

Immortal 821

Chapter 821: Undaunted By Perils

The water spheres ruptured, and then the water puppets trapped inside woke up. They charged over when they sensed the auras of living beings. The group could sense the creatures' powerful resentment even from far, far away. Those with lower cultivations couldn't help but shiver all over.

"Everyone, get into position. Crossbow shooters, fire at your targets; scouts, prepare the traps; everyone else, prepare for close quarters combat..." Even though Bi Linglong's face was a bit pale, she still firmly gave out orders one after another. Her steady voice began to affect everyone else. Their formation, which had been starting to become a bit disorderly, also stabilized.

Whoosh!

A barrage of bolts shot upward. Their surfaces flickered with white light, coming from special ice element formations carved by rune masters. They could turn ki into the ice element.

This was the crown prince's great exam, so the royal family had given them abundant resources. The Jade Moon Serpent could devour other beasts and turn their souls into water puppets. That was why they had specially prepared ice element bolts.

The marksmen were all the clans' elites. Soon afterward, many ice element arrows hit their targets. The water element puppets were quickly covered in chunks of ice.

If these puppets had only been at the sixth rank, they might have already turned into frozen sculptures after being hit by so many of the special arrows. Unfortunately, these were seventh ranked beasts before they had been killed. The arrows were able to cover them in chunks of ice, but it wasn't enough to completely freeze them.

What remained of the beast souls' fighting spirits made them furious at their injuries. They roared and charged at the group. With how close they were, there was already no time to fire a second round of bolts.

The scout troops, however, had already finished setting a trap in the path these water puppets had to take. Many lights flickered as the traps activated.

The four water puppets trembled all over, as if they were screaming miserably. Even their bodies began to grow dim. However, in the end, they still broke through the traps and charged into the group's formation.

The warriors, who had already been waiting for this moment, charged forward. They surrounded their respective targets according to the prearranged plan.

Bi Linglong didn't move and instead gave out instructions from the center. She transferred men over whenever she saw that one side was struggling. At the same time, she directed all kinds of attacks and defenses.

Some warriors screamed from their wounds, or even lost their lives. However, under Bi Linglong's command, the formation didn't collapse. On the contrary, everyone seemed to have been inspired by her, all of them charging at their enemy without any thought for personal safety.

Someone had his stomach ripped apart by the Golden War Ox's horns, his intestines strewn across the ground. However, with the last of his strength, he thrust the weapon in his hand into the ox's neck, doing his best to exhaust the water element power in its body.

Another person was slammed in the waist by the Lightning Devouring Tiger. His body was instantly blown into two pieces. However, his upper body continued to cling to its rear leg, doing what he could to at least slow its speed down a bit.

There was another whose entire body was bloody from the Hard Bristle Black Boar's bristles. When he saw that there was no hope of survival, he threw himself at its body, using his body as a shield for his allies.

One person saw his allies easily ripped in half by the Giant Frost Bear, yet instead of backing up, he charged forward with reddened eyes.

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Because of that, the four seventh rank puppets' overwhelming advantage was actually being held off by these people.

Zu An felt deep respect for the group. Previously, because of how the young masters behaved, he couldn't help but feel contempt for these warriors as well. But now, he finally understood that these were all individuals who had been carefully selected. No wonder the emperor was okay with these people accompanying the crown prince. It was because these were indeed the best from their clans.

He didn't make a move, because his opponent wasn't these water puppets, but rather that several dozen meter long ninth ranked serpent in the skies.

That Jade Moon Serpent had already locked onto his aura not long ago. The ninth ranked beast's instincts immediately told it that he was the one that posed the greatest threat out of everyone here.

Zu An was also looking for an opening. A ninth ranked beast had an incredibly tough body and all sorts of innate skills. Its real strength was comparable to a human at the master rank.

There was no hope of victory for a normal human ninth rank cultivator. Even someone like Han Fengqiu, who was at the peak of the ninth rank, would only be able to run away at most.

Zu An was now at the ninth rank's fourth step. Because of his various miraculous skills, his ki amount and density were much greater than that of others at the same level. However, compared to the master rank, he didn't have much of a chance of success. But with all of his strange and miraculous skills, it wasn't as if it were completely hopeless.

That was why the two faced each other, both parties looking for an opening to exploit.

The Jade Moon Serpent was also watching the battlefield. When it saw that its water puppets were actually fighting on even footing with those puny humans, it felt anger inside. It opened its mouth and spat out another water sphere, which instantly turned into a strange bird.

"It's the Blackfeather Hawk!" Bi Linglong's voice carried a hint of despair. It was because this was an eighth ranked beast!

This Jade Moon Serpent had actually devoured an eighth ranked beast! No wonder it was able to rise up to the ninth rank. However, fighting against those four seventh ranked puppets was already their limit. How could they possibly defeat an eighth ranked beast?

But Bi Linglong bit her lip. She wouldn't give up until the absolute final moment. She gave the command for everyone to get into formation again.

Then, the marksmen that had been preparing to fire at the four seventh ranked puppets raised their bolts toward the Blackfeather Hawk in the sky. Countless bolts screamed out.

However, with a wave of the Blackfeather Hawk's wings, water element bubbles filled the air. The vicious barrage of bolts was instantly trapped when they made contact with the bubbles. The ice element power they carried was also neutralized at once.

Then, the remaining bubbles landed on the Eastern Palace's formation. The warriors felt as if they were trapped in a swamp as they were imprisoned in the water bubbles. They struggled frantically, trying to free themselves. Unfortunately, they were like drowning people who didn't know how to swim. They were just wasting their strength, as it was futile

The Blackfeather Hawk raised its neck and released a silent roar. Then, it pulled in its wings and dove down. Its body transformed into a stream of light and smashed into the formation. Blasts of blood erupted from the chests of those who weren't trapped in the bubbles. Huge holes appeared in their chests.

The Blackfeather Hawk's charge was terrifyingly powerful, almost like the flying sword of a ninth ranked expert. Meanwhile, these people were only at the sixth rank at most. How could they possibly withstand this type of power?

Zu An made his move. The Jade Moon Serpent had actually revealed an opening earlier, but if he wanted to make use of that opportunity, the time it would take to take the serpent's life might be enough for everyone below to die ten times over.

He had been filled with endless admiration when he witnessed the others' bravery earlier. He really couldn't find it within himself to use their lives to buy him more time.

He used his Grandgale ability to instantly arrive in front of a stunned warrior, pushing him away. Then, he raised the Tai'e Sword and blocked in front of him.

Clang!

A shrill and ear-splitting sound erupted. The Blackfeather Hawk's beak that had torn through the chests of countless people slammed into the Tai'e Sword. The tremendous impact made even the Tai'e Sword bend a bit.

"It's so freaking noisy!" Mi Li's annoyed voice exclaimed from inside the sword. Then, a terrifying pressure rushed out. The Blackfeather Hawk trembled and stopped attacking.

How could Zu An let such a great opportunity go? His sword flickered, directly cleaving it in half. Originally, with the Blackfeather Hawk's strength, even though he could win, it wouldn't have been so clean and efficient. He hadn't expected to receive Mi Li's help.

"Big sis empress, you're awake." Zu An was happy and surprised as he secretly talked to her.

"Don't get distracted, that damn bird won't die so easily," Mi Li said coldly.

Zu An lowered his head and saw the two lumps continue to wriggle about, as if they wanted to recombine with each other.

These were existences that used the souls of beasts the Jade Moon Serpent had devoured as their foundation, and then had bodies created through the water element. Water was a formless substance and possessed a powerful regenerative ability to begin with.

When Zu An saw that, he immediately used the Snowflake Sword. The two wriggling blobs of water were frozen into chunks of ice. Then he channeled his ki, smashing them to pieces with a kick. The Blackfeather Hawk was now completely destroyed.

At the same time, the bubbles that had trapped all of the warriors froze and shattered from the cold ki. Those inside were free again.

"This king only refined the Blackfeather Hawk after great difficulty, yet you actually destroyed it. So I'll devour you and turn you into my new puppet!" The Jade Moon Serpent in the sky roared furiously.

Chapter 823, (1): Mutual Selfless Sacrifice

But suddenly, something happened on the battlefield. Zu An completely released his ice barrier, allowing the water arrows to fly toward him.

Bi Linglong cried out in alarm. However, she discovered that Zu An was unfazed. The water arrows couldn't hit him and instead brushed right past his body. She thought, What is going on?

It wasn't just her. When it saw that every shot missed, the Jade Moon Serpent was completely baffled as well. Was it because it was angry that its aim had become a bit off? As such, it summoned more water arrows and fired them at Zu An from all sorts of different angles.

But even though those arrows had clearly been aimed well in the beginning, once they reached within three feet of Zu An, they would mysteriously shift an inch or two to the side. Even though it wasn't much, it was still enough for Zu An to avoid them.

The others also noticed this strange phenomenon. They began to cheer one after another.

"Sir Zu is mighty!"

"With Sir Zu on our side, everything becomes easy!"

"Sir Zu, have my child!"

Bi Linglong frowned. These clan disciples really had no filter. You want to give birth to Sir Zu's child? Do you have the ability? I'm probably the only one here who can...

Ah, pah pah. What the hell am I thinking?

But as she watched Zu An leisurely walk amid the rain of arrows, easily avoiding those deadly attacks, she couldn't help but think to herself, I guess he is pretty handsome when he's being serious.

She quickly refocused her thoughts on the battle. With things the way they were, she had already given out all the orders she could. The others were working together in a methodical manner. The seventh ranked puppets were already dead, so their strength couldn't compare to when they were still alive. They were already near the point of collapse. She joined the fray so that she could end the battle quickly, and then lead everyone over to help Zu An.

"Petty human, what kind of weird magic are you using?" The Jade Moon Serpent's eyes widened. Its expression was full of disbelief.

"Ugly loach, who do you think you're talking to?" Zu An was stunned. You haven't even evolved into a dragon yet, so why do you already have their annoying arrogance?

Even if you were one, it's not as if I haven't killed dragons before. What's a stupid serpent like you acting all cocky for?

"Ugly loach?" The Jade Moon Serpent was stunned. It reacted to what Zu An said, its entire body shaking with rage. "This king is going to flay your skin and rip out your tendons! I'll let you know the consequences of angering me."

You have successfully trolled the Jade Moon Serpent for +888 +888 +888...

Seeing that the water arrows couldn't injure Zu An, it decided to just give up on water arrows. Instead, it spat out a bubble that flew over slowly. Zu An tapped his feet against the ground and avoided it.

"This thing might be able to deal with those of lower cultivation, yet you're trying to use it against a high level cultivator?" Zu An asked, confused. This serpent shouldn't be that stupid, right?

But the Jade Moon Serpent didn't give him a chance to think about that as it swung its massive tail.

Zu An was alarmed. This thing relied on its thick skin and tough flesh, so he'd give it a taste of the Poisonous Prick.

Mi Li spoke up again. "Don't keep relying on that Poisonous Prick of yours. It will limit your progress. One day, you will meet someone who's protected against your dagger, so what will you do then? Your cultivation has grown too quickly and your foundation isn't stable. This is a rare chance for you to train yourself and fight it fair and square!"

With how strongly the winds around him were stirring, Zu An didn't dare to take it head-on. He used the Sunflower Phantasm to evade. The tail slammed into a boulder by the pond. The boulder, which was the size of a small house, was instantly crushed into powder. The power of the Serpent's strike was just too terrifying.

The young masters in the distance were horrified. They felt more and more admiration for Zu An. He could actually fight against this kind of monster!

Meanwhile, Zu An was secretly talking to Mi Li. "But if I fight fair and square against it, that will take too much time! Many of those young masters might perish."

"When did you become such a saint?" Mi Li snorted. "The path of cultivation will always rely on you alone. This is something all cultivators must realize. If they need others to save them every time, what

meaning is there left in bitter cultivation? You can save them this time, but can you save them every time?"

Zu An didn't agree. "I don't care about the future, but I have to care about the present."

Mi Li's voice actually carried a bit of praise as she said, "I didn't expect your will to actually be so firm. However, you don't need to worry. Those water puppets have been wounded by my soul attack. That crown princess is decent at command, so victory is already guaranteed. They'll only get a bit injured at most and their lives aren't really in danger. That's why you can just focus on your fight."

Zu An sighed in relief. But just then, the Jade Moon Serpent's massive claw swung over. Even though it hadn't evolved into a dragon yet, it was starting to possess a dragon's powerful body. Its entire body could be used as a weapon.

Zu An dodged while looking for a chance. Since he wasn't going to use the Poisonous Prick, random injuries were meaningless. He wasn't going to attack unless he could deal significant damage.

Snakes had their seven joints, and dragons had their reverse scales. Serpents probably weren't too different, either. He quickly noticed one scale that was a bit lighter than the other scales around its neck.

The Jade Moon Serpent launched another round of attacks, but Zu An easily avoided them. He was just about to strike, but he suddenly went on alert. He noticed that there was something shiny next to him. It was the bubble the Jade Moon Serpent had created earlier!

Unfortunately, it was already too late, and he was completely trapped in the bubble. This bubble was many times stronger than the ones that had trapped the warriors below. He tried to struggle, yet he felt as if he were trapped in a swamp and unable to gain any footing. Even his breathing became difficult.

At that moment, he finally realized that the Serpent's vicious attacks with its body were merely feints. It had continued to release these types of bubbles around it, and they were the trap it was really baiting him into. He had been mocking these bubbles for being slow just now, but he hadn't thought about how they would continue to bounce around and change directions!

As if she could read his mind, Mi Li jeered, "Now do you know what the price of underestimating your enemy is?"

Zu An's face heated up, but he didn't reply. He used his Snowflake Sword and the bubbles gradually became covered in frost, losing their original flexibility. He then used this chance to break out of the ice.

A massive water arrow passed through where he had just been a split second later. It turned out that the Jade Moon Serpent had launched a vicious attack the moment he was trapped. It hadn't expected him to avoid it at the last moment.

The Jade Moon Serpent was extremely annoyed. "Puny human, do you only know how to hide?"

"Ugly loach, aren't you always hiding too? If you have the skills, then how about you take one strike from me?" Zu An replied mockingly.

The Jade Moon Serpent was clearly a water element beast, yet right now, it seemed as if flames were coming out of its eyes. "Lowly human, you've now truly offended this king. You can keep dodging, but this king wants to see if your companions can dodge just like you."

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After it spoke, it aimed its mouth at where most of the group was. A sphere of light flickered around its mouth, growing larger and larger as it charged its attack. Its destructive aura filled every inch of the place.

"Everyone, be careful! It's about to launch its attack!" Bi Linglong was horrified and quickly warned the others. They immediately brought out their small shields and entered a special formation.

According to the different intelligence reports, the Jade Moon Serpent could release an absurdly powerful ball of water element energy that would obliterate all life around it. They had prepared special shields for this attack, and they had been training in a new formation to neutralize such attacks for the past few days.

Unfortunately, all of that was built on the premise that they were facing a seventh ranked creature. Even if the opponent were at the eighth rank, they might be able to barely hold on. Unfortunately, the enemy was a ninth ranked vicious beast, its strength already far above theirs. It wasn't something they could handle at all.

Despair flickered through the group's eyes. Bi Linglong once again reached for the flower mark on her forehead.

Chapter 823, (2): Mutual Selfless Sacrifice

At that moment, a figure appeared in front of her. Compared to the massive serpent in the skies, that body looked extremely insignificant. However, at that moment, she felt as if his figure were extremely mighty and tall.

Zu An sighed. His tone was full of ridicule. "Ugly loach, not even a real dragon dares to brag in front of me. You actually want to use a breath attack?"

The Jade Moon Serpent was feeling cocky. A beast like it had intelligence that wasn't lower than a human's; perhaps it was even a bit smarter. It keenly sensed that Zu An wasn't easy to catch, but his companions couldn't escape. In that case, it would just use them as hostages to see if he would save them.

If he saved them, he would have to take this breath directly. The berserk water element would rip him to shreds. If he didn't save them, the breath would wipe out his companions and save its puppets. At the same time, Zu An would lose all support. Regardless of which result it was, it would be good.

But it ended up hearing the other party's ridicule while it was feeling all arrogant. It was furious. This lowly human was deliberately angering this king to get me to stop my breath attack!

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Hmph, why would a proud serpent like me fall for such petty tactics? I want to see all of you struggle and cry out in agony once my breath attack is done! Then, I'll properly take my time to laugh at all of you!

The Jade Moon Serpent finished its preparations. But when it was about to fire its attack, it suddenly heard a devil-like voice asking, "Why are your eyes wide open like that? What are you looking at?"

The Serpent was stunned. It knew it shouldn't be replying right now, yet an uncontrollable urge surged through its entire body as it answered, "I'm looking at you, sh*thead!"

Because it spoke, all of the destructive energy that had gathered in that ball of water exploded in its mouth. No matter how tough its body was, and even despite the fact that it was a water element beast, the recoil made its head ring and blood trickle out from its eyes. A few of its fangs even fell off.

Forget about the Jade Moon Serpent, the entire group was stunned. They never would have thought that it would make such a rudimentary mistake! To think it would actually talk at such a time and hurt itself.

"Beasts are just beasts after all; their intelligence is too low!"

"We should've provoked it more if we knew that things would be like this! We shouldn't have fought it from the front like this."

"Are you stupid? Do you think you're Sir Zu? There's such a huge difference in strength; if we angered it, we'd only die even faster!"

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Only Bi Linglong alone remained silent. She remembered that such a situation had happened before as well. Could it be that Zu An possesses an ability similar to Dragon Soulspeak?

The Jade Moon Serpent screamed and cursed bitterly in anger. Zu An didn't know if it was serpent tongue, but even though he didn't know the language it spoke, he could understand the meaning. After all, the Rage points he received from the system proved that these were probably curse words.

You have successfully trolled the Jade Moon Serpent for +999 +999 +999...

Zu An didn't waste this rare chance. He used Grandgale to instantly move behind its back.

The Jade Moon Serpent also sensed danger. It continued to slam its body around to throw Zu An off. Unfortunately, Zu An grabbed onto its scales firmly, so it couldn't throw him off at all.

The Serpent was starting to get nervous. It threw itself toward the pool, hoping to use the huge impact to throw Zu An off. Unfortunately, it didn't know that Zu An's body had experienced the tempering of the Primordial Origin Sutra, so it was just as tough as its own.

The Serpent was starting to get dizzy from all of its smashing around. Not only did it not manage to shake off Zu An, but he was also getting closer and closer to its reverse scale! It was now really panicking. It quickly dove toward the bottom of the pond to try and see if it could drown that hateful human. After all, there was also the tremendous water pressure below!

As if sensing their master's fear, the puppets all turned around and charged towards the pool, as if they were going to head over to help.

"No!" Bi Linglong tried to stop them, but the puppets were made of the water element and had no real substance. If they wanted to run, the group couldn't stop them at all. She quickly rushed over to the poolside. Unfortunately, the only thing she could see was the surging pool surface; she couldn't see the situation inside at all.

Meng Pan moved over to her side and said urgently, "Crown princess, let's hurry and retreat. Otherwise, it'll be too late and we won't be able to get away anymore." The barrier that stopped them from leaving had also vanished along with the beast souls. It was as if the serpent didn't want to waste even a bit of energy on them anymore. That was why they were no longer trapped and could now leave this place.

Zhao Xi rubbed the blood off his face. "Pah, bastard Meng, I knew you were no good from the start. If it weren't because of Sir Zu, the two of us would already be in that serpent's belly. Yet now, Sir Zu is still fighting for his life, but you already want to run?"

Meng Pan became anxious. "I'm not a heartless person, but you saw how fast that Jade Moon Serpent rushed into the water. Did you see that huge splash? Just the power that rippled out alone would be enough to destroy every bone in our bodies. Sir Zu suffered the brunt of the attack. I fear that..."

Bi Linglong's complexion paled a bit when she heard what Meng Pan said. She replied, "Sir Zu's cultivation is profound. Even though we're no match, he might have been able to withstand it." She didn't know if she was saying such a thing for the sake of arguing against Meng Pan, or to console herself.

Meng Pan continued, "But even if Sir Zu could handle it, he's been dragged to the bottom of the pool by that Jade Moon Serpent. That's its home field, a place where we humans can't even breathe, let alone fight against a ninth ranked beast."

Bi Linglong bit her lip. She knew Meng Pan spoke the truth. Even though high level cultivators could use their ki to provide themselves with a bit of air, and they could use ki to breathe for a while, that was only enough to swim stealthily underwater. This kind of intense battle underwater would quickly make one suffocate.

Seeing that she remained silent, Meng Pan cried out in concern, "Crown princess, if we don't leave now, we won't be able to once that Jade Moon Serpent catches up! We can't let Sir Zu's sacrifice be in vain. Furthermore, we have no idea where the crown prince is right now. The mountains are full of danger; we need to find him as quickly as possible."

As for killing the Jade Moon Serpent, he didn't even dare to think about it. But since it was at the ninth rank, they would have a justifiable reason to give the emperor once they left. It wouldn't be a complete failure.

Zhao Xi wanted to say something, but when the crown prince's safety was mentioned, he swallowed his words. The crown prince was just too important! If they stayed behind to help Zu An, and yet something happened to the crown prince, King Liang Manor wouldn't be able to bear the consequences!

Bi Linglong was biting down on her lip so hard that blood was almost about to come out. "You all leave to look for the crown prince. I'll head down to take a look!"

Meng Pan and Zhao Xi exchanged a look. Both of them saw shock in the other's eyes. The crown princess seemed to care a bit too much about Zu An. When they associated that with the scandal that happened previously, could it be that it had been real? They felt chills run down their backs. They didn't dare to voice these thoughts and quickly snapped out of their daze.

"Crown princess, you must reconsider! You won't be of help even if you stay behind."

“Exactly! We should reunite with the crown prince and the others first, and then we’ll think over what to do together.”

Losing the crown prince was a huge crime; losing the crown princess would similarly be a crime punishable by death!

“Who says I won’t be of any help?” Bi Linglong touched the flower diagram on her forehead, a poignant smile on her face. Then, she jumped toward the pool.

Meng Pan and Zhao Xi had thought that she was just going to make a gesture; how could they have expected that she would really jump? She was also just a sixth rank cultivator, and they were caught off guard. It was already too late for them to stop it. They could only watch as she jumped into the water.

But a second later, the incredibly deep waters suddenly surged powerfully. Then, a striking trace of red shot out, gradually dyeing the waters red. The warriors who were near the pool were all horrified. Had something happened to the crown princess?

“The Jade Moon Serpent is about to come out! Everyone, run!” Meng Pan screamed in panic and ran outward.

The others seemed to have been infected by his mood. The same people who had been willing to fight dauntlessly with Bi Linglong as their leader all subconsciously ran away too with the terrified Meng Pan in charge.

The waters split open a second later, and a massive body flew out. The group was overwhelmed with despair when they saw that it was the Jade Moon Serpent.

But a strange voice suddenly began to speak just then. “What are you all running for?”

“Sir... Sir Zu? Is that you?” Zhao Xi turned around. His voice was full of uncertainty.

“Who else could it be?” Zu An asked with a smile.

Only now did Zhao Xi see that the Jade Moon Serpent’s eyes were already completely dark. Its massive body was also limp. There was a massive wound by its neck, and blood continued to pour out from the opening.

Meanwhile, Zu An was below that serpent. He had carried the Jade Moon Serpent’s corpse and flown out!

The group had been so scared, they hadn’t looked carefully. They had thought that it was the Jade Moon Serpent that had come back out to hunt the rest of them down.

“It’s Sir Zu! Sir Zu killed the Jade Moon Serpent!” Zhao Xi shouted joyfully.

Meng Pan cursed, “Bastard Zhao, look at what kind of situation we are in, yet you’re still busy kissing up to him? Do you want the rest of us to die?”

But he suddenly discovered that everyone else had stopped, and they were all cheering as well. He turned around in shock and saw that the Jade Moon Serpent’s corpse had been tossed onto the ground. A huge crater had formed from the impact.

“He actually killed a ninth ranked Jade Moon Serpent?” Meng Pan was incredibly shocked. He also unconsciously followed everyone else.

“Sir Zu is unrivaled!”

“Long live Sir Zu!”

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There were some who even shouted some disgraceful things. However, no one thought that those words were inappropriate. Instead, they felt that only these words could fully express what they were feeling right now.

Zu An looked all around him and asked, “Huh? Where is the crown princess?”

Only now did Zhao Xi and Meng Pan realize that she was missing. “Sir Zu, you didn’t see the crown princess? She jumped into the water after you, saying that she was going to save you.”

Zu An’s expression changed. This pool wasn’t an ordinary, harmless pool. The giant waterfall caused all sorts of vortexes and undercurrents, and he had just fought intensely against the Jade Moon Serpent, so the waters were in even greater chaos. The water streams were comparable to a frenzied sea.

He jumped back in without a moment of hesitation.

Chapter 824: A World for Only Two

The Jade Moon Serpent had wanted to try to drown him to death. Unfortunately, it had made the wrong choice.

If it were any other human, even if it were a master rank cultivator, they would be in quite the tough spot once they were dragged to the pool’s depths. Whether it was breathing or fighting, humans would be at a disadvantage. But Zu An had the Blue Mallard skill, granting him powerful water affinity. The water was like a second home for him.

How could the Jade Moon Serpent have known about this? It had seen that not only was Zu An not affected, he had instead become stronger and stronger. That huge psychological blow made it panic. Together with Zu An constantly approaching its weak point, it was ultimately killed by Zu An after a long battle.

Zu An jumped back into the pool. With Blue Mallard protecting him, it was as if he were walking on smooth ground. He quickly searched the area.

Because of the waterfall and the intense battle, the water was rippling so greatly that it was hard to see. However, that didn’t block Zu An from sensing what he needed to see. He could sense the situation through his affinity with the water element and didn’t need to use his eyes.

He suddenly thought of something and quickly dove down like a fish. Soon, he noticed Bi Linglong. She was struggling frantically in the water, her face entirely red. She had ended up being caught within several undercurrents and couldn’t break free no matter what she did.

Sixth rank cultivators could form a ki barrier around themselves, and that would provide them with some air underwater. However, Bi Linglong had clearly already run out of oxygen. She was now suffocating and couldn't even maintain the ki barrier. She had already drunk a lot of water. A hint of despair flashed through her eyes. She hadn't expected that not only would she fail to save anyone, but she herself might also drown here.

Suddenly, the figure of a familiar man came into view. Bi Linglong felt a bit dizzy. It was rumored that people would see things when they were about to die. Could it be that even though she was going to die, she didn't see her parents, didn't see the crown prince, but instead saw him?

Suddenly, she felt a strong arm pull her in, and then a steady voice spoke in her ears. "It's alright now!" She felt a sense of relief overtake her. She no longer tried to hold on and immediately fainted.

Zu An hadn't expected her to faint. He raised his head and looked around. This was close to the bottom of the pool, so it would take some time before they would reach the surface. She might not be able to hold out for that long.

Suddenly, a light caught his eye. He turned around and saw a giant aquatic cave. This was probably the Jade Moon Serpent's dwelling! It had probably used its water abilities to set up an energy barrier in the vicinity, opening up a space there. There were formations set up nearby because the nest was right there. The whirlpool that had trapped Bi Linglong just now had been formed because of one of the formations.

Zu An didn't dare to waste time and quickly carried Bi Linglong to the transparent barrier. It clearly contained a restriction, but it didn't stop him, as he had a strong affinity with the water element. When he reached out his hand, the barrier and the water element resonated. Then, he went inside with Bi Linglong.

Past the barrier was a dry world. Apart from the bit of water on the ground, the rest of the space contained oxygen.

Zu An carried Bi Linglong to a gazebo inside the barrier and called, "Linglong, wake up!"

But Bi Linglong was still unconscious and didn't respond at all. Zu An saw that her belly was swelling a bit. He realized that she had drunk too much water, and so he quickly moved to apply CPR.

His palms crossed over her chest and continuously pressed down. He suddenly remembered that when he had first crossed over, this was how he had saved Snow as well, and Chu Chuyan had just happened to catch him doing that. There won't be some weird misunderstanding this time as well, right?

After performing compressions for a while, his expression grew serious. Even though Bi Linglong had already spat out a lot of water, she still hadn't woken up. Furthermore, her breathing was becoming increasingly weak, like a candle flame in the wind that might go out at any time.

Zu An quickly stooped down to provide her with oxygen. After the procedure continued for a long time, Bi Linglong finally slowly opened her eyes with a few coughs.

Zu An sighed in relief, saying, "You're finally awake. Looks like I didn't learn CPR in my past world for nothing."

"Ah Zu..." Bi Linglong's vision was blurry. She didn't dare to believe what she was seeing. "Did I already die, and are we meeting in the afterlife?"

"Pah pah pah! We're both perfectly fine, okay? What do you mean dead?" Zu An quickly corrected her.

Bi Linglong snapped out of her daze. She asked with shock and pleasant surprise, "Did you save me?"

"Of course!" Zu An said confidently. "I've been pressing on you for so long that even my hands are... numb." He suddenly realized that something wasn't quite right. Such a rescue treatment didn't seem to exist in this world.

Sure enough, Bi Linglong lowered her head and saw that his hands were still pressed against her chest. Her face instantly turned bright red. Her instincts as a young lady subconsciously made her swing her palm at his face, exclaiming, "Shameless!"

You have successfully trolled Bi Linglong for +55 +55 +55...

Zu An jumped backward, exclaiming, "Hey, you better not bite the hand that fed you. I was saving you earlier, okay? If I hadn't continued those compressions, how could I remove all the water you drank? You would have been dead a long time ago."

Bi Linglong sat up and crossed her arms tightly around her chest. "Couldn't you have just hit my acupoints and infused your ki to release the water inside me? Why did you have to press my... chest?"

Zu An was stunned. Only now did he remember that back then, Chu Chuyan seemed to have done the same to help the drowning Snow. He couldn't help but chuckle in embarrassment. "This is what people in my hometown do, and I already got used to it, haha... I forgot I could use ki to do the same thing."

Bi Linglong was speechless. However, her eyes suddenly shifted to his lips. There was a bit of color stuck there, and it was a bit familiar. She subconsciously touched her lips, and then her palm smacked toward Zu An again. "You dare use this chance to take advantage of me?!"

Right now, she was actually feeling more disappointment than anger. She hadn't expected this man to take advantage of her in that situation and do something so shameful.

Zu An dodged while exclaiming as if he had been wronged, "That was to save you! Your breathing almost stopped; my hometown calls this artificial respiration! We do this every time for those who have almost drowned!"

Bi Linglong ran after him while feeling embarrassed and angry. "Nonsense! There's no such thing in Brightmoon City! How are drowning girls supposed to even continue living even if they're saved?"

Zu An was starting to feel a headache. He really didn't know how to explain himself. After all, everyone thought that Brightmoon City was his hometown, and he couldn't say that he was a transmigrator, that his hometown was Earth, right?

Mi Li snickered in his head. "Serves you right!" She was sitting nearby, watching the situation with amusement. After all, Bi Linglong couldn't see her as long as she didn't want her to.

When she saw Zu An remain silent, Bi Linglong became more and more embarrassed. "See? You're not saying anything because you're guilty, right?"

You have successfully trolled Bi Linglong for +77 +77 +77...

Zu An was getting annoyed as well. It doesn't matter how I explain myself here, right? He decided to just not dodge anymore. "Are you done yet? What part of your body haven't I touched before anyway? Do I have to take advantage of you this way?"

Bi Linglong's face turned beet red as she exclaimed, "You...!"

But she had to admit that there was some reason behind his words. Back then, the two of them had been tightly embracing each other without a single piece of clothing. He truly didn't need to take advantage of her like this.

Furthermore, judging from their time together, she didn't think he was that kind of person. She was only acting the way she did because she was still a young lady. Now, she gradually calmed down and slowly began to believe him.

After all, she wasn't a normal girl. She calmed down after taking a deep breath, saying, "Sorry, my emotions were a bit worked up just now because of the situation. Thank you for saving me."

Zu An was quite shocked. He hadn't expected her to be so reasonable. He felt a newfound level of respect for her. He said, "I'm discovering that I'm starting to like you more and more."

"Who wants you to like them, hmph!" Bi Linglong harrumphed and took a step back apprehensively. "You can't say these things outside, or else you'll really die."

Zu An couldn't help but laugh. "Are you worried about me? I can't say this in front of others, and I can only say this when it's just the two of us?"

Mi Li, who was watching from a distance, sneered. "Pah, playboy. Deceiving another innocent girl." However, she knew that this was a crown princess who was knowledgeable and experienced. She wasn't some naive and innocent girl.

"You can't say it even when it's just the two of us." Bi Linglong was starting to panic. Her heart was pounding crazily. She liked to be in control, yet she was clearly losing it right now.

"But I think I heard them say that when you saw that I was in danger, you jumped in without any hesitation to save me?" Zu An looked at the beautiful and stunning woman with passionate eyes.

Chapter 825: King Qin's Mirror of Souls

Bi Linglong was completely drenched. Her hair was messy and there wasn't as much of a noble air around her as usual, instead being replaced with a bit of loveliness. Because her clothes were damp, they stuck to her skin. That gave her a feminine charm she had never possessed before.

Zu An suddenly thought of the phrase 'innocent temptation'.

Bi Linglong was the crown princess, so she had to make sure she presented herself as a noble and dignified person. She paid close attention to her bearing and didn't show any elements of sex appeal. But it was different right now. She really displayed both innocence and seduction perfectly.

Bi Linglong was getting more and more flustered from his gaze. "Why are you staring at me like that? You better not have any weird thoughts! I just want this mission to be completed; I would've jumped in if it were someone else too."

She immediately became embarrassed when she thought of that. She had clearly come to save him, yet she ended up being the one who had been saved instead. She had lost control as soon as she entered the water, and then powerlessly sank to the bottom. If Zu An hadn't hurried over, she might have already been sleeping with the fishes.

"Is that so?" Zu An chuckled. "But why do I feel as if you wouldn't sacrifice yourself like this if this happened to anyone else?"

Bi Linglong jerked her head unnaturally to the side. "It's because your cultivation is the highest. Only with your cooperation could I even have a chance of completing the mission of defeating the Jade Moon Serpent. That's why you shouldn't overthink it; this was just for the sake of completing this mission."

Zu An sighed and said "I thought I was already someone special to you. So it was just because of that."

Bi Linglong felt a bit sorry when she sensed the dejection in his voice. However, she understood their statuses clearly. She hardened her heart and changed the topic, asking, "Right, you're okay now, but what about that Jade Moon Serpent? We should hurry outside, right? The others have no chance of defeating it!"

Her eyes were full of worry as she spoke. The Jade Moon Serpent was at the ninth rank, so they had a justifiable reason even to abandon this mission. However, if all of the young masters who followed her perished, that would be a huge loss.

"Ah, that loach? I already killed it," Zu An said while waving his hands casually.

Bi Linglong looked at him in shock, speechless.

"Even though that loach was pretty tough, it couldn't hold itself back from talking while it was charging its dragon breath, so its attack exploded in its own mouth. I used that chance to close in on its reverse scale and kill it," Zu An said. "Then, when I dragged its corpse out, I learned that you jumped down to save me, so I came down to find you."

Bi Linglong gave him a serious look. "You actually single-handedly killed a ninth ranked beast. Everyone in this world has underestimated you... Just how many secrets are you hiding?"

Zu An chuckled. "My greatest secret is precisely the fact that I spent a night with the stunning crown princess naked in my arms."

Bi Linglong's face turned red. She panicked and exclaimed, "Didn't I say you weren't allowed to mention that again?"

"What are you so scared of? There's no one else here," Zu An said nonchalantly.

"Am I not a person?" Mi Li remarked in dissatisfaction.

"You're not even an outsider anyway." Zu An quickly tried to justify himself. He began to sweat as he muttered, "Why are you still here?"

He had forgotten that Mi Li was still watching everything from a corner. He immediately felt embarrassed and ashamed when he recalled everything he had just done.

“How would I learn how a playboy plays around with the heart of a young lady if I didn’t come out and watch?” Mi Li stretched as she continued, “But to be honest, I’m still a bit disappointed. If you ended up doing her, my opinion of you would’ve improved a bit. But even after playing around all this time, this is it?”

Zu An was speechless.

Bi Linglong suddenly said, “I’m going to get mad if you keep doing that... Huh? What are these things?”

Zu An followed Bi Linglong’s gaze when he heard her voice. He saw a pile of sparkling goods. He had been so busy rescuing her that he didn’t even notice them. He replied, “This is the Jade Moon Serpent’s nest. The dragon race loves to hoard all sorts of shiny objects. Even though that serpent isn’t a dragon, it’s still a relative of the dragon species and has their habits. These are probably the treasures it’s collected over the years.”

There were all kinds of sparkling treasures, as well as many ki stones.

“Oh.” Bi Linglong wasn’t all that interested. As the daughter of a distinguished clan, and now the crown princess, these things didn’t hold much meaning for her. She was more concerned with something else right now. “Let’s hurry and go back to the shore then. Otherwise, the others still won’t know if I’m okay. They might send some people to look for me.”

Her words also clearly implied that there would be some damage to her reputation if she stayed with another man alone for too long and got caught. Furthermore, she had even jumped into the waters to save him earlier. She felt a huge headache when she thought of that, wondering how she was going to explain the situation to everyone else.

When he saw her stare absentmindedly toward the surface, Zu An used the Brilliant Glass Bead to store everything. Bi Linglong didn’t care about money, but he still needed it.

He actually had quite a bit of wealth saved up, and normally, it would already be enough for him to use for the rest of his life. But that simple pill refinement last time had already used up twenty thousand taels of silver, and that was just the cost of an upgrade and didn’t include the price of the medicines.

He needed to refine more things in the future, so his consumption would only increase. He had seen for himself just how poor that Shen Xuzi was; the profession of alchemy was absolutely one that burned money.

Suddenly, Mi Li voiced her surprise. She stared at something in a daze. “That’s...”

“What is it?” Zu An was alarmed. With Mi Li’s background and experience, there weren’t many things that could draw her interest. He followed her gaze and saw that after the treasures had been taken away, there were some scattered things left in the corner.

One of those things was a small and exquisite bronze mirror. It was square, and the surface was made of a special material that seemed like bronze, yet wasn’t. It looked more like a type of gemstone. Both sides shone, yet when Zu An picked it up, it couldn’t reflect an image at all.

A mirror that doesn't reflect... Zu An turned to Mi Li and asked, "What's up with this mirror?"

Mi Li reached out her hand and took it from him. Her fair, slender fingers were trembling a bit. "It's been so many years... I didn't expect to see it again."

Zu An was shocked as he asked, "This is yours?"

Mi Li shook her head. "It's not mine, but rather Ying Zheng's."

"The first emperor!" Zu An exclaimed, shocked. He had never expected to find the first emperor's belongings in a serpent's nest within a dungeon.

Mi Li's fingers passed over the mirror's surface. A nostalgic expression appeared on her face. "This item is called King Qin's Mirror of Souls. It's four feet wide and five feet nine inches tall; it's a spiritual item inside and out. When shone upon people, their shadows emerge. When one's hand covers one's heart, the internal viscera of the body will be revealed. If one is sick, covering up one's heart will reveal the illness. If a woman has nefarious intent, the truth will come to light. The first emperor often shone this mirror on everyone in the palace, and all those with impure motives were killed without exception..."

Zu An was doubtful. "Are you sure you're talking about this thing? This little thing isn't anywhere as big as that four feet wide, five feet nine inches tall item you're talking about?"

Mi Li shook her head. "There's no mistake. I can sense its aura. There must be a reason that caused it to shrink in size."

"Back then, Ying Zheng, the first emperor, was a mistrustful person by nature. He liked to shine this mirror on everyone in the palace. Whether it was the princes, dukes, concubines, or maids, as long as they were disloyal, they wouldn't be able to escape from this mirror. Once he found out, Ying Zheng would look for a chance to execute them."

"It has this kind of use?" Zu An was stunned. He hadn't noticed anything special about it all this time. "It doesn't seem that special to me... By the way, did Ying Zheng use this mirror on you back then?"

Mi Li sighed. "Why else do you think I was sealed up?"

Zu An was speechless.

"Put it away; that thing should be of use to you in the future." Mi Li's gaze was a bit distant. She thought to herself that she had always felt a bit uneasy ever since they came inside this dungeon. Could it be that it was because she had mysteriously sensed this thing?

Chapter 826: Tacit Understanding

Zu An didn't know what Mi Li was thinking. He was just surprised that he had actually found something so awesome just from killing a stinky loach. Mi Li didn't reply even after he called out a few times, so he put away the Brilliant Glass Bead and arrived at Bi Linglong's side, saying, "Don't worry, this place is too deep, and the Jade Moon Serpent has set up all kinds of formations. They won't be able to come here."

Bi Linglong bit her lip and replied, "Even if they can't come down, we still have to return to the surface eventually. It's not good for us to stay down here for too long anyway."

Zu An chuckled. "Then I'll just bring you back up."

Bi Linglong's expression finally eased a bit. "Thanks."

When Zu An had pretty much looted the entire nest, he called out to Mi Li. This time, Mi Li didn't joke around with him and silently returned to the Tai'e Sword.

Why is she so gloomy all of a sudden? Zu An was a bit puzzled. However, there was no way for him to know unless Mi Li talked about it. He collected his thoughts before arriving at Bi Linglong's side, wrapping his arm around her waist.

Bi Linglong jumped in fright and leaped backward like a startled rabbit, asking, "What are you doing?"

Zu An rolled his eyes. "I'm gonna carry you up, of course. With your cultivation, you can't withstand the current at all. How else are we going to return if I don't do this?"

Bi Linglong felt troubled. "But our statuses are special and there are countless eyes watching. We can't afford to make any mistakes!"

Zu An was speechless. "It's not as if I haven't hugged you before. What are you getting all flustered for?"

Bi Linglong began to panic. "But the problem is that there are many people watching outside..."

Zu An immediately chuckled when he heard what she said. "So you didn't mind us hugging in private, but you just didn't want others to see us?"

Bi Linglong looked away. "You better not let your imagination run wild. That's not what I meant."

Zu An moved over to her side and pulled in her slender waist. "Don't worry, I'll let you go before we leave the surface."

Bi Linglong opened her mouth, but she didn't say anything in the end. A light blush appeared on her neck. Zu An had to admit that even though this woman normally acted tough, her body really was soft.

When she saw that they still weren't moving, Bi Linglong said with a voice that was as soft as a mosquito's buzz, "Can we... leave?"

"Hold on tight." Zu An focused his attention and bent down slightly. Then, he kicked off the ground and the two of them shot out like a rocket, rushing straight out of the Jade Moon Serpent's nest and toward the surface.

Bi Linglong held on nervously. She had already used ki to store a bit of oxygen around herself. Even so, it was barely enough. Unfortunately, they were just too deep in the water right now. This was a place where even the massive Jade Moon Serpent could swim freely, so it was easy to imagine just how deep the pool was.

Bi Linglong could still barely hold on at first, but her expression became grave soon afterward. She could feel that she was about to faint. She had underestimated how deep they were. The oxygen around her was already getting thin before they even reached the surface, and it was getting hard to breathe.

This deep down, the berserk water element attacked a cultivator's ki viciously. A cultivator might be able to last an hour underwater normally, but here, they would only be able to hold on for a few minutes.

However, she clenched her teeth and held on. Her small hands grabbed the man beside her. She only felt a bit more at ease when she felt the warmth coming from his arm. Perhaps because this feeling really was awful, even though not much time had passed, she felt as if it had taken several years.

A while later, she could vaguely see light above her. She knew they were about to reach the water surface. She felt a sense of ease, but then she could no longer hold on. The lack of oxygen made her mind a bit hazy, causing her to accidentally drink several gulps of water. She subconsciously began to struggle.

Suddenly, a pair of soft lips pressed against hers and she felt a burst of fresh oxygen enter her body. Bi Linglong greedily took in the oxygen, and then her mind gradually calmed down again. Her beautiful eyes immediately widened. Only now did she realize that the two of them were kissing.

It was as if an explosion had gone in her head, and then everything went blank. Even at this age, she had never kissed another man yet, even though she had already gotten married.

As a daughter of a distinguished clan, she had been trained in all types of etiquette ever since she was little. The young ladies of nobility had to follow many rules. They had to present themselves as wise and virtuous women. When she was chosen to become the crown princess, that part of her life became even more strict.

Whether it was the royal family or the Bi clan, they had both protected her, making sure that no men would approach her. Bi Linglong had always fulfilled this part of her responsibility. Until now, she had always been a perfect noble daughter, a perfect crown princess.

Until she met Zu An...

Back then, when the two of them had been right next to each other without a stitch of clothing, she had already become a bit different. However, her powerful rationality had warned her that this was a scheme by the enemy, so it didn't count.

But what about this? She had been kissed while she was conscious by a man!

What left her at an even greater loss was that right now, she wasn't as uncomfortable or annoyed as she had imagined. She didn't even instinctively push him away.

He's only doing this to save me... Yeah, that's it. Bi Linglong continuously consoled herself, and then she slowly closed her eyes.

Zu An almost laughed when he saw her. He had originally only been feeding her some oxygen. Yet now, she looked as if she were completely willing to do this. He wasn't some unromantic brute, so obviously, he continued to kiss her gently.

Bi Linglong's entire body trembled. He actually... He actually...

But she didn't know what to do either. She could only close her eyes tightly, as if pretending she didn't know anything.

A while later, a gentle voice spoke next to her. "We're almost at the surface."

Only then did Bi Linglong react and open her eyes. She could vaguely see nervous figures by the shore. She was extremely embarrassed and quickly pushed Zu An away, leaping out of the waters on her own.

“Crown princess!”

The many young masters that were waiting by the shore flocked around her.

However, another figure that even faster, fishing out a cloak from who knew where and wrapping it around her body. It covered her entirely drenched, seductive figure.

The crown princess felt warm inside. Looks like this guy did care about me after all. However, when she saw the others’ expressions, she immediately coughed lightly and said, “Thank you for saving me, Sir Zu.”

Zu An smiled. “Crown princess, you’re too polite. If not for the fact that the crown princess dove down and diverted some of the Jade Moon Serpent’s attention, I wouldn’t have been able to kill it so easily.”

The two of them had called each other Linglong and Ah Zu underwater, but in front of everyone else, they tacitly agreed to return to their usual relationship.

Bi Linglong’s cheeks blushed when she heard what Zu An said. She obviously knew he had said that to help her out. Otherwise, if the others found out that not only had she not offered any help, but she had also almost drowned after diving in, that would really be way too embarrassing.

She gave him a grateful look, and then used the chance to say, “It’s still thanks to Sir Zu having the strength to face the Jade Moon Serpent that I had a chance to offer some help. In that kind of situation, I could only take a gamble. Thankfully, Sir Zu was able to successfully take down that evil serpent.”

The group shouted out in praise, “Sir Zu is formidable, but crown princess, you’re even more incredible!”

“You truly are a woman who’s even more courageous than men!”

“We were all shaking in our boots, yet only the crown princess dared to jump in!”

...

Bi Linglong sighed in relief when she heard the group’s praise. She had been worried about how she was going to explain her action of diving into the waters, but Zu An downplaying his contributions allowed her to easily solve this troublesome problem.

She pursed her lips and looked at Zu An. He was currently smiling toward her. For some reason, her eyes couldn’t help but drift towards his mouth. She immediately became rattled and turned her face away.

Suddenly, a voice cried out from the distance. “Linglong, save me, Linglong!”

Everyone turned around and saw a fatty running while gasping for air. A group of giant wolves were chasing after him. The Eastern Palace guards were all drenched in blood as they tried to fend off the wolves.

“It’s the crown prince!”

“Hurry and save him!”

The group frantically rushed over with their weapons. When the wolves saw that there were so many people there, they stopped at once. After circling them a few times, they reluctantly withdrew into the forest.

Bi Linglong had her subordinates treat their wounds while asking out of curiosity, "What happened? Why were you all being chased by the Giant White Wolves?"

Chapter 827: Dungeon Barbarians

The crown prince said, "Of course I ran when I heard that the weird snake likes to eat fat people! But for some reason, I kept running into all sorts of beasts. Linglong, I'm never going to leave you again! All of them tricked me; it's only safe at your side."

The others had strange looks on their faces. This crown prince really was worthless.

Gao Ying couldn't continue listening to this and explained after a cough, "At the time, all of you were trapped by the Jade Moon Serpent and we had no way to help you. That was why we wanted to hurry back and ask for reinforcements."

There were many elites from powerful clans there. They obviously knew what the others had really been thinking. Saying that they were going to ask for reinforcements was just to make it sound a bit better. But they also understood why the others had done what they did. If they had been in that position, they would most likely have chosen to bring the crown prince out first as well.

"Right, where... is that Jade Moon Serpent?" Pei You asked out of curiosity. But his eyes suddenly shifted to the massive serpent corpse, leaving him dumbstruck.

Zhao Xi roared with laughter. "You guys weren't here to see how Sir Zu heroically and single-handedly fought against the Jade Moon Serpent. Then, he heroically dove into the pool to end its life!"

Meng Pan immediately added, "It was also thanks to the crown princess' help, or else it would've been difficult for Sir Zu to kill that ninth rank beast alone."

Zhao Xi's breathing stopped at once. He cursed Meng Pan for being a bootlicker inwardly, but at the same time felt regret. This damn mouth of his... Why hadn't he thought of that? It would be really bad if he ended up offending the crown princess because of this!

With Liu Xian in the lead, the others began to recount the battle together. Even though they were all wounded and they hadn't even washed the blood off of their faces yet, they were all excited.

"A ninth ranked beast was killed?" Gao Ying and Pei You looked toward Zu An with shock. They knew that the crown princess' cultivation was inferior to theirs, yet if they faced a ninth ranked beast, they would only be delivering themselves as food. That was why it was probably Zu An who had taken down the Jade Moon Serpent alone.

What kind of concept was this?! From then on, the capital would have another stunning genius! No longer would people feel that his past accomplishments were a fluke, and the great clans would definitely try to rope him in.

I heard that the Chu clan has already ended their relationship with him. I should contact my uncle later and have him find a suitable young miss to arrange a marriage with him, Gao Ying thought, but he

quickly became troubled. The Liu clan's two most beautiful women had already been taken into the palace. The others all seemed to still be a bit too young.

Pei You was thinking similar thoughts. Which of the Pei clan's girls are of marrying age... Hm, he seems to have asked me about Little Man, and neither her looks or talent are inferior to Chu Chuyan. She seems to be a good candidate. But I seem to have heard my uncle say that a marriage has already been arranged for her? I need to go back and ask about this properly.

Meanwhile, Liu Xian was thinking about inviting Zu An to Heavenly Abode once they returned to the capital, wishing to introduce some courtesans to him. Even though their appearances might not be comparable to Chu First Miss, in terms of understanding and serving men, those distinguished daughters couldn't compare at all. That's precisely why this is one of the three bonds of brotherhood. To run away together, to fight together, and to go to broth... Hahaha, I'm really a genius!

While the others were wondering how they were going to rope him in, Zu An was examining Piao Duandiao and Jiao Sigun's injuries. The two of them were the crown prince's personal guards. Their bodies were covered in injuries, but thankfully, none of them were fatal.

Unfortunately, the other guards weren't so lucky. After a rough count, he saw that while twenty or so of the crown prince's personal guards had come inside, now there were fewer than ten. The lives of the others had probably been lost to those beasts.

He took out the medicines Chu Youzhao gave him and treated them. Then he asked, "Why did you guys come back if you already left?"

Piao Duandiao said with a bitter smile, "I don't know why, but we were just incredibly unlucky. We were already extremely careful when we left. Our group already ran into many beast nests on the way here, so we had that experience, yet for some reason, we kept running into them this time."

"It really is weird. The beast nests in the mountains are really strange. Not only were they stronger than what the intelligence said, none of the beasts were in their original territories and were instead roaming all over the place," Jiao Sigun said. "We were chased until there was no way out, so we could only run back here and see if we could borrow the Jade Moon Serpent's intimidation to scare the Giant White Wolves away."

Piao Duandiao explained, "Big bro Zu, we wanted to help you, but..." He snuck a glance at the crown prince and the others. He wanted to say something, but stopped.

Zu An patted his shoulder. "Don't take it to heart. I know how hard you guys have it; you two had no choice."

When they heard Zu An's words, the two of them felt relief. "Big bro Zu, you really are incredible. You even managed to kill a ninth ranked beast."

Zu An smiled. "I was just lucky. Furthermore, it was thanks to everyone fighting bitterly together and taking off some of the pressure."

The young masters from the different clans all felt warm inside when they heard those words. They were extremely grateful when they looked at Zu An. Sir Zu is so handsome and he speaks so nicely; we love him!

Zu An told the rest of them to get some proper rest, and then arrived at Bi Linglong's side, asking, "How is the situation looking?"

Bi Linglong felt a bit strange when she looked at him. However, she didn't let it show in front of so many people and quickly replied, "Everyone has suffered heavy casualties from the battle against the Jade Moon Serpent. A third of our group has died in battle, while another third are seriously wounded. The remainder all have some wounds as well."

Meng Pan said in an aloof manner, "Crown princess, don't worry. We joined this mission for the sake of our clans' glory. Each and every one of us has already resolved to die in battle. Furthermore, regardless of what happened, we managed to complete this mission in the end, and the enemy was even at the ninth rank. King Qi's side has no excuses this time."

Zhao Xi also smiled and said, "Indeed. Once we get out, the crown prince's position as heir apparent to the throne will be solidified. I offer my congratulations to our future empress ahead of time."

Bi Linglong might have been more than happy to hear these words before, as this was the dream she had always been chasing. But when she heard them now, her first reaction was to look at Zu An nervously. She quickly said, "Please be careful not to say such things. They're a bit inappropriate."

Zhao Xi laughed and said, "You're right. Then I'll congratulate you again later."

Bi Linglong didn't wish to continue the topic and quickly said, "Let's remove the Jade Moon Serpent's tendons, and then we'll return to make a report on the mission's completion. Danger lurks everywhere in these mountains, so we should leave as soon as possible."

It wasn't suitable for them to transport such a massive serpent corpse back. They couldn't just make Zu An haul it all the way back, right?

"The crown princess is most wise for considering the bigger picture. You aren't as small-minded as some of us," Meng Pan added.

Zhao Xi was infuriated. "Say whatever you want, but why are you looking at me?"

Meng Pan rolled his eyes. "They're my eyes; I can look at whomever I want. What does that have to do with you?"

Bi Linglong felt a huge headache coming on. Could these two buffoons stop arguing for even a single day?

The warriors of the different clans headed over to remove the tendons. But suddenly, a group of barbarians charged over.

"Ji ri gu la!"

"Abu cha cha!"

"Gai Gai ja!"

...

The barbarians' upper bodies were naked, while their lower bodies were covered in beast skin. Their bodies had all sorts of stripes and diagrams smeared on them, while crowns of different colored feathers covered their heads.

The different clans' warriors all prepared for battle when they saw the barbarians' blades and arrows. "Protect the crown prince and princess!"

Zu An was baffled. "This dungeon even has native barbarians?"

Bi Linglong was also bewildered. "I didn't know that either. There have never been any reports of people living in the dungeon."

A large and tall man who seemed to be the leader of the barbarians stepped forward from the group. He jumped over to the Jade Moon Serpent's head, pointed at it and said in a crude manner, "This! Ours... All you, leave!"

Liu Xian rubbed his eyes. He moved closer and gave the leader a look. Suddenly, he laughed and said, "I was wondering who it was. Isn't this King Qi Manor's Guardian Wei? When did you become a barbarian?"

The others' expressions changed when they heard these words.

Chapter 828: After Working So Hard

The crown prince's side was furious when they saw that the barbarians were trying to steal away the Jade Moon Serpent.

"You bastard, we were the ones who killed the Jade Moon Serpent! Why should we give it to you?"

"If you have the skill, why don't you hunt one yourself!?"

"We worked hard to kill it, yet you guys came over to steal the fruit of our efforts! Do you all have no sense of shame?"

...

Bi Linglong's face darkened when she heard her subordinates' curses. The Serpent's tendons were supposed to serve as proof of its defeat; how could they possibly give them to anyone else?

Meng Pan exclaimed coldly, "These barbarians think they can do whatever they want! If they don't listen, just kill them all."

Zhao Xi's fists clenched so tightly they cracked. "I was already pissed off that we had to fight a ninth ranked Jade Moon Serpent. I can just use these barbarians to vent my anger."

Zu An arrived at Bi Linglong's side and said, "Be careful. I feel like something's not right."

"What is it?" Bi Linglong asked. She didn't dare ignore any of Zu An's opinions now.

Zu An said with a frown, "I feel like these barbarians aren't as simple as they seem."

Bi Linglong also became quiet. So many of the academy's students had come into the dungeon over the years, yet no one had ever discovered any barbarians before. Their appearance was indeed quite strange.

But she hadn't felt too much suspicion at first, because the dungeon was quite big, so the academy hadn't completely explored it. It wasn't entirely impossible for barbarians to appear here.

After all, the human race didn't know too much about dungeons. They only knew that these places that seemed to come out of nowhere were full of mysteries and dangers. They had no idea how they formed.

Suddenly, Liu Xian took a few steps forward to size up the barbarian leader. He suddenly laughed out loud and said, "Isn't this King Qi Manor's Guardian Wei? When did you become a barbarian?"

The others' expressions changed when they heard those words. Bi Linglong suddenly looked toward the barbarians. This was actually someone from King Qi Manor?

King Qi Manor had many powerful cultivators under its network. They had five great guardians: Lu Xiao, Wei Pingyang, He Li, Mu Ping, as well as Han Fengqiu whom Zu An was familiar with.

Han Fengqiu was ranked fourth out of the five guardians. Even the worst of these nine individuals was at the mid stage of the ninth rank. Lu Xiao was even at the mid stage of the master rank!

The 'Guardian Wei' Liu Xian spoke of was probably Wei Pingyang, ranked number two. He was at the initial stage of the master rank!

Zu An was quite shocked. How had King Qi Manor sent one of their men in? Were the people from the crown prince's faction who were watching the entrance of the dungeon blind?

The expression of the barbarian leader changed. "What guardian? I have no idea what you're saying. This serpent corpse is ours! You'd all better scram!"

Liu Xian laughed out loud. "Who are you trying to fool? The two of us even made a trip to Heavenly Abode together back in the day. I let that Lady Xiang I wanted go with you out of respect for your cultivation, but look at you pretending you don't know me now!"

Zu An was speechless. This fella might not be so great at anything else, but he really is a master at whoring.

Bi Linglong's expression changed greatly as she exclaimed, "This is bad!"

The 'barbarian leader' threw away his previous crude accent and spoke normally. "I didn't want to expose my identity before for fear of any of you getting away and telling the outside world. You would've had your prey mysteriously stolen by barbarians, resulting in the failure of the exam, but at least you would all live. We didn't want to take the risk of silencing everyone, because isn't it fine for all of us to be alive and well? But since a fool like you insisted on exposing me, there's no other choice. All of you will die here!"

As soon as he finished speaking, more of his subordinates who were dressed similarly emerged from the woods. All of them had blades in their hands, their eyes flickering with light. They were clearly all high level cultivators.

Zhao Xi and Meng Pan glared angrily at Liu Xian. They really were going to die because of this idiot! However, they soon realized that King Qi's side didn't want to go all the way either, and their job was just to ruin their mission. They didn't want to take the risk of incurring the wrath of the emperor.

But now that they had been exposed by Liu Xian, they had no choice but to silence everyone here. Otherwise, with so many eyes watching, they wouldn't be able to cover this up. The emperor would have a proper reason to go after King Qi then.

After all, Guardian Wei was at the master rank! Furthermore, his subordinates didn't look weak either. The group couldn't defeat these people even if they were at their prime, let alone right now after they had just fought against the Jade Moon Serpent and were severely wounded.

Bi Linglong was comparatively more composed. She did her best to calm herself down. She raised her head proudly toward the enemy leader and asked, "How did you all enter the dungeon? There's no way the emperor or my father would have let you all in."

That was also what everyone present was confused about. Zu An remembered the Gu clan brothers' 'curse' before they died. Back then, they had just thought that was just their resentment before death, but it seemed as if King Qi really did have more cards to play after all. But the key was, how had these people gotten in? This didn't make any sense!

Guardian Wei laughed and said, "Indeed, with all of you guarding the entrance, there would be no way for us to get in. But just because we couldn't have entered at this time doesn't mean we couldn't have entered at any other time!"

Bi Linglong was shocked and blurted out, "Then three years ago, you..."

"Correct!" Wei Pingyang stroked his beard. "Three years ago when the academy dungeon opened, King Qi found a way to bring us in. That time didn't involve the crown prince's great exam, so the examination wasn't as strict. Do you know how we spent these years? We only had beasts to keep us company day after day, and we almost went mad. Fortunately, you guys finally arrived, ha ha ha!"

Zu An was stupefied. King Qi really was a deeply scheming man; he had actually planned for this three years ago! King Qi Manor had looked like it was at a disadvantage, but perhaps they had looked weak on purpose precisely for the emperor to agree to this great exam! What a crafty old bastard!

When Zu An realized that this was the type of person he had offended, a chill ran down his back. It was probably only because most of King Qi's attention was on the emperor and crown prince that he hadn't gone after Zu An yet. Once this test was over, things would become really troublesome once King Qi really decided to target him.

Zu An couldn't help but look down on the emperor. Was having the title of 'world's number one' behind him really all that? The emperor was completely being toyed with in the palm of King Qi's hand.

Judging from King Qi's schemes, he was clearly someone who planned things far in advance. Who knew just how many traps he had lying in wait? Comparatively speaking, the emperor was vastly inferior. Ever since they had entered the dungeon, their group had been led around by the nose the entire time.

If not for me, the Gu clan brothers and Shi Tong alone would've already been enough to wipe out the entire group.

Wait... The emperor didn't do absolutely nothing. I guess he sent a golden token envoy like me inside to protect the crown prince and princess.

Originally, his cultivation would already have been enough to settle this situation. But the emperor hadn't expected King Qi to have planned this far ahead either, to have actually arranged for these experts to come in three years ago.

Bi Linglong said in a clear voice, "Wei Pingyang, you have quite the nerve. Do you think his majesty won't be able to find out what happened just because you killed our people here? All things will inevitably leave behind a trail."

The others felt admiration. No wonder she was the crown princess chosen by his majesty! The natural presence she possessed was definitely not something a normal girl could compare to.

Whether it was when they had faced the ninth ranked Jade Moon Serpent or now, when she was facing a master rank expert, she had always remained the calmest and bravest out of all of them, silently granting everyone courage.

Wei Pingyang laughed and said, "Crown princess, there's no need for you to scare me. Why would King Qi not know about this? All those here with me are warriors who were recorded to have died in battle over the years. They're people who shouldn't exist anymore. How will his majesty find out then?"

Bi Linglong frowned. King Qi really was thorough! Who knew how many years of preparation this kind of thing had taken? She looked at him coldly. "They might not exist in the records anymore, but what about you? There's no way you can just be 'missing' or dead, right?"

Wei Pingyang's smile faded. "That's not something you need to worry about. Once I kill all of you, naturally, no one will know about my existence anymore."

Chapter 829: Do You Dare to Fight Against Me?

Bi Linglong's face paled, but she still held her head high. "Do you think you've already won? We were even able to kill a ninth ranked beast just now; it's hard to say who would come out on top if we fought. I advise you not to make that huge mistake. If we really fight, we might not be your match, but letting one or two people escape won't be too difficult. Once we leave the dungeon, King Qi's schemes will be known to the world and his majesty will have enough reason to end him. Then, all of your prospects will be finished as well.

"So why don't you renounce the darkness and seek the light? If you surrender to us, I'll not only let bygones be bygones, but also consider you the greatest contributor to bringing down King Qi. Whether it's time, authority, wealth, or cultivation resources, all of it will be yours. That has to be better than just being a follower of King Qi Manor, and then falling together with him, right?"

Wei Pingyang was surprised. "I have to say, crown princess, your words are quite tempting. Even I'm a bit moved."

Bi Linglong didn't feel happy hearing those words at all, because his words implied that he would still refuse her proposal.

"If I really let you all go, killing you and the crown prince will indeed lose meaning. However, since King Qi set up this kind of plan, how could he not have made other preparations?" Wei Pingyang sighed. "Crown princess, are you rambling on here because you want to stall for some time, so your subordinates can recover a bit? But since I've seen through your schemes, why do you think I'm still chatting here with you?"

Bi Linglong's expression finally changed. Don't tell me...

Wei Pingyang cracked a grin, revealing his yellow teeth. "The crown prince already ran away earlier. Say, why do you think he returned?"

Gao Ying was shocked. "Then don't tell me the sudden appearance of those beasts was because of you?!"

"Of course. We secretly chased those beasts to where you would have to go." Wei Pingyang looked rather proud of what he'd done. "We wanted those beasts to just finish you all off, but I didn't expect your group to have some skill, fighting fearlessly the entire time. In that case, I had no choice but to intervene personally."

The group's spirits sank to rock bottom when they heard Wei Pingyang's words. They couldn't even win against these people in front of them. Judging from what he was saying, there were even more people...

Suddenly, a figure quickly rushed out of the encirclement with a scream. The Meng clan's camp was in chaos, because the one who was running was their own young master, Meng Pan! They were currently completely trapped. The clans' warriors were supposed to act in coordination with their own young masters, but the crown prince and princess were here. If Meng Pan ran, wouldn't that make him a deserter?

"Bastard Meng, do you have any sense of shame?!" Zhao Xi exclaimed furiously, pointing at Meng Pan and cursing.

They were already at a disadvantage, and Meng Pan was one of their strongest members. But he was running? Unfortunately, they had to concentrate on Wei Pingyang and the others' attack right now and didn't dare to chase after him. Otherwise, their formation would become disorderly and everything would collapse. They could only hope that Wei Pingyang's men would stop Meng Pan now. For better or for worse, that might exhaust some of the enemy's men.

Bi Linglong felt dispirited. She wasn't all that upset, because at this point, having Meng Pan with them or not didn't make much of a difference. On the contrary, if he really managed to escape and talked about the things that had happened here, leading his majesty to take revenge, that would be worth it.

That was why she instead looked expectantly in the direction Meng Pan was running in. She had to admit that for a sixth rank cultivator, Meng Pan was quite fast. He had rushed out of the 'barbarian' encirclement in just a few moments.

But what was strange was that no one from Wei Pingyang's side tried to stop him. His subordinates didn't seem to see Meng Pan at all and only focused on the remaining people.

Meng Pan was overjoyed. He had carefully chosen this moment to run because he knew that King Qi Manor's people would have to deal with the crown prince and princess first. Those who had come to

assist the crown prince were all the best warriors of the different clans. Even though they had just fought a great battle, they still retained some strength. Furthermore, with someone as powerful as Zu An here, even if Wei Pingyang was at the master rank, it wouldn't be that easy for him to win.

That was why he figured they probably wouldn't have the time to bother with him. As for whether or not his escape would affect their morale, that was already none of his business.

Hmph, at the very least, the Meng clan's warriors are staying behind to help. He continued to console himself. He had already begun to think about how he was going to explain things to his majesty once he escaped alone.

Suddenly, his eyes bulged out and he frantically clutched his throat, his legs kicking from side to side. It seemed as if there were an invisible hand clutching his throat.

Wei Pingyang revealed a relaxed smile, saying, "You're finally here."

A voice slowly said, "If I hadn't come, you would have let a living mouth get away."

A tall figure slowly walked out of the woods. He was dressed in white robes, his long beard flowing in front of him. He gave off an aloof and majestic presence.

Bi Linglong's entire body trembled. There was a bit of despair in her voice as she exclaimed, "Lu Xiao!"

The one in front of them was the head of King Qi Manor's guardians, the one who was rumored to have reached the mid stage of the master rank, Lu Xiao!

Two more individuals appeared from other directions just then. One of them had a huge red mark on his face; his appearance was sinister and ugly. With such distinctive traits, he could naturally be none other than King Qi Manor's fifth guardian, the mid stage ninth ranked Mu Ping. The other one had a big head and had a mischievous expression on his face. This was King Qi Manor's third guardian, the peak stage ninth ranked He Li.

Bi Linglong laughed in distress. "Four of King Qi Manor's five guardians were sent out at the same time? Looks like King Qi really is showing us quite a bit of respect here."

It wasn't just the four powerful guardians; there were many strong warriors here as well. In reality, such an army alongside any one of the guardians would have been enough to completely wipe out the group, let alone this powerful lineup!

Lu Xiao smiled. "King Qi never fights battles he doesn't have confidence in winning. Our king always holds back until there's a chance to strike, making that the fatal blow. This old one originally thought he was being a bit excessive, but after witnessing the crown princess' courageous command, I had to praise King Qi's foresight once again."

Bi Linglong had a bitter smile on her face. "I'm but a young junior; I don't deserve such praise from a powerful master."

At the same time, she transmitted her voice to Zu An. "Ah Zu, you should find a chance to run. Inform his majesty about the things that happened here. You're the only one out of all of us who has a chance of accomplishing this."

Zu An said with a serious expression, "I'll bring you with me!" He couldn't be bothered with everyone else. Furthermore, he didn't have a high chance of getting away, even if he just took Bi Linglong alone. There were two master ranks, two ninth ranks, and a whole army. If Mi Li helped him here, there might still be a chance, but she didn't pay him any attention even when he tried to talk to her.

Bi Linglong shook her head. "The crown prince is here, and all of my men are here. How can I run by myself?"

Suddenly, there was a resounding crack. The struggling Meng Pan was crushed into a lump, and then flung into the air, landing at Bi Linglong's feet.

Lu Xiao said indifferently, "I've always despised these cowardly people the most, so I'll return him to the crown princess out of my respect for you."

Zu An shivered inwardly. Lu Xiao's hands had been behind him the entire time, yet the mid stage sixth ranked Meng Pan had been grabbed by a pair of invisible hands. He hadn't had the slightest bit of strength to resist.

Killing a sixth rank expert was even easier for Lu Xiao than slaughtering a chicken; he didn't even have to use his hands. Was this the power of a master rank expert?

Bi Linglong said coldly, "I was the one who gave young master Meng the order to escape and make a report to his majesty. How could he be someone greedy for life? On the contrary, you killed a loyal official. This is a crime deserving of a thousand deaths."

She knew the other party was saying that on purpose to lower the Meng clan soldiers' morale. After all, if even their master was cowardly, then what were they even supposed to fight for as subordinates? That was why she quickly deflected the accusations toward Meng Pan and immediately steadied their hearts.

Sure enough, the dispirited Meng clan warriors were immediately filled with fighting spirit. Their eyes burned with anger as they stared at Lu Xiao. This person had killed and slandered the Meng clan's young master!

Lu Xiao was stunned, but then he chuckled and said, "The crown princess is wise as expected. Unfortunately, all tricks are meaningless before absolute strength."

"Absolute strength?" Bi Linglong had a strange expression on her face. "Since your distinguished self believes that you possess absolute strength, do you dare fight against me in a fair battle?"

Chapter 830: The Bride with White Hair

Everyone from King Qi Manor laughed when they heard what Bi Linglong said. What kind of joke was this? Lu Xiao was King Qi Manor's number one expert, a mid stage master rank! He was one of the best even in the capital.

Even though Bi Linglong wasn't bad for her age, she was still too young. She wasn't someone of the same level as Lu Xiao at all. To put it a bit more bluntly, any random disciple of Lu Xiao's would be enough to take out Bi Linglong.

Lu Xiao laughed. "I've heard that the crown princess is smart and quick-witted. Today, I didn't expect to find out that you were even better at telling jokes."

His smile faded as he said, "You don't possess the qualifications to fight against me." His tone was calm without any anger, as if he were talking about something that couldn't be simpler.

Everyone from the Eastern Palace was baffled as well. They couldn't figure out why the crown princess would make such a demand. After all, Meng Pan's cultivation was above the crown princess', but Lu Xiao hadn't even had to use his hands to kill him. Wasn't the crown princess just throwing her life away here?

Zu An looked at Bi Linglong with a frown. However, he didn't say anything, because he knew she wasn't the type to speak without thinking.

Sure enough, Bi Linglong stepped forward and looked coldly at Lu Xiao. "I'll only strike once with my sword. Let's talk about qualifications if you can survive."

After she spoke, she pointed at the flower mark between her brows, and a burst of golden light erupted from it. Then, her figure slowly rose into the air. Her meticulously combed hair completely dispersed. Her fine black hair fluttered in the wind, making her look like a goddess that had descended from the heavens to rain down punishment.

"Ninth rank? Or maybe master rank?" Wei Pingyang and the others from King Qi Manor were horrified. Everyone knew only those at the ninth rank could fly like this. Could it be that the crown princess was actually at the ninth rank or higher? How was that possible?

But reality forced them to believe it, because they could feel Bi Linglong's aura becoming more powerful. A terrifying pressure descended. The people nearest to her were already shivering uncontrollably and kneeling on the ground. Even Zu An found it a bit hard to handle with his cultivation, and he subconsciously took a few steps back.

"The emperor's aura?" Zu An exclaimed, looking at Bi Linglong in horror. This aura was too familiar! When the Embroidered Envoy had used the imperial decree in Brightmoon City, the emperor's power had left him with a deep psychological shadow.

Zu An had seen the flower mark between Bi Linglong's brows many times. Back then, he had only taken it to be some decoration. After all, many of the court beauties had similar decorations, so he hadn't thought too much about it. How could he have known that it would be a seal that hid a formidable ultimate move?

The smile on Lu Xiao's face instantly froze, and he could no longer remain calm. He quickly raised his hands and a transparent energy barrier appeared, surrounding him. He didn't relax at all afterward, however. He knew that he had already been targeted by that terrifying aura. Every cell in his body was telling him that the situation was incredibly dangerous.

He didn't dare to treat it lightly, so he drew on all of his cultivation. Soon afterward, seven layers of protection formed around him, as well as a sword that floated above his head. This was a magic weapon he was soulbound to, one he had pledged to live and die with.

At that moment, Bi Linglong opened her eyes. Her gaze was filled with emptiness, as if she were an empress who ruled over all. Behind her was a faintly visible golden figure.

“Your majesty!” Even though that figure was blurry, the onlookers could still vaguely make out who it was. Furthermore, with that distinctive aura, everyone from King Qi Manor finally realized what was going on.

In that instant, all of them were scared witless. The emperor’s might as the most powerful cultivator in the world was deeply embedded within their hearts. No one dared to fight against the emperor, even if they were already at the master rank.

“Linglong is so awesome! Kill them all!” the crown prince cheered excitedly. The others from the Eastern Palace also encouraged her. They no longer despaired as they had before.

It turned out that the emperor still had this trump card to play! With the emperor here, everyone else was insignificant!

Zu An was the only one who was still extremely worried. Would Bi Linglong be able to handle the power needed for such a strong move? She had only recently broken through into the sixth rank, after all!

The decrees of the Embroidered Envoy were different. Back then, they had used the intricate runes on the decree to communicate with the power of the world, and then used that to bring down the emperor’s divine will.

But Bi Linglong’s move was different. The dungeon was a world of its own, and not even the emperor’s divine will could cross worlds. As such, this had to have been something the emperor left for Bi Linglong. However, how could there not be a price to pay if the flesh were used to release such great power?

Just then, Bi Linglong finally moved. She raised the sword in her hand and gently swung it in Lu Xiao’s direction. At the same time, the projection behind her also slashed out. A giant wave of sword ki rushed out, seemingly transcending the concept of space and time to appear in front of Lu Xiao.

The seven layers of protection Lu Xiao had set up melted like paper. Then, the sword light cleaved into the sword above his head. His sword managed to hold on for a second, and then it broke apart inch by inch.

With his soulbound sword in pieces, blood gushed out from Lu Xiao’s mouth. His originally rosy complexion instantly became as white as snow. However, he didn’t have any time to steady his breathing and instead raised his hands to try and stop the wave of sword ki.

Boom!

With a loud explosion, dust flew everywhere.

A groove several dozen meters long appeared where Lu Xiao had been. The nearby trees and rocks were all turned to powder from the attack. As for the King Qi Manor experts who were next to Lu Xiao, they directly vanished from the face of the world.

The others merely watched in horror. The power of this sword was actually that terrifying!?

Wei Pingyang and the others subconsciously backed up. Not even Lu Xiao could take this sword, so what were the rest of them supposed to do?

Just then, the golden light in the sky grew dim. Then, with a groan, a figure fell from the sky.

“Linglong!” Zu An had been watching silently the entire time. When he saw her fall, he immediately flew over to catch her. However, he immediately jumped in fright when he saw her condition.

Her hair had been a fine black a second ago, yet now, her glossy and soft hair had completely turned white. Her skin that had sparkled like jade was now dull in color. The attack just then had clearly used up a lot of her life essence.

Bi Linglong slowly opened her eyes when she heard Zu An rushed breathing. When she saw that it was Zu An who was holding her, she felt a bit more at ease. However, she remembered something and quickly asked, “Am I old and ugly now?”

Zu An shook his head. “You’re just as pretty as before; no, you’re even prettier right now.”

Bi Linglong sighed deeply. “You love to trick others, just as always. When he gave me this flower mark, his majesty told me that it was powerful, but I shouldn’t use it unless absolutely necessary. Otherwise, the lightest consequence would be to age greatly; the more serious one would be to die immediately.”

Zu An cursed inwardly. That damn emperor, why are you giving someone something with such huge side effects? Aren’t you scamming them here? When he sensed the sadness in her eyes, he quickly said, “Don’t worry. Even though your body is weak right now, you won’t lose your life. You’ll recover if you rest a bit.”

“With my beauty already faded, what meaning is there left even if I recover?” Bi Linglong’s voice was quiet and sad as she touched her white hair.

Zu An knew that the more beautiful the woman, the more they cared about their looks, let alone Bi Linglong who had married into the royal family. What her appearance represented went without saying.

He consoled her with a smile. “You don’t have to feel so bad. Forget about whether or not your white hair can recover; even if it doesn’t, so what? Doesn’t it look pretty good? I’ll tell you the story of ‘The Bride with White Hair’ next time. I really like that story’s main character.”

Bi Linglong blushed. “What am I going to do with you? Your tastes are so weird.”

The others were still in shock from the power of that strike, and many of them still hadn’t recovered from their daze, so they didn’t notice Zu An and Bi Linglong’s interaction.

Suddenly, a voice exclaimed with a bitter laugh, “Hahaha! I’m still alive! I’m still alive!”

Bi Linglong’s expression changed. She quickly turned to look in the direction of the sound. She saw a bloody man crawl out from the deep gorge with almost no part of his skin intact. His left arm was nowhere to be seen. However, he still wasn’t dead.

“Brother Lu!” Wei Pingyang and the others from King Qi Manor all cheered.

Lu Xiao glared at Bi Linglong, his eyes filled with resentment. “What a pity, what a pity! Your cultivation was too low and you couldn’t bring out the full power of that sword. Furthermore, this dungeon is its own world, severing your connection with the emperor. That’s why I survived! However, you ended up destroying my soulbound sword, and I’ll never be able to recover my severed arm. I’ll make sure to properly take my revenge for this on your body!”

Normally speaking, after the seventh rank, cultivators would obtain the power of self-regeneration. As long as key areas like the head were unharmed, they could still slowly recover. Regrowing a severed arm wasn't anything too difficult either. However, his arm had been severed by the emperor's aura. Unless he could completely expel the emperor's aura from his body, there was no hope for him to ever regrow that arm back.

But if he wanted to remove the emperor's aura, who in this world had such an ability?