

Immortal 861

Chapter 861: The Stele Inscriptions' Secrets

How could Zu An have predicted that the emperor would do such a thing? He couldn't even say a thing. His entire plan had fallen through. He immediately panicked when he saw that the emperor's hand was going to drop like a guillotine. You can cut off my head, but not my little head!

He quickly called out to Mi Li, "Master empress, save me!"

Mi Li harrumphed. "Hmph, let's see if you'll ever think yourself clever again."

She had just been about to lend Zu An a helping hand. Even though each time she used her strength it would eat up a severe amount of soul power, and even though the emperor's cultivation was so ridiculous, she couldn't just watch Zu An throw his life away.

Fortunately, Bi Linglong spoke up just then. "You can't kill him!"

Zhao Ruizhi was so annoyed he instead laughed. "Oh? Are you going to plead in his place?"

He Li nodded in agreement. The crown princess was usually so sharp; why had she suddenly become so stupid? Anyone else could speak out for Zu An's sake right now, except you! Isn't pleading for your male adulterer just adding fuel to the fire?

Bi Linglong's face paled when she sensed the pressure in the emperor's eyes. Despite that, she still straightened her back and said, "Because only he alone knows how to reach the palace over there. You've sought out immortality your entire life; there's no way you would let this chance go."

Even though she didn't know that the other group had also obtained some ancient text, after spending so many years in the palace, she understood how the emperor thought. She had always been a smart girl, so she immediately realized that only immortality could temporarily hold back the wrath Zhao Ruizhi felt toward Zu An. Sure enough, it worked.

Even though Zhao Ruizhi was indeed convinced, he wasn't willing to admit it. "Hah, do you think I need someone like him to get up there?" Despite those words, his hand stopped, and he instead threw Zu An off to the side.

He raised his head and looked at the floating palace. With a tap of his toes, he instantly vanished, dashing over. Even though that highest peak was a few hundred zhang from the island they were on, for someone with his cultivation, it wasn't hard to reach at all.

However, his figure suddenly began to plummet shortly afterward. His expression changed. He grabbed toward the island he had taken off from. An invisible claw of air grabbed the edge of the floating continent. A moment later, he instantly returned to his original location.

"Flight is still restricted," Zhao Ruizhi muttered with a gloomy expression. Fortunately, he had been prepared for this, or else he really might not have been able to come back.

"Your majesty, there seems to be a mechanism here. It might be the solution to crossing over." He Li quickly came over to earn brownie points when he noticed that the emperor didn't seem to be too happy. He pointed at the stone slabs on the ground.

Zhao Ruizhi's eyes lit up as he walked over to the stone slabs. However, even with all of his knowledge, he was still completely lost. "This could be a diagram of the heavens, but why is it so messy? Could it be that it needs to be pieced together in a certain way...?"

All sorts of ideas entered his head, but in the end, he rejected every single one of them. He suddenly turned around to look at Zu An and asked, "Can you solve this mechanism?"

Zu An rubbed his neck and replied indifferently, "I can, but you'll kill me as soon as I do so. Why would I bother?"

Zhao Ruizhi's eyes narrowed. "Are you threatening me?"

"I'm not threatening you, I'm just telling the truth." Zu An was wondering just how the emperor had incapacitated him so quickly. Why couldn't he do anything in return? It really was a pain.

Mi Li's voice said in his head, "His cultivation is indeed profound. After the master rank, every single rank is a huge transformation. He's already at the earth immortal rank now, so many of his attacks are already beyond your understanding. It's only natural that you couldn't retaliate at all."

Zu An sighed. "This kind of powerlessness really sucks."

Mi Li said, "Since you've already called me your master, I should obviously take responsibility as your master. I'll try to explain the commonly used methods people in his realm use in terms you can understand later. How much of it you can understand will depend on you. But with your aptitude, at the very least, you won't be as helpless as you were just now."

Zu An asked wryly, "Why didn't you teach me a bit earlier then?"

"If you went up against people at his level, whether or not I taught you these things wouldn't make a huge difference. It would just be about whether you died sooner or later. That's why I didn't think it made a difference whether I taught you or not." Mi Li harrumphed. "Are you going to learn or not?"

"I will, I will!" Zu An immediately exclaimed apologetically. "Thank you, gorgeous master!"

Mi Li's brows rose. "What did you call me?"

Zu An explained, "You know what happened between me and Zhao Han's wife. She's an empress too, so I think about her whenever I think of the word empress. Wouldn't it be a bit disrespectful if I called you that? That's why I changed it a bit. Master is gorgeous anyway, so I'm being honest when I call you that."

The corners of Mi Li's lips couldn't help but tilt upward. "It's just master; you're not allowed to add any other words."

"Yes, gorgeous master." Zu An looked completely sincere. Mi Li was left speechless.

Zhao Ruizhi said just then, "If you can grant me eternal life, our past grudges will be completely meaningless. I won't care about them anymore and will instead let you live. If you don't believe me, I can make a vow."

He sneered. Chopping off your limbs and turning you into human swine is still letting you live, no? That won't count as violating the vow.

“A single word from your majesty is worth nine sacred cauldrons. Of course I believe them!” Zu An was overjoyed on the surface, but he sneered inwardly. I’d be an idiot if I believed your damn words.

But since both sides had ulterior motives, they came to an agreement in the end.

Zu An walked over to the stone slab array. “These describe the stars in the sky. As long as they’re arranged in the correct pattern, it should work.” He quickly moved around the stone slabs while speaking. Sure enough, the stone slabs could slide up, down, left, and right.

“...left, Azure Dragon First Monarch, 51st year; right, White Tiger War General, 21st year; up, Vermilion Bird Light of Tombs, 31st year; down, Black Tortoise Holder of Wisdom, first year; the noble lunar moon at the center...” He recalled the characters from the stele and gradually matched the stone slab puzzle to the corresponding shapes.

When he put the last slab in order, a clear sound of something starting up followed. The slab mechanism, and even the ground beneath it, quaked. Those present looked around, but after the slight tremble, there weren’t any other changes.

He Li remarked with a snicker, “Sir Zu, is this the so-called mechanism that solves our problems?”

Zhao Ruizhi’s gaze became fierce when he looked at Zu An.

However, Zu An didn’t pay them any attention. He carefully observed the slabs on the ground. His eyes shifted to the circular depression at the center of each stone slab. He thought of something, then took out the eighty-one pearls and arranged them into the depressions. Sure enough, they were a perfect fit.

Cracking noises emerged from underground. The stone slabs continued to rise and fall. Then, some of the stone slabs sank into the ground, while some other slabs slowly rose up. In the end, they formed several rectangular pillars. The new stone pillars had different diagrams on them, some resembling beasts, some resembling astrological signs. Eventually, the rumbling finally stopped, and the mechanism became still again.

Zu An frowned. Is the mechanism still not fully activated? He tried to move the pillars, but discovered that even though they couldn’t be moved at all, they could be rotated. Furthermore, when one was rotated, it would also make some of the other pillars rotate as well.

“So that was it...” Zu An realized what was happening, but he frowned soon afterward. Even though he had a rough idea of the solution, he didn’t know what kind of conditions the pillars had to satisfy. Many of the characters on the stele had already been missing.

Zhao Ruizhi suddenly laughed loudly. “So that was it! The heavens are on my side after all! Little bastard, you’ve already lost your value to me!” He gave Zu An a malicious look, as if he would attack at a moment’s notice. He hadn’t even made that vow anyway, so he didn’t have anything to worry about.

Zu An remained completely calm, as if he had expected as much. “I advise you not to burn your bridges so quickly. Even if you know the correct pattern, you can’t open this mechanism without me.” He had already realized that since he had found part of the solution on his way here, how could those people not have found anything? They had definitely found their own answers.

Zhao Ruizhi hesitated. He didn't immediately take action and instead ordered He Li, "Match the diagrams based on the stele inscriptions we found in those ruins." He had already made his decision to castrate Zu An as soon as He Li solved the mechanism.

Chapter 862: Confessing Love

"Absolutely!" How could He Li give up such a great chance to make some contributions? He quickly rushed over and recalled the inscriptions on the stele. "Above chaos rests dark clouds; the Heavenly Gate opens wide. The great sun returns to the Golden Palace; the Southern Star moves around the Alioth. The Imperial Canopy lies in purple; elegant music enters Zheng. Those who understand shall receive eternal life..."

Sure enough, there were dark clouds, a heavenly gate, a great sun, a golden palace, and other such diagrams. He just had to match up the diagrams. Unfortunately, whenever he matched up two of them and tried to match more, the ones matched already would start rotating and mess up the order. He tried all sorts of different things, but unfortunately, he couldn't figure it out at all. He broke out into a cold sweat.

Zhao Ruizhi, having seen He Li fail, walked over and pushed him aside. "Trash. You couldn't even take care of something so easy."

After saying so, he began to rotate the pillars himself. Four of them were soon matched, as he paid close attention the entire time. But when he worked on the last two, he discovered that no matter what he did, it would ruin the other pillars that he had already correctly matched. He frowned. He tried a few more times, but he just couldn't match all six. He also ended up quite helpless.

He Li had to hold back his smile. He thought to himself, What are you cursing at me for? I thought you were formidable or something, but this is it? Of course, there was no way he would ever say these things out loud.

Zhao Ruizhi couldn't keep up his calm exterior anymore. He turned around and looked at Zu An. "You said earlier that you could activate this mechanism?"

"But of course," Zu An said proudly.

Zhao Ruizhi harrumphed. "In that case, you do it. If you can't do it, I'll immediately make you understand what regret means."

Zu An shook his head. "You'll immediately kill me if I help you with this mechanism. I'm not that stupid."

Zhao Ruizhi said seriously, "Don't worry, there are so many here to serve as witnesses. I promise I won't kill you as long as you activate this mechanism."

"Your word is as good as a fart. You were just about to lash out a moment ago." Zu An sneered.

Zhao Ruizhi was angered by Zu An's words. It had already been a long time since anyone had dared to speak to him like this.

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But for the sake of obtaining what he really wanted, he endured his anger and said, "I can make a vow if you don't trust me."

Zu An shook his head. "This dungeon's elements are unstable. A vow might not work."

Zhao Ruizhi was shocked. After all, only someone like him could sense the abnormalities in the world. How had this fellow noticed that? "You're refusing this and that, so what do you want?" he snapped, annoyed.

Zu An said, "Let's not talk about oaths, but rather interest. There will be all sorts of mechanisms to solve in this dungeon, and you'll need me to solve almost every one of them. We've only finished the first floating continent; there are two more to come. That grand palace will definitely have all sorts of even more complex puzzles. If you injured me beforehand and I couldn't help you with any of the mechanisms to come, causing you to fail to obtain the immortality you've sought out for so long, wouldn't that become your life's greatest regret?"

He obviously wouldn't trust the emperor that easily, but he had to temporarily appease him. Similarly, he also wanted to reach the highest palace, find the first emperor's secrets, and obtain the latter half of the Primordial Origin Sutra. With Mi Li's help, he would practically be fighting in his home territory. He could use the palace's layout to have a chance against the emperor.

"But this is an exchange of mutual interest. Since I'm helping you obtain eternal life, what can you offer me?" Zu An asked.

Zhao Ruizhi's face darkened. "Didn't I promise to let you live? I've already given you that, yet you want more?"

"Isn't this life of mine a bit too insignificant compared to eternal life?" Zu An looked as if he didn't care at all. "I'm not interested in getting scammed like that. We can all just die here if you want."

He Li was starting to even feel some admiration. This kid really was something! He was gambling with his very life here! He wished he could negotiate with the emperor as well, but he would lose confidence whenever they faced each other.

Bi Linglong bit her lips tightly. Even though her rationality told her that the emperor would probably agree because of his obsession with immortality, she was still worried. She was extremely curious what Zu An would ask for.

"Fine, I'll just treat you leniently then. What do you want?" Zhao Ruizhi planned to appease this fellow first, to have him help with acquiring immortality. Then, he would slowly settle things afterward.

Zu An pointed toward Bi Linglong. "I want her!"

Zhao Ruizhi erupted with rage. "You're courting death!" A ferocious aura erupted from him. However, Zu An continued to stand in place, staring right back at him without a sliver of fear.

He Li was already beyond amazed. This kid really is amazing! Even I would kneel! Zu An and the crown princess have already done so many things to anger the emperor, and yet the emperor couldn't cross the floating islands and do anything about it. Now, Zu An is asking for the crown princess right in front of the emperor's face? He was extremely curious as to how the emperor would reply.

Bi Linglong had been worried about Zu An's safety, but how could she have predicted that he would ask for such a thing? She blushed immediately. What am I going to do with you...

She couldn't even describe how she was feeling right now. She didn't know why he would demand something like that! Wasn't he poking at the emperor's Achilles heel? But rationality was one thing, and emotions were another; moreover, more women were emotional.

Zu An was taking such a huge risk to 'confess his love' to her. Her heart pounded as she thought, Does he really care about me? As for Zu An's safety, she instead stopped worrying about that. As someone from the royal family, she knew what the emperor was like.

As long as he had a chance at obtaining immortality, what did a trifling woman count for? Furthermore, it was only a vocal promise. Any politician would always be prepared to go back on their word at any time. As for bringing shame to the royal family, that didn't matter either, because he just had to silence everyone present. That way, no one would ever know that he made such an embarrassing promise.

Zu An calmly said, "You want eternal life, so I'll help you. After you obtain eternal life, you'll have endless women, so why do you have to cling to her? If you really aren't willing, just kill us now. You can seek that fleeting eternal life yourself then."

Zhao Ruizhi's expression changed several times. In the end, he coldly said, "Fine, but that's based on the premise that you really can help me."

He had already made his decision. Once Zu An helped him enter that palace, he would instantly blast that guy to smithereens to vent out his resentment. He was no longer in the mood to slowly torment Zu An anymore.

He Li and the other soldiers had been waiting for the emperor to rip Zu An apart. They hadn't expected to hear such a reply. The royal family's moral principles really were lacking! You can even give away your own wife? Wait, is this your wife or your daughter-in-law...

"As expected, your majesty is generous!" Zu An laughed out loud. Then, he turned around and grabbed Bi Linglong's hand. "From now on, you're mine."

Bi Linglong was getting a bit dizzy. It all felt like an illusion, and yet it was all real. Her face was completely red. She opened her mouth, but she didn't know what to say.

Should she face him with a look of happiness? Her bashfulness as a lady made it impossible for her to do that in front of so many people. But she might hurt Zu An if she said anything else. That was why she decided to just say nothing.

Zhao Ruizhi's eyelids twitched. "Solve this mechanism first! Or else I'll kill both of you right now!"

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Zu An said with a laugh, "Relax, it's easy enough."

He jogged over to the pillars and spun them around. He took mental notes of which pillars would rotate when he spun one pillar, and he spun all of them a few times. After testing out all of them, he wrote down a series of digits on the ground.

Zhao Ruizhi was getting impatient. “What the hell are you doing?”

Zu An shot right back, “What the hell do you know? This is called linear algebra! This is the culmination of a certain world’s wisdom.”

Chapter 863: The Secret of King Qin’s Mirror of Souls

“Linear algebra?” Zhao Ruizhi frowned. He didn’t even have time to feel anger. He thought, What kind of secret manual is this? Why haven’t I heard of it before?

Forget about him, even Mi Li, who had read through the entire Qin Royal Family’s library, was stumped. What the hell is linear algebra? Why don’t I know what this is?

Only Bi Linglong seemed to have picked up on something. She recalled that according to Zu An’s information, he seemed to have been Brightmoon Academy’s mathematics teacher. Furthermore, when he had made a trip through the Royal Academy, even those revered teachers had been left in awe of his knowledge. This ‘linear algebra’ was probably one of the special skills he had.

Zu An confirmed the stele inscriptions with Zhao Ruizhi one more time, and then he muttered to himself, “‘Dark clouds’ should be matched with ‘Heavenly Gate’; this describes our situation when we first arrived on this island...”

But the latter parts involved ancient astrology, so Zu An didn’t understand it too well. Still, for better or for worse, he had a well-read granny with him. He asked Mi Li for help. That way, he gained a rough idea of the steles’ secrets.

The ‘Heavenly Gate’ was located in the corner of the twenty-eight constellations; the ‘great sun’ was naturally the sun itself. The ‘Golden Palace’ historically referred to the palace courtyard where heaven and earth resided, while the Purple Forbidden Enclosure of the ancient celestial bodies was a residence within heaven and earth.

Ancient astrology divided the heavens into three enclosures and twenty-eight constellations. Those twenty-eight constellations were arranged in groups of seven, and those groups were divided into north, south, east, and west through the Azure Dragon, Vermilion Bird, White Tiger, and Black Tortoise.

The ‘Southern Star’ most likely referred to the Sagittarius star; the Southern Star moving around the Alioth should have been quite the rare phenomenon according to normal astrology, and that was what had left the emperor in despair earlier. But these slabs corresponded to the heavens, and he just had to match them all up. They didn’t really need the specific astrological phenomena.

The ‘Imperial Canopy’ referred to the Purple Forbidden Enclosure’s Imperial Canopy star; ‘purple’ referred to the Emperor star.

‘Elegant music’ in ancient times referred to Xia music, and the Xia people were descendants of Xuanyuan. That meant it referred to the Xuanyuan star. ‘Zheng’ referred to the Heavenly Market Enclosure’s Zheng star.

With Mi Li’s help, Zu An quickly cracked the secrets of the inscriptions. He just had to match them up to their proper positions.

This type of pillar rotating puzzle wouldn't be too difficult to brute force if it were a simple one, but a mechanism as complex as the stele inscriptions made random testing pointless. But even though the ancient puzzle was quite profound, it wasn't too difficult for someone like him who had a college education. It was merely a linear algebra problem.

He gave each pillar a number, then recorded how the others spun according to the first pillar's rotation. For example, if the second pillar didn't spin, it would be 0. If the third spun once, it would be 1. If the fourth spun twice, it would be 2, and so on. He could then remember it as $d1=[1,0,1,2...]t$.

Then, if he turned the first pillar $x1$ times, the pillar would become $x1*d1$. If he spun the second pillar $x2$ times, the pillar would become $x2*d2$. From there, the final pillar would be $x1*d1+x2*d2+x3*d3+...=b$. b would be a constant; since they had the exact final positions from the stele inscriptions, he could deduce the final state of the pillars and how many times each pillar had to be rotated.

The sequence would then produce a homogeneous linear equation, and $x1, x2, x3...$ could all be solved. These would tell him how many times he had to spin each pillar, thus granting him the final state the stele inscriptions presented.

Zhao Ruizhi was completely lost as he watched Zu An write out symbols he had never seen before on the ground. He couldn't help but give the others a few glances. He saw that whether it was Bi Linglong, He Li, or anyone else, they all appeared stupefied, making him feel a lot better.

A while later, He Li couldn't help but sneak a look at the emperor. He saw that the emperor was nodding slightly as he watched Zu An draw those weird symbols, as if it were making sense to him. He immediately felt admiration. His majesty is his majesty after all; he can even understand these things!

Zu An finally stood up after a while. "It's done!" Then, he walked over to the stone slabs, spinning the pillars according to the answers he had calculated. Sure enough, all of the diagrams matched after he rotated them in order!

Another rumble emerged from underground as the mechanism began to activate. The stone slab mechanism lit up. Then, the light rose, illuminating the luminescent pearls Zu An had placed in the holes before. Rays of light shot out from the luminescent pearls, striking certain parts of the stone slabs. Those slabs then tilted slightly.

But nothing much happened even after those present waited for a while. Zhao Ruizhi frowned. "What's happening?"

He wasn't in a rush to criticize Zu An, because various signs had proven that Zu An's method was the right one. Were they still lacking something? He couldn't think of anything, so he looked at Zu An. As an emperor, he didn't have to do everything himself. He could just hand over his headaches for his subordinates to think about.

Zu An was also confused. Hadn't he already done everything properly? Why hadn't anything happened?

Mi Li suddenly thought of something. "Do you still remember the last line on that stele we saw?"

"The noble lunar moon at the center..." Zu An silently mouthed those words. He saw a slight depression where the beam of light struck the slab. The depression's shape resembled a mirror. He thought of

something, and took out King Qin's Mirror of Souls, something he had obtained from the Jade Moon Serpent. Sure enough, the shape matched perfectly.

Zu An had tried all sorts of methods to activate it ever since he obtained the mirror, but it had never reacted to anything. But now, when the light hit the mirror, it seemed to come alive. It lit up like a small sun, becoming so dazzling no one could look straight at it. A streak of brilliant light shot out from the mirror, firing through the clouds and landing somewhere on the third sacred mountain.

Then, something shocking happened. An extremely wide, bright yellow light slowly descended from the sacred mountain. It unfurled like a carpet, and soon reached the second sacred mountain. Afterward, a similar carpet of bright yellow light emerged from the second mountain, traveling toward where the group was. It quickly stopped near the stone slab array, forming a transparent bridge of light between the islands.

After the bridge formed, the light coming from the luminescent pearls in the stone slabs gradually disappeared. King Qin's Mirror of Souls also returned to normal. Zu An quickly put it away, as it was an absolute treasure he couldn't afford to lose.

Zhao Ruizhi gave him a look. He could tell that the mirror was special too. He had just been about to take it and eliminate Zu An, but he remembered what Zu An had said earlier. He had even witnessed Zu An's skills with those weird symbols, so the brat might really be skilled with such puzzles. As such, he decided to wait for the time being, because in the future, there really might be situations where he needed Zu An.

After calming down his killing intent, Zhao Ruizhi was the first to step onto the bridge of light. He was careful at first, but he soon discovered that even though the bridge looked transparent and terrifying, it was like walking on sturdy ground. There was no need to worry about falling off.

"Is this one of the so-called methods of an immortal?" Zhao Ruizhi's eyes burned with passion as he stared at the distant palace. His figure turned into a blur and he quickly arrived on the second island. He Li and the others quickly followed behind him. After all, there might be tremendous opportunities related to immortals up ahead. Who didn't want a share in that?

Zu An cried out pitifully inside. He had wanted to try and see if he could use the bridge of light to kill the emperor, but whether it was the pearls or the pillars, they were all firmly set in place. He couldn't move them at all. "Forget it, I'll look for other opportunities," he muttered as he brought Bi Linglong onto the bridge as well.

Bi Linglong was incredibly shocked. She looked around excitedly as she walked on the bridge of light. However, Zu An had already seen similar scenes in the shows and games he had played, so it wasn't all that special to him.

He silently brought out the Mirror of Souls. It seemed to have been activated earlier. Does it have any abilities now? he thought. But unfortunately, it remained lifeless the entire time. He didn't notice anything special about it. "Did I just misunderstand?" he muttered, frowning.

While Zu An was holding the mirror, Bi Linglong just happened to be standing behind him, looking at him in puzzlement.

Zu An lowered his head to look at the mirror, and blood immediately trickled out from his nose.

Chapter 864: Deathly Stillness

The mirror reflected a shining white scene. Bi Linglong's fair collarbones, her smooth and round shoulders, and all the rest of her delicate and gentle features were on full display.

Even though the two of them had slept together butt-naked in the Hundred Flower Palace, Zu An had spent most of that period unconscious. Once he had woken up, everything had happened too suddenly, so he hadn't had any time to appreciate this view.

Bi Linglong saw Zu An suddenly stare blankly at the mirror, two lines of blood coming out of his nose. She quickly brought out a handkerchief to help him wipe the blood away, her voice nervous and worried. "What's wrong? Were you wounded or poisoned?" But that only made Zu An's nose bleed even more profusely.

"Ah Zu, don't scare me like that!" Bi Linglong's face paled. She quickly rushed over to see what was happening to him. Suddenly, her eyes flickered to the mirror in his hands.

Her expression was blank at first, but then she screamed. Her hands blocked off her chest, her charming face becoming entirely red. She stared at him in embarrassment and irritation.

Zu An finally snapped out of his daze. "I didn't expect this to happen, I really didn't... I didn't know that this thing would have such an effect!"

"Stop aiming that mirror at me!" Bi Linglong was already about to cry. Her instinctive reservations as a young lady had made her mind go blank. She had no idea what to do.

Zu An quickly put the mirror away. "Sorry, I didn't react fast enough." Bi Linglong bit her red lips lightly. She stared rigidly at him, as if she were about to bite him.

Zu An mumbled quietly, "It's not like I haven't seen you before..."

"What did you say?" Bi Linglong's eyes widened.

"Nothing, haha." Zu An handed over King Qin's Mirror of Souls. "Do you want to look at me too? That way, we'd be even?"

Bi Linglong had been about to shower him with scolding, but she was stunned when she heard those words. She couldn't help but laugh, but she then looked away. "Who wants to look at you?"

"Take it or leave it; if you miss this chance, this offer will never come back." Zu An handed the mirror over again.

"I don't want it!" Bi Linglong was even starting to admire this guy. How was he so shameless? She wanted to flip out, and yet she found it really hard to get truly angry. Just what the heck did this guy do to me?!

With a cold snort, a voice snapped, "Are you two done flirting yet? Get over here already."

Both of them looked up and saw that Zhao Ruizhi was standing at the edge of the second sacred mountain, coldly looking at the two of them. His penetrating gaze seemed as if he were looking at pigs he was trying to drive into cages.

Bi Linglong blushed. She didn't really know what to do. But Zu An stood in front of her calmly, helping her block some of the pressure. "We're coming, we're coming. Why are you rushing us like this?"

When she saw the wide shoulders of the man in front of her, Bi Linglong felt warm inside. She alone had always been the one who controlled everything that happened in the Eastern Palace, shielding the foolish crown prince from everything on the outside. Now, she finally knew just how great it was to have someone else who could take care of her.

The two of them walked across the bridge of light, one after the other. Bi Linglong was a bit embarrassed because of what had just happened. As such, she walked a few steps behind him on purpose. Zu An called out to her several times, but she ignored him, so he could only give up.

Mi Li really couldn't keep watching and remarked, "How could she bring herself to talk to you after you just saw her buck naked?"

"It's not like I haven't seen it all before. Why does she have to be so bashful?" Zu An was a bit confused.

"Looks like you still don't really understand women." Mi Li rolled her eyes. She didn't feel like paying him any more attention.

"I wasn't even doing it on purpose. How could I know that damn mirror was so lowly?" Zu An exclaimed indignantly.

"Lowly? Then what's with that smirk on your lips?" Mi Li ruthlessly exposed him.

Zu An's face heated up. He immediately tried to shift the blame and said, "It's you guys' damn mirror's fault for having that stupid function. Wait, the Qin Emperor shone this mirror on you back then..."

Mi Li cut him off right away. "Hmph, do you think everyone is like you? That mirror was used to reflect one's inner organs, to see if they harbored any disloyalty. It probably hasn't fully recovered its power yet and can't pass through the body, only through clothes. Haven't you heard before that what a treasure is like depends on its master? This mirror was always an honorable treasure in the hands of successive Qin emperors, and yet it became so indecent when it fell into your hands."

Zu An was speechless. He had to admit, however, that he liked the function of seeing through clothes much better than seeing one's inner organs. Hmph, I shouldn't let it upgrade even if there's a chance to in the future... Wait, what happens if I shine it on Mi Li?

But he might just be beaten to death if he tried that, so he decisively cut short the tempting thought.

...

The two of them quickly crossed the bridge of light, arriving on the second floating continent.

Zhao Ruizhi's skin bristled when he saw Bi Linglong's blush. When had this woman ever shown him this side of her? He took a deep breath, forcefully subduing his killing intent. He had witnessed how Zu An

had solved the mechanism earlier; this kid was still useful to him. He'd make his decision after he obtained the method of immortality.

The group continued toward the other bridge of light. The scenery was greatly different from the floating continent they had just been on. The previous continent had been full of fruit scents, a world vibrant with greenery and life. The second floating continent had many trees too, but the deeper they went, the bleaker their surroundings became. The environment was one filled with rock and sand. There was even a faint red tint on many of the rocks that resembled coagulated blood.

"Be careful, everyone. There might be danger lurking." He Li had felt a sense of danger when he witnessed Zu An's performance. He had to prove his own worth; only then would he not be so easily thrown away by the emperor. All of the deathsworn soldiers shifted their hands to their weapons. They looked all around them cautiously.

Perhaps because she sensed the sudden tension, Bi Linglong subconsciously leaned closer to Zu An's side. However, she couldn't get too close after what had just happened. Zu An held her hand to comfort her. She bit her red lips, but in the end, she didn't pull her hand back.

Zhao Ruizhi's sensory range was expanded, so he naturally detected their small movements. His expression darkened, but since he had already agreed to hand Bi Linglong over to Zu An, he couldn't really say anything. He couldn't punish Zu An even if he lashed out, and it would instead destroy his image in front of everyone else. He might as well feign ignorance now and eventually settle the debt with Zu An once he obtained immortality.

Suddenly, the scout ahead brought back an update. "Something's come up!" His voice was full of alarm, as if he had seen something terrifying.

The group looked in the direction of the voice. They saw a massive black expanse of human figures, all of them with weapons in hand. Most importantly, they even saw the outlines of some cavalry and war chariots. This was an entire army!

Zhao Ruizhi harrumphed. "What are you all panicking about? They're nothing but some statues."

Only then did the others see that those dark figures weren't really people, but rather clay figures. It was just that they had the same proportions as real people and held real weapons.

Zu An actually found the scene familiar. Isn't this a Terracotta Army? He had seen them before in Xi'an, and had even fought against them in a dungeon. Now that he was looking at them like this again, he actually found them quite adorable.

"Don't panic, don't panic, everyone! I already checked and made sure they aren't living beings." He Li quickly tried to placate his men.

They continued onward. Even though they knew that the statues were fake, because the terracotta soldiers were divided into two groups on either side of the road, it looked as if their eyes were following the groups movements. But on closer inspection, it was merely an illusion created by the light and shadow reflecting off them. The group still felt a bit scared, as the sculptures were so lifelike. The statues truly were creepy.

The one who was most at ease apart from Zu An had to be Zhao Ruizhi. His eyes were full of praise as he examined the statues. He wondered if they were statues of elite troops, because they really were impressive to look at.

Zu An said to Mi Li, "I remembered that scene from when I first met you again."

Mi Li harrumphed. "I really should've just smacked you to death back then..." Her expression suddenly changed midway through her sentence. "Something's not right with these statues; be careful!"

Suddenly, a terracotta soldier that had been completely lifeless a moment before swung its blade down! It was incredibly fast, and together with the fact that the group had their guard down, it was incredibly hard to defend against.

Fortunately, Zu An's cultivation was already exceptional, and with Mi Li's reminder, he quickly protected Bi Linglong and evaded the attack. Even so, a corner was still cut off his clothes.

King Qi Manor's deathsworn soldiers weren't so fortunate. Miserable screams rose and fell. Almost half of them were already riddled with holes from swords and spears.

Chapter 865: Descent of the Reaper

Even though King Qi Manor's soldiers were all carefully selected elites, He Li had just examined those terracotta warriors himself and promised that they were lifeless statues. They hadn't expected the statues to suddenly come to life at all!

Furthermore, the terracotta warriors' attacks were sharp and lethal, their coordination excellent. They were just like a well-trained army. It was to the extent that the deathsworn might be able to avoid one or two strikes, but they couldn't avoid the spears and halberds attacking from other directions.

All of them cursed He Li to hell as they died. It was all because of this damn pig of a comrade!

When he saw that half of his subordinates had been killed so quickly, Zhao Ruizhi erupted in rage. "Preposterous!"

A blast of power spread outward. At the same time, a streak of golden light suddenly appeared. Before anyone could even see what was going on, all the terracotta warriors within a dozen zhang had already collapsed into pieces.

"I have to admit that this fella is quite strong," Mi Li's voice said by Zu An's ear. He could clearly sense the graveness in her voice.

Zu An forced a laugh. "Auntie, did you only realize this now? I already knew that a long time ago." Mi Li harrumphed and ignored him.

All of the remaining King Qi Manor soldiers rushed over to Zhao Ruizhi's side. Even though they knew that the emperor might not necessarily let them go, that was something they would worry about later. The terracotta warriors could take their lives right then and there. As for their companions' corpses, they couldn't be bothered at all at the moment. Even Zhao Ruizhi's expression was grave as he stared at the distant, dark expanse of terracotta warriors.

Only Zu An didn't seem that fazed. After all, he was already well acquainted with them. His eyes shifted to King Qi's deathsworn soldiers, and he couldn't help but ask in confusion, "Gorgeous master, don't you feel like they're not bleeding as much as they should?"

"You're right. It's almost as if the blood is quickly absorbed by the ground as soon as it drips out," Mi Li said, confused. "But isn't it common for such dry ground to do something like this?"

"I hope I'm overthinking things too." Zu An's expression darkened.

A rumble suddenly erupted in the distance. Those present were shocked, because they could tell that it was the sound of an army marching. A march this orderly was the trademark sign of a powerful army. Furthermore, the footsteps seemed to even harmonize with the very world, proving that they had received the acknowledgment of heaven and earth.

Even Zhao Ruizhi subconsciously backed up. No matter how strong he was, defeating an entire massive army was beyond his power.

Right at that moment, a group within the dark expanse of terracotta warriors stopped. Then, they drew back their bows. A split second later, a storm of arrows plummeted from the heavens. The shrill noises of tearing air echoed through the sky. It was easy to see just how powerful they were!

Zhao Ruizhi didn't dare underestimate them. He raised his hands above his head, then slowly spread them. A golden barrier of light took form above his head, surrounding the group within. He still had more uses for Zu An and Bi Linglong. As for the others from King Qi Manor, he might need them as cannon fodder in the dungeon, so he didn't plan to lose them here.

Of course, he wasn't so stupid as to endanger himself to protect them. He would decisively shrink the barrier for increased effectiveness the moment he sensed that the circumstances weren't right.

The endless barrage of arrows bounced right off the golden barrier. Meanwhile, Mi Li said, "Pay attention to what he's doing. He isn't taking the impact of these arrows straight on; instead, he's using the least amount of force needed to alter the arrows' trajectory and deflect them to the side. This will allow him to save a lot of his strength. Apart from a difference of cultivation between those of higher and lower ranks, their use of power is also a big difference. The rest of you waste way too much of your power."

"I understand." Zu An nodded.

"You understood it that easily?" Mi Li was baffled. She'd thought that she would use this chance to make him understand that she was the master here, and yet this brat didn't play along at all! She was completely caught off guard.

"Of course. I read about things like this all the time in those webnovels," Zu An replied.

Mi Li was speechless. After being around him for so long, she obviously knew that Zu An's way of thinking was greatly different from most people of this world. He would always say some words she had never heard of before. Hmph, I'll ask him what webnovels are later.

The rain of arrows was deflected by Zhao Ruizhi's barrier. When he saw that there were only some sparse arrows left, he snorted. "Is that all?"

Mi Li sneered when she heard him speak. "This fella only knows how to act tough."

She continued, "It's extremely difficult for a cultivator to face an entire army by himself. An army consists of countless cultivators, and they have formations that can greatly increase their defensive force. If it were some other grandmaster who had faced that barrage of arrows, they might have already been turned into a porcupine. Even though the emperor successfully blocked those arrows, it wasn't that easy for him at all. Did you notice that the barrier of light around us has already become much dimmer in color?"

Zu An saw that that really was the case. Furthermore, he even noticed that there were some fine cracks in certain areas. It was just that the others had been so busy praising the emperor for his power, he hadn't noticed those details until now.

Just then, a terracotta warrior who was clearly larger and taller than the others leapt onto a carriage. Then, he raised the massive bow in his hands. The arrow in his hand flickered with a pitch-black radiance, then transformed into an arc of black lightning. In the blink of an eye, that massive pitch-black arrow instantly hit the golden barrier straight in the center!

Tzzzzz!

A shrill, earsplitting noise screamed. It sounded as if two rough chunks of metal were grinding against each other.

The pitch-black arrow spun frantically, and the golden barrier began to visibly cave in. Zhao Ruizhi's face turned red. Then, his hands crossed in front of his chest, forming a sphere of golden energy that slowly pushed the arrow back out.

The madly spinning arrow finally lost its momentum and fractured into pieces with a loud noise. Those pieces then exploded into fine powder from the recoil. But as soon as the group sighed in relief, another pitch-black arrow roared down, hitting the barrier in the exact same spot as the last. Even the other soldiers finally noticed that there were cracks forming in the golden barrier around them.

Zu An clicked his tongue. "What is going on with that terracotta warrior? He's able to pressure the emperor that much with just arrows?"

Mi Li was a bit stupefied when she looked in the direction of the attacks. When she heard Zu An's question, she replied with a complicated expression, "That's Wang Jian, the one who helped the Great Qin Dynasty eradicate six nations and unite the world..."

"Wang Jian?" Zu An exclaimed, shocked. How could he not know about such an incredible figure? "What kind of state is he in right now? Is he in soul form, or is he some living corpse?"

Mi Li shook her head. "I don't know. Either way, I know Wang Jian's cultivation when he was alive wasn't inferior to Zhao Han's. However, his current aura seems to be a bit weaker than when he was at his strongest."

A third arrow flew over just then, hitting the second arrow. The second arrow exploded, but then the third arrow continued the previous arrow's momentum. The barrier, which had already been on the verge of collapse, was instantly blown apart.

Zhao Ruizhi's hands joined together, clamping down on the black light. Then, he exerted force through his palms to break the arrow in half. On the surface, it didn't seem too hard for him at all. However, Zu An noticed that his hands were trembling a bit in his sleeves.

Zhao Ruizhi's eyes flickered when he saw that the enemy general was going to fire again. Then, he charged forward like an artillery shell. He obviously knew the principle behind taking down the enemy leader first. If he continued to remain passive forever, he would only be slowly whittled down to death.

In the world of cultivators, it was common knowledge that those who excelled at long-range attacks weren't as good at close quarters combat. As long as he closed the gap, he had confidence in taking the other party down. The rest of the strange army might very well collapse once he took down the main general.

When they saw Zhao Ruizhi charge forward, many terracotta soldiers rushed out to protect Wang Jian. Their defenses were rock solid, but unfortunately, they were facing a falling meteorite!

"Get lost!" Zhao Ruizhi roared. He didn't show any mercy, and all those standing in his path were blown apart.

The general on the carriage aimed his bow and fired again. But now, Zhao Ruizhi didn't have to face the arrows directly. He became quite difficult to hit because of his movement skill. Three arrows missed in a row, and Wang Jian didn't have the time to fire a fourth.

Zhao Ruizhi grinned maliciously. His hand slammed toward Wang Jian's head. At that distance, he was confident he could defeat his opponent within a few moves.

But right at that moment, the air next to him suddenly cracked open. A pitch-black sickle appeared out of thin air, cleaving at his neck.

Chapter 866: I'll Stop Playing Around Now

Zhao Ruizhi felt goosebumps and quickly grew vigilant. How long had it been since he felt the threat of death, ever since he became the most powerful cultivator in the world? He couldn't be bothered with the archer general at all, and quickly shifted his arms to the side to defend himself.

Golden and black lights clashed, causing a powerful shockwave. The tough terracotta warriors didn't stand a chance. Those that stood nearby exploded into pieces one after another, while those further out were left leaning unsteadily from side to side.

Zhao Ruizhi was blown back a large distance, blood trickling from his palms. How many years had it already been since he was injured? He had already forgotten that feeling. But at that moment, his attention wasn't on his injury. Instead, he stared rigidly at the one who had wounded him.

That individual's entire body was shrouded in black mist, so Zhao Ruizhi couldn't see his face at all. However, his outline made him appear to be dressed in armor. He was likely a general as well. He had a long halberd in hand; however, its speartip wasn't straight like a normal halberd, but rather curved. Furthermore, it was much longer than a normal halberd, making it resemble a reaper's scythe.

He had another, even more distinctive trait; his entire body was shrouded in dense killing intent. Even Zu An and the others could sense a thick wave of bloodiness, as if the general had just crawled out from a mountain of corpses.

“Who are you?” Zhao Ruizhi asked. “Anyone who’s capable of injuring me can’t possibly be nameless.”

Unfortunately, the other party didn’t reply to him. Instead, the black mist around his entire body surged, and he charged while brandishing his scythe again.

Zhao Ruizhi shivered. He didn’t dare underestimate his opponent when he faced the attack. The two of them exchanged several moves in an instant, at speeds far greater than the spectators’ wildest imaginations. Those from King Qi Manor couldn’t even see their movements.

Even Zu An could only make out a few afterimages with his full concentration. He could only ask, “Gorgeous master, who is this ridiculously strong fella?”

His blade had almost removed the emperor’s head! Such strength really was ridiculous.

Mi Li’s expression was strange. “The Great Qin... No, it’s more accurate to call him the Warring States period’s number one general, the Human Butcher Bai Qi.”

Zu An was alarmed. He turned around to stare at that figure. This was the renowned Bai Qi?

Bai Qi had led the Battle of Yique. With his army, he had taken down the Wei and Han alliance’s strongholds one after another; the battle had ended with the enemy suffering 240,000 casualties. In the war against the Chu state, he had taken down their capital city. In the battle of Changping, more than four hundred thousand Zhao soldiers had been buried alive on his orders... His existence represented the deaths of countless people, and thus, he was given the title of ‘Human Butcher’.

“I know what they are,” Mi Li said with a conflicted tone. “This is Westhound Tomb, the ancestral court of the Qin royal family. Not only are the successive generations of Qin Emperors consecrated here; there are also outstanding ministers from the Qin Dynasty, just like an ancestral shrine. Wang Jian and Bai Qi are heroic spirits of the ancestral shrine.”

The different dynasties similarly had their own honored minister chambers. Similar to the Western Han Dynasty’s Qilin Chamber, Eastern Han’s Cloud Altar of Eighty Generals, and the Tang Dynasty’s Lingyan Chamber, the other dynasties had also granted some ministers the honor of being buried together with the Qin Emperors, representing tremendous glory for these subjects.

Once, Zhang Tingyu, a senior minister who had served three successive emperors, was granted that privilege when Yongzheng died. However, for the sake of that honor, Zhang Tingyu had been so scared of making a mistake that right before he died, he had that right stripped away by Qianlong. It was an absolute tragedy.

Zu An couldn’t help but become interested, asking, “Then isn’t Zhao Han dead for sure?” All this time, he had been worried about how he was going to deal with the emperor, but now, the situation had completely solved itself!

Mi Li shook her head. “If they had been as powerful as when they were alive, Wang Jian and Zhao Han would be almost on par in strength, while Bai Qi would be even stronger than them. But now, they’re

nothing more than soul fragments that have continued to exist in this special world. They're much weaker than before. It would be extremely difficult for them to take down Zhao Han."

Sure enough, the battlefield situation had already begun to change by the time Mi Li finished speaking.

Zhao Ruizhi's fist smashed into the dark figure and a large amount of the black mist scattered. It clearly suffered great damage from his strike. He sneered. "I don't care what kind of thing you are. Die!"

His other fist slammed toward the figure's head. It wasn't surrounded by golden light like the previous one, but instead had turned completely golden, as if his hand were made of gold.

At that moment, Wang Jian raised his bow, firing at the emperor's back. A bit of hesitation filled Zhao Ruizhi's eyes, and in the end, he chose not to take the risk. He turned around, using his fist to smash the arrow to pieces. Bai Qi raised his sickle and attacked again.

This was a fearsome duo, with one excelling in ranged attacks and one in frontal combat; even Zhao Ruizhi found himself in a difficult situation. The pair also commanded their subordinates to attack from time to time as well. They were both illustrious generals; even though they were just soul fragments, commanding the battlefield had already become an instinct. Under their commands, the army's strength seemingly multiplied. Eventually, Bai Qi didn't even have to face Zhao Ruizhi directly and only had to offer some support from time to time.

No matter how strong Zhao Ruizhi was, he was gradually drowned out by the sea of troops. He felt an incredible sense of danger. He knew that continuing like this would only slowly bring him closer and closer to defeat, and he could even die. As such, he decisively seized an opening to rush out, and vanished into the distance.

When Bai Qi and Wang Jian saw him flee, they quickly commanded their army to pursue him. Normally, ordinary war chariots and cavalry had no chances of catching up to cultivators, but for some reason, these war chariots and cavalry were exceptionally fast. They could actually catch up to Zhao Ruizhi from a distance.

Those from King Qi Manor were stupefied. He Li rubbed his eyes in disbelief, murmuring, "His majesty... ran away?"

It might not have been that big of a deal for Zu An, but for residents of the capital like them, the emperor was the symbol of invincible power! His actions in the dungeon so far had only further proven that point. But now, he was actually forced to flee for his life! In that instant, all of them suddenly felt as if something within them broke.

But they didn't have any time to ponder such thoughts. The ones that had chased after Zhao Ruizhi were the war chariots and cavalry; there were still many ordinary troops left. The terracotta warriors turned around, aiming their weapons toward the cultivators, and charged.

"Damn it all!" Even though He Li was at the peak of the ninth rank, he had already lost all of his confidence after all that had happened in the dungeon. He didn't have any will to fight anymore! When he saw the terracotta warriors charging over, he immediately chose to run for his life.

Again and again, he told himself that it was fine even if he couldn't outrun the clay soldiers; he just had to outrun his companions! They could buy him some time; in that case, he might even be able to escape and obtain some tremendous immortal encounter.

The other cultivators fled in confusion when they saw He Li run, all heading in different directions. But there were more and more terracotta soldiers gathering around them. King Qi Manor's soldiers were soon completely surrounded. Even though they fought back with everything they had, the enemy's numbers were just too great. They were almost instantly cut down.

"We're leaving!" Zu An grabbed Bi Linglong and sprinted toward the distant bridge of light.

When she heard miserable screams fill the air around them again and again, Bi Linglong's face paled. These strange clay soldiers were all around them; was it even possible to escape?

Along the way, she brandished her sword against the warriors several times. They weren't weak at all. She could defeat one or two of them with her six ranks of cultivation, but the soldiers coordinated with each other far too well. She would have no choice but to run if there were five or six of them grouped together, and she might not even be able to get away.

Fortunately, Zu An was fast enough. They were always able to somehow barely slip past the hordes of terracotta warriors and break out of their enclosure.

As time passed, Bi Linglong couldn't see those from King Qi Manor anymore. Even though they were her enemies, they were still people after all. Furthermore, after having been around each other for so long, she found them far more pleasing than the lifeless clay soldiers.

However, Bi Linglong's face suddenly paled when she saw a row of clay soldiers appear in front of her. These guys even knew about flanking tactics! She felt despair. Even the invincible emperor had no choice but to run, so how could they defeat this endless army of soldiers?

She gathered her resolve and turned to Zu An, saying, "Ah Zu, you should run. Don't worry about me; I'll help you hold them off. You might have a chance to get away if you're by yourself."

Zu An gave her a look of surprise. "You have it backward; how can you hold them off with your bit of cultivation? Even if someone had to do it, that would be me."

Bi Linglong shook her head. "My cultivation is too low, I won't even be able to get very far even if you try to hold them here. But you're different. With your cultivation, there's still a good chance for you to escape."

She suddenly got up on her tiptoes and kissed him when she saw that Zu An was about to say something. "Ah Zu, you don't have to say anything else. Thank you for everything you've done for me along the way; it's now my turn to do something for you. Even though this journey has been dangerous, I've actually been extremely happy... happy that I got to meet you... There's not much time left. You need to hurry, or both of us will die here meaninglessly."

Bi Linglong really began to panic as she saw those troops get closer and closer. She repeatedly urged Zu An to leave.

“Who said we were going to die?” Zu An had a strange look on his face. Then, he looked at the vicious soldiers. “I wanted to fight you fair and square, but you guys really are going too far. Whatever, I’ll stop playing around now.”

A draconic roar filled the air as he drew his sword and raised it above his head. He focused all of his attention on using the Primordial Origin Sutra, commanding, “The Qin Emperor is here! All subjects shall obey!”

Chapter 867: Immortal Palace’s Gate

Bi Linglong was stupefied. What the hell was this idiot doing?! If these soldiers had any intelligence, wouldn’t they only get even angrier that someone was impersonating their emperor?

But something shocking happened. Those soldiers didn’t charge at them and cut them to pieces; rather, they calmly looked at Zu An. Confusion could even be seen on their faces, as if they were hesitating.

Zu An was actually quite nervous. Even though the Tai’e Sword was King Qin’s personal sword, and the Primordial Origin Sutra King Qin’s cultivation method, the terracotta soldiers might not be able to recognize those things. If he really had no choice, he would just purify them all with the Primordial Origin Sutra.

That was why Zu An had never been scared at all. This wasn’t even his first time dealing with such things. His Primordial Origin Sutra’s second layer granted him the ability to restrain all kinds of deceased existences.

Mi Li slowly took form by Zu An’s side. She stared coldly at the soldiers with her dignified gaze.

At first, the soldiers had only been a bit confused, because while the man’s sword and aura resembled the Qin Emperor greatly, he didn’t look like him at all! They had been wondering if something was wrong with their memories, causing them to end up hesitating. However, when they saw the past empress standing at his side, their confusion was instantly dispelled. They lowered their weapons and knelt down, bowing respectfully to the two of them.

Zu An gave the cool and elegant Mi Li a look. Having her pose as his wife really did make him feel pretty good. But he quickly focused and said, “Pass on this emperor’s orders. You must take down that fat bastard who was shining with yellow light, no matter the cost!” He was worried that the soldiers might not know who Zhao Ruizhi was, so he gave them more details about the emperor’s appearance.

The soldiers couldn’t speak, but they all saluted with their fists in front of their chests, offering their respect to Zu An’s group again. Then, they rushed in the direction Zhao Ruizhi had disappeared toward with their weapons in hand.

When she saw the ferocious clay soldiers all leave, Bi Linglong’s mouth fell open in shock. “How did you do that?”

Zu An proudly replied, “Didn’t you hear what I said? I am the Qin Emperor’s reincarnation!”

But he screamed miserably a second later. “Ah! Let go, it hurts, it hurts...”

Mi Li twisted his ear. “Damn brat, you dare to even take advantage of your master?”

Bi Linglong gave the elegant red-clothed woman a look of shock when she saw the two of them bicker. Don't tell me she...

Their group continued toward the bridge of light, but they didn't run into anything else dangerous along the way. They even encountered other clay soldiers many times; but not only did the soldiers not show them hostility, they even greeted the group respectfully.

...

As He Li was being chased miserably, he saw them from a distance. He began to question life. "Why are they only chasing me and not them?!"

"Is it just because he was born with a handsome face?"

"Save meeee!"

He wanted to run toward Zu An's side, but they were already far from each other. There was no way he could close the distance, so he could only continue to run in a panic.

...

Meanwhile, Zu An and Bi Linglong had safely arrived at the edge of the bridge of light. They continued toward the third sacred mountain. Now that they were looking at the majestic palace up close, Bi Linglong couldn't help but say with a sigh, "As expected of the home of an immortal. This palace is far grander than even our imperial palace!"

They had only been able to see the palace from far away. Only now that they were up close did they discover that there were three platforms beneath it. Each one was incredibly broad and wide, likely able to hold ten thousand people at the very least. Between the platform levels were white marble stairs, and past over a hundred flights of steps was the palace gate.

"Look at you bumpkins," Mi Li said. Despite that, there was a grin on her lips. The praise was actually to her liking. She took large strides with her long legs and walked up the stairs. However, she was actually becoming a bit emotional. Just how long had it been since she had last walked similar steps...?

Zu An couldn't help but ask, "Gorgeous master, are you familiar with this palace?"

"How can I not be?" Mi Li sighed. "This place is practically identical to the past Qin Imperial Palace. There are even many influences from the Epang Palace."

The Qin Imperial Palace was the palace of the Great Qin Dynasty. Later on, there had been new additions made after the first emperor unified the world, one of which was the Epang Palace. Unfortunately, the Epang Palace was too large of a project, and so it had never been finished even when he passed on.

Bi Linglong asked Zu An quietly, "Just what kind of country is this Qin State you're both talking about? Why haven't I ever heard of it before?"

Zu An replied, "It's a country from ancient times. A lot of ancient records were lost over time, so it's natural that the people of this age don't know about them."

"Ancient times..." Bi Linglong's eyes lit up. From what she knew, many dungeons were remains from the ancient era. They were filled with all sorts of powerful inheritances and opportunities. Even if they didn't contain methods of immortality, they were definitely extremely valuable.

The three of them quickly crossed the steps, arriving in front of a massive palace gate. Zu An thought there might be some mechanism he would have to solve, but Mi Li simply walked over and opened it. Stuffy air rushed out, reflecting the passage of time.

Zu An was a bit puzzled. "Hm? Even though the air is a bit stuffy, there's still oxygen."

Mi Li said, "The palace's construction is special, with ventilation openings in many hidden places. Those inside obviously wouldn't suffocate to death." She took the initiative to walk in after speaking/. Revisiting a place that brought so many memories filled her with emotions. She began eagerly looking all around her.

Zu An and Bi Linglong followed behind her, but the two of them suddenly felt a great force. They were pulled to the palace door! Zu An reacted right away, quickly struggling free from the door and pulling Bi Linglong away too.

He examined the surroundings vigilantly, but he didn't see any mechanisms or abnormalities at all. But even so, the two of them still felt waves of suction force pulling them toward the main entrance.

Mi Li chuckled. "There's no need to be nervous. The door was made using magnetite. The Qin Emperor ordered the palace door to be made out of a massive piece of magnetite. Anyone who entered with metal weapons would be pulled toward the door."

Zu An thought, So that was it. He and Bi Linglong both had swords and artifacts on them, many of them made of metal. That was why they had been pulled over.

He said mockingly, "The Qin Emperor really had no sense of security. He used a Mirror of Souls to check his subjects, and he even created a door like this."

Mi Li sighed. "The various countries were in conflict. For the sake of victory, they committed every crime imaginable. He obviously had no choice but to increase his precautions."

The three of them had already entered through the palace gate while they were chatting. They arrived at the main hall, which was decorated splendidly. On a high platform in the distance was an imperial dragon throne that flickered with golden light.

Mi Li walked forward. She caressed the dragon throne, looking behind a pearl curtain that hung behind the throne. "Back then, I would sit behind this place during grand celebrations."

Bi Linglong was extremely shocked. Mi Li was someone from the ancient era? How had she managed to live for that long? Was there really an elixir of immortality in this world?

For some reason, Zu An felt annoyed. He just didn't feel great when he saw Mi Li reminiscing fondly about her past. But he soon laughed in self-mockery. Being homesick was something natural. Why the hell was he getting jealous over that?

Suddenly, a roar of laughter filled the air. A voice exclaimed, "I still managed to enter the palace in the end!"

Zu An turned around with a grave expression, and saw Zhao Ruizhi standing by the main entrance.

The emperor wasn't in the best state. His body was covered in blood, and his chest had a massive wound on it. There were vague wisps of black smoke coming out of it; Zu An could already tell it was a wound inflicted by Bai Qi. The emperor's aura was extremely unstable as well. He Li and three deathsworn soldiers were by his side; they were all wounded as well, and looked even more miserable than Zhao Ruizhi.

"This immortal palace doesn't seem all that different from an emperor's palace, hm?" Zhao Ruizhi frowned. Even though the aura of the place was grand, it didn't go beyond the level of what was achievable by mortals. He was a bit disappointed.

Zu An asked, "Why are you the only ones here? Where are the others?" He was extremely disappointed. He had ordered the soldiers to kill Zhao Ruizhi no matter the cost, but it seemed they had failed.

"They're all dead. They were killed by those weird clay things," He Li said. He couldn't help but give Zhao Ruizhi a look.

The others had all been running toward the bridge, and they had just happened to meet up together. They had thought that with the emperor on their side, they were safe for sure; and yet the emperor had snatched a few of them and thrown them into the enemy as cannon fodder to hold up the two terrifying generals. Only then were they able to escape onto the bridge of light.

The terracotta warriors seemed to have some kind of restriction placed on them. They couldn't continue onto the bridge and chase after the cultivators. That was why the group had been able to barely survive.

Even though the soldiers had known that the emperor only kept them alive to use them, they were still upset when they witnessed that scene. Unfortunately, no matter how much resentment they carried, they didn't dare to show it at all. They could only focus on staying alive for as long as possible.

Zhao Ruizhi began to laugh madly. "What immortal palace? What immortality? Judging from everything we've seen and experienced, this is clearly just the grave of an emperor! Since it's a tomb, how could there possibly be any elixirs of immortality?"

He suddenly turned toward Zu An. "Since there's no elixir of immortality, there's no value in keeping you alive any longer. Die!"

Chapter 868: Coffin

Bi Linglong's face paled, but she still gripped her sword tightly. The emperor had once been the absolute symbol of unrivaled power, so she couldn't even produce a single thought of rebellion.

And yet, her time together with Zu An seemed to have had an influence on her. She had gradually discovered that the emperor wasn't all that terrifying after all. He got angry, and there were times where he would fly into a fit of rage, and yet was powerless to do anything. He got injured just like everyone else, and bled like everyone else...

She suddenly realized that the emperor was still only human! She was curious how Zu An was going to reply, but she knew for sure that he wouldn't be scared.

Zu An didn't disappoint her. He raised his Tai'e Sword confidently and said, "You don't look so good right now. Maybe not even at half of your usual strength, I reckon?"

Zhao Ruizhi harrumphed. "You're right. I'll give you credit for your courage, but even if I only have half my strength left, killing you will just be too easy."

But he suddenly frowned and asked, "Who's that red-clothed woman behind you? Is she an immortal from this palace?"

He had been extremely disappointed when he found that the palace was just another construct built by mortals. But the instant he saw Mi Li, his emotions were stirred up. This woman was beautiful and graceful. That look in her eyes, of seemingly looking down on everything, suited his tastes perfectly. Only someone like this had the right to be his empress! He didn't care if she was some female immortal. He would find a way to obtain her.

Mi Li laughed lightly. "Fine, since you've spoken so nicely, I'll spare your life today." She twisted a dragon head knob on the imperial throne, and the ground atop the platform suddenly opened up. Zu An's group fell straight through.

Zhao Ruizhi was alarmed. He rushed forward, but the ground had already closed up again. He slammed his fist down. With his strength, forget about the floor, not even a mountain would be able to handle his full-strength strike! Unfortunately, the ground surface was still smooth and unbroken. He could feel his strength dissipating in every direction.

Suddenly, the entire palace rumbled.

"Huh?" Zhao Ruizhi suddenly noticed that the entire palace seemed to have become one body through a myriad of rune formations. That was why brute force would never be able to destroy the mechanism.

That phenomenon put him on guard. This was definitely not an ordinary palace; otherwise, it wouldn't be too difficult for him to destroy the entire thing if he really wanted to. But now, his fist didn't even leave a mark.

Zhao Ruizhi repeated what Mi Li had done, twisting the dragon head knob on the throne. Unfortunately, there was no reaction at all. His expression darkened, He waved his sleeves, gesturing for He Li and the others to start searching for any hidden mechanisms. He had to find Zu An no matter what.

At the same time, there was something else that he was even more hesitant about. The red clothed beauty carried a strange aura, unlike that of a still-living person. Was she someone from this immortal palace? Things would be really troublesome if Zu An obtained her acknowledgment and obtained the elixir of immortality before he did.

Even though his reason told him that the chances of the dungeon having an elixir of immortality were extremely low, he refused to let anyone else have an edge over him no matter how low the chances were.

...

While Zhao Ruizhi's group was busy looking for hidden mechanisms, Zu An's group slid through a long secret passage. Eventually, they appeared in a completely new room. Mi Li walked over to the wall and twisted something that resembled a light fixture. This room immediately lit up.

"You were acting all tough earlier, but you ran away. How embarrassing," Zu An said sarcastically.

Mi Li gave him a sidelong stare. "Wasn't it for your sake? Even though he's injured, there's still no way in hell you could win. Even though I could deal with him, that would waste up too much of my soul power. The poison in my body could flare out again if we really fought, so why the heck would I fight him?"

Bi Linglong's eyes widened. It sounded as if the red-clothed woman could actually defeat the emperor, but she chose not to, solely because she didn't want to waste her power. Was she really that formidable?

"Haha, my master is absolutely brilliant!" Zu An exclaimed. "Wait, is this a luminescent pearl?" He saw a pearl that was giving off warm light on the wall. He reached out to grab it, but Mi Li smacked his hand away.

"Things like oil lamps aren't very convenient in these sealed spaces. Of course we'd use luminescent pearls," Mi Li explained while slowly walking forward.

Zu An followed her and asked, "Are you familiar with all of these mechanisms?"

Bi Linglong looked at her fearfully. This woman was someone from the ancient era after all! Could it be that she came from this place? She was incredibly confused, but now wasn't the time to ask such questions. She could only quietly follow along, staying by Zu An's side. She felt a strange sense of ease while she was at his side.

Mi Li replied indifferently, "I already told you that the layout of this place is pretty much the same as the Qin Imperial Palace. The Qin Emperor created that secret escape tunnel out of fear of a rebellion happening."

"This place is more like an underground palace for the deceased. What if this sort of thing hadn't been made? They're already dead anyway, so why would they fear something like assassination?" Zu An said with a laugh.

"You're still too young and haven't experienced the inevitability of death," Mi Li said calmly. "Whether it was the emperor or the common people, they believed in life after death. They believed that the way one lived before should be maintained even after death, because a new world awaited them after death; just that they would live through a different method.

"It's just that it would be hard for an ordinary person to achieve something like that, but an emperor is different. An emperor really could replicate everything from when they were still alive, like an army or an imperial palace. In that case, why would they skimp on something like the imperial palace's emergency escape tunnel? You need to understand that for people who treasure life to that extent, they worry that they might be assassinated even after they die."

Zu An replied mockingly, "Wasn't the Qin Emperor really formidable anyway? Did he have such little confidence in his own cultivation? Did he really have to be worried about any assassinations?"

Mi Li turned around and gave him a look. “Even for the smallest chance, he would still prepare just in case. Someone like him wouldn’t let the slightest possibility go. Take that Zhao Han outside, for example. He clearly knows there’s no chance of this place having the elixir of immortality, but it was because he wasn’t willing to give up on even the slightest possibility that you led him right by the nose the entire time.”

Zu An couldn’t help but say with a sigh, “Your distinguished self really is long-winded.”[1]

Bi Linglong could barely hold in her laughter. Mi Li rolled her eyes. She was already used to Zu An’s weird style of speaking.

Suddenly, a loud rumble erupted, and the three of them almost lost their footing.

“What the hell? Is there an earthquake?” Zu An exclaimed as he grabbed Bi Linglong and Mi Li.

Mi Li flung his hand away and rose into the air. She frowned, saying, “I can sense that our surroundings are changing.”

Sand and dust began to fall from above as she spoke. Then, the walls around them began to quickly rise, fall, and slide horizontally. The room continuously moved and shifted. The entire palace around them began to change quickly like a rapidly changing Rubik’s cube, while they seemed to be the small square at the very center.

The entire room had ended up lying on one side. Zu An could only hold on by grabbing a candlestick. He quickly turned to Mi Li and asked, “Was your palace this crazy too?”

“I don’t know what’s going on either. The Imperial Palace obviously didn’t do this.” Mi Li’s figure became a bit unstable. For fear that the changing room might separate them, she chose to float a bit closer to Zu An.

The rumbling continued for roughly fifteen minutes before the surroundings gradually calmed down.

The group jumped off the wall... No, it was now the ceiling. Then, they walked through a newly formed door.

Mi Li frowned. “The layout has changed completely. I don’t even recognize anything now.”

Zu An laughed and replied, “Who cares? Let’s just go straight ahead. I’ve always been pretty lucky.”

But his smile quickly froze as they arrived in a giant room. The interior was wide and spacious, but there was a grand and imposing bronze coffin floating in the center. There were large chains binding the coffin, their ends extending toward the walls all around them.

Zu An felt his heart thud. “Did we somehow end up stumbling into the Qin Emperor’s tomb?”

. This is actually an interesting pun/slang phrase in Chinese. There’s a phrase that goes ‘a sentence from the ruler saves you ten years of reading’, but here, it says ‘a sentence from the ruler only saves you a sentence’, meaning it saves nothing. In other words, ‘you’re wasting time’. ?

Chapter 869: Why Is He Here?!

Zu An voiced his shocking suspicion out loud, but Mi Li shook her head and said, "That's not too likely. Even though this tomb is quite grand, it's still too far from the standard for an emperor's tomb." But she was also confused, as she remarked, "Hm? This is the Qin Emperors' ancestral land. Apart from the successive generations of Qin Emperors, who else has the right to be buried here?"

Bi Linglong cried, "You guys, come look! There's a picture over here."

Zu An and Mi Li turned around. Sure enough, they saw that there were several pictures on the wall. After their previous experiences, they knew that tombs would often have murals on the wall to record important events during the inhabitants' lives. That was why they began to carefully examine the images.

The first two paintings were of a general taking down many cities, clearly a representation of brilliant military service. The third painting was of him commanding a great army in the construction of a long wall. The final painting was one where he was surrounded by several officials, and he had no choice but to take a drug and end his own life.

Bi Linglong couldn't help but sigh. "This general lived a glorious life, and yet this was his conclusion. The bow is put away when the birds are all gone, a worthy person is discharged when he has served his purpose..."

"Could this person be Qin General Meng Tian?" Zu An couldn't help but remark.

Mi Li was quite shocked. "How did you know?"

Zu An pointed at the third picture. "Isn't this the construction of the Great Wall? There are historical recordings of Meng Tian commanding an army of three hundred thousand to construct the wall."

Mi Li sighed. "Indeed, the ancestor of the Meng clan was someone from the Qi State of the Warring States. Later on, they came to the Qin state and produced many outstanding generals, becoming one of the Great Qin Dynasty's greatest clans. He had a brother, Meng Yi, and with these two brothers working, one out on the battlefield and one in internal affairs, their clan rose to power. Unfortunately, because the one they supported was Fu Su, they must've met miserable ends."

She had already heard what had happened to the Qin State from being around Zu An all this time. She obviously knew that Fu Su and the Meng clan brothers had committed suicide on the ruler's orders later on.

Zu An had a strange look on his face. He asked, "Was Fu Su your son?"

Mi Li's brows rose. But now that they were already so close, she decided not to hide things from him. "Fu Su was my older sister's son. My older sister passed away too early, so I entered the palace to become the new empress. I just never expected the Qin State would begin to attack the other six states, and so when they faced the Chu State on the battlefield, members of the royal family like us who had married in from the Chu State were obviously no longer welcome. Because Fu Su carried the Chu State's blood, I don't believe Ying Zheng would ever have allowed him to succeed the throne."

Bi Linglong was shaken from what she had just heard. Her suspicions were now confirmed! This woman was someone from the ancient era after all, and furthermore a glorious empress! No wonder her

bearing is so noble and elegant. However, the Qin they spoke of wasn't some dynasty, was it? I have to ask Ah Zu more later.

"That's good then, that's good." Zu An sighed. For some reason, he felt strangely happy when he learned that Mi Li hadn't given birth to a child yet.

"What do you mean 'that's good'?" Mi Li shot back in annoyance. She definitely didn't think of it as anything good. She raised her head toward that coffin in the air and frowned. "Why is the coffin wrapped in chains? It's almost as if it's holding something back. Did the emperor hate him so much that his resentment didn't end even after this man died?"

Bi Linglong spoke up and asked, "Do you two feel that the elements in this space are a bit strange?"

Mi Li and Zu An had both overlooked that fact because they were overthinking things. When they sensed their surroundings, they both said, "The earth element here is much more active and richer than usual."

Mi Li paced around the room while looking around. She squatted down and brushed the floor with her sleeves. The dust on the ground was swept away, revealing all kinds of strange runes. She frowned. "Hm? This is a formation, and it seems to carry a certain sinister aura..."

"Can you tell what kind of formation it is?" Zu An asked.

Mi Li shook her head. "There's not enough information. Besides, we can't see the entire formation from where we are right now. We need to check other places."

Just then, the ground suddenly began to rise and fall. The entire room began to quake!

"Are all the rooms going to change again like earlier?" Bi Linglong quickly moved toward Zu An's side. She was worried that they might be separated into different rooms. If that happened, she might really fall into true despair.

"I don't think so," Mi Li said. She stared at the space beneath the coffin. The ground there suddenly ruptured.

Then, a mound slowly rose from it, growing taller and taller. The mound continued to twist about, eventually becoming a giant bear-like structure. It was a good thing that the room was big enough, or else it wouldn't have been able to stand up straight. It didn't have eyes, but its large head still 'looked' at Zu An's party. It roared and charged at them.

Mi Li quickly said, "Some elements form elemental spirits when the element is abnormally dense or active. I'll leave it to you."

"I got this!" Zu An knew that she couldn't afford to waste her power here, so he naturally didn't object. "Real men should just do it... Pah pah pah, I mean they should just face their enemies head on!" He roared and charged forward.[1]

Bi Linglong was a little worried. She quickly warned him, "This monster is called a Giant Earth Bear. It's extremely violent and strong, and it also possesses strong defensive prowess! It's hard to defeat..."

Zu An charged head-on, letting this bear hit him all it wanted. However, the bear's attack didn't even tickle him. His fist hit the Giant Earth Bear in the head.

Boom!

The bear's head exploded, and its giant body came crashing down.

Bi Linglong quickly rushed over to Zu An's side, asking, "Are you okay?"

"Of course," Zu An said with a laugh.

"But you were clearly hit by the Giant Earth Bear's fist..." Bi Linglong looked worried. Even though she had never fought a Giant Earth Bear, she had read about it in books. Its punch carried a thousand pounds of force. Even a master rank cultivator would be seriously injured if they were hit directly!

"Don't worry, this kid might not be good in other ways, but his body is pretty hard. A Giant Earth Bear isn't enough to wound him." Mi Li harrumphed. Zu An had just reforged his body three times over with the Primordial Origin Sutra, so his body was already at an unheard-of level. There was no way he would be injured by that attack.

"What do you mean, I'm not good in other ways?" Zu An became upset. He was just about to lash out, but he suddenly heard strange sounds coming from behind him. He turned around and saw that the Giant Earth Bear's headless body was moving. The scattered earth condensed into another head. Then, after groping around on the ground, the bear replaced its head.

Mi Li said, "The reason this thing is hard to deal with is because as long as it has access to the earth element, it will regenerate endlessly."

That Giant Earth Bear roared and charged at Zu An again. Zu An's attack had already made it angry.

However, Zu An came up with an idea and summoned his Fire Phoenix. The phoenix flames quickly surrounded the monster. The extreme temperature evaporated all of the water in its body, causing its surface to develop visible cracks. There were even signs of crystallization.

Then, he quickly withdrew the phoenix fire and changed to the Snow Phoenix. The room quickly turned into a frozen world, rapidly cooling the Giant Earth Bear's body. Its body could no longer hold on after being exposed to both heat and cold so quickly, and it crumbled into countless earth chunks.

With a wave of Zu An's hand, a layer of frost covered the chunks, freezing them and preventing them from gathering together again.

"Learn the sciences and you have nothing to fear; the saying was true after all." Zu An patted his hands. He thought to himself that if he had enough time, he could even burn the pile of dirt into pottery.

"Let's get out of here before the ice melts and keep looking around." Zu An wouldn't be stupid enough to keep fighting something that wouldn't die. Who knew where the emperor was right now? He might even be ahead of them.

Mi Li and Bi Linglong had no objections. The group traversed a long path and arrived in a new room. Unlike the previous space, the room was full of life, with green grass everywhere. It felt as if they had entered a primitive forest.

“Those vines look like they’re wrapped around something!” Bi Linglong pointed at the tightly coiled vines at the center of the room.

Zu An and Mi Li were both strong cultivators, so they walked over fearlessly to examine it. Even though many vines blocked their way, a path was quickly carved open by the sharp Tai’e Sword.

“It’s another coffin,” Zu An remarked gravely.

“Bring it up; I want to see who’s buried inside.” Mi Li could accept Meng Tian being buried here, because he had brought the Qin State tremendous contributions. He barely had the qualifications to be buried here. But she had no idea who was buried in the second coffin. There were no murals describing the owner’s identity.

Zu An was also curious, so he raised the coffin lid. With his current strength, it wasn’t difficult at all. However, when he saw what was inside, he felt his scalp go numb. A chill ran down his back. “Why is he here?!”

. The Chinese character he used for ‘do’ can also mean ‘fuck’ ?

Chapter 870: Reunion

Mi Li’s expression became serious when she saw who was inside as well. Bi Linglong cried out in alarm. They reacted that way because the figure was someone who shouldn’t have been there at all: Han Zhong!

They had met Han Zhong on the first sacred mountain, but they were now already on the third sacred mountain. Furthermore, they had seen Han Zhong die with their own eyes not too long ago. With their cultivation and knowledge, they knew his death wasn’t fake. But the weed monster who had died on the first sacred mountain had actually arrived here before them, waiting for them in this coffin.

Bi Linglong pursed her lips and asked with difficulty, “Are we seeing things?” Compared to Mi Li, who felt at home here, she instead found the place eerie and creepy. The earlier she could leave, the better.

Mi Li frowned. “Could it be that the Han Zhong we saw earlier was fake? Or perhaps this one is fake?”

Zu An reached his hand to feel the corpse. He shook his head and said, “I fought with him earlier, so I can still sense some of my ki on him. Judging from the condition of the corpse, it’s apparent that it hasn’t been long since it died. It would already be dried bones if it had died during the Qin Dynasty.”

“Then why is it here?” Bi Linglong wrapped her arms around her knees. She felt a chill run through her body.

“He might’ve been brought here by those vines.” Mi Li gave the vines in the room a look. “This place is rich with the wood element. It’s definitely an abnormal situation.”

“Then is there a chance of an elemental creature appearing again?” Bi Linglong gripped her sword handle. The humiliating stance she had been in before hurt her whenever she thought about it. She really didn’t want to go through that again.

Zu An shook his head. “I already checked when I first entered this room. Even though this place is rich with the wood element, there are no signs of any elemental creatures.”

Mi Li explained, "It might be because of Han Zhong's death, so the density of the wood element here hasn't accumulated long enough to create any elemental creatures. Let's keep looking around."

"Do you think this palace is being used to activate some kind of sinister formation?" Zu An asked Mi Li along the way.

Mi Li nodded. "There's a good chance. Ying Zheng was willing to try anything to obtain eternal life. I wouldn't be surprised if he created some sort of evil formation to achieve this. We need to be careful."

That possibility immediately made the atmosphere somber. None of them could relax when there was such a possibility.

A while later, Bi Linglong subconsciously tugged at her collar, asking, "Do you two feel hot at all?"

Zu An voiced his agreement. "It is a bit hot." Even he felt the urge to take off his shirt. Wait... isn't it a good thing that it's getting hot?

Mi Li's expression became serious as she said, "I can sense the fire element stirring. Everyone, be careful."

Zu An could already see faint red glimmers coming out of a room in the distance. That was probably where the feeling of the agitated fire element came from. All of them continued carefully. The closer they got, the hotter they felt. They could clearly feel waves of heat hit them in the face as soon as they opened the door.

Just like the previous two rooms, there was a coffin at the very center of the room. Beneath the coffin were all kinds of complex runes that extended out in all directions. The room was much taller than the previous two, and even the coffin and the surrounding funerary objects were similarly taller.

But something above them drew their attention. Densely packed red lights flickered around on the ceiling, as if countless eyes were opening and closing. Even Zu An, who had seen all sorts of things, felt a chill when he saw them. Someone more claustrophobic might have already passed out from the sight.

"What is that? Is it some thousand-eyed monster?" Zu An asked Mi Li cautiously, for fear of alarming the thing.

"Won't we know if we give it a try?" Mi Li immediately swung her sleeves. A strong gale swept toward the ceiling.

Zu An was speechless. Why the hell does this woman always have to be so headstrong?!

The entire room lit up. The flickering red lights all became bright red, as if countless monsters had opened their eyes at the same time. Then, the red eyes rushed toward the party. They could finally see that the creatures weren't eyes, but rather brightly burning butterflies.

Bi Linglong seemed to have remembered something when she saw the flaming butterflies. "Be careful; those are Blazing Devil Butterflies! Once, a teacher from the Royal Academy led a group of outstanding students into a small dungeon. In the end, their entire party was wiped out from an encounter with these butterflies! They can burn your body on contact, and you won't be able to put the fire out no matter what you try; it'll continue until all of your flesh is burned away..."

She suddenly froze, a blank expression on her face. She saw that there were already several embers on Zu An's body.

Zu An frowned. Just as he was about to put up some resistance, he saw the flames suddenly begin to tremble. Then, they grew weaker and weaker before extinguishing on their own. Then, as if the Blazing Devil Butterflies had encountered something terrifying, they quickly shrank back. They attached themselves to the farthest wall and dimmed the flames around them as much as possible, as if they had gone back to sleep.

"Huh? How did you do that?" Forget about Bi Linglong, even Mi Li looked at Zu An in confusion. They hadn't seen him do anything, so why had those flaming butterflies been scared off?

Zu An took out a flame-shaped pendant that hung around his neck. It flickered with a faint radiance as warmth spread out from it.

This was the pendant Pei Mianman had given him because she was scared that her black flames would hurt him. He hadn't expected it to help him again today, that even the Blazing Devil Butterflies would be scared of the pendant. Even though it was light, it felt extremely heavy in Zu An's hand. It represented Pei Mianman's unconditional trust in him, as well as all of her love.

Mi Li chuckled when she saw his expression. "Hmph, it's probably a gift from one of your lovers."

Bi Linglong's ears pricked up. She wondered who it was that had given him the pendant. She remembered that Zu An had many beauties around him. This man was nothing but a womanizer after all!

But she soon remembered her identity, which immediately helped her calm down. Even if they did leave this dungeon successfully, the emperor was still waiting outside. What future did she have left? Such thoughts were completely meaningless.

Zu An snapped out of his daze when he saw the Rage points appear. He changed the topic with an embarrassed smile. "Let's take a look inside the room. Hm? The coffin looks like a crystal coffin. We might be able to look inside." He jumped over to the crystal coffin after he spoke. But when he got up close, he was surprised. "Huh?"

Bi Linglong arrived next to him. She couldn't help but exclaim in alarm, "Is this person dead or alive?"

There was a young man lying inside. He had handsome features, even though his face was a bit pale. Everything else about him looked fine, and even his eyelashes could be seen clearly. It was as if they were looking at a living person! It was no wonder that Bi Linglong had been surprised.

Zu An was about to ask Mi Li if she recognized him, but he saw that her lips were trembling slightly. Her face was extremely pale. "What's wrong?" he asked out of concern.

"This is my nephew, our Great Qin's crown prince, Fu Su..." Mi Li's fair fingers caressed the coffin. Her eyes were filled with sorrow.

"He's Fu Su?" Zu An was shocked. "Just how many years have already passed? Why is his body still perfectly intact?!"