

## **Myth Beyond 2011**

### Chapter 2011 The Kunlun God Tomb (1)

After walking for a few minutes, the dense foliage thinned, revealing a clearing bathed in an ethereal glow. Tendrils of mist swirled around a jagged, volcanic rockface, its surface shimmering faintly.

Yun Lintian looked ahead, spotting several spatial vortexes hanging in the air, each representing a distinct secret realm.

"These are the entrances to all the secret realms within the Kunlun Mountains," Lin Feng began his explanation. "We can only open three of them at present. We haven't found a way to access the others yet."

Yun Lintian recalled the information from the map he'd seen and soon noticed a solitary boulder a hundred meters away to his right. At first glance, it appeared to be nothing more than an ordinary stone.

Lin Yitong walked towards the boulder and reached out to touch it. However, nothing happened. It was as if the boulder refused to acknowledge her power.

"May I try, Senior?" Lin Feng asked cautiously.

With Lin Yitong's permission, Lin Feng approached the boulder and channeled his power into it. The triangle symbol on his forehead glowed brightly, and his entire body emitted an azure light.

Yet, nothing transpired. Lin Feng, puzzled, kept trying, but the boulder remained inert. This made him doubt whether it was indeed the tomb's entrance.

Lin Yitong glanced at Yun Lintian without a word. If anyone could open the entrance, it had to be him.

Yue Shen had also observed this scene. Her gaze on Yun Lintian intensified, recognizing his seemingly extraordinary status.

Yun Lintian said nothing and walked forward.

A bone-chilling wind suddenly whipped across everyone, tearing at their robes. The sea of white clouds around the mountains churned violently.

This abrupt change startled everyone. Lin Feng glanced at Yun Lintian with surprise. He immediately realized that the young man he had overlooked possessed something unique.

Subconsciously, Lin Feng stepped aside, allowing Yun Lintian to reach the boulder.

Yun Lintian reached out to touch the cool, weathered surface. When his hand landed, ancient text immediately surfaced on the boulder, resembling a celestial map with swirling constellations etched in an unknown language. Yun Lintian traced the grooves with his fingers, channeling his divine energy.

The air crackled with unseen energy in response to his touch. A low hum resonated from deep within the mountain, steadily growing louder until it vibrated through his very core.

A blinding light erupted from the inscription, forcing Yun Lintian to shield his eyes. The boulder itself groaned, cracks splitting across its surface. With a deafening roar, it split open, revealing not a hollow interior but a swirling vortex of jade-green light.

The air shimmered with otherworldly energy, carrying the faint scent of rain and wildflowers. This was it. The entrance to the legendary Kunlun God Tomb, a secret realm lost to time.

A tremor of nervous excitement ran through Lin Feng and the other sect masters. Their reverence for the Kunlun God flowed through their veins. Their greatest desire - witnessing the Kunlun God's remains - was now within reach.

"This is the map." Lin Yitong spoke, and a map of the tomb materialized in the air, allowing Lin Feng and the other sect masters to commit it to memory.

"We are deeply grateful for your generosity, Senior," Lin Feng expressed sincerely. He turned to Yun Lintian. "Sir..."

Before Lin Feng could complete his sentence, Yun Lintian calmly interjected, "I'll claim the treasures."

Lin Feng, stunned, quickly replied, "That is only natural. However, we hope you can preserve the Kunlun God's remains here. We have no other interest."

"Sure," Yun Lintian readily agreed. He had no desire for the Kunlun God's remains anyway.

He reached out to touch the vortex, channeling his divine energy. The emerald vortex pulsed with an otherworldly hum, its tendrils of light reaching for Yun Lintian's outstretched hand.

"You may enter," Yun Lintian announced calmly.

"Please, Senior," Lin Feng gestured to Lin Yitong, inviting her in.

Lin Yitong, without a word, led Long Qingxuan and the others into the emerald vortex, followed by Lin Feng, Hou Jinyang, Yu Xinlan, and Yue Shen.

As Yue Shen passed Yun Lintian, she couldn't resist stealing another glance at him before disappearing into the vortex.

Unfazed by Yue Shen's reaction, Yun Lintian plunged his hand into the vortex. The world dissolved into a swirling kaleidoscope of emerald light. Disorientation washed over him, a sickening sensation of weightlessness followed by a jarring impact. When his vision cleared, he found himself amidst a scene straight out of a celestial painting.

Towering jade pillars, each etched with intricate symbols that pulsed with an ethereal glow, reached towards a sky painted with swirling nebulae. Lush vegetation, vibrant beyond imagination, carpeted the ground, the air thick with the sweet fragrance of unknown flowers.

In the distance, a majestic city shimmered like a mirage, its spires adorned with shimmering crystals that refracted the otherworldly light.

Yun Lintian couldn't help but marvel. This wasn't just a tomb; it was clearly a mega city, untouched by the ravages of time.

Everyone recalled the map in their minds, only to find it didn't align with the colossal city before them.

"Our spiritual sense is suppressed here," Yu Xinlan spoke up.

"I can feel the Kunlun God's aura," Lin Feng said with reverence. "This place is undoubtedly his eternal resting chamber."

"That towering structure there might be what the map described," Hou Jinyang pointed at the central tower of the city.

Lin Yitong exchanged a brief glance with Yun Lintian before leading everyone towards the city.

The colossal city, dwarfing anything they had ever witnessed, sprawled across a vast plain. Towering structures, impossibly tall and crafted from a material that shimmered with otherworldly hues, pierced the sky like celestial spears.

Jade walkways, wide enough for ten carriages abreast, crisscrossed the city, connecting a network of colossal buildings adorned with intricate carvings depicting mythical beasts and celestial landscapes.

The air itself buzzed with an unseen energy, a potent cocktail of spiritual essence far richer than anything they had ever encountered in the outside world.

As they entered the city, they immediately spotted various dried skeletons scattered on the streets, alongside scattered spirit weapons. It was as if a civilization here had been wiped out overnight.

"We can explore independently," Lin Yitong announced, glancing at Lin Feng's group.

Understanding her subtle dismissal, Lin Feng and the others cupped their fists. "Thank you, Senior. We will take our leave now."

"Where should we start with?" Lin Yitong glanced at Yun Lintian after Lin Feng's group left.

"Explore the city first and see what we can take away." Yun Lintian made a decision.

## Chapter 2012 The Kunlun God Tomb (2)

As they walked along the street, Yu Xinlan couldn't help but ask, "Why did you keep looking at that young man, Sister Yue?"

Lin Feng and Hou Jinyang also turned their attention to Yue Shen, awaiting her explanation.

"Didn't you notice?" Yue Shen spoke softly. "The senior kept consulting him for his opinion. There is also his extraordinary talent. Obviously, his status isn't as simple as he appears to be."

"Indeed," Lin Feng agreed with a nod. "He remains an enigma to me."

Hou Jinyang and Yu Xinlan recalled the previous scene and realized Yue Shen was right. Blinded by excitement, they had completely overlooked Yun Lintian.

"This feeling has been bothering me since the divine image appeared," Yue Shen continued. "It's as if I've met him before."

Lin Feng and the others were surprised by this revelation.

"Are you sure it's not love at first sight, Sister Yue?" Yu Xinlan teased with a playful smile.

Yue Shen shook her head with a faint smile. The longer she spent around Yun Lintian, the stronger this feeling became. However, she was certain they had never met before.

Yu Xinlan changed the subject, glancing at the scattered skeletons on the street. "Where should we head now?"

"Let's check out that tower," Hou Jinyang suggested, raising his head towards the tallest structure in the distance. "Undoubtedly, it must be the tomb of the Kunlun God."

Lin Feng pondered for a moment before responding, "Agreed. But let's refrain from touching anything."

Everyone concurred, and they set off towards the tower.

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Dust motes danced in the slanted shafts of light filtering through cracks in the ceiling. The silence in the abandoned avenue was broken only by the crunch of Yun Lintian's shoes on the jade pavement.

Towering structures, once gleaming with otherworldly brilliance, now stood marred by the ravages of time. Vines snaked through decaying facades, their tendrils adorned with bioluminescent flowers that cast an eerie glow on the deserted streets. The air hung heavy with the scent of damp earth and forgotten memories.

At the center of the avenue, countless skeletons lay stacked on top of each other, forming a small mountain of bones.

Zhang Yu frowned deeply as he stared at the pile. "What exactly transpired here?"

Yun Yi looked at Lin Yitong. "Have you discovered anything, Senior?"

"Nothing," Lin Yitong replied, her brow furrowed. "Clearly, these were practitioners, yet there's no trace of profound energy left behind. However, their skeletons are remarkably well-preserved."

"Furthermore," she added, "their clothing and weapons suggest this happened recently, yet the surrounding structures are clearly aged."

Despite her vast knowledge, Lin Yitong couldn't fathom a proper explanation for this strange scene.

"Look at their bones," Long Qingxuan said calmly. "They're too well-preserved."

Everyone observed the complete lack of damage on the skeletons. It was as if they had simply died without a chance to fight. Whoever had killed them hadn't even disturbed their bodies.

Yun Lintian scanned the area with the Eyes of Heaven but couldn't detect anything unusual.

A sudden memory surfaced - the Skymist Ancient City where he met Tang Suyin back in the Azure World. However, this place emanated a completely different aura. There was no sense that these skeletons could return to life.

Yun Lintian scanned his surroundings and made a decision. "Let's investigate the inn over there."

Everyone turned their attention to a beautiful building adorned with a signboard reading "Jade Inn" and proceeded towards it.

A wave of stale air, thick with the scent of dust and forgotten memories, assaulted them as they entered. Despite the passage of time, the interior was surprisingly well-preserved. Polished jade tables and chairs sat neatly arranged around a central hearth, where the remnants of a long-extinguished fire lay scattered. Scrolls depicting scenes of boisterous feasts adorned the walls, the colors muted but still vibrant.

The reception hall of the inn was vast, capable of accommodating thousands of guests at once. An unsettling silence hung heavy in the air, broken only by the soft drip of water somewhere in the back. A shiver ran down Yun Lintian's spine.

This place, once filled with laughter and life, now held an undeniable aura of melancholy.

Yun Lintian scanned the room meticulously but found nothing out of the ordinary. However, he decided to explore further.

As they ventured deeper, the inn creaked and groaned around them like a living entity. In the kitchen, they discovered utensils hanging neatly on racks, pots, and pans seemingly frozen in time.

They stumbled upon a storeroom farther back, filled with petrified foodstuffs – fruits, vegetables, and even slabs of meat. A testament to a time abruptly stopped.

Finally, they reached a flight of stairs leading upwards. Curiosity piqued, Yun Lintian ascended, his companions close behind. The stairs led them to a balcony overlooking the common room. And there, propped against the railing, sat a skeletal figure clad in faded red robes.

The empty sockets of the figure seemed to stare directly at Yun Lintian, a faint, melancholic smile etched on its skeletal face.

A single jade pendant hung from its bony neck, the inscription on its back glowing with an ethereal red light.

Yun Lintian carefully examined the characters carved on the jade and discerned the word "Phoenix."

Nantian Fengyu noticed the pendant as well. She knelt in front of the skeleton and reached out to get a closer look at the jade pendant.

Buzz—

The moment her finger touched the jade, a burst of fiery phoenix flame erupted and vanished in a split second. The skeleton disintegrated into a pile of ash.

"Fifth Sister?" Yun Lintian called out with concern, rushing to Nantian Fengyu's side. He was immediately struck by the sight of tears streaming down her cheeks.

Nantian Fengyu wiped away her tears, clutching the jade tightly. She looked at Yun Lintian and said, "I'll keep this jade."



"Of course," Yun Lintian agreed, worry lacing his voice. "Are you alright, Fifth Sister? What happened?"

"I'm fine," Nantian Fengyu replied with a forced smile. "I'm just... happy to find a fellow clansman here."

Yun Lintian sensed there was more to her story but decided not to pry. He smiled gently. "That's good. Let's keep searching. Perhaps there are others here."

"Mhm!" Nantian Fengyu nodded vigorously.

On the side, Lin Yitong observed the jade pendant in Nantian Fengyu's hand with a thoughtful expression, her mind seemingly grappling with an unspoken revelation.

#### Chapter 2013 The Glorious Past (1)

Yun Lintian and his companions crept cautiously along the second-floor hallway. Cobwebs, like tattered shrouds, draped the exposed rafters, and a thick layer of grime clung to everything. The silence was a suffocating weight, pressing down on them with an unseen hand.

Tentatively, Yun Lintian pushed open the nearest door. A stale, moldy odor assaulted his nostrils, sending a jolt of revulsion down his spine. The room was barren except for a pile of tattered straw mats huddled in the corner and a single, dust-encrusted chest shoved against the far wall.

Yun Lintian's gaze lingered on the chest for a moment before a dark stain spreading across the floorboards near the window snagged his attention. Dried blood, unmistakable. It was the first time he'd encountered such evidence after navigating countless skeletal remains.

He scanned the room carefully, finding no remnants of life here. Evidently, the source of the blood hadn't met its demise in this room.

Yun Lintian continued down the hallway, each creaking floorboard a jarring screech in the oppressive silence. He pushed open door after door, each room revealing a similar tableau – dust, decay, and the lingering ghost of blood. But in the third room, something far more unsettling awaited him.

In the center of the room, collapsed amongst a jumble of broken furniture, lay a skeleton. Bleached bone, unmistakably human, formed its skeletal frame, with tattered remnants of robes clinging to it. A single, empty eye socket seemed to stare sightlessly at Yun Lintian, a silent testament to the violence unfolding here.

As he continued his exploration, he found more skeletons – some sprawled across the floor, others slumped against the walls, their vacant sockets appearing to accuse him from the shadows.

These skeletons, however, held nothing of note – unlike the one with the phoenix jade.

Emerging from the room, Yun Lintian found everyone waiting. They all shook their heads in unison, silently conveying their lack of success.

"Then let's move on," Yun Lintian decided, leaving the inn behind.

When Yun Lintian stepped out, a blinding ray of morning light speared his eyes, forcing him to raise a hand to shield them.

Before fully recovering, he found himself standing on a bustling street teeming with life. Gone was the emptiness. Merchants hawked their wares from colorful stalls, their voices a melodic cacophony. People in vibrant silks and jade ornaments bustled past, their laughter echoing off the intricately carved facades of buildings that shimmered with an otherworldly sheen.

Stunned, Yun Lintian whipped around. Instead of Nantian Fengyu and the others, he saw customers spilling out of the inn onto the street. The once-decayed inn now pulsed with life.

"Big Brother Yun?" Linlin, perched on Yun Lintian's shoulder, echoed his bewilderment.

"Where are we?" Qingqing blinked several times, eyes darting across the bustling scene. They had undeniably been in the abandoned city. How could they be here?

With a swift activation of the Eyes of Heaven, Yun Lintian confirmed that everything before him wasn't an illusion. It was real. As if by some unknown magic, they had traveled to the past to witness the city in its glorious prime.

While Yun Lintian grappled with the situation, a beautiful woman in a red robe emerged from the inn. The red jade pendant at her neck instantly drew his attention – it was undeniably the phoenix jade he'd seen on the skeleton.

The woman caught Yun Lintian's gaze, and a flicker of surprise crossed her features when she noticed Linlin on his shoulder. She approached him with a smile. "It's been a long time since I've encountered a descendant of the White Tiger God Royal Clan."

Yun Lintian's brow shot up. The woman radiated a pure Divine Phoenix bloodline, rivaling Nantian Fengyu's in potency.

Seeming to realize her forwardness, the woman offered an apologetic smile. "Forgive my abruptness. I'm Nantian Yu. Might you be an elder of the White Tiger God Clan?"

Nantian Yu? The surname surprised Yun Lintian.

Gathering himself, he replied, "Indeed. I am Yun Lintian, and this is Princess Linlin."

"Yun Lintian, quite an ambitious name," Nantian Yu chuckled, then turned to Linlin. "A pleasure to meet you, Little Sister Linlin."

"Mhm," Linlin responded, unsure of what to say. The prospect of Nantian Yu inquiring about the White Tiger God Clan unnerved her, fearing she couldn't answer.

Nantian Yu found Linlin's reserved response endearing.

Looking back at Yun Lintian, she asked, "What brings you to Nine Firmament City?... My apologies. Perhaps that was presumptuous."

Yun Lintian offered a faint smile. "This is our first visit. We're here to gain experience."

"I see," Nantian Yu said, glancing at Linlin with understanding. "She must be quite young." Linlin's low cultivation compared to her age was evident. "Is that why you've come?"

"Actually," Yun Lintian admitted politely, "we'd appreciate some guidance. We're a bit lost, unsure of where to start."

Nantian Yu's expression brightened. "Excellent! I'm heading to the Nine Furnace Alchemy Convention. Why not join me?"

"We'd be delighted," Yun Lintian readily agreed.

With a smile, Nantian Yu merged back into the bustling crowd.

Casting aside his doubts, Yun Lintian followed closely behind. They weaved through the crowds of practitioners until they reached the plaza where he'd previously seen the mountain of bones.

The once-bustling marketplace was now a vibrant tapestry of color and sound. Sect flags of every design fluttered in the morning breeze, boasting ancient lineages and prestigious legacies.

Hawkers peddled a dazzling array of exotic wares, shimmering vials containing rare ingredients, gleaming robes adorned with intricate enchantments, and even pulsating stones thrumming with a faint aura.

Yun Lintian marveled at the sheer variety of cultivation resources on display. Nantian Yu, on the other hand, was a whirlwind of curiosity, her eyes sparkling as they darted from one marvel to the next. Leaning closer to Yun Lintian, she barely managed to make herself heard over the cacophony.

"See the old man over there?" she whispered, pointing. "That's the city lord."

Yun Lintian followed her gaze. Seated on the main seat of a raised platform was a white-haired old man. To his surprise, the man exuded the unmistakable aura of a True God.

What surprised him even more was the people surrounding the old man. Every single one – True Gods. It was the first time Yun Lintian had witnessed such a gathering of these powerful beings.

"He's quite powerful but nowhere near your supreme elder," Nantian Yu said further.

Supreme elder... Yun Lintian thought, a spark of realization igniting in his mind. The White Tiger God Clan in this time must have been at its prime.

Chapter 2014 The Glorious Past (2)

On the other side, Lin Yitong and the others stood frowning in front of the Jade Inn. The moment they followed Yun Lintian out, he had vanished into thin air. Even Lin Yitong couldn't find a single trace.

Long Qingxuan scanned the surroundings with her draconic eyes glowing azure, but she too failed to locate Yun Lintian.

"Senior?" Yun Yi looked at Lin Yitong with a questioning gaze.

Lin Yitong glanced at the phoenix jade in Nantian Fengyu's hand and asked, "What did you see?"

Everyone turned to Nantian Fengyu, waiting for her explanation. Nantian Fengyu lowered her head slightly and spoke up, "I saw... how she died."

Lin Yitong raised an eyebrow slightly. "How?"

Nantian Fengyu raised her head and began to speak slowly...

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"Ugh, why is that bastard here?" Nantian Yu furrowed her brow, spotting an unwelcome figure in the crowd ahead.

Yun Lintian followed her gaze and saw a tall young man clad in crimson robes. A flicker of recognition crossed his features as he sensed a familiar power emanating from the man – the Golden Crow bloodline.

The young man noticed something and looked in Nantian Yu's direction. A smile, laced with affection, appeared on his face.

"Ugh... Let's leave here." Nantian Yu felt a surge of nausea as she saw the approaching young man and clutched her stomach, feigning discomfort.

Yun Lintian nodded and followed Nantian Yu out of the crowded area.

In the distance, the young man shifted his gaze onto Yun Lintian. A frown creased his face, expressing apparent dissatisfaction.

"He is the current true heir of the Golden Crow God Clan, Jin Yang," Nantian Yu explained after finding a relatively distant place to stay. "He's been relentlessly pursuing me for years. The sight of him makes me want to vomit."

Yun Lintian smiled faintly and remained silent.

"Well, this should be a safe distance," Nantian Yu glanced at the stage ahead. Although further away, it was a small price to pay to avoid Jin Yang.

Bang!

A booming voice suddenly echoed across the plaza, drawing all eyes towards a towering platform erected at the center. Nine colossal furnaces, each etched with intricate symbols and burning with an otherworldly fire, dominated the platform.

"Esteemed guests, welcome to the Ninth Furnace Alchemy Convention!" The city lord stood up, his voice resonating with power. "This year, we have gathered the most talented alchemists from across the continent to compete for the coveted title of Alchemy Emperor!"

A collective gasp rippled through the crowd. The title of Alchemy Emperor was a highly sought-after honor, a mark of unparalleled skill and prestige in the world of alchemy.

Yun Lintian watched with a hint of curiosity. Surprisingly, he hadn't seen or participated in any alchemy competitions before. This was a rare chance to witness one. Perhaps he could gain some valuable knowledge.

While the event was undoubtedly fascinating, Yun Lintian didn't forget his primary objective – to understand the situation and figure out how he ended up here.

"Who do you think will win the competition?" Nantian Yu asked, her curiosity piqued.

"I don't know," Yun Lintian admitted gently. "What about you?"

Nantian Yu pointed at a group of practitioners on the right side of the stage and said confidently, "Them, without a doubt."

Yun Lintian followed her gaze and saw a group of practitioners clad in robes adorned with the fiery emblem of the Vermilion Bird.

"Did you see the gentle woman standing at the front? She is the eldest princess of the Vermilion Bird God Clan, Yan Jingru. Her alchemy talent is unprecedented. I didn't expect her to participate in this year's convention. Normally, she rarely shows up in public," Nantian Yu explained further.

"I see," Yun Lintian responded thoughtfully.

Nantian Yu glanced at him curiously and said, "It seems you rarely come out."

"Well, yes," Yun Lintian smiled. "I usually stay in seclusion with Her Highness."

"I can tell," Nantian Yu chuckled.

A palpable crackle of anticipation hung in the air as the first round of the competition began. Yun Lintian and Nantian Yu's eyes were glued to the platform, eager to witness the spectacle of alchemical mastery unfold.

The first round of the Nine Furnace Alchemy Convention blurred into a dazzling display of skill and power. Masters of fire, ice, and even the more obscure elements like lightning and wind danced across the platform, coaxing their respective furnaces into a frenzy. Exotic ingredients bubbled and hissed, sending plumes of multicolored smoke billowing into the sky.

Yun Lintian found himself enthralled. Each alchemist's technique, the subtle nuances in their hand movements and how they guided the flames, were valuable lessons.

"These techniques are impressive but a bit showy," Nantian Yu curled her lips. "I miss the good old days when alchemy was more about control than spectacle."

"Did you come here often?" Yun Lintian inquired.

"Yes," Nantian Yu responded casually. "I come here every year. It's too boring at home."

Yun Lintian smiled faintly. He found the personalities of Nantian Yu and Nantian Fengyu to be quite similar. Both of them enjoyed adventure and rarely stayed at home.

Suddenly, a commotion erupted near the Vermillion Bird God Clan's section. A young woman, barely out of her teens, stood trembling, tears welling up in her eyes. Her robes, adorned with the fiery emblem of the clan, were singed and smudged.

Before Yun Lintian could inquire, a voice cut through the din.



"Yan Qing! Have you brought shame upon the clan again?" The speaker, a tall, imposing woman with fiery red hair, glared down at the young woman with icy disdain. "Another failed concoction! You are a disgrace to your lineage!"

Yun Lintian felt sympathy for the young woman, Yan Qing. Her shoulders slumped under the harsh reprimand, and shame clouded her expression. He thought the Vermilion Bird clan members were relatively gentle. It turned out they could be harsh as well.

"Her strength clearly isn't enough," Nantian Yu said indifferently. "It seems someone wants to make trouble for her."

Yun Lintian spotted a gloating smile on a woman sitting beside the tall woman who spoke earlier. He could immediately figure it out. This Yan Qing was obviously forced to come here. With this failure, she would certainly be cut out of the competition for the throne.

The competition continued, and the winners of the first round emerged.

"Let's find something to eat," Nantian Yu declared. "The second round will start tomorrow."

"Sure," Yun Lintian agreed, standing up as well.

They exited the bustling plaza, unaware of Jin Yang's watchful gaze. Jin Yang frowned slightly, then pushed through the crowd, determined to follow them...

### Chapter 2015 The Glorious Past (3)

The scent of sizzling meat and fragrant spices filled the air, dancing merrily around the crimson lanterns that hung outside the Blossoming Lotus Restaurant. Inside, Yun Lintian sat across from Nantian Yu in a spacious dining hall.

Between them, a steaming pot of Jade Pearl Rice and an array of delicacies fit for a king awaited their ravenous appetites. Yun Lintian carefully cut a piece of grilled meat into several pieces and fed them to Linlin and Qingqing.

Nantian Yu dug straight into a plate of glistening stir-fried Earth Dragon meat, the crunch a satisfying counterpoint to the savory sauce. With a mouthful of food, she looked at Yun Lintian and said, "You surely dote on them."

Yun Lintian smiled faintly and asked, "Did you come here alone?"

"Otherwise?" Nantian Yu responded casually. "It's impossible for them to let me come out freely. I had to sneak away."

Taking a sip of Jade Berry wine, she continued, "How long do you plan to stay here?"

"I haven't decided yet," Yun Lintian replied gently. "What about you?"

"I'll leave after the convention," Nantian Yu responded. "You should consider leaving too. It will be difficult to depart later."

"Why?" Yun Lintian inquired curiously.

Nantian Yu, seemingly accustomed to Yun Lintian's lack of knowledge, explained, "They'll hold a celebration for the Yellow Emperor next. Many more people will flock here then."

Surprise flickered in Yun Lintian's eyes. It seemed the Yellow Emperor was truly here.

"Your people should be coming as well," Nantian Yu suggested. "Perhaps you can stay here. After all, you don't need to avoid them like I do."

"Who is he?" Yun Lintian asked with a curious expression, "The Yellow Emperor?"

Nantian Yu cast Yun Lintian a doubtful look. "I'm starting to wonder now. How could your elders let you come out alone? You seem to be completely clueless."

She didn't mind and began to explain. "The Yellow Emperor is one of the twelve emperors under the God of Mortals. He's even considered the foremost among them. His standing is incredibly high among the True Gods. Even our elders must show him respect."

Yun Lintian was shocked inwardly. This was the first time he'd heard of such a thing. The Yellow Emperor, it turned out, was a True God under the God of Mortals, the very one who initiated the Primordial War.

A flurry of questions arose in Yun Lintian's mind. He felt as if he were taking a step closer to the truth.

"Surprised?" Nantian Yu chuckled, noticing Yun Lintian's contemplative expression. "Well, perhaps you could accompany your people to the banquet. The Yellow Emperor is known for his kindness. There might be an opportunity for you."

"I understand," Yun Lintian nodded politely. He certainly would like to meet the Yellow Emperor, but his situation wouldn't allow it. After all, he had no connection to the White Tiger God Clan here.

Just then, Nantian Yu furrowed her brow in annoyance, setting down her chopsticks with a sigh.

The source of the interruption was none other than Jin Yang, who swaggered over with his two guards in tow.

"Nantian Yu," Jin Yang declared, his voice booming like thunder. "What a delightful surprise to find you here!" However, his gaze flickered towards Nantian Yu's companion.

Yun Lintian briefly glanced at Jin Yang before continuing to feed Linlin and Qingqing. The two bodyguards flanking Jin Yang were both High Gods, while Jin Yang himself was on the middle level of the Lower God Realm. There was nothing for Yun Lintian to worry about.

The guests in the dining hall observed the scene, whispering amongst themselves. Most undoubtedly recognized Jin Yang's identity.

Nantian Yu crossed her arms defiantly and glared at Jin Yang. "You might as well pay for the meal. Your presence has completely ruined my appetite."

"No problem, just a few divine stones," Jin Yang chuckled.

His golden eyes flickered towards Yun Lintian, a thinly veiled challenge. "Perhaps we could share a table? There's much to be discussed between practitioners of such esteemed lineages."

Prior to arriving, Jin Yang had already investigated Yun Lintian's identity. With Linlin perched on his shoulder, Jin Yang presumed Yun Lintian to be her divine protector, obviously of lower status than himself.

"Please, Young Master Jin, don't hesitate to make yourself comfortable," Yun Lintian replied with a faint smile.

Jin Yang chuckled and took a seat. He glanced at Linlin and bowed with cupped fists. "Jin Yang greets Your Highness. It's a pleasure to share a table with such esteemed company."

Linlin simply gave him a curt glance and remained silent.

Undeterred, Jin Yang turned to Nantian Yu and inquired, "Did you come here for the celebration?"

"Get lost before I'm forced to teach you another lesson," Nantian Yu said coldly. Her eyes flickered with phoenix flames.

"That's part of what I find attractive," Jin Yang chuckled. "Well, I didn't come here to cause a scene. There will be another opportunity."

Surprisingly, he rose and prepared to leave. As he took a step forward, he paused abruptly and turned back to Nantian Yu. "Almost forgot to tell you. My father has already spoken with Uncle Nantian. Expect news soon."

He flashed a smile before leaving after finishing his sentence.

Nantian Yu's face darkened upon hearing this.

Yun Lintian watched her, noticing her hands clenched into trembling fists. It wasn't difficult to understand the situation. Jin Yang's father must have discussed a marriage with Nantian Yu's father.

Nantian Yu snatched the wine cup and downed it in one gulp to steady her nerves.

Yun Lintian remained silent, silently refilling her cup.

"You must be secretly gloating at me," Nantian Yu spoke, taking another swig of wine.

Yun Lintian shook his head. "Not gloating, but understanding. We can't control everything. There will always be situations beyond our power."

Nantian Yu sighed and gently touched the phoenix jade. "If only my mother were still here..."

"Let's drink," Yun Lintian offered, raising his cup.

Nantian Yu didn't respond but clinked her cup against his before draining it again.

The meal continued, but Nantian Yu barely touched the food. She focused solely on drinking, her face reddening progressively as her head drooped.

Yun Lintian watched her with concern. "You should stop drinking."

It was evident that Nantian Yu wasn't attempting to metabolize the alcohol.

"Leave me be," Nantian Yu mumbled, waving her hand dismissively before reaching for another drink.

Yun Lintian sighed and grasped her wrist, gently using his power to restrain her.

"We should head back," he said, guiding her out of the restaurant.

Chapter 2016 The Glorious Past (4)

"Which room?" Yun Lintian inquired, returning with Nantian Yu to the Jade Inn.

"The first one on the second floor," Nantian Yu mumbled, her eyelids fluttering shut before sleep overcame her. She leaned heavily against his shoulder.

Yun Lintian swiftly adjusted his hold to support her. With a helpless sigh, he carried her to her designated room and laid her gently on the bed.

"Mom... I miss you," Nantian Yu murmured, clutching the quilt as if it were her lifeline.

Yun Lintian observed her silently. A strange sense of familiarity washed over him, a fleeting glimpse of Nantian Fengyu in Nantian Yu's vulnerable state.

A while later, Nantian Yu's grip loosened on the quilt, and she drifted into a deep sleep.

Yun Lintian carefully draped the quilt over her and surveyed the room. His gaze landed on an ordinary chest tucked away in the corner. This room was undeniably the same one he had seen before. Following the original timeline, Nantian Yu was supposed to meet her demise on the staircase outside.

"What has changed?" Yun Lintian pondered, his mind consumed by the mystery surrounding the city's fall. He yearned to unravel the truth.

With one final glance at the sleeping Nantian Yu, he quietly slipped out.

Emerging from Nantian Yu's room, Yun Lintian encountered two figures clad in the crimson robes of the Golden Crow God Clan. Their postures were ramrod straight, their expressions unreadable, the epitome of unwavering loyalty.

Yun Lintian recognized these individuals as Jin Yang's personal guards, the ever-present shadows flanking the flamboyant young master. Before he could raise a question, one of the guards spoke, his voice clipped and formal.

"Greetings, Divine Protector of the White Tiger God Clan. We are under orders from Young Master Jin to request your presence."

Yun Lintian lifted an eyebrow. "Request?" he echoed, his voice devoid of warmth. "Or is it more of a demand?"

The other guard stepped forward, a flicker of impatience crossing his otherwise stoic demeanor. "Think of it as an invitation. Young Master Jin awaits you in the inn's finest private pavilion. He assures you, the refreshments will be most agreeable."

Yun Lintian narrowed his eyes. A scoff escaped his lips. "Tell your Young Master," he drawled, "that I have no interest in whatever peacock posturing he has planned for this evening."

The guards exchanged a tense glance. "We urge you to reconsider. Ignoring a direct invitation from the Golden Crow God Clan is not advisable." Their words held a veiled threat, a reminder of the power disparity between the clans.

"Are you threatening me?" Linlin spoke up, her eyes flickering with golden lightning sparks.

"Certainly not, Your Highness," the guard replied politely. "The Golden Crow God Clan enjoys a good relationship with your esteemed clan. We merely have business with your Divine Protector."

Yun Lintian wasn't intimidated by Jin Yang or his clan. "And what are the repercussions of refusing?" he challenged, his voice a low rumble.

The lead guard remained impassive. "The consequences are entirely at Young Master Jin Yang's discretion."

Yun Lintian smirked upon hearing this. "Then convey this message," he declared, his voice firm. "If he has something to say, he can find me himself. Otherwise, I suggest he seek entertainment elsewhere."

He brushed past the guards calmly after finishing his sentence.

A flicker of surprise marred the guards' stoicism as Yun Lintian brushed past them. They hadn't anticipated such defiance, such a blatant dismissal of their veiled threat.

The two exchanged glances and reached out, attempting to grab Yun Lintian's shoulders. Before they could make contact, a surge of power slammed into them, invisible but undeniable. It was Yun Lintian's aura, unleashed in a sudden burst of anger and protectiveness.

The guards, both at the peak of the High God Realm, stumbled back as if struck by a physical blow. Shock contorted their faces—Yun Lintian, a mere Divine Emperor, had effortlessly pushed them away without them realizing it.

Yun Lintian didn't pause. He continued walking, his steps purposeful, his back radiating an icy resolve.

Behind him, the guards slowly regained their footing. Shame burned in their eyes, a stark contrast to their usual stoic demeanor. Being overpowered by a practitioner of a lower realm was a humiliation they wouldn't soon forget.

However, they didn't pursue Yun Lintian further.

"We underestimated him," one guard muttered, his voice laced with bitterness.

The other guard nodded grimly. "No wonder he dares to come here alone with the princess."

They exchanged a tense look, the unspoken question hanging heavy in the air – what now? Returning to Jin Yang empty-



handed was unthinkable. Yet, engaging Yun Lintian in a direct confrontation was a path fraught with danger.

Suddenly, a new figure emerged from the shadows. A tall, slender woman with eyes like molten gold and a smirk playing on her lips materialized – Jin Yuxin, Jin Yang's Divine Protector. Her power undoubtedly resided in the God Ascension Realm.

"Seems you boys ran into a bit of trouble," Jin Yuxin drawled, her voice dripping with amusement.

The guards bowed their heads in shame. "We apologize, Lady Jin. We underestimated him."

Jin Yuxin chuckled. "He wasn't hiding anything. He's indeed a Divine Emperor."

The guards were stunned. They didn't doubt Jin Yuxin's words in the slightest.

"Go," Jin Yuxin directed them with a glance. "I'll handle this."

"Yes, Lady Jin," the guards responded readily before departing.

Jin Yuxin's eyes flickered slightly. Then, with a silent movement, she vanished from the spot.

After leaving the inn, Yun Lintian strolled along the street, trying to grasp the situation in this place.

"Big Brother Yun?" Linlin piped up curiously, eager to know his plan. Having sensed Jin Yuxin's presence in the shadows earlier, she was naturally worried.

"Don't worry," Yun Lintian said with a reassuring smile. "They wouldn't dare do anything."

He reasoned that Jin Yang and his people wouldn't risk an open attack until they unraveled Linlin's true identity.

"Mhm," Linlin hummed in agreement, adjusting her position to comfortably nuzzle her face against Yun Lintian's cheek as she observed the bustling scene around them.

Yun Lintian attempted to summon the Gate of Beyond Heaven but to no avail. It was possible he was trapped within some kind of illusory realm within his own mind.

Lost in thought, Yun Lintian suddenly spotted a familiar figure in the crowd ahead. It was none other than Yan Jingru from the Vermilion Bird God Clan.

As their eyes met, an inexplicable feeling welled up within both their hearts...

#### Chapter 2017 The Glorious Past (5)

There was no such feeling for Yun Lintian when he first saw Yan Jinru. Now, however, he felt a sense of familiarity, as though they had known each other for a very long time, which was obviously impossible.

A strange fluttering arose in Yan Jinru's chest. Regaining her composure, she bravely walked towards Yun Lintian.

"Greetings," she spoke. "May I have a chat with you? I'm Yan Jingru, by the way."

Slightly surprised, Yun Lintian gestured in invitation. "I'm Yun Lintian. Please."

The two found a private room in a nearby teahouse to settle in.

"Apologies for the abruptness," Yan Jingru said after pouring cups of tea for Yun Lintian and his companions. "Are you perhaps related to my Vermilion Bird God Clan?"

"Why do you ask this, Miss Yan?" Yun Lintian inquired, carefully observing Yan Jingru. He discovered that the purity of her bloodline was incredibly high, a bit inferior to his.

"Though you clearly belong to the White Tiger God Clan, I sense the aura of the Vermilion Bird God from you," Yan Jingru revealed honestly.

Yun Lintian was inwardly surprised. He had fully displayed the White Tiger God bloodline on the surface, yet Yan Jingru could still detect his Vermilion Bird God bloodline.

Yan Jingru, assuming it was difficult for Yun Lintian to reveal his background, glanced towards a corner. "Second Aunt," she said, "please help me seal this place."

A figure emerged from the shadows – Yan Feihong, Yan Jingru's Divine Protector. Briefly glancing at Yun Lintian, she waved her hand, conjuring an isolation barrier to seal the room.

Yun Lintian wasn't surprised by her sudden appearance. It was normal for someone of high status like Yan Jingru to have a powerful protector. Jin Yang, for example, had been the same.

While these people concealed themselves well, they couldn't escape the Eyes of Heaven. Yun Lintian had already scanned the surroundings the moment he entered the room with Yan Jingru.

Yun Lintian sipped his tea and inquired, "What if I told you I have no connection to your clan?"

"I believe you," Yan Jingru replied calmly. "The purity of the Vermilion Bird God bloodline in your body can only exist in a first-generation descendant. Our Vermilion Bird God Clan has no male heir to inherit the bloodline, at least none that we are aware of."

"No," Yan Feihong interjected. "The purity of your bloodline is equal to or even surpasses that of Lord Vermilion Bird God herself."

She locked eyes with Yun Lintian and asked, "Who are you?"

Yun Lintian hadn't anticipated their complete understanding. However, considering the power of the Vermilion Bird God bloodline, it wasn't surprising they could detect it.

"I apologize," Yun Lintian responded after a brief pause. "I cannot disclose that information. However, I can assure you that I have a positive relationship with Senior Vermilion Bird God."

Yan Jingru and Yan Feihong exchanged bewildered glances. They had never heard their master mention such a person.

"May I inquire about the name of Senior Vermilion Bird God?" Yun Lintian pressed, hoping for confirmation.

"This..." Yan Jingru hesitated, seeking help from Yan Feihong with a glance.

Suddenly, Yun Lintian remembered that mentioning Lord Vermilion Bird God's true name, or any True God's name for that matter, was taboo. Just as he was about to apologize, Yan Feihong spoke first.

"Yan Siqi," she stated. "Her name is Yan Siqi."

Yun Lintian's pupils constricted. It was the same name as Senior Yan, whom he had encountered in the past. Could they be the same person?

This possibility lingered in Yun Lintian's mind because something had always felt off about the Divine Realm's divine beasts. For instance, the Primordial Azure Dragon God turned out to be the true Dragon God. Similarly, Senior Jin was clearly not the real Golden Crow God. The same was true for Senior Gui and Senior Divine Phoenix.

As for Linlin's mother and the Vermilion Bird God, Senior Yan Siqi, Yun Lintian couldn't reach a conclusion yet.

Overwhelmed by the revelation, Yun Lintian struggled to compose himself. It felt like he had stumbled upon a piece of a hidden truth.

"This might seem peculiar," Yun Lintian said earnestly, "but could you tell me the true names of all the beast god clan leaders?"

Yan Feihong furrowed her brows. "Shouldn't you reveal something about yourself first?"

She turned to Linlin and added, "You are clearly a descendant of Lord White Tiger God."

Yun Lintian regretted asking such an impulsive question. He quickly composed himself and fabricated a story. "We were raised in seclusion our entire lives. This is our first time venturing out."

Yan Feihong scrutinized Yun Lintian's expression, searching for any deception. However, he appeared truthful.

"Except for the Dragon God," Yan Feihong said, "I can tell you about the others. Lord White Tiger God's name is Bai Xiaoyun. Lord Black Turtle God is Gui Shen. Lord Golden Crow God is Jin Huoxuan. And Lord Phoenix God is Nantian Feng."

This revelation sent shockwaves through Yun Lintian. Except for the Golden Crow God, the names matched those he knew perfectly.

"Big Brother Yun..." Linlin whimpered, her eyes brimming with anxiety. She couldn't be sure if the current White Tiger God was her mother, but they shared the same name.

Yun Lintian forced himself to remain calm and gently patted Linlin's head. "We'll find out soon."

He turned to Yan Jingru and Yan Feihong. "May I inquire about the possibility of requesting an audience with Senior Vermilion Bird God?"

Yan Jingru looked at Yan Feihong silently, unable to make a decision.

After a moment of contemplation, Yan Feihong said, "I can inquire, but I cannot guarantee a meeting."

"Thank you, Senior," Yun Lintian expressed his gratitude.

"Hmm?" Yan Feihong raised an eyebrow, sensing something.

Turning to Yun Lintian, she asked, "Have you encountered any trouble from someone belonging to the Golden Crow God Clan?"

"Yes," Yun Lintian confirmed, explaining the situation.

"Heh. How audacious," Yan Feihong scoffed after hearing his story.

Dissipating the barrier with a wave of her hand, she spoke, "You certainly work hard for your worthless young master, Jin Yuxin."

The door creaked open, revealing Jin Yuxin entering the room with a faint smile. She cast a brief glance at Yun Lintian before addressing Yan Feihong, "Don't tell me you plan to interfere?"

"What do you think?" Yan Feihong countered with a smile.

The moment her words died down, the surrounding temperature plummeted, and the atmosphere crackled with tension...

#### Chapter 2018 The Glorious Past (6)

Icy tension gripped the room, a suffocating weight threatening to turn even the sturdiest pillars to frost.

"You overstep your bounds, Jin Yuxin," Yan Feihong's voice pierced the silence, each word a honed blade. "Do you not fear the wrath of Lord White Tiger God?"

A flicker of amusement, sharp as a viper's strike, danced across Jin Yuxin's features. "Fear? Of course, one would be remiss not to fear Lord White Tiger God." She chuckled. "But do you truly believe him to be a divine protector?"

Jin Yuxin turned to Yun Lintian and added, "Your strength is unprecedented. I've never encountered such an anomaly like you before. If you truly belong to the White Tiger God Clan, they wouldn't allow you to venture out alone."

Yan Feihong furrowed her brow but remained silent. Jin Yuxin's sharp mind had exposed the flaw in Yun Lintian's fabricated story. Here, Yan Feihong was powerless.

Yun Lintian calmly sipped his tea, then raised his head to meet Jin Yuxin's gaze. "Indeed, I'm not affiliated with the White Tiger God Clan. However, I wouldn't recommend provoking me."

"Oh?" Jin Yuxin offered a playful smile. "Sounds like you're quite confident. What should I do then? I'm suddenly tempted to test that confidence."

Linlin and Qingqing's dissatisfaction manifested as a frown. Their auras subtly emanated from their bodies, indicating their readiness to take action.

Naturally, neither was a match for Jin Yuxin, but they could still make a scene.

Yun Lintian placed his teacup down and smiled. "Go ahead then. What are you waiting for?"

A sudden sense of danger prickled at Jin Yuxin's heart. Unexplained intuition urged her to keep her distance from Yun Lintian.

Jin Yuxin remained unaware that she was subconsciously intimidated by Yun Lintian's Golden Crow God bloodline. In terms of hierarchy, Yun Lintian's bloodline was on par with, or even surpassed, the actual Golden Crow God. In his presence, what power did a descendant like Jin Yuxin truly possess?

On the sidelines, Yan Feihong seemed to grasp the situation. A similar pressure emanated from Yun Lintian, a sensation of bloodline suppression. He possesses the Golden Crow God bloodline as well? The revelation stunned her.

Just then, a crimson-green flame ignited within Yan Jingru's eyes. She fixed Jin Yuxin with a cold stare. "Are you finished? He is my guest. You've disrupted our conversation."

Jin Yuxin's eyebrows shot up at this declaration. Yan Jingru held a status equivalent to Jin Yang, both true heirs to the throne. As long as Yan Jingru stood between them, taking action against Yun Lintian would be difficult.

Jin Yuxin's gaze flickered momentarily. She offered a smile. "Apologies for the interruption. I'll take my leave now."

Jin Yuxin cast one last lingering look at Yun Lintian before exiting the room.

Yan Feihong saw no reason to stop her. Causing a scene wouldn't benefit them here.

"Thank you, Miss Yan," Yun Lintian said, cupping his fists in a gesture of gratitude.

"It's my pleasure. You are my guest, after all," Yan Jingru replied gently. "However, I do have a suggestion. It would be wise to maintain some distance from Nantian Yu."

"Why is that?" Yun Lintian inquired, puzzled.

"Her situation is complex," Yan Jingru sighed softly, her eyes filled with sympathy. "Simply put, it would be in your best interest to stay away from her, especially now that Jin Yuxin is aware of your identity."

Since Yan Jingru wasn't forthcoming with details, Yun Lintian didn't press the issue further. "I always assumed there wouldn't be intermarriage between the beast god clans," he said.

"Your understanding is correct," Yan Jingru explained. "Marrying into another clan signifies the abandonment of one's bloodline. Those who do so are stripped of everything and exiled before leaving. Otherwise, any offspring born from such a union would surely perish due to conflicting bloodlines."

"In Nantian Yu's case, she would be the one to lose her bloodline."



Yun Lintian furrowed his brow deeply upon hearing this. A sense of unease settled in his heart. Perhaps it was his own Divine Phoenix bloodline that drew him closer to Nantian Yu. If possible, he wouldn't want to see her condemned to such a fate.

However, when he considered her supposed demise, Yun Lintian wasn't sure whether to feel relieved or saddened.

Yan Jingru noticed a subtle shift in Yun Lintian's eyes. He seemed overcome with emotion at that moment.

"Have you ever heard the legend of the Twin Souls Phoenix?" she inquired.

Yun Lintian pondered for a moment before shaking his head. "No," he responded. "What is it about?"

"Legend tells of twin phoenixes," Yan Jingru began. "One named Feng, the other Yu. Together, they formed Fengyu, the True Divine Phoenix, embodying the perfect balance of yin and yang."

"As we know, yin and yang are inseparable. If one were to disappear, the balance would be broken. The legend continues that Feng and Yu encountered a formidable foe, and Feng perished protecting Yu. Though Yu emerged victorious, it lost the will to live and ultimately perished."

Yun Lintian grasped the story's core. "Are you implying...?" he inquired curiously.

"Indeed," Yan Jingru sighed. "Nantian Yu is the daughter of Lord Phoenix God. Together, they were the fabled Fengyu. Roughly twenty thousand years ago, Lord Phoenix God met with calamity and ultimately succumbed."

"Following Lord Phoenix God's passing, her husband, Nantian Huang, ascended to the leadership position. Though a True God himself, his strength pales in comparison to Lord Phoenix God. Consequently, the Phoenix God Clan was diminished to the Divine Phoenix Clan we know today."

Yun Lintian fell silent. The memory of Nantian Yu calling out for her mother in her sleep surfaced in his mind. He felt a sudden, suffocating pressure grip his heart, causing him immense discomfort.

He understood everything perfectly. Faced with the Golden Crow God Clan, Nantian Huang had no choice but to compromise, even if it meant condemning his daughter to a fate worse than death.

"Do you think you can help her?" Yan Feihong asked as if peering into Yun Lintian's thoughts. "While I must admit your strength is extraordinary, remember that you are alone in this."

Yan Feihong couldn't fathom why she'd spoken up. Perhaps it was the thought of someone with such a pure Vermilion Bird God bloodline dying for an illogical reason that troubled her.

Yun Lintian remained silent. Even if he intended to help, he first needed to determine whether he'd traveled back in time or was trapped in an illusion.

Observing his silence, Yan Feihong diverted the conversation. "I've already sent a message to Lord Vermilion Bird God. We await their response."

#### Chapter 2019 The Glorious Past (7)

"Many thanks, Senior." Yun Lintian expressed his gratitude. He didn't have high hopes, aware of the difficulty of his request. Meeting an unknown person like him was almost impossible for the Vermilion Bird God herself.

Yan Feihong looked deeply at him and said, "It seems you are indeed familiar with her."

Surprised, Yun Lintian soon understood her meaning. People who received the message from Yan Feihong must have noticed something and passed it on to the Vermilion Bird God, proving Yun Lintian's unusual status.

"Don't overthink it," Yan Feihong said with a smile. "They're merely interested in your origin. It is still unknown whether Her Majesty would respond to your request."

"Understood," Yun Lintian replied politely.

Yan Jingru sipped her tea and spoke. "Do you have any plans after the celebration?"

"Not at the moment," Yun Lintian shook his head.

"If you'd like," Yan Jingru said, "I'd like to invite you to our clan."

Yun Lintian considered for a moment. "I wouldn't mind. However, I also have another request. Would it be possible to visit the White Tiger God Clan?"

Yan Jingru glanced at Linlin on his shoulder before turning to Yan Feihong. "Second Aunt, what do you think?"

Yan Feihong frowned slightly. "There shouldn't be a problem. However, you need to conceal your bloodline better... Forget it. I heard Elder Bai is coming. I'll bring you to meet her."

"Elder Bai?" Yun Lintian repeated, unsure.

"She's the White Tiger God Clan's supreme elder, second in command," Yan Jingru explained. "I don't know the source of your royal bloodline, little sister, but Elder Bai is known for her kindness. You can trust her."

"Thank you, Miss Yan and Senior Yan," Yun Lintian said sincerely while patting Linlin gently.

"Why don't you head back first? We'll contact you tomorrow with a response from Lord Vermilion Bird God, hopefully." Yan Jingru said gently.

"Then, I'll take my leave." Yun Lintian cupped his fists and departed directly.

After Yun Lintian left, a deep frown creased Yan Jingru's face. She couldn't understand how Yun Lintian possessed the bloodline, especially since he apparently had two divine bloodlines, something only legends spoke of.

"Second Aunt?" Yan Jingru looked at her aunt for an opinion.

"No idea either," Yan Feihong shook her head. "Only Her Majesty knows. It's best not to pry further."

"You're right." Yan Jingru took a deep breath and nodded.

"Right now, I'm worried about how he'll handle that... crazy woman," Yan Feihong sighed softly. She knew Jin Yuxin wouldn't stop easily.

"Should we intervene?" Yan Jingru couldn't decide. Sending Jin Yuxin away was already pushing it.

"Let's wait and see," Yan Feihong spoke. "Did you see his reaction earlier? No fear in his eyes. He seemed extremely confident in dealing with everyone here."

Yan Feihong chose to omit the part about bloodline suppression.

"Well, understood," Yan Jingru nodded gently.

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Leaving the teahouse, Yun Lintian wandered the city. Despite the urgency to find answers, he had no starting point.

"Big Brother Yun..." Linlin voiced the doubt gnawing at her.

"Anything's possible right now," Yun Lintian acknowledged her worry. "It's risky, but we'll do everything to get answers. Be patient, alright?"

"Mhm," Linlin mumbled softly, nuzzling his cheek with her head. "Thank you, Big Brother Yun."

Yun Lintian patted her head gently and continued his stroll.

Drawn by a towering structure, he soon found himself before it. This was the very tower housing the supposed remains of the Kunlun God.

Yun Lintian lingered in the plaza for a long time before reluctantly turning back. Powerful guards surrounded the building, making entry impossible.

Unbeknownst to him, a pair of eyes watched him from the tower's heights. The observer, an amiable-looking middle-aged man, seemed preoccupied as he gazed upon Yun Lintian.

"My lord," the city lord announced, entering the room with a respectful bow.

The middle-aged man retracted his gaze and turned to him. "How are the preparations?"

"Everything is ready," the city lord, Li Shan, confirmed. "However, I recently received news that Lord Yan will personally attend the banquet."

Lord Yan, of course, referred to none other than the Vermilion Bird God, Yan Siqi.

"Oh?" The man's surprise was evident. He glanced at the distant Yun Lintian and instructed, "Prepare for her arrival. Ensure everything goes smoothly."

"Understood," Li Shan readily responded.

"Very well, you may go," the middle-aged man dismissed him.

Li Shan bowed again and left.

The man continued to watch Yun Lintian's disappearing back, muttering to himself, "Something momentous is brewing... What is it?"

This enigmatic man was none other than the supreme being Yun Lintian sought – the Yellow Emperor, Huan Yiming!

Yun Lintian continued his exploration until dawn. He gained a rough understanding of the city layout, confirming its similarity to the one he'd seen before.

He then found a secluded spot to bury a divine stone imbued with his aura. He'd retrieve it upon returning to confirm this wasn't an illusion. This was the only solution he could devise for now.

Without further deliberation, Yun Lintian decided to return to the Jade Inn. He settled at a table in the lounge, waiting for Nantian Yu.

Nantian Yu was currently his only source of information about the situation. Perhaps, deep down, he also harbored a worry for her. The thought of leaving her alone didn't sit well with him.

An hour later, Nantian Yu entered the lounge and spotted Yun Lintian. She approached him and said, "Did you stay here last night?"

Yun Lintian glanced at her cheerful demeanor, and her tragic story immediately surfaced in his mind. The image of Nantian Fengyu seemed to perfectly overlap with the woman before him. Both carried burdens within, yet maintained a facade of cheerfulness.

He shook his head. "I wandered around the city last night."

"Oh," Nantian Yu acknowledged. "I forgot to mention something. You can stay in the room next to mine. I booked it for, well, peaceful sleep."

Yun Lintian eyed her curiously. The room had an isolation barrier, so there wasn't a logical reason for her to book the adjacent one.

"Thank you," Yun Lintian accepted without protest.

"Let's grab something to eat," Nantian Yu suggested, leading the way out of the inn.

Yun Lintian followed silently, but before exiting, he saw Jin Yuxin behind him. Jin Yuxin flashed him a playful smile, which he promptly ignored as he left.

"Are you sure he's strong?" Jin Yang appeared behind her and looked at Yun Lintian doubtfully.

"If you want to cause him trouble, you should consider another approach," Jin Yuxin said gently.

Jin Yang's eyes flickered slightly. His thoughts remained a mystery.

#### Chapter 2020 The Glorious Past (8)

Yun Lintian and Nantian Yu found a restaurant for breakfast before heading to the plaza to watch the pill competition.

The second round focused on individual knowledge. Competitors received random ingredients and had to formulate the best pill recipe they knew.

Yun Lintian found the competition intriguing. If he had the chance to hold such an event, he'd set it up similarly.

Time flew by, and the competition reached its climax. Ten winners were announced, including Yan Jingru and Jin Yang.

"There's nothing else to see here. Let's go sailing," Nantian Yu suggested.

Yun Lintian naturally agreed. Perhaps he could glean some information from overheard conversations.

They weaved through the crowd and headed towards the west side of the city.

On the stage, Jin Yang glared at Yun Lintian and Nantian Yu, his expression darkening. The murderous intent in his heart intensified.

Yan Jingru noticed the killing intent in Jin Yang's eyes and frowned. She had warned Yun Lintian, but he seemed oblivious. With a sigh, she realized there was nothing else she could do.

After the ceremony, Jin Yang stormed off with anger flickering in his eyes.

Yan Feihong approached Yan Jingru and whispered, "Her Majesty has arrived."

Yan Jingru's eyes widened in disbelief. "She...?"

"Don't worry," Yan Feihong soothed, "that boy will be safe. Come on, let's go." She gently pulled Yan Jingru away.

In the distance, Jin Yuxin observed the interaction between Yan Feihong and Yan Jingru. A frown creased her face. It seemed she needed to intervene and prevent Jin Yang from attacking Yun Lintian.

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The afternoon sun cast long shadows across the jade-green water of the Serene Canal, a ribbon that snaked through the city's western side.

Yun Lintian, brow furrowed in concentration, wrestled with the ornately carved tiller of the flat-bottomed boat. Beside him, Nantian Yu's laughter, tinkling like wind chimes, filled the air as she expertly adjusted the sail, catching a playful breeze.

"How's it going? Master sailing yet?" Nantian Yu teased.

"Well, it's definitely harder than I imagined," Yun Lintian admitted, letting out a breath and surrendering to the rhythm of the water lapping against the hull. His pre-conceived image of sailing was far from reality.



Naturally, Yun Lintian could use his power to effortlessly maneuver the boat, but that would defeat the purpose of enjoying the moment.

The wind, carrying the sweet fragrance of blooming lotuses that lined the canal, filled their lungs. As they glided past bustling markets overflowing with exotic wares and restaurants wafting the aroma of spiced delicacies, a melody drifted across the water.

A group of musicians perched on a nearby bridge played on instruments resembling stringed lutes but emitting an otherworldly sound. The music, melancholic yet strangely uplifting, painted a picture of soaring mountains and ethereal waterfalls in Yun Lintian's mind.

Nantian Yu retrieved a small clay pot and two delicate cups from a wicker basket. With practiced ease, she brewed a fragrant tea, the steam swirling skyward like wisps of smoke. "This is Butterfly Blossom tea," she explained, handing him a cup. "Said to calm the mind and awaken the senses."

Yun Lintian took a tentative sip. The tea, infused with the essence of the music and the sights around them, tasted like a dream – sweet, floral, and strangely invigorating. As he closed his eyes, the worries gnawing at him seemed to melt away, replaced by a sense of wonder and a newfound peace.

In that moment, bathed in the golden light of the setting sun, surrounded by the beauty of this fantastical world, Yun Lintian wasn't just a man lost in an unknown world. He was a traveler, a part of this breathtaking tapestry, and for a stolen moment, everything felt strangely perfect.

"I wouldn't mind living like this every day," Nantian Yu spoke softly, sipping her tea and looking at Yun Lintian.

"He must have been bothering you, right?" she asked. Nantian Yu's keen observation skills easily picked up on Jin Yang's demeanor and petty personality.

"Don't worry about me," Yun Lintian said casually. "He should be grateful I didn't retaliate."

"Wow, I never thought you'd brag," Nantian Yu laughed.

Yun Lintian took a sip of his tea with a smile. "I thought you'd resort to alcohol again."

"I'm not a drunkard," Nantian Yu shrugged. "Last night was an exception."

Yun Lintian chuckled and fed Qingqing and Linlin some snacks.

Nantian Yu's gaze followed the path of the golden sunlight, her mind drifting to an unforgettable memory buried deep in her heart. In the past, she'd often sail a boat with her mother, those being the happiest times of her life.

Unfortunately, she would never be able to experience that again.

Yun Lintian sensed the shift in her mood. Hesitating briefly, he reached out and gently patted her shoulder. "I believe she wouldn't want you to be sad."

"You know?" Nantian Yu looked up at him, surprised.

"Well, I met with Yan Jingru last night, and we had a conversation," Yun Lintian explained, not hiding anything.

"She probably warned you to stay away from me, right?" Nantian Yu chuckled. "Why didn't you listen?"

"Why should I?" Yun Lintian smiled. "I trust my own judgment."

Nantian Yu held his gaze for a long time before speaking softly, "Thank you."

Her voice blended with the ethereal music, yet Yun Lintian heard it clearly. He looked at her and said, "I've lost someone precious to me as well. But I know they wouldn't want me to live in despair. The only thing I can do is follow their wishes. Maybe you could try it too."

Nantian Yu locked eyes with Yun Lintian for a moment and said, "You know what? I've always had this feeling since I first saw you. It's like we've known each other for a long time."

"Really?" Yun Lintian smiled faintly, taking a sip of his tea. "I thought you were attracted to my undeniable handsomeness."

"Bah!" Nantian Yu rolled her eyes. "Not only do you brag, but you're also narcissistic. I take my words back. I don't think we have known each other."

The two laughed, sharing a peaceful moment.

Standing on a distant stone bridge, a beautiful veiled woman watched Yun Lintian silently. Her eyes, hidden beneath the veil, held a complex mix of emotions.

If Yun Lintian were present, he would be utterly shocked. The woman's appearance was identical to Yan Siqi, the one he'd seen in the past!

Behind her, Yan Jingru and Yan Feihong stood silently, unsure why their Lord chose to observe Yun Lintian from afar.