels explained, quickly spilling the beans as soon as Zu An released his master rank power.

Zu An asked in surprise, "Where is your big boss?"

"He should have already made his way into the main camp by now," the rebels replied.

Zu An was surprised and furious. He had seen Scarface Yang Shen's cultivation before; the opponent was a master rank cultivator. Even though he couldn't face an army head-on, it wouldn't be too difficult for him to infiltrate the camp.

Could it be that he's still going after Xie Daoyun? Or maybe he wants to get revenge? If he's allowed to kill some of the Armed Escort Division's officers, the losses will be too great.

He restrained the rebels and tossed them over to some patrolling soldiers who had rushed over after discovering the disturbance. Zu An rushed toward the main camp, leaving afterimages into his wake.

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At the same time, a blue light flickered from the center of the camp. It was the radiance of a formation, bearing Xie Daoyun's unique rune patterns.

Zu An was a blur as he arrived at the scene as quickly as possible. He appeared just in time to see Xie Daoyun's hands form a seal, but it was smashed apart by Scarface Yang Shen's palm.

Yang Shen pressed a hand down on Xie Daoyun's shoulder and yelled, "Stay back!"

Wang Bolin, Zhang Zijiang, and the others had brought their soldiers over when they heard the activity. However, Yang Shen had noticed that he was exposed, bringing his blade up against Xie Daoyun's neck. As the one he feared the most was Zu An, he did his best to place Xie Daoyun's body between the two of them.

"Let her go!" Zu An barked sternly. At the same time, he couldn't understand what was happening. What was Yang Shen doing? Why had he taken such a huge risk to invade their camp and capture Xie Daoyun?

When she saw Zu An, Xie Daoyun's nervous heart quickly relaxed. She told Yang Shen, "You won't get away. I advise you to surrender quickly, as there might be a chance for you to live then."

A hint of viciousness flickered through Yang Shen's eyes, making the scar on his face look even more threatening. He said, "Even if I can't get away, I'll just take the lady with me on the road to hell. However, I fear that sir over there might not wish for you to die."

Xie Daoyun's face turned completely red when she heard those words. The gazes of everyone present landed on Zu An before wandering between the two of them.

Zu An said with a frown, "Let Miss Xie go, and I'll let you live today."

Yang Shen spat on the ground and retorted, "As if I'd believe the rotten lies of officials. Tell your subordinates to get lost. Once I'm able to leave safely, I'll naturally let her go."

There was no way Zu An would believe him. He replied indifferently, "Do you really think there's nothing I can do in this situation?"

"I admit that your cultivation is profound, but there's no way you can move faster than my blade at this distance," Yang Shen said with great confidence.