

Teacher 1191

Chapter 1191: Second Round, Chess Battle

When the genie wearing an unbuttoned vest took form, and a pair of big hands pressed down on the Qi Emperor's back, he immediately jumped up like a fish that had been tossed up onto the shores.

"What... What is this thing?"

The empress covered her mouth and asked in surprise.

"Great... Great Teacher Sun..."

The Qi Emperor felt a little scared. He almost called out for his men to protect him.

"This is the master masseur that is summoned when using the Ancient Dragon Capturing Hands. You'll know after you give it a try!"

Sun Mo consoled him.

Gulp!

The Qi Emperor gulped and secretly thought to himself that it was unlikely Sun Mo would harm him. After all, he had great prospects, and even if he wished to harm someone, he'd have many means to do that. He didn't need to use a big man to hammer him to death, right?

But...

(Looking at the genie's glossy muscles, this... this Emperor feels really scared!)

(Although I'd occasionally shower my love on one or two elegant-looking eunuchs, this Emperor really can't accept someone like this!)

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The Qi Emperor was hesitant and wanted to refuse Sun Mo's kind intention. However, he didn't dare to do so either, fearing that Sun Mo would be enraged and refuse to give him treatment.

Sigh, he should just bear with it. He'd just close his eyes and let things get over with.

The Qi Emperor consoled himself.

Ten minutes later.

"Huh? It's over?"

The Qi Emperor, who was having a wonderful dream, immediately looked stunned when Sun Mo woke him up. He recalled the comfortable feeling when the genie was giving him a massage and then looked at Sun Mo with a smile.

"Great Teacher Sun, can you do it again?"

"There won't be any effect even if we continue with the massage!"

Sun Mo shook his head.

“It’s fine even if there’s no effect! I just want it to give me a massage!”

The Qi Emperor hesitated for a moment but didn’t really say this out.

“Your Majesty, I still have to guide Ziqi to prepare for her battle, so I’ll be taking my leave first!”

Sun Mo cupped his fists together.

“Oh, This Emperor will send you off!”

The Qi Emperor got up and the silk blanket slid off.

“Your Majesty!”

The empress was embarrassed and covered her eyes with her sleeves.

“Huh?”

The Qi Emperor also noticed that he wasn’t wearing clothes and it wasn’t appropriate for him to send people off. Therefore, he instructed, “Empress, go send Great Teacher Sun off on this Emperor’s behalf!”

“Hmm?”

The empress was surprised. (I’m a noble empress of a country, but you’re asking me to send off a guest?)

But after her beautiful eyes saw Sun Mo’s side face, the annoyance she felt disappeared. After all, women would always want to get close to handsome men.

“Make sure to take good care of Great Teacher Sun!”

The Qi Emperor instructed.

After the empress and Sun Mo left his palace, the refreshed Qi Emperor wanted to test his body to see if it had improved. When his gaze landed on a young palace maid not far away, a ball of fire rose in his heart.

“Let’s wait until the empress comes back!”

The Qi Emperor held it in. However, when the empress came back after sending Sun Mo off, she saw the Qi Emperor on top of a young palace maid.

“Your Majesty!”

The empress’s beautiful brows frowned.

“Haha, this is amazing! The God Hands is really true to its name!”

The Qi Emperor was elated and couldn’t help but boast to the empress, “This Emperor is the most amazing man in the world from now on!”

Before receiving the massage, the Qi Emperor would only be able to last for two to three minutes even after relying on strong nourishing alchemical pills. But now, he had been going for 15 minutes.

“I feel that I can go for seven rounds in a night!”

The Qi Emperor was proud.

Seeing how ferocious the Qi Emperor was, the empress couldn't help but think of Sun Mo. (He's definitely more amazing than you.)

“Oh right, I heard that Sun Mo's God Hands can be used to perform cosmetic surgery as well?”

The empress then thought of something. “I wonder if I can...”

“You're already very beautiful!”

The Qi Emperor frowned.

“Your Majesty, I want to become the most beautiful woman in the world!”

The empress said coyly, “Don't you want to have a woman like that?”

“...”

The Qi Emperor wanted to say (No matter how beautiful you become, you don't have enough knowledge in your brain.) He couldn't help but think of the few young ladies by Sun Mo's side on the Great Tang's spectating stand.

Each of them had their own merits.

Moreover, Sun Mo's fiancée seemed to be a beautiful great teacher who was ranked fifth on the Devastating Beauty Rankings.

This time around, Mei Ziyu and Murong Mingyue hadn't come along to the Qi Country. Otherwise, the Qi Emperor would definitely feel a little jealous.

In terms of beauty, the Qi Emperor's 3,000 concubines wouldn't be bad, but in terms of intelligence and status, they couldn't match up. An Xinhui alone would be able to get an instant win against all his concubines.

“Your Majesty, I've never asked you for anything before. Can't you even agree to such a small request?”

The empress looked like she was on the verge of tears.

“Alright then!”

The Qi Emperor gave in. He wanted to see the effect of the cosmetic surgery, then get one for himself. However, he wasn't targeting a change to his face. His status as the emperor allowed the Qi Emperor to have everything he wanted.

However, some parts of his body couldn't be changed and were born as such.

“If Sun Mo can do that, this Emperor is willing to bestow upon him a city!”

The Qi Emperor was willing to pay a big price.

...

The next morning, Victory Public Square was congested by people once again. Many people came after having their breakfast, wanting to get a good seat.

At 9.30 a.m, the second round started on the dot.

“This round is a chess battle!”

The Qi Emperor announced the rules. “Each royal prince group will send out at least three people to participate in the battle. There’d be one lead attacker, one defense, and one as the back-up!”

“Ziqi, which position do you want?”

Sun Mo had learned about the rules beforehand.

The attacker would challenge the other four teams’ attackers and compete with them. The one with the most number of victories would come in the first place.

This was only the first round!

The second round would be to have every royal prince group concurrently compete against Chess Sage Qing Wuzi.

The three participants from each team could switch places at any time, but the one who was switched down wasn’t allowed to go again.

For this round, if the participants were to lose a match, it wouldn’t contribute to their losses. However, if they were to win against Qing Wuzi, it’d be considered as two wins for them.

“That’s the Chess Sage we’re talking about. No one can win against him, right?”

Xianyu Wei felt that this rule was very strange.

“Of course they won’t be able to win. This round is just providing an opportunity for the crown princes to display their talents!”

Qin Yaoguang explained.

To put it plainly, it was a performance-based round.

“Royal Brother, which one will you pick?”

Li Ziqi didn’t mind. She’d have to join for five rounds anyway.

“Of course, I have to play defense!”

The crown prince snorted coldly.

Usually, the attacker would have the strongest chess skills and would need to assure as many victories as possible. Also, this position would get the most limelight.

However, Li Xuan was going to choose the opposite path. As his performance in the first round was very bad, he wanted to turn things around this round and clear his humiliation.

“I knew you’d pick that!”

Li Ziqi's lips twitched.

"To avoid anyone trying to drag out the time, the participants would have two incense sticks' worth of time each match. Once the incense burns out, they must make the next move within ten breaths' worth of time. Otherwise, it'd be considered their defeat."

After taking a sip of tea, the Qi Emperor continued to announce the rules.

"If both parties have used up their time, then the match will forcibly come to an end in 15 minutes, and we'll count the moku to decide the victory!"

Chess was something that took up too much time. Some people could continue playing one match for a few months. That was why the Qi Emperor came up with such a rule.

The time taken for two incense to burn was two hours.

The battle soon started.

Xia Taikang, Jiang Yuzhen, Wei Wu`an, and even Xiang Zhao had all chosen to become the main attackers. It was an unspoken rule for the crown princes to assume this role in the chess battle.

When the ceremonial officer was announcing that the Great Tang's attacker was Li Ziqi and Li Xuan was the defense, many people were surprised.

What were they doing?

Was Crown Prince Li Xuan no longer trusted due to his horrible performance in the first round?

"Hmph, just you guys wait! I'll let you guys witness what a national player is!"

Li Xuan walked up the arena with great confidence.

For the Great Tang's first match, it was Li Xuan vs. Xia Taikang, and Li Ziqi vs. a princess from the Great Wei, Wei Ziyin.

The incense was lit and chess pieces landed on the chessboard, making crisp sounds.

Li Xuan and Xia Taikang didn't say any crap and decided to meet each other in the match.

Ten minutes passed.

"I feel that the crown prince might end up going for wool and coming back shorn."

Qin Yaoguang teased.

Li Xiu's countenance was grim.

Although the Five Empires War Discussion was a competition between the five empires, it was also the stage for the five crown princes to prove themselves. In the past, when the crown princes took on the role of the attacker, most of them would clinch a beautiful win and earn a reputation for themselves.

As time passed, everyone gave their silent consensus to this hidden rule. Therefore, the chess battles became a performance. However, Li Xuan acted on his own accord today.

He was going to take on the other four countries' crown princes and princesses.

"Sigh, I should have stopped him!"

Li Xiu felt a little regretful.

"Eldest Princess, there's no need to worry. You've tested His Highness's chess skills before!"

Han Cangshui stroked his beard, looking very confident.

"Is His Highness very amazing?"

Lu Zhiruo was curious.

"He's a half-step grandmaster!"

Han Cangshui boasted, instantly bringing about a series of gasps. All the maids and imperial guards felt that they were sure to win this round. "But I wonder how Princess Ziqi's level is."

Swoosh!

Everyone's gaze immediately turned over.

"I don't know!"

Sun Mo spoke the truth. Although he had become a national-level chess player, it hadn't been that long and he had only played with Li Ziqi before.

Moreover, it wasn't that easy to meet Go grandmasters.

"You don't know? You're probably just too embarrassed to say it, right?"

Han Cangshui chuckled.

Just then, the ceremonial officer spoke out loud from the arena.

"Great Tang's Princess Li Ziqi wins!"

Boom!

A commotion broke out on the Victory Public Square.

Why was it so fast?

Although everyone didn't know much about Go, they knew that one match would generally take at least half an hour. How did she manage to win against her opponent in just ten or so minutes?

"What?"

Han Cangshui was stunned too. (What kind of person did you guys from Wei Country send? Did this person come to give a free win?)

"Mmmmmmm!"

In the arena, Wei Ziyin clearly realized that she had made a fool of herself. She grabbed her head with both hands and started crying.

“Sister Ziyin, you aren’t bad at chess. You just fell for my trap.”

Li Ziqi consoled her.

“...”

Wei Ziyin frowned.

“Everyone would want to clinch a beautiful victory in the first match to get a good start. I made use of this mentality that you had and purposely had a quick match with you!”

Li Ziqi had placed her pieces very quickly, in addition to saying things to agitate her opponent, causing Wei Ziyin to subconsciously follow her pace.

However, the little sunny egg was born with a photographic memory and had unparalleled mental calculation abilities. Therefore, she could plan out moves that were 50 steps ahead. However, Wei Ziyin couldn’t do that. By the time she realized that the situation wasn’t looking good for her, it was already too late.

“I specially trained in playing fast chess. It’s not an unjustified loss for you!”

Li Ziqi explained.

“So that’s how it is!”

Hearing this, Wei Ziyin felt a little better. She immediately felt unconvinced by this outcome and wanted a rematch. However, Li Ziqi had left the arena.

“Stop looking around and play quickly!”

Xia Taikang reproached.

Li Xuan frowned and withdrew his gaze from his royal sister. He suddenly felt a little regretful of his decision since Xia Taikang wasn’t a weakling who could be easily pushed around.

“I’d get a sure win if I were up against Wei Ziyin as well!”

Li Xuan felt that it was a pity.

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“Teacher, I’m sorry, I lost!”

Wei Ziyin returned to the spectating stand and first apologized to the grand tutor.

“You can’t have believed what Li Ziqi said, right?”

Grand Tutor Su’s eyes narrowed.

“Huh?”

Wei Ziyin couldn’t understand.

“The reason Li Ziqi said that is to numb the other opponents so that they’d let down their guards!”

Grand Tutor Su let out a cold snort. “Think about how strong you are in chess. She’s at least a half-step grandmaster to be able to win against you in 20 minutes!”

“Huh?”

Wei Ziyin was stunned, but she soon came around to things. She was very strong in chess. Otherwise, she wouldn’t have been sent out to represent the Wei Country.

“The reason I’m telling you these things is so that you can put away your naivety and innocence, and take the chessboard as a battlefield. Treat each time you land a piece as if there’d be a soldier who’d die over the decision.”

Grand Tutor Su preached.

Buzz!

Priceless Advice had erupted.

Wei Ziyin, who was shone by the golden light spots, seemed as if she was enlightened.

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Chess was very boring. To ease this situation, the Qi Emperor had set up a huge wooden tablet on another high platform that was 50 meters away. It was inscribed with the exciting battle situation.

A grandmaster was explaining the matches.

“Ah, Prince Li Xuan’s move is too conservative.”

As expected, three minutes after the grandmaster said this, the ceremonial officer mentioned that Xia Taikang had won.

Li Xuan sat there with a dazed look, looking at the chessboard as if he was a stone statue.

“He couldn’t be having a mental breakdown, could he?”

Tantai Yutang chuckled.

“Go and help him down!”

Han Cangshui ordered. He couldn’t stand leaving Li Xuan there to embarrass himself in the arena.

“One win and one loss. It’s still acceptable!”

When Li Xiu saw that Li Xuan had come back, she consoled him. However, she was unsatisfied with this outcome.

“Aunt!”

Li Xuan felt very aggrieved. He couldn’t understand how he had lost either. (Xia Taikang is clearly not comparable to me in chess!)

“Take your emotions in check and continue the battle in the afternoon!”

Li Xiu consoled him.

“You were too conservative in this round. Be more daring! You’re a half-step grandmaster!”

Han Cangshui encouraged him.

When Sun Mo heard this, he couldn’t help but throw a glance at Han Cangshui. (Someone like you who couldn’t even see through Xia Taikang’s background dares to give commands? You guys might just continue to lose for the next match!)

The Great Tang’s two matches had ended so they left the place first.

After returning to the hotel, Li Ziqi entered Sun Mo’s guest room.

“Teacher, did Xia Taikang use some tricks?”

Li Ziqi frowned.

“Why did you say that?”

Sun Mo drank the tea.

“Although my brother is mediocre in most areas, he’s extremely good at chess.”

Li Ziqi thought about it. “I don’t believe that he’d lose to someone like Xia Taikang!”

This Great Xia’s crown prince was clearly not a dignified person and had no sense of literary air at all. There was no way that he’d waste time mastering chess.

And to raise one’s capability in chess, one must accumulate years of experience to compete with others.

“You’ve guessed it right! Xia Taikang did use a dirty trick!”

Sun Mo asked, “Did you notice that each time they reached a crucial point in the match, your brother would always make the wrong move? It’s as if the lucky goddess despised him so much that she spat thick phlegm onto his entire face.”

Chapter 1192: Do You Have the Capability To Say That Someone Has Cheated, But Don’t Have the Capability To Point It Out?

Each match would be broadcast live on the wooden tablet, with professionals to explain the matches. Therefore, Sun Mo had noticed the few mistakes that Li Xuan had made.

It’d be acceptable if it happened once or twice, but when he made mistakes every time they reached a crucial point, it was hard for one to not have any doubts. Therefore, Sun Mo paid extra attention to Li Xuan’s condition.

“Teacher, what dirty trick did Xia Taikang use?”

Qin Yaoguang’s voice rang out from outside the door.

“Why did you guys not come in?”

Sun Mo frowned.

“We’re watching the door so that other people won’t listen to your conversation!”

Lu Zhiruo wanted to do something for her eldest martial sister.

“Even if you guys stay outside, you won’t be able to stop other people’s tricks!”

Sun Mo laughed and continued to reply. “If my guess is correct, Xia Taikang used some kind of spiritual control technique to make Li Xuan make mistakes.”

“Huh?”

Hearing this term, Lu Zhiruo felt troubled. It was because this subject was very mysterious and it was too difficult for one to want to grasp the flaws.

“Will my royal brother’s life be in danger?”

Li Ziqi was worried.

“I don’t think he’ll die!”

Sun Mo wasn’t sure either. “Given how ‘well-prepared’ others are, haven’t you guys thought of similar tricks?”

“My father has great trust in Great Teacher Han and thinks that he can deal with everything!”

Li Ziqi smiled bitterly. “Moreover, who’d expect that Xia Taikang would be so despicable just to win?”

“It’s better to make more preparations.”

Sun Mo felt that Li Xuan might not do well in the next few matches either.

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In the afternoon, the matches started again!

Li Xuan vs. Xiang Zhao, Li Ziqi vs. a prince from Qi Country.

These two matches continued until the incense finished and then the players started a 10-second quick match.

The victor wasn’t decided between Li Xuan and the Chu Crown Prince [1] even after 15 minutes had passed. In the end, when they counted the pieces, Xiang Zhao had won the match by just 1.5 moku.

Li Ziqi played a quick match, making only 30 moves for it. This Qi Country’s prince then admitted his loss.

Li Xuan’s mentality was crashing a little after having lost two consecutive rounds. Han Cangshui ignored him and left immediately.

Li Xiu didn’t know what to say. She had thought that it was almost definite that he was going to clinch this match, but Li Xuan ended up making a lot of mistakes.

“That Chu Crown Prince is very strong.”

Lu Zhiruo was soft-hearted. When she saw Li Xuan's eyes turning red and was so angry that he was biting his lips, she consoled him. "After you guys reach this phase in the match, all that's left is dependent on your luck. And you're slightly unlucky today."

"Shut up!"

Li Xuan bellowed.

The papaya girl's neck shrank back and she hid behind Ying Baiwu.

"Royal Brother!"

Li Ziqi wanted to say something, but Li Xuan refused to listen and walked off quickly.

"Looking at his state, his third match will be a goner too!"

Qin Yaoguang mocked.

"For this round, Li Xuan lost in his mentality. As he had lost one match in the morning, he had a great urgency to win this match. This led to him having an unstable mind and Xiang Zhao took this chance."

Sun Mo said a word in fairness and then looked at Li Ziqi.

The little sunny egg lowered her head. She knew that her tricks had been seen through.

"Ziqi, what is the reason you've come to participate in the Five Empires War Discussion?"

Sun Mo looked toward the Xia Country's spectators' stand. Xia Taikang had won again and he left amidst the cheers.

"To win! To show off the Great Tang's prowess!"

These were her heartfelt words. Li Ziqi wasn't fighting for herself.

"Then have you thought of how people would look at you and Li Xuan if he continues to lose like this and you're winning with so much difficulty?"

Sun Mo asked.

Li Ziqi fell silent.

"Ziqi, sweeping out at your enemies with exhilaration and giving them a crushing defeat is even more relishing compared to an ordinary victory!"

Sun Mo thought of those e-sports competitions he had seen in the past. People would always look at the gridlock matches as a fight between newbies, and no one would remember them. One would only be seen as the strongest if they were to have a crushing victory or turn the tables around in an amazing manner.

"Think about it carefully!"

Sun Mo patted the little sunny egg's shoulder and walked off.

"Eldest Martial Sister, what's going on?"

Lu Zhiruo couldn't understand.

"Ziqi, did you hold back?"

Li Xiu had guessed the reason from Sun Mo's words.

"En!"

Li Ziqi nodded. In order to number her opponents and make it hard for them to figure out her capabilities, she had intentionally played a gridlock match.

The truth was that the match's progress was all within the little sunny egg's control.

"Huh? This could be done too?"

Xianyu Wei was surprised. "You aren't scared that things will go wrong and you'll lose?"

"That won't happen!"

Li Ziqi was very confident.

"Ziqi, what is your level in chess?"

Li Xiu was astonished too. The fact that Li Ziqi could put up such a performance showed that she was a lot stronger than her opponent.

"I don't know!" Li Ziqi sighed. "I can't win even if Teacher were to give me a six-stones handicap!"

"..."

Li Xiu was stunned. A six-stones handicap was considered a very big advantage in Go.

Could it be that Sun Mo was a national player?

That couldn't be, right?

Even a grandmaster, that was one notch weaker than the national player, would be very reputable in the world of Go.

In the Nine Provinces, a Chess Sage was worth more money than a Music Saint.

The next day, the chess battles continued.

This time around, it was Li Xuan vs. Jiang Yuzhen, while Li Ziqi was up against a prince from Chu Country.

After Sun Mo had talked to the little sunny egg, her mentality had changed and she stopped holding back. Instead, she went all out and crushed her opponent just in time for one incense stick to finish burning.

Li Xuan also managed to win this match and clear his humiliation.

However, Li Xuan's mood was still bad. It was because, like him, Jiang Yuzhen had also lost two consecutive matches yesterday. She was a weakling, so it wasn't convincing at all to be winning against an opponent like her.

The people from Qi Country didn't mind it either. After all, Jiang Yuzhen's reputation had been built up from her powerful battle prowess and military commanding capabilities. She was the only candidate to be a Military God amongst the younger generations across the different countries.

After a short afternoon break, the fourth round started.

Li Xuan was up against Wei Wu'an, while Li Ziqi was up against a princess from the Great Xia. Her name was Xia Qiyun.

"Even if you're a great teacher, I'm not afraid!"

Li Xuan was ready to show off his skills, but after the match started, he realized that his opponent was quite capable.

The two of them put up a strong battle, attacking fiercely or defending firmly. It was hard to decide a victor between them.

On the other side, Li Ziqi also encountered trouble.

At the start of the match, the little sunny egg had an advantage. However, after ten moves, she felt that the other party's chess skills had surged up fiercely and her style changed. After 100 moves, she was put at a disadvantage!

"This won't do! If this continues, I'll lose!"

Li Ziqi thought very hard about how she could break out of this predicament.

"This is bad! Eldest Martial Sister is going to lose!"

Lu Zhiruo panicked when she saw Li Ziqi holding onto a chess piece but not placing it down after very long. The burning incense wasn't going to wait for anyone.

The match had just started, but to think that she was starting to think long about the match. She was clearly on the losing end.

"Teacher, what do you think?"

Qin Yaoguang asked.

Li Xiu perked her ears.

"In terms of chess skills, Ziqi will definitely lose. But if she can find the other party's flaws, she'll definitely win!"

Sun Mo drank the tea.

"Huh?"

Lu Zhiruo looked stunned. It was just a game of chess, but there were flaws? It wasn't as if this was a cultivation art!

"You're saying that the other party has cheated?"

Qin Yaoguang was very smart and immediately understood what Sun Mo meant.

“En!”

Sun Mo’s impression of the princes and princesses from Xia Country was really bad.

They were willing to use all kinds of despicable tricks just to win.

Li Xiu’s nervous expression relaxed. With that, even if Li Xuan were to lose, they’d be able to win six rounds and would at least not be ranked last.

But Li Xiu soon realized that something was amiss. Sun Mo was sitting steadily there, not showing any intention to expose Xia Qiyun.

“Great Teacher Sun, it’s better to expose Xia Qiyun earlier. Once the results come out, others may think that we are a sore loser if we expose them then.”

Li Xiu suggested.

Moreover, she was also worried that once the match ended, the other party would stop cheating. This would make it even harder to expose them.

“Why do I have to expose her?”

Sun Mo asked.

“Huh?”

Many people were stunned. (What do you mean by that?)

“Great Teacher Sun, this isn’t funny!”

Li Xiu frowned.

“I’m not joking!”

Sun Mo looked at the arena where the little sunny egg was frowning and deep in thought. “This match is an experience for Ziqi. I hope that she can see through the opponent by herself. If she can’t, then she should accept this loss and withstand the regret from the lack of judgment and her inexperience! A person will only remember a lesson for life if the fall they went through is hard enough!”

“...”

Li Xiu’s lips that were painted red almost cursed out.

(You aren’t caring about our Great Tang’s honor by doing this.)

“Eldest Princess, please be patient and watch. Ziqi is a lot more outstanding than you think!”

Sun Mo believed in his eldest disciple.

In the arena, Li Ziqi tossed the chess piece in her hand back into the holder.

“If you’re throwing your piece to admit your loss, you should be putting two chess pieces here!”

Xia Qiyun reached out her index finger and tapped on the lower right corner of the chessboard.

Right now, she was looking at Li Ziqi with a gaze as if she was looking down on her. Her expression was filled with pride.

“So what if you’re the youngest great teacher in the Nine Provinces? You still end up losing!”

Xia Qiyun’s lips twitched. In this world, there was nothing better than dealing a blow to a genius who was in the limelight.

Even though the crown princes were the main characters of the Five Empires War Discussion this time around, the most famous participant was Li Ziqi. She herself had not only broken the great teacher record, but the fact that she was Sun Mo’s personal disciple was enough to win her a lot of attention.

It was because Sun Mo’s reputation was unparalleled amongst those with power and wealth!

Who wouldn’t want to enjoy his God Hands?

Who wouldn’t want his Skyward Spirit Rune?

Look at how the Qi Emperor had chosen not to play host to the other countries’ crown princes and grand tutors, choosing to look for Sun Mo directly. He was also after his God Hands.

“Li Ziqi, you’re just lucky that you’ve acknowledged a good teacher!”

Xia Qiyun said in disdain. She wanted to take this chance to perform well and move Sun Mo, so she would be accepted to study under him. (By then, I’ll be the number one princess in the Nine Provinces.)

“Who says that I’ve lost?”

Li Ziqi smiled.

“Hehe, I don’t care to quibble with you!” Xia Qiyun sneered, “You can continue to make your move!”

“Do you think that other people can’t tell that you’ve cheated?”

Li Ziqi sneered coldly.

Bang!

Xia Qiyun slammed her palm onto the table, looking furious. “Li Ziqi, you can eat whatever you want, but take care of what you say! Do you have any proof?”

“Oh my, Princess Ziqi and Princess Qiyun seem to be having some conflicts!”

The ceremonial officer immediately walked over, planning to give a live broadcast of the situation.

The audience’s gazes turned over too.

This abruptness was a selling point to hype up the atmosphere.

“Why? Speak up. Do you have the capability to say that someone has cheated but don’t have the capability to point it out?”

When Xia Qiyun saw that Li Ziqi wasn’t saying anything, her words became more agitated, as if she was a fierce woman who had caught her husband’s mistress.

Chapter 1193: I Know Gu Techniques Too. You Didn't Expect That, Right?

"Huh? Turns out that Princess Ziqi is suspecting that Princess Qiyun has cheated! The problem is serious now!"

The ceremonial officer's voice rang through the sound amplification stone and clearly spread out across the Victory Public Square.

The people from the Nine Provinces were like people from Ancient China. They viewed honor with high regard. This was especially so for the royalty. If a commoner dared to scold a member of the royalty, they'd be beheaded or in lighter cases, be exiled.

"Eldest Martial Sister, go at her!"

Qin Yaoguang wasn't afraid to blow up the situation and shouted loudly. However, Lu Zhiruo and Xianyu Wei held onto Sun Mo's sleeves worriedly.

"Teacher, think of something!"

Li Xiu was a little anxious too. Such reprimand might bring a diplomatic conflict. "Great Teacher Sun, if you know about it, then hurry up and expose Xia Qiyun's cheating ways!"

"Ziqi will take care of it."

Sun Mo's composed look almost drove Li Xiu to death. Left with no choice, she could only look toward Han Cangshui with a hopeful look on her face.

Han Cangshui looked to the front, pretending that he hadn't seen anything.

The truth was that he had no idea what Xia Qiyun had done.

(It's one thing for Li Ziqi to be able to notice Xia Qiyun's cheating method because she is close to her. But how did Sun Mo, who is the same distance away from the arena as I am, notice it? Could it be that Sun Mo is really stronger than I am?)

At the thought of this, Han Cangshui felt gloomy and so disgusted that he felt like puking as if he had eaten a fly.

"You're using Gu Technique to cheat!"

When Li Ziqi said this, she looked very composed, as if everything was within her control. The truth was, she was secretly observing Xia Qiyun's reactions and was even focusing on listening to Xia Qiyun's heartbeat.

As expected, for a short instant, Xia Qiyun's pupils contracted abruptly and her right hand's fingers paused for a moment. However, she immediately smiled coldly.

"I can say that you're using Gu Technique to cheat too!"

Xia Qiyun was mentally prepared to be discovered for cheating. She had even practiced means to react to this a few times and used it very smoothly.

However, she still showed some slight reactions. After all, Li Ziqi was on point in calling out her cheating method.

This was really too astonishing.

Therefore, Xia Qiyun revealed some reactions due to her inevitable jealousy toward Li Ziqi's talent and experience.

Most other people would definitely miss out on Xia Qiyun's fine reactions, but Li Ziqi's observational skills were too detailed.

"The color of your face is too red compared to your neck. This is a sign of gu bugs' frequent activities. Therefore, I can be sure that there are gu-bugs in your head!"

Li Ziqi explained.

There was one other thing. Xia Qiyun's eyeballs would occasionally dart around subconsciously. This was an uncontrollable action from having one's nerves interfered with by gu-bugs.

"This is absurd! If I have gu-bugs in my brain, then won't I be dead?"

Xia Qiyun retorted.

However, great turbulence rose in her heart. It was because Li Ziqi was spot on.

There was an amazing gu-bug in her brain that was planted by a Gu Technique grandmaster. Its effect was to clearly transmit the Gu Technique grandmaster's words clearly into her brain and not be overheard by others.

Xia Qiyun's cheating method was to have a grandmaster in Go watch the live broadcast on the wooden tablet and play the chess match for her.

He would tell the Gu Technique grandmaster the move to make, and then the Gu Technique grandmaster would inform Xia Qiyun through the gu-bugs.

If Xia Qiyun could win, she'd definitely not cheat. However, after ten or more moves, the Go grandmaster came to the assessment that Xia Qiyun wasn't a match for her opponent and thus decisively took over.

To put it simply, the current Xia Qiyun was just a tool.

The audience whispered amongst themselves, feeling that Li Ziqi might have made a mistake. It was because gu-bugs were extremely dangerous, and a princess didn't have to go to the extent of implanting one into her brain just to win in chess.

"Since you aren't willing to admit it, then I can only prove it by myself!"

Li Ziqi let out a sigh, showing off a kind girl image as if she didn't wish to do this but she was forced to.

"Alright! Prove it!"

Xia Qiyun's voice was very loud and she didn't cower. She then saw Li Ziqi taking out a translucent glass bottle, opening the cork. Then a strange scent immediately drifted out.

“Hmm? What is this? It smells so good!”

The ceremonial officer was very curious.

“It’s ancient whale oil, the essence extracted from the ancient whale’s fats and bones, refined together with 16 precious medicinal herbs. It is for external applications. It can relieve pain and increase the sensitivity of the six senses. This is my teacher’s unique prescription and when used with the Ancient Dragon Capturing Hands, it has a huge benefit to the human body!”

Li Ziqi explained, “To some gu-bugs, it is a great nourishment, like ambrosia of the immortals.”

If an overdose of such whale oil was used, it’d corrode the nerves and produce an intense sense of excitement. It was like a stimulant.

Gu-bugs had a sharp sense of smell and it’d be weird if they didn’t go crazy after smelling such a ‘delicacy’.

When the Qi Emperor heard this, he felt unhappy.

“Great Teacher Sun, if you have such good medicine, why didn’t you let this Emperor use it?”

The Qi Emperor looked at Sun Mo with an aggrieved look, like a woman who had been abandoned. (Even if you want money, an official post, or beauties, this Emperor can give them to you! Even if you wish to marry one of this Emperor’s princesses, it is negotiable.)

After the seven rounds last night, the Qi Emperor had become infatuated with the Ancient Dragon Capturing Hands. He was even thinking about how he could have Sun Mo stay in the palace for a long period.

“Your Majesty, be mindful of your words!”

Grand Tutor Su was shocked. (Isn’t it inappropriate for you to be saying such words in such a situation?) At the same time, he was also a little surprised.

To think that Sun Mo’s God Hands were so amazing that he had conquered the Qi Emperor in just two hours?

All the members of the upper echelon knew that the Qi Emperor had invited Sun Mo into the palace. After all, it wasn’t a difficult thing to bribe a couple of eunuchs.

“Great Teacher Sun, His Majesty has great admiration for you. His Majesty will be so sad to find out that you’ve done this!”

The empress complained.

“...”

Grand Tutor Su wanted to curse. (So my advice earlier has fallen on deaf ears. I guess I don’t need any face, huh?)

“Your Majesty, the ancient whale oil is too valuable and I usually don’t carry it on me!”

Sun Mo explained.

“So that’s how it is!”

The Qi Emperor smiled. “I knew that Great Teacher Sun isn’t such a selfish person. If you’re free tonight, why don’t you come to the palace and join this Emperor for dinner?”

“...”

The nobles and officials were all stunned. Although His Majesty was very easygoing, was it really a good idea to be saying such things in a situation like this?

(You’re the host for this event! Right now, Xia Qiyun and Li Ziqi are in the midst of a conflict. Won’t others think that you’re biased toward the Great Tang if you do this?)

(But how amazing is Sun Mo’s God Hands that His Majesty has become so impatient?)

“Your Majesty!”

Sun Mo felt a little helpless. The Qi Emperor’s actions would make ordinary citizens suspect that there was an inside story to this.

Thankfully, Xia Qiyun suddenly let out a scream at this moment and it drew back everyone’s attention.

This Great Xia’s princess was wearing a hideous expression, punching her head forcefully and repeatedly with her right hand.

“Your Highness!”

“Hurry up and save her!”

“What did you do?”

The Great Xia’s delegation all stood up, drawing their weapons.

The people from the Great Tang didn’t cower either.

Li Xiu was thinking of defending her niece when Sun Mo lashed out.

“We’re in public. Isn’t everyone seeing it for themselves whether or not Ziqi has played any tricks? Or are you guys blind?”

Here it was, here it was. It had been very long since their teacher had lashed out at others like a wild dog that had broken free from all reins.

Qin Yaoguang was very agitated. She even took out a little notebook, wanting to take down the words Sun Mo used to lash out at others.

“Someone come and help her down! We’ll give up this match!”

Xia Taikang threw a glance at his younger sister and then instructed.

However, it was too late. Before the maid came, Xia Qiyun bent over and smashed her forehead hard into the chessboard.

Splash!

All the chess pieces were messed up.

When she raised her head again, a huge gush of blood shot out from her mouth and nose. Then, a green bean-sized blood droplet immediately shot toward the glass bottle in Li Ziqi's hands.

Pffft!

The blood droplet flew in, and Li Ziqi corked up the bottle.

"Xia Qiyun, the evidence is right here. What more do you have to say?"

Li Ziqi raised the bottle. The blood droplet in it was washed off by the ancient whale oil and then a small beetle could be seen.

Xia Qiyun's countenance was pale and she wanted to seek help from her royal brother. However, at the thought of Xia Taikang's brutal nature, she instinctively held it in.

Xia Taikang's countenance was very grim.

Right now, there were two choices placed in front of him.

The first one was to refuse to admit it no matter what. He could claim that this was done by the Dark Dawn's dark great teachers, and both he and his royal sister didn't know about it at all. They were victims too and she didn't cheat.

The second one was to sacrifice the rook to save the king, letting Xia Qiyun take the blame.

People would find it hard to believe the first scenario. Even if they didn't say anything, they'd have an idea what kind of character the Xia Country had. However, if he were to pick the second choice, Xia Qiyun's life would be over.

As a princess, if she had such a stain to her name, it'd be hard for her to get a good marriage, let alone acknowledge a good great teacher.

Xia Taikang got up and walked over.

"Royal... Royal Brother!"

Xia Qiyun didn't even dare to meet Xia Taikang's eyes.

Pa!

Xia Taikang slapped hard on her face.

"To think that you used such despicable means just to win! You really disappoint me!"

Xia Taikang reproached, "Apologize to your opponent and then scam back, shut yourself up and reflect on your mistakes!"

"I..."

Xia Qiyun felt very aggrieved.

"Apologize!"

Xia Taikang insisted.

“I’m sorry!”

After saying that, Xia Qiyun dashed down the arena unsteadily.

Xia Taikang took a long look at Li Ziqi because this was his first time assessing this young girl seriously.

She was very pretty and had a small and sharp face that showed a hint of her charm. She’d definitely become a devastating beauty in the future.

Of course, her looks were nothing compared to her intelligence and talent.

“I will remember you!”

The princes and princesses who were in the midst of chess matches near them raised their heads in surprise when they heard this. It was because they knew that Xia Taikang was too arrogant and never cared for those in his generation.

His words meant that he was treating Li Ziqi as his rival.

Li Xuan was very disappointed and angry. (I’m the one who should be Xia Taikang’s fated rival.)

Seeing that the incense continued to burn but Xia Taikang still didn’t show any intention of returning to his seat, the Great Xia’s delegation was very worried. However, none of them dared to speak up to persuade him.

“Your Highness, please continue with the match!”

The ceremonial officer stepped in and then smiled as he looked toward Li Ziqi. “As everyone knows, Gu Technique is Nanyue’s secret art that isn’t passed down to outsiders. How did Your Highness detect it?”

This was also something that everyone felt was strange.

All sorts of Gu Technique were precious secret arts and it wasn’t even accessible to just any student in the Myriad Spirits Academy. They’d at most be able to understand some simple Gu Technique briefly.

Since Xia Qiyun dared to cheat in front of so many people, it showed just how amazing this Gu Technique was and that it wouldn’t be easily discovered. Hence, how did Li Ziqi know of it?

“My teacher taught it to me.”

Li Ziqi explained.

“Great Teacher Sun?”

The ceremonial officer wasn’t the only one who was surprised. Many people had gotten to know of Sun Mo’s information by now, and Gu Technique wasn’t listed on it.

“I repeat. Right now and in the future, I’ll only have Sun Mo as my personal teacher to whom I’m indebted!”

Li Ziqi frowned. “And the outstandingness of my teacher isn’t something that you guys can imagine. He has no limits!”

Wow!

A commotion broke out. It was because Li Ziqi's boast was too exaggerated.

In fact, when Sun Mo imparted Li Ziqi with the knowledge about Gu Technique, she was surprised too. This was especially when those contents were very detailed and comprehensive. She felt that even Gu Technique grandmasters in the Myriad Spirits Academy wouldn't know about the details of the foundational knowledge as much as her teacher did.

The little sunny egg was right. The [First Glimpse into the Origin of Gu] that Sun Mo had received from the system was the most detailed entry-level book in the Nine Provinces.

"Alright, I won't be disturbing everyone's matches then."

Li Ziqi came down from the arena and returned to the spectators' stand. She immediately hugged Sun Mo's arm.

"Teacher, I've won!"

The little sunny egg added in her heart. (I didn't embarrass Teacher.)

"Eldest Martial Sister, you'll be up against the Chess Sage Qing Wuzi next. If you win against him, your reputation will spread across the world!"

Lu Zhiruo encouraged.

"If Secondary Saint Zhou could see this scene, he'd probably feel extremely regretful."

Many high star-level great teachers gloated a little. They would very much want a student like Li Ziqi.

Wei Wu'an hadn't planned on using his great teacher halos. But after seeing how outstanding Li Ziqi was, he didn't wish to lose to her and thus applied Sudden Insight and Composed Calm onto himself.

The former could let him be struck with a sudden inspiration when he was thinking, giving him a very high chance of making an amazing move. The latter would ensure that he wouldn't be affected by the external environment and could constantly maintain his composure, being in his optimal battle state.

Li Xuan's chess skill was a little better than Wei Wu'an, but his improvising skills were too weak. He lost again for this match.

His original plan was to defeat three crown princes and one princess, shooting to fame. However, he ended up losing three matches. He only won against Jiang Yuzhen but no one took that very seriously.

As a result, he brought himself great embarrassment.

On the contrary, Li Ziqi's performance was exemplary and won her a lot of cheers.

Thankfully, Li Ziqi was a girl. Otherwise, Li Xuan was afraid that his position as the Great Tang's crown prince would be unstable.

In the first round, Xia Country won the most number of matches and only lost once in which Xia Qiyun was up against Li Ziqi. Wei Country came in second, with Wei Wu'an winning all his matches. The Great Tang came in third, all thanks to Li Ziqi's great effort in winning his matches. Qi Country was ranked last.

“If we win against the Chess Sage, we still have a chance to turn the tables around!”

At dinner, Li Xiu encouraged her nephew, but Li Xuan looked very dispirited.

(Win against a Chess Sage?)

(You’re thinking too much. Moreover, taking into consideration of the Xia Country’s morals, they’ll probably use some dirty tricks again.)

...

Right now, at the base of the Great Xia’s delegation.

In the bedroom, Xia Taikang sat by the window ledge, looking up at the starry sky. “How are the preparations going?”

“We’ll definitely win tomorrow. But will it be too much of an exaggeration to be doing this?”

There wasn’t anyone in the bedroom except Xia Taikang. However, there was another person’s voice ringing out.

“My goal is to have a tie. But if Li Ziqi were to show an outburst, then I must win the match.”

Xia Taikang didn’t want to have such a high profile either. However, this Great Tang’s princess kept giving her a very dangerous feeling.. He had to keep his guards up against her.

Chapter 1194: Chess Sage Battle

When Qing Wuzi was young, his family was poor and he’d sneak to a private school to listen to the teacher teaching, wanting to learn a few words. However, he ended up seeing the teacher playing chess and since then, he had become infatuated with it.

Regardless of whether he was chopping firewood, grazing the cattle, or farming in the fields, Qing Wuzi was constantly pondering about chess. He couldn’t afford to buy a chessboard so he drew lines on the ground and used stones as pieces.

He didn’t have an opponent, so he split his attention into two, playing his left against his right.

To temper his chess skills, he ground himself a chess set and then set up a stall in town. For those who could win against him in a game, he’d work for them for free for a month.

Therefore, those landlords and wealthy merchants who were bored and also wanted to take advantage of him came and played against him.

Qing Wuzi won against all of them.

Gradually, Qing Wuzi’s reputation grew. Some poets or even scholars and great teachers all came to play against him as well.

The more Qing Wuzi played, the better his chess skills became. When he was 29 years old, he became the Chess Sage and his name was known all over the world.

Thereafter, he never lost a single match.

After rising to fame, Qing Wuzi had to deal with the ways of the world as well. For example, he was unable to refuse the invitations from some emperors.

Therefore, he became some royal members' Go teacher and taught them the game.

This situation continued for seven years until Qing Wuzi occasionally chanced upon an incomplete chess book. Since then, he forwent all fame and riches, went into seclusion in the forest, and focused on studying chess.

His departure went on for 20 years.

Qing Wuzi then came out from his seclusion, and countless Go lovers gushed forth toward him, wanting to play a match with him. Over ten Go grandmasters also wanted to challenge him.

However, Qing Wuzi told them that he was only willing to play life or death matches!

“What did that mean?”

This meant that the players would have to put their lives on the line.

The loser would commit suicide on the spot.

With that, many people calmed down. However, some didn't believe that they'd lose. As a result, Qing Wuzi played 17 matches and 17 people died.

Therefore, when the Qi Emperor announced that the various countries' royal prince groups had to go up against Qing Wuzi in the Chess Sage Battle, various people from the upper society went crazy.

In the Nine Provinces, Go was a dignified entertainment.

Just like how there weren't many people in the modern world who'd play Go, ordinary people knew that people who could play the game definitely didn't have low intelligence.

It was impossible to act cool in a game of Fighting the Landlord[1], but it'd definitely seem cool for one to know Go.

In the Victory Public Square, the glowing Qi Emperor announced the rules with great spirit.

“Every royal prince group will send out three people to play against Chess Sage Qing!”

The Qi Emperor didn't say that if they were to win against the Chess Sage, it'd count as three victories for them. It was because it was impossible for them to win.

The Chess Sage was going to give them a three-stones handicap, and the most terrifying thing was he was going to play all 15 matches concurrently!

“These people are all weaklings. Even if Qing Wuzi were to play 50 matches concurrently, he wouldn't lose. It'd just be a little tiring for him.”

Tantai Yutang's lips twitched. He wasn't interested in Go. If it wasn't because Li Ziqi was participating, he would have returned to the hotel to sleep.

Very soon, the matches started!

The players representing the Great Tang were Li Xuan, Li Ziqi, as well as Li Lin.

“This is it?”

When Qin Yaoguang saw Qing Wuzi in person, she was very disappointed.

This old man was all skin and bones, his skin all wrinkled, looking like a dehydrated rotting log. His gaze was also dull.

“Huh?”

Lu Zhiruo frowned and secretly tugged at Sun Mo’s sleeves. “Teacher, his aura doesn’t feel right! He doesn’t feel like a human!”

“Huh?”

Xianyu Wei was given a fright. “What is he if he doesn’t seem like a human?”

Sun Mo had always believed the lucky mascot’s luck. If it was something that could make her feel uncomfortable, then he’d have to be wary. Therefore, he activated Divine Sight.

Four big red words appeared. Unknown target!

As expected, the system blocked his ability again.

Sun Mo could only rely on his own capabilities.

In the arena, 15 chess boards were laid out in a row. The participants all looked as if they were facing a great foe, making each move very warily. Qing Wuzi, on the other hand, looked very calm and was seated on a cushioned seat with his legs crossed and his eyes closed. Only when he heard the crisp sound of a chess piece being placed would he raise his head and look over. He would then make the next move without giving it any thought.

Sun Mo had no idea if Qing Wuzi was trying to look cool, but his coolness was definitely at the Chess Sage level.

This battle was more of a performance. And because it was impossible to win, the criteria to see if the princes and princesses were outstanding would be on who could hang on for the longest.

It was dependent on who made the most moves.

As a result, over two-thirds of the princes and princesses chose a defensive battle tactic.

Xia Taikang and Jiang Yuzhen chose a strong offense as usual. Li Ziqi played a balanced match, waiting to see how the match developed before making her decision.

“This won’t do. The opponents are too weak and we can’t tell the Chess Sage’s real abilities!”

“Prince Taikang, Prince Zhao, and Princess Ziqi are doing alright!”

“The Great Tang’s crown prince is doing okay too!”

The spectators discussed amongst themselves.

15 minutes later, two people cast the pieces to indicate that they had given up on the match while wearing dejected expressions. Half an hour later, seven people entered a dejecting situation and were putting up a tough struggle.

At the one-hour mark, there was only Xia Taikang, Li Xuan, Wei Wu`an, Li Ziqi, and Xiang Zhao left in the arena.

“This Wei Wu`an is such a schemer!”

Sun Mo commented.

“Teacher, what did you see?”

Helian Beifang asked humbly.

“He knows that he can’t win, so in order to persist for a few more steps, he used weird moves, wanting to stimulate Qing Wuzi’s curiosity. He wants Qing Wuzi to feel pleased from seeing a prey, not bearing to cut him off right away!”

Li Xiu could tell that too and explained.

“Sly!”

Xianyu Wei didn’t like such people.

The truth was, at this stage, the few participants were starting to frequently spend a long time contemplating each move. There was no helping it. There was really no possibility of winning.

After another few minutes passed, Xiang Zhao sighed.

“I admit my loss!”

Xiang Zhao got up.

Hearing this, Li Ziqi threw a look at him and sank into hesitation.

“Should I concede too?”

If this continued, it’d just be a useless struggle. One would only be able to feel the tremendous pressure when playing against him. He was like a metal screen, with nothing being able to escape his grasp no matter what moves they used.

Li Ziqi was very proud and didn’t want to let others, especially her teacher, see her forlorn and struggling state. Since she was going to lose anyway, it was better to concede her loss coolly.

When the little sunny egg was hesitating, she looked toward Sun Mo.

Her teacher smiled and gave her an encouraging smile.

“Go for it. You can do it.”

Li Ziqi understood what her Teacher was mouthing. He was cheering her on. Suddenly, she thought of the lines her teacher often said.

(As long as the victor isn't decided, don't give up! Do you guys know? Victory isn't decided during the match. It's decided at the instant you give up! Persist a little longer! Your limits are far greater than you anticipate!)

Li Ziqi closed her eyes and took a few deep breaths. When she opened her eyes once again, her expression changed.

(Even if I have to be in a forlorn state like a wretched cur, I will continue to fight!)

(It's not just for me! But for Teacher too!)

The ears of Qing Wuzi, who was resting with his eyes closed, twitched. He opened his eyes and looked toward Li Ziqi. Then, he broke into a smile.

Excellent. Such an opponent, no matter how weak, was worthy of playing against!

If there wasn't someone like her, then this battle would be too boring.

"Hurry up and think! Hurry up and think!"

Li Ziqi stared at the chessboard, using every bit of her brain. Suddenly, a thought struck her and a voice rang out.

Chapter 1195: Three Ancient Sages In One Wing

"Black should play a keima[1] over here and then form a ko[2] over here!"

This voice was rough and aged, clearly sounding like an old monster who had lived for several hundred years.

Li Ziqi was surprised, but soon came to the realization that this should be the ancient sages' consciousness that had entered her brain after she had gained enlightenment to the Ancient Sage Halo.

Their consciousness had died, but they didn't dissipate because of the powerful and mysterious halo retaining part of their minds in the human world.

Right now, this consciousness showed a reaction after being stimulated by the Chess Sage's disposition.

"What ko? There's no saving this match. It's definitely a loss after at most 16 moku!"

"Haven't you guys heard of the saying that a gentleman watches a game of chess without saying a word?"

All sorts of voices fluctuated in Li Ziqi's mind—a total of over 20 of them. They were so noisy that she couldn't help but frown.

Most of them were just making useless arguments, but there'd be the occasional one to two comments that could give her great inspiration.

Li Ziqi sank into deep thought. It seemed that the situation was disadvantageous for her, but there was no longer the unwillingness to accept the loss and anxiety on her face. She was fully focused and her battle intent became increasingly stronger.

Pa!

Li Ziqi made her move.

“Hmmm?”

At the sight of this move, Qing Wuzi was a little surprised. He couldn't help but raise his head and look at Li Ziqi.

Interesting!

This move felt like how one had executed extreme precision in picking out the end of a thread amidst a jumbled mess. There was a feeling of finding the critical point of breaking through the situation.

But this wasn't enough!

Qing Wuzi made a move without showing any mercy.

Each step Li Ziqi made was done very slowly but steadily. She gradually saved the round which should have been a crushing defeat for her.

Xiang Zhao conceded his defeat and then walked over, standing by the side to watch the match. After he saw the match, he looked surprised.

This round was really amazing!

Qing Wuzi hadn't expected to be able to encounter an opponent like Li Ziqi here. He was overjoyed at having found a prey and wanted to enjoy himself. Therefore, he no longer played a guiding role in the matches but made decisive moves, wanting to end everything quickly.

Suddenly, Wei Wu`an, Li Xuan, and Xia Taikang were all on the verge of losing.

“What is this guy up to?”

Xia Taikang felt displeased and let out two loud coughs. He then performed his spiritual control technique.

Boom!

Qing Wuzi, who was about to make his move, felt a tremor in his brain and his arm stiffened. With a plop, the chess piece fell onto the board.

Li Ziqi immediately became invigorated. Her chance was here!

“Oh! To think that Chess Sage Wuzi has made a mistake? Could it be that he isn't feeling well? Or is he going easy on his opponent?”

The ceremonial officer immediately reported to hype up the atmosphere.

“I'm going to kill this guy!”

Li Xiu crushed her teacup.

What did he mean by going easy on his opponent?

Was he saying that the Great Tang had played some kind of trick?

The ceremonial officer clearly knew that he had misspoken and quickly added. "The Chess Sage must be thinking of playing the game longer with Princess Ziqi in admiration of her chess skills!"

Qing Wuzi didn't look at Xia Taikang but let out a sigh in his heart.

After another ten or more moves, Wei Wu'an and Li Xuan lost in succession. Now, Xia Taikang and Li Ziqi were the only ones remaining.

Both of them were having a slight advantage in their match.

Xia Taikang's countenance was grim. This situation was the one he didn't wish to see the most.

With the advantage from the first round, it'd be his win if everyone were to lose here. However, if Li Ziqi were to get a tie in this match, the Great Tang would win.

If he also played a tie, although others wouldn't say anything openly, they'd definitely have doubts behind their backs.

"No, I'm thinking too much into this. How can it be possible for Li Ziqi to win against a Chess Sage?"

Xia Taikang turned his head and observed, realizing that Qing Wuzi was taking the match very seriously, wearing great respect on his face as if he had met a rival.

"F*ck your mom, how come this Li Ziqi is so good in everything? She can't have cheated, right?"

Xia Taikang felt very upset. He could only carry on with the plan and try to get a tie.

However, after a few more moves, he felt so angry that he had the urge to smash the chessboard. It was because Qing Wuzi had gotten up from his cushion, walked over to Li Ziqi, and then sat down cross-legged across her.

(What do you mean by this? Are you recognizing Li Ziqi as your rival?)

As expected, the spectators all turned their gazes toward Li Ziqi due to Qing Wuzi's action. This made Xia Taikang appear like a clown.

"Hehe!"

Xiang Zhao mocked.

Although Xiang Zhao couldn't see through what kind of tricks Xia Taikang was using, the latter must have done something to make Qing Wuzi go easy on him. It was because judging from his chessboard, it was impossible for him to persist till now.

As for Li Ziqi's chessboard, its standard was very high. If there were no accidents, this would become a match that all professional chess players would study.

As time passed, Xia Taikang was caught in a predicament. Previously, he had thought of winning against Qing Wuzi and didn't think that it was that big of a deal. However, when it was time to carry out the plan, he found it to be extremely embarrassing.

This would be blatantly cheating. Even if he were to win in the end, he'd look like an unscrupulous clown in other people's hearts.

Damn it, did they say that this Li Ziqi was a piece of trash that even a secondary saint didn't want?

Why was she this good?

Could it be that her personal teacher really had amazing means of turning trash into gold?

Xia Taikang's mind was in a mess, and he was no longer in the mood to play chess. In the end, he chose his reputation over everything else, not wanting to leave a stain on his name. Therefore, he gave Qing Wuzi a signal to bring the match to a tie.

This was easy. He'd just have to turn the match into one in which neither of them could kill the other.

"Oh my, it's such a pity for Prince Taikang. If he works a little harder, he might just be able to win."

The ceremonial officer said with great pity.

"Hmph!"

Xia Taikang got up and walked over to Li Ziqi's side to watch the match.

"A tie. That's amazing!"

Xiang Zhao put up a big thumb.

Xia Taikang paid him no heed as it was clearly a mockery.

"Do you think that even if Li Ziqi were to tie in this match, you'd still be able to win? I'm telling you, you're wrong. Li Ziqi will definitely win this match."

Xiang Zhao said in contempt.

"How would she be able to do that? Even if she has immense luck, there's no way that she'd be able to win against a Chess Sage!"

Xia Taikang said in disdain.

"Hehe, you're wrong. Didn't you cough just now? The Chess Sage might have been given a fright by you earlier and dropped his piece. This is an opportunity."

As long as the chess piece landed on the board, it'd be considered a valid move and one wouldn't be able to retract it. Therefore, Qing Wuzi's wrong move gave Li Ziqi a chance.

Li Ziqi felt as if she was seeing life in a dead situation. She put a lot of thought into it, wanting to aim for a tie, but in her mind, the various sages' voices got into a noisy quarrel.

Some of them said that it was possible to win, some said that it was more stable to aim for a tie. The rest were asking if they could stop wasting time on this match.

An ordinary person would definitely not be able to handle the noises, and their heads would be aching from this. However, Li Ziqi was different. She found accurate answers from all the arguments.

The situation was turning around.

“I can do it!” Li Ziqi was very spirited. “I can get a tie!”

At the Great Tang’s spectators’ stand, everyone was agitated.

“Eldest Martial Sister can win!”

Lu Zhiruo was very happy and she had a strong urge to cheer loudly for Li Ziqi.

Han Cangshui and Li Xuan’s countenances were looking extremely bad.

Sun Mo continued to watch the match. Just as Li Ziqi was about to make a move again, he spoke out.

“Ziqi, is it alright to just get a tie? When has your heart become so small?”

Sun Mo’s words caused Li Ziqi to freeze up.

“What did Great Teacher Sun mean by that?”

“Li Ziqi’s situation has turned around a little. It might be possible to seek a tie in the match, but there’s no hope in winning.”

“Sun Mo is too arrogant!”

The great teachers actively discussed amongst themselves.

Qing Wuzi was a Chess Sage, someone who stood at the very top of the Go domain. He wasn’t someone who could be beaten with just one or two words of encouragement.

“Ziqi, when doing something, either don’t do it at all or go all out, seeking for the best outcome!”

Sun Mo taught. “When you’re thinking of getting a tie, the level you can reach in life will just be that.”

Buzz!

Priceless Advice had erupted.

Golden light spots splattered around.

Li Ziqi felt a little embarrassed.

“Your teacher is right!”

Qing Wuzi spoke up, “For the first 72 moves in this match, you’ve made perfect moves. But thereafter, you were too conservative. To speak the truth, I’m a little disappointed!

“If no one dared to challenge a Chess Sage, then there would never be a new Chess Sage born in this world!”

Qing Wuzi’s words caused the arena to become quiet as everyone pondered over his words.

“I’m sorry, I was disrespectful!”

Li Ziqi closed her eyes and got her act together. When she opened her eyes once again, she went all out, aiming to win against Qing Wuzi.

In the end, after 256 moves, Li Ziqi won the match with a slight advantage of half a moku.

“Wow! Eldest Martial Sister has won!”

Lu Zhiruo cheered and jumped onto Sun Mo, hugging him and celebrating happily.

Xia Taikang stared at Qing Wuzi, having a strong urge to kill him.

“How is it? I told you that Li Ziqi will win, right?”

Xiang Zhao threw a sideward glance at Xia Taikang, mocking, “Does your heart ache a lot now that the first place in your hands has slipped away?”

With Li Ziqi winning against Qing Wuzi, it was considered three victories for them. With that, the Great Tang’s victory count would be on par with the Great Xia’s. However, she had won against the Chess Sage. Therefore, Xia Taikang’s victories became insignificant.

People would only remember that Li Ziqi had won against Qing Wuzi when thinking about this year’s chess battle.

“That’s not right. Li Ziqi, your chess style was unstable toward the end, very different from your earlier style. Can you explain why?”

Wei Wu`an, who had been keeping quiet all this while, suddenly spoke up.

“That’s right. The last few moves she made didn’t have any order to them at all. It’s as if there were many people helping her out!”

Some high star-level great teachers who were good at chess also had the same question.

Even in Fighting the Landlord, a person would develop a playing style, let alone in Go. The more one played in Go, the more obvious their style would be reflected.

Ordinary people might not be able to tell, but in the eyes of experts, Li Ziqi’s playstyle wasn’t right.

“There were some ancient sages arguing about this match in my brain.”

Li Ziqi didn’t conceal anything. “I’ve benefited a lot after listening to them!”

“Huh?”

Everyone gasped.

Ancient sages? What was that?

“I heard that when Great Teacher Sun was giving a lecture in the Ancient Sage Hall, one of his female students gained enlightenment to the Ancient Sage Halo. It must be you, right?”

The grand tutor of the Great Wei sized up Li Ziqi.

“You’re mistaken. That’s my second junior martial sister!”

Li Ziqi explained.

“What? To think that there are two!”

“My god, since when has the Ancient Sage Halo become so worthless?”

“Three ancient sages in one wing, isn’t that too unbelievable?”

All the great teachers present revealed astonished expressions, which then turned into envy.

It was too difficult for great teachers to gain enlightenment to the Ancient Sage Halo. It was because they’d have to convince those ancient sages. This was hard to do even for many high star-level great teachers.

“May I be so intrusive as to ask how you did it?”

Qi Country’s Grand Tutor Su also spoke up.

Previously, he had also thought that the student under Sun Mo’s wing who had gained enlightenment to the Ancient Sage Halo was Li Ziqi. He didn’t expect there to be a second one!

“Teacher brought me to the Ancient Sage Building and I gave a lecture for an entire week. I then gained enlightenment to the halo!”

Li Ziqi smiled like a blooming lily.

This was a training that Sun Mo had put her through in order to increase her chances of winning in the Five Empires War Discussion. She ended up succeeding in it.

The Ancient Sage Building was an important place and not everyone could be allowed entry. However, Sun Mo was a new uprising star and was also a great teacher who had gained enlightenment to the Ancient Sage Halo. No one could stop him from going there.

“Huh? This could work as well?”

The great teachers were stunned.

“My teacher is too good at teaching!”

Li Ziqi shrugged.

Having been through five rounds of the Black-White Game, Li Ziqi’s recognition of things had transcended that of this era.

“Teacher Sun, can you resolve everyone’s query?”

Wei Country’s grand tutor cupped his fists together.

“We’re in the midst of the chess battle now. Let’s not steal the limelight from them!”

Sun Mo shook his head.

“Teacher Sun, you’re wrong. This is the crux behind Ziqi winning the chess battle. Of course it has been exemplified!”

Grand Tutor Su interjected too.

Why were they so anxious?

It was because they wished to get their hands on the Ancient Sage Halo. They knew that if they were to ask about this in private, Sun Mo would definitely refuse them. After all, this was an invaluable great secret. But now, if he didn’t explain things, he’d get a reputation for being narrow-minded.

They were using the bigger picture to force Sun Mo to give an answer.

As expected, many high star-level great teachers also started to persuade Sun Mo.

In their perspective, it might be just luck for one to gain enlightenment to one or two Ancient Sage Halos. But for there to be a third, Sun Mo must have grasped some kind of trick.

“To gain those ancient sages’ recognition, you’ll have to talk about stuff that can interest them!”

Sun Mo said.

“They are well-learned and very experienced. What have they not seen before?”

The great teachers felt troubled, feeling that Sun Mo was being half-hearted in dealing with them.

“Don’t ask anymore. There are no shortcuts to a great teacher’s path! Your mentality right now isn’t right!”

Sun Mo’s tone turned solemn as well.

Buzz!

A great teacher halo erupted. It was Profound Words. Although he was unable to forcibly get these great teachers to shut up, he could let them understand his intention.

If they asked any further, then don’t blame him for not showing them any respect.

When Profound Words hit one great teacher, the power of the great teacher halo created a resonance, causing that great teacher to comprehend a lot of things.

“So it’s to talk about things that all of them don’t know about but are interested in!”

Buzz!

Golden light lit up on this great teacher.

“It’s Learning from Everyone!”

Someone let out a surprised gasp.

“Great Teacher Sun, thank you for your selfless sharing!”

The great teacher who had gained enlightenment to Learning from Everyone walked over to Sun Mo, giving him a deep bow.

“There’s no need to stand on ceremony!”

Sun Mo didn’t dare to claim credit for this.

Some teachers felt very envious. This halo had a great practical use.

“Since Li Ziqi relied on the Ancient Sage Halo to win the chess match, then this battle should be considered our Great Xia’s win, right?”

A princess from the Great Xia asked in a loud voice.

“Sigh, why did Eldest Martial Sister have to say that?”

Xianyu Wei felt upset.

“To other people, winning against a Chess Sage might be something they can boast about for life, but to Eldest Martial Sister, it’s nothing worth mentioning. It’s just an ordinary victory.”

Tantai Yutang understood Li Ziqi’s mentality very well. “Her glory is to become a Saint and an amazing absolute great teacher like our teacher!”

“Don’t worry, I feel that given Eldest Martial Sister’s intelligence, she must have other moves up her sleeves since she dares to admit this!”

Qin Yaoguang felt that there was going to be a good show to watch.

“It doesn’t matter if my match is considered a win or a loss, but aren’t you guys being too impudent to be cheating time after time?”

Li Ziqi lashed out.

Chapter 1196: Spiritual Control By the Chess Soul

“Xia Qiyun indeed cheated, but she has received her punishment. You can’t just condemn the others because of her wrongdoings!”

This princess spoke with great conviction, looking like she was aggrieved.

“Oh, then based on what you’re saying, then we can cheat too? If the person is caught, it’d just be that person’s mistake alone. If the person isn’t caught, then it’d be the team’s glory!”

Li Ziqi snorted disdainfully.

“That’s right. Your team has bad practices. At the very least, there’s no running away from the fact that Xia Taikang has been negligent in managing his team’s discipline!”

Jiang Yuzhen chipped in.

The Great Xia’s princess wanted to continue but was reproached by Xia Taikang.

“Shut up!”

Xia Taikang had the feeling that Li Ziqi might have discovered something. Continuing the argument might be disadvantageous for him.

“Why? Are you scared?”

Li Ziqi smirked, “I would like to ask His Highness, what do you think about your match that ended in a tie?”

The spectators all looked over. After all, Xia Taikang’s chess match was a little hard to justify.

“It’s understandable for the Chess Sage’s performance to not be up to standard in one or two rounds when he’s playing 15 matches concurrently!”

Someone helped.

“Then why is it that only the Great Xia managed to benefit from this advantage?”

Li Xiu stepped forth as well, saying with an aggressive tone, “Moreover, at the very last moment, the Chess Sage wanted to quickly clear out the rest of the participants in order to play against Ziqi. Therefore, he displayed exceptional chess skills. However, Xia Taikang was able to remain.”

Everyone whispered amongst themselves. It was true that this didn’t make sense.

“This is due to Qing Wuzi not performing up to standards. You guys can just ask him about it. Why are you chasing my royal brother for an answer?”

The other members of the Great Xia’s royal prince group also started to complain.

Li Ziqi looked toward Qing Wuzi. “I respect you as the Chess Sage, so I won’t ask you for the reason behind this. I don’t wish to continue to pursue this matter either. But from today onward, the reputation of a Chess Sage will be worth nothing to me!”

Qing Wuzi’s face flushed up. He also noticed that many great teachers were pointing fingers and discussing something amongst themselves softly.

Although Qing Wuzi couldn’t hear what they were saying, he could more or less guess what it was about.

If he had cheated, then he had tainted the Chess Sage title. In the future, the status of all Chess Sages in the Nine Provinces would plunge.

“Nice one!”

Li Xiu praised.

This was what it meant when they said that one’s status didn’t match their virtues!

One person alone had brought discredit to an occupation.

Li Ziqi’s move could be said to have pushed Qing Wuzi into a dilemma. (Qing Wuzi, you can deny it, but can you block everyone’s mouths?)

There were many great teachers here and if they were to go back to their schools to talk about this, and the students all found out about it, the parents would as well.

Chess Sages were standing at the very top of the Go domain. Therefore, Qing Wuzi had the obligation to protect the Go world and defend its honor. Otherwise, he wouldn't deserve to be respected by predecessors.

"This is bad!"

Xia Taikang frowned as he tried to think of how he could salvage the situation. However, Qing Wuzi broke out laughing.

"Hahaha!"

After Qing Wuzi was done laughing, he suddenly swung his hand and swept off the chess pieces on the chessboard. Then, he flipped the entire Chinese Cedarwood chessboard and sent it flying far away.

"What Chess Sage? I've long since wanted to give up on being it!"

Qing Wuzi bellowed, "Do you guys think of it as a kind of glory? It's just shackles for me!"

"I was originally a young man from Bamboo Town and had always liked practicing martial arts since young. My dream was to become the best swordmaster in the world. But when I found a charred blood-ignition chessboard in our house's woodshed, I ended up getting possessed by the chess soul on it!"

Chess soul?

Many people gasped in surprise upon hearing this, perking their ears up.

This was the Chess Sage's great secret and many people's gossip side rose.

"Play chess! Play chess! Play chess!"

"That chess soul kept on enticing me to play chess!"

"The young man defeated the entire Bamboo Town and a school's teacher. Even two great teachers weren't a match for me! I liked this feeling of winning against others!"

"Without realizing it, my reputation grew and I was known as a child prodigy. Because of chess, I gained money, status, reputation..."

"In the end, I became a Chess Sage at a young age!"

"But life didn't change. I'd be playing chess every single day. I'd be playing chess when I woke up and even when I slept. That chess soul didn't even let me off when I was dreaming! He'd still want to play against me then!"

"It was to the extent that he caused me to be impotent so I'd have more time to play chess!"

"I've had enough of such a life! I want to break free from it, but it's already too late! He has integrated into my blood!"

Qing Wuzi cried.

Lu Zhiruo poked Qin Yaoguang's arm and asked softly, "What does impotent mean?"

"It means that he's a eunuch!"

Qin Yaoguang explained.

“Huh?”

Lu Zhiruo gasped in surprise. It was no wonder this Chess Sage didn't have any children. So this was the reason.

“What kind of f*cking life is this? Whoever wants to be this Chess Sage can come to take it!”

Qing Wuzi gave up.

“The Xia Country's people approached you saying that they have a way to help you break free from the chess soul's possession. However, the prerequisite is that you'd have to cheat and help Xia Taikang to win the chess battle. Is that right?”

Jiang Yuzhen pursued.

“That's right!”

Qing Wuzi admitted it.

“You old dog! Don't be spouting gibberish!”

“My royal brother won't be so despicable!”

“That's right, Royal Brother would always openly snatch things that he want and he doesn't care for such tricks.”

The Great Xia's princes and princesses were enraged. Someone even drew their sword and stopped addressing him with respect, calling him 'old dog'.

“I understand now. You must be helping Li Ziqi to pass things off, right? You guys must have a secret transaction. You'll malign my royal brother and then let Sun Mo help you dispel the chess soul!”

That Great Xia's princess lashed out, wearing a 'so that's how it is' expression.

“B*tch, be careful of your mouth!”

Jiang Leng reproached.

“Is my teacher's name something you can say directly? Scram out here! I'll have a life and death battle against you!”

Helian Beifang drew his blade.

Sun Mo's other disciples felt upset too and glared at this princess.

“Why? Did I say it right and you guys got angry?”

The Great Xia's princess sneered. “As the Chess Sage, Qing Wuzi's status and connections definitely won't be weak. However, they are still unable to resolve the problem of the chess soul. This means that this matter is very difficult. Then what can my royal brother possibly do?”

“But Sun... Great Teacher Sun is different!”

The Great Xia's princess changed her way of address. It was because the stares from Sun Mo's students seemed as if they were going to engulf her, making her heart beat a little faster.

"Great Teacher Sun got full marks in his spiritual control written exam before. Li Ziqi, whom he teaches, also got full marks in this. Therefore, I believe that he has a way to get rid of that chess soul."

Some great teachers looked toward Sun Mo.

The words spoken by the Great Xia's princess did sound reasonable.

Qing Wuzi's problem was too big and only a genius like Sun Mo would be able to resolve it.

"I heard that Sun Mo understands the divine language of spiritual control!"

"That's right, he also has the grandmaster spirit controller title!"

"Hehe, Sun Mo is too strong and this has become his flaw."

Some great teachers murmured.

"Regardless, the ones who approached me were from Xia Country!"

After Qing Wuzi said that, he wanted to leave. "In the future, don't call me the Chess Sage anymore! I'm not fit to have that title and I don't wish to have it either!"

"Please hold on!" Sun Mo spoke up.

Qing Wuzi didn't listen, so Sun Mo spoke again.

"Please hold on!"

Buzz!

Profound Words erupted.

Qing Wuzi wanted to move but couldn't. He was frozen on the spot.

Sun Mo's act astonished many people.

"What are you thinking of doing?"

Qing Wuzi questioned.

"Although you were complaining a lot about the chess soul earlier, I can tell that you do like Go!"

Sun Mo consoled him. "The fact that you sat down in front of Ziqi because she played an amazing move and played against her seriously proved this!"

Qing Wuzi was stunned!

"Has the chess soul ever harmed you before?"

Sun Mo asked again.

"It made me impotent. Is that considered harming me?"

If Qing Wuzi could beat the chess soul up, he'd definitely stomp out its brain matter. "And given how talented I am in Go, my aptitude in swordsmanship shouldn't be weak either. Therefore, I should have been a Sword Saint, and it had held me up."

How great would it be to become a Sword Saint? One would have a strong body and longevity. He wouldn't have looked so old and aged before even reaching 100 years old.

"The reason you're impotent should be because the chess soul is a spiritual being, and this is an effect brought to your body after being possessed. This isn't its intent!"

Sun Mo explained. "As for sword arts, Qing Wuzi, liking something and being able to achieve something are two different things!"

"Hmph!"

Qing Wuzi refused to listen.

"I have the reputation of God Hands. You can go ask others. Therefore, I can be certain that you don't have an aptitude for cultivation. If it wasn't for that chess soul, you wouldn't even be able to get into a famous school in this lifetime if you were to develop normally. In the end, you would only have been able to live a life as a sharecropper."

Sun Mo looked at Qing Wuzi. "My spiritual control technique is quite alright and I can help you purge that chess soul. Let me ask you now, do you want to purge it?"

"Of course!"

Qing Wuzi replied extremely fast.

Sun Mo raised his hand.

Swoosh!

A beam of divine light shot out, hitting Qing Wuzi's body. He immediately felt his body becoming light as if a heavy burden he had been carrying for many years was suddenly removed.

"You're an ordinary person now!"

Sun Mo congratulated him.

However, Qing Wuzi wasn't happy at all. Instead, he looked dispirited as if he had lost something very precious to him. He looked toward the black and white chess pieces that were scattered on the floor.

He squatted down and picked them up!

...

"I want to play chess with you for an entire lifetime!"

The chess soul said hopefully.

"Me too!"

The young Qing Wuzi thought of the oath he had made under the setting sun that he was going to become the number one Chess Sage in the Nine Provinces!

Pata! Pata!

Qing Wuzi's tears flowed down silently. He thought of the times he had spent together with the chess soul.

(In the future, I'll probably live a life of solitude, right?)

"It's true that doing one thing for a long period will make one feel tired. At times like this, one must learn to divert their attention and not choose to hate this act!"

Sun Mo shared his experience. "For example, you can practice the sword. When you return to play chess again later on, you'll discover a whole new novelty toward playing Go."

"Will... Will it still be able to come back?"

Qing Wuzi felt a little nervous. He was asking about the chess soul. He was feeling extremely regretful now.

"Why do you only know how to treasure something after losing it?"

Sun Mo felt that this Qing Wuzi was too pretentious and had nothing better to do. Other people would probably go crazy from happiness if they could gain the Chess Sage title.

"I... I was wrong. Great Teacher Sun, can you think of something?"

Qing Wuzi dropped to his knees as he spoke, "Can you bring Little Teng back for me?"

Chapter 1197: Light Breeze Brushed Across the Chess, Another Amazing Performance!

This was how many people were. When they had one thing for over several decades, they'd naturally stop treasuring it.

"Do you know what that chess soul told me when I was trying to purify him?"

Sun Mo said in a deep voice.

"What?"

Qing Wuzi asked.

"It thanked you for helping him to realize his Chess Sage dream. Although he had talent, he died at a young age and wasn't able to realize his dream. Furthermore, he wished for me to tell you that he was very apologetic about the harm he had brought you."

Sun Mo let out a sigh. "Thereafter, before I completed the purification process, that chess soul has left by himself."

"The reason why he hadn't left in the past was that he couldn't bear to do so. He felt that you wouldn't really hate him. However, your 'heartfelt words' from earlier had hurt his heart!"

Qing Wuzi was stunned. He stumbled and fell onto the ground, breaking out in great tears.

Sun Mo looked toward the Great Xia's royal prince group. "It's just a victory over a chess battle. So what if we have to give up the first place to you?"

After saying that, Sun Mo turned to leave coolly.

Li Ziqi quickly followed.

(That's right! I'm going to win the rest of the competitions anyway!)

Pa pa pa!

Seeing how domineering Sun Mo had replied to the Great Xia's reproach of them cheating, the spectators all cheered.

Anyone who wasn't blind could tell that the Great Xia were the ones who had cheated. Moreover, the last part where Sun Mo had educated Qing Wuzi was really filled with a great teacher's flair!

Right now, a big gust of wind blew and moved the chess pieces.

Splash! Splash!

The chess pieces fell onto the floor.

Hua!

People at the spectators' stand that could look down at the arena were all astonished and shot up to their feet.

"What's going on?"

"What happened?"

"There seem to be words on the arena?"

The spectators all squeezed their way over.

That was right. The black and white chess pieces that had fallen onto the arena formed two big words, 'thank you!'

This was clearly the chess soul thanking Sun Mo for helping him and Qing Wuzi bury the hatchet between them.

"Teacher!"

Sun Mo tugged at Sun Mo's sleeves.

Sun Mo turned back, saw a light breeze brushing past the chess pieces, and smiled.

"I hope that you'll be treated kindly by the world, even though life is always filled with harshness and deceit!"

Sun Mo wished in a loud voice.

The smile on his face was very light, like sunlight, like spring water, like the third lunar day of the year, filled with warmth!

Swoosh!

Golden light shot out of Sun Mo's body and radiated in all directions.

Priceless Advice erupted!

The chess soul would become a wandering soul after leaving his host. He'd then eventually perish due to the lack of blood and energy supply after having depleted his remaining energy.

But now, under Priceless Advice's effect, this chess soul that had been shackled by Go for his entire life had been purified.

He no longer had any other regrets!

Hu!

A great gust of wind blew the chess pieces all over the floor!

Splash! Splash!

The black and white chess pieces formed a sentence!

"Thank you! Please allow me to be so impudent as to address you with respect in the last moment of my life. Teacher Sun, thank you!"

The several thousand people around the arena who witnessed this scene were stunned.

This...

Had this mysterious chess soul also managed to break free due to Great Teacher Sun's guidance?

The countenances of Xia Taikang's group were all extremely grim.

Wei Wu'an assessed Sun Mo with an astonished gaze. The reason he had become a great teacher was only because he could. He hadn't put in hard work into this. After all, he was going to be the Great Wei's emperor in the future. Hence, he didn't expect that a real great teacher was actually so amazing.

Jiang Yuzhen blinked her big and beautiful eyes, looking at Sun Mo with curiosity.

"Hope that you'll be treated kindly by the world? Well said!"

Although Jiang Yuzhen was seen as a Military God candidate and liked the art of battle formations, it was because she had seen a lot of massacres and deaths that she respected life more than any other people.

Sun Mo's words moved her a lot.

"That's too cool! That's really too cool!"

Lu Zhiruo grabbed Ying Baiwu's arm and shook it vigorously. She felt that this was how a great teacher should be like. Not only would they be able to educate people, but they would give guidance to ghosts and dead souls as well.

"How much did you record?"

Qin Yaoguang held onto an image-recording stone and filmed while asking Tantai Yutang. "I've missed out on the 'thank you' in front."

"I have everything!"

Although the sickly guy looked calm, he was filled with extreme admiration in his heart.

His teacher was really sharp.

"That's great! This image-recording stone can definitely be sold for a great price!"

Qin Yaoguang could already imagine herself raking in big bucks.

"Grand Tutor Su, what do you think of this?"

The Qi Emperor asked. He was surprised as well. This Sun Mo was really amazing.

"We might have a new Saint in ten years!"

Grand Tutor Su felt very emotional. "When I was his age, I couldn't be compared to him!"

Sun Mo returned to the Great Tang's spectators' stand.

It was because there was still a performance-based competition coming up and he couldn't leave.

"Great Teacher Sun!"

Li Xiu didn't know what to say and could only give a toast with a cup of tea.

At the sight of this, Li Ziqi was all smiles.

Her aunt was very proud and in the entire Great Tang, not more than three men could enter her eyes. And now, her teacher was one of them too.

Han Cangshui's facial muscles twitched. He suddenly felt a little regretful to have come to Western Jing.

F*ck, till now, there had been nothing to show off his sense of existence. Everything had been covered up by Sun Mo's glow. To an 8-star great teacher, this was a humiliation.

Li Xuan was suddenly a little regretful for having lashed out at Sun Mo.

Someone like him would definitely be a person of great power in the great teachers world in the future.

(Would it be too late if I were to apologize now?)

"The Eldest Princess is too polite!"

Sun Mo took the teacup and had a sip.

He didn't seem to show any emotions on the surface, but he was all smiles in his heart.

He was raking in a lot from this.

The favorable impression points he was receiving were filling up his vision. 100,000, 200,000...

Ding!

"Congratulations, you've received a total of +257,000 favorable impression points!"

The system congratulated.

"System, are there many women who want to give birth to my children?"

Sun Mo had taken a brief look earlier. On average, the number of favorable impression points contributed by women were one-third more than the men.

"Please remain modest and keep your cool. You've only gone so far."

The system said in disdain. However, it was true that Sun Mo's looks had added a lot of points for him.

"In this round, the Great Tang comes in first place!"

The Qi Emperor announced the results. The Great Xia was second, the Great Wei was third, the Great Chu was fourth, and the Great Qi was fifth. This meant that no one had cheated and the ranking was done following the results of the matches.

"There'll be a performance-based competition up next. Anyone from the respective countries' royal prince groups can seek guidance from the grand tutors of other countries to have a performance-based match."

There were three goals for such performance-based matches.

Firstly, it was to give the princes and princesses a chance to display their brilliance. After all, they had traveled such a long distance to come here, so they couldn't just possibly serve as a foil, right? Secondly, it was to drag out time and give the audience more time to talk about investments and improve the economy.

The longer the competition drew out, the longer the tourists would stay in Western Jing. This would naturally bring about a huge raise for the local economy.

Thirdly, it was to let the main participants have a chance to take a break so that they could prepare themselves for the third Calligraphy Battle.

After the Qi Emperor said that, the four countries' princes and princesses started moving urgently toward the spectators' stand of the Great Tang.

The sight of this scene caused Han Cangshui's countenance to become even grimmer.

No matter how stupid he was, he wouldn't think that these people were here to ask him for a match.

No!

Maybe there was an exception?

Turned out that Han Cangshui had thought too much.

All the princes and princesses gathered in front of Sun Mo.

“Great Teacher Sun, please give me your guidance!”

“Great Teacher Sun! I bought your biography long ago and after finishing it in a day, I placed it on my pillow and would flip through it every night!”

“Great Teacher Sun, please take me in as your disciple!”

Some of them were reserved, while others wanted to grab this chance to shoot up to fame.

Amongst these princes and princesses, some of them clearly didn’t have the chance to rise to the throne. However, even salted fish had dreams. They felt that after becoming Sun Mo’s students, they might be able to rely on his support to fight for the throne.

No matter how bad things became, it couldn’t be any worse than how they were now, right?

“Even if Great Teacher Sun wishes to take in disciples, we should have priority. Why would you guys have the chance?”

The Great Tang’s princes and princesses were unhappy.

They felt as if the rice sacks from their home were stolen from them.

Suddenly, everyone got into a quarrel.

The other delegations’ grand tutors were feeling so awkward.

Li Xiu sneaked a glance at Han Cangshui. She felt that the reason her royal brother had let him be the leader of the delegation might have been a bad move. Yes, Han Cangshui was an ancestor-level alchemist, and the alchemical pills he refined were really precious. However, Sun Mo’s God Hands wasn’t bad either.

She didn’t expect that even the Qi Emperor was so greedy to have Sun Mo and had invited him to his palace many times.

“Great Teacher Sun’s popularity is really high!”

The Qi Emperor praised. “Yuzhen, aren’t you going to ask him for a guidance match?”

“No!”

Jiang Yuzhen shook her head.

These princes and princesses were too enthusiastic, and Sun Mo also wanted to get into a good relationship with the various countries’ royalty. Therefore, he didn’t refuse them.

“Let’s go for a lucky number six. How about I do six matches at once?”

Sun Mo got up to the arena and played against six opponents at the same time. He also gave them a handicap of three stones each.

“Can Teacher do this?”

Qin Yaoguang felt a little worried.

If one was too proud in a situation like this and ended up losing, it'd be too embarrassing.

“Don't worry, Teacher is a grandmaster in Go. He'd definitely win even if he were to play ten matches at once!”

Li Ziqi was very confident in Sun Mo's chess skills.

As expected, Sun Mo won against everyone.

Although the system would occasionally block off some of his abilities, the skill books it gave were all very good and wouldn't be discounted.

Sun Mo's skill in Go was at the national level.

What did it mean?

This meant that he was at the top of a country. Those who could compete with him wouldn't exceed three to five people!

By the afternoon, Sun Mo started playing ten matches concurrently.

“Teacher won't bring back another Chess Sage title, would he?”

Xianyu Wei was surprised. She felt that there was nothing her teacher couldn't do.

Over two consecutive days, Sun Mo played a total of 60 matches and didn't lose a single one of them. He showed an amazing performance again.

After resting for one day, the third round, which was the Calligraphy Battle from the four categories—zither, chess, calligraphy, and painting—officially started.

It was held in the morning as usual, but the weather wasn't good. The sky was cloudy and a light drizzle fell.

“They say that those who are studious will have a graceful elegance that makes them stand out from the rest!”

The Qi Emperor spoke in a loud voice, “Everyone wants to be a person who is well-learned and can speak in verses and poems. No one wants to be at a loss for words when they see their beloved girl, being only able to say ‘I want to sleep with you!’”

Hearing this, Grand Tutor Su's lips kept on twitching.

Laughters broke out amongst the crowd too.

“The Qi Emperor is as impracticable as always!”

Li Xiu shook her head and laughed. But someone simple-minded like him would definitely be very happy in life.

“All the princes and princesses have studied under great teachers since a young age and are very learned. Therefore, it’d be meaningless to test you guys on these things. Why not have something new?”

The topic decided for every Five Empires War Discussion could be traditional or decided by the emperor of the host country.. The impractical Qi Emperor was clearly up to something again.

Chapter 1198: Admiration From An Emperor

The third category in zither, chess, calligraphy, and painting was calligraphy.

They said that seeing one’s writing was as good as seeing one in person. In the Nine Provinces, one would be mocked for not having good handwriting.

If a person wanted to become good at calligraphy, they’d require time and determination. However, it’d be too simple if it was purely a competition in calligraphy. After all, all of the princes and princesses were good at it.

To add points to ‘good calligraphy’ and allow it to be passed down through the times, one would naturally require to complement it with a good article.

Therefore, the Qi Emperor would come up with the topic for the Calligraphy Battle. The princes and princesses needed to write a good article based on this topic.

The one with the better article would naturally be the winner.

“You are all princes and princesses. Even if you don’t ascend to the throne in the future, you’ll be an important character standing at the very top of a country. Some of your ideals also represent the direction in which your country will move in the future. Therefore, this time around, my topic will be, how do you guys want to build your country?”

The moment the Qi Emperor said this, many people frowned.

This was considered political ideals!

This was a problem that great officials and Saints would consider.

To speak the truth, many emperors didn’t give much thought to this.

“Such a topic will only become empty words!”

Li Xiu shook her head.

When people with power decided on some measures, they wouldn’t share the intent behind implementing such measures with those from the lower echelon. This meant that citizens could only follow and not be told why.

These hidden rules mustn’t be written. This meant that they could only write about their inspirations. But wouldn’t that become empty words?

Reality was like an iron fist that could crush anyone’s inspirations and make them lower their heads.

Anyone had an ideal world in their heart. But reality would teach them what to do. No matter how majestic their inspirations were, they'd eventually just become an ordinary person with no achievements to their name.

"This time around, there'd be no limits to the number of participants. All seven people from each royal prince group can answer the question. The time limit will be two hours!"

The Qi Emperor sat down.

The princes and princesses would be spending two hours on the question, but they couldn't possibly keep everyone waiting like that. Therefore, the Qi Emperor's court musicians came on stage.

This band would usually only perform to the dukes and ministers during banquets or festive events. Normal people wouldn't get to see them. But now, even commoners were given a chance to see them.

"Wow! Look at those dancers! They are all so beautiful!"

"Of course! Which woman that can enter the palace isn't beautiful?"

"It's no wonder everyone wants to become the emperor!"

When the commoners saw those beautiful palace maids, they were so jealous that it felt as if their mouths were stuffed with lemons. These were top-notch women that they wouldn't even be able to touch in their entire life.

Sun Mo drank tea while eating snacks, enjoying the show.

Compared to the modern world's variety programs, the singing and dancing in this era had more of a traditional charm to them. Sun Mo, a country bumpkin who hadn't seen such things, enjoyed himself.

The only problem was that these dancers were wearing too many clothes.

"They'll probably wear fewer when they are performing for the emperor in private, right?"

Sun Mo wanted to see the special version catered only for the emperor.

Li Xiu was very bored. She had long since gotten sick of watching such singing and dancing performances. She was planning to chat with Sun Mo when she saw that he was very interested. Therefore, the eldest princess was stunned.

(What the hell? Are the Qi Country's women so charming? Hold on...)

(It seems that even after he shot to fame, Sun Mo has only been focused on studying and educating people. It seems that he has never enjoyed a luxurious life?)

Because of Li Ziqi, Li Xiu had sent people to follow Sun Mo before. She remembered that they had reported that he didn't even visit the brothels.

"This is bad! I've neglected to send greetings to Great Teacher Sun! After we go back, I'll give him a band of court musicians!"

Li Xiu decided.

Although it was very costly to maintain a group of court musicians, Sun Mo was definitely not one who'd be lacking in money.

"Great Teacher Sun, how is This Emperor's band? Do you like them?"

The Qi Emperor came over, with the empress and Grand Tutor Su following behind him.

Everyone from the spectators' stand stood up hurriedly and bowed to give their greetings.

"Very good!"

Sun Mo praised.

The Qi Emperor nodded at Li Xiu and Han Cangshui, casually said something as a greeting, and then continued to chat with Sun Mo.

"Which one of them do you think is the prettiest?"

"..."

Sun Mo sneaked a look at the Qi Emperor, not knowing how he should reply. By right, these dancers were all property of the royal family and belonged to the Qi Emperor's harem. He could shower them with favor as he wished, so Sun Mo didn't dare to comment on them.

(Talk about an emperor's woman? Are you sick of life?)

"I've tried that lead dancer before! Her body can really take on various poses!"

The Qi Emperor said in a soft voice.

"Your Majesty!"

The empress looked embarrassed and angry, while Grand Tutor Su looked very helpless. The Qi Emperor was known for his impracticality in the Nine Provinces.

"Alright, alright, I know that you great teachers pay attention to your image. I don't mean anything else by saying this. I just thought that you seem to enjoy looking at them, and I want to give you a few dancers!"

The Qi Emperor explained.

"No need!"

Sun Mo felt bad about accepting.

(But of course, if you insist, I'll forcibly accept it.)

Sun Mo couldn't help but throw a glance at that lead dancer. (Forget about that one though. You can keep her for yourself!)

"How could there be any men who don't like women? Other than eunuchs, even monks are no exceptions!"

The Qi Emperor pouted, feeling that Sun Mo was a little boring. However, thinking about his status, he accepted this. After all, he was the ruler of a country and it was very normal for Sun Mo to not feel at ease around him.

“I’ve told you to take your pick. If you don’t, then I’ll decide by myself!”

The Qi Emperor took a look. “I’ll give this group of court musicians to you!”

“Your Majesty!”

The empress frowned, a little unwilling. This was the Great Qi’s best court musician group that was formed after six years. The members were the best both in looks and talents.

(The most important thing is that if you were to give them to Sun Mo, what would we do for the year-end great event for the country?)

“Your Majesty, thank you for your kind intentions, but this gift is too valuable and I can’t accept it!”

Sun Mo quickly refused.

It was a lie to say that he didn’t want them, but these were living people and Sun Mo, with his upright perspectives, couldn’t accept gifting away people easily as if they were goods.

(Sigh, I’m the light of righteousness!)

“Then what do you think we should do? Should I get people to train a group for you from scratch?”

The Qi Emperor sounded unhappy.

“Great Teacher Sun, since His Majesty has such an intent, you should just accept it.”

Grand Tutor Su persuaded him.

(The Qi Emperor is an emperor who needs to be a man of his words. The fact that he bestows you with a gift is because he admires you and if you keep on rejecting, then you’d get hated.)

“Alright then, I’ll thank Your Majesty!”

Sun Mo cupped his fists together.

“Haha, that’s the way!”

The Qi Emperor smiled happily like a 50-year-old child after gifting away the gift successfully. “I feel like we’re old friends when This Emperor sees you. Why don’t you come to the palace tonight and share a bed with me to deepen our friendship?”

“You f*cking...”

Sun Mo almost cursed out. Thankfully, he knew that the Qi Emperor was just craving for his God Hands. Otherwise, he wouldn’t have dared to go.

“Your Majesty, I have a medicinal packet that is used in a warm water bath. It has an amazing effect on strengthening the body!”

Since the Qi Emperor was so generous, Sun Mo would feel bad if he acted selfishly. “After the Five Empires War Discussion ends, I’ll prepare a special version of the ancient whale oil that is suitable for your body!”

“Excellent! Excellent!”

The Qi Emperor was overjoyed. At the thought of how he could display his great masculine prowess in bed again, he wished that the Five Empires War Discussion could end quickly.

(A special version? Great Teacher Sun, you really know me well!)

“Despicable! Bootlicker!”

When some of the Qi Country’s ministers saw Sun Mo chatting happily with the Qi Emperor and even received a great bestowal, they were so jealous that they felt like spurting blood.

This guy was a foreigner and had just gotten to meet His Majesty. They weren’t on familiar terms at all, but His Majesty was showing him so much favor.

If he were to stay in Qi Country for a few years, he’d definitely become the favorite official.

Li Xiu felt immense pressure.

What should she give to win against the Qi Emperor?

The members of such a court musicians group were selected from across the country. Not only were they beautiful, but they would also need to be very talented. Most importantly, these were beauties from Qi Country.

Men always liked novelty and there was nothing wrong with them liking foreign women.

“Since we can’t beat them in terms of looks and talent, then we can only work on the statuses!”

Li Xiu planned on gifting Sun Mo a princess[1]. However, she had just come to this decision when she heard the Qi Emperor’s question.

“Great Teacher Sun, what do you think of This Emperor’s daughters?”

Li Xiu’s ears immediately perked up.

“Hey, what do you mean by that? This old b*stard wants to give Sun Mo a princess to get into his good books? Why are you so shameless?”

Li Xiu immediately decided to let Ziqi talk bad about the Qi Country’s royalty and mess this plan up.

(Sun Mo is our Great Tang’s shiniest great teacher. We mustn’t let him get snatched away by the Qi Country.)

At the thought of this, Li Xiu threw a glance at Han Cangshui, planning on getting Li Xuan to acknowledge Sun Mo as his teacher, even if it was just in name.

It was better to forge a relationship first.

Han Cangshui sat in a corner and drank wine by himself. He had been utterly embarrassed today.

“Sun Mo, f*ck your mom!”

Han Cangshui felt very helpless. (Just like how a clever housewife can't cook without rice, I can't do anything when Li Xuan's aptitude is this bad. I can't possibly change his blood, can I?)

“Great Teacher Sun, are these your personal disciples?”

The Qi Emperor looked at Lu Zhiruo and the others. His eyes gleamed. They were so beautiful!

“Yes!”

Sun Mo laughed softly. “Zhiruo, Tantai, you guys come over and pay respect to His Majesty!”

Sun Mo's students came over and bowed toward the Qi Emperor modestly.

“All of you are young heroes!”

The Qi Emperor waved his hand. “Man, bestow them with great gifts!”

At the sight of this scene, Han Cangshui felt even more jealous.

Given the Qi Emperor's judgment, how would he be able to tell that these children were geniuses with just a look? The reason he said such things was all on Sun Mo's account.

It was impossible for the Qi Emperor to keep on staying here. After chatting with Sun Mo for a while, he invited Sun Mo over to the main spectating platform.

Even Sun Mo's students were invited.

One and a half hours later, the princes and princesses finished their articles in succession.

Xiang Zhao scratched his head. He hated writing about such things the most.

“Time's up! Stop writing!”

The ceremonial officer announced.

The princes and princesses who hadn't finished panicked, wanting to write a few more words. However, they were disqualified for that and didn't even get a chance to get their work rated.

“We'll be openly assessing the articles next!”

As the ceremonial officer said this, four eunuchs carried a metal device up onto the arena.

This was a projecting device made using projecting stones and weaponsmithing. When a piece of paper was placed onto it, it'd be magnified and projected.

The effect was similar to a movie screen.

“Is there anyone willing to be the first to have their work assessed?”

The Qi Emperor looked at the participants and asked.

Chapter 1199: Splendid Article!

Xia Taikang and Jiang Yuzhen stepped forth at the same time. Their characters were the type that'd dauntlessly compete to be first. They'd want to be in first place no matter what they did.

"The guest should go first!"

As a princess from the host family, Jiang Yuzhen showed her sincerity.

"Thank you!"

Xia Taikang accepted it,

Very soon, a eunuch received Xia Taikang's article and placed it on the projecting device. The article was then projected in the air.

Those words looked strong and magnificent, looking like ancient ferocious beasts.

"He must have put in a lot of hard work to be able to write the seal script to this level!"

"Why did he practice the seal script? Is there something wrong with his head?"

"Weird!"

Seal script was an ancient writing style. Its structure was too complicated with a lot of strokes and had more curves and fewer straight lines. It took a lot of time to write and was also difficult to master. As a result, the Nine Provinces' countries stopped using this writing style.

Only when forging ceremonial items, during the countries' great event, as well as when making offerings to heaven would it then be used.

But soon, no one cared about Xia Taikang's seal script anymore. Instead, they were astonished by his content.

What did this guy write?

Unify the Nine Provinces?

Was he crazy?

Just as everyone was reading the article, Xia Taikang also took the sound amplification stone. He should have been reading out the article, but he didn't do that. Instead, he started an impromptu speech.

"It's easy to break one chopstick, but it's hard to break one bunch of it. I'm sure that everyone has heard about this before. This is what parents use to teach children the importance of harmony and unity between siblings. The truth is, this rationale works even between countries."

Xia Taikang said very firmly and smoothly.

"There are a total of over 200 countries of varying sizes in the Nine Provinces, with over 100 types of languages and writings, as well as countless dialects. Everyone lives in their small world, possibly not even leaving 50 li away from their homeland from the moment they were born until they died of old age. Don't you think that such a life is very boring?"

“Our food, mines, and lands are limited. Every country would extract a portion of it and use it for their sustainability. I feel that this is a waste. Take for example how the Qi Emperor likes beauties and enjoys good songs and dances. However, he doesn’t have many achievements in the area of politics and martial arts. He has been on the throne for 30 years. Although Qi Country is at peace, not advancing is a form of retrogressing.”

Xia Taikang’s words were without any mercy, making the Qi Emperor look awkward. However, they were in the midst of the Five Empires War Discussion and he mustn’t stop him.

“I want to unify all the countries in the Nine Provinces, unify the writing, language, all measurements, size of ruts made by vehicles, and build a massive road network. With that, even ordinary people will be able to see the sunrise in Western Jing, as well as enjoy the company of women and wine in Jinling along the Qinhuai River at night

“I want to gather the powers of all countries and see how far this unified country can go when that happens!”

Xia Taikang’s words astonished everyone.

It wasn’t in recognition, but that no one had thought before that the world could be like this too.

“Gibberish! No matter how he puts it, he just wants to become the ruler of the Nine Provinces!”

Li Xiu felt worried.

Due to the existence of the Darkness Continent, the countries in the Nine Provinces stopped engaging in large-scale wars. As a result, there was no competition and each country was just idling their lives away.

This was why the Nine Provinces’ feudal slave system still existed after so many years and also why capitalism couldn’t grow.

If Xia Taikang were to become the Xia Emperor, he’d definitely incur a great war in the Nine Provinces.

“I hope that in the future, there won’t be citizens from the Xia Country, Qi Country, or Chu Country. Everyone would just be a citizen of the Nine Provinces. With that, there’d be no discrimination, conflicts, or massacres!”

Xia Taikang concluded his speech.

His main thought was that the Darkness Continent’s resources weren’t endless either. What would happen after everything had been excavated?

A war would definitely break out amongst the various countries.

When that happened, his descendants might not necessarily be able to let the Xia Country continue to rise in the war. Therefore, he might as well do it himself.

After all, the strongest country in the Nine Provinces right now was the Xia Country. Anyone in his shoes would want to bet on this!

“A person like this is just a tyrannical ruler!”

Sun Mo heard someone in the crowd say this. However, he didn't comment but instead felt that Xia Taikang had great foresight.

The second to head up was Jiang Yuzhen.

She wrote in the clerical script, her handwriting looking very steady and regular.

"Strong starting strokes and light ending strokes that keep on changing. Princess Yuzhen's clerical script has the glamor of a great master!"

"But what does this article mean?"

"I don't understand!"

Even the well-learned great teachers were stunned, let alone ordinary people.

What were Jiang Yuzhen's political ideals?

She felt that there'd definitely be contradictions between different countries. To live in harmony, one must first build a powerful military power that surpassed that of the other countries.

Each time disputes and wars broke out between countries, this military power would intervene and perform arbitration.

Martial prowess was both a form of defense as well as a way to instill awe and fear!

"Zhen`er, this is..."

The Qi Emperor was stunned.

(Why would a tranquil and apathetic ruler like me have such a daughter?)

"Princess Yuzhen, how would you uphold this military power's fairness and justice? Absolute authority would lead to absolute corruption. Allowing this military group to perform arbitration to all countries would definitely lead to corruption."

Sun Mo felt curious.

Jiang Yuzhen's way of doing things shouldn't be possible no matter the era.

"Great Teacher Sun, you think too badly of human nature!"

Jiang Yuzhen retorted, but a hint of gleam flashed in her eyes.

Absolute fairness leading to absolute corruption?

This was really well said.

"This means that you can only pray that this military group is fair and just?"

Sun Mo sighed.

"I'd like to seek Great Teacher Sun's guidance!"

Jiang Yuzhen requested humbly.

“Offering high salaries to discourage corruption, or let great teachers who are at secondary saints or higher train them in turns. Even if the great teachers have selfish motives, there’d still be some kind of suppression as they would be unable to teach these soldiers for very long.”

Sun Mo casually brought up two solutions. “But these methods will only deal with the problem on the superficial level. When time passes, they’d become useless.”

“I understand!”

Jiang Yuzhen looked disappointed.

“It’s good that you can have such thoughts. Time is developing. There might be a solution when the time comes.”

Sun Mo encouraged her.

Jiang Yuzhen was an idealist. If a person like her were to become a ruler, she’d at least not be too harsh to the citizens.

Other crown princes and princesses also presented their articles in succession. Although their handwriting wasn’t bad, the content was very mediocre and didn’t stand out.

Finally, it was Xiang Zhao’s turn.

This guy wrote in cursive script that was filled with his personal charm. Even a grandmaster calligrapher like Sun Mo couldn’t recognize a lot of the words he wrote.

The first feeling Sun Mo had when reading this was the horror he felt from reading the doctor’s writings when he went to the hospital to seek treatment and get medicine.

At that moment, Sun Mo, who had received nine years of compulsory education, suspected that he was illiterate.

“Fighting and killings are really bad. I feel that art has no national boundaries and can let people forget their troubles as well as cultivate the mind. Therefore, we must put more effort into developing the arts. When everyone has indiscriminate love for others, the world will become a happy place.”

Xiang Zhao scratched his head while he introduced his ideals. He wore a smile that looked a little awkward.

He had never thought of where he wanted to lead his country to.

As he was an only son, there was no running away from the throne for him.

“Pfft!”

Li Xiu didn’t manage to hold it in and laughed.

The Chu Country’s crown prince was so naive that it was adorable.

The Qi Emperor looked at Xiang Zhao, feeling consoled and comfortable. After this guy became the Chu Emperor, he’d definitely become someone even more incapable than he was.

“Seeing one’s words is like looking at a person. The Chu Crown Prince is really unbridled!”

Qin Yaoguang chuckled.

“Great... Great Teacher Sun, what do you think of my idea?”

Xiang Zhao couldn’t stand the gazes other people were looking at him—as if they were looking at trash. Therefore, he looked toward Sun Mo for help. He felt that Sun Mo was an amazing great teacher and his mindset would be at a higher level. Sun Mo would definitely be able to understand him.

“There are no national boundaries to art, but there are to artists!”

Sun Mo consoled him, “You might not be able to become the most amazing emperor, but you’ll be an amazing artist. I feel that you can consider letting go of the throne and follow your heart to pursue arts to the greatest heights.”

Xiang Zhao fell silent. He hadn’t expected that Sun Mo would say this.

Give up on the throne?

He had thought about this before but didn’t dare to do that. Otherwise, he’d be deemed an unfilial descendant of the Xiang Clan if he were to lose the thousand years of hard work his ancestors had devoted to build.

The article assessment continued until Wei Wu`an and Li Ziqi were left in the end.

“Royal Sister, please!”

Wei Wu`an was older and had the right to address Li Ziqi as his royal sister.

“Royal Brother can go first!”

Li Ziqi said modestly.

In the end, Wei Wu`an was the one who gave in.

His beautiful regular script that looked impressive and elegant was presented in front of everyone.

“Some of my ideals are the same as Prince Taikang. I also feel that the countries in the Nine Provinces should be unified!”

Wei Wu`an said indignantly, “There are western countries far away and the Darkness Continent closer to us. The civilization they nurture will definitely be different from ours. I believe that one day, there’d be a clash. For us to be able to survive at that moment and become the strongest country, I feel that we need to go through a great unification.

“However, I don’t agree to unify through war. It’s because the people will be plunged into misery and suffering. As for how we should do that, I haven’t thought of an idea yet!”

Wei Wu`an was only saying this to earn himself a favorable impression. After all, no one would like a tyrannical ruler. He actually knew that war was the only means of resolving the problem.

Some great teachers started discussing amongst themselves.

Out of all these people, Wei Wu'an was the most reasonable one. After all, it was true that these dangers did exist.

"Last but not least, it's our participant with the greatest popularity, Princess Ziqi!"

After the ceremonial officer announced this, many people looked over with great anticipation, hoping that she'd get another first place.

It wasn't because they liked Li Ziqi, but because they had placed bets that the Great Tang would come in first place.

When the device projected her words in the air, many people immediately let out surprised gasps.

Regardless of whether it was the rarely seen seal script or the cursive script that no one could read, they were at least writing styles that everyone had seen before. However, Li Ziqi's calligraphy style was a brand new one and it was extremely beautiful.

"What calligraphy style is this?"

"It's the thin gold body style. I have seen Li Ziqi's test paper for her one-star examination. It was astonishing!"

"Isn't this too pretty?"

Li Ziqi's words were nimble and quick, thin but still substantial, having great power. It had a unique charm of its own.

A top-notch beauty, regardless of whether it was one from within or beyond the country, would attract men regardless. The same went for calligraphy.

Many people were unable to write well, but they could tell a good piece of writing when they saw one, feeling pleased.

"What did Eldest Martial Sister write?"

Qin Yaoguang was surprised.. (Why don't I understand it?)

Chapter 1200: Dinner Banquet Commotion!

What did Li Ziqi write?

She wrote that humans needed to establish a shared destiny, have a common goal, and put aside all prejudices, contradictions, and massacres, working together to realize a majestic goal so that everyone would benefit.

When Sun Mo saw this, he shook his head. (Your thinking is too advanced and it'd be weird if other people could understand it!)

"Princess Ziqi, what do you mean by this? Can you explain it?"

Grand Tutor Su spoke up to ask.

“Although our lives are peaceful now, this is temporary. It’s because as long as humans go through development, there’ll eventually come a day when they face opportunities or threats!

“Regardless which it is, humans can only grab onto opportunities and resolve threats if they possess sufficient strength!

“We shouldn’t just focus on the benefits in front of our eyes. Instead, we should look forward to 1,000, 2,000, or even 10,000 years later. We should establish a firm foundation for our descendants!”

Li Ziqi’s words were like a fantasy story. 1,000 years later? Even remains would have turned into ash. However, the little sunny egg’s tone was exceptionally solemn and serious.

Li Ziqi had experienced five rounds of the Black-White Game and had seen too many society structures and mindsets. Which of them was the right one?

Li Ziqi had no idea, but what she knew was that humans would definitely continue to advance. If they wished to do so more steadily, faster, and further, there was a need to twist humanity into a rope so that everyone would work together toward a common direction.

“Our current goal is to excavate the Darkness Continent!”

Li Ziqi thought of those science-fiction movies she had watched in the Black-White Game. “And in the future, it’ll be the great ocean of stars! We’ll eventually be leaving the Nine Provinces and head to a broader universe to search for life’s end point and meaning!

“...”

Grand Tutor Su looked stunned. (What are you talking about? Who’d be able to understand this?)

“Leave the Nine Provinces? Universe? What are these things?”

“I don’t understand!”

“Although I don’t understand, it sounds very amazing!”

Even the well-learned high star-level great teachers were muddled by many technical terms Li Ziqi had used in her article, let alone ordinary scholars.

“This is my beloved niece?”

Li Xiu subconsciously looked toward Sun Mo. (What on earth did you do to her? Had she been taken over by some great ancient figure from the legends? That wasn’t right, even a great ancient figure wouldn’t say things like this, right?)

Li Ziqi got off the arena and came back.

“Eldest Martial Sister, what were you talking about? Can you explain to me?”

Qin Yaoguang felt curious.

“They are just useless knowledge!”

Li Ziqi smiled in self-mockery and then looked toward Sun Mo, lowering her head to admit her mistake. "Teacher Sun, I don't think that I'll be able to get first place for this round."

"Since you know that, why did you still do it?"

Sun Mo felt curious.

Although Xia Taikang's political ideal was domineering and sounded like that of a tyrannical ruler, it was still within the perimeters in which people could understand. However, Li Ziqi's article was too forward.

Hoping that the people in the Nine Provinces could understand such a mindset?

It'd be better to wash up and go to sleep!

"I don't know either. I only feel that since I've seen some 'light of dawn', then I have the responsibility to let everyone take fewer detours. Several centuries is too long yet too short in the long river of history!"

Li Ziqi sighed.

"Eldest Martial Sister, you're speaking so profoundly. Are you using koans?"

Xianyu Wei scratched her head, unable to understand it at all.

Sun Mo smiled and rubbed the little sunny egg's head. "I'm very proud to have a student like you!"

Hearing this, Li Ziqi's face instantly beamed. She couldn't help but shake her head slightly in response to her teacher's stroking.

Seeing this, Han Cangshui felt a little jealous and disappointed at the same time. He couldn't understand the conversation between Sun Mo and Li Ziqi, but the six senses of a high star-level great teacher told him that this was definitely a lofty topic.

This teacher-student pair had surpassed him.

Li Xuan's article was published too.

His writing was good, in a beautiful regular script. The contents weren't bad either. People were able to tell that he wished to become a benevolent ruler, but that was it.

With so many emperors and rulers in the course of history, it wasn't as if there weren't any benevolent rulers amongst them.

(No matter how outstanding you are, can you be more outstanding than Yao, Shun, and Yu[1]?)

As the articles' assessment went on, the participants' ranking was also released.

The judges were 18 prestigious great teachers who were all 6-stars or higher. Moreover, they were also well-learned and could write very well. Therefore, there was no need to worry about there being schemes or for an amazing article to not be recognized.

But the truth was that Li Ziqi's article was still underestimated.

In the afternoon, the final results were released!

Xia Taikang came in first place. His goal was very clear, his ideals majestic. Although he could become a tyrannical ruler, from the great teachers' perspectives, there were also countless benefits if the Nine Provinces were unified.

Wei Wu'an came in second. This was because although his ideals were similar to Xia Taikang, he wasn't as domineering and didn't dare to say the solution.

Li Xuan's article was ranked in the top ten. It wasn't that he was good, but that the others' weren't good enough. There were no other choices.

Even though Jiang Yuzhen's idea was novel, it was too naive. As for Xiang Zhao, he was ranked behind her. It was because this guy wasn't suited to become a ruler.

Li Ziqi's ranking was done last. It was because the great teachers were all hesitating.

How were they supposed to rank her when they didn't understand her article?

In the end, they could only give her a ranking in the middle. However, many great teachers had decided to look for her privately to have a discussion over this.

After the Calligraphy Battle ended, what was left was the last battle—famous painting competition. However, before this, as they were in the last week of the Five Empires War Discussion, on the night where the results for the Calligraphy Battle was announced, the Qi Emperor held a large-scale dinner banquet, inviting the various countries' delegations as well as great teachers.

All great teachers who were 4-stars or higher could attend the banquet even if they didn't receive an invitation.

This showed that in the eyes of these top-notch countries, only 4-stars great teachers were worthy of courtesy and respect.

...

The banquet was held in the Taiji Palace. It was very big and grand.

At times like this, the order of seats represented the guest's status to this country, or rather, to the emperor.

The closer one sat to the emperor, the more highly-regarded or closer they were to the emperor.

The Great Xia was first in overall capabilities, but right now, they sat behind the Great Tang. This made the princes and princesses from the Great Xia's delegation feel that they had been humiliated. All of them stared at the Great Tang's delegation angrily.

Li Xiu felt helpless about this too. The Qi Emperor was really too impracticable. (Can't you put more effort into such respect-related matters? Do you have to turn things like this, making enemies for others?)

Other than a few lines of polite talk, the Qi Emperor spent the rest of his time during the banquet talking to Sun Mo.

"Beloved Subject Sun, it's too inconvenient to be talking like this. Why don't you sit over here?"

The Qi Emperor extended an invitation.

He no longer referred to Sun Mo as Great Teacher Sun but changed to address him as 'Beloved Subject'. This showed that their relationship was closer.

"Your Majesty, that's your seat!"

Sun Mo rejected.

He didn't really care about seats, but he didn't want to sit together with this old man. (I might consider it if it was to sit with the beautiful empress instead.)

Even though the empress was getting on in age, as the mother of a country, her disposition was too attractive. Moreover, she had taken care of herself well.

"Empress, you don't look too good. Have you been having frequent insomnia recently?"

Sun Mo smiled and asked.

"That's right!"

The empress stroked her face and then asked, "I heard that Great Teacher Sun's God Hands can change one's looks. I wonder if..."

"The empress is born with great beauty and doesn't need any cosmetic surgery. However, one's body would always have all kinds of problems with age. It's still necessary to do some maintenance. Otherwise, one would age too quickly."

Sun Mo recommended, "I'll let Ziqi perform a beauty treatment on you to get rid of your wrinkles. Even though I don't dare to claim that it'd bring you back to when you were 18 years old, it wouldn't be a problem to bring you back to when you were 25 years old."

"Huh? 25 years old?"

The empress's beautiful brow raised and she looked surprised. If it wasn't because they were in the midst of the banquet, she'd have pulled Li Ziqi away to get the beauty treatment done immediately.

(Hold on!)

"Great Teacher Sun, can't it be done by you?"

It was like how many people wanted to look for the best doctor to get treatment, the empress was no exception. It'd definitely be the safest for Sun Mo to do the job.

"Ziqi has inherited my skills!"

Sun Mo assured.

Sigh, this was a good opportunity to touch an empress, applying oil all over her body. Was it not an amazing chance?

But Sun Mo gave up on it for Ziqi's future.

After the empress tried out the ancient massaging technique, she'd definitely like it and want to do it often in the future. After all, regardless of the era, women had no resistance toward cosmetics and beauty.

When that time came, Ziqi would have gained an ally.

Li Xuan sneaked a look at Sun Mo, who was smiling and chatting happily with the empress. She then chugged down a mouthful of wine, feeling that his pressure had increased tremendously.

(Teacher Han, you're useless!)

Li Xuan had some complaints in his heart.

"Beloved Subject Sun, can This Emperor have beauty treatment too?"

The Qi Emperor was displeased about his wrinkles for a long time. He also wanted to look like a handsome man.

"..."

Sun Mo was speechless. He wanted to tell the Qi Emperor that a man's value wasn't in his face but in his achievements. This could also be interpreted as status and money.

(You're already the ruler of a country. Even if you look like Tu Xingsun[2], you can get anything you want. Why would you still need beauty treatments? Are you telling me that you don't wish to work hard as well? Do you want to find an older woman to buy things for you?)

"Yes!"

Sun Mo didn't mind. It didn't matter if the treatment was done for one person or two. It was something that could be settled in just several minutes.

"Haha, as expected of This Emperor's bosom friend! I'll toast to that!"

The Qi Emperor emptied the great wine in the bronze cup.

"How can there be no poetry in the presence of wine? I heard that Teacher Sun is Gandalf and has written [Journey to the West] and [A Dream of Red Mansions]. I often feel regret over not being able to see Teacher Sun's great charm. I'd like to take this chance to request for Teacher Sun to compose a poem and bring some entertainment to this grand banquet."

A clear and beautiful voice rang out.

Everyone turned over and saw that it was a princess from the Great Xia who was requesting for Sun Mo to compose a poem.

"It this little b*tch again!"

Li Ziqi felt displeased. This young lady had been an annoyance since the chess battle.

The princes and princesses from the Great Xia's delegation immediately chipped in, requesting for Sun Mo to compose a poem.

Everyone had carefully prepared several good poems and articles for the Calligraphy Battle. These people were all members of the royalty and had many people working for them. It wasn't a problem for them to get their hands on some good poetry.

If they were to throw out a poem after Sun Mo was done composing one, wouldn't they be able to crush him? It'd also reflect that they had great talent in poetry.

"Is there going to be a poetry competition?"

The princes and princesses from the other countries were raring to give it a go as well, not just the Great Xia's delegation. All of them had a strong urge to battle 300 rounds with Sun Mo.

As long as they could win against Sun Mo, they'd be able to shoot up to fame!