

Immortal 1611

Chapter 1611 – One Mistake in Judgment Leads to a Lifetime of Regret

"I used to be really curious too. Just what kind of woman could leave so many outstanding men enamored, choosing to pursue her their entire lives? After meeting her yesterday, though, I learned that she truly is stunningly beautiful," Xie Daoyun said, sighing. She had an astonished expression as she recalled her meeting with Yan Xuehen the previous day.

Zu An was a bit speechless. He had learned that Heavenly Sorrow Sect's Sect Leader was one of Yan Xuehen's pursuers, and now, there was another one. Furthermore, it was the State Teacher, someone with an extraordinary position in the current dynasty.

Just how many pursuers does Yan Xuehen have that I don't know about?

Now it almost seems as if, out of the people from the previous generation I've met, half of them seem to have liked Yu Yanluo, while the other half liked Yan Xuehen. Of course, there were shameless individuals who liked both, such as Xie Daoyun's father.

Then what about Yun Jianyue? Her appearance clearly isn't inferior to Yan Xuehen, so why did she have such few pursuers?

However, he quickly realized that Yun Jianyue came from the Devil Sect. As the sect master, she had to maintain a strong and fierce demeanor and lacked the approachable impression Yan Xuehen gave off. Those people probably feared her, so there was no way she could compete with Yan Xuehen.

There was also another factor he wasn't considering, though. He hadn't met too many people from the Devil Sect yet. Yun Jianyue had likely captured the hearts of countless people there.

...

Just then, a disturbance occurred in front of Violet Mountain. The appearance of two women immediately drew the attention of all those who were coming and going.

One was dressed in a white dress purer than snow, while the other wore an icy-blue gown. Their clothes fluttered around like their beautiful black hair. Violet Mountain was known for its purple ki that appeared every morning, but these two seemed to be surrounded by a mystical energy too; it seemed some women really did glow, inevitably drawing people's attention from birth. Furthermore, with two of them standing together, it really was a feast for the eyes.

The two women had veils over their faces that only revealed their beautiful eyes. However, not only did it not tarnish their beauty at all, it actually left quite a bit for the onlookers' imaginations. There was a cold and detached look in the women's gazes. Their skin was as exquisite and pure as snow, as if they were two snowy peaks that stood apart from the world with an icy, aloof, and sacred air. They didn't give off the slightest hint of worldliness.

The previously busy mountain gate fell silent, as people couldn't help but look at the women. They felt as if they were having an encounter with goddesses for the first time and were completely stupefied. Many of them didn't even dare to stare directly, as they felt a mysterious sense of inferiority.

Such women were only supposed to exist in the heavens. How could the onlookers meet anyone like that in this world? Furthermore, there were two of them. Were they mother and daughter? Their temperaments seemed to have been cut from the same mold, with the only difference being that one was a bit more mature and the other more youthful.

However, the onlookers quickly dismissed that thought. How could a goddess birth a child for a man? They were definitely sisters! Those present were all outstanding talents, but at that moment, outrageous thoughts appeared in their minds one after another. It was as if their souls had been stolen away.

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Sigh, after meeting goddesses like these, how can we ever like normal women again?

The two women walked toward the Righteous Sun disciples at the mountain gate. However, the disciples seemed to be frozen in place and didn't react at all, causing the women to frown slightly.

The disciples' leader suddenly seemed to wake up from a dream and quickly swallowed. He said with great difficulty, "Did the two fairies come to sightsee on Violet Mountain? I really must apologize. We plan to hold a Great Sects Competition on Violet Mountain, so no outside guests will be allowed in." He regretted it as soon as he finished speaking. He had actually called them fairies the way a commoner would! He felt as if he had tarnished the Righteous Sun Sect's reputation.

Meanwhile, other people shot him murderous looks from every direction. This guy is actually refusing such beautiful women? Did he turn stupid from too much cultivation?

Even if they're not people from the nine sects, you still have to let them in somehow!

The woman in the icy blue gown took out a jade token and handed it over. The leader felt his heart rate accelerate just from looking at the small part of her wrist that was exposed; his throat went dry. He believed he had a firm will, and yet he had never met someone with a hand this beautiful and perfect.

However, he had been chosen to preside over welcoming the different sects, so he was still extremely talented. He quickly gathered his thoughts, then carefully received the jade token. When he saw the information recorded on it, he exclaimed in shock, "So it was the White Jade Sect's Sect Master Yan! This junior is the Righteous Sun Sect's Watchful Heart Peak Master Zhang Xi. I was lacking in manners earlier and hope that the sect master does not mind."

The onlookers suddenly realized what had happened, and felt that this explained everything. Apart from the White Jade Sect's Goddess Yan, who else could be so elegant and outstanding? They had heard that she recently took in an outstanding disciple. That was probably the one at her side, right? They hadn't expected her style to be comparable to her master.

Why the heck did that Righteous Sun disciple give them his name? Is he trying to recommend himself? they thought. Still, they knew that if they were his place, they would want these two goddess-like figures to remember their names too.

The two women were, naturally, Yan Xuehen and Chu Chuyan. Perhaps because she wanted to avoid Zu An, Yan Xuehen had dragged her disciple all the way from Yi Commandery to Violet Mountain early in

the morning. When she saw the disciple apologize, she didn't say anything and only nodded slightly in return. It was a gesture of appreciation from a senior toward a junior, but that was also all it was. As long as it wasn't related to Zu An, she could face anything with absolute composure.

As expected of the strongest of the nine sects, just a single disciple from one of their peaks had a great deal of cultivation and composure. Even then, however, the nod was enough to make Zhang Xi excited. Even though he was quite steady at heart, he was still a man. He instinctively wanted to show off in front of a beauty. As such, he continued, "Your esteemed sect's Elder Li already brought his disciples up the mountain earlier. They are currently stopping over at the Divine Water Pavilion. This junior will bring you two to them."

Many people around them cursed him for being shameless. Wasn't this guy supposed to be receiving guests here? And yet, he was abandoning his duty to hang around women!

Sigh, those who are closest always benefit the most. Ah, we're so jealous!

Chu Chuyan knew her master's nature. She quickly said, "There is no need. My master prefers peace and quiet, so she will not stay with the other disciples. We will just head up on our own. Thank you for the trouble, senior brother."

Even though her voice was soft and pleasant to listen to, it still carried a hint of coldness that almost seemed to push people a thousand miles away.

A hint of disappointment flickered through Zhang Xi's eyes. The women had already tactfully refused, so there was no way he could insist. As such, he said, "Then please head up the mountain. Once you reach the palace, there will definitely be disciples there to make further arrangements for you."

His expression was calm, but all sorts of emotions swirled within him. She actually called me senior brother! She called me senior brother! How can there be a voice this beautiful in this world? Ah, I'm going to die!

As the onlookers watched the two leave, only leaving behind a faint lingering fragrance, all those present by the entrance suddenly felt a sense of disappointment and loss.

...

Even after a long time passed, Chu Chuyan's face continued to appear in Zhang Xi's mind. He muttered to himself, "In the past, I didn't understand why the glorious sect master would suddenly dedicate his entire life to Sect Master Yan after a single meeting. Today, I finally understand. What is the meaning of love in this world..."

He suddenly shivered as he spoke. He quickly ordered the disciple next to him, "Hurry, hurry and inform the Pure Yang Palace that Sect Master Yan has arrived!"

Each sect naturally had their own special method of passing on information.

...

Meanwhile, atop Violet Mountain's highest peak, Golden Peak, inside the Pure Yang Palace, a middle-aged man in a robe sat on a praying mat in meditation. Purple ki surged around him as he took in and released the surrounding energies. He was clearly cultivating an extremely profound skill. Even though

there were already some signs of age on his face, his complexion was still excellent. He was very handsome, and the purple ki lingering around him gave him the air of an immortal.

He was none other than the court's State Teacher, the Righteous Sun Sect's Wang Wuxie!

All of a sudden, a little bell nearby rang. He suddenly opened his eyes. After all, normally, no one would dare to disturb him during his cultivation. That meant the information was extremely important. Could it be that someone was coming to cause trouble at the bottom of the mountain? His expression turned cold. Even though all the members of the different sects were experts, things were now different from before, so even someone like him couldn't underestimate them.

Suddenly, a row of gold letters appeared on the wall in front of him. When he saw the contents, he was so excited he immediately sat up from his praying mat. Even his breathing quickened slightly as he muttered to himself, "Xuehen, so you still came to Violet Mountain after all?"

Chapter 1612: Jedefall Palace

At Wang Wuxie's cultivation realm, he had long reached a point where not many things could make him feel strong emotions. Normally, all the members of the Righteous Sun Sect called him emotionless in private, saying that he was unfathomable, but their jaws would undoubtedly drop if they saw what he was acting like at that moment.

Wang Wuxie's expressions had turned uncharacteristically rich. He appeared nostalgic, happy, and yet also in pain... To think such complicated expressions could actually coexist on one person's face at the same time!

Wang Wuxie walked over to the place where he had been meditating. He opened a secret compartment below it and took out a scroll. He slowly unfolded it, revealing the image of a young, beautiful woman wielding a sword. Her white dress and long hair fluttered in midair. She looked as if she were a goddess dancing in the clouds. However, her expression in the picture carried a hint of anger...

When he saw the woman's lovely appearance, Wang Wuxie recalled some memories from the Nine Sects Competition of that time. A slight smile appeared on his lips. The picture was something he had personally drawn. Only by drawing the scene of their first meeting had he been able to even slightly alleviate his longing for her.

If Yu Yanluo were present, she would definitely have commented that even though the drawing was only made with above-average skill, there were decades of feelings contained within. That gave it much more charm and grace, making it no worse than the work of any great master.

If Zu An were present, he would immediately recognize the woman in the drawing as his big sis Yan. However, the young lady looked much more underripe than the mature and ice-cold Yan Xuehen he knew.

As he stared at the woman in the picture, Wang Wuxie remained absentminded for a stick of incense's time. Afterward, he slowly exhaled. He laughed self-deprecatingly, muttering, "Wang Wuxie, Wang Wuxie, aren't you always flaunting yourself as some extraordinary genius? The real person has already arrived, and yet you only dare to stare blankly at this inanimate thing?"

He carefully rolled up the drawing, seemingly scared of damaging it in the slightest. He returned it to the secret compartment. Then, he sorted out his clothes before walking away with a big smile. His heart burned with red-hot passion, as if he had returned to the times of his youth.

He pushed open the door. As the sunlight hit his face, even though he had lived on Golden Peak for so many years, he felt that it was more beautiful than ever before. However, as soon as he took a single step, he was struck by biting cold winds that wailed past him.

Wang Wuxie was completely stunned, and his boiling blood gradually calmed down. He was the Righteous Sun Sect's Master, as well as the State Teacher. He was no longer that immature brat who could give up everything else for the sake of love.

As he stood there by the entrance, his deep and profound gaze fell upon the winding road beneath him. He knew that Yan Xuehen was standing somewhere on those stairs. He stood there in the cold winds for a long time without moving; it was as if he had become a sculpture. In the end, however, he closed the door again, cutting off the sunlight.

He understood Yan Xuehen too well. She was most likely here to bring her disciple to the Great Sects Competition. Even if he met her, so what?

She didn't accept me back then; how could she be willing to accept me now?

He laughed self-deprecatingly. Even though they had been separated for several decades and never met once, he had collected every bit of information he could get about her. Yan Xuehen's ice-cold personality was something he understood better than anyone else. If they didn't share any fate, what was the point of forcing things? He would only make everyone in the world look down on him.

The only thing worth feeling gratified about was that even after all these years, Yan Xuehen was still alone. She had never thought highly of another man.

That means that it isn't my fault for not being charming enough. Perhaps I'm still the most special one in Xuehen's heart.

After centuries have passed, when the world of warriors talks about our past, perhaps it will be considered a beautiful tale.

His heart gradually calmed down when he thought of that.

...

Meanwhile, at the foot of the mountain, Zhang Xi and the other disciples were all restless. They clearly still hadn't recovered from the shock of seeing Yan Xuehen and Chu Chuyan. They naturally didn't dare to have any thoughts about a glorious senior like Yan Xuehen, but Chu Chuyan was their peer. She was like the little sister next door! Perhaps they could still have the slightest sliver of a chance.

Suddenly, a slight disturbance happened not too far away.

"How big..."

No one knew who had started the conversation, but several voices rose and fell. Even though they deliberately suppressed their voices, because of how many people there were, Zhang Xi could still vaguely hear them.

“What do they mean, how big? Don’t tell me monsters have come to attack Violet Mountain?” Zhang Xi muttered in shock. He didn’t have time to focus on his lingering feelings for Chu Chuyan anymore and quickly looked into the distance. At the same time, he reflexively moved his hand to the hilt of his sword.

However, the moment he saw what was happening, Zhang Xi couldn't help but sigh in admiration. He finally understood what those people were saying. He too remarked, “How big!”

A group was moving toward the gate; they were clearly from another sect. The one in the lead was a large, tall man with some stubble around his mouth. His appearance lent him a sense of imposing pressure.

Next to him was a middle-aged daoist nun who was actually quite good-looking, but because she always had a frown on her face as if everyone owed her money, and they had just seen the extraordinary beauties Chu Chuyan and Yan Xuehen, her looks didn’t do anything for the onlookers.

However, all of their attention was drawn to the young lady next to her. She was dressed in a red top and black dress, giving her both the energetic air of youth and a hint of dangerous beauty. This young lady’s appearance actually seemed to be on par with that of Sect Master Yan’s disciple!

The onlookers were all shocked. Just what was happening today? They were actually fortunate enough to encounter so many extraordinary beauties!

Compared to Yan Xuehen and Chu Chuyan’s composed demeanor, this young lady looked much more enthusiastic. Her charming smile and pretty eyes made her extremely captivating. However, what drew the most attention was her chest; her top looked as if it were about to burst with every step, taking the hearts of the men present up and down as her chest moved. There wasn’t a single exposed area, but that couldn't stop their imagination from going crazy.

If the feeling Yan Xuehen’s disciple gave off was akin to an ice-cold glacier, this young woman made the onlookers feel as if they were next to a volcano... no, as if they were about to become volcanoes themselves, ready to erupt at a moment’s notice.

“Ah, I’m going to die, I’m going to die! How can there be such a beautiful woman in this world? If I could make her my wife, I’d lose at least 20 years of my life, right? But which man wouldn’t be willing to accept such a burden?”

Many of the disciples present no longer had Chu Chuyan in their minds. She was beautiful, but she was just too cold and seemed quite difficult to approach. However, this woman looked like the open-minded and enthusiastic sort. She would no doubt be easy to get along with.

Even Zhang Xi became a bit absent-minded, trapped by the woman’s massive... smile.

“Hmph!” the middle-aged daoist nun harrumphed. A chilly pressure spread outward, and the onlookers’ bodies trembled. This woman’s cultivation was actually incredibly high! It seemed to be at the grandmaster level.

Zhang Xi also trembled, and only then did he remember his role. He scolded himself inwardly, thinking that he had really cultivated for nothing all these years. How could he have so many filthy emotions within him?

He quickly stepped forward and greeted them. “May I ask if senior came here to participate in the daoist sects’ competition?”

Someone at that cultivation rank definitely wasn’t someone a junior like him could stop. He naturally couldn’t ignorantly ask for a jade token. However, the middle-aged woman gave him a look of disdain, as if she felt that he didn’t have the right to talk to her.

While Zhang Xi was overwhelmed with embarrassment, the young lady helped him out of his conundrum, saying, “Hello, senior brother. We’re from Jedefall Palace. This is our invitation jade token.” Afterward, she handed him the token.

The woman’s bright and beautiful smile made Zhang Xi feel dizzy. In that moment, he immediately made a pledge of undying love.

Mom, I think I’m experiencing true love!

It’s completely different from what I felt toward those junior and senior sisters, Xiao Youchu, Chen Rongyu, Gu Hengbo, Li Xiangjun, Kou Baimen, Ma Xianglan...

Uh... Let’s not talk about junior sister Chu Chuyan for now.

He received the jade token in a daze. When he saw the contents, he immediately broke out into a cold sweat. All of the fluttering feelings within him disappeared. He bowed respectfully to the large, tall man, saying, “So Jedefall Palace’s Palace Lord came personally! Please forgive my negligence!”

Chapter 1613 – Mystery to All, All to One

Zhang Xi was incredibly shocked. After all, Jedefall Palace Lord Wan Tongtian had been extremely well-known among the nine sects for a long time, and had been a grandmaster for many years. On top of that, the middle-aged daoist nun at his side had grandmaster rank cultivation too. Two grandmasters had actually come to this great competition today! So Jedefall Palace was actually this powerful?

The other sects normally either had their sect master or a single elder leading their representatives. Rarely would two grandmasters arrive together. After all, they needed someone to remain back at the sect to oversee things, so as to avoid someone taking advantage of their unprotected home. However, Jedefall Palace had sent two grandmasters at once just like that! That meant there were at least two more grandmasters overseeing things back at their home base.

As expected of Jedefall Palace, one of the most powerful of the nine sects! People had long thought that the sect was in decline, but just how much time had it taken for them to have recovered this much power?

“The Righteous Sun Sect really is regressing!” Wan Tongtian remarked with a snort. If not for the sake of showing respect for Violet Mountain, he would already have retaliated against the disciples’ display.

At the same time, he remembered when Pei Mianman had first entered Jadedfall Palace. At the time, the sect's disciples hadn't been much better either. If not for the fact that he wasn't the perverted type, perhaps even he would have been infatuated by her.

On the other hand, she was Huo Ling's disciple. Wan Tongtian reflexively glanced at the middle-aged daoist nun accompanying the group with an extremely conflicted expression. In the end, he released a deep sigh.

Zhang Xi and the others trembled. Even though they were the best among their peers, what was any of that worth in front of a grandmaster? They couldn't even say the slightest thing in protest.

"I thought that, because the Righteous Sun Sect had Violet Mountain and the court's resources, their younger generation would be incredibly formidable. However, it seems they aren't all that special," a youngster at Wan Tongtian's side sneered. He had a wild and unruly expression, and he had a resemblance to Wan Tongtian. The two were clearly father and son.

However, while Wan Tongtian was no spring chicken, his son looked quite young. Despite the boy's youth, he had the air of a sharp sword. His gaze alone delivered a sharp blow to the disciples present.

When he heard the criticism of his sect, Zhang Xi cursed himself for forgetting his manners. He mustered his courage and said, "A disappointing disciple like me is obviously not worth mentioning, but I have several senior brothers who are ten times, or even a hundred times better than me."

At the same time, he was incredibly shocked. The young boy was clearly far younger than he was, and yet seemed to have far higher cultivation. A few years prior, he had heard that the Jadedfall Palace Lord had a genius son named Wan Guiyi. The boy had already dominated the entire younger generation of the sect at an extremely young age. This was probably that very son.

"A hundred times stronger than you?" Wan Guiyi sneered, clearly unconvinced. "The only senior you have who's worth anything is that Wu Xiaofan, who's only passable. I've come here this time precisely to see whether he's as formidable as the legends say."

Zhang Xi's expression turned serious as he replied, "I believe that senior brother will not disappoint your respected self."

Wu Xiaofan was Crouching Cloud Peak's chief disciple, as well as the personal disciple of their Sect Leader Wang Wuxie.

Normally, all of the different peaks competed fiercely against each other. Their relationships weren't that good. For example, even though the chief disciples of Violet Mountain's various peaks didn't normally beat each other up as soon as they met, they were still often compared to each other. That was why their relationship usually wasn't too great.

However, there was one exception, which was their great senior brother Wu Xiaofan. They had all been convinced by his strength, to the extent that none of them felt even the slightest bit of jealousy. That was because he was just too strong, and his personality was also good.

With only a small gap in strength, one could still chase after an opponent with everything one had, and perhaps even feel a bit jealous. However, if they were way, way stronger, there could only be admiration left. The disciples' great senior brother Wu Xiaofan was precisely that kind of person. That

wasn't only true in the Righteous Sun Sect; he even seemed to have the potential to be number one among all of the daoist sects' younger generations.

Wan Guiyi looked toward Violet Mountain's tallest peak, and a strong fighting spirit arose within him. He exclaimed, "I hope so!"

...

Then, Zhang Xi arranged for some disciples to bring the guests to their palace. When they left, all of the Righteous Sun disciples sighed in relief. They discovered that all of their backs were dripping with cold sweat. The pressure of a grandmaster was actually so terrifying!

Soon afterward, several of them began to quietly discuss things among themselves. "That female elder was way too terrifying! We only gave her disciple a few looks, and yet it felt as if, if this weren't Violet Mountain, she would have killed all of us!"

Zhang Xi said, "That's Jedefall Palace's Elder Huo Ling. She has always been known for her irritable temper. Furthermore, because of her great strength, when she was Senior Wan's fellow disciple, the two ended up fighting. They even fought over the Jedefall Palace Lord position. In the end, Senior Wan ended up being a bit stronger and became the Palace Lord, while she took the second peak of Jedefall Palace, Haze Peak. Whether in terms of status or power, it isn't beneath the Palace Lord's Jedefall Peak at all."

He was the chief disciple of Watchful Heart Peak, so he knew much more about the daoist sects than ordinary disciples.

"So that was it. No wonder she was so fierce."

"I feel as if that disciple of hers is even fiercer."

"Right, right! She is fierce!"

...

Meanwhile, Jedefall Palace's representatives continued up the mountain. The Palace Lord and his son walked at the forefront, while Elder Huo Ling and her disciples followed far behind them. The Righteous Sun Sect disciples who saw that clicked their tongues. Jedefall Palace's internal relationships didn't seem to be that good.

Wan Tongtian looked behind him. When he saw Elder Huo Ling walking that far behind him, he couldn't help but frown slightly, but there was nothing he could do. He waved his hand, and an energy barrier appeared around him. Then, he asked the youngster next to him, "Guiyi, do you know why your father gave you this name?"[1]

The youngster nodded and replied, "It is recorded in our sacred texts: 'Profound mystery birthed all things; all things of the world return to one'. I understand the high hopes father has placed onto me clearly."

Wan Tongtian nodded in gratification, saying, "I gave you your name according to the ancient texts, so I hope you can represent our sect in the future. Our Jedefall Palace used to be at the very top of the nine sects, but by the time your father took over, it was already in decline. I cannot allow Jedefall Palace to

continue to decline under my rule. I have done my best to expand our foundation, but even though Jedefall Palace has shown signs of recovery, it is still far from when we were at our peak.

"I was already starting to be discouraged, but you simply brought me too great of a pleasant surprise. The revival of our Jedefall Palace might have to fall to you," Wan Tongtian said, beginning to look excited. "With your aptitude and your current cultivation, none of the other so-called chief disciples of the other sects can compare to you. What Heavenly Sorrow's Zhi Yin, or the White Jade Sect's Lou Wucheng... Even though those people all have great reputations, they are actually nothing at all. The only one among all of the nine sects' younger generations who could be a match for you is Wu Xiaofan."

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Even though Wu Xiaofan's name meant 'little ordinary', he wasn't little or ordinary at all.

No, perhaps he had been pretty ordinary in his youth, and he had only been able to do odd jobs in the Righteous Sun Sect at first. His aptitude hadn't been anything special, and he had learned all of the sect's teachings very slowly. He had been mocked and bullied quite often by the others.

However, he was honest and considerate, and he hadn't let it bother him. On the contrary, he had admitted that he was slow and often sincerely asked the other senior brothers and sisters for guidance. That made it so the others were too embarrassed to make fun of him.

Apart from that, Wu Xiaofan was also extremely hardworking. He had always believed that, if his aptitude wasn't good enough, he would just make up for it with hard work. Thus, he had gradually begun to catch up to the other people around him. The others were soon shocked to discover that he even began to learn things more quickly than he did. That was especially true when he practiced mental cultivation, which he learned much more quickly than any powerful fighting skills.

Because he wasn't good at those fighting skills, he often still lost to the people around him during the clan's internal competitions. One day, however, he had stumbled upon an opportunity. Wang Wuxie had noticed him, discovering that the boy had already reached a level of mental cultivation far above that of his peers.

After secretly observing Wu Xiaofan, Wang Wuxie had discovered that the boy had one great strength, which was his ability to remain focused. He could achieve a state in which, whenever he did something, he could remain completely undistracted by anything else.

Many people were stunning and extraordinary in this world. However, the smarter one was, the quicker their thoughts would change, making it difficult for them to focus on one thing. As a result, it was easy for them to develop all kinds of inner demons.

However, Wu Xiaofan was exactly the opposite. His thoughts were sluggish, but that meant he could concentrate on something for a long time. Wang Wuxie didn't even think he himself could reach that level. Apart from that, Wu Xiaofan's best trait was his pure and innocent heart.

As such, Wang Wuxie had made an exception and taken him as his disciple. That had caused quite the disturbance in the Righteous Sun Sect. Many people had been unconvinced and couldn't understand why their sect master would choose such an ordinary person as his disciple, especially someone who

was often defeated by the other disciples. They had even suspected that Wu Xiaofan was the sect master's illegitimate son.

Wang Wuxie hadn't tried to explain anything. He simply gave Wu Xiaofan a specialized cultivation plan, teaching him in line with his aptitude. After half a year, Wu Xiaofan's cultivation shot through the roof, and he shocked the entire sect with his abilities.

The disciples of the other peaks had remained unconvinced and thought that it was only because the sect master had personally taught Wu Xiaofan. However, Wang Wuxie didn't say anything and quietly left the sect for some time. Meanwhile, Wu Xiaofan remained at Crouching Cloud Peak and cultivated alone.

Just like that, half a year passed. The disciples of the other peaks worked hard the entire time, believing that without his master's instruction, they would be able to surpass Wu Xiaofan again. However, when they faced each other, the disciples of the other peaks all suffered miserable defeats. The gap between them was even greater than the first time they had fought.

Only then did Wang Wuxie explain how Wu Xiaofan was special. All the members of the Righteous Sun Sect finally accepted the explanation wholeheartedly.

Many people wanted to imitate Wu Xiaofan, but they couldn't copy this freakish single-minded devotion at all. In the end, they could only helplessly give up.

...

Wan Guiyi had heard all of those things before. A look of excitement appeared in his eyes as he said, "Only someone like that is worthy of being my rival."

Meanwhile, Elder Huo Ling, who was following far behind them, said to the young lady beside her, "Manman, you need to make your master look good this time and surprise everyone with your abilities during this competition."

The fierce woman who had left all the men present captivated was naturally Pei Mianman. When she heard that, she replied with a helpless smile, "Master, just how long has it been since I joined the sect? Even though I've improved quickly, I'm still far from those chief disciples."

"There's no need to undervalue yourself. I understand your aptitude best, and you aren't inferior to any of the chief disciples. The only weakness you have is a lack of time." Elder Huo Ling harrumphed. "But your strength is special. It can't be evaluated purely by your cultivation rank."

Pei Mianman stuck out her tongue and said, "It seems I can't fool master after all."

A proud expression appeared on Elder Huo Ling's face as she said, "Let's not talk about other things for now. Either way, your achievements definitely can't be inferior to that Wan Guiyi's. Of course, if you could beat him, that would be even better. I hate seeing Wan Tongtian praising his son like that the most."

"If I could win against him that quickly, would I even need to find a master?" Pei Mianman replied, rolling her eyes. "Sigh, master, why are you going through all of this trouble? If you had backed down a bit back then... Wan Guiyi would definitely have been born to you and the Palace Lord."

Chapter 1614: Doubts

"Shut up!" Elder Huo Ling snapped, her expression changing. She shot Pei Mianman an angry look, saying, "You're not allowed to bring that up again; otherwise, don't blame your master for becoming angry!"

Pei Mianman stuck out her tongue. She was the only one in all of Jedefall Palace who dared to speak to her master in such a way. Normally, no one would dare to breathe even a word of the subject in front of Elder Huo Ling for fear of being torn apart.

Even though Elder Huo Ling was still quite good-looking, she was so fierce that people rarely paid any attention to her appearance. Still, in her youth, she had been one of Jedefall Palace's flowers. Back then, she and Wan Tongtian had been known as a golden couple.

By then, Jedefall Palace had already fallen. However, they finally produced two talented geniuses, and thus naturally had to raise them carefully.

Both disciples had begun to develop some mutual admiration after being around each other for so long. Eventually, all those who knew them expected them to get married and have a child. However, they belonged to different peaks, and thus carried the glory of each peak on their shoulders. Thus, they had often been forced to fight each other to gain resources for their respective peaks.

At first, the two of them had held back a bit because of their feelings. However, as time passed and their masters urged them further on, they gradually stopped doing so. The two were both proud, and neither one believed that they were weaker than the other. In each of their minds, even though they had held back in the past, their opponent simply disregarded that and crossed the line. As such, their friendly rivalry eventually turned into real anger.

It was quite strange, however. Both of them were talented, and their cultivation speed and ranks were similar. Even after using all of their abilities, they still couldn't win against each other. Still, the longer that went on, the more they both wanted to find out who would come out on top.

Just like that, several decades passed. They clearly liked each other, but because of their personalities, neither one of them wanted to lose to the other. They both wanted to win properly against the other before expressing their real feelings. And yet, even after decades of fighting, neither one of them could decide the winner.

Later, when the position of palace lord opened up, some misunderstandings occurred between them. As such, their relationship became more and more strained. In the end, they became two old rivals who couldn't stand each other.

As they grew older, however, the matter of Wan Tongtian's marriage couldn't remain under his own control. After all, it was related to the prosperity of the entire sect.

Ever since then, Elder Huo Ling's temper had grown worse and worse, leaving the rest of Jedefall Palace frustrated and annoyed. Eventually, even those from Haze Peak began to gradually disperse. Many people had left because they couldn't stand her.

However, Elder Huo Ling had never really cared. In her opinion, it didn't really matter if those with ordinary talent left. She didn't feel bad about that at all. Only one concern always gnawed at the back of

her mind, which was that she didn't really have an inheritor. In time, as Wan Guiyi grew older and displayed his talent, she felt more and more anxious.

She had never once lost to Wan Tongtian. Could it be that her disciple would lose to his descendant? And that descendant was that woman's son, no less? Just the thought of that practically drove her mad. As such, she searched the entire world for good saplings to raise. However, even though there were many with outstanding cultivation, none of them were to her liking.

Fortunately, the heavens pitied her, and she had eventually stumbled upon Pei Mianman by chance. She had been overjoyed, concluding that this was the descendant fate had ordained for her.

At the time, Pei Mianman just happened to have been worried that Chu Chuyan would only continue to widen the gap between them after joining the White Jade Sect, leaving her quite depressed. She had accepted Elder Huo Ling's invitation, and they had quickly hit it off. The lively Pei Mianman's arrival brought a touch of new beauty to the once gloomy and depressing Haze Peak.

Thus, a hint of consolation had appeared in Elder Huo Ling's sealed and overcast heart. Because she had never gotten married and could only watch as Wan Tongtian and Wan Guiyi enjoyed the love between father and son, the frustration she felt had grown day by day. However, Pei Mianman was lively and likable, so Elder Huo Ling couldn't help but begin to treat her like a daughter.

As such, Elder Huo Ling naturally put her heart and soul into teaching Pei Mianman over the years. This time, she had even brought her disciple to join the Nine Sects Great Competition to reveal her to the world. At the same time, it was to show those who had mocked and pitied her that she wasn't inferior to anyone else in this world, so her disciple wouldn't lose to anyone else's disciple either.

When she saw her master get angry, Pei Mianman sighed and didn't dare to push the issue anymore. In truth, the situation between her master and the palace lord was too pitiful. They clearly could have become wonderful partners, and yet they just had to have ended up as enemies like this.

I definitely won't be like master and let my competitive feelings ruin my chances at a lifetime of happiness.

But honestly, what is wrong with the palace lord? He's a grown man; couldn't he have been a bit nicer with his words? If he had been like Ah Zu, he would already have had many kids with master.

A hint of gentleness appeared on her face when she thought of Ah Zu. It had already been a long time since she saw him. She wondered where he was now. Even after getting a rare opportunity to leave Jedefall Palace, she lacked the opportunity to look for him. Perhaps that skirt-chaser was spending his time happily with some vixen somewhere.

...

Achoo!

Just then, as Zu An's group happened to arrive at the foot of Violet Mountain, he suddenly couldn't help but sneeze.

"Did big brother Zu catch a cold?" Xie Daoyun asked out of concern. At the same time, she found it a bit strange. The bodies of cultivators were special; it was rare for them to get any common illness.

"I didn't. It might be that someone is thinking about me," Zu An said, rubbing his nose. He looked at the majestic Violet Mountain, thinking it had to be at least a few thousand meters tall; it seemed comparable to Mt. Everest. In his previous world, a place like this would practically be devoid of human life; in this world of cultivation, however, it was such a normal place to be.

Zu An gave the nearby Wang Bolin an order. "General Wang, we might disturb the State Teacher's place of cultivation if we all head up the mountain. Stay with the rest here at the foot of the mountain, but be ready to head up after I give you the signal." Then, he had Zhang Zijiang choose some of his personal guards to accompany him up the mountain.

"Understood!" Wang Bolin replied, secretly feeling happy. It seems that, in the eyes of Sir Zu, I'm worth trusting after all! He handed such an important task to me and not that bootlicker.

Zhang Zijiang was also really happy. It seems my bootlicking really worked! That stupid Wang is doing all the hard work, and yet he's keeping me at his side.

...

Zu An had no idea what they were thinking. The group, now smaller, thus proceeded up the mountain. A refreshing feeling swept over them as soon as they started climbing.

Zu An couldn't help but say, "This Violet Mountain really is a cultivation paradise."

Zhang Zijiang remarked, "I heard that whenever the sun rises, the sunlight covers the mountain in gold. At the same time, the peak produces violet ki, which is really good stuff for cultivation! Sir Zu should give it a try if you ever have the chance."

Zu An nodded. He thought to himself, This violet ki might be richer than ordinary ki, but as someone who has even used primordial ki, can this violet ki really compare?

It was clearly winter, and yet the pine and cypress trees were green, and the wild flowers were rich with color. Peaches and apricots rested among jade trees, and even medicinal herbs grew in innumerable quantities. From time to time, the cries of red-crowned cranes emerged from the clouds, making the place feel like a mystical land.

Zu An thought, Should they really be holding construction projects in this kind of place? It almost feels as if they're ruining this place's original beauty. However, as they went higher and higher, he discovered that there were more and more people around. He couldn't help but feel a bit strange. Were there always so many people on Violet Mountain?

Soon afterward, the group arrived at the mountain gate and saw some of the Righteous Sun Sect disciples looking absent-minded, as if something had stolen their very souls.

"Which sect are you from? Right now, the nine daoist sects are holding their great competition, so unrelated people shouldn't come to cause trouble," A disciple with a sword at his waist said, shooing them away.

Zu An's group didn't look like daoists at all, and the one in the lead didn't even have any ki aura, seeming to be an ordinary person. The general next to him was the only one who seemed to have some skill.

They figured that it was just some noble son who had gone on a trip to admire Violet Mountain. Such things had often happened before.

If it were an ordinary sect, they wouldn't dare to show these soldiers negligence. However, the leader of their Righteous Sun Sect was the empire's State Teacher, so they naturally didn't have to fear any court officials.

Zu An was a bit surprised. He hadn't expected the Great Sects Competition to be at Violet Mountain! Zhao Han had decided to hold his Fengshan ceremony here, while the nine sects had gathered all of their experts to hold a great competition. Was it really just a coincidence?

Chapter 1615 – Public Authority For Private Grievances

Xie Daoyun's thoughts were in line with Zu An's. She thought to herself, I really made the right choice in changing my outfit this time. Violet Mountain might seem calm, but it somehow feels as if there's something brewing.

Zhang Zijiang stormed over and shouted, "Are you freaking... Ahem, we are the Armed Escort Division. We came on his majesty's orders to repair the palaces on Violet Mountain. This one is our leader and general, Marquis Zu!" He almost went straight to cursing, but when he realized that the disciple belonged to the Righteous Sun Sect, he swallowed his dirty words back down.

Zu An's forehead darkened. Why are you adding 'marquis' to my title? It sounds weird.

"Armed Escort Division?" the Righteous Sun Sect disciple repeated, his expression changing. He knew that the Armed Escort Division was one of the emperor's personal armies.

Zhang Xi received the news and hurried over, saying, "So it was Sir Zu and General Zhang! The State Teacher told us about you before. Excuse me for not going out to meet you, truly."

He had already lost count of how many things he had to apologize for today. No wonder none of his martial brothers from the other peaks had been willing to take on this role. Still, it was a good thing that he had come, or else he wouldn't have been able to interact with White Jade Sect's junior sister Chu so closely, nor could he have experienced the joy of seeing that junior sister from Jadenfall Palace. When the other disciples heard about it, they'd definitely go crazy from jealousy.

Not only were there disciples from the other daoist sects by the mountain gate, some other sects had arrived too. There were also honored guests who had been invited by the Righteous Sun Sect. However, most of the people who didn't belong to the nine sects were just there to join in the lively atmosphere. After all, it was normally quite difficult for them to see the legendary figures of the nine sects. It would be beneficial for their disciples to have the chance to experience the aura of the strong. That was precisely why the Righteous Sun Sect had arranged for some of their disciples to be in charge of checking jade tokens.

When those people saw how the two sides were chatting in a friendly manner, they all felt a bit jealous. The Righteous Sun Sect and the court's relationship really was good. No wonder they had been able to obtain so many resources and grow so quickly.

Apart from that, however, some people keenly noticed that something was strange. Why did the leader look like a useless pretty face? There wasn't even the slightest trace of ki aura coming from him. Wasn't

he just a normal person? He was probably just some hedonistic son of a great clan who had gotten to his position through nepotism.

The court has already fallen this far? You can even get to that kind of position through nepotism?

Didn't the court always tell us that as long as we worked hard and improved our cultivation, we would get positions matching our strength?

The disciples of the smaller sects felt angry, as if they had been deceived. In contrast, the disciples of the nine daoist sects were secretly delighted.

The court is so corrupt! The Righteous Sun Sect is bound to them, so it seems they don't have many good days left. At that time, it'll be our turn to shine!

Zu An was confused when he saw all the Rage points coming in from the backend for no apparent reason.

I didn't do anything to these guys! Why are these people so angry?

Don't tell me that once someone reaches a certain level of handsomeness, one can draw the jealousy of the same sex just by standing there?

His mood quickly lifted as he thought of that.

...

Afterward, Zhang Xi arranged for some disciples to escort them up the mountain.

Along the way, Zhang Zijiang secretly moved over to Zu An's side and said, "Sir Zu, I didn't expect Violet Mountain to be the place where the nine sects have gathered! There are so many people here, and they're all powerful individuals. It'll be much more difficult for us to safely do our work later!"

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They had said they were going to repair the buildings as a pretext, but the real reason was to establish a vanguard for the emperor's Fengshan ceremony, to get rid of all kinds of hidden dangers ahead of time. Now, however, there were hidden dangers everywhere! How were they even supposed to get rid of them?

According to what the Righteous Sun disciple said, the ones who had arrived were all the elite disciples of the different sects. There was no lack of grandmasters among those who led their sect's disciples. Even if they used the army, there was no way they could face so many powerful cultivators!

Zu An's expression remained calm as he said, "Everything will be fine."

Zhang Zijiang's eyes lit up. He immediately gave Zu AN a big thumbs up and said, "Big brother Zu is outstanding as expected! You aren't like this subordinate, who begins to panic when he encounters a bit of trouble..."

Xie Daoyun actually felt a bit of secondhand embarrassment from all the praise. Just how is this guy able to say so many ridiculous things without batting an eyelid?

Zu An sighed inwardly. No wonder people all wanted to become officials. He had once thought that excessive praise was a bit corny, but that was only because he hadn't been the one to receive it. Now that he had reached his current position, he realized that it really was intoxicating. One couldn't help but want them to continue.

However, his willpower was different from that of others, so he quickly snapped out of it. He found a chance to ask the disciple at the forefront, "How often do the sects hold this great competition?"

The disciple knew that Zu An's rank wasn't low, so he didn't dare to show negligence. He promptly replied, "Once every ten years, sir."

"When was the last instance held?" Zu An asked, and the disciple replied with the date. When Zu An calculated it in his mind, he realized it was indeed ten years prior. That clearly wasn't an excuse they had just put together on the spot at the last minute. He then asked, "Then are the great competitions always held at Violet Mountain?"

"That is not necessarily the case. The nine sects alternate for each great competition. This time, it just happened to be our Righteous Sun Sect's turn," the disciple replied.

Zu An asked a few more questions, but he couldn't find any issues and could only leave the matter be.

Soon afterward, the group arrived at the Guidance Palace. The Guidance Palace was built next to a mountain, and it had beautiful architecture. There were all kinds of auspicious beasts sculpted on the corners and eaves. The palace was grand and majestic, but also solemn and dignified. It could make one feel the sheer size of the world when one stood in front of it, causing them to feel extremely insignificant in comparison.

The Guidance Palace was rumored to have been built for the purpose of guiding immortals down to the lower realm. Of course, no one had ever seen any true immortals, so that saying was always treated as nothing more than folklore.

Now, the Guidance Palace was the place the Righteous Sun Sect used to receive guests. Previously, when the nine sects arrived with their disciples, they had been brought there after they passed through the main gate, upon which they were received by the various peak lords of the Righteous Sun Sect. Afterward, disciples had led them to their respective dwellings.

The disciple who led the way arranged a place for Zu An's group to stop at for the time being, saying, "Everyone, please wait for a moment. The sect master will arrive soon."

Zu An chuckled, refraining from commenting. Strictly speaking, they were the Imperial Envoy. Any local officials, even if they were kings of the area, had to come out to welcome them. However, Wang Wuxie had extraordinary status, so he probably had his own pride.

Just then, cries of alarm filled the air. A streak of purple ki emanated from the Golden Peak. Only when it got closer did the onlookers see that it was actually a handsome middle-aged man, flying while surrounded by purple ki. The nine sects' experts, who had been resting in their respective chambers, suddenly opened their eyes and looked in the direction of the purple ki.

In Jaded Palace's courtyard, Wan Tongtian's expression grew grave. He remarked, "It's been a while since I last saw him, but Wang Wuxie's cultivation seems to have advanced again."

Elder Huo Ling harrumphed. "Prioritizing the interests of others will only sacrifice your own."

Wan Tongtian's expression changed. However, he was already used to Elder Huo Ling's complaints about him. Furthermore, he felt a bit guilty toward her for what had happened before, so he ignored what she said.

Inside the Heavenly Swallow Sect's courtyard, Guan Chouhai chuckled and said, "That guy, Wang Wuxie, didn't even come out to greet us. Just who could be worth a personal visit from him?"

Inside Emptiness Isle's courtyard, Qiu Honglei tugged on the sleeves of the person next to her, saying, "Master, master, this Wang Wuxie is pretty strong. Can you win against him?"

Yun Jianyue's expression turned grave. She said, "In the past, I would definitely have lost. Now, not necessarily."

Qiu Honglei curled her lips and retorted, "It sounds as if you'd still most likely lose. Otherwise, with your personality, you would already be bragging about how you'd grind him into the dirt."

Yun Jianyue's expression stiffened as she snapped, "Damn girl, would you believe me if I say I'm going to rip your mouth off your face?"

Qiu Honglei began to beg for mercy. "Ah, master, I was wrong! Right, why did master's cultivation increase so quickly recently? If there are any shortcuts, could you share some of those secrets with me? That way, I'll have a higher chance to win against Chu Chuyan."

Yun Jianyue's expression became a bit unnatural as she said, "You'll naturally experience it in the future. There's no rush."

She stormed off in a huff afterward, and Qiu Honglei was left all alone in confusion. What do you mean, I'll naturally experience it in the future? Just what kind of mystery is master trying to create?

...

Meanwhile, in the White Jade Sect's courtyard, Chu Chuyan stood by the bedside while looking at the purple ki. There was some shock in her eyes as she remarked, "The State Teacher's cultivation really is formidable. Master, do you want to come and see too?"

Yan Xuehen calmly sipped on some tea, not even turning her head. She replied, "What does that have to do with me?"

"Master, I heard that the State Teacher pursued you in the past. Did you ever feel anything for him before?" Chu Chuyan asked, a mischievous look suddenly appearing in her eyes. Only in front of her master would she show such a side.

"Never," Yan Xuehen said. Her expression was calm, as if she were talking about something unrelated to her. "When did you become so gossipy?"

"Really?" Chu Chuyan replied, finding it a bit hard to believe. "The State Teacher is quite the handsome man, and his cultivation is high. I heard many people say that back then, many female cultivators liked him, and yet master never approved of him. If master doesn't even like someone as perfect as him, just what kind of man do you like?"

Shatter!

A loud and clear sound rang out. Yan Xuehen had lost her grip on her teacup and let it fall to the ground.

When she saw her disciple's suspicious expression, she snapped with a scowl, "Did you forget the most important part of cultivating the Unshakable Daoist Manual? Why is your mind always filled with romance? Go and copy the Frozen Heart Sutra a hundred times as punishment!"

Chapter 1616: This Day Will Change

"Huh?" Chu Chuyan's breath caught in her throat as she recalled the fear she had felt when she first joined the sect. Copying the Frozen Heart Sutra clearly wasn't a good memory for her.

She moved closer to Yan Xuehen and sat at her side. She said quietly, "I could tell that master had some thoughts on your mind for some time. I was just saying those things out of consideration for you..."

"Is that the kind of thing you should be saying to help me feel better?" Yan Xuehen replied, shooting her a look.

However, she felt helpless deep down. In the past, she could have just used her prestige as Chuyan's master to apply pressure and discipline her. But now, she felt too strange. She felt guilty toward Chuyan, and in the future... Chu Chuyan would get married first in the future. She, her master, could end up having to pamper Chuyan as a later wife! What kind of thing was that?!

Yan Xuehen's entire body trembled. A blush briefly appeared on her skin. What am I thinking? How could I possibly have any further relationship with that guy?!

She didn't know whether she was upset at Zu An or at herself. She suddenly got up and said coldly, "A hundred times! I'd better not see even one less time!"

Afterward, she didn't give Chu Chuyan the chance to throw a tantrum and turned around to leave. Chu Chuyan was left all alone and in distress.

Sigh, I used to always warn Snow not to gossip. Now, why couldn't I remember to not do that myself?

...

Meanwhile, Zu An's group was enjoying some tea and resting in the Guidance Palace. Suddenly, he noticed something. He looked up and saw a middle-aged man descend to the plaza in front of the palace, before walking toward Zu An's group with a steady and stable gait.

No matter how much of a narcissist Zu An was, he had to admit that with this guy's style and bearing, he would definitely steal the hearts of countless female cultivators. There were some strands of white hair at his temples, but it didn't make him look old. Instead, they simply gave him a mature and graceful air. That was obvious from all the young female disciples who were clutching their chests and blushing, as if they were about to faint.

This guy's freaking handsome! He's almost at my level.

"Sirs have come from afar. Excuse this poor daoist for not going out to meet you and showing negligence in your treatment," Wang Wuxie said, cupping his hands toward Zhang Zijiang. His armor was

the shiniest among the group, and his cultivation seemed to be the highest. Thus, Wang Wuxie reflexively thought that he was their leader.

“Armed Escort Division Deputy General Zhang Zijiang greets the State Teacher!” Zhang Zijiang replied, feeling a bit embarrassed. He quickly introduced Zu An, saying, “This is Marquis Sir Zu, general of the Armed Escort Division. He is our leader.”

Wang Wuxie was a bit stunned. He looked at Zu An with a hint of surprise. He had actually made an error in judgment? This person didn’t have the slightest ki aura coming from him, and he looked like a little pretty boy. Who would have thought that he was the one in charge?

“So it was Sir Zu. As expected, you are young and outstanding, worthy of admiration!” Wang Wuxie remarked. He had experienced all kinds of things, so he didn’t show any awkwardness and naturally exchanged greetings with Zu An. There was no trace of contempt on his face.

“The State Teacher is too polite,” Zu An said, returning the greeting. “I’ve come this time on his majesty’s orders to repair the palaces on Violet Mountain...”

He took out the Imperial Edict and read it afterward. Of course, he wasn’t so stubborn as to want the State Teacher to kneel as he read it. Fortunately, Wang Wuxie was still respectful during the entire process, so they still got along.

“Many thanks for his majesty’s benevolence...” Wang Wuxie said toward the capital.

Zu An was left in admiration. This handsome big brother really was impressive! He was even able to speak flattery in such an outstanding manner. He thought, This Zhang Zijiang still has a ways to go.

There were many disciples from all sorts of different sects outside. They were curious to find out just what kind of important figure would be able to make Wang Wuxie greet them personally. After all, there were sect leaders among the previous guests, but he had never come out to greet them.

However, when they saw that it was just a young man, they were disappointed. That was especially true when they saw that the young man was completely ordinary. Apart from being a bit taller and more handsome than average, and looking as if he had some money, he didn’t seem to have anything else going for him. Not a single ki fluctuation emanated from him; he was clearly just a normal person.

Of course, that was just what the men thought. Several female cultivators’ eyes were glittering.

“Look, there’s a really handsome big brother there!”

“But he looks a bit delicate.”

“What do you understand? He’s much better than those crude muscleheads! I really want to give him a hug.”

The male cultivators were all completely confused.

You have successfully trolled the surrounding male cultivators for +444 +444 +444...

Zu An felt helpless when faced with the storm of Rage points. The ladies like a handsome man; what did I do wrong?

He looked at the disciples outside, then said to Wang Wuxie to test the waters, "The State Teacher's mountain seems to be quite lively."

Wang Wuxie smiled and said, "The nine sects are holding a great competition that they hold every ten years. There are indeed more people than usual."

"A competition between the daoist sects? Then our repair of the temples might be a bit troublesome..." Zu An said, thinking to himself, This guy isn't holding anything back from me. Is it because he has a clear conscience or because he's confident in his backing?

"There will be no issues. The competition between the great sects will be carried out mostly on Golden Peak. You may carry on with your repairs of the other places as usual. Once the repairs are close to being done, the competition should be just about finished too. At that time, the rest of Golden Peak can be repaired," Wang Wuxie replied.

"May I ask how long the competition will continue for?" Zu An asked.

"Roughly half a year, I suppose. The exact time frame is difficult to say, as it will depend on the final battle outcomes," Wang Wuxie chuckled. "Seeing as Sir Zu is so interested in this competition, why not make a guest appearance and judge the fights? There will be sect masters and elders in attendance as non-voting delegates. For the sake of fairness, I even specially invited some virtuous and prestigious seniors from the world of warriors to serve as witnesses."

Zu An didn't really have much interest at first. He was about to refuse when he suddenly thought of something, and subsequently agreed. "Alright. I'll have to trouble the State Teacher for that."

He thought to himself that based on the State Teacher's earlier statement, the man didn't seem to want the Armed Escort Division to come to Golden Peak. In that case, he would just have to personally see if there are any secrets hidden there.

Wang Wuxie was speechless. He had just made the offer out of politeness. How could he have known that this guy would actually just agree in such a straightforward manner? After all, all the other guest judges would be extremely famous figures from the world of warriors. If they weren't sect leaders, they were highly experienced elders. Even the weakest among them were at the master rank, with many grandmasters among them.

Just where does someone like you with no cultivation get the courage to sit together with them?

However, as Wang Wuxie had already spoken those words, he couldn't take them back. He said with a nod, "Once the competition starts, I will send someone to inform Sir Zu. For now, you should all get some rest first. If there is anything you need, you may contact the sect's disciples. This poor daoist has something to tend to, so I will leave for now."

Zu An replied, "The State Teacher should do what he needs to do first."

...

When Wang Wuxie left, a Righteous Sun Sect disciple quickly came to lead them to their residence. The people nearby began to discuss among themselves.

“So this is a marquis from the court, and he could even become a general? I feel as if any random disciple from our sect would be better than him!”

“Just which clan did this hedonistic son come from? The court has such a mediocre person in such a high position? It really makes one feel bitter and hateful!”

“Maybe he’s a prince and carries a magic artifact to hide his aura. It’s normal if you can’t tell,” a female cultivator couldn’t keep herself from retorting. At least he’s handsome, okay?

“Are you still dreaming of becoming the wife of a king? Keep dreaming! The princes of the world are all well-known, and none of them look like him. Besides, he said his surname was Zu, not Zhao.”

“Besides the fact that the leader is just a pretty face, even the cultivation of that deputy general next to him isn’t all that. Forget about chief disciples, even some other true disciples could defeat him. I really don’t understand how the great sects were defeated by these guys back then.”

“Lower your voices! The court is most adept at military formations. Don’t think this deputy general’s cultivation is low. If he’s good at commanding an army formation, forget about a chief disciple, not even our sect masters would be able to stop it.”

“Brother Li, are you going a bit too far? If a grandmaster came out, he’d really be nothing in comparison.”

A group of debate warriors promptly began to argue over the strength of an army.

Just then, an old and gray-haired old monk came over from the foot of the mountain. There was a cute little novice monk at his side.

Zhang Xi quickly asked, “May I ask where the two of you are from?” These two monks definitely weren’t from the daoist sects. However, their temperaments looked impressive, so he didn’t dare to treat them negligently.

The old monk didn’t reply. He only raised his head toward Golden Peak and muttered to himself, “This day is about to change.”

Chapter 1617: Master Jian Huang

Zhang Xi looked up in confusion and saw a blue sky without a single cloud. The weather was clearly excellent!

A while later, the old monk finally lowered his head. He turned to the little monk next to him and said, “Jie Se, give this person the item.”

“Understood!” the chubby little monk replied, taking out a jade token and handing it over. “We were invited by the State Teacher to attend the gathering.”

Zhang Xi thought, This little monk has quite the kind smile, but why does he have this kind of religious name?[\[1\]](#)

When he received the jade token, he was filled with veneration. He bowed toward the old monk and said, “So it was Tranquility Temple’s Master Jian Huang. This junior has offended you.”

The old monk put his palms together and said, "Form is emptiness; emptiness is form. Young benefactor didn't recognize me, and this old one isn't some formidable person, so where is there any offense?"

"This master is too humble," Zhang Xi said, bowing respectfully. Tranquility Temple was an extremely famous sect in the world of warriors. In terms of their background, they were stronger than even his Righteous Sun Sect.

Tranquility Temple was a Buddhist sect, but ever since the Righteous Sun Sect became the predominant sect in the past century, the influence of Buddhism had declined. Their reputation had become less prominent than before. However, as the chief disciple of Watchful Peak, Zhang Xi had received the teachings of a peak lord. He knew a bit more about the secrets of the world than ordinary people.

This Master Jian Huang was an abbot of Tranquility Peak, someone with profound cultivation. When Tranquility Temple was at its pinnacle, the temple had been home to four divine monks, as well as countless other apprentices with the Jian surname. However, following a hundred years of the court's prosperity and the changes that had taken place within the Buddhist sects in the past, no one knew how many of them were left after so many years had passed.

This time, their sect master had arrived alongside a small novice monk. It seemed as if Tranquility Temple was lacking in talent after all.

Then, Zhang Xi arranged for someone to bring them up the mountain, but he was gracefully turned down with the words 'those of Buddhism pursue all through simplicity'.

The master and disciple ascended the mountain just like that. Along the way, the small novice monk couldn't help but grumble, "Master, this name you gave me is really awful. Those Righteous Sun Sect disciples who were assigned to welcome guests at the entrance have clearly undergone strict training and normally wouldn't laugh unless they couldn't hold themselves back. But when they heard my name, all of them laughed!"

The old monk said solemnly, "Jie Se, the 'Se' in our Buddhism refers to all things with form, all things that are tangible. It does not refer to the female charms, lust, or desires that the secular world believes it to mean. In Buddhism, to have color refers to the principle that nothingness is everything. The reason why this master gave you that name is to constantly remind you to be vigilant, to see past the fabricated."

The chubby little monk gave him a doubtful look, replying, "Then why can't you hold back your laughter either right now?"

"You are mistaken; I did not laugh," the old monk said as he rubbed his face, flattening the wrinkles that had curved up.

"You're clearly laughing!" the little monk replied angrily. "I know it's because your master gave you the name Jian Huang, which made you a laughingstock for many years. You were never happy about that, so it just passed on from one generation to the next and you made all of us suffer too." [\[2\]](#)

"You are speaking nonsense. I was not thinking that, not at all," the old monk instinctively replied. He immediately put his hands together and said, "Amitabha Buddha, this old one has erred."

...

Meanwhile, Zu An's group was brought to a side courtyard. Even though it wasn't large, the pavilions and kiosks were all elegant and refined. There was even a pond in the center with all sorts of rarely seen plants and flowers grown inside. Greenery covered the artificial rock garden off to one side like a blanket. In terms of elegance and peacefulness, it wasn't inferior to the Imperial Palace's Imperial Garden at all.

When the Righteous Sun Sect's disciples left, Xie Daoyun couldn't help but pat her chest and say, "I was almost scared to death at the Guidance Palace earlier! Fortunately, the State Teacher's attention was focused on you. If he had noticed me, that would be really awkward."

Zu An chuckled and replied, "It's all thanks to Master Yan's talisman that was able to hide your aura, so the State Teacher didn't notice anything."

Zhang Zijiang was a bit confused, asking, "Why does Lady Xie not want the State Teacher to notice you? Could it be that Master Yan and the State Teacher have some kind of conflict between them?"

"Of course not..." Xie Daoyun replied. She was a bit tongue-tied, not knowing how to explain herself.

"There must be a reason why Lady Xie needs to do this. General Zhang, there's no need to inquire too much about it," Zu An said to help Xie Daoyun out of the situation.

Zhang Zijiang chuckled and said, "I was being rude. I will leave first to arrange for a dwelling place." Afterward, he gave Zu An a knowing expression, then left in high spirits.

Zu An was confused, thinking, What is that guy so happy for?

Xie Daoyun said with a moved expression, "The State Teacher really is a giant among men; his temperament is truly incredible. It really is hard to imagine that there could be something wrong with such a person."

"Are those who are attractive always good people?" Zu An replied with a chuckle. "But the State Teacher's charms really are lethal toward women. I saw many women go crazy over him earlier. I didn't expect little sister Ling'er to also like that kind of style."

"I don't!" Xie Daoyun replied, panicking. "I was just commenting impartially. Besides, he's not even the most handsome out of those I've seen before."

"Oh?" Zu An replied with interest. "I wonder who little sister Ling'er thinks is the most handsome?"

Xie Daoyun blushed and said, "Not telling you."

Zu An chuckled and didn't think too much of it. Right now, his biggest headache was Golden Token Seven's death, as well as whether Violet Mountain's great competition had anything to do with the emperor's Fengshan ceremony. Unfortunately, he couldn't make any progress in either investigation because both cases lacked information.

Just then, all those who had ascended the mountain decided on which rooms to take. Zu An, as the most important official, was naturally given the largest room in the center. Zhang Zijiang and the other guests surrounded and protected him. Wang Bolin was specially left a spot, or else it would really look bad. Of course, they still played some tricks, placing Wang Bolin's room in a spot quite some distance away from Zu An.

However, that left Xie Daoyun in an awkward spot. She discovered that there weren't any rooms for her. She couldn't help but ask, "General Zhang, what about me?"

Zhang Zijiang pointed at Zu An's room and said, "You're going to live with Sir Zu, of course."

"Huh?" Xie Daoyun replied, her face turning completely red.

Even Zu An, who was writing some letters at a table, couldn't help but frown. He looked over in confusion.

Zhang Zijiang thus said with a deadly earnest expression, "It is mainly because your current status is as Sir Zu's personal attendant, so you have to be close to him and take care of his everyday needs. If there is anything at night, you need to immediately heed his call and send a message. If you live separately, those from the Righteous Sun Sect will definitely suspect your identity. Furthermore, your skin is so fair. If they begin to suspect you, they will easily discover that you are female. You have shown yourself at King Yan Manor before, so it won't be too difficult for the State Teacher to recognize you."

Xie Daoyun was a bit ill at ease. She said, "But... but..."

She hadn't expected things to end up like this at all! Otherwise, she definitely wouldn't have dressed up as Zu An's attendant.

Zhang Zijiang chuckled and said, "Don't worry. Lady Xie will live in the outer room, with a partition separating you two inside. If our general needs something, you will have to go over and make arrangements. I do not believe that Sir Zu would trouble you in the middle of the night."

He secretly winked at Zu An as he spoke. At the same time, he was really in admiration of himself. How am I so smart? This bootlicking is already at the level of perfection!

If these two stay together in one room and sparks fly, won't a fire start immediately? What will a partition do?

Sir Zu should know what to do then. He'll definitely praise me for my competence.

Hmph, Mister Wang, you only know how to do things in a slow-witted manner. How can you compare to me?

Zu An was speechless when he saw Zhang Zijiang's proud expression. After everything, the look he had gotten earlier was just for that?

He was about to say something when Xie Daoyun nodded and said, "What General Zhang says is reasonable. I will just stay here."

Either way, there's a partition in the middle, which makes it more or less how servants live. Also, big brother Zu is a gentleman. He won't do anything disrespectful in the middle of the night either, she thought. However, even though she told herself that, her face was still as red as the sunset.

When he sensed her awkwardness, Zu An walked over and suggested, "The scenery outside isn't bad. Why don't we go out for a walk together? We'll see if there's anything special about Violet Mountain along the way."

“Okay~” Xie Daoyun replied, exhaling, in relief. Big brother Zu really is considerate, helping me out of my trouble.

Zhang Zijiang chuckled. “There is something else here that needs to be put in order. I will not be going with you.”

What kind of a joke is this? Why would I disturb their alone time? All of my earlier bootlicking would be for nothing!

...

Zu An and Xie Daoyun left the courtyard. There were all kinds of figures all around them along the way; they were clearly the disciples of different sects. This was a rare opportunity, so they were either observing Violet Mountain’s various sights curiously, or discussing cultivation with each other. Many were old friends who had finally reunited. There were also some young and vigorous male disciples trying to hit on the female disciples of other sects. It made the men of those other sects glare at them angrily.

Of course, the overall mood was still rather friendly. No one dared to cause trouble in such a place, because that would embarrass their sect, and they could also easily lose their place in the competition that was scheduled to happen soon.

Just then, two ladies walked over, conversing at a volume only they could hear.

“What’s so special about this Violet Mountain? In the past, I slaughtered my way in and then back out...”

“Okay, okay, you’re really awesome, master. But this is already the eight hundredth time you’ve bragged about that.”

“Did I really talk about it that many times?” the older one asked in surprise.

“Of course,” the young lady replied. She was about to say something when her eyes suddenly lit up and exclaimed, “Master, look, it’s Ah Zu!”

The older one’s entire body immediately trembled. She felt the urge to turn around and run on the spot.

Chapter 1618: Absolute Nonsense

The two women were none other than the master and disciple, Yun Jianyue and Qiu Honglei. After successfully sneaking into Violet Mountain, Yun Jianyue had initially planned to carry out some meditation, but she couldn't stop Qiu Honglei's enthusiasm toward everything on Violet Mountain and insistence on going to look around together. Unable to change her mind, and worried about her disciple wandering around alone while surrounded by so many daoist experts, Yun Jianyue had decided to accompany Qiu Honglei.

As the two strolled around, Yun Jianyue secretly commented on the cultivation of the passing disciples and their cultivation patterns. Coincidentally, they happened to pass by and see Zu An.

“Master, what’s wrong?” Qiu Honglei asked, noticing something strange about her master. She couldn't help but give Yun Jianyue a strange look.

"It's nothing. I don't want to see that person!" Yun Jianyue snapped. She took a deep breath, and only then did she calm down her restless heart a bit.

"Huh? Didn't the two of you even fight side by side together? You should be friends now for better or for worse, right?" Qiu Honglei asked out of confusion. "Could it be that Zu An did something to let you down? Tell me what he did! I'll be sure to teach him a lesson for you!"

It had already been a long time since they met, so Qiu Honglei was really excited. Her tone was much more casual than usual.

Yun Jianyue was alarmed. She thought to herself, It wasn't Ah Zu who did something to let me down; rather, we did something to let you down... However, she reacted quickly. She grabbed her disciple, who was itching to rush over, and said, "What I'm saying is that I don't want you to see him."

Qiu Honglei broke out into tears, protesting in clear dissatisfaction, "Why? I obediently listened to you and cultivated in secret, and only now have I been allowed to go outside. Why can't I see him yet?"

"There are too many things going on right now, and I'm worried that you might not be able to control yourself," Yun Jianyue patiently explained. "Did you forget who we are right now? There are so many of those supposedly dignified, upright figures all around us right now. If we're exposed, what will await us?"

"I'm not scared! With our strength, even if we can't win against these stupid daoists, they can't stop us from getting away either." Qiu Honglei harrumphed.

"Just where do you get your confidence from?" Yun Jianyue replied, rolling her eyes. If they really began fighting, there were so many people present that even she wouldn't necessarily be able to escape from Violet Mountain.

"Wasn't it from you, master? You keep talking about how you can slaughter your way in and out of Violet Mountain however you wish. But now that I'm talking about really doing it, you can't take it anymore?" Qiu Honglei retorted with a glare, seemingly starting to doubt her master's previous boasts.

Yun Jianyue choked before replying, "Back then, there was only a single sect master here. All of the nine sects' daoists are here; is that the same thing?"

"Wasn't it easy enough to deal with back then when we were facing those Emptiness Isle people?" Qiu Honglei replied. However, her tone grew visibly weaker.

"Emptiness Isle didn't send any of their real experts this time, most likely because they knew that their chances of victory in this Great Sects Competition weren't great. They were just sending some people to get by. They didn't even send a grandmaster." Yun Jianyue said, giving her a look. "Even so, didn't we still lose some people? These daoists can't be looked down upon at all."

"Whose fault is it that you wanted to look cool and didn't want to interfere?" Qiu Honglei muttered to herself.

"What did you say?" Yun Jianyue snapped, raising her voice.

"Nothing," Qiu Honglei replied, sticking out her tongue. "I was just going to talk to him a bit secretly... No one else would even know. Ah Zu is a smart person too, and definitely won't tell anyone."

Yun Jianyue sighed and said, "Even if you didn't reveal anything, it would make things really dangerous for us later on. With that brat's nature, do you think he would just watch if we... I mean, if you were put in danger? That he could just sit by without doing anything?"

"Even though Ah Zu always has a mischievous smile on his face, he's a true hero deep down. Even if the entire world were his enemy, he definitely wouldn't just stand there without doing anything; otherwise, why would I like him?" Qiu Honglei replied, a gentle expression appearing on her face.

Yun Jianyue felt a headache when she saw her disciple's look of infatuation. If she finds out about me and Zu An, what should I do then? Ah, enmity leads to sin! She sighed and continued, "In that case, you definitely can't expose your identity to him, because you'll be putting him in danger too. I don't think you want him to be endangered, do you?"

Qiu Honglei was stunned when she heard that. She nodded and said, "Master, what you say makes sense. I can't be so selfish."

Yun Jianyue couldn't help but sigh in relief when she saw that she had convinced her disciple. Suddenly, Qiu Honglei clung to her arm and said with a big smile, "Master, I've noticed that you've changed recently."

"How so?" Yun Jianyue asked, her gaze darting toward Zu An from time to time. When she recalled the time they had spent in the Fiend King Court, her mind started to drift a bit.

"The Holy Sect's people always talk in private, saying that even though master is so pretty, you've never been close to another man. They all thought that you were just another martial fanatic and didn't understand love at all, but now, I've discovered that they were wrong. You actually understand love pretty well," Qiu Honglei said with a look of admiration. "It's probably just that you've never found a man that you liked. Don't worry, this disciple will definitely help you look around for someone. I'll definitely find a perfect man for you."

"Hmph, who wants someone from you?!" Yun Jianyue snapped, feeling inexplicably guilty. "Who's been gossiping unnecessarily in the sect? I'm going to rip off their mouths!"

"Ah! I was just joking around..." Qiu Honglei trailed off, naturally unwilling to speak their names. She knew fully well about her master's nature, that Yun Jianyue really would act on her threats. She was about to say something when her expression suddenly stiffened. She tugged on Yun Jianyue's sleeves and asked doubtfully, "Master, why does that attendant at Ah Zu's side look a bit like a girl?"

Yun Jianyue had been completely focused on her internal turmoil, so she only noticed the attendant now. Her expression darkened and she hissed, "It is indeed a woman!"

The attendant had red lips and bright teeth; her skin was fair and supple. Where would anyone find such a pretty man?!

Qiu Honglei noticed that Yun Jianyue was walking toward Zu An and quickly grabbed her, protesting, "Master, what are you doing?!"

"I'm helping you kill those adulterers!" Yun Jianyue said through gritted teeth.

"Master, didn't you just say that we couldn't meet him right now?" Qiu Honglei asked, stunned.

"Everything has its time and place. We were actually concerned for his sake, and yet he was actually having such a good time behind my... er, the back of my precious disciple," Yun Jianyue muttered unhappily. The worst part was that she didn't recognize the woman, so she was clearly someone Zu An had gotten together with after the Fiend King Court.

Even though she knew this guy was a skirt-chaser, she hadn't expected him to be like this. She recalled what had happened between the two of them. When she thought about how she was still frightened out of her mind by her inability to escape from those feelings, and yet he was completely fine and already flirting with another woman, she found it almost impossible to control herself.

I'm the freaking Devil Sect Master. Do I not have my pride?

"It's not that serious; it's not that bad at all," Qiu Honglei said, starting to sweat. "I know that woman."

She hadn't expected her master to actually care so much about her. She felt more and more moved. I really have to choose a good man for my master in the future so she isn't bullied by any men.

"You know her?" Yun Jianyue asked, turning around when she heard that. She looked at Qiu Honglei in suspicion. Is it another one ahead of me? Just how many women does this rascal have?

"Uh, she's Brightmoon City Lord Xie's daughter, Xie Daoyun. We met a few times before in Brightmoon City," Qiu Honglei explained. "She and Ah Zu were fellow students, so it's expected for them to be together."

If she really let her master go over there and cause a huge fuss, wouldn't everything her master had warned her about happen? Not even she would be able to face Ah Zu herself! If they were going to interfere when fellow classmates were chatting, she would seem really jealous! It would only benefit that vixen.

Yun Jianyue's eyelids twitched and she asked, "Do students always act so touchy with each other nowadays?"

Qiu Honglei raised her head. She saw that the two were hugging each other, as if they were flirting. She was speechless.

"Let this master help you get rid of this adulterous couple," Yun Jianyue said through gritted teeth.

Qiu Honglei felt a bit strange. Why did her master seem even angrier than her? It was almost as if it were her man who had cheated. However, she said with a cold smile, "There's no need at all. Why do we have to do anything?"

Yun Jianyue was stunned, asking, "What do you mean?"

"Master, did you forget that the Chu girl just happens to be on Violet Mountain too? She's naturally the one who should be taking care of these kinds of things. Why would considerate women like us dare to do something so petty?" Qiu Honglei replied. Even though she had a smile, it was filled with a dangerous air.

Yun Jianyue couldn't help but chuckle too, saying, "That's more like a demoness."

...

Meanwhile, Zu An held Xie Daoyun while asking, "What's wrong with your foot?"

"I twisted it by accident just now. I think it should be okay though," Xie Daoyun said, standing back up with a reddened face. She had been thinking about how they were going to sleep in the same room, leaving her in a daze. She had been so distracted that she actually fell down the stairs, straight into his arms.

"It's good as long as you're okay," Zu An said, sighing in relief. At the same time, he turned around and looked into the distance. Why did he seem to have felt two waves of killing intent just now?

Because he was handsome and had all kinds of girls trying to start conversations with him, causing jealous men to constantly send him Rage points, and because of his concern for Xie Daoyun, he actually hadn't noticed the Rage points the two Devil Sect women sent him.

Chapter 1619: Joy and Sorrow

Then, Xie Daoyun took out a talisman and applied it to her ankle. The swelling disappeared at a visible rate. Zu An clicked his tongue in wonder, remarking, "If someone had a bunch of these talismans, wouldn't they become invincible?"

Xie Daoyun shook her head and said, "To a certain extent, cultivators can recover on their own. This treatment talisman merely activates one's innate potential and speeds up healing. In the end, it still depends on one's own ability. After a certain point, it won't be able to treat injuries anymore."

Zu An now had a rough idea of what was happening. This thing was like a catalyst, capable of speeding up a process, but it couldn't create something from nothing. If the user was exhausted and couldn't recover anymore, it wouldn't be able to do anything.

"I'm better now, so let's continue and look around at other places," Xie Daoyun said, standing up and gently stretching her ankle a bit.

Zu An voiced his confirmation, and they began to look around again. However, there were so many people present that they couldn't find anything noteworthy. Just like that, they roamed all around the mountain. Along the way, the Righteous Sun Sect disciples attentively showed them the way. The two of them moved quickly and passed through many places.

"Did you notice anything?" Zu An asked. They were naturally not there just to go on a scenic tour. His greater purpose was to accompany Xie Daoyun as she investigated whether or not there were any hidden formations present.

Xie Daoyun shook her head and said, "Apart from the great formation that protects the Righteous Sun Sect, there aren't any signs of other formations. But that's to be expected. The daoist sects' great competition is now at hand, and there are people coming and going from all sorts of different places. There's no lack of exceptional individuals among them. If the State Teacher really wanted to mess around somehow, there's no way it would be so easy for me to notice."

"Then where should we look next?" Zu An asked.

"Let's end it here for now. I'll keep observing over the following days and think over how I should continue this investigation," Xie Daoyun said with a frown. She looked just like a top student who had stumbled upon a hard question.

"That sounds good," Zu An said. He thought for a bit, then took out a mask and gave it to her. When he saw her puzzled expression, he explained, "This mask can hide your appearance. If you're going to secretly look around Violet Mountain's formations, it will definitely be extremely dangerous. You're dressed as a man right now, but your skin is too fair, and you look quite attractive. It will be too easy for you to be targeted, and that won't be favorable for what you want to do.

"This mask was something I stumbled upon coincidentally. It can make you look completely ordinary, and no one will give you a second look on the streets."

He should have given it to her before, but at the time, he had thought that rather than having a normal-looking face next to him, having an attractive attendant would be much more pleasant. However, after he sensed the two waves of killing intent, he grew vigilant. He naturally didn't want Xie Daoyun to be in danger anymore.

"Thank you, big brother Zu," Xie Daoyun said, her face turning pink. Her eyes were full of happiness, because he seemed to be praising her on her beauty.

...

Then, Zu An and Xie Daoyun returned to their courtyard. Soon afterward, some Righteous Sun Sect disciples delivered their evening meals. Because there were just too many guests on Violet Mountain, it wasn't convenient to eat together at all. Zu An didn't mind that, though.

The meals that the Righteous Sun Sect disciples brought over were quite sumptuous too. Because this was a cultivation land, there wasn't much meat and fish, but there were still many mountain delicacies paired with spiritual flowers and unique herbs; they were all beneficial to cultivation.

Zhang Zijiang couldn't help but say with a sigh, "The Righteous Sun Sect really has quite the powerful backing! This meal is enough to last me for an entire month!"

As a court general, and furthermore someone in a formidable position such as the Armed Escort Division, the amount of cultivation resources he was assigned naturally wasn't low. Even so, the amount they received in a month was only comparable to what he had received here for a single meal. Furthermore, there were so many people present, so just how much were they all going to eat? As such, his shock was completely understandable.

"I believe that only the more important groups were given such abundant meals. But even so, this Righteous Sun Sect is quite the local tyrant," Zu An said, shaking his head. That Wang Wuxie appeared pure and holy, but he clearly still couldn't help but show off a bit.

...

He and Zhang Zijiang then discussed the matter of Violet Mountain's repairs. At the same time, they planned to arrange their troops at various chokepoints to be prepared against any hidden dangers.

Zhang Zijiang left while in heavy spirits, because things had become much more difficult with so many daoist cultivators present. Fortunately, Sir Zu had said that he would deal with things involving the nine sects' higher-level individuals, so he just had to go back and make a concrete plan himself.

Eventually, only Zu An and Xie Daoyun were left in the room. The atmosphere quickly became a bit awkward.

Zu An said, "It's already quite late. Little sister Ling'er should get some rest early."

"Huh? Oh, okay..." Xie Daoyun said, thinking to herself, Why do these words sound like what my parents tell each other?

Zu An then said, "You can sleep in my bed."

"Oh. What?" Xie Daoyun exclaimed in surprise. Wasn't big brother Zu being too direct?

Even though I have a good impression of him, my parents haven't approved of this yet, and there aren't any third parties involved... Isn't this just an illicit sexual relationship?!

As she came from a literary family, she had always had an extremely strict upbringing in this respect.

Actually, I wouldn't really mind if it was with big brother Zu, but he is still in love with Chu First Miss. What kind of status would I have if I joined like that...

In that instant, too many possibilities flashed through her mind.

Zu An was stunned. He knew she was thinking strange things. He said, "I figured that, seeing as the attendant's room only has a single simple bed, it won't be that fitting for little sister Ling'er. I just happen to have something to do tonight and won't be back that soon, so you can sleep in my room."

In order to reclaim his innocence, he didn't even wait for her reply and just left through the door afterward.

...

"Ah, that was so embarrassing!" Xie Daoyun cried as she jumped into her own bed. She pulled the covers over her head and rolled around back and forth, awkwardly kicking her feet in the air. After a long time passed, her completely red face emerged from the covers. She looked in the direction Zu An left in and muttered to herself, "Big brother Zu really is a gentleman. He even made up an excuse to leave and stay in a different room in order to make me feel better."

She sat up in the bed, and an absentminded expression spread across her face; her thoughts were inscrutable.

...

Meanwhile, Zu An left the courtyard to look for Chu Chuyan. While wandering around with Xie Daoyun, he had heard the disciples of the sect discuss the White Jade Sect's two goddesses and their beauty. Judging from their description, he had quickly realized that Yan Xuehen and Chu Chuyan had arrived at Violet Mountain, which filled him with joy.

It was finally evening, and he had taken care of everything else. He couldn't hold himself back anymore. However, as soon as he left his courtyard, he noticed a white figure sneakily fluttering by and called out, "Show yourself!"

He was still feeling restless from the two waves of killing intent this morning. He hadn't expected them to already be coming after him! He rushed toward the figure. However, that person's movement skill was extremely profound, and they swiftly twisted to one side to avoid his grip.

Unfortunately, with Zu An's current cultivation, how could they evade so easily? He was about to lash out when he saw an annoyed and displeased, yet incredibly charming face. He asked, "Chuyan, why are you here?"

"You probably didn't want to see me tonight, right?" Chu Chuyan harrumphed. She turned and started walking away.

Zu An quickly followed along and replied, "No way! When I heard the disciples discussing how two goddesses had arrived from the White Jade Sect in the afternoon, I knew it was you. I went to look for you as soon as I had the chance."

"You don't have to accompany that charming and lovely attendant of yours?" Chu Chuyan replied coldly.

Zu An was stunned, but then replied with a laugh, "So you were jealous! You were even sneaking around... Was it to catch an adulterer? So? Did you discover how loyal I am to you?"

"Who's jealous of you?" Chu Chuyan harrumphed. "The reason I came here was to remind you that there are people here who are hostile toward you. You have to be on guard."

Zu An was stunned, asking, "What information did you receive?"

Chu Chuyan said, "In the afternoon, someone sent me a paper strip that hinted at something between you and that attendant... Hmph, I don't care who you fool around with, but you were targeted and had no idea. If I hadn't come to warn you, you might have died without even knowing why."

Zu An felt warm inside. Even though Chu Chuyan was normally ice-cold, and this time, she was clearly jealous, she was still more concerned with his safety. He couldn't help but gently hold her hands, saying, "I did feel two waves of killing intent in the afternoon, but I didn't notice who it was."

"Judging from your description, they're probably people from a certain faction of the nine sects," Chu Chuyan said. She tried to shake him off, but couldn't, so she just let him continue. She said with a serious expression, "This time, many powerful cultivators from the nine daoists sects arrived. Just who did you offend?"

"If it's anyone I've offended recently... then it's probably the Heavenly Sorrow Sect," Zu An replied. He thought to himself, Could it be that Zhao Xiaodie told the sect about that time?

That wasn't too likely, was it? She was the one who had proactively begged for forgiveness, and that situation was just too embarrassing. She was likely too ashamed to talk about it.

When she remembered what had happened in King Yan Manor, Chu Chuyan thought that was most likely the case too. She replied, "As long as you know what's going on. Heavenly Sorrow Sect's Guan

Chouhai has cultivation on par with my master's. Even though he wouldn't go so far as to bully juniors, you still need to be careful." She turned around to leave afterward.

"I'm not even scared of him. Don't I still have you and big sis Yan?" Zu An replied, following along with a smile.

Chu Chuyan said, "She's my master, and yet you're calling her big sis. You're clearly trying to take advantage of me."

"Ah, come on. We can just have our own relationships with each other, right?" Zu An said.

...

As the two of them continued to chat, they unwittingly arrived at Chu Chuyan's residence. Chu Chuyan said helplessly, "You've already seen me back, so you can go back already."

"You might have done what you wanted to do with me, but I still haven't talked about why I was looking for you," Zu An said with a smile.

"What do you need me for?" Chu Chuyan replied, a faint blush creeping across her face.

"Lovesickness, of course," Zu An said, sizing up the beauty in front of him. Her lips were slightly open, moist and sparkling like morning dew. He couldn't help but move closer.

Chu Chuyan bit her lip slightly, saying, "But master isn't letting me meet you..."

Before she could even finish, she moaned as Zu An forcibly kissed her. She struggled a bit, but then, her body gradually softened. No matter how cold the Snowflake Sword was, how could it stop the blistering heat of a couple in love?

At first, Chu Chuyan's hands instinctively covered her chest. But soon afterward, she unwittingly wrapped her arms around her lover's neck; she was embarrassed, but proactively responded to Zu An's passionate kiss.

Suddenly, both of them stopped. A rather elegant male voice called out from outside, "Fairy Chu, Heavenly Sorrow's Zhi Yin wishes to meet with you."

Chapter 1620: Immortal Sword

At that moment, Chu Chuyan's cheeks were completely red. When he saw her exquisite and refined cheeks, Zu An couldn't help but be amazed by her beauty when her icy exterior melted.

However, how could they have expected the sudden appearance of such an earache of a voice? Chu Chuyan was so frightened that she quickly stopped Zu An's mischievous hands. The room fell silent for a moment, and she feigned calm as she said, "It is already very late. Why has senior brother come to look for me?"

Outside, Zhi Yin was overjoyed. In the past, Chu Chuyan had always been aloof and indifferent whenever she spoke to him, like the snow on the highest point of a mountain. And yet today, she wasn't as cold as she usually was, and there was even a hint of sweetness coming from her voice.

Could it be that all of my efforts have finally resulted in an opening, that she's finally sensed my deep affection? he thought, quickly becoming more enthusiastic as he continued, "The weather today is not bad, so I came here to invite Fairy Chu to admire Violet Mountain's evening scenery."

He had arrived without much hope at all, but he strongly believed that if he didn't try, there would be a one hundred percent chance of failure. If he tried, no matter how small the chance was, it wouldn't necessarily be zero. Now, however, he had suddenly discovered that the chances of success were gradually climbing.

Just the thought of admiring the evening scenery with Chu Chuyan alone, and how the disciples of the other sects would cast countless looks of envy, made him feel as if he would explode from excitement.

"Ah!" A cry of alarm emerged from inside.

Zhi Yin was stunned. What's the meaning of 'ah'? Is she agreeing or not? Furthermore, Fairy Chu's voice sounds a bit strange. It seems to be trembling a bit.

...

Inside, Chu Chuyan was frantically pinching the man on top of her. This guy actually took the chance to bully me! She was caught so off guard that she had almost really embarrassed herself. However, Zu An didn't reply as he showered her in a storm of kisses.

Chu Chuyan's breath quickened greatly. She couldn't help but lean backward and bite down on her lip, struggling to endure and trying her best to not make any sound.

"Fairy Chu, Fairy Chu?" Zhi Yin called out. When he heard no reaction coming from inside at all, he began to panic. Could it be that Fairy Chu is changing and preparing to go out with me?

"Thank... Thank you for your good intentions, senior brother. It is already dark and I have already headed to bed, so I will not be accompanying... senior brother," Chu Chuyan stuttered from inside.

Zhi Yin was a bit disappointed, but he became excited soon afterward, because Chu Chuyan was normally too cold and had never said such a long sentence to him at once before.

It looks like her impression of me really is different! Also, her voice isn't as ice-cold as before, and there seems to be a bit of shyness... Could it be that Fairy Chu really does feel something toward me now?

She's probably just refusing me because of her reserved nature. Maybe she wants to use this chance to size me up?

He put away his disappointed expression when he thought of that and said in a charming tone, "As it is inconvenient for Fairy Chu, we can do this another day. Zhi Yin will not disturb you anymore."

He thought his bearing was absolutely perfect in terms of grace and elegance, and that he had definitely left her with a good impression. He immediately raised his chin and stuck out his chest when he thought of that. As he left, he looked like a proud rooster.

Not long after he left, he bumped into someone. The other person called out in surprise, "Zhi Yin?"

"Lou Wucheng?" Zhi Yin exclaimed. When he saw who it was, his expression turned grave.

Lou Wucheng's master Li Changsheng was an elder of the White Jade Sect, as well as Sect Master Yan's senior. It was rumored that his cultivation was even a bit higher than Sect Master Yan's. In his younger years, he had let Yan Xuehen take the position because he wasn't too interested in the management of the sect and secular affairs. He had chosen to focus on cultivating his Immortal Sword.

Zhi Yin's own master Guan Chouhai was a rather prideful person, and he always showed disdain when some of the sect masters of the nine sects were mentioned. However, whenever Li Changsheng was brought up, his expression always turned grave, and he carried quite a bit of apprehension toward the Immortal Sword.

Lou Wucheng was the last disciple of Li Changsheng, and it was rumored that he was already an inheritor of the Immortal Sword. He could contend for the number one spot among the daoist sects' younger generation.

What made Zhi Yin even more unhappy was that this guy was quite handsome too. Even though Lou Wucheng's looks were a bit inferior, it was still enough to charm hundreds of women. In comparison to Zhi Yin, he had tanned skin and a more masculine build. People had always criticized Zhi Yin on those grounds, so he naturally treated Lou Wucheng as a formidable opponent.

Furthermore, Lou Wucheng was Fairy Chu's proper senior brother. The two were from the same sect, so they had more chances to grow closer to each other than others. Just the thought of that alone drove Zhi Yin mad with jealousy.

When he saw the direction Zhi Yin had emerged from, Lou Wucheng's expression became a bit unpleasant as he asked, "What are you doing around my junior sister's courtyard so late at night?"

"Violet Mountain isn't your home; are you trying to tell me what to do?" Zhi Yin sneered. "Furthermore, Fairy Chu isn't your junior sister alone. She also calls me senior brother."

Lou Wucheng glowered. His fingers unwittingly began to stroke the hilt of his sword.

Zhi Yin's expression turned serious. He prepared himself while saying, "What, do you want to fight? Others might fear your Immortal Sword, but I don't."

Lou Wucheng lowered his fingers from his sword and said, "I'll definitely personally experience whether your sword is as formidable as your mouth during the great competition."

He knew Zhi Yin had quite the formidable reputation too. There was almost no chance of subduing him without causing a disturbance. With the great daoist sects' competition imminent, Violet Mountain prohibited private battles. All those who violated the rule would lose their qualifications. He didn't want to do something rash and foolish now.

Zhi Yin sneered and said, "Likewise."

Lou Wucheng didn't pay him any more attention. He turned around and walked toward Chu Chuyan's courtyard.

"What are you going over there so late in the evening for?" Zhi Yin asked, suddenly panicking. Even though he didn't have any sort of relationship with Chu Chuyan yet, he felt really unhappy seeing another man approach her.

“Do we martial siblings need an outsider like you to comment on what we do?” Lou Wucheng retorted with a sneer.

“Martial siblings?” Zhi Yin sneered. “She doesn’t even want to live together with a senior brother like you. Do you really have no sense of tact?”

Lou Wucheng choked. He quickly said, “That’s only because Sect Master Yan prefers peace and quiet, so that’s why they are residing here alone. It doesn’t have anything to do with little sister Chu.”

“I advise you not to go. Fairy Chu has already gone to bed. You’ll just be wasting your time by going,” Zhi Yin said. He couldn’t help but carry a sliver of pride, as if he knew some great secret about Chu Chuyan.

Lou Wucheng roared with laughter and said mockingly, “If a woman says she’s going to sleep, isn’t that just tactfully dealing with a fly? You even believed something like that?” Afterward, he walked over confidently.

Zhi Yin’s expression changed several times. Could it be that it really is what this guy said, that Fairy Chu was only saying that to half-heartedly chase me away? No, there’s no way! Fairy Chu treats me differently from the others; there’s no way that could be the case!

However, he couldn’t bring himself to walk away. He decided to stick around and see how things ended up for Lou Wucheng.

...

Inside the room, Zu An looked at the beauty beneath him with a mysterious expression, saying, “You and that chicken... Ahem, what kind of relationship do you have with Zhi Yin? Why is he coming to find you so late at night?”

Chu Chuyan’s entire body trembled. This guy was teasing her in the way that annoyed her the most. However, she was worried that he would think strange things and explained, “It’s just that back then, I once paid the Heavenly Sorrow Sect a visit to deliver a letter. That was when I first met him. Back then, he always tried to find me for a conversation, but I never paid him much attention.” She breathed heavily as she spoke. Her face was a bright pink. Her beautiful eyes were half open, and her words were hard to make out.

“That’s more like my obedient wife~” Zu An said, nodding in satisfaction. He lowered his head to kiss her again.

Chu Chuyan groaned. She felt as if she had already forgotten the Snowflake Sword she cultivated for all these years. There seemed to be a flame burning inside of her, melting all the snow into water.

Zu An suddenly frowned. However, Chu Chuyan was in a different place mentally, so her reaction was a bit slower. She quietly asked, “What is it?”

Zu An glanced toward the door. Soon afterward, Lou Wucheng called out, “Junior sister~”

Chu Chuyan’s beautiful brows furrowed. Even with her usual indifferent nature, she still couldn’t help but become a bit annoyed. Will this never end? Why do they keep bothering me at this kind of time? Still, she couldn’t just ignore him. She could only ask, “Why are you here, senior brother?”

Lou Wucheng's heart skipped a beat. He thought, Why does Chu Chuyan's voice sound so sweet and beautiful today? After he calmed down a bit, he said confidently, "Junior sister, this Violet Mountain is known for its rich violet ki, which holds a lot of mysteries. Normally, even the great sects cannot come here to explore this place. We have managed to obtain the rare chance to become guests of Violet Mountain, so how about we look around? We might be able to find some of this place's secrets."

He knew that with Chu Chuyan's personality, it wasn't too likely for her to agree to an evening date. But if he used the mysterious purple ki as the reason, not many cultivators would be able to refuse, especially someone like her who cared a lot about her mental strength.

The rich violet ki only appeared when the rising sun emerged each day. That kind of investigation would mean that they would spend the night together. Even though nothing would happen, it would be very beneficial toward bringing their relationship closer.

"Mmm~" A soft moan emerged from inside the room. It sounded really sweet and uncontrollable, but also flustered and annoyed.

"So junior sister agrees?" Lou Wucheng asked, overjoyed. At the same time, he found it really strange.

Why does junior sister's voice sound so strange? Could it be that something bad happened while cultivating?

His thoughts didn't go anywhere else, because Chu Chuyan was usually incorruptible, like a fairy in the clouds. How could he possibly imagine that she was pressed beneath a man?

A while later, Chu Chuyan called out, "I apologize, senior brother. I am cultivating, so I will not be going out."

Lou Wucheng sighed in relief. She was cultivating, as expected. He asked, "Does junior sister need me to help with anything? Just now, your voice sounded as if there could be some danger of deviation."