

M. Slaying 71

Chapter 71: South Gate City

Recently, South Gate City buzzed with two major pieces of news.

The first news was about Miss Xue of the South Melody Conservatory, who would soon commence her tour. Her first stop was in South Gate City.

Secondly, there were reports of a demon wreaking havoc in the Li Family Estate, which was located outside the city. It was rumored that several people had died.

Among the Divine Nine and Terrestrial Ten, the South Melody Conservatory held a particularly unique position. Although ranked as one of the Terrestrial Ten, its activities differed significantly from ordinary sects and factions.

The South Melody Conservatory has a long tradition of inheriting the path of music, making it a sacred place for musician cultivators. Disciples of the South Melody Conservatory would study music from a young age and spend their entire lives cultivating with their musical instruments. They rarely engaged in combat, but they were powerful cultivators who even had their own unique divine skills.

Musician cultivators sought to understand everything in nature and society. During the early stages of their musical cultivation, they would aim to resonate with as many people as possible through their music. The greater resonance they achieved, the more successful their cultivation would be.

As a result, the South Melody Conservatory would select a few exceptionally talented individuals from numerous outer disciples to become inner disciples. These chosen few were then provided with abundant resources for their tours, propagating the path of music.

This unique system led to each generation of the South Melody Conservatory's inner disciples gaining immense popularity and numerous followers. The sect also considered the disciples' popularity a crucial factor in the final evaluation of the inner disciples.

After several years of individual tours by each inner disciple, a grand evaluation would be held at the sect home base. At this time, supporters from all corners of the world would gather to aid their favorite musicians, hoping to make them the head disciple of the generation and be renowned throughout the world.

This system resulted in the South Melody Conservatory having the fewest members among the Divine Nine and Terrestrial Ten yet boasting the greatest influence.

For the past thousands of years, the South Melody Conservatory's dedication in the Dao of Music has deepened greatly, attracting numerous seekers of Dao to visit the South Melody Conservatory. As a matter of fact, even cultivators who had attained the Heavenly Origin Realm had visited.

Therefore, although the South Melody Conservatory's disciples followed a unique cultivation path, no one dared to look down on them.

The competition among the South Melody Conservatory's current generation of disciples was exceedingly fierce.

Two years ago, the exceptionally gifted Yu Xiang'er emerged, nearly securing the position of head disciple in advance.

However, shortly afterward, Xue Lingxue entered the scene. Even before officially joining the sect, she was renowned for her extraordinary talents.

Yet, who could have predicted that, within a year, another gifted musician named Shen Qingyan would surface? Shen Qingyan, known for her unparalleled beauty and ancient charm, was another individual with peerless talents.

Some couldn't help but lament that any one of these three could have easily become the head disciple in previous generations. Fate, however, brought them into the sect during the same era.

It could be described as an era of intense competition within the South Melody Conservatory.

At this point, Yu Xiang'er's tour had already started, with several performances in major cities in the Eastern Regions.

Instead of directly challenging Yu Xiang'er, Xue Lingxue chose to start her tour in the Southern Regions.

However, while the Eastern Regions of the Yu Dynasty boasted prosperity, the Southern Region comprised wilderness mountains and few cities. They were incomparable.

Therefore, it was presumed that Xue Lingxue would commence her battle in the Eastern Regions after garnering more popularity in the Southern Regions.

South Gate City, located at the border between the Eastern Regions and the Southern Regions, was considered one of the most prosperous cities in the latter. This was precisely why Xue Lingxue chose it as the first stop of her tour.

Although the performance date was still a few days away, the pre-event publicity had been highly successful. Currently, Miss Xue's concert was the hottest topic in the entire city. Even the choice of the performance venue and the hosting business association had become popular discussion topics.

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"Are you two the esteemed cultivators from the Mount Shu Sect?" a middle-aged man with twisted chin whiskers asked, nodding as he bowed. He smiled and greeted, "I am the manager of the Li Family Estate. My surname is Cui, and you can call me Old Cui."

"Manager Cui, you need not be so formal. We are young. Just treat us like how you would treat your nephew," a young man with thick eyebrows and big eyes said, wrapping his arm around the middle-aged man's shoulder. "He's Chu Liang, and I'm Lin Bei. If you don't mind, I will call you Uncle Cui."

Once again, Lin Bei began his charming efforts to instantly deepen relationships.

"Ah, young heroes, you treat me with too much respect," the manager replied, chuckling with a smile. "The head of our village is busy and has been out of South Gate City. Otherwise, he would have definitely personally welcomed you two young heroes."

"It's all the same, all the same," Lin Bei said as he waved his hand. "We are doing things to eliminate harm for the people. Everything else is not important."

"Young Hero Lin, you are very eloquent," praised Manager Cui.

As they were led inside, Lin Bei and the manager continued to flatter each other.

Chu Liang couldn't help but speak up, "Manager Cui, why don't you tell us the specifics of the mysterious case first?"

"Oh, right, right." Manager Cui slapped his forehead and sighed. "We had no choice but to request the presence of the young heroes from the Mount Shu Sect."

"Recently, the Li Family Estate has been vying for the opportunity to host the performance of Miss Xue from the South Melody Conservatory. It was nearly a done deal, and success was within sight," Manager Cui explained.

The Li Family Estate, situated on a spacious hill outside South Gate City, was not a private residence but a high-end entertainment garden. It catered to the upper class.

They wanted to host Xue Lingxue's performance to boost their popularity and establish a prominent reputation.

Manager Cui continued, "Our only competitor is the Jingyue Pavilion by the Qinnan River. They specialize in the business of pleasure boats and proposed a plan to dock a painted boat on the riverbank, where Miss Xue would perform, and the audience would sit along the riverbank. Haha, how ludicrous."

Even while Manager Cui was providing details, he didn't forget to take a jab at their competitor.

"Indeed," Lin Bei chimed in at the right moment.

Manager Cui continued, "However, just as we were nearing an agreement, a strange incident occurred in our manor. For several consecutive nights, people encountered a monster! That monster came and went like the wind. It was extremely fast! Even the few martial artists that we raised could not discern its movements. Some guests were frightened and disturbed, and the news got out.

"Moreover, the monster seems to only scare women and ignore the male guests, for reasons unknown..."

"The matter was initially trivial with no injuries reported. However, Jingyue Pavilion seized the opportunity to spread rumors and sensationalized the situation, claiming that several people had died due to the monster. The news has now spread, and our chances of winning the bid for the performance have become extremely unfavorable..."

"So, we sought help from the Mount Shu Sect and requested the assistance of two young heroes to eliminate the monster."

Manager Cui gazed at them with hope in his eyes.

"Isn't the South Melody Conservatory one of the Divine Nine and Terrestrial Ten? Is there a need to ask us for help?" Chu Liang asked in confusion.

"Hah. You are probably not familiar with the South Melody Conservatory," Lin Bei said, chuckling. "Although the musician cultivators have high cultivation levels, they are not fond of combat. In addition, the South Melody Conservatory has very few inner disciples, and almost none of them would help anyone with eliminating demons and devils."

"Someone like Miss Xue, who is here for an important performance, would need to dedicate all her focus to preparing for the performance. If she was distracted by a monster and forced to allocate extra energy to deal with it, her mental state for the performance might be affected."

"Their path of cultivation is different from other normal cultivators."

"Young Hero Lin is right," Manager Cui said. "The South Melody Conservatory naturally won't help us with these matters. In addition, the founder of the Li Family Estate was also a disciple of the Mount Shu Sect. Therefore, we offer continuous tributes to the Mount Shu Sect every year, and our relationship with the Mount Shu Sect has always been very good."

"Oh, so the estate was built by our senior. That's interesting," Lin Bei immediately remarked. "Uncle Cui, I've got another favor to ask, and I hope it won't be too much trouble."

"Young Hero Lin, please feel free to voice out your request," Manager Cui replied courteously.

"Once we've eliminated the demon, the Li Family Estate will naturally have the right to host the performance. When the time comes, could we stay a few more days in the estate to explore and have fun? We will leave after the performance ends."

"Haha!" Manager Cui laughed. "This is of no issue at all. I can promise you this on behalf of the estate owner. If you two can help us solve the problem, we will certainly extend our warm hospitality. Young Hero Lin, are you also looking forward to Miss Xue's performance?"

"Hehe." Lin Bei grinned. "My favorite in the South Melody Conservatory is Shen Qingyan, and my second favorite would be Xue Lingxue. But looking across the entire martial world, my ultimate favorite is Jiangjiang of the Mount Shu Sect! Jiang Yuebai!"

"Oh! Young Hero Lin, you and I share the same interest! My favorite is also Shen Qingyan! I have admired Fairy Jiang of Mount Shu for a long time, but unfortunately, I haven't had the chance to meet her," Manager Cui said, revealing a sincere smile from the bottom of his heart for the first time. "Qingyan! Qingyan! She is beautiful and has a sweet voice!"

"My face shines with joy for Qingqing who has my heart!"[1] Lin Bei also responded excitedly.

As the two spoke with enthusiasm, they joined hands and showed such expressions of joy, portraying the thrill of discovering like-minded companions across the expanse of the world.

On the other hand, Chu Liang was just so confused.

Lin Bei, with his thick brows and big eyes, could get away with such behavior since he was young. Uncle Cui, on the other hand, had lived for at least four decades, yet he was still interested in such things...?

What are you two talking about? Salty and sweet?[2]

Are we really living in the same world? Hm?