

Protect OCL 91

Chapter 91: Powerful! Old Ancestor Longyan

...

As the sentence echoed.

A graceful woman floated forward from afar, hovering in the air before slowly descending to the ground. Her white hair was loose over her shoulder, her eyes, deep and icy beneath her veil, unreadable as they scanned Liu Zhide and Zhao Bojun.

Her dress was simple and devoid of luxury, yet it made her look ethereal, as if untouched by the mundane world.

She reached out with her jade hand.

The floating Dragon Smoke Sword gently hummed, "Hum~~~," moving like a living being into her palm.

"Wang Longyan!"

The pupils of Liu Zhide and Zhao Bojun shrunk, both compulsively retreated a few steps, their eyes flickering with horror and fear. Countless years had passed, but Wang Longyan's terrifying memory was still firmly imprinted in their minds.

It was her!

A city-shaking swordswoman, as dreamlike and magnificent as an immortal descended from the heavens.

It was her!

Undeterred by a three-to-one disadvantage, she fearlessly slaughtered a powerful ally they relied upon.

Fifty years have passed, and other than her hair turning snow white, she hasn't changed much. Her gaze has only become more profound, her demeanour subdued, making her more elusive and unpredictable.

The members and heads of the Liu and Zhao clans looked on in tension and fear, stepping back slowly. However, despite this fear, many curious eyes stole glances at Wang Longyan.

This woman, known amongst the two families, was full of a mysterious aura. With her capabilities, she has sustained the Wang family until now, even the clan ancestors were in deep awe of her.

In contrast to the low morale of the Liu and Zhao clans.

The Wang family members were excited and overjoyed. The ancestor, Longyan had appeared. Let's see if the Liu and Zhao clans still dare to act arrogantly?

Wang Shouzhe alone remained calm from beginning to end, as if everything was well under his control.

Nevertheless, Liu Zhide and Zhao Bojun, being people who have lived for over a hundred years, quickly recovered from their shock and fear.

Zhao Bojun took a deep breath, his eyes gradually concentrating, "Wang Longyan, aren't you afraid of aggravating your injury by forcibly fighting with your Mysterious Energy?"

Indeed.

Everyone in Ping'an Town knows that Wang Longyan of the Wang family has been critically injured and has been barely holding on. Recently, there have been many speculations saying that she won't live long.

Could it be that she is just putting up a strong front now?

Members of the Liu and Zhao Clan sighed in relief, their morale slowly recovering from the low point, and all eyes turned to their two ancestors.

Feeling the hopeful gaze of the clan members, Liu Zhide knew it was not the time to back down.

He stood tall, arms behind him, exhibiting a calmer demeanor, "Wang Longyan, I admit that you are remarkable. However, years of injury, even if it has not worn you down too much. In these fifty years, we have been cultivating day and night, our strength is no longer what it..."

"Try me."

Without wasting words with him, Ancestor Longyan launched herself forward, raising her jade hand, the Dragon Smoke Sword hummed gently as it advanced towards Liu Zhide.

This attack, though seemingly ordinary, caused temperatures around her to plummet sharply in an instant as the sword was launched. Moisture condensed into dancing frost, quickly clustering around the Dragon Smoke Sword and forming a frost storm within a radius of several feet that enveloped Liu Zhide.

Liu Zhide's pupils constricted, he exclaimed, "Mysterious Ice Sword Technique!", then, terrified, he retreated.

The Top-Grade Swordsmanship 'Mysterious Ice Sword Technique' is a unique swordsmanship from Master Binglan's lineage of the Purple Abode Academic Palace. It requires the practice of the 'Mysterious Ice Jue' cultivation method to be implemented effectively.

It is said that at its peak, everything within a hundred feet will be covered in frost once the sword is drawn, causing all things to perish.

However, Liu Zhide's retreat was too late, the frost storm had already frozen him, slowing his movements considerably and the deadly Dragon Smoke Sword was silently aiming for his heart.

The sword was not yet there, but the Mysterious Ice Sword Energy had already arrived.

Feeling a sharp pain in his chest, Liu Zhide hurriedly flipped his palm, revealing a dark gold bowl in his hand.

A Spirit Level Purple Gold Bowl!

Holding the bowl in one hand, Liu Zhide forcefully stimulated the Mysterious Energy.

"Hum!~~"

The Purple Gold Bowl started to vibrate at a high frequency, emitting a deep sound like that of morning and evening drums. Suspended in the air, it unleashed a radiant golden light which quickly solidified to form a semi-circular shield.

Everything seemed complicated but transpired in just an instant.

The Dragon Smoke Sword, wrapped in the frost storm, collided head-on with the golden shield of the Purple Gold Bowl.

"clang!"

A violent collision was heard, the frost danced in the sky. The golden shield caused ripples of energy but stood firm like a lone peak in the midst of a storm.

Only Liu Zhide, who was spiritually connected with the Purple Gold Bowl, took a portion of the impact and his face turned a little pale.

But in the end, he survived!

"Huh, the Purple Gold Bowl from Banruo Temple?"

Her sword had not done the devastating damage she intended.

Master Longyan exclaimed lightly in surprise, showing a slight bewilderment. But she instantly dismissed this idea and coldly said, "So it's just a replica of a Spirit Instrument Level artifact, the real Purple Gold Bowl would not fall into your hands."

There are various types of spirit instruments in the world. Master Longyan once possessed two spirit instruments, the Dragon Smoke Sword and the Turtle Scale Shield. However, both of these spirit instruments were original works made by master refiners using the unique attributes of the materials.

There are also some master refiners in the world who replicate famous and powerful magical treasures. Although the power and effectiveness of these replicas are far from reaching the level of the genuine treasure, they are more suitable for Spirit Platform Realm cultivators to use.

This Purple Gold Bowl was evidently a replica.

"Exactly." Liu Zhide held the Purple Gold Bowl in his hand, and a proud smile appeared on his face, "This Purple Gold Bowl of mine is a defensive spirit instrument, how does it compare to your Dragon Smoke Sword and Turtle Scale Shield?"

He was proud, and naturally had a reason for his pride. A spirit instrument is worth tens of thousands of Qian Gold. Some of the lesser Rank 9 families simply can't afford it. Even the more powerful families would consider themselves fortunate if they managed to accumulate enough wealth to acquire a spirit instrument over a long period of time.

The reason Master Longyan had two spirit instruments was because one of them, the "Dragon Smoke Sword," was a creation from the peak period of the Wang family.

At that time, Old Ancestor Zhou Xuan was a powerful cultivator in the advanced stage of the Spirit Platform Realm. He had earned a lot of money and accumulated many valuable resources in the process of expanding his territory. He personally returned to Longzuo County Town and commissioned a master refiner to forge two spirit instruments.

The "Zhou Xuan Sword" is now enshrined in the ancestral hall as the focal point of the Wang family's faith, and the "Dragon Smoke Sword" is Master Longyan's main spirit weapon.

As for the Turtle Scale Shield, it was a gift from Master Binglan, Master Longyan's mentor, when she was selected as a core disciple. Even for the Purple Abode Academic Palace, with its immense wealth and resources, spirit instruments are not casually given to disciples.

It is evident that Master Binglan greatly valued Master Longyan, thinking she had a good chance of advancing to the Heavenly Human Realm.

During such a prosperous period, the Wang family could only forge two spirit instruments. For a Rank 9 family like the Liu Clan, which was far less prosperous than the Wang family had been, it wasn't easy to acquire even one spirit instrument.

The Purple Gold Bowl was revealed.

Zhao Bojun and Master Meng, both revealed looks of envy and jealousy, as neither of them possessed spirit instruments.

It was rumored that the Gongsun Clan did have a spirit instrument, but that instrument was a Clan Suppression Treasure, and it wasn't at the disposal of Master Meng.

At this moment, Liu Shengye, the head of the Liu Clan, was gloating over Zhao Jinxian, the head of the Zhao Clan: "Brother Jinxian, who said making money is useless?"

It was quite clear that even if this Purple Gold Bowl was not entirely acquired by Liu Shengye alone, he undoubtedly had contributed a lot to its acquisition.

Even Wang Shouzhe, was looking at him with newfound respect. Liu Shengye was indeed skilled at making money.

"Humph!" With a dissatisfied and envious snort from Zhao Jinxian, his attention shifted back to his son. Thankfully, the ruthless young girl had reined herself in after Master Longyan's appearance and had stopped tormenting Zhao Dingteng.

With Zhao Dingteng's robust constitution, enduring a bit of hardship and persisting was no big deal.

Just when Liu Clan members and Liu Zhide were feeling smug,

Master Longyan calmly said, "How good is its defensive ability? Let's put it to the test."

Immediately, she advanced again and thrust her sword.

This thrust was completely different from the first.

The moment she launched her attack, a thunderous roar erupted, followed by a torrential rainstorm. As snow fluttered in the sky, countless sword lights enveloped Liu Zhide.

Master Longyan seemed to have transformed into a goddess enveloped in snowfall, her robes swirling and a myriad of frost particles dancing around her.

Again?

The smile on Liu Zhide's face froze as he hurriedly summoned the "Purple Gold Bowl" again, turning it into a golden barrier to resist the attack.

"Clang, clang, clang..."

The flurry of sword lights raining down, exploded densely on the golden barrier like a heavy downpour, the splashing icy frost caused countless golden droplets to spray everywhere.

With the Purple Gold Bowl in his hand, Liu Zhide couldn't withstand the unending onslaught, he kept retreating, barely managing to hold the barrier, looking terribly distressed. With a look of terror in his eyes, he yelled, "Brother Bojun, why aren't you helping?"

He knew that if he let Master Longyan continue, once his Purple Gold Bowl's defense was broken, what would he use to resist the Dragon Smoke Sword?

Zhao Bojun was also terrified. With Master Longyan's might, had her injuries really healed? If they couldn't suppress her together now, the repercussions would be endless.

Just as Zhao Bojun was about to move and join the fight,

Master Meng blocked his path and laughed heartily, "Brother Bojun, weren't you looking for a spar with me? Come, come, let's get to know each other better."

With that,

Master Meng's momentum swelled, and even his body seemed to enlarge. He threw a straight punch with no frills, unstoppable and unyielding. It was a display of absolute strength, with the demeanor of breaking all laws with a single punch.

"Gongsun Meng, you dare!"

Zhao Bojun roared in indignation, but he was forced into a fight with Gongsun Meng.

Boom, boom, boom!

Energy exploded, stones flew chaotically.

Four Old Ancestor-level figures, divided into two sides of the battlefield, fought fiercely. However, the battle between Zhao Bojun and Master Meng seemed evenly matched.

As for Longyan Old Ancestor and Liu Zhide, it was completely one-sided.

The fight between Spirit Platform Realm cultivators was massive and very dangerous. Therefore, Wang Shouzhe urged everyone to keep their distance. They simply couldn't intervene in their battles.

The two major fights left Wang Shouzhe reeling, his eyes filled with longing. Spirit Platform Realm cultivators were truly too strong.

No wonder a clan with a Spirit Platform Realm Old Ancestor can continue to flourish. Without their protection, how can they resist the bullying of others?

Chapter 92: Catching a Big Fish

...

Not only Wang Shouzhe

Even other youngsters in the family, one by one, had sparkling eyes and were mesmerized by the battlefield.

Battles of the Ancestor-level figures in the Spirit Platform Realm were rare to see. Everyone's understanding of their fighting power and lethality was merely the product of their imagination.

Today, this was a grand feast that positively influenced the young generation who aspired to tread on the path of the Spirit Platform Realm.

Just like Wang Luoqiu, the girl who always bragged about walking the imperial path, was currently full of disbelief and shock on her pretty face. It seemed as if she had received a blow, which made Wang Shouzhe feel a bit sorry for her.

"Lass, it's okay," Wang Shouzhe comforted while patting her head, "You are still young. If you wish to walk the imperial, no, the Spirit Platform path, the fourth brother will definitely support you, even though this path is full of hardships and obstacles..."

Unexpectedly.

Wang Luoqiu turned her head and glanced at Wang Shouzhe: "Old, no, Wang Shouzhe, can you stop being so childish? The path of the strong has no shortcuts. I was just feeling a bit sentimental thinking about when I would be able to destroy a mountain with a single punch, which will probably take one to two hundred years."

Wang Shouzhe was speechless. You're planning to tear apart cosmic spaceships with your bare hands, aren't you? He didn't bother responding to her.

Suddenly!

The battlefield underwent a change again.

Under Ancestor Longyan's relentless attack, Liu Zhede's turtle shell was finally blasted away. He was knocked back and cried out in terror, "Lei Yangqiu, do you really want to watch me die?"

As soon as the words were spoken.

Wang Shouzhe's face immediately turned serious. Here it comes.

Liu Zhede eventually shouted out that name. Wang Shouzhe had already anticipated it, but his face only turned especially grim when it actually happened. The questions he pondered before had started to surface.

With Liu Zhede's cry for help.

From a distance, a loud shout resounded, "Everybody, stop!" The voice exploded like a thunderbolt, shocking everyone.

At the same time.

A man dressed in martial armor slowly walked into the square from the crowd. He looked quite awe-inspiring and grim, "Esteemed Ancestors, you are free to spar. But please restrain yourselves a bit. If someone ends up dying, don't blame this Garrison Commander for being merciless."

Lei Yangqiu, the Garrison Commander of Ping'an Town.

There are two great celestial families in Changning - one of them is the Huangfu Clan. The other, the Lei family.

As expected.

Wang Shouzhe gave a slight groan inwardly but immediately accepted the facts. Because all this was within his expectations.

Many details about the great battle that happened fifty years ago, recorded in the family annals, were ambiguous. The attack of a Level Five Fierce Beast caused a beast disaster, and Ancestor Zhou Xuan had already tried his best to resist.

Changning should have swiftly sent reinforcements, but they arrived too late.

Then, the Ancestral figures of the Liu and Zhao families surprisingly feigned death and allowed two groups of Fierce Beasts to break in, causing Zhou Xuan Ancestor's defensive line to collapse. Were they really just thinking about a rebellion?

Two vassal families that were not even on par with Rank 9 families, dare to engage in such operations? If it weren't for strong support from behind, they probably wouldn't have had the guts.

Among all the families in Changning, who had the power to support them? The family with this manipulation power could be counted on the fingers of one hand.

If one were to deduce who was the puppeteer behind the scenes based on who gained the most benefit, the greatest possibility Wang Shouzhe inferred was the Lei Family of Changning.

The reasons are twofold. One, the Changning Lei Family had the full capability to do so. Second, the Garrison Commander of Ping'an Town was always appointed from the Lei family or a family close to them.

However, Wang Shouzhe couldn't fully confirm their ultimate motive. There was another doubt: if the Lei family was the hidden culprit back then, why didn't they act on their own? Or finished them off completely?

Why did they allow the Wang family to cling to life until today?

A lot of questions remained unanswerable, but today, Wang Shouzhe took the opportunity to set up this scene, firstly to severely damage the reputation of Liu and Zhao families and prepare for the next step. Second, naturally, it was to probe the bottom line of the Garrison Commander.

The Garrison Commander is the representative of the Great Qian Land. His interference would stop the battle, and if anyone continued to fight to death, a big hat would inevitably be put on their head.

The four Ancestral figures also stopped on the spot, still confronting each other.

Just at this moment, Wang Shouzhe rushed over, grabbed Wang Longyan's arm, and said with concern and anxiety, "Ancestor, are you alright? Has your injury recurred?"

At the same time, he gently pinched Ancestor Longyan's arm, reminding the Ancestor not to forget his prior instructions.

How can he just stand and do nothing?

Ancestor Longyan was pretty good in every aspect except for the fact that he was too forthright.

After a moment of surprise, the ancestor Longyan suddenly remembered Shouzhe's previous instructions. Without warning, her slender body swayed, and, placing a thin snowy hand on her forehead, she collapsed, no longer able to control the backlash of the "Yin Sha energy" within her body.

"Puff!"

A mouthful of blood spurted onto her veil, dyeing it blood red, the sight was exceedingly gruesome.

Look at this acting, Wang Shouzhe could only give her a seven out of ten. The spitting of blood was too abrupt; there were no signs of it at all. Fortunately, Wang Shouzhe was prepared and immediately called out with a distressed expression. "Ancestor, despite my repeated urging, why didn't you heed my words? If this continues, what's going to happen?"

"Ancestor, are you alright?". "Ancestor!"

The members of the Wang family also rushed over, each of them extremely anxious. The Old Ancestor Longyan was the stabilizing pin of their family. If something were to happen to her, what would they do?

"Luo Jing, Luo Qiu, quickly help the ancestor go rest. I'll handle things here." Wang Shouzhe, acting as the Clan Leader, quickly arranged everyone's tasks.

During this time, both Zhao Bojun and Liu Zhide were shocked. Wang Longyan was full of vigor just a moment ago. How could she suddenly not control her injuries?

Even the Garrison Commander who had just intervened to prevent the fight, for fear that Liu Zhide would be killed by Wang Longyan on the spot, was somewhat at a loss. How did everything take a sudden turn immediately after he made an appearance?

"Wang Shouzhe pays respect to the Garrison Commander." With gratitude all over his face, Wang Shouzhe bowed to the Garrison Commander Lei Yangqiu, saying, "On behalf of the Wang family, I

thank Commander Lei for stepping in and delivering justice, preventing my family from a disastrous outcome."

Lei Yangqiu's mouth twitched slightly, he hardly could catch the moment. He then replied seriously: "Clan Leader Wang, how is Old Ancestor Longyan's injuries?"

"Ah, in response to Commander Lei," Wang Shouzhe heaved a deep sigh, his face displaying a mixture of grief and anger, "The Ancestor was showing signs of recovery, but unexpectedly, the Liu and Zhao families started a skirmish aiming to suppress my Wang family.

With no other choice, the Ancestor had to resort to a secret technique of our sect to temporarily suppress the injury and barely fend off these strong enemies. If not for Commander Lei's timely arrival to stop the Liu and Zhao families from killing, our Ancestor today might have..."

At this point, Wang Shouzhe shivered as if he was somewhat frightened. He saluted Lei Yangqiu once again, and sincerely added: "Commander Lei, I will never forget your great kindness to the Wang family, and I will definitely repay you in the future."

Upon hearing this, Liu Zhide felt wrongfully accused. How could he actually paint a target on his back? It was obvious that Wang Longyan was the one who destroyed his Purple Gold Bowl with her strong energy. How did it turn out that he was the perpetrator?

No, considering his understanding of Wang Longyan's injuries, even selling the entire Wang family would not be enough to cover the cost of treatment.

Could it be...!

Liu Zhide's body trembled at the thought. Did Wang Longyan actually use some secret technique from the Purple Abode Academic Palace to temporarily suppress her injuries? Suddenly, an overwhelming sense of regret overcame Liu Zhide.

If that was true, if only he had held on a little longer, wouldn't Wang Longyan break down on her own? No wonder she kept attacking him relentlessly from the very beginning. She was afraid there wouldn't be enough time.

What a regret.

Why didn't he just persist a little longer? In the end, fetching Lei Yangqiu turned out to be counterproductive, saving Wang Longyan instead.

Meanwhile.

Zhao Bojun and Lei Yangqiu also realized this, and they both stared intensely at Liu Zhide. The golden opportunity for Wang Longyan to collapse from her own injuries under the name of a fair fight had been lost.

Nevertheless, Lei Yangqiu was still the Garrison Commander, maintaining his serious expression, he added: "Clan Leaders, Ancestors. Our Daqian law stipulates that private fights between various prominent families are strictly prohibited. If you have that strength, it's better to go kill some fierce beasts outside and contribute to the human race. Let's all disperse!"

With his final word, he closed the chapter for today.

As he was leaving, he cast a somewhat annoyed glance at Liu Zhide. Liu had stirred up such a commotion, not only losing both families' faces, but eventually also letting Wang Longyan get away by luck.

Today was a total defeat.

Liu Zhide and Zhao Bojun, while regretful, also felt somewhat dispirited. They couldn't stay here any longer, it was better to leave sooner.

Just as they were about to quietly leave.

Wang Shouzhe suddenly called out: "Hold on! The matter today isn't over yet."

Everyone's eyes were fixed on him.

Lei Yangqiu knitted his brows slightly and said displeasedly: "Clan Leader Wang, do you have anything else? The Garrison Commander has already said, all of you disperse, let this matter end."

"In response to the Garrison Commander," Wang Shouzhe saluted, speaking calmly, "I have a few cases of atrocious massacres to report. As everyone is here, let's close these cases once and for all."

Massacres?

Liu Zhide and Zhao Bojun's hearts skipped a beat. Today's circumstances were not right; it felt as if they had been continually falling into traps.

Without waiting for anyone to respond, Wang Shouzhe waved his hand and loudly called out: "Third Uncle, bring up the evidence."

Wang Shouzhe's third uncle, Wang Dingzu, was the Deputy Garrison Commander of Ping'an Town. He came forward with a group of soldiers slowly from a distance. With a solemn expression, he saluted: "In response to the Garrison Commander, I have cracked a few cruel cases of massacre.

With both human and material evidence present, I ask the Garrison Commander to approve our punishment of beheading the culprits."

Looking at the expressions of Lei Yangqiu, Liu Zhide, and Zhao Bojun.

Wang Shouzhe sneered internally. Did they think they could come and make a mess in the Wang family, arriving whenever they wanted and leaving as they pleased? He had planned for this, would he let the Liu and Zhao families leave without stripping off a few layers of their skin?

Chapter 93: What's the Use of Keeping Someone Who Can't Even Be a Good Villain? _1

...

Having said that Wang Dingzu.

He immediately presented all the physical evidence to the Deputy Garrison Commander Gentleman Yangqiu, saying: "The witnesses are under full control. If you have doubts, my lord, they can be summoned for further examination." He then stood respectfully to the side.

The Deputy Garrison Commander, Lei Yangqiu, was born of the Celestial Lei Family's direct descendants. Showing exceptional performance from an early age, he was trained as an elite.

After advancing to the Spirit Platform Realm, he was assigned by his clan to guard Ping'an Town and has been doing so for more than ten years. Naturally, he has seen much and has abundant experience.

Even now, he knew full well that he had fallen into a trap.

However, as the Deputy Garrison Commander, Lei Yangqiu carefully examined the evidences and statements against Wang Dingzu's case. The chain of evidence was complete, and the points of the statement were clearly outlined without any loopholes, showing Wang Dingzu's "heartfelt effort" in handling this case.

Lei Yangqiu put away the evidence and statement, a slight "kindness" appearing in his gaze, "Dingzu, you are a talent, and your intellect and talent are no less than mine as the Deputy Garrison Commander."

Wang Dingzu bowed and saluted, "My lord, you flatter me. I am unworthy."

"Regrettably, you were born in a declining family, and your support is limited." Lei Yangqiu sighed, his hands behind his back, "45 years old, Level Eight of the Qi Refining Realm, it's such a pity. If you were born into the Lei Family, you would have been a key cultivation target and the path to the Spirit Platform wouldn't be unattainable."

Wang Dingzu remained silent, his face expressionless and didn't comment.

"Dingzu, are you really going to fight against me for such a family?" Lei Yangqiu gazed fiercely at Wang Dingzu, "Are you aware of the consequences?"

Despite the immense pressure, Wang Dingzu was as steady as a mountain, bowing and replying gravely, "My lord Lei, the Deputy Garrison Commander, as the deputy commander of Ping'an Town, I am bestowed with the grace of the sovereign of the Da Qian's greatest prosperity. Naturally, I should be diligent in my duties, guarding and comforting the people.

The evidence in this case is concrete, and I implore the lord to order the summoning of the criminals and apply the law of the state publicly as a warning to others."

"Good, good,good! Yong Dingzu, you really are devoted to the state, a model amongst our officials." Lei Yangqiu laughed in rage, "I will take this case file, and after returning to the Garrison Commander's residence, the accused will be summoned for interrogation soon."

With that, he prepared to leave.

"Hold on, my lord," Wang Shouzhe stopped him.

Lei Yangqiu stopped in his tracks, his gaze fell unwelcomingly on Wang Shouzhe, "Leader Wang, what further advice do you have?"

"I wouldn't dare give advice," Wang Shouzhe bowed in salute, "Our Ping'an Wang Family, although declining, is still a registered Profound Martial Prominent Family of Da Qian."

"According to Daqian Law, my Profound Martial Worldly Family is obligated to safeguard the people and is also responsible and empowered to assist and oversee the local government. Moreover, this case involves the blood relatives of the Liu and Zhao clans. Therefore, it's more appropriate for my lord to make a public judgement, avoiding slander and damaging your official reputation."

"Public trial, public trial."

From the crowd, some people have started to incite, "These several family extermination cases are related to the high and superior Profound Martial Clan. Who can be sure that the Garrison Commander won't show partiality?"

"Yes, yes, the Liu Clan and Zhao Clan are so powerful, as long as they are given time, they will certainly destroy the evidence, and turn things around."

"If that's the case, wouldn't those wrongly executed people never be exonerated?"

"Alas, young man, you are still too young. Unaware of the world's dangers and human malice. Things like this have happened many times before. Who has ever seen the members of Liu Clan and Zhao Clan lose a single hair?"

The crowd was spirited in waves, and among the instigators were the people arranged by Wang Shouzhe.

Previously, the Liu Clan and the Zhao Clan also arranged some people among the crowd, but as for using public opinion to stir up trouble, who could beat the 'well-experienced' Wang Shouzhe?

In his previous life, he had seen numerous similar techniques in the online world. The tactics of Liu and Zhao clans were just child's play.

"Everyone rest assured, the Garrison Commander Lei will definitely answer us."

"Everyone, you have to trust the Garrison Commander. He's a noble man from the Celestial Family."

The public was boiling!

Lei Yangqiu has been cornered. He stared at Wang Shouzhe darkly, murmuring, "Leader Wang, you are very young; you are truly capable. Is this kind of confrontation really appropriate?"

"What are you talking about, my lord?" Wang Shouzhe glanced at the two clans of Liu and Zhao, then immediately solemnly said, "As the leader of an influential family, and as the ancestral lands of the generations of the family are here at the Peaceful Corner, it is absolutely obligatory to investigate this case out of filial piety, loyalty, reasonableness, and duty.

Of course, Ping'an Town ultimately looks to the lord for guidance. If the lord has any worry, you can choose to return to your mansion and continue."

Worry? Continue in the mansion?

Lei Yangqiu now had murderous intent, the matter had already gone this far due to Wang Shouzhe's instigation. If Lei insisted on going back to the house for verification, given Wang Shouzhe's tactics, he would probably exploit the situation.

If things got big, Lei Yangqiu's position as the Garrison Commander would likely come to an end, and his family would also reproach him, and possibly even put him on hold. If one couldn't even

handle being a small local Garrison Commander, how could they be entrusted with a heavy responsibility?

There are pros and cons to being born in the Celestial Family. The disadvantage is that there are many competitors. In the massive Celestial Family, there is no shortage of resources to cultivate to the Spirit Platform Realm, nor a lack of talents to walk the path of the Spirit Platform.

Upon this thought, Lei Yangqiu immediately put on a stern face, and reprimanded Wang Shouzhe righteously, "What is this, Leader Wang? As the garrison commander who received the grace of the king to guard this place, my food and pay come from the livelihood of the common people, it's my duty to represent and protect them."

Both the Great Qian Land and the Profound Martial Prominent Family, although standing high above, still value the local order and stability. Common tenant farmers and the like, though low in their eyes, even akin to ants, are clearly seen as the fundamental foundation for the Profound Martial Prominent Family and the state.

Without the masses, where would the Profound Martial Prominent Family get their abundant resources?

If a real surge of public resentment occurs, which cannot be suppressed, neither the Profound Martial Prominent Family nor the local garrison commander would benefit.

"Dingzu."

Lei Yangqiu was a decisive person and immediately went into action.

"I am here." Wang Dingzu solemnly saluted.

"This case involves Liu Shengze of the Liu Clan, and Zhao Jinda of the Zhao Clan, according to the law, you have no power to arrest and interrogate direct lineages of prominent families." Lei Yangqiu said seriously, "I, the local garrison commander, hereby authorize you, in light of the conclusive evidence, to go and arrest these two people immediately."

Many deputy garrison commanders are possibly from local prominent families.

To prevent prominent families from using public power to interfere with disputes within families, all cases involving family members, the garrison commander must personally order the arrest when the evidence chain is complete.

"I shall obey the commander's orders." Wang Dingzu respectfully accepted the command and led his wolf-like officers and soldiers into the midst of the Liu and Zhao's men, arresting Liu Shengze, and Zhao Jinda.

"Father." "Father!"

Liu Yongzhou and Zhao Dingtian, the young elite of the two clans, instantly rushed forward.

"How dare you!" Wang Dingzu's face turned cold, and with a "clang" he drew his saber, "You dare to obstruct the garrison from enforcing the laws of the Great Qian Land. If you don't retreat immediately, I, the Deputy Garrison Commander, will not spare you."

The two clan leaders, Liu Shengye and Zhao Jinxian, hurriedly intervened: "Yongzhou, Dingtian, retreat immediately."

They both looked gloomy and hateful towards Wang Shouzhe.

But now that Wang Dingzu holds the "Imperial Sword", who dares to obstruct it? If big accusations come down one after another, who can stomach it?

Thus, the two clan leaders could only turn their eyes to the old ancestors. At this time, only the old ancestors could speak up.

The old ancestors of the Liu and Zhao clans, Liu Zhde and Zhao Bojun, looked at each other, both feeling the tricky nature of today's affairs.

Moreover, at this moment, they had both sensed that they seemed to have been led by the nose by the Wang family from the beginning, falling into their schemes step by step.

However, if they don't save the key clan members, wouldn't the family's morale disperse?

Thus, Liu Zhde had no choice but to confront Lei Yangqiu and say: "Brother Yangqiu, as everyone knows, there is a feud between the Wang family and our Liu and Zhao Clans. The Wang family is likely to have targeted us in this case. Why not..."

"The evidence in this case is conclusive and there's no need for further review." Lei Yangqiu interrupted directly, "Old Ancestor Zhde, Old Ancestor Bojun. Although the garrison commander has had a long association with you two, he would not violate the law for personal reasons.

I would advise you once again that, as members of the Profound Martial Prominent Family, although bad apples are inevitable, it is your negligence in discipline."

Despite saying this on the surface, Lei Yangqiu was cursing in his heart, "Do you two old things dare to ask him to bend the law for you? The Wang family had calculated every step ahead, evidence is watertight, and the people are already nailed."

Moreover, Lei Yangqiu was very clear that these were indeed the things they had done without any false accusations.

He, Lei Yangqiu, was being roasted in public today all because of Liu Zhde and Zhao Bojun's incompetency, weren't they?

If they couldn't even handle causing a ruckus, they would be led by the nose, slapped in the face repeatedly from start to finish, their dignity and face lost.

In the end, he, Lei Yangqiu, was dragged into this, caught by Wang Shouzhe, who wouldn't let go. To whom could he convey his grievance?

With the pleas of the two old ancestors ineffective, the clans of Liu and Zhao erupted in anger.

The two clan leaders immediately signaled to have Zhao Dingtian and Liu Yongzhou temporarily restrained to prevent them from acting impulsively. Otherwise, if they gave the Wang family a handle to grasp, the trouble would be even greater.

Seeing that the others were restraining themselves, Wang Dingzu naturally had no reason to push issues further. Acting impartially and faithfully, he brought the two central clan members before Lei Yangqiu.

"Zhao Jinda, Liu Shengze, considering the conclusive evidence, if you do not possess the capability to overthrow the evidence, as the garrison commander, I suggest you maintain some dignity for your family."

Lei Yangqiu looked at them indifferently, having already sentenced them to death in his heart.

At the same time, he was annoyed. What a disgrace to have two men who can't even be bad properly, what's the use of keeping them around?

On the other hand, the Wang family... That seemingly gentle and polite young man... All of a sudden, Lei Yangqiu felt a growing dread toward Wang Shouzhe.

This young man is terrifying!

Chapter 94: Wang Shouzhe, Who Abandons After Use

...

Liu Shengze, Zhao Jinda.

Both of them were elite members of their clans, and while their powers were only at the fifth or sixth layer of the Vital Energy Refining Realm, they were responsible for managing significant clan enterprises, and they performed their duties excellently.

They were used to being held in high regard wherever they went.

They had come to make trouble at the Wang Family, intending to suppress Wang Longyan. They had arrived brimming with excitement, imagining all the benefits their clans would garner if they could suppress the Wang Family once more.

However, as soon as they arrived at the entrance of the Wang Family, they were faced with one brutal blow after another. Even their Old Ancestors were nearly killed, barely managing to survive by begging for mercy.

Such a humiliation was not where their misery ended...

At this moment, Liu Shengze and Zhao Jinda were bound tightly, in a distressing and disgraced state. Any aura of nobility they held had vanished, their eyes filled with deep fear and despair.

They wanted to defend themselves, but didn't know where to begin. All the charges listed against them were accurate and undisputable.

Perhaps the only defense they could offer was that everything they did was for their clans and not borne out of personal desire. However, by doing so, they would inevitably bring their own clans into the ordeal, implicating their own descendants as well.

They understood what the Town Governor meant by preserving their clan's honor. They were also aware of the relationship their clans had with Lei Yangqiu. If they were to offend Lei Yangqiu, there would be no peaceful days ahead for their clans.

After a fierce internal struggle, the two of them finally made up their minds.

"Head of the house!" A distraught Liu Shengze cried out, "Take good care of Yuongzhou. Wang Shouzhe, Wang Dingzu, your deaths shall be terrible."

Having said that, he agitated his Mysterious Energy and shattered his own heart. In the throes of death, his heart convulsed violently, and he spat out a mouthful of blood before succumbing to death.

Zhao Jinda likewise laughed bitterly and said, "Wang Family, your arrogance will not last forever. Son, take care of your mother and siblings."

With that, he followed the example of Liu Shengze and committed suicide in order to preserve some honor for his clan.

With their "heroic sacrifices", members of the Liu and Zhao Families were overwhelmed with grief. Many of them cried, their hatred for Wang Shouzhe, Wang Dingzu, and even the entire Wang Family intensifying. Wang Shouzhe, today's matter is far from over with you.

Liu Yongzhou and Zhao Dingtian, the sons of the deceased, were so distraught that they had to be forcefully taken away from the scene by members of their respective families.

The Old Ancestors of the Liu and Zhao families, Zhao Bojun and Liu Zhde, glared fiercely at Wang Shouzhe. Was it conceivable that they would let the deaths of those children be in vain?

Even some of the females from the Wang clan couldn't bear to watch and shielded their children's eyes. However, the Wang people would never truly sympathize with their enemies. The actions of the Liu and Zhao families against the Wang Family had already made them incompatible.

"I must admit, they were brave men." Lei Yangqiu appeared to be slightly moved, then turned to Wang Shouzhe and said sarcastically, "Clan Leader Wang, are you satisfied with this result?"

Of course, he wasn't pleased. All of this was forced upon him by Wang Shouzhe, compelling him to act against the Liu and Zhao Families.

As a result, the previously submissive Liu and Zhao families might bear a grudge against the Lei Family that would be hard to reconcile.

Meanwhile,

The onlookers also seemed to let out a breath of relief and began to cheer for Lei Yangqiu.

Many expressed their admiration for Lei Yangqiu's fair and impartial enforcement of the law. They didn't expect him to punish the offspring of the Liu and Zhao Families for the deaths of commoners. Comments praising the Celestial Beings and their families filled the air.

Lei Yangqiu, who had reached the Spiritual Platform Realm, regained some of his dignity when he heard these comments. Although the matter was forced upon him and was unpleasant, at least he had earned some renown.

"I am not satisfied," Wang Shouzhe answered solemnly and confidently.

This response caught everyone off guard. Even the Old Ancestor standing nearby, and the crowd watching the Liu siblings, were struck with apprehension, fearing that Yangqiu's anger might be fully ignited.

The discussions of the onlookers died down, leaving a bewildered crowd. Everyone thought that Lei, the Municipal Magistrate, has done all he could. How could Clan Leader Wang still be unhappy?

Some members of the Liu and Zhao families couldn't help but feel a surge of elation. Wang Shouzhe was digging his own grave, offering the Municipal Magistrate, who felt humiliated, an opportunity to retaliate.

"What?" The slight sense of satisfaction in Lei Yangqiu's heart froze, replaced by uncontrollable fury. He laughed with rage, "Very well, Wang Clan Leader. Please set the conditions. I guarantee that I will satisfy you today."

He had originally planned to deal with Wang Shouzhe after this incident and then find an excuse to trouble the Wang Family. He was determined to have his revenge on Wang Shouzhe, who had played him today, ten-fold and even a hundred-fold.

But, to his surprise, Wang Shouzhe had provided him the handle he needed without any prompting. If he didn't make things clear now, Lei Yangqiu could start stirring up trouble immediately.

"First, the Honorable Municipal Magistrate referred to them as valiant men, implying some measure of respect," Wang Shouzhe declared solemnly. "Although there was no formal trial, it's clear from the charges that they were the masterminds behind multiple family massacres. They are soaked in innocent blood and have committed heinous crimes.

Yet, you express admiration for such brutal beasts, which suggests that you inherently approve their actions. This makes me doubt whether someone with your moral compass and reputation should hold the position of Town Governor in Ping'an Town."

Chapter 94: Wang Shouzhe, the One who Abandons Tools After Success

"You..." Lei Yangqiu's face changed dramatically, a wave of anger surging in his chest, "Wang Shouzhe, you are just making nonsense accusations."

"The accusations are real, but whether they are nonsense or not, naturally, depends on discernment." Wang Shouzhe said leisurely, "The second point is not a matter of dissatisfaction, but I, Wang Shouzhe, deeply question the integrity and professional standards of a Councilor like you.

You know, we, as members of a Prominent Family, have the right to oversee the actions and laws followed by the Councilor."

"A Councilor should adhere to the Da Qian law fairly handle cases. Let's see what exactly you have done?"

"What about this Councilor has not been fair?" Although Lei Yangqiu was furious, he vaguely felt something was wrong.

Wang Shouzhe was vehemently upright, and loudly said: "In the Da Qian law, there are natural steps for adjudicating a case. Firstly, you used your power to oppress and directly blocked the self-defenses of the two untried suspects."

"Secondly, without any questioning or listening to their confessions to verify if the crime was consistent with the investigation, or inquiring if they had accomplices or any puppet-master in the background, or if the case had any hidden aspects, or even if there were any old cases that were not dug up yet, you concluded they were the unforgivable criminals.

I am interested to see how you write up your closing statements. This kind of professional ethic, as an Officer-In-Charge, is something I, Wang Mou, cannot agree with."

"Thirdly, you hastily decided the case without any trial, which is inherently irregular. I really didn't expect that you would indirectly hint and subtly threaten the suspects, who were not sentenced yet, to commit suicide. There are only two explanations for this. One, is that you're afraid that more people will be implicated during the trial of the suspects.

Two, you're very impatient about this matter and are trying to hastily conclude this case. I, Wang Mou, am deeply afraid of either of these two possibilities."

"Today, you've hastily dealt with the bloodline relations of Liu and Zhao clans like this. Tomorrow, you might subjectively convict members of my Wang family. I, Wang Mou, am quite scared."

"You..." Lei Yangqiu's face went as red as a tomato, angered to the point of stepping back a few steps, with his eyes wide open, "Wang Shouzhe, you dare to make accusations out of the blue."

A wave of overwhelming oppressive aura enveloped Wang Shouzhe.

"What a powerful official aura you have." Faced with this force, Wang Shouzhe remained unfazed, the oppressive power of the Spiritual Platform Realm is mostly a psychological deterrent for those lower in the food chain. The amount of Divine Mind Power it contained could not harm him with his seventh level of Vital Energy Refining Realm strength.

Seeing Lei Yangqiu exerting the oppression of the Spirit Platform Realm, The Old Ancestor expected to step in front of Wang Shouzhe to help him out, but he didn't expect him to be utterly unfazed, causing him to admire his grandson even more.

He had to admit, everything his grandson said made a lot of sense. Lei Yangqiu's methods were clearly not up to the standards of a Councilor mandated by Da Qian.

He had a hunch that with his grandson's capabilities, Lei Yangqiu was likely to be in trouble. His grandson was not one to make empty threats.

Even the Old Ancestor felt some sympathy for Lei Yangqiu. This fellow was, after all, a respectable Spiritual Platform Realm cultivator. He was forced by Wang Shouzhe to take action against the Liu and Zhao families first, using him as a tool to carry out the murder.

After using him, Wang Shouzhe immediately started to disengage, like trying to get rid of a dirty piece of toilet paper after wiping himself.

Not just the old ancestor thought this way.

Members of the Wang family, the Liu siblings, all felt that what Wang Shouzhe said made sense. Either Lei Yangqiu was not capable of holding the position of a Councilor, or he had some malicious intent and had some deep connection with the Liu and Zhao families.

No matter the case, him holding the position of Councilor in Ping'an Town was a disaster.

Around a thousand spectators, who in the beginning thought that Lei was a good Councilor for handling the case, had their hairs stand on end and felt chilled after hearing Leader Wang's analysis.

Yes, is it good to have such a Councilor who disregards the country's law, acts recklessly, and hastily closes cases? Today he can randomly deal with the Liu and Zhao families, tomorrow he can arbitrarily deal with the Wang Family, and the day after tomorrow, he may start slaughtering the common people in his jurisdiction.

A Councilor should maintain peace and comfort in his area.

Now everyone was afraid. Who wouldn't fear such a Councilor with no respect for the law?

With purposeful guidance, the public discussions grew louder and were filled with more and more agitation. Everyone felt that there were big problems with Councilor Lei.

The growing noise of discussions reached Lei Yangqiu's ears, causing his heart to sink gradually. The public opinion was boiling.

Even the clansmen of the Liu and Zhao clans and even the old ancestors Liu Zhide and Zhao Bojun, were sneering without the least bit of sympathy for Lei Yangqiu's predicament. Instead, they had a sense of schadenfreude.

Lei Yangqiu, Lei Yangqiu, did you imagine this scene when you were dealing with us just now?

Seeing that the situation was about right, Wang Shouzhe immediately sneered with a bowing of his hands, saying, "Commander Lei, I experienced your power. But this Changning defense is not monopoly of Celestial Lei Family."

"This matter, I will record in detail from beginning to end, make several copies, one to be sent to the prefect of the First Capital City, one to the Purple Abode Academic Palace, and one to the Longzuo County Commandery Prince's Residence. Right and wrong will be judged by the adults. I won't believe in this fallacy. There must be a place in our great Da Qian Land that will stand for the people.

If that doesn't work, I will appeal to the national capital."

"Brother Shouzhe is right, I also think that Commander Lei is not quite fit to lead one side," Liu Ruolei spoke passionately as she stepped out, "I will entrust this letter to the Purple Abode Academy to Old Ancestor Xuanfu."

"Thank you Sister Ruolei for your strong support," Wang Shouzhe thanked with a bow, "Although my Wang family also has some connections to the Academy that can handle such matters."

"Could it be... Bing?" Liu Ruolei exclaimed with joy, "Has she forgiven my grandmother?"

"It can't be said, it can't be said." Wang Shouzhe vaguely alluded to Master Binglan, not daring to lie directly, just in case it got to Master Binglan's ears, trouble would ensue.

Leave some space for everyone to imagine themselves.

And sure enough, Liu Ruolei laughed, "Since Brother Shouzhe already has a plan, I won't meddle. With her around, the Academy will surely react."

Lei Yangqiu was truly shocked, he suddenly felt an intense chill in his heart.

With Wang Shouzhe's words, no one around him was on his side. If the command post of the First Capital City was alerted and an envoy was dispatched to investigate, he feared that no one would speak out in his favor.

Furthermore, Wang Shouzhe's words were not mere threats, how could he survive an investigation?

As Wang Shouzhe said, Changning's defense was not solely under the control of the Lei family. His family had spent a lot of effort to put him in this position. If it devolved into a family dispute, he would be the first to suffer.

Wang Shouzhe, this boy's ability to control the situation was terrifying!

At that moment, he quickly retracted his aura and looked at Wang Shouzhe with an amiable expression, giving him a salute, "Brother Wang, could I have a word with you?"

Wang Shouzhe returned the salute and gently refused, "Commander Lei, you jest. We have no quarrel. Please, speak your mind publicly."

Lei Yangqiu was furious, but was held firmly in their grip, and his life's prospects were now completely at their mercy.

At that moment, he no longer cared about his dignity, and said with a ingratiating smile, "Clan Leader Wang, in your opinion, what should I do? Rest assured, I swear I will not make things difficult for the Wang family again."

"Commander Lei, my Wang family has done nothing against the law, so why do we need your oath not to create trouble? At this point, I can only offer you one piece of advice," Wang Shouzhe bowed.

"What advice?" Lei Yangqiu asked with a sinking heart.

"I suggest you save some face for your family," Wang Shouzhe finished, turned and walked away.

What?

Wasn't this the advice he had given Liu Shengze and Zhao Jinda earlier?

"Wang Shouzhe, you..." Lei Yangqiu, enraged, spat out a mouthful of blood.

Chapter 95: Completely Suppressed Lei Yangqiu

...

A revered Spirit Platform Realm cultivator, being so furious as to suffer a bout of blood-spitting, was something rather rare to witness, if not unprecedented.

Lei Yangqiu was so filled with anger that he glared daggers at Wang Shouzhe's retreating figure, he yearned nothing more than to explode in rage. Yet he repressed his own fury, because that young man had gotten him by the throat, so to speak.

Oh, well; he thought, he would have to endure Wang Shouzhe's antics for the time being.

Seething with rage but reduced to the point of being unable to vent his frustration on the Wang family, he redirected his wrath by throwing venomous glances at the Liu and Zhao clans.

Both the Liu and Zhao clans harbored immense resentment against Lei Yangqiu. After all, heroes from both tribes had been essentially killed by him. Even worse, after Lei Yangqiu selfishly preserved his own life by sacrificing members of their respective clans, he ended up having his ego crushed, while he was also forced to plead with the Wang family.

The scene was cast in utter silence.

Members of the Wang family stared at Wang Shouzhe with complex expressions. They too had not anticipated that today's sequence of events would escalate to such proportions.

The Liu and Zhao clans - and the Celestial Being's community enforcer Lei Yangqiu - none of them were pushovers! Yet, they were all suppressed by Wang Shouzhe, single-handedly.

Even the Old Ancestor didn't dare underestimate Wang Shouzhe anymore, and he asked cautiously, "Shouzhe, how will we handle the next stages of this matter?"

Upon hearing this, all eyes from the Liu and Zhao clans, as well as from Lei Yangqiu, were drawn towards Wang Shouzhe. Who knew what other cards he still had up his sleeve?

This continuous series of predicaments left everyone knocked off their feet.

"What kind of handling?" Wang Shouzhe laughed. "Everyone naturally goes their own way. Unless the Old Ancestor intends to invite them to dinner?" He was in such a good mood that he even started to joke around.

In reality, given Wang Shouzhe's personality, he would have preferred to detain both the Liu and Zhao clans along with Lei Yangqiu.

However, that was practically impossible.

Although the Old Ancestor was a robust fighter, he wasn't the original patriarch of the Wang family. Wang Shouzhe already felt immensely grateful for him coming to Wang family's aid. Asking him to risk his life was out of the question.

More importantly, Da Qian ultimately had its own law.

Wang Shouzhe was not arrogant enough to ignore the Daqian Law blatantly. Private affairs were dealt with privately, while public affairs were handled publicly.

Being able to suppress Lei Yangqiu today was merely due to Wang Shouzhe leveraging the power of the Daqian Law.

Upon hearing this, the household heads of the Liu and Zhao Clan felt a strange sense of relief. They had sustained losses and lost face, but they still had homes to return to, didn't they?

Just as they turned to leave, however, Wang Shouzhe called out, "Wait a minute."

All members of the Liu and Zhao clans shuddered involuntarily, could another catastrophe be on the verge of befalling them? Nothing good ever happened whenever Wang Shouzhe said, "wait".

"Firstly, although Zhao Jinda and Liu Shengze are dead, compensation for the survivors is unavoidable," Wang Shouzhe said solemnly.

Lei Yangqiu's eyes brightened instantly, sensing an opportunity to prove his worth. He stepped forward, "Clan Leader Wang is absolutely right. I, as the town's guardian, will oversee this matter. As for the total compensation, it shall amount to not less than five hundred Qian Gold, make it a thousand instead."

Under his current circumstances, if Wang Shouzhe was determined to make life difficult for Lei Yangqiu, he would probably be stripped raw, and his clansmen would not let him off either.

Perhaps after all this was over, the Lei Clan would retaliate against Wang Shouzhe, but by then Lei Yangqiu would already be out of the picture.

When they heard "a thousand Qian Gold" for compensation, the clan leaders of the Liu and Zhao clans almost turned black with anger. Such an amount was equivalent to all the profits they'd acquired through a year of toil. But they had to ask themselves, didn't they wipe off several households from existence?

Wang Shouzhe did not confirm nor deny this, he added, "The Liu and Zhao clans caused a commotion and damaged many green stone bricks on our plaza..."

"Indeed, what Clan Leader Wang said makes perfect sense." Lei Yangqiu immediately began to curry favor again, "I observed that at least several hundreds of green stone bricks were smashed, so let's assume there were five hundred. Calculating at the rate of one Qian Gold per brick, that's another five hundred Qian Gold. I will ensure this debt is collected. Pay it now."

Five hundred Qian Gold!

The Liu and Zhao clans were about to go insane! Lei Yangqiu was striving to appease the Wang family, exerting so much effort to maintain his position as the town protector, but did he really have to take such drastic measures against them? One Qian Gold per brick? Why not just rob them?

Even Wang Shouzhe felt that Lei Yangqiu's demands were a bit too excessive.

"What's with those looks?" asked Lei Yangqiu with a grave expression, "These green stone bricks are a treasure left by our Wang family's Old Ancestor Zhou Xuan. They're historical artifacts that have been around for over a hundred years. They bear witness to how our Ping'an Town evolved from a savage land to its current state of prosperity.

Given their historical value, the cost of one Qian Gold per brick is practically a bargain."

"Err..."

Wang Shouzhe was stunned by this weighty proclamation. This extensive plaza had at least hundreds of thousands of green stone bricks. At one Qian Gold per brick, this plaza would be the Wang family's most valuable possession.

Alright then, for the sake of money, Wang Shouzhe decided to spare Lei Yangqiu for the time being.

After all, watching him and the Liu and Zhao clans plunge towards a consummate break was a fairly entertaining spectacle. As for the aftermath, that would entirely depend on his performance.

Despite Lei Yangqiu's lack of shame, he was still the town's guardian. Under his "persuasion", the Liu and Zhao clans had no choice but to cough up five hundred Qian Gold as compensation.

"Clan Leader Wang, what do you think of how I handled this situation..." Lei Yangqiu carefully offered the compensation.

Chapter 95: Completely Suppressed Lei Yangqiu

Wang Shouzhe pondered briefly, then with a serious expression on his face, he said: "Arranging and compensating for the family members of those victims can be considered a consolation to their

spirits in heaven. I would appreciate it if Guard Lei could handle this matter. If it's well taken care of, it might be a worthwhile achievement."

As he went through the files of those cases, dubbed as the extermination cases, the victims were all adult males, leaving behind a bunch of women and children. It wasn't because the murderer was empathetic, but rather, it seemed like they intentionally left behind a group of grief-stricken widows and orphans as a warning to others.

Lei Yangqiu was taken aback, but he soon found himself gaining a newfound respect for Wang Shouzhe. Looking at his actions, it appeared as though he genuinely cared for those bereaved women and children.

Regardless of whether his concern was genuine or not, even if it was just an act, as long as he was able to maintain this façade, it would appear real in the eyes of everyone else.

As long as Wang Shouzhe didn't fall midway, the Wang family was likely to rise under his leadership.

Thereupon, Lei Yangqiu said with a solemn look: "Since Clan Leader Wang has asked me, I will do my utmost to comfort those elderly, weak women and children who survived."

He paused, then spoke in a low voice, "Clan Leader Wang, you need to be careful of Zhao Bojun and Liu Zhide in the future. Those two old men are crafty characters. While they won't dare to take action openly, one can't say for sure about what they might do behind the scenes."

Unconsciously, Lei Yangqiu tried to curry favor.

"Huh?" Wang Shouzhe squinted and smiled, "Grand Guard Lei, it seems that you aren't holding a grudge against me for my actions towards you today. Are you pretending to let your guard down, ready for a surprise attack of revenge?"

At this point, Wang Shouzhe had started to notice some patterns.

In these aristocratic celestial families, the cultivators in the Spiritual Platform Realm seemed to have temperamental issues.

Take the Liu Clan and Zhao Clan, for example. Although the two old ancestors were enemies of the Wang family, and Wang Shouzhe would love to kill them instantly if he could, he had to admit that those two old ancestors still had the temperament worthy of the Sea Stabilizing Needle of a Clan.

Minister Zhong Xingwang of the Hundred Islands Guard, a Celestial family he had known before, and Lei Yangqiu, seemed to lack the unyielding tenacity and pride found in the elderly members of the Celestial families.

Upon further thought, this was inevitable.

The cultivators of the Spiritual Platform Realm in minor clans were the foundation of the family, bearing the survival or extinction of the whole clan on their shoulders. They couldn't afford the slightest negligence. Even a minor decision could lead to a catastrophic disaster for the clan.

As time passed, these cultivators would naturally develop a formidable determination and a mindset that prioritized their clan above everything else.

However, those in the Spiritual Platform Realm within the Celestial families didn't need to worry about the survival or extinction of their entire family. They were more focused on personal achievements and their status and benefits within the family.

In their upbringing, they constantly had to look up to the elderly Celestial ancestors in their family. As a result, they had to temper their personalities, making it impossible for them to foster an attitude or aura of dominance.

Enough of the digression for now.

Hearing Wang Shouzhe's question, Lei Yangqiu promptly looked solemn and said, "Honestly speaking, I would be lying if I said I didn't hold a grudge over the previous incident. Still, there was originally no animosity between Wang family and my family, the Lei Clan. If I were to turn that incident into a vendetta against Clan Leader Wang, my clan might not support it."

No animosity?

Wang Shouzhe's eyes narrowed slightly. Could it be that his previous assumptions were wrong? Or was it possible that Lei Yangqiu was kept in the dark?

Without saying a word, he continued to listen to Lei Yangqiu.

"Secondly, although I, Lei Yangqiu, am indeed not a good person, I have nothing to do with those who conspired with Independent Cultivators and killed civilians." Lei Yangqiu said, "As a guard of a heavenly family, I have a promising future. Why would I participate in such horrendous acts? The Liu and Zhao Clans wouldn't have involved me either."

Wang Shouzhe remained expressionless, pondering over the words of Lei Yangqiu.

"Our Lei Clan has been around for nearly a thousand years, so naturally, we have our rules." Seeing that Wang Shouzhe seemed to soften, Lei Yangqiu quickly added, "Of course, during my guard duty here, I intended to cozy up to the Liu and Zhao clans on behalf of our family in order to increase our influence in Ping'an Town. That was a strategic family objective."

"And I must also admit that I have accepted gifts from the Liu and Zhao clans in private. However, I can swear by the name of our clan that I was not involved in any heinous deeds." Lei Yangqiu hurriedly clarified.

Wang Shouzhe pondered for a moment, believing him to a certain extent, but still scoffed, "But your indulgence and turn-the-blind-eye attitude have made the Liu and Zhao clans increasingly wild."

"That's true." Lei Yangqiu admitted unabashedly, "But I won't admit that I was aware of this. Honestly, I was quite surprised when I saw the evidence today. But firstly, Leader Wang, you've put me on the spot, clearly using me as a pawn. Secondly, wooing the Liu and Zhao Clans is part of our Lei Family strategy. As such, I felt compelled to protect them and oppose Leader Wang."

"Of course, in my heart, I also didn't think the death of some common people was a big deal..." Lei Yangqiu said cautiously, but upon seeing the displeasure on Wang Shouzhe's face, immediately added, "After being reprimanded by Leader Wang, I now understand the error of my thinking."

"Although Leader Wang's scolding made me feel humiliated and furious to the point of wanting to kill you, upon reflection, it wasn't necessarily unreasonable," Lei Yangqiu said earnestly. "If I could really do as Leader Wang suggested, I might actually accomplish something. The old ancestor in our family might perhaps look at me in a new light."

"Of course, one more thing is crucial," Lei Yangqiu said earnestly, "Our aim with the Lei Family is to have an influence in Ping'an Town, but it's not as if we have to cling to the Liu and Zhao clans. We could ally with the Wang family too. After today, I'm convinced that Zhao Bojun and Liu Zhide likely won't be a match for Leader Wang."

To persuade Wang Shouzhe to pardon him, Lei Yangqiu was really giving it his all.

"An alliance with the Lei Family?" Wang Shouzhe furrowed his brow in thought.

Lei Yangqiu wanted to say it wasn't an alliance, but a surrender. However, he swallowed his words at the last moment. He had already seen that Wang Shouzhe would likely not be one to play second fiddle.

"Let's leave it at that for now," Wang Shouzhe said after pondering for a moment. "Guardian Lei, don't think you're off the hook. I will have someone investigate you. If it turns out like you've said, that you're just misinformed and not greatly evil, we'll put today's incident behind us."

"If you've committed an unforgivable crime, even though I don't have the authority to judge you, I would suggest you pack up and leave immediately."

Wang Shouzhe's gaze was fixed on Lei Yangqiu.

Lei Yangqiu was unnerved by his stare, his heart was pounding, he quickly answered, "Of course I have minor offenses, even accepting bribes, but I wouldn't dare commit major crimes. I promise to make amends for these in the future."

"Alright, your word alone isn't enough. First, go and take care of the aftermath for the orphans," Wang Shouzhe waved his hand dismissively, "Or should the Guardian expect the Wang family to serve him a meal?"

"How dare I, Leader Wang, I'll take my leave now." Lei Yangqiu's face tightened and he quickly retreated.

It wasn't until he had gone a considerable distance that Lei Yangqiu could finally let out a sigh of relief, it felt like he had made it through a critical juncture.

At this point, his back was soaked with sweat. Wang Shouzhe, no, Leader Wang, was terrifying. He manipulated Lei Yangqiu effortlessly with his casual demeanor and words, controlling his life or death, leaving Lei Yangqiu feeling powerless.

He found himself in a strange and unsettling situation, and couldn't help but fall into deep thought.

At this moment, he genuinely felt a combination of deep respect for Wang Shouzhe, gratitude for being spared, and loathing for the Liu and Zhao clans who had put him in a bad spot.

...

Watching Lei Yangqiu's receding figure, Wang Shouzhe also fell into deep thought.

What's this state Lei Yangqiu is in called again? He had read about it on an app before.

Oh right, Stockholm Syndrome? More or less, it's quite similar.

It's the circumstance where someone completely controls one's life and death and they are powerless to resist. Receiving a little favor, they become deeply grateful to the controller, even worshipping and blindly following them.

Heh heh~ things have become interesting now.

Chapter 96 Brother Shouzhe is Truly a Godly Person_1

...

Thus, the matter was resolved.

After paying the compensation, the Liu and Zhao families left in such a pathetic condition, like a defeated pack of dogs. This greatly contrasted with their prior grand entrance causing trouble.

Lei Yangqiu was spared, for now. Having survived the ordeal, he didn't want to linger here any longer.

The spectators, however, remained for quite a while, still engrossed in discussing the event, sharing their excitement with each other.

The reality for most civilians was a life of hardship and monotony, just managing to make ends meet. Their aspiration was to save money by living a frugal life year after year, to buy land or provide a better future for their children, like arranging good marriages and such.

But today's dramatic event, with its twists and turns, was undoubtedly a tale they would never forget.

Old Lady Gongsun Hui, along with some sisters-in-law, were in charge of setting up a porridge stall for the commoners, offering them nourishing salty meat porridge.

Today these commoners, even the paupers, looked like mere onlookers. But in reality, they were the crux of Wang Shouzhe's plan for the day.

This was equivalent to treating them to a feast.

Civilians were seen as insignificant, like ants that could be easily crushed, in the eyes of many prideful scions of prominent families.

However, a large number of such prominent families couldn't function without these civilians. What would they use to support their lavish lifestyles or buy precious cultivation resources, if not the wealth created by these civilians?

A single civilian might not seem significant, but when their numbers increased, their collective power became immeasurable. They could even suppress powerful individuals like Lei Yangqiu, being a Realm Cultivator and the Fortress Commander, preventing him from acting uncontrollably.

Wang Shouzhe had learned from his previous life that the power of the common populace, once united, was formidable. Even Celestial beings of powerful families needed ordinary people to survive.

Young girls and young male servants of the Wang family volunteered to help with the porridge distribution and maintaining order.

This group also included two legitimate daughters, Wang Luoyi and Wang Luomiao.

Even Wang Luo Qiu and Wang Luo Jing, who had just made significant contributions to their family, were earnestly helping out, completely without any sense of disdain.

Wang Shouzhe was very satisfied with this. The people of their family had a healthy mindset. They would never abandon their humaneness or become arrogant because of their martial power.

Wait, what?

It seemed something odd had crept in.

A muscular man with a pig-headed face was sitting on the ground in front of the porridge stall, devouring bowl after bowl of meaty porridge voraciously, having had more than ten bowls in the blink of an eye.

This little guy!

Wang Shouzhe approached and observed him closely. Surprisingly, the injuries he had from the spirit bee's sting had healed significantly, his recovery rate was indeed astonishing.

"Is it good?" Wang Shouzhe asked with a smile.

"Very good, very good," Zhao Dingteng replied instinctively. He raised his head and saw Wang Shouzhe, immediately cowering in fear and guarding his bowl, as though Wang Shouzhe was about to steal it.

Wang Shouzhe was amused, thinking this kid seemed to be terrified of the wrong thing.

He was an innocent boy but was quite wily when it came to combat. If he were to fight Wang Luo Qiu, it'd be tough to predict who would win.

"Okay, okay, eat your fill and then go home." Wang Shouzhe waved, showing his generosity. He saw no need to argue with a fourteen-year-old boy, even though he wasn't exactly what you'd call childish.

Although the boy didn't look his age, he was still only fourteen.

"Clan Leader Wang, it's Clan Leader Wang."

Seeing that Wang Shouzhe had come to the porridge stall, all the civilians became eager and excited. Many admired and looked up to him.

Today's incident not only enhanced the reputation of the Wang family but asserted Clan Leader Wang's praises in the public's opinion as well.

"Feel free to eat as much as you like today." Wang Shouzhe greeted cheerfully, "From now on, if you find life under Liu and Zhao families' jurisdiction hard, you're welcome to migrate to the Wang family's jurisdiction. Here, you can at least live peacefully and happily. In case of a natural disaster, we, the Wang family, will support you in overcoming the difficulties."

Many people were moved by Wang Shouzhe's words. When compared to the high and disdainful Liu and Zhao families, the Wang family seemed like the only real Prominent Family.

Living under the protection of the Wang family seemed much more comforting.

"But Clan Leader, all my fields and home are in the village," said a self-reliant farmer in ragged clothes. "If we move, we can't take our lands with us."

Indeed, indeed.

Many people agreed, all excited about the idea of moving yet faced practical difficulties, all expressing disappointment and frustration.

Among the thousands of civilians were also subjects from the Wang family's jurisdiction.

Hearing the struggles of the others, they immediately felt superior. A young man in his twenties said, "Your broken houses and fields, how much could they worth? Only the houses and fields within our Wang family's jurisdiction are valuable."

Upon hearing this, the people from outside the jurisdiction were dissatisfied, angrily retorting, "How come they're worthless? They still produce grain and can be lived in."

The young man haughtily replied, "What do you all know, our Wang family has an Insect Master. This year, our lands only had a decrease in production by half."

Chapter 96 Brother Shouzhe is Truly a Godly Person_2

The rest of the "natives of Wang family", began to respond to the young man, affirming that what he said was all true. On average, every household has seen a reduction in yield by about 50%.

An Insect Master? Only a 50% reduction in yield? It merely affected them lightly.

The tenant farmers outside Wang's jurisdiction were silent, weren't the tenant farmers within Wang's jurisdiction receiving an extra 20% harvest this season compared to them?

If they could have an extra 20% yield, they would have a considerable surplus after paying their grain taxes, and they wouldn't have to desperately borrow grain everywhere to survive the disaster, nor bear the bullying of the prominent families.

For a moment, the "tenant farmers of other families" all cast envious glances at those locals.

"Not only that, when our Wang family collects taxes on behalf of the Government Office, the part that is owed by the prominent families can be directly offset at par by money. We had an easy time overcoming the famine this year.", the young man said with pride, "Just quoting our family as an example, we have over twenty Dan's of surplus grain."

In a bountiful harvest year, having twenty Dan's of extra grain isn't considered particularly wealthy.

But this is a year of disaster!

When the tenant farmers of other families heard this number, their eyes turned red. Your family is so rich, and you still come here to share the gruel with us?

"Not only that, I have a brother from a side branch of the Wang family who revealed a top-secret information to me. Wang's family was not prepared this year. When the next season begins, we can invite Insect Masters to treat all the fields within Wang's jurisdiction.

The effect will be better in eliminating the insects, and the cost is only half of the Insecticide Powder." The young lad said mysteriously.

Half of the Insecticide Powder?

That almost means... can each acre of land save a copper coin every year? If a family has twenty acres of land, just the investment in Insecticide Powder can save twenty copper coins a year. This is equivalent to several Dan's of grain!

The tenant farmers from other families completely lost their spirits, feeling that compared to the tenant farmers in Wang's jurisdiction, they are shortcomings out of nowhere.

"Young lad, are you married yet?" A tenant farmer from the other family who was quick-witted asked smilingly, "We have two girls at home, one is sixteen and the other is fourteen. We can have a good chat."

"We also have a daughter at home, she just turned fifteen this year."

A group of farmers from other families who have daughters swarmed around the young man like a pack of wolves, advertising their daughters and even proposing to negotiate a dowry.

The young man was frightened, his face turning bright red.

In the past, his family's conditions were mediocre, with not much savings, and the house they built was not enough. Every time they sent a matchmaker to propose, as soon as the other party saw his condition, they either refused directly.

Or the others bluntly demanded a huge dowry.

He is already nineteen, yet he hasn't found a wife. But now, simply by being a tenant farmer in Wang's jurisdiction, these tenant farmers from other families are actually rushing to marry their daughters to him, and some families are even willing to offer money.

In an instant, the young man felt that he had stepped into the peak of his life.

Seeing this scene, Wang Shouzhe couldn't help but smile.

He didn't expect that the household registration in Wang's jurisdiction had begun to gain value. But this is well deserved, as land and house prices vary in different locations.

For example, the houses and lands near Changning are naturally much more expensive than those in Ping'an Town. Even if the output and taxes are the same, the civilians living there have a greater sense of safety.

Moreover, it is more convenient for them to occasionally enter the city than the civilians in Ping'an Town, and their social relationships are also more complicated. Many middle peasants and wealthy peasants there send their children to study in the city, or let their younger sons learn a money-making craft.

It's not surprising.

Over a hundred years ago, this area around Ping'an Town was still a savage land. If not for the tough times, how could the common people migrate to a place like Ping'an Town?

However, after this cropping season, the prices of land and goods within Ping'an Town are likely to change now.

"Don't rush, everyone." Wang Shouzhe said loudly, "I believe you've all heard that our Wang family is currently dredging and filling in to farm new fields. The future fields are fertile lands based on silt. Our Wang family is about to launch a plan to switch to farming these new fields, as well as a plan to pre-purchase these fields."

A "field-switching" program?

What on earth is that? This was a term countless ordinary people had never even heard of.

"To put it simply, it is to exchange your current houses and lands within the domains of the Liu Family and the Zhao Clan for our newly reclaimed lands and houses." Wang Shouzhe squinted his eyes, "Of course, because the land can't be obtained yet and will require approximately two years, we call it future land.

However, at present, we only accept internal workers involved in the reclamation project to participate in the land swap. If you plan to migrate to Wang's jurisdiction, this is the only way for now."

The farmers remained silent for a while.

But soon, someone jumped up and said: "Why not swap? Damn it, I've had enough of those bastards from the Zhao Clan all these years."

"Swap, as long as the Wang family pays for our work and doesn't starve us. Two years is nothing, let's swap."

"I believe in the Wang family, I believe Leader Wang won't let us suffer, let's swap."

Echoing shouts of 'swap' resonated. The farmers were not fools, they had their own clever ways. Although it seemed a bit unfair on the surface, the value of the household register under Wang's jurisdiction would increase as it went on.

"Detailed plans for the swap will be released shortly, please pay attention to our announcements." After whetting their appetite, Wang Shouzhe turned and left.

Not far away, the Liu siblings caught up, looking at Wang Shouzhe with strange eyes.

"Yuanrui, Sister Ruolei." Wang Shouzhe felt uncomfortable under their gaze, bowed his hands and said, "Why are you looking at me like this?"

"Brilliant, absolutely brilliant," Liu Yuanrui raised his thumb and complimented him twice, and bowed his hands, "You've done an amazing job, Brother Shouzhe. Your plan is simply indescribable. My admiration for you is as endless as the water in Peace River. It not only accomplishes self-gain but subtly defeats the enemy."

Wang Shouzhe was rendered speechless.

"Brother, I can see the self-interest part, but where does it kill without a trace?" Liu Ruolei asked curiously.

"The self-interest part is quite obvious. Brother Shouzhe's great project needs a large number of people, and by using the method of swapping for future land, a large number of farmers can get involved in the project. Eventually, those people will become Wang's jurisdiction farmers," Liu Yuanrui explained.

"Furthermore, the farmland that the Wang family swaps for originally belongs to the Liu and Zhao families. As long as they integrate and swap a little bit, they can establish private farms on the enemy's territory and turn that land into Wang's possession."

"The most amazing thing is that the trend of migration to Wang's jurisdiction has already formed. Many people are eager to join Wang's jurisdiction. If Brother Shouzhe carefully and progressively operates, the lands of the Liu and Zhao families will become smaller and smaller, and the number of civilians under their rule will also greatly decrease."

"Under this invisible and vicious cycle, the Liu and Zhao families will become weaker and weaker, unable to compete with the Wang family, and are doomed to collapse!"

Liu Yuanrui's explanation aroused admiration in Liu Ruolei's eyes as she exclaimed, "Brother Shouzhe is truly a godlike figure, I'm so lucky."

"Um..."

Wang Shouzhe touched his nose, feeling like he hadn't really thought it through as thoroughly as Liu Yuanrui, simply wanting to solve the labor shortage problem, and he certainly didn't want to come up with a century-long plan.

However, it seemed that his future brother-in-law was quite clever. Listening to him, the plan did sound pretty good.

Also, could Ruolei stop talking to him with that tone and look? It made him, Wang Shouzhe, feel a bit creeped out.

Just at this moment,

A monotonous voice arose: "Well, everyone, I have a question. Is our Zhao Clan really that annoying?"

Zhao Dingteng!

Wang Shouzhe glanced at him and noticed that most of the poisonous lump on his face had disappeared. He felt speechless, this dim-witted guy's recovery ability was terrifying!

Liu Ruolei and Liu Yuanrui also stared at Zhao Dingteng with surprised eyes.

Did this big oaf not have any idea of his Zhao Clan's infamous reputation?

Chapter 96: Why is the Younger Aunt Persisting in Not Leaving?_1

...

Actually, Wang Shouzhe knew that this naive boy probably really didn't have a clue about all this, right?

Being the legitimate successor, obsessed with cultivation and combat, he wouldn't usually care about the outside world.

And those within the Zhao Clan wouldn't walk around with the words "I am a villain" on their faces.

Moreover, good and evil are not absolute adjectives.

From the Zhao Clan's point of view, they're just seeking more room to survive, although having to resort to ruthless methods, the world is cruel and full of competition after all.

Wang Shouzhe nonchalantly replied, "Irrespective of the means used, infringing on and usurping the interests of innocents will naturally offend people."

"Isn't it also you, using whatever means necessary, infringing us Zhao family?" Zhao Dingteng, with his innocently naive expression, pointed at Liu Yuanrui and said, "He said you murder with invisible tricks."

"The Zhao Family are not innocent, it was you Zhao people who broke the rules, making us enemies," Wang Shouzhe said calmly, "Secondly, if it were not for your Zhao Clan's rotten deeds, long-term infringement of innocents' interests, causing offense to so many people, my plan would never have been able to cause such a storm.

Ultimately, a prominent family will perish sooner or later if it is not righteous."

Wang Shouzhe was not afraid of his plans being leaked because with the prestige he commanded, Liu clan and Zhao clan are powerless to resist. Even if they desired to be good people, the ordinary people would not believe them.

"So... can our two families still be friends?" Zhao Dingteng's naive face looked somewhat troubled. "I don't want to be a villain."

"No." Wang Shouzhe calmly replied, "Once some things have been done, there's no turning back. You've had a meal, now hurry back to your home. Your father is currently discussing with your great grandfather on how to eliminate me."

Huh?

Zhao Dingteng looked shocked, you foresaw this as well?

In the end, with a look of disappointment, Zhao Dingteng left. He couldn't quite grasp why he couldn't choose to be a good person.

After Zhao Dingteng left.

Liu Ruolei also sighed and said, "This Zhao Hanhan is quite pitiful, born in a certain family, he carries that family's indelible brand throughout his life."

"Which is why we need to become even stronger," Wang Shouzhe said with emotion, "Only true strength can break free from constraints and control our own fate."

"Break free from constraints, control our own fate?" Liu Ruolei murmured quietly under her breath as her eyes shimmered slightly.

"Uh..." Wang Shouzhe immediately got an uneasy feeling, his future sister-in-law was at a rebellious age. Wasn't feeding her this ideology like adding fuel to the fire?

Immediately, Wang Shouzhe's face turned serious and he sternly said, "However, we humans are called a civilized world, because we have a complete society. All of our actions, we need to be responsible for ourselves, but also for others. Take myself as, for example, the reason why I strive to be strong is because I want to protect the people around me and the ones I care about."

"Mmhmm~ Thank you, Brother Shouzhe, I understand." Liu Ruolei immediately brightened up.

?

Wang Shouzhe was baffled, what are you thanking? What did you understand?

Right at that moment.

Liu Yuanrui formally bowed and said, "Brother Shouzhe, my sister and I have been staying at the Wang family's residence for quite some time now. I think it's time for us to take our leave."

Wang Shouzhe's body stiffened; even Yuanrui could see that?

Without hesitation, Wang Shouzhe also respectfully said, "Since Yuanrui is eager to return, I will not detain you any longer."

He was indeed anxious. If this Liu sibling duo continues to stay here, he was worried his future, rebellious-aged aunt might stir up some trouble.

"Leaving? Why should we leave? Brother, I haven't had enough fun yet." Liu Ruolei looked displeased.

Aiyo, my Grand Aunt! Liu Yuanrui groaned internally. If they stayed here any longer, he was afraid something was about to go wrong.

Immediately, Liu Yuanrui's gaze became serious, "Ruolei, you can't be so willful. Your Brother Shouzhe, as the Clan Leader, has a lot of things to take care of."

"That's okay, Brother Shouzhe can go to work." Liu Ruolei innocently responded, "I can go play with Sister Luo Yi, younger sister Luomei, and Luo Qiu as well as Luo Jing. Let me tell you, younger sister Luomei is so fun, she has revealed all sorts of embarrassing anecdotes about Brother Shouzhe's childhood."

As soon as these words were spoken.

Liu Yuanrui's whole body shivered, he was on the verge of tears.

Little sister, little sister, you like the sisters of the Wang family so much, are you planning on staying and not leaving? If something really happens, how will I Yuanrui face the family when I get back?

Didn't you say before you came that you were planning to discipline my future brother-in-law on behalf of my sister? How come you've now cast yourself into the role in the blink of an eye?

Soon, in Liu Yuanrui's trembling heart, he had already imagined a dramatic scene of sisters turning against each other due to love and resentment.

What should he do? What should he do?

"Well, Yuanrui is right." Wang Shouzhe also spoke, "Recently, I've been occupied with a lot of things here, I'm afraid I really can't spare time for you."

"Okay."

Even though Liu Ruolei was a bit unwilling, she could tell from Wang Shouzhe's words that he wanted her to leave. She grudgingly said, "After you finish your work, Brother Shouzhe, you can come to the Liu family as a guest. If my sister cannot handle the reception, I can do it on her behalf."

"Well, let's not." Wang Shouzhe politely declined, "Considering that your sister and I are not yet married, it would be inappropriate for me to stay in the Liu household, it could lead to unwarranted speculation."

Chapter 96: Why is the Younger Aunt Persisting in Not Leaving?_2

These are the unspoken courtesy rules within the Profound Martial Prominent Families.

Just like Chen Fangjie, Wang Shouzhe's future brother-in-law, it is estimated he would get booted by Wang Shouzhe after a couple of visits to the Wang family's Main Residence.

So even if Chen Fangjie came to help Wang Shouzhe with affairs, he wouldn't step into the Wang family's Main Residence, to avoid being seen as some wavering prodigal by the members of the Wang family.

"Alright then, there won't be so many concerns after brother Shouzhe and sister get married." Liu Ruolei said with a disappointed face, "Brother Shouzhe, reserve that courtyard where I've been staying recently for me, and don't let anyone else live there."

Wang Shouzhe broke into cold sweat.

This little girl, is she really planning on staying at Wang's for a long time? He could hardly reject her request though, so he said, "Alright, I'll arrange for it later."

Off to the side, Liu Yuanrui was on the verge of tears.

Why is it that our Liu Family's legitimate daughter seems to be going through a buy one, get one free sort of rhythm?

...

Almost at the same time, inside a secluded manor.

The elders and high-ranking members of the Liu and Zhao Clan gathered here. The two old ancestors were sitting in the main seats, each with a very serious look.

The trip to the Wang family caused an uproar this time. They were initially full of confidence but unexpectedly ended up battered, bruised, and soot faced. Most importantly, the reputation of both Liu and Zhao Clan had been tarnished by Wang Shouzhe, losing people's hearts and becoming the laughingstock.

"Brother Zhide." The old ancestor of the Zhao Clan, Zhao Bojun, said solemnly, "With that Wang boy's tactics, he will surely strike us next. At this critical juncture of life and death, our two clans must abandon suspicion and work together to overcome the difficulties."

"Yes, the kid is indeed very aggressive." Liu Zhide replied gravely, "But he underestimated the foundations of our two clans. Brother Bojun, I suspect that your Zhao Daoyuan is close to advancing to the Spiritual Platform Realm, isn't he?"

Zhao Bojun's face stiffened, then he laughed heartily, "I knew it, I couldn't hide this from Brother Zhide. But Liu Shenghao from your family is also close, isn't he?"

Zhao Daoyuan and Liu Shenghao, both are talented clan members who are on the path to Spiritual Platform.

Not all clans always focus on cultivating the clan leader at all times. Sometimes, when they consider long-term interests, they prefer some talented direct line descendants.

Just like the Wang family, they once vigorously cultivated Wang Xiaohan.

"Alright, let's just talk straight and clear." Liu Zhide said, "We, our two clans, spare no expense to purchase those auxiliary materials, allowing Daoyuan and Shenghao to make an Impact on the Spirit Platform Stage. As long as we have one more elder at the Spiritual Platform Realm, even if there are Gongsun Meng and Wang Longyan to protect, we have the confidence to kill Wang Shouzhe forcibly.

When that time comes, the Wang family will be like a pack of dogs without a master, what do we have to fear? Isn't it easy for us to manipulate?"

After this time, their number one dreaded target had shifted to Wang Shouzhe.

"But before that, we need to sign a 100-year co-development contract to avoid suspicion."

"It should be so, we two clans jointly control Ping'an Town. Come on, let's make it a bit faster, strive to sprint within one month."

After the pact.

Both the Liu and Zhao Clan seem to have disappeared without uttering a single word, laying low with no actions, while Wang family is making its presence felt, continuously expanding the project scale of Zhuwei Lake. Between the three clans, it seems a brief peace has arrived.

However, a dangerous undertone is brewing beneath it.

One day.

Not far from Pudukou.

There is a small-scale manor with a tasteful environment named "Summer Garden." It has a large pond filled with lotus flowers and hence the name.

Now it's the season of lotus bloom. In a pond of about 200 mu, everywhere is the view of blooming lotus flowers.

A winding path leads to the middle of pond. The raised house made of round wood and bamboo structure - "Lotus Pavilion."

In such a lovely scene.

Living in the Lotus Pavilion, being caressed by the night breeze, bathed in the moonlight, admiring the enchanting lotus flowers, surrounded by the incessant croaking of frogs in ears, this could be a paradise.

It's a pity, Lotus Pavilion is only suitable for living during this season of the year.

This courtyard, built with much effort and money of the Liu family, was originally to please a lady of the Celestial Lei Family.

However, at present, it is owned by the "Goddess" Zhong Luoxian.

Tonight, the moon is bright, and the wind is soft.

Two noble sons dressed in cloud-patterned brocade were sitting cross-legged on the second floor of the Lotus Pavilion, drinking top-grade Spiritual Tea - "Red Maid," while casually chatting about some anecdotes.

A beautiful and ethereal woman is serving the two nobles, and her eyes occasionally fell on the younger and handsome son among them.

"Is Brother Chen bored lately?" The young noble dressed in brocade is the present Wang Family Head, Wang Shouzhe. He sounded a bit impatient, "Don't come to Ping'an without anything to do. It has a bad influence."

Wang Shouzhe was also a bit fed up; he had just sent away his little aunt who wouldn't leave. Before he could enjoy two quiet days, his soon-to-be brother-in-law was here to disturb again. His days were not peaceful at all.

"Not exactly free." The other person is naturally Chen Fangjie, the Young Clan Leader of the Chen Clan of Donggang. He shamelessly smiled and said, "I was part of the big play that you have been plotting for a long time. I played a small villain. If I don't come to see the closing act, I always feel a bit regretful."

"I heard that you acted brilliantly in the Wang family's Main Residence, causing the Liu and Zhao Clans to fall apart and flee in a sorry state," Chen Fangjie said, "I already missed the first big event. I don't want to miss the second one. I don't understand why you don't want me to be part of the last act. Don't worry, I am here to watch the commotion, and I don't want any benefits."

Wang Shouzhe was speechless. His soon-to-be brother-in-law insisted on forcing himself into the matter. It was not good to drive him away, right? Alright then, if you like the feeling of "envy, jealousy, and hatred," I'll make you have it.

The attendant on the side, Wang Mei, no, "Zhong Luoxian," gently covered her mouth with her hand and laughed softly, sounding tender and enchanting, "Master, would you like to have a foreplay to enhance your mood before the main event begins?"

Foreplay?

"Cough cough~" Wang Shouzhe, who was drinking tea, almost choked to death.

"Zhong Luoxian" and Chen Fangjie both stared at Wang Shouzhe with unusual eyes. It's just a foreplay, why this reaction?

"Cough cough~" Wang Shouzhe coughed even harder, well, he also admits that his thoughts are far "advanced" than these people. From this perspective, brother-in-law and Wang Mei are still pretty innocent.

Suppressing the odd emotions, Wang Shouzhe asked solemnly, "Wang Mei, what kind of foreplay have you prepared?"

"Master, please call me Luoxian." She pretended to be angry and cute, then playfully glanced at Wang Shouzhe. She then pulled out a jade flute, "During this time, I learned how to play the flute out of boredom. The night is long and clear, and drinking is boring, so let me play the flute with you to enhance your mood."

Chapter 97 Luoxian: Young Master Please Stay

...

Without waiting for Wang Shouzhe's objection, Chen Fangjie praised, "Good! The flute's melody is bright, clear, and full of vitality, yet reveals a deep history. It conveys a sense of distant depth, yet does not lose its high spirits. It fits perfectly with our ongoing tea tasting and lotus listening session."

Let it go, just let her play the flute, Wang Shouzhe relented. After all, she was preparing to play the flute in a traditionally formal manner.

"Then allow me to show my humble skills." Following that, "Zhong Luoxian," with her beautiful eyes as tranquil as water, held up her jade flute, her rosy lips slightly open, her jade fingers moving melodically and started to play.

The scene was exquisite and captivating.

And then...

There was no 'then'.

The flute play was so terrible that even a layman like Wang Shouzhe was left feeling frustrated and wishing he could plunge himself right off the second floor into the lotus pond beneath.

As for Chen Fangjie, he closed his eyes tightly, his face turning rigid and pale, swaying on the verge of explosive anger, not falling only because his self-control held out.

This was indeed a straightforward display of humiliation.

As the music ceased, Wang Shouzhe gulped down a few mouthfuls of Spiritual Tea Red Mistress to calm his agitated heart and couldn't help but curiously ask, "Luoxian, where did you find the courage and confidence to dare to play the flute in front of me?"

"Eh? Young Master Liu and Young Master Zhao have both complimented my flute playing."
"Zhong Luoxian," said with a baffled face, "Am I still not up to the mark?"

Not up to the mark?

Luoxian, you are being too humble; you didn't get anything right.

Wang Shouzhe suppressed the impulse to splash her face with Red Mistress. Liu Yongzhou and Zhao Dingteng, they sure are blind.

"Well... Luoxian, when it comes to playing the flute, the four main elements: breath, finger technique, lip movement, and tongue flexibility are important.

Simply put, you must learn to control the fluctuation of your breath, your dexterous finger movement, lip flexibility, and the agility of your tongue." Chen Fangjie gave his advice with an extremely pale face, "Each element requires repeated practice over a long time."

Wang Shouzhe's face twitched uncontrollably. He clearly understood that Chen Fangjie was explaining the principles of playing the flute, but he couldn't suppress his urge to kick him right into the lotus pond.

Good thing at the same time.

A young man's voice echoed from the distant walkway in front of them, "Is Miss Luoxian present? Yongzhou is here to visit as promised."

This man appeared to be in his twenties, looking lively enough although he was dressed simply. His reddened eyes couldn't hide his deep sorrow. This person was none other than Liu Yongzhou, one of the elites of the younger generation of the Liu Clan.

Inside the Lotus Pavilion on the second floor.

Chen Fangjie, drinking Spiritual Tea Red Mistress, commented, "I've heard that this Liu Yongzhou is quite the character. Capable and talented, it's a pity he isn't the legitimate son of his clan and is unlikely to tread the path of the 'Spirit Platform Realm'. Considering his recent loss, wouldn't it be cruel to take advantage of him now, Shouzhe?"

"Brother Chen, you indeed have a noble spirit, but I, Wang Shouzhe, am not a treacherous villain." Wang Shouzhe answered calmly as he refreshed their tea cups, "When Wang Mei chose her target, she made sure to investigate and select them carefully. This Liu Yongzhou isn't a good man.

His fleet often preys on selected targets while operating on the river, such as weaker cargo ships and merchant vessels that were left alone..."

"You mean... river bandits?" Chen Fangjie's expression instantly turned serious and angered, "A scion of a prominent family, capable of such ruthless and insane behavior? My Chen Clan of Donggang, essentially relying on water transport, naturally abhors river bandits and pirates."

"Well, it's not that he's insane, it's just that he's part of a family like the Liu Clan, which rose to power by betraying others." Wang Shouzhe said indifferently, "This family has always been obsessed with their interests and doesn't pick their methods. Furthermore, Family Head Liu Shengye is extremely greedy and has an insatiable desire to plunder resources.

Becoming like this was just a matter of time."

"It's just that their actions are conducted in great secrecy; forcefully silencing the victims by leaving no survivors or boats, making it difficult for others to discover. After all, the Peace River stretches for countless miles and contains countless dangers, so accidents aren't necessarily suspicious.

My Uncle Dinghai Six only managed to unravel the clues and have them thoroughly investigated by accident. And according to subsequent investigations, this Liu Yongzhou has committed more crimes apart from acting as a river bandit, most of them on behalf of his Family Head, Liu Shengye."

"Such a villain, deserves to die." Chen Fangjie said angrily, "And the entire Liu Clan is rotting from the inside. Shouzhe, I will fully support you in wiping out the Liu Clan. Consider it a justifiable deed."

"Thank you, Brother Chen." Wang Shouzhe toasted him with tea instead of wine.

"Gentlemen, please continue with your tea and rest here." 'Zhong Luoxian' chuckled, "I will excuse myself to perform a little 'justice', then I will return."

...

Following Wang Mei's instructions, a maid led Liu Yongzhou to the gazebo beside the "Lotus Pavilion". From the angle where Wang Shouzhe and another were enjoying their tea, they managed to look down through the sheer curtains and witness the scene in the gazebo.

Zhong Luoxian, already present, displayed an elegant demeanour, further enhancing her noble aura.

Liu Yongzhou entered the gazebo, in an attempt to act like a well-mannered aristocrat, he greeted, "Yongzhou pays his respect to Miss Luoxian." His eyes carried traces of grief and resentment that wouldn't fade away.

"Master Liu..." Zhong Luoxian sighed deeply, "The dead have passed on, I hope you can contain your grief. Let's sit down and talk."

She then personally brewed tea to serve her guest.

"Thank you, Miss Luoxian." For the first time, Liu Yongzhou was treated to tea brewed by Zhong Luoxian and was taken aback, "I wonder why Miss Luoxian called me here..."

Enjoying such nice weather and charming night, Luoxian invited him over, could it be that...? At this moment, Liu Yongzhou's grieving heart seemed to lighten a little.

"I invited you here to say goodbye." Zhong Luoxian's tone carried a hint of distance and cold indifference.

"What?" Liu Yongzhou nearly dropped his teacup in surprise, he asked anxiously, "Luoxian, you're leaving! Why? Could it be that you find my service to be lacking? Or is it because..." His heart tightened as he thought of the young aristocrat who was insolent and domineering.

"Thank you indeed for your warm hospitality earlier today, Mr. Liu. Especially for the unique Spiritual Tea from Red Mistress that you sent, it was excellent." There was an increasingly noticeable coldness in Zhong Luoxian's tone, "I can assure you, Mr. Liu, that your kindness will be reciprocated a thousandfold upon my return."

"What... What... What..." Liu Yongzhou was in a panic, he stood up quickly and asked, "Luoxian, have I done something wrong? If yeah, please point it out to me and I'll correct it at once."

"No, the mistake is not yours, Mr. Liu. Instead, it is mine." Zhong Luoxian's eyes flashed with pain and disappointment, "I used to think that you were... Never mind, I blame my naivety."

Liu Yongzhou suddenly felt a chill run down his spine as he seemed to recall something, trying to defend himself, "Luoxian, you've misunderstood. My father was framed by the Wang family, that contemptible Wang Dingzu, Wang Shouzhe! I will never let them off the hook." Hatred filled his eyes.

"Liu Yongzhou, you have disappointed me!" Zhong Luoxian's words were intense, filled with a lot of emotion, "I always believed that you were a man I could depend on, a man of integrity. But I never thought you would be a simpleton who can't differentiate right from wrong, who lacks any moral compass. Please leave.

I do not wish to see you again." Overwhelmed with emotion, she clutched her chest, her brows furrowed in what seemed to be pain.

"Luoxian, I, I..." Liu Yongzhou was flustered, pleading, "You can shout at me or hit me, but please don't hurt yourself over this. Tell me what I did wrong, and I'll correct it. I mean it."

"Mr. Liu, I can put up with a man of... humble origins, as long as he is kind-hearted and relentless in improving himself," Zhong Luoxian sighed regretfully. "Forget it, your Liu Clan has a way of survival that suits you. I have no right to interfere."

Shivering! Coldness! Liu Yongzhou understood then, the notorious acts of the Liu Clan had reached Zhong Luoxian's ears, and she detested them.

It certainly makes sense, as she is a noble woman from a prominent celestial family. The fact that she chose to associate with him across significant social boundaries was already a great sacrifice on her part. But with Liu Clan's reputation in tatters and numerous challenges facing them, she could no longer associate with him.

"Lady Luoxian, please hear me out," Liu Yongzhou pleaded hastily. "Our Liu Clan's decline is temporary, we are planning a counter-attack. Soon, we will be the actual rulers of Ping'an Town. And I... I will follow the path of Spiritual Platform so I'll deserve you."

"Liu Yongzhou, you still don't understand," Zhong Luoxian said with extreme disappointment, "If I desired power and influence, I could have chosen from countless celestial families, and is a cultivator of the Spirit Platform really that remarkable?"

"I never despised you for your family's poverty. But now, your disgraceful and despicable clan disgusts me. For a little gain, you are capable of the most shameless actions. Do you think I could accept that, or the Zhong family would accept that?" Shock and contempt filled Zhong Luoxian's eyes, "And don't try to divert the blame onto others. You know very well how your clan is."

"Ah!"

Liu Yongzhou felt as if he had been struck by lightning, finally understanding what was going on. After a while, he conceded, "You're right, Luoxian. I am not worthy of you. And I had no say in which family I was born into. If I had the option, I'd also desire..."

Zhong Luoxian's eyes softened gradually: "I know, you are a good person at your core. Yongzhou, can you walk away from such a whirlpool?"

"Walk away?" Liu Yongzhou was taken aback, but he quickly brightened, "Luoxian, are you implying... Yes, I can become a son-in-law and marry into your family."

However, immediately after rejoicing, he sank into sorrow, "If I marry into Zhong family, my status may not be high, and they might not support me on the path towards Spiritual Platform."

Zhong Luoxian's face flushed slightly, her eyes softened: "Didn't you say last time that your Liu Clan is planning to help you walk on the path of Spiritual Platform? If you could get their support..."

"You're right, Luoxian." Liu Yongzhou nodded constantly, "I've given so much to the Liu Clan, asking for some compensation now, I doubt the Family Head would say no."

"Yongzhou, you need to be careful with Liu Shengye. He is as cunning as a fox and can't be considered a good person."

The term 'Yongzhou' had Liu Yongzhou's heart melting.

"It's okay, he has given me his word. Alright, alright, Luoxian, don't worry. I'll be cautious and test the waters first."

"You have to be careful with everything. I fear that Liu Shengye..." Zhong Luoxian bit her lip and said, "Okay, for our future, let me offer you some suggestions on how to test the waters."

"Luoxian, your idea is brilliant. Wait for a few days, there'll be news."

Soon, Liu Yongzhou left 'Summer Garden' in high spirits. It was the first time in his relationship with Luoxian that they had really discussed their future marriage. So what if he has to be a son-in-law? Being the son-in-law of a prominent celestial family is not bad at all, let alone being the son-in-law of Luoxian.

...

At the Lotus Pavilion on the second floor.

Chen Fangjie was amazed at Zhong Luoxian's improved acting skills but as he continued to listen, he began to suspect that something was amiss.

After Liu Yongzhou left, Chen Fangjie had a sip of tea but remained shocked, "Shouzhe, you're really going against heaven's will this time. What exactly are you planning on the Liu Clan? Could it be... the Heavenly Spirit Pill?"

With his wisdom, standing on the perspective of God to deduct, he still could not hide anything from him.

However, Wang Shouzhe was leisurely drinking tea, "The Liu Clan plotted against our patriarch and stole our family fortune. I'm just getting some compensation. It's not a big deal. Really, should I just watch as they enjoy the Heavenly Spirit Pill and then deal with our Wang family? Even if I can't get it, I will destroy it."

"High stakes, impressive," Chen Fangjie said with a face full of envy, "I am so jealous."

Wang Shouzhe didn't entertain him, 'I told you not to come and suffer this.' He was just here to help Wang Mei with ideas, write scripts and provide some protection for her.

After two hours...

The corridor outside the Lotus Pavilion echoed with a young man's voice, "Dingtian from the Zhao Clan Elite and disciple, as promised, greets Lady Luoxian."

This young man was none other than Zhao Dingtian, the elite disciple of the Zhao Clan.

"Mr. Zhao, my mistress Luoxian has been expecting you." A maid led Zhao Dingtian into the pavilion.

Chapter 98: Heavenly Spirit Pill! Got It

...

Several days have passed since the incident at the Lotus Pavilion of the Summer Garden.

During this period, the Liu and Zhao clans seem to have fallen into silence, no matter what actions the Wang family takes, they continue to hold back. It's as if they've transformed into two wounded tigers lurking in the dark, licking their wounds and waiting for the right opportunity to retaliate against the Wang family.

With Wang Shouzhe's tactics, he naturally wouldn't miss such a golden opportunity to develop. Waves of propaganda continued to unfold in the area of Ping'an Town.

Using the navy and a large amount of direct water strategy to carry out their propaganda, in a short time, the causes and consequences behind the battle at the gate of the Wang family's main residence, as well as the different performances of the three major prominent families, spread throughout the entire Ping'an Town.

The war of public opinion! The war of propaganda!

Many common people start to discuss eagerly, passing the story of Wang family's history and the story of how the ancestor Zhou Xuan moved south to establish Ping'an Town. They also speak of how Zhou Xuan, the founder, died gloriously while resisting the Level Five fierce beast, the Golden-winged Sun-Eating Tiger.

Many of those who experienced the great disaster fifty years ago have passed away. Even those who are alive were young children at the time, or they simply can't remember clearly and do not understand the actual situation.

Under the Wang family's large propaganda offensive, the twenty thousand residents of Ping'an Town slowly gained a clear understanding. It turned out that Ping'an Town was established by the Wang's ancestor Zhou Xuan, who led his clan to develop the land over a period of nearly a hundred years.

The Liu and Zhao Clans were actually run-down households who could not make a living in the County Town, and they came to join the Wang family midway as helpers.

They learned more about the ins and outs of the great disaster fifty years ago. Not only did Liu and Zhao clans pretend to be dead, but they also let in fierce beasts, causing the death of civilians and even leading to the death of the ancestors Zhou Xuan and Qiongyuan.

The Wang family's reputation and prestige were rapidly soaring, while the notorious names of the Liu and Zhao clans continued to spread. Many people couldn't help but spit in contempt and disgust when mentioning them.

No wonder, in any era and any world, human nature is the same. People worship heroes and detest and despise sneaky villains.

Wang Shouzhe was in a side hall of his courtyard, leisurely handling family affairs. After ending his daily cultivation and replenishing his spirit food, his energy was exceptionally vigorous.

This was one of the benefits of cultivation. Persistently practicing the Mysterious Energy formula every day not only strengthens the body's physique and mysterious energy but also expels diseases and prolongs life, allowing the body to remain in peak condition for a long time.

"Family Head, please have some tea." As usual, the young servant Wang Gui brewed some spiritual tea.

The tea he used today came from Cloud Mist Spirit Seed. This tea is mild like water, and after taking a sip, it feels as if it permeates the five internal organs.

Wang Gui likes this type of spiritual tea very much.

Of course, Wang Gui did not dare nor had the possibility of secretly taking some spiritual tea to brew for himself. However, being close to the water tower, he could completely enjoy the remaining tea after the family head had brewed a few rounds. This tea was not tasty enough to eat but too good to be thrown away.

Even the remnants of the tea had some effects and should not be wasted. Until it was completely tasteless, it could still be cooked into rice porridge and eaten...

There are several kinds of spiritual tea, each with its own taste, but Wang Shouzhe also has a preference for Cloud Mist Spirit Seed. Whenever he drinks this Cloud Mist Spirit Seed, he would always think of his fiancée, who he has not met face to face until now — Miss Liu.

Unlike the members of the direct line who have a lot of choice in marriage and have some autonomy to choose between many potential partners, the marriage of the principal family line depends much more on the future direction of the family, and they have almost no choice.

Therefore, both Wang Shouzhe and Miss Liu passively accepted the existence of each other. However, after a small, silent interaction between the two, Wang Shouzhe developed some fondness for her.

As he sipped the Cloud Mist Spirit Seed, feeling good, he leisurely updated the system panel, in the column for family reputation.

"Family prestige": "Township Reputation (90) — Dominating the area, County Reputation (29) — Slightly famous, Prefectural Reputation (00) — Unknown."

The reason why the township reputation hasn't reached the full value of 100 is of course due to the system's consistent principle — the later the data, the harder it is to improve. What's more, the Liu and Zhao clans have not been wiped out yet, so the Wang family cannot reach the full value of "Covering the sky with a single hand."

It's even more difficult to improve the county reputation. In order to reach the "Dominating the area" level in county reputation, the family must at least have a Celestial being as its old Ancestor. So, this time the increase by 8 points to 29 points is already quite a lot.

"Hmm, the progress is good." Wang Shouzhe looked at the updated prestige template, sipped his Cloud Mist Spirit Tea, and was quite satisfied with his recent achievements.

Just add a bit more effort to wipe out the Liu and Zhao clans, and the Wang family will truly cover the sky with one hand in Ping'an Town.

...

Meanwhile,

In the main residence of the Liu Clan, a courtyard where the clan members lived,

The young talent Liu Yongzhou was downing his wine with an extremely unpleasant look on his face. Too many things had happened recently — the rise of the Wang family, the death of his father.

Everything changed too fast.

But what surprised him the most was Liu Shengye's attitude towards him. When he attempted to test the waters a little, Family Head Liu Shengye appeared somewhat impatient, treating him dismissively.

Subsequently, he recalled what Luoxian said. Following her suggestion, he got Liu Yonghao drunk and learned shocking news from him.

It turned out that among the clan members who continued after Liu Shenghao and took the spiritual platform path, the person who was appointed as the heir was Liu Yonghao. And he, Liu Yongzhou, was merely a pawn casually utilised by Liu Shengye on his chessboard.

Chapter 98: Heavenly Spirit Pill! Got It

"Damn!" Liu Yongzhou slammed his fist down, shattering the stone table, his eyes bloodshot and fierce. His father even sacrificed his life for the family. And Liu Yongzhou, he did not know how many significant contributions he had made.

The heir Liu Yonghao! What capabilities did that boy have? He was taken down in a few moves by a little girl of eleven in public. Such a weak character, was he even eligible to tread the path to the Spirit Platform Realm?

Luoxian was right. This clan was filthy and petty beyond comparison.

Luoxian... thank goodness there was Luoxian.

In Liu Yongzhou's eyes, there emerged a strong hope, which then turned into a tone of resolution as he angrily muttered, "Liu Shengye, all of this is owed to us, father and son, by the Liu Clan. I'm just taking back what is supposed to be mine."

...

Late at night.

The night blanket covers the land.

In a world untouched by light pollution, the starry sky was dazzling, and the moonlight enchanting.

When all was silent, only a galloping horse's sound echoed through the country road, the urgent hooves seemingly announcing the rider's anxious mood.

Faster!

Even faster.

The rider, Liu Yongzhou, was so eager to see her. His heart was blazing with heat. His outlook for the future was filled with passionate hope.

After marrying into her family, he would certainly dedicate himself to cultivation, aiming to reach the Spirit Platform Realm as quickly as possible, so as not to embarrass Luoxian.

Pushing his horse to its limit, he arrived at Summer Garden.

Liu Yongzhou dismounted and, without announcing his arrival, vaulted over the wall, heading directly towards Lotus Pavilion.

"Luoxian, I'm here..." Liu Yongzhou's voice abruptly stopped, his pupils contracted and his expression drastically changed. The scene that greeted his eyes was...

Inside the pavilion of Lotus Pavilion.

Two men in splendid dresses were leisurely admiring the moonlight and sipping tea. And his goddess, Zhong Luoxian, was dutifully attending to them on the side, pouring tea like a maid.

What was even more horrifying were the large smears of blood on the ground of the pavilion, and a delicate brocade box sitting on the stone table where they were drinking tea.

"Wang Shouzhe, Dantai and Jade." Liu Yongzhou, with a pale face, roared in anger, "What are you doing here? Let go of Miss Luoxian now!"

Wang Shouzhe put down his teacup, gently tapping the brocade box, "Yongzhou, you're a bit late. Look, the Lotus Pond is wilting. Also, your brother Zhao Dingtian has already left before you."

"You..."

Liu Yongzhou felt chills all over his body, a mix of shock and anger, "Wang Shouzhe, what do you want?"

"What do I want? I should ask you, what have you done?" Wang Shouzhe laughed and pulled out a stack of papers from his bosom, which seemed to be filled with words. He casually drew out one, "In the autumn of the 3140th year of Great Qian Changlong, a peddler offended the interests of the Liu Clan because he was selling at too high a price.

Liu Shengye dispatched you, father and son, to brutally kill him two miles before Pudukou, robbing him of his goods, which totalled about three hundred Qian Gold."

Liu Yongzhou trembled instantly, sternly saying: "Wang Shouzhe, stop making false accusations. Luoxian, Luoxian, don't believe him."

Wang Shouzhe didn't pay attention to him but continued to draw another one: "In the summer of the 3142nd year of Changlong, your fishing party discovered a lone merchant ship.

You used your excellent Water Escape Technique to first puncture the bottom of the ship, pretend to save them from the shipwreck, and when you discovered that the valuable goods aboard were silk, you cruelly killed all thirteen members of the crew and stole the wealth. The most outrageous thing was that you took two young female passengers, whose whereabouts are still unknown."

Liu Yongzhou staggered, this matter was carried out so surreptitiously that only a few confidants knew about it, how could Wang Shouzhe find out?

However, Wang Shouzhe continued to draw and read more of Liu Yongzhou's misdeeds over the years, his expression getting colder and colder. In the end, he did not even bother to read anymore but simply slapped the evidence on the table, coldly saying: "Liu Yongzhou, I'll give you a chance to explain."

"Luoxian, don't believe him. He is slandering me." Liu Yongzhou roared hysterically, "Their Wang family and ours are enemies, they want to drive a wedge between us. Luoxian, Luoxian, say something."

"It's a pity." Wang Shouzhe slowly rose from his seat, took a step towards Liu Yongzhou, with his calm looking eyes, carrying a strong killing intent, "Most of these pieces of evidence were investigated and confirmed with the help of Luoxian."

"What?" Liu Yongzhou staggered back a few steps, shocked and incredulous.

"Family Head, this is my duty." 'Whispered Zhong Luoxian', flattering as she said that, "It's an honor for me to serve the family."

"Pah! Zhong Luoxian, you deceived me." Liu Yongzhou's face turned beet red, and he spat out a mouthful of blood.

Being quite keen, he easily understood at this point that he had been tricked.

Driven by instinct, he began to back away quickly, looking to escape... to get away from the scene.

"Clang!"

As the sound of a sword echoed, Wang Shouzhe transformed into a figure soaring through the air. His posture was agile and fast, much like a hovering eagle.

"Ding! Ding! Ding!"

In the face of danger, Liu Yongzhou exploded with potential, continuously blocking several attacks with the dagger tucked at his waist. However, he could not withstand the relentless, and increasingly powerful, attacks from the Mysterious Element Sword.

"Boom!"

Spewing out blood, Liu Yongzhou was flung backwards through the air and plunged towards a pond filled with decayed lotus leaves.

Before he could even hit the water, the white radiance of the sword flickered twice more. In the final moments of his life, Liu Yongzhou could only perceive his own decapitated head taking flight, while his body was grabbed by Wang Shouzhe and thrown onto the shore.

"Thud!"

His head fell into the pond of decaying lotus flowers.

All of this happened too quickly.

Wang Mei efficiently followed up, relieving the Family Head from getting his hands dirty. She searched through the corpse before placing the spoils of war and a brocade box on the stone table.

"Gulp!" Chen Fangjie, witnessing Wang Shouzhe killing someone for the second time, gulped down his saliva in fear at the murderer's ruthlessness.

This future brother-in-law of his was formidable in both cunning and strength.

Chen Fangjie felt that even if he gave his all, he might not be a match for Wang Shouzhe. In the future, living as his brother-in-law would involve treading on thin ice, without daring to make a single mistake.

"Head of the family, the search is complete. The Heavenly Spirit Pill, as well as two supportive spirit pills, the Body Protection Pill, and the Spirit Blood Pill, are all here," said Wang Mei, her excitement bursting. All the effort and hardships, it was all leading to this moment.

"Wang Mei, well done." Wang Shouzhe also let out a sigh of relief, suppressing his elated spirits.

All their calculation and planning had paid off, with two Heavenly Spirit Pills and all the supporting materials in their grasp. Such a bountiful harvest was enough to accelerate the Wang family's rise to power.

Chen Fangjie's eyelids twitched uncontrollably, his mouth watering. These were Heavenly Spirit Pills after all. His family, the Chen Clan of Donggang, had to save up for many years just to afford one.

Yet his future brother-in-law had managed to obtain two at once.

"You want them?" Wang Shouzhe pocketed a brocade box before turning towards Chen Fangjie with a sly smile.

"Yes, yes, I do. Even though our Chen Clan is currently short of money, I can write a promissory note as a pledge," nodded Chen Fangjie eagerly. "As long as the price is within reason."

"Hehe~" Wang Shouzhe then pocketed another brocade box. "I'm afraid you're not part of the deal this time."

Suspicion filled Chen Fangjie's heart. No wonder Shouzhe did not want him to be part of the saboteur; he was afraid Chen wouldn't be able to handle it!

Regret welled up in him; he shouldn't have come. As they say, 'out of sight, out of mind'.

Chen Fangjie could only express his bitterness. "Shouzhe, your plot seems fine, but in the end, it's too risky. As your elder by two years, I must advise you that particularly in the final moments, your plan fell short. What if they found out, and an old ancestor-level figure came after you? In my opinion, you should've informed me earlier, I could have asked for help from our family's Old Ancestor.

You could've given me three-tenths of the spoils!"

"Shouzhe, you're too young after all. Remember for next time, 'it's not the thousand things you fear, but the one you don't'. You're too stingy. This situation, you should have..."

Before Chen's words came to an end, Wang Shouzhe made a sign of respect, saying solemnly, "Old Ancestor Longyan, the task is completed, we can leave now."

L...Longyan Old Ancestor?

Chen Fangjie chuckled. "Shouzhe, are you joking with me?"

Suddenly, his body underwent a seismic shock and his face lost all color.

A graceful figure, appearing seemingly out of nowhere, plummeted from the darkened sky. Her veil masked her face as her cold eyes met Chen Fangjie's. "Is your Chen family's Old Ancestor more skilled than me?"

"This humble one, Fangjie, pays respect to Old Ancestor Longyan. The sudden appearance of the Old Ancestor has filled this humble one with overwhelming excitement and joy, much like witnessing the Morning Star the midst of a long, dark night. Fangjie wishes the Old Ancestor safety and well-being, always."

Chen then wisely kneeled down, showing utmost respect and awe in his expression, his gaze fervent. He bowed his head in utmost sincerity.

Could he dare not to be sincere? To offend this lady would mean losing his future wife~

Chapter 99 Attack on Spiritual Platform & Lici's Hard Work

...

Chen Fangjie had always felt that he wasn't the cunning sort.

He was calm and methodical in his actions, earning compliments and affection from the family elders. Even the two revered ancestors highly doted on him.

However, ever since befriending his future brother-in-law, Wang Shouzhe, his astute nature had started surfacing.

It couldn't be helped as Shouzhe often tried to trick him. Therefore, to survive his tricks, cunningness was necessary.

That rascal has invited Ancestor Longyan here without even telling him in advance!

Ancestor Longyan scrutinized him from head to toe and indifferently said, "Such smooth talk. Luo Yi has to discipline you properly; get up now."

Chen Fangjie couldn't help but wryly smile. In the twenty-something years of his life, this was the first time someone accused him of babbling. Shouzhe, you sure have played me deliriously.

However, he got up and obediently replied, "Yes, everything the ancestor has said is right. I will do exactly as Luo Yi says in the future." After all, if the wife wishes to discipline, even adjustment would do!

Brother Chen, I have pressing matters to attend to. I'll leave now and you should rest early," Wang Shouzhe said amicably, saluting, then left Summer Garden with Ancestor Longyan.

After Wang Shouzhe left, Chen Fangjie grew bitter, "Rest? My heart is filled with envy and jealousy; how can I possibly rest?" It was disappointing. He didn't care much about success as long as he could participate in the climax. And then...Shouzhe didn't really care anymore.

"Young Clan Leader Chen, Summer Garden is my property," Wang Mei sized him up, "as you'll be Luo Yi's husband, it would be inappropriate for us to share a rooftop. Please make yourself comfortable," she said.

Comfortable? Ah?

Chen Fangjie was at a loss. Where was he supposed to go in the middle of the night?

...

Time passed.

Day was breaking.

A black-boated ship was quietly sailing on the inner river, going towards the family business, Prosperous Farm.

Liu Yongzhou and Zhao Dingtian were both elites of the clan. They had handled countless affairs for the clan in an overt or covert manner. For the theft of the Heavenly Spirit Pill, they would have surely planned meticulously, making it impossible to realize it in a short time.

Otherwise, even if they had acquired the Heavenly Spirit Pill, they wouldn't have the time to elope with Zhong Luoxian.

However, Wang Shouzhe was even more careful. After acquiring the Heavenly Spirit Pill and the promotion aids, he wasted no time in delivering it to Grand Elder Wang Xiaohan.

Once Grand Elder Wang Xiaohan reached the Spirit Platform Realm, everything would be secure. On top of that, he had two sets of promotion materials. Even if he had to pile it up, it would produce a Spiritual Platform ancestor.

The journey with Ancestor Longyan was the safest. At this point, Wang Shouzhe wished for a legal expert to blunder his way forward.

They journeyed without words.

By the time they reached Prosperous Farm, it was dawn.

After sending the message.

Not long after, Wang Xiaohan hurried over. After small formalities, they proceeded into a secluded mountain cave by the Prosperous Farm, which was the remnant of Liuping Mountain.

This cave was a hidden emergency shelter excavated by ancestors using natural caves. It contained a pond of spring water, and ample food storage. At the bottom of the shelter was a secret tunnel for escape.

Even a wise rabbit has three burrows, let alone a family that has been operating for over a hundred years. All major families had secret storage points and hidden paths in their assets and main residences. These were used to avoid emergencies and escapes.

This shelter was the safest place for Grand Elder Wang Xiaohan to reach the Spirit Platform Realm. Ancestor Longyan guarded the entrance of the cave; indeed, a woman was the strongest barrier.

"Grand Elder, is everything ready?" Wang Shouzhe asked while saluting.

At this time, Wang Xiaohan, who had undergone a month's treatment, was looking pretty healthy. A cultivation pill and abundant Spirit Food made his complexion radiant, and his body filled with energy.

"Very well, I am ready to attempt the promotion," Wang Xiaohan said, brimming with energy. However, having failed once before, he seemed a little less confident.

Wang Shouzhe responded with a joke. "Grand Elder, you are already experienced. You are not a bride who will shy away and act as if she knows nothing at all. Once you gain familiarity, you won't even need to open your eyes for the third time. Your Two Bridges of Heaven and Earth have already been nourished by the Heavenly Spirit Pill, making you more experienced than others.

You will most definitely open the Spiritual Platform. Besides this, I have prepared two sets of promotion materials for you. If necessary, we can take another month to adjust your body before making another attempt."

"You, where did you learn these words from that you dare to mock Grand Elder?" Wang Xiaohan laughed, feeling a lot more relaxed. "But you sure know how to comfort people, I feel much more comfortable."

Everyone knew that breaking into the Spirit Platform Realm was only the first step. It needed the Mysterious Energy to enter the Spirit Platform to establish it and consolidate the Spiritual Sense. Once the Spiritual Platform was established, the body's Mysterious Energy could complete the Grand Circulation and induce a fundamental transformation in the body's functions.

The human body's Spiritual Platform is a mysterious and vulnerable place. If the first establishment failed, it usually led to some trauma, which affected the second establishment.

Therefore, each attempt to break into the Spirit Platform Realm is harder than the last, especially if the attempts are made within a short period of time - the success rate is even lower.

Chapter 99 Attack on Spiritual Platform & Lici's Hard Work

Fortunately, it had been almost twenty years since Wang Xiaohan's last failed attempt to breakthrough. Even though the Spirit Platform Realm's recovery was slow after the impact, it should be about complete by now.

Right now, Wang Xiaohan's biggest problem was psychological issues.

"Old Ancestor Longyan." Wang Shouzhe turned and bowed his hand, "I'll need you to safeguard this place, I'll step out and keep watch."

Attempting to impact the Spirit Platform Realm was relatively easy to disturb, ultimately leading to unrest within one's mind.

Reality was not like fantasy novels, where breakthroughs happened conveniently during battles. In reality, it was nonsense. Anyone who dared to attempt reaching the Spirit Platform Realm during a fight would surely die quicker.

Wang Shouzhe exited the secret refuge, the outside was already brightly lit.

As he kept watch outside, he began to feel somewhat idle. At this moment, he thought of his niece, Wang Licui. This girl had been toiling and suffering at the Prosperous Farm for nearly a month.

After a month of hardship and tribulations, the girl should have finally lost some of her impatience, and have a better understanding of the principle - the more you put in, the more you get out.

Enough, it was time to see her and perhaps bring her back.

She should have lost quite a bit of weight by now, shouldn't she?

Speaking of which, Wang Shouzhe was genuinely fond of and caring towards his niece, unable to bear to see her suffer anymore.

Wang Shouzhe could already anticipate that when Licui saw him, she would emotionally jump into his arms, crying with remorse and say, "Uncle, I was wrong. I will definitely work hard in the future."

And so on and so forth...

With this in mind, Wang Shouzhe's steps became lighter and his mood much more cheerful.

...

Meanwhile.

Next to the Spirit Field of the farm, several young men from tenant farming families were busily at work in a pavilion. They had prepared fresh fruits, a grill, charcoal fire, quality fish, chicken legs, chicken wings, pork belly, vegetables, and other ingredients.

At the same time, they were skillfully grilling these ingredients, with some delicious smelling food ready to eat.

At this moment.

A young lady walked in, her eyes haughty and prudish, scanning everyone before saying, "Has the chicken legs and wings been marinated yet? You all know how picky the young miss can be, not a single mistake can be made."

"Miss Wang, everything has been marinated." A young man replied respectfully, "As per your instructions, this time we're using top-grade smokeless charcoal. The salt we used is also top-grade, along with culinary wine, cumin, hot pepper, and other condiments."

Just then.

A voice from outside announced, "Miss Licui has arrived."

Immediately, the young men and women inside the pavilion all put on solemn expressions, straightened their posture, and prepared to greet the guest.

Two young men carried a Taishi Chair into the pavilion, with a girl sitting on it. She had some baby fat, and was carrying around a big cat with patches of white fur.

This girl was none other than Wang Licui, who had been sent here to the farm. After smelling the aroma of the barbecued food, her spirits immediately lifted, picking and choosing from all the food with a critical eye.

"Firstly, bring me two chicken legs, five chicken wings and half a pound of pork belly to satiate my hunger." She nonchalantly issued her command, "And for my cat, Hua Hua, prepare extra pork belly."

"Yes, Miss."

One by one, the delicious barbecued food was served. Wang Licui languidly laid on the Taishi Chair, holding a chicken leg in one hand and a chicken wing in the other, savouring it with gusto.

Her cat, on the other hand, roared and pounced on the plate full of pork belly, eating with fierce bites.

It was true what they said - pets resemble their owners. The big fat cat was plump and robust, its round body waddling around aggressively while gobbling up the barbecued pork.

"Very good, now bring me five more chicken legs."

"Young Miss, take your time eating, no one is rushing you." The young woman surnamed Wang massaged her shoulders while advising. "Eating too fast will be hard on your stomach."

...

Wang Licui gorged on the food, unaware that Wang Shouzhe was standing outside the straw hut. He was so livid that steam may as well be coming off of him.

"Hmm, Wang Shouzhe, you're still too naive." Wang Shouzhe could feel his body shaking, his face twitching uncontrollably.

Where was the promise of laborious work and breaking a sweat?

Wasn't she supposed to study diligently under the moonlight?

Wang Licui!

Ha, to think your Fourth Uncle dotes on you so much. Just as Wang Shouzhe was about to march out and grab her ear, planning to send her to the mine of the Gongsun Clan to "reform",

Suddenly.

A young man approached and flattered her, "Young Miss, why not attend to the spirit rats in the fields while you eat. As you know, our White Jade Spiritual Rice is at the crucial stage of filling. If the spirit rats wreak havoc for a little longer, it might decrease the yield."

Spirit rats?

Wang Shouzhe stopped in his tracks.

Spirit rats are the number one enemy of the spirit fields. Unlike common fierce beasts with gigantic bodies that are hard to hide, these spirit rats are elusive. Wherever there are spirit fields, spirit rats will appear, known for their gluttony and massive appetites.

In the past, the spirit fields of the Wang family were always ravaged by spirit rats, resulting in varying degrees of decrease in yield. Even Wang Xiaohan, who has a wealth of knowledge and whose cultivation base reached the peak of the Vital Energy Refining Realm, didn't have a good solution for the spirit rats.

Despite their efforts to capture them, they could only manage to barely control them. The spirit rats are petite and incredibly swift, coming and going in groups, their nests concealed and connecting in all directions. Neither fumigation nor flooding could deal with them.

Wang Shouzhe began to wonder. Could it be that Licui had a way to deal with spirit rats? Using her tubby pet cat?

"Yeah, Hua Hua, get them." Wang Licui knew the importance of spirit rice. After all, it was their business. She immediately instructed the big cat.

"Roar." The big cat was enjoying its meal and wasn't willing to heed her call, it roared in annoyance.

"Wang Licui can't even control you, huh?" Wang Licui announced coldly, "You won't catch the spirit rats? Fine. Then calculate everything you ate and make it up to me in Qian Gold. People, take away Hua Hua's pork."

Someone obeyed her command and took away the basin.

The poor big cat, where could it find Qian Gold to buy back its freedom? Its face immediately filled with regret, and it roared, plunging into the spirit fields. Its speed was astonishing, like a gust of wind ten times when running.

Suddenly, the spirit rats in the field began chirping and scattering in all directions.

At this moment, Wang Shouzhe was stunned.

Wasn't this thing called Hua Hua just a cat? It was obviously a cub of a tiger-like fierce beast!

Meticulously learning and reciting the Beast Atlas is essential for disciples of the Wang family. After recalling it slightly, Wang Shouzhe could only determine that it was a cub of some kind of common tiger-like fierce beasts.

Because most tiger-like fierce beasts look very similar in their childhood, it's hard to distinguish. But regardless of what type of tiger-like fierce beast they are, once they grow up, they would at least reach Level Three!

A Level Three fierce beast! Equivalent to a human Spirit Platform Realm Cultivator.

What kind of a creature was this Wang Licui? She had even raised a fierce beast tiger cub! Where did she get it from? How did she tame it... Moreover, since when did a fierce beast tiger cub start catching spirit rats?

While Wang Shouzhe was in utter chaos,

Hua Hua had already finished her job. The spirit rats it bit to death, all dragged out, neatly aligned in a row. Among them, the largest spirit rat was almost one to two pounds in weight, plump and fat.

Unlike common rats, spirit rats that only eat spirit rice are very clean, and their meat is soft, fresh, and full of vitality. They are a very delicious and nourishing Spirit Food.

"Roar!" The little fierce beast roared menacingly, demonstrating to the humans that they were supposed to cook the spirit rats for it.

"Hold on!" Wang Licui lazily walked over, saying, "According to the principle of dividing war spoils, we share half and half."

Then, she divided very fairly.

"You get one, I get one. I get one, I get one, you get one."

And then the ten spirit rats were divided into two piles. She ended up with seven in her pile. While the little fierce beast Hua Hua only got three, and they were all skinny spirit rats.

The little fierce beast, Hua Hua, scratched its head in puzzlement. Something didn't seem right, but it couldn't figure out what. Forget it, first roast and eat them. Humans, hurry up!

Then, Wang Licui put her "half" of the war spoils into her bag, smiling smugly, "Fourth Uncle's words were right, Nine Chapter Arithmetic is indeed very useful."

Such shameless words left Wang Shouzhe shocked!

Could this niece of his be any more shameless?

Chapter 100: Promotion! Old Ancestor Xiaohan

...

"No wonder Miss Lici is so notable, her arithmetic skills are outstanding. They say that she was personally tutored by the Clan Leader himself."

Wang Shouzhe's face started to heat up; such a student would be hard to handle.

"Not only is Miss Lici exceptional at arithmetic, but she's also greatly favored by the Clan Leader, who appointed her to oversee the affairs of the Prosperous Farm. This shows exactly how high her standing is within the family, doesn't it?"

Oversee affairs? Wang Shouzhe stared blankly, when did he appoint her to oversee things? Could it be, he was getting senile?

Right, I sent you here to experience hardship, yet you're here living the life of luxury.

"The Clan Leader is truly a master at utilizing talents, our Wang family is sure to prosper."

The children of the tenant farmers, or the non-direct descendants of the Wang family, began heaping flattering compliments onto Wang Licui, going overboard with their praises.

This flattery made Wang Licui feel like she was floating on the cloud, leading her to just chill out on the Taishi Chair. There she layed relaxedly, gnawing on a large chicken leg, and declaimed, "I'm not worthy, I'm not worthy! It's all thanks to Fourth Uncle regularly teaching me well."

This...

Wang Shouzhe could not tolerate listening to this anymore, was this really how he instructed her usually? The phrase "I'm not worthy" was more fitting for me, her Fourth Uncle!

"Right, before leaving, Fourth Uncle repeatedly admonished me, 'Lici, you must study hard and do your homework diligently.'" Wang Licui turned serious immediately, "I, Wang Licui, greatly value the expectations and kindness of Fourth Uncle. I absolutely cannot be negligent with my daily homework."

"Miss Lici is indeed diligent, her future prospects are immeasurable."

"Miss, which passage are we reading today?" A girl from a side branch of the Wang family asked cautiously.

?

Wang Shouzhe's steps halted again, and a warm current welled up from within his heart. Our big girl of the house, although loves to eat, lazy, and shameless, she still listens to me. At least she knows that she must diligently study every day.

"We will read the classic piece 'The Clan Leader says'. It is a famous piece by a great past Clan Leader. It is said that understanding it can benefit family management greatly. In the future, I will be responsible for the major tasks of our family."

Wang Shouzhe silently nodded. This is a good choice. It contains many wise sayings, and it is a model for managing the family and its traditions. It seems that the big girl still has the will to improve herself after all.

Then, that girl from another branch of the Wang family started to read aloud: "The Clan Leader says: managing a large clan is like cooking small fish... The Clan Leader says: when taking a wife, one should marry a wise one, as a husband is the wife's guide, and the wife is the child's guide..."

Excellent, excellent!

Wang Shouzhe had just nodded a couple of times when he suddenly noticed something odd – why didn't the voice sound right?

He peered around to see that girl from the side branch of the Wang family reading whilst swinging her head from left to right. Meanwhile, big girl Wang Licui was half-listening while chomping on a chicken leg, occasionally shaking her head in a ridiculously exaggerated manner. Soon after, she fell asleep with a chicken leg in her mouth...

Not only did she fall asleep, but she was also taking occasional bites of the chicken leg, with a satisfied smile on her face. It seemed as if these days she was completely carefree.

Wang Shouzhe stood there, even though it was midsummer, he felt like he had been doused with a bucket of cold water, chilling him from head to toe.

Studying hard!

So this is Wang Licui's idea of studying hard!

This child, can she be any more difficult?

He just couldn't deal with her anymore. Maybe he should send her to a mine?

Wang Shouzhe thought if he allowed Wang Licui to continue flaunting herself in front of him, it was bound to take years off his life.

He really couldn't stand her anymore.

Wang Shouzhe stepped out from beside the straw hut, strolling towards the pavilion with his hands behind his back.

The side branch girl who had been reading was quick-eyed and seemed to have seen Wang Shouzhe before. Her face changed instantly and she hurriedly went forward to pay her respects, "Wang Juan, paying my respects to the Clan Leader."

Upon hearing that the Clan Leader had arrived, the other young people from the side branches and tenant farmers were all shell-shocked, and hurriedly came forward to pay their respects, "Paying our respects to the Clan Leader."

"Everyone, please rise." Wang Shouzhe replied warmly, "I just came to visit Lici. Oh my, how has this child ended up asleep so early in the morning?"

All the attendants turned pale, not daring to say a word.

Wang Juan turned pale as well, whispering stutteringly, "Mi..Miss Licui stayed up late reading last night. She had to wake up early to catch Spirit Rats for the tenant farmers from the Spirit Field. She might just be tired."

"You're called Wang Juan, do you know me?" Wang Shouzhe asked noncommittally.

"Replying to the Clan Leader," Wang Juan answered honestly, "I saw you before at the Clan School."

Clan School.

Yes, that's the internal school of the Wang family. Besides the direct descendants, children of the head of household and so on, the more outstanding children from the side branches can also study at the Clan School. Or to put it another way, most of the students at the Clan School currently belong to the side branches. There aren't many direct descendants in total anyways.

After the children from the side branches have learned something, most of them will get involved in various industries of the Wang family and become key players. Those with exceptional abilities will gradually become Principals, Chief Principals and so on, as they get older and accumulate experience.

"Hmm, you have good command over your readings, you must have put in a lot of effort. Keep up the good work. The family needs talents in every field for it to develop," Wang Shouzhe nodded in praise. If a family wants to develop, it cannot do without talent.

Wishing to become integral members, having culture is essential. It's not possible that someone illiterate takes on the role of Principal or Chief Principal, right?

Being praised and remembered by the Clan Leader made Wang Juan's face flush with excitement. She hurriedly thanked him, "Wang Juan will definitely work hard."

Next, Wang Shouzhe strolled up to Wang Licui.

"Roar~~" Little Hatchet Flower, who had never seen Wang Shouzhe before, sensed from her fierce beast instincts that this human was very dangerous. She stepped front, guarding Wang Licui.

Chapter 100: Promotion! Old Ancestor Xiaohan

It let out a meek growl, its body barely bigger than a cat, far from having the mighty roar of a tiger in the woods.

Its roar woke Wang Licui up. She grabbed Little Tiger Huahua's neck and criticized, "Huahua, how many times have I told you? Don't make noise when I'm studying. Don't you know you're disturbing me?"

With a face full of sullenness, Little Tiger Huahua let out a few whimpers in its defense.

"Oh, you're grown-up and dare to talk back now. Ha, deducting five, no, ten Qian Gold." Wang Licui took out a small notebook and wrote it down, "Hmm, Huahua, you now owe me six hundred Qian Gold. Remember, work hard and strive to pay off the debt."

Little Tiger Huahua looked distressingly at its mistress. How could it owe so much? It couldn't even count up to such a large number. After all, the important thing was that it owed a lot.

The corner of Wang Shouzhe's mouth twitched.

Is it really okay to bully a young fierce beast like this?

Tigers are very smart. Once they reach level three maturity, they are very quick-witted, not inferior to ordinary humans. If they are trained by a human beast master, they can even read and write.

It's said that a level five beast is clever and cunning, and it can communicate with humans in many ways. Some level five beasts can even talk like humans.

Therefore, beasts and spirit beasts in this world are not simple. They are not just wild creatures.

As Wang Shouzhe was mumbling to himself, he noticed someone approaching from the corner of his eye. It was... Fourth Uncle... Was he dreaming?

Upon realizing the situation, she was struck as if by lightning and her face turned pale, "Fourth Uncle, why, why are you here?"

In front of everyone, Wang Shouzhe gave her face and just chuckled, "I came to the farm to handle some business and just took the opportunity to visit you."

He looked around, curled his eyes and said with a smile, "Nicely done, you're doing a good job here."

"Well, well, well..." Wang Licui stuttered, quickly wiped the Taishi chair's seat, "Fourth Uncle, please sit. I'll report to you about my recent work and studies."

Wang Shouzhe sat on the Taishi chair. Ah, this chair was comfortable. Its ergonomic design meant it was perfect for a nap. He thought, it might not be a bad idea to get one for his study room, where he could take a nap after reading.

As for enjoying life, no one plays better than Licui.

"What are you staring at? Clan Leader is here, hurriedly bring the roast," Wang Licui turned back and instructed. "Hey, third brother, get one of my spirit rats, no, two, no, three. Roast them for the Clan Leader to try."

When she mentioned having to give away three rats, she had gritted her teeth a bit. It showed just how far she was willing to go just to please the Clan Leader.

Wang Shouzhe didn't refuse. At least she acknowledged to honor elders, so he let her carry on.

He decided to take a nap. Making preparations for Heavenly Spirit Pills had kept him up for two days. Although his strength had already reached the level seven Qi Refinement Stage, he was still a bit tired.

This Taishi chair was indeed comfortable.

He dozed off for about half an hour.

Upon waking up, he felt refreshed, and his nose was greeted by a pleasant fragrance.

"Fourth Uncle, you're awake? You have been working so hard for the family," Wang Licui poured flatteries on him, giving him a shoulder rub, acting the part of a considerate youngster perfectly.

Then she presented the Spirit Rat roast. Wang Shouzhe tasted it, the flavor was pretty good. The meat was delicate and tender, accompanied by an aroma of Baiyu ZhiLan Spirit Rice.

After finishing one rat, he desired for more and was about to grab a second. But he noticed that Wang Licui, too, had finished her own rat and was already eating the second one.

Wang Shouzhe was dumbfounded. So he wasn't the only one meant to eat the three roasted rats? Also, didn't this girl eat too much of the roast earlier?

With Wang Shouzhe's stare on her, Wang Licui stopped her hand and blinked her large eyes at Wang Shouzhe, seeming very puzzled. Was one rat not enough for Fourth Uncle?

Then, with a hardened heart, she ripped her rat's front leg off and gave it to Wang Shouzhe.

Thank you!

Wang Shouzhe's heart was filled with frustration as though a herd of animals was on a stampede inside him.

...

Inside the secret shelter,

Wang Xiaohan's attempt to reach the Spirit Platform Realm was at its final stages. His body energy was in full swing. His pores opened, and his body was shrouded in a mist.

After what felt an eternity, the mist began to recede back into his body.

He opened his eyes, and a strong aura erupted from him.

"I did it! I, Wang Xiaohan, did it."

For a moment, tears gushed out of his eyes. It had been twenty years, a full twenty years.

Ever since he had failed in his costly attempt to ascend to the Spirit Platform Realm, he had felt like a sinner in his family. From then on, he had led a secluded life in the Prosperous Farm, where he cultivated Baiyu ZhiLan Spirit Rice for his family.

A long roar echoed, causing a subtle shake in the cave. He felt a huge transformation within him, felt a strand of wonderful spiritual sense within his spirit platform, a strand filled with a multitude of miraculous functions.

Moreover, with spiritual sense, he could now manipulate spiritual artifacts. A Spirit Platform Realm practitioner who has a spiritual artifact is often much stronger than one who doesn't.

Soon, he curbed his inner jubilation. He took a devout bath, washing off the stains from his advancement.

Afterward, Wang Xiaohan, dressed in coarse hemp clothing, walked out of the hidden storage cave.

At this moment.

Old Ancestor Longyan, Wang Shouzhe, and Wang Licui were already waiting at the entrance of the cave.

As Wang Xiaohan stepped into the sunlight, it was clear that his vigour was completely different. His vitality was overflowing, his complexion rosy like a baby's, and his eyes sharp as a hawk.

Even Wang Shouzhe, looking at him, felt a sense of reverence and difficulty to match.

It was a success!

Wang Shouzhe also felt overjoyed, his heart elated. The Wang family had been in decline for years, relying on the barely functioning Old Ancestor Longyan to hold on.

The members of the Wang family lived in constant dread like they were treading on thin ice. They dared not offend one side, and on the other, they had to be cautious, carrying on their lives with their tails between their legs every day.

Why?

Because they had no Old Ancestor to fall back on.

Even if others bullied you, there was nothing you could do. You couldn't expect the severely injured Old Ancestor Longyan to fight back, could you?

The only feeling they had was one of repression!

Not to mention, even the annual autumn and winter hunts were just a roundabout at the edge of the outlands before hurrying back. There was no other choice - what would you use to confront a powerful fierce beast if you encountered one? Your head?

Recently, Chen Fangjie had sent some Iron-backed Wild Pig meat, hunted by the Old Ancestor of the Chen Clan after their clansmen discovered the top-level-two fierce beast.

Such an opportunity, if presented to the Wang family, would have to be surrendered. Without a Spirit Platform Realm Old Ancestor, hunting a top-level-two fierce beast was too dangerous.

But now things were different.

It won't be long before Old Ancestor Longyan's entire body will be purified of the evil qi. Once she uses the Creation Pill to gradually repair her body, she will truly return to her peak state.

However, Old Ancestor Longyan will always be the biggest trump card and should not be used at will.

Now that they have Grandfather Wang Xiaohan, a conventional Spirit Platform Realm Old Ancestor, the strategic deployment options for the future will increase. Likewise, the Wang family will thoroughly step into the fast lane of development.

"Congratulations, Grandfather! For advancing to the Spirit Platform Realm!" Both Wang Shouzhe and Wang Licui congratulated him together, their voices full of excitement.

This was a joyous occasion for any Spirit Platform Family.

Even in the deep, starry-eyes of Old Ancestor Longyan, there was a hint of tears welling up. For many years, she had singlehandedly held up the family.

The family had spent a significant amount of resources and effort to cultivate Spirit Platform Realm practitioners, only to experience failures time and again.

Old Ancestor Longyan, who had been tormented by the Yin Sha to the point of wishing for death, did not even dare to die. If she died, the Wang family would have no rightful successor to the Spiritual Platform and their doom was certain!

It's our turn for the Wang family to rise!

Wang Shouzhe's heart was ablaze with fervor. With Grandfather's successful advancement, there was a significant increase in their sense of security.

The days of Liu and Zhao families were numbered.