

SOVEREIGN OF THE THREE REALMS

Chapter 14: Denying Face Twice

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The heir of White Tiger, Bai Zhanyun and the heir of Vermillion Bird, Hong Tiantong were surreptitiously discussing something in a secluded tavern in the capital.

“Brother White, the kid is extremely cocky. He thinks nothing of you or me, particularly you Brother White. You and he arrived at almost the same time, but he stole the Dragonbone Sun Grass from you, this cannot be tolerated!”

Hong Tiantong was obviously quite crafty and his words carried evident overtones of provocation.

“Huh! Jiang Chen, insulting I, Bai Zhanyun, is to seek death!”

As Bai Zhanyun spoke, an underling in charge of following others came hurriedly rushing in.

“Young duke, the kid didn’t go back to the Jiang Han manor. He seems to have gone to the Turquoise Hall.”

“Turquoise Hall? What’s that kid doing there? Does he want to buy spirit stones?” Hong Tiantong was a bit skeptical.

Bai Zhanyun, on the other hand, displayed a strange smile upon hearing those words. “Turquoise Hall is it? Are you sure?”

“Your servant has been continuously following him and could not have been mistaken.”

Bai Zhanyun laughed joyfully. “Jiang Chen you brat, you’ve brought this upon yourself. The owner of Turquoise Hall is my uncle!”

He grew even more proud when he finished speaking. “Brother Hong, come. Let’s go watch the show and ruthlessly insult this kid. Let’s also seize the Dragonbone Sun Grass while we’re at it!”

Their current location wasn’t that far from the Turquoise Hall. The two of them quickly arrived and entered through the back door.

Turquoise Hall was a retailer that specialized in spirit and exotic stones. Its scale of operations was all encompassing, and was a premier brand in the capital.

Jiang Chen’s visit was naturally not for viewing or admiring stones, but to customize a stone.

He wandered around the Turquoise Hall for half a day, calling upon his past life’s various memories of appraising stones to decide on a particular stone. He discussed, and settled on the price.

The owner of Turquoise Hall hastily walked out when Jiang Chen was waiting to pay. He smiled, “Little brother, what a horrid coincidence. I’ve only just learned myself that the crouching yang stone you’ve reserved was already reserved by someone else last night.”

“Who reserved it? What a coincidence!” Jiang Chen was quite surprised, did such a coincidence truly exist in this world?

“Why, the great me of course!” An ear piercing voice rang out from behind as Bai Zhanyun sauntered out.

“Jiang Chen, how unfortunate. I’ve purchased this yang stone. You want it? Hand over the Dragonbone Sun Grass. I may just consider giving the stone to you if I’m in a good mood.”

Jiang Chen was quick on his feet. When he saw Bai Zhanyun, that coyly smirking Hong Tiantong behind him and then the owner of Turquoise Hall, he understood the situation at once.

It seems like this Bai Zhanyun was bored out of his empty mind. He'd started a fight at the Hall of Healing and continued it to the Turquoise Hall. He really wanted to start something with Jiang Chen.

However, the owner of Turquoise Hall was greatly demeaning himself in taking orders from the son of a duke. Jiang Chen's opinion of the man was abruptly revised downwards.

"Interesting. Interesting. Boss Song, are you sure you're not selling the stone to me?" Jiang Chen asked as he maintained his composure.

Bai Zhanyun bellowed, "Jiang Chen, I've already told you that I will only give up the stone if you hand over the Dragonbone Sun Grass. Otherwise, don't even think of getting the crouching yang stone."

"Oh? What if I must have it?" Jiang Chen smiled lightly.

"Hahaha, do you think I, the mighty Bai Zhanyun, would give it up to you? I'd sooner buy this stone to line my latrines than give it to you."

"Your household's latrines are certainly fancy. So, there's no room for negotiation?"

"Negotiation my ass! Either you hand over the Dragonbone Sun Grass or get the hell out of here!" Bai Zhanyun also more or less knew that it would be unrealistic to expect Jiang Chen to hand over the Dragonbone Sun Grass.

Jiang Chen laughed heartily and paid Bai Zhanyun no heed. He couldn't be bothered to waste spittle on idiots like Bai Zhanyun. It's not like he was buying stuff for himself.

He was purchasing equipment for the royal princess. He wasn't about to waste time and effort in explanations. Since the village idiot Bai Zhanyun wanted to go up against the royal family, then by all means let him try.

"Boss Song. It seems like you're a smart guy engaging in dumb transactions." Jiang Chen laughed lightly and shook his head with a sigh. "If you don't sell to me now, it will be too late even if you come to me crying in the future."

He waltzed out without a glance at Bai Zhanyun or Hong Tiantong after that.

He'd just reached the main lobby when an associate came tearing in, his expression extremely terrified. He murmured a few sentences next to boss Song's ear with a face full of fearful reservations. He didn't even dare meet Jiang Chen's eyes.

Boss Song's face abruptly whitened after he'd finished listening. It was as if all the blood had been suddenly sucked out of his body. His face was starkly white and his lips infused with bitterness.

He called out in a voice that was almost crying, "Young duke Jiang, hold your steps, please hold your steps! This crouching yang stone is yours. Turquoise Hall will not charge you anything and will immediately courier it to your manor."

Boss Song's attitude did a complete 180 in a blink of an eye, greatly surprising Bai Zhanyun and Hong Tiantong.

Particularly Bai Zhanyun, his very foot hopped in astonishment.

"Uncle, are you serious? Haven't we already agreed?"

Boss Song had a woeful face. "I say little emperor, don't make things tough for your uncle. Don't throw us mere mortals into the middle when you celestial beings are fighting."

Bai Zhanyun became enraged. “Celestial being? Faugh. What kind of crap celestial being is Jiang Chen? His Jiang Han dukedom doesn’t even rank in the top out of all 108 Eastern Kingdom dukedoms. You’re scared of him uncle?”

If he hadn’t been intimidated by Bai Zhanyun’s old man, boss Song would have definitely rushed up and dealt out the beating of a lifetime. He would first beat Bai Zhanyun so hard that he wouldn’t be able to function normally, and then disdainfully spit on him a few times for good measure.

This brat was not only the ruination of his family, but also dragging boss Song down with him!

Boss Song almost leapt forward and attached himself to Jiang Chen’s thigh. “Young duke, I was senseless and blind. I beg you, I beg you to accept it! Please view this crouching yang stone as a token of old Song’s devotion!”

They said to forgive and forget, Jiang Chen had no intentions of making too much of a fuss over a small business owner.

He smiled, “Boss Song, your words actually highlight that I am an ungrateful person. Since you are so sincere, I will accept this stone if I must. As for the price, someone will naturally pay for it. Send the stone to a certain address on the day after tomorrow. I will notify you of the address when it’s time.”

“Yes, yes. The young duke is magnanimous and generous. I am shamed, shamed.”

Jiang Chen laughed heartily. How could he not know that someone outside must have intervened, resulting in old Song’s about face?

As for who intervened, that was even more obvious.

How many houses within the capital possessed such power that not even the great dukes dared to defy? And at this moment, who else other than the royal family would protect Jiang Chen's interests?

"It would seem that ole Eastern Lu has made certain preparations. Afraid I'll renege?" Jiang Chen shook his head in his mind and stepped out merrily.

He'd finished preparing all the components needed for the initial steps.

Bai Zhanyun had been repeatedly ignored by Jiang Chen and suffered under a most ignoble feeling of defeat. He glared ferociously at boss Song, "Uncle, you must give me an explanation for this matter!"

Boss Song rolled his eyes, "Bai Zhanyun, you'd best watch yourself! This is the capital, not your White Tiger territory! Think about whether or not you can afford to offend someone before behaving atrociously. As your uncle, I'll give you a word of advice. Be careful of ruining generations of your family's work in a single night if you make one wrong step!"

Boss Song was absolutely not being an alarmist. His associate had only spoken two sentences just now.

The first was, "Commander Tiandu of the royal guard is outside", and the second was, "we must sell the crouching yang stone to Jiang Chen, or else face the consequences."

Those two sentences alone were enough to alter boss Song's attitude.

Who didn't know that the royal guard was the king's personal guard, a contingent with one of the highest fighting competencies, an entity that held the power of life and death in the Eastern Kingdom?

It wouldn't be an exaggeration to say that if the royal guard was offended, even the White Tiger duke would end up in pieces, not to mention a mere boss Song!

The royal guard was also one of the most powerful forces within the kingdom. What did this indicate when an entity of this caliber was secretly protecting Jiang Chen's interests?

Boss Song wasn't an idiot, he could read the writing on the wall and discern the seriousness of the situation.

It was with certain resignation that he couldn't clearly explain himself in the face of Bai Zhanyun's whining complaints. His warnings fulfilled the duties of being a relative.

If Bai Zhanyun insisted on pursuing this like moths to a flame, then boss Song would have to draw a line between the White family and his at the earliest opportunity.

Bai Zhanyun was still cussing and ranting as he accused boss Song of not honoring relationship ties. Hong Tiantong however, was deep in thought. He thought this development was too strange. This had happened not only once, but twice!

"Is it possible that this Jiang Chen really has some influential figure backing him up?"

As for Jiang Chen, he didn't loiter outside once he'd completed his errands, but made straight for the Jiang Han manor.

Two people walked out as soon as he'd set foot into the doorway. One of them was Jiang Feng, the duke of Jiang Han and father that he'd gotten for cheap.

The other was a middle aged man with a gloomy and ominous face. His expression was cold and he walked straight towards the exit. The duke of Jiang Han was accompanying him with a somewhat obsequious smile, murmuring something in a low voice.

His manner was even a bit humble.

But no matter how warmly Jiang Feng came off, it was as if he was putting a hot face next to a cold butt. The middle aged man remained remote and had no reaction at all.

When they reached the door, they ran into a just returning Jiang Chen.

Jiang Chen finally recalled who this man was from his past self's memories. Assistant Organizer Du?

This man was actually one of the main organizers of the Hidden Dragon Trials.

“Chen'er, you've come back? Come and greet the great Organizer Du. I've finally been able to invite him to our manor but unfortunately, master Du needs to go attend to a few matters.”

That Assistant Organizer Du flicked a glance at Jiang Chen, and smiled without really smiling, “You're Jiang Chen?”

As one of the main organizers of the Hidden Dragon Trials, he naturally knew who Jiang Chen was. This question was obviously fake.

Jiang Chen was a smart guy and a keen observer. He feared that his father had gotten a face full of dust from this fellow, and replied noncommittally, “That's me. You're Assistant organizer Du?”

Du Ruhai, the assistant organizer of the Hidden Dragon Trials, was ranked number two in terms of real power. It wouldn't be an exaggeration to say that he held the fortunes of all the great families participating in the Trials!

No matter which duke it was, who didn't present a polite and ingratiating front when they met Du Ruhai? Who wouldn't humble themselves?

If he threw a wrench into the works at a critical moment because you offended him, you wouldn't even know how you died.

Therefore, seeing that Jiang Chen was not only not eager to please, but in fact questioned him back with this sort of tone, organizer Du was quickly incensed.

It wasn't that Du Ruhai had no measure of subtlety, but more like he had no need to pretend he was generous and forgiving in front of the Jiang household.

His expression froze, "Duke of Jiang Han? Your son is quite a character. He dared desecrate even the Rites of Heavenly Worship, no wonder he doesn't think much of a mere organizer ."

Jiang Feng knew things were bad when he heard those words, and was about to apologize.

Du Ruhai spread out his hands and laughed coldly. "Duke of Jiang Han, no further words are necessary. I was planning to help your son during the Hidden Dragon Trials. But I've received a lot of messages from other dukes this afternoon, saying that your son has no understanding of morals or ethics. Helping him would be akin to putting myself in harm's way. Therefore, you're on your own for the Trials!"

"Organizer Du, this..." Jiang Feng was extremely agitated.

"Duke of Jiang Han, don't blame me for speaking frankly. Even without the dukes' reminders, based purely on your son's good-for-nothing attitude, you should be offering daily prayers that I don't make life difficult for him!"

Du Ruhai arbitrarily decided to cast aside all consideration for others.