

The Doctor 1231

Chapter 1231: Competition

According to my understanding of Chu Yue, he definitely hasn't remembered the formula wrongly or put the wrong herbs in. The only explanation is... Chu Yue changed the formula on his own! What exactly is this kid thinking?! Elder Wan Zheng couldn't help but grind his teeth.

Formulas of such a grade are all extremely complicated. Just adjusting the quantity of even one of the herbs can cause the pill to fail, let alone directly changing the formula and putting in so many herbs?! His lips trembled, and he swallowed his words with much difficulty. *Now, I can only quietly observe...*

...

It wasn't only Elder Wan Zheng. Many other heavenly doctors present had also noticed that something was amiss. "Chu Yue is planning to produce the Pei Yuan Pill, right? But why did he put a green lotus seed in?"

"Not only did he do that, but he has also put in four herbs that aren't in the formula... I really don't know what he's planning to do."

"With Elder Wan Zheng and Senior Brother Rong Xiu personally guiding him, he shouldn't have made such a low-level mistake, right? Seeing how calm he is, he definitely did it on purpose!"

Many people were confused. *No matter our standard, we all know that formulas can't be changed casually, let alone in such a nerve-racking competition. Chu Yue is indeed gutsy!*

Some people secretly shook their heads. "The herbs used to produce the Pei Yuan Pill are all very gentle. When cultivators take the pill, they can elevate their Yuan and be calmer. But all the herbs that Chu Yue just put in have very strong natures. Isn't this going to ruin the pill?"

"I think there's no need to compete anymore..."

"What a pity! I thought he performed quite decently just now! However, suddenly changing the formula is really a big taboo!"

...

Some people discussed softly, and they clearly had no more hope for Chu Liuyue.

When Luo Shishi heard those words, her heart hung high. Even though she wasn't a heavenly doctor, she knew these kinds of things that were akin to common sense. *As a ninth-grade heavenly doctor, Chu Yue definitely knows this. Therefore, why did he do it?*

Zhuo Sheng shook his head regretfully. "I think Chu Yue is going to lose this time."

Luo Shishi pressed her lips against each other. "Perhaps he has his own thoughts..."

"He just broke through to become a ninth-grade heavenly doctor. How can he randomly change the formula?" Although Zhuo Sheng always felt that Chu Yue was very talented, formulas were the root of pill production!

Luo Shishi kept quiet for a moment and stared at the young man in the square.

He stood tall and upright, with one hand on the cauldron controlling the red fire while the other hand continuously added herbs. He looked calm and composed.

“I don’t think he suddenly changed the formula...” muttered Luo Shishi softly. *Seeing how natural Chu Yue looks, it’s as if those herbs should be added.*

Zhuo Sheng shrugged his shoulders. “Just now, that bunch of heavenly doctors said that he’s producing the Pei Yuan Pill. Quite a few people know this formula, and they all said that Chu Yue changed the formula. Are they all wrong?”

Luo Shishi didn’t speak further.

When Zhuo Sheng saw her gaze, his heart tingled. He knew that she was worried about Chu Yue, so he comforted her. “Hey, you actually don’t have to be too worried! This is the first match after all, and his opponent is a senior brother on the Qing Yun Ranking. Even if he loses, nothing will happen to him. After all, everyone can tell that he’s indeed a ninth-grade heavenly doctor!”

Luo Shishi was hesitant in her words. *Even so, there are a lot of people waiting to see Chu Yue make a joke of himself. If he really loses, then... It’s fine if he is mocked on his own, but he will also implicate Senior Brother Rong Xiu and Elder Wan Zheng. Does Chu Yue... really not care about the results of this match?*

...

No matter what the others said, Chu Liuyue didn’t take it to heart. The reason she would add those herbs was actually due to the fact that she produced the pill according to her own formula.

Yes, she had once changed the Pei Yuan Pill formula.

Every pill formula was perfected after countless trials by heavenly doctors. The quantity of every ingredient, the refinement technique, one’s fire control, and even the sequence of herb placement all had strict requirements. If any of them went wrong, the pill would likely fail.

Chu Liuyue naturally wouldn’t treat this matter as a joke.

She moved her wrist and finally placed the last herb in to refine it.

After all the herbs were prepared, she had to produce the pill. Chu Liuyue took a deep breath in and circulated her force to rush out!

Rumble!

The fire in the cauldron suddenly rose, and all the herbs gathered together!

“The medicinal nature of the herbs he put in is too strong, and it’s hard to merge with the other herbs. I’m afraid he won’t even be able to produce the pill this time...”

Soft murmurs could be heard coming from the crowd. Some people even felt that it was boring as they turned around and planned to leave.

But at this moment, a strong collision suddenly sounded from Chu Liuyue's cauldron!

Dong!

The sound was thick and loud as it spread far and wide!

Quite a few people's expressions changed! *Is this... succeeding?!*

As expected, they saw a spherical pill appear in the red fire the next moment!

The thick herbal fragrance spread around!

Elder Wan Zheng took a deep breath in, and his eyes lit up! *This smell... is indeed one that can only come when a Pei Yuan Pill is successfully produced! Besides, it vaguely has a different fragrance to it, causing the entire Pei Yuan Pill smell to be even richer!*

At that moment, the fragrance rejuvenated one's lungs and caused one to be very comfortable as if they had been energized rapidly!

Elder Wan Zheng looked at Chu Liuyue with bright eyes. *The herbs she put in earlier have clearly merged with the pill perfectly! And if I haven't guessed wrongly, the grade of this Pei Yuan Pill—*

Bam!

Tang Rui was finally done producing his pill! He jumped up and captured the pill, placing it in a jade box!

Almost at the same time, Chu Liuyue's hand slammed against the cauldron harshly!

A pill flew out!

She moved her wrist, and red force flew out! At the same time, it turned into a net and stopped the pill!

Chu Liuyue then moved her foot slightly and quickly captured that pill!

The two of them had finished producing their pills one after another!

...

Tang Rui knitted his brows slightly.

Although he had successfully produced an intermediate ninth-grade pill on his side, for some reason, he felt faintly uneasy when he saw that young man's calm expression.

Even if he hadn't seen Chu Yue's pill personally, he also knew that it wasn't simple! Changing the formula yet ultimately being able to successfully produce the pill stated too many problems!

He hesitated for a moment and passed his pill over first. "Elder Wan Zheng, please take a look."

Elder Wan Zheng took his pill and then looked at Chu Liuyue. His eyes had a slight hint of emotion. "Chu Yue, yours."

Chu Liuyue's fingers moved slightly, and she still passed the box over.

Elder Wan Zheng held two jade boxes. He took a deep breath in and opened Tang Rui's first.

Chapter 1232: Her Name!

A maroon pill lay in the jade box quietly. The nine horizontal lines were clear and bright, and only the last line was slightly faint.

This was indeed an intermediate ninth-grade pill!

Elder Wan Zheng nodded, smiled, and said, "Tang Rui, you've broken through for a while already, right? You hid it quite well!"

Seeing the quality of this pill, it definitely wasn't something one could have after producing it for the first time.

Tang Rui smiled in embarrassment as his white dough-like face became even rounder. "Elder Wan Zheng, you have sharp eyes. I can't hide anything from you."

Elder Wan Zheng nodded and suppressed his agitation. He then opened Chu Liuyue's jade box.

Nine lines could clearly be seen on the bright-red pill!

Elder Wan Zheng glanced at the ninth line and gasped. *?This is also an intermediate ninth-grade pill!?*

Even though he had already predicted this result, Elder Wan Zheng was still stunned when he saw it personally. *?Not long ago, Chu Yue produced his first ninth-grade pill in front of me. And now, this kid can actually produce an intermediate ninth-grade pill?!?*

Elder Wan Zheng seemed to be overwhelmed as if his heart would burst out the next moment! Although he had seen all sorts of incidents, he still couldn't control his excitement and agitation!

At the side, Tang Rui also saw the pill in the jade box. He couldn't help but be stunned and smiled bitterly.

"Junior Brother Chu Yue, you indeed have outstanding talent, and your abilities are amazing. I heard that you were just an eighth-grade heavenly doctor when you first came to the academy. It has only been two months, yet you can already produce an intermediate ninth-grade pill..." He sighed deeply and cupped his fists toward Chu Liuyue. "I am not good enough!"

Tang Rui's words reverberated throughout the square. The noise instantly disappeared as almost everyone went into a daze.

They took a while to react. *?What did Tang Rui say?! Chu Yue has also produced an intermediate ninth-grade pill?! How could this be possible!?* *Chu Yue even changed the formula, so how could he successfully produce the Pei Yuan Pill and even improve it by one small grade?!?*

Chu Liuyue smiled. "Senior Brother Tang Rui, you're too kind. I was just luckier."

However, Tang Rui shook his head and smiled helplessly. *?Luck? Luck is the most useless thing when a heavenly doctor produces pills. I have never heard of anyone being lucky and managing to produce a ninth-grade pill. Being able to do this proves that Chu Yue indeed has genuine talent and capabilities!?*

"Junior Brother, you're too humble." Tang Rui sighed.

He had previously heard quite a few rumors regarding Chu Yue. Like the others, he also felt that Chu Yue wasn't very capable and that he was just luckier with many fateful encounters. But with this match, he finally understood that... those rumors weren't false!

After thinking about it, he agreed with it. *Who are Elder Wan Zheng and Rong Xiu? Someone that they think highly of is definitely not ordinary.*

Elder Wan Zheng took a deep breath in and gazed at his disciple, his gaze still filled with admiration and surprise.

"Intermediate ninth-grade." He stretched out his hand and patted Chu Liuyue's shoulder. "Chu Yue, you're... great!"

I originally just wanted to let those people see how outstanding my disciple is, but I didn't expect Chu Yue's performance to be this shocking! He is much better than I had predicted! Seeing the two pills, Elder Wan Zheng knitted his brows slightly and seemed conflicted. "Um... The pills you two produced are of the same grade, and they are of similar quality. This match... is a tie!"

The crowd went crazy. *Tie?! Doesn't this prove that Chu Yue indeed has the ability to get onto the Qing Yun Ranking? However, Tang Rui is the hundredth-ranking person, so only one of them can be on the list. Of course, with the skills the two of them have exhibited, they should be able to rank higher on the list. However, they would then have to continue challenging those above.*

Tang Rui suddenly cupped his fists toward Chu Liuyue and laughed.

"Junior Brother Chu Yue should be on the Qing Yun Ranking. Even though Junior Brother Chu Yue and I have produced pills of the same standard, Junior Brother Chu Yue is just 16 years old. Just based on this point alone, he's already much better than me."

The crowd had various gazes, but nobody objected to it. That was because the Qing Yun Ranking indeed had such a rule: If the two competitors were of similar standards, the younger one would be placed in front.

Chu Yue had entered the Qing Yun Ranking with enough reasons!

At this point, Elder Wan Zheng actually didn't really care if Chu Liuyue could get onto the Qing Yun Ranking. Anyway, everything that the latter showcased was enough to prove how capable he was!

That was enough!

He thought in his heart, *Actually... From the start, I shouldn't have given Chu Yue the target of just getting onto the Qing Yun Ranking. With this kid's potential, he should go for an even better ranking!*

Elder Wan Zheng glanced at Tang Rui, and his gaze had admiration in it. "Tang Rui, although you'll drop out of the Qing Yun Ranking after this match... With your current abilities, you can definitely challenge those people above you."

Tang Rui nodded respectfully. "I understand."

Elder Wan Zheng looked at his disciple again as he smiled and raised his chin. "Kid, go ahead! Place your hand on the Qing Yun Ranking and inject a bit of force; then, your name will naturally appear!"

Chu Liuyue curled her fingers. *Qing Yun Ranking...?*

“What’s the matter?” Seeing that his disciple hadn’t moved for a while, Elder Wan Zheng couldn’t help but ask.

Chu Liuyue shook her head and walked toward the heavenly doctor list.

...

Countless gazes landed on her—envy, jealousy, admiration, shock...

Chu Liuyue ignored all of them. She stood a step away from the heavenly doctor list. *As long as I stretch out my hand and my name appears on it, I will get onto the Qing Yun Ranking! However... will my name really appear??*

Chu Liuyue took a deep breath in and finally raised her hand—

Chapter 1233: Ascend the Board!

The white palm gradually went near and was finally placed on the black list.

With the contrast between the two extreme colors of black and white and the glowing names on the list, it seemed like a painting had been formed.

Quietly glowing in an iridescent manner—solemn and holy.

The cold touch spread from her palm, but Chu Liuyue’s blood seemed to be rapidly coursing through her veins! Her heart seemed to be tightly clutched by something.

Everyone felt that the current her should be proud, elated, and filled with honor, but in actual fact, she was so nervous that she couldn’t hear the surrounding sounds. All that she could see and hear was only the Qing Yun Ranking before her!

Yesterday, she was also standing here.

The extremely familiar ripple was still coursing in her heart as she carefully circulated her force and injected it into the Qing Yun Ranking!

Whir!

A tiny whir suddenly entered her ears!

Chu Liuyue’s heart skipped a beat, and she almost wanted to retract her hand! But the sound quickly disappeared the next moment as if it had never appeared before!

Chu Liuyue was dazed, and she waited quietly for a while. That sound didn’t ring again, and even the ripple that should’ve occurred didn’t flash!

Then, a ray of light appeared in her palm and rushed forward!

She immediately looked up!

The ray of light stopped at the last name of the Qing Yun Ranking. Then, the name ‘Tang Rui’ silently disappeared as her name replaced it!

When she saw the words clearly, her heart finally eased. That was because the name was Chu Yue!

...

The matter she was most worried about didn't happen, allowing her to be much more at ease.

She looked up slightly at the highest point.

It was still dark and quiet. The hidden name didn't appear.

Everything seemed as normal as ever.

She lightly exhaled.

...

The surrounding spectators were silent. No matter how much doubt and suspicion they had before, they all immediately disappeared!

Nothing else could prove one's ability even better than winning such a match and officially entering the Qing Yun Ranking!

Even though this matter seemed extremely unbelievable, it... still happened!

In Dong Huang Clock Tower, Elder Bo Yan stroked his beard and nodded with much satisfaction. "This Chu Yue indeed has a lot of potential."

He faintly had the image of the girl back then. They equally loved to cause trouble yet were similarly intelligent. They even had shocking talent in the Xuan Master path and the warrior path.

"Bo Yan, it seems like you think highly of this Chu Yue." A voice sounded behind Elder Bo Yan.

Elder Bo Yan turned around, smiled, and said, "Yeah, you just came back, so you don't know him well. However, this kid... is pretty capable."

"If Rong Xiu thinks of him so highly, he definitely has decent talent." A middle-aged man walked over, looked down, and nodded. "He's indeed not bad, but Elder Meng has some comments about him."

"You went to Fengmin Mountain?" asked Elder Bo Yan in shock.

Shang Yulin bared his teeth. "Do you still need to ask that? If Elder Meng knows that I didn't go there the moment I came back, I'll be skinned alive!"

Elder Bo Yan nodded in understanding. "That's true, but you said that Elder Meng is displeased with Chu Yue? Did this kid do something strange when he was locked up at Fengmin Mountain previously?"

Shang Yulin stretched out a finger and shook it as a smile with deep meaning appeared on his face. "No. I just haven't seen someone who can affect Elder Meng's emotions so easily in a long time, and... The old man even misses him, so I was rather curious. Strictly speaking, Elder Meng isn't displeased toward Chu Yue but more... curious."

Thinking of the words Elder Meng said before, Shang Yulin stroked his chin. "Even I want to personally meet this Chu Yue."

He glanced at Elder Bo Yan. “He has only entered the academy for two months, but he spent most of his time locked up at Fengmin Mountain. Such a person hasn’t appeared in quite a few years, right?”

He’s rather capable.?

Elder Bo Yan smiled. “He’s currently Wan Zheng’s precious disciple. Wan Zheng dotes on him very much, so don’t cause trouble.”

“How can it be considered as causing trouble? Many students want to be guided by me, but they don’t even have the chance!” Shang Yulin was nonchalant. “If he’s outstanding enough, he can definitely handle me easily!”

Elder Bo Yan laughed out loud.

Shang Yulin suddenly thought of something and asked, “Right, did you bring back the Yuan instrument from Ancient Feather Abyss?”

Elder Bo Yan’s expression became rather strange. “...Yes.”

Shang Yulin’s eyes lit up. “Where is it? I’ve been thinking about this item for a long time. Now that it’s finally brought back, you must let me study it properly!”

Elder Bo Yan raised his brows. “There’s no use asking me about this. It’s not with me.”

“If it’s not with you, where can it be?” Shang Yulin was dazed. *Logically speaking, such an item should be taken care of by the director after getting returned. But now that the director isn’t around, Bo Yan should take care of it.?*

Elder Bo Yan raised his chin toward the young man below. “There—it’s with him.”

Shang Yulin couldn’t help laughing out loud. “Huh? You must be joking. That kid—”

“That item recognized him as its owner.” As Elder Bo Yan explained slowly, he saw the man opposite him change his expression incredulously rapidly in much satisfaction.

Shang Yulin closed his eyes and took a deep breath in. “Good child!”

Chapter 1234: Celebrate

Elder Bo Yan laughed silently. *Shang Yulin has been thinking about the Yuan instrument in Ancient Feather Abyss for years. Every day, he just hopes that it will be brought back to the academy one day and that he can properly study it.*

But Shang Yulin didn’t expect that when he came out after being in seclusion for a few months, that Yuan instrument had already recognized someone as its owner! One had to know that a Yuan instrument with an owner was no longer easy to get close to.

Shang Yulin’s previous plan was entirely thwarted! How could he not be angry?

“But you don’t have to put Chu Yue in a difficult spot because of this. In actual fact, this incident is just a coincidence.” Then, Elder Bo Yan explained the entire incident to Shang Yulin clearly.

During this explanation, Shang Yulin's expression kept changing. He wanted to interrupt Elder Bo Yan on several occasions, but he still held it in.

However, it was obvious that such an explanation couldn't directly cause him to let it go. After all, he had thought about that item for years. Yet, once it appeared in the world, it was taken in by a kid in the blink of an eye. It would be a wonder if he could be at peace with it!

"Actually, as an Armory Refinement Master, you should also understand that this matter is more related to fate than capabilities." Elder Bo Yan sighed. "That Yuan instrument didn't have a weapon soul, and Chu Yue coincidentally flung out his advanced Yuan instrument. The sword soul then forcefully barged in, allowing the item to become his... The key is that the sword soul couldn't possibly suppress the weapon soul, yet it still succeeded in the end. This could only prove that the item had also chosen him..."

Others really could not be envious of such incidents.

"Hmph." Shang Yulin coldly snorted. "I will go to see that kid sooner or later and see what he has up his sleeves!"

...

Currently, Chu Liuyue didn't know that someone had already had his eyes on her.

Seeing the two words 'Chu Yue' on the heavenly doctor board, she instantly felt much better. She stared at that name calmly before turning around to return to Elder Wan Zheng's side. "Mentor, do the things you said before still count?"

Elder Wan Zheng couldn't help but laugh out loud. "I knew you'd remember this! Don't worry! Since I've said it, I'll definitely do it! I will fulfill everything I promised you!"

Isn't it just some points and herbs? I'm more than elated to develop such an outstanding disciple. Why would I care about anything else?

"For you!" As he spoke, Elder Wan Zheng waved his hand.

A bright ray of light flashed across!

Chu Liuyue captured that item. She then looked at it, and her heart couldn't help but skip a beat. *This is Elder Wan Zheng's green jade plaque! He directly threw it to me?*

Just as this thought surfaced in Chu Liuyue's mind, she heard Elder Wan Zheng generously shouting, "As your reward, I'll give you 200,000 points this time! Additionally, for the next three months, all the herbs you collect at Medicinal Valley will be recorded under my name!"

Once he said this, not only Chu Liuyue but even the surrounding crowd was stunned. *200,000 points?! We might not even have so much after accumulating in the academy for a few years! Chu Yue actually got it in one shot?!*

For many of the heavenly doctor students present, this wasn't what they were most envious of. They were most envious of Chu Yue being able to take any herbs he wanted at Medicinal Valley for the next three months!

As heavenly doctors, herbs were something they had to have. As they got stronger, the herbs required when producing pills became increasingly precious. This also caused their cultivation costs to increase continuously, and some of them might not even be able to bear it.

Even though they could also accumulate points by selling pills, one had to know that they didn't succeed in every pill production. Sometimes, it was normal to fail ten times or even a hundred times. This entire process even exhausted them.

Sometimes, even if they were very frugal with their spending, they would still be unable to make ends meet.

As soon as he spoke, Elder Wan Zheng allowed his disciple to use the herbs as much as he wanted for the next three months. How could others not envy the latter!?

"Thank you, Mentor!" Chu Liuyue smiled happily, and her eyes curved up.

She was truly elated. Originally, I thought one month would be the maximum. I didn't expect that Elder Wan Zheng would be so supportive and give me three months of free herbs in one go! With these three months, I can definitely break through to become a peak ninth-grade heavenly doctor!

Elder Wan Zheng laughed out loud. I saw the great hidden potential in Chu Yue through today's competition. In such a situation... As a mentor, I can only patiently guide him and try my best to solve all the unnecessary worries. I can't wait to see Chu Yue's capabilities in three months!

...

Chu Liuyue placed the two jade plaques together, and a ray of light flashed across. Her black jade plaque instantly had a series of zeroes.

She raised her brows, and a large smile was plastered on her face. *Luckily, I didn't reject competing with Tang Rui. If not, I would've missed out on too much.*

She put away her own plaque and returned the green jade plaque respectfully.

Tang Rui cupped his fists toward her. "Junior Brother Chu Yue, let's duel again if there's a chance in the future!"

Chu Liuyue smiled and bowed in return. "Sure. I'll wait for you eagerly, Senior Brother Tang Rui."

Tang Rui then turned around to leave. He didn't find anyone else to challenge and directly left the area.

It seemed like he planned on competing again next month.

Chu Liuyue thought and looked at Elder Wan Zheng. "Mentor, since the competition here has already ended, I would like to go back and cultivate too."

Elder Wan Zheng stroked his beard. He originally wanted to ask about the formula in detail, but seeing that his disciple really had no intentions of staying here, he swallowed his words.

"Okay, you've worked very hard today. Go back and rest!" Elder Wan Zheng patted her shoulders. *It also seems rather inappropriate to ask about the formula in front of so many people. I can ask another day when we have the time.*

Receiving Elder Wan Zheng's approval, Chu Liuyue bowed and quickly left. Different from when she came, her steps were now much lighter.

The crowd just thought that she behaved in this manner because she won the match and didn't think much about it. Now, they were only envious and jealous that Chu Yue had such a generous elder as his mentor.

Of course, they also knew that Elder Wan Zheng did this because Chu Yue was worth it.

Who didn't want such a talented disciple?

They could only watch and be envious.

...

After Chu Liuyue left the venue, Luo Shishi and the rest rapidly went up to congratulate her. Amongst their congratulations were naturally all sorts of praises and gasps.

Chu Liuyue knew that the few of them also performed very well, especially Luo Shishi. Without long, Luo Shishi should be able to enter the warrior list successfully.

After the few of them congratulated each other, Zhuo Sheng chuckled and asked, "Chu Yue, you're the first amongst all of us to get onto the Qing Yun Ranking. We must celebrate this properly! Why don't we gather at Million Wine Mountain tonight?"

Chapter 1235: Good to Make a Trip There

Chu Liuyue's heart tingled. Yes, today is the beginning of the month. Million Wine Mountain will definitely be very crowded.

"I think we should forget it." Luo Shishi knitted her sharp brows slightly and glanced at Chu Liuyue carefully. Chu Yue seems to have an ill fate with Million Wine Mountain. Every time he goes there, he gets into a whole lot of trouble. What if he causes more trouble??

Chu Liuyue thought for a moment before saying, "It's fine if we make a trip there. After all, I don't think anyone will purposely cause trouble for me like the first time."

After all, there is still a Rong Xiu behind me.

"Chu Yue, you really want to go?" Luo Shishi was still rather worried.

Chu Liuyue nodded, smiled, and said, "Everyone can go, so why can't I? Don't worry; I'll be more careful myself. And... I don't want to be locked up in Fengmin Mountain again."

Of course, she was talking about recently. After all, she was severely warned when she came out a few days ago. It would really be quite inappropriate if she went back again.

I should go back after a while.

Hearing this, Luo Shishi and the rest felt at ease.

"Oh, right! Chu Yue, you're staying with Senior Brother Rong Xiu, but we can't go to Jiuheng Peak. We'll wait for you outside the mountain tonight?"

Chu Liuyue nodded. "Okay."

...

Chu Liuyue returned to Jiuhe Peak and saw Rong Xiu standing with his hands behind his back. She quickly flew over and stood before him.

Rong Xiu's thin lips curled up. "Congratulations."

Chu Liuyue raised her brows. "You did something to the Qing Yun Ranking?"

"You can't say that either." Rong Xiu smiled. "Although that's also your name, your current strength is still different from back then. I just suppressed the connection that strength had with you. When you break through to recover your original cultivation level, that seal will naturally dissolve."

"Original cultivation level?" Chu Liuyue blinked. *In my memory, I have always been a stage-nine warrior and didn't continue to break through. But since I could be at the top of two lists, then... I should've been a true god. However, I'm still not sure what level it was exactly.*

Rong Xiu raised his sharp brows slightly. "You'll know naturally at that time."

At this point, a cold and child-like voice came from the house. "Come in and cultivate."

Chu Liuyue rubbed her temple.

Ever since she stayed at Rong Xiu's place, nobody came to disturb her, and it was much more convenient for her to cultivate in all aspects. In this manner, Dugu Mobao would come over and train with her when he had the time.

"I'm coming!" Chu Liuyue acknowledged it, took a deep breath, and walked in.

...

After this period of training, Chu Liuyue's capabilities had strengthened by quite a bit. At the very least, she wouldn't completely collapse after a few steps under Dugu Mobao like in the past. However, this bit of skill was far from good enough for Dugu Mobao.

Hence, every time he trained her, he would unleash a stronger force than before.

Chu Liuyue was still greatly suppressed by him. The only good point was that under this extremely maniacal training, Chu Liuyue could clearly feel that her skills as a Xuan Master had improved greatly!

She was only one step away from becoming a ninth-grade Xuan Master!

...

Evening.

The 'duel' finally ended.

Seeing the chessboard that suddenly disappeared, Chu Liuyue sighed deeply. Then, she glanced outside and stood up. "Big Baby, I have an appointment with them to go to Million Wine Mountain. I'll go first!"

Unexpectedly, Dugu Mobao didn't object as he glanced at her and said, "It's good if you make a trip there."

Chapter 1236: Apology

The sun was setting.

When Chu Liuyue came out from Jiuheng Peak, she saw Luo Shishi and the rest from afar. She rapidly went forward and met with them.

Zhuo Sheng curiously glanced behind her and smacked his lips. "Chu Yue, you entered the Qing Yun Ranking today. Does Senior Brother Rong Xiu not plan to celebrate with you?"

Chu Liuyue raised her brows. "You want me to invite him to go to Million Wine Mountain with us?"

After being seen through, Zhuo Sheng didn't hide his intentions and chuckled. "I just respect Senior Brother Rong Xiu a lot, and I want to see how good he is! However, I think he won't be very interested in such matters..."

He just said this casually and didn't actually want Chu Liuyue to think of ways to invite Rong Xiu.

Thinking of how someone kept reminding her not to play outside for too long, Chu Liuyue couldn't help but smile. *Rong Xiu isn't just uninterested in Million Wine Mountain. He even has opinions about me going to Million Wine Mountain. However, he just saw that I really wanted to go, so he didn't stop me further and let me have my way.*

"If Senior Brother Rong Xiu really came, I'm afraid we won't have a good time," said Chu Liuyue. *Many academy elders are very polite when they meet Rong Xiu, let alone students. If he goes, everyone present will probably have to restrain themselves. What could we talk about then??*

Luo Shishi couldn't help but laugh. "That's true! Many people in the academy respect Senior Brother Rong Xiu greatly, but if he was really in front of them... They might not even be able to say a full sentence."

Upon hearing this, Zhuo Sheng could only shrug his shoulders regretfully. "Then, let's just go ourselves!"

...

When they reached Million Wine Mountain, the sky had completely darkened. Only a sea of candlelights burned brightly in the middle.

The crowd bustled, and it was very lively.

The moment Chu Liuyue and the rest arrived, they attracted quite a few people's attention.

The surroundings fell silent. Even though Chu Liuyue had come quite a few times before, today was different. This was because she had entered the Qing Yun Ranking.

Tuan Zi had run out much earlier on and was squatting on Chu Liuyue's shoulders. Hearing the water by the side, its eyes glowed with temptation.

If there weren't so many people around, it would've rushed to the fountain without care long ago.

Tuan Zi looked up with much desire and kept using its furry head to nudge Chu Liuyue's cheeks. Its intentions were clear.

Chu Liuyue knew that Tuan Zi was impatient from all the waiting, so she walked forward.

Quite a few people automatically retreated to the two sides and made way for her. Even if being hundredth on the heavenly doctor list wasn't an elite achievement, everybody in the academy knew that Chu Yue—who had gotten this position—came to the academy less than two months ago.

The point was that he was only sixteen years old. One just had to think to know how bright his future would be!

Even if they didn't consider his backer, his talent and personality would unwittingly cause people to fear him.

When Chu Liuyue arrived at the fountain area, quite a few people were already standing there. There was even a familiar face amongst them—Liu Yintong.

But before Chu Liuyue could speak, Liu Yintong had already taken a step back and said, "Chu Yue, you're here? I've already helped you reserve this seat. Just use it!"

Chu Liuyue was dazed for once before she looked up and sized Liu Yintong up.

Liu Yintong was different from the previous few arrogant and unreasonable times. Her current gaze had a slight hint of urgency and nervousness. It was as if she were terrified she had done something wrong and that she faintly wanted to flatter her.

That's strange...? Chu Liuyue thought to herself secretly. Liu Yintong has a fiery temper and is always competitive. If not, she wouldn't have hated me just because her own red-tailed phoenix lost to Tuan Zi. Therefore, why did she suddenly become someone else now??

"Senior Sister Liu, the agreement between us has already been completed. I can do it myself in the future; I won't trouble you anymore," said Chu Liuyue.

The effects of the punishment had sunken in, and Liu Yintong had even offended quite a few people because of this. To Chu Liuyue, this incident was over. After all, her time was also very precious, and she didn't want to waste her time on such matters.

Chu Liuyue originally thought that the other party would look relieved when she heard this, but Liu Yintong's face actually flushed white unexpectedly.

Liu Yintong couldn't help but take a step forward as she anxiously and worriedly asked, "It's no trouble—no trouble! I made a mistake previously, so I should do all of this to apologize and make it up to you! Junior Brother Chu Yue, you mustn't stand on ceremony with me! Y-you aren't still angry with me, right?"

Chu Liuyue's expression became even weirder. This... What's going on? Liu Yintong still wants to continue? But this matter only seems to have cons and no pros for her, right? Wouldn't any normal person be happy that they are done with such a torture? Who would still miss it??

Chu Liuyue glanced at the other party calmly and realized that the latter's expression wasn't fake. She was even more surprised.

She smiled. "Senior Sister Liu, why would I be angry with you? This matter has already passed, right?"

She didn't like to waste her emotions on such matters.

Liu Yintong looked at the young man before her anxiously.

His appearance was clean and handsome, and his eyes were clear. His lips formed a nonchalant and gentle smile, causing his entire person to look harmless.

It seems like... he really didn't take it to heart...? Liu Yintong secretly heaved a sigh of relief and felt empty.

It had just been a mere two months, but their identities had completely changed. When she saw this young man for the first time, she never thought that she would bow down to him one day.

"That's good... That's good..." she muttered softly. Then, she couldn't help but say, "Junior Brother Chu Yue, I was too impulsive last time, so I did a lot of things to make you upset. I hope... you won't take it to heart. I promise I will never do it again! I just hope that you won't bear a grudge, Junior Brother Chu Yue!"

At that moment, Chu Liuyue wanted to ask if Liu Yintong was sick or if she was foolish.

Actually, it was normal that she wanted to totally resolve the previous grudges. After all, Chu Liuyue had a spot of her own in the academy.

With the few backers supporting her, she truly became someone that wasn't to be trifled with in the academy. Everyone feared her in some way or another.

However, Liu Yintong doesn't need to be this enthusiastic, right? This really doesn't seem like something she would do.?

"Senior Sister Liu, if you need anything, just say it directly." Chu Liuyue sized her up and said it.

Liu Yintong felt that her entire self had been seen. At this point, she shockingly realized that Chu Yue was even more intelligent and cunning than she had thought.

She clenched her fists tightly, and her nails dug into her palm. She hesitated for quite some time before saying, "N-nothing much. I just feel that I was overboard regarding those matters, so... If you need my help with anything in the future, just say so, Junior Brother Chu Yue!"

Before Chu Liuyue could reply, she suddenly heard a mockery from the side. "Junior Brother Chu Yue currently has Elder Wan Zheng and Senior Brother Rong Xiu protecting him. Why would he need your help? You think too highly of yourself."

Chapter 1237: Familiar Legendary Fiend!

The crowd quietened down.

Chu Liuyue turned around and saw that it was also a very familiar face—Liang Xiaoxiao.

She and Jiang Zhiyuan walked over together. She was the one who said the sentence earlier.

“If Senior Brother Rong Xiu didn’t think highly of Junior Brother Chu Zhong, I believe you’d still be thinking of how to teach him a lesson, right?”

“You!” Liu Yintong’s face flashed white and red. *?This Liang Xiaoxiao has never given me face.?*

Previously, they had already ended on bad terms. Now that they met again, they would naturally not be able to stand each other.

“Do you think you can absolve yourself of responsibility regarding what you previously did just because you said a few good words?” Liang Xiaoxiao covered her lips and laughed. “It seems a little too late for you to come over and apologize, right? Do you really think that everyone is stupid and that they can’t guess your true intentions? You just want to know Senior Brother Rong Xiu through Chu Yue, right?”

Liang Xiaoxiao lightly nudged Jiang Zhiyuan’s elbow. “Zhiyuan, you know Senior Brother Rong Xiu the best. Why don’t you say if he will fall for this trick?”

Jiang Zhiyuan lightly said, “He’s naturally a cold person, so he won’t take these things to heart. Besides...”

She paused and glanced at Liu Yintong as she said meaningfully, “Besides, he hates other people harassing him non-stop the most.”

Even if it were me, who had loved Rong Xiu for so long and could be considered the princess consort that the Sky-Cloud Empire’s clan leader had wanted from the very start, I didn’t dare to do anything out of character.?

A few years ago, I kept diligently cultivating but couldn’t even see Rong Xiu once. When I suddenly barged into the Sky-Cloud Empire the previous time, I was already lectured. Not to mention others!

Liu Yintong clenched her silver teeth tightly. “Don’t accuse me! I-I just feel that I let Junior Brother Chu Yue down previously, so—”

Before she could finish her sentence, Liang Xiaoxiao laughed in mockery. “Liu Yintong, do you believe your own words?”

Liu Yintong finally couldn’t carry on, and her face burned!

Chu Liuyue—who was standing at the side—blinked and suddenly realized. *?It was still because of Rong Xiu. I knew that Liu Yintong’s sudden attitude change was too weird...?*

Detecting her gaze, Liu Yintong felt even more humiliated as she hurriedly turned around to leave.

That back view looked as if she were running out of fear and humiliation.

Liang Xiaoxiao crossed her arms and laughed. “She’s really relentless! Senior Brother Rong Xiu has already made himself very clear, yet she still dares to harbor such filthy intentions! She really doesn’t know what’s good for her!”

Jiang Zhiyuan didn’t seem so agitated; she was calmer and glanced at Chu Liuyue. After a momentary pause, she suddenly walked toward the latter.

When she stood still, the both of them were only three steps away from each other. She gave Chu Liuyue a generous and magnanimous smile. "Junior Brother, thank you for what happened previously."

Jiang Zhiyuan was a natural beauty. She had a slim figure and intricate five features. Even though it was nighttime, she still looked very charming under the reflection of the surrounding candlelight.

Her smile looked even purer and gentler, causing quite a few people to be dazed. It was a pity that this move didn't have much effect on Chu Liuyue.

Chu Liuyue also smiled, and her black gem-like eyes were calm and unaffected. "Senior Sister Jiang, why did you thank me?"

Seeing that the young man seemed to be nonchalant toward her goodwill, Jiang Zhiyuan couldn't help but be dissatisfied. *?This Chu Yue... Why can't I seem to see through his thoughts...?*

But these thoughts only flashed across her mind once, and she didn't show any of her inner emotions on her face.

Her smile was unfaltering as she gently replied, "I'm naturally thanking you for helping Senior Brother Rong Xiu block that attack. Even though he's very strong and won't normally be in trouble if he meets with such matters... it's still good that you helped him, Junior Brother Chu Yue."

Her eyes looked worried, but she smiled even deeper, and her eyes were genuine. "I heard that he came back safely and isn't very injured. If it weren't because of your intelligence and you managed to pass through the academy barrier to help him in time, I'm afraid... the consequences would be unimaginable. Not to mention that you were even locked up at Fengmin Mountain for a month because of this. For him, Junior Brother Chu Yue, you have sacrificed greatly."

Chu Liuyue's gaze flickered, and she smiled. *?On the surface, Jiang Zhiyuan seems to be praising me. However, she is actually scolding me for not knowing what is good for me, breaking the academy rules, and barging through the barrier.?*

To many people, this wasn't a very glorious event. It was a pity these words weren't harmful to Chu Liuyue. This was because she didn't even care about how others thought or talked about her, and it was pretty nice to stay at Fengmin Mountain.

Hence, after this sentence, Chu Liuyue wasn't angry or awkward as she smiled even more brightly. She took advantage of the situation and said, "Senior Sister Jiang, you're too kind. I was just doing a little something within my means. I really don't dare to take all the credit for myself. Besides, Senior Brother Rong Xiu has already thanked me personally. I think... you don't have to make this unnecessary move, right?"

Jiang Zhiyuan's expression immediately became incredulous.

Chu Liuyue didn't seem to notice it as she continued, "I helped Senior Brother Rong Xiu, not you, Senior Sister Jiang. I think you should keep your gratitude. If not, it'll be bad if other people misunderstand you."

Jiang Zhiyuan's blood boiled! *?Is Chu Yue slapping my face in public?!?*

She forced a smile and said, "His Grace and I have grown up together since young, and we have a deep relationship. We don't have to separate it so clearly..."

To save her face, Jiang Zhiyuan had even changed how she addressed Rong Xiu.

"Oh?" Chu Liuyue interrupted her and said in a seemingly smiling manner, "Listening to you... Senior Sister Jiang, I almost thought that Senior Brother Rong Xiu's Princess Consort was you."

Jiang Zhiyuan couldn't maintain her smile any longer! She finally could tell that this Chu Yue had no intentions of talking to her peacefully!*?He is young, but he has a sharp tongue!?*

The atmosphere was cold and awkward.

Everyone could tell the mocking intent in Chu Liuyue's sentence.*?Yeah! At the end of the day, Jiang Zhiyuan has no special relationship with Rong Xiu. How could she have the right to thank him? Strictly speaking, isn't Chu Yue the closest one to Rong Xiu in the entire academy? Her previous sentence was laughable!?*

Jiang Zhiyuan took a deep breath in. In actual fact, she already disliked Chu Yue greatly from the first time she saw him. She wasn't sure where this feeling came from, but she couldn't get rid of it.

Seeing Tuan Zi squatting on Chu Liuyue's shoulder, she squinted her eyes and suddenly said, "Junior Brother Chu Yue, you legendary fiend seems rather familiar..."

I remember clearly that Chu Liuyue also had an identical red-tailed phoenix!? She suddenly thought of something, averted her gaze, and stared at Chu Liuyue closely!

Chapter 1238: Interception

"My red-tailed phoenix?" With a calm smile, Chu Liuyue turned to look at Tuan Zi and said, "It's not surprising that you find it familiar. After all, Liu Yintong has one too."

Jiang Zhiyuan frowned.*?No, that can't be right. That definitely isn't the reason why I find it familiar! I've seen Liu Yintong's red-tailed phoenix before. Although they're of the same race, hers looks different from this one because of the difference in bloodline purity. I can tell that they're different! On the contrary, Chu Yue's red-tailed phoenix looks a lot like the one I've fought with! I didn't notice it before, but this one seems similar to that one now that I'm taking a closer look at it!*

Once this thought emerged in her head, it stayed stuck in her mind.

"No, yours is different." She stared into Chu Liuyue's eyes with scrutiny.*?Something's not right. Given Rong Xiu's character, there's no way he'd value someone so much for no rhyme or reason, much less let them stay with him. Not unless... he's known that person for a long time and is very close with them!*

Jiang Zhiyuan carefully studied the youth in front of her and tried to find hints of panic and fluster within him, but it was, unfortunately, to no avail.

"My fiend can't be compared to, of course." Despite being in the face of Jiang Zhiyuan's interrogation, Chu Liuyue smirked. She sounded confident and calm, and her voice even carried hints of pride in it. It was hard for anyone to be suspicious of her. "You may take a longer look at it if you want. Its color is very beautiful, which is hard to see elsewhere."

Jiang Zhiyuan didn't believe Chu Liuyue and continued staring at the red-tailed phoenix.

Perched on Chu Liuyue's shoulder, Tuan Zi looked like a ball of flame from afar with its red and feathery figure. When it sensed Jiang Zhiyuan's gaze, it lifted its head to look at her before lazily burying its head into its wing again.

It was then that Jiang Zhiyuan realized that this red-tailed phoenix was a little different from the one she remembered. The color of its feathers and eyes seem a little darker. *?Am I... really mistaken?*

Chu Liuyue then lightly patted Tuan Zi. "Go on!"

Tuan Zi looked up with sparkling eyes and rubbed its head against Chu Liuyue's face before swiftly flying over to the fountain. As there were many people around, it restrained itself a little and landed on the stone next to the fountain. As the water gushed out of the fountain, it repeatedly poked its small head into the water as if it were about to fall inside.

As Chu Liuyue had been bringing Tuan Zi to the fountain whenever she was free, many people were used to this scene. Hence, Tuan Zi didn't attract too much attention.

Chu Liuyue looked back at Jiang Zhiyuan, who appeared to be deep in thought. "Is there anything else you want to say? If not, my friends and I will be heading over to the fountain as well."

Jiang Zhiyuan hesitated. Even though she wanted to pull Chu Yue to the side and question him, she eventually held herself back and turned to leave instead. "Xiaoxiao, let's go."

Liang Xiaoxiao hurriedly stopped her as she asked in surprise, "Eh? Why are we suddenly leaving? We've only just arrived!"

Jiang Zhiyuan frowned. "I feel a bit sick all of a sudden, so I want to go back and rest."

Liang Xiaoxiao found this strange. *?She feels sick? But she was fine just now. Is she... upset over what Chu Yue said?*

That must be it. Liang Xiaoxiao said, "Alright, I'll go back with you."

Jiang Zhiyuan shook her head though. "It's fine. Just stay here; I don't want to spoil your fun."

Great! It'd be so boring if I went back just like that! Liang Xiaoxiao—who wasn't too keen on leaving in the first place because this was the only day of each month that they could properly relax—asked, "Will you be okay on your own?"

Jiang Zhiyuan forced a smile. "Don't worry. I can take care of myself."

Thereafter, she politely rejected the requests of a few young men to take her back and left on her own.

Liang Xiaoxiao shrugged her shoulders as she watched Jiang Zhiyuan leave. Even though she was best friends with Jiang Zhiyuan and had always gotten along well with her, the latter kept a lot of things from her. Besides, she was no fool, so she could naturally see that something was up.

It was just that she saw no need to question her about it. People of their status knew best the things they should and shouldn't say. Even though she wasn't super talented, she was at least capable of reading faces.

While Liang Xiaoxiao retracted her gaze and went to join the others to have fun, Chu Liuyue was reminded of what happened at Million Wine Mountain when she saw Tuan Zi stick its head into the water. *There's been a noticeable change in Tuan Zi, even though we've been coming here only in the evening. I wonder what will happen if Tuan Zi stays here for an entire month to awaken its bloodline power completely.*

...

After leaving Million Wine Mountain, Jiang Zhiyuan quickly went back to her residence and carefully locked the door before sitting in front of the study table. After some contemplation, she spread out a piece of paper and took a brush to start writing a letter.

It didn't take long before she finished writing the letter. She then carefully folded it and stuffed it into the body of a bronze bird she had prepared.

Once she injected some force into the bronze bird, it started flapping its wings to fly outside. It soon disappeared into the night sky.

Jiang Zhiyuan's hands were clasped together in front of her, and her eyebrows were tightly knitted together. She was very suspicious of Chu Yue's identity, not to mention that Rong Xiu's attitude toward him was also highly suspicious.

After much thinking, she had decided to write a letter to her father in Fairy Water Mound and ask him to look into this matter. She wanted to expose Chu Yue right away even if there was the slightest bit of a problem with him.

...

It was all quiet in Jiuheng Peak.

With a ripple of the air, a tall, black figure suddenly appeared in front of the house. It was Rong Xiu, and it appeared that he had just returned from somewhere.

He was about to walk forward when he suddenly froze and looked up. All that could be seen in this dark night was the undulating mountains, but his dark eyes suddenly became murderous.

Whoosh!

With a wave of his hand, a dark force flew out and soon returned with a bronze bird.

Rong Xiu narrowed his eyes at the sight of the bronze bird.

Boom!

A soft blast was heard, and a letter dropped out of the bronze bird as it shattered into pieces.

Rong Xiu lifted his hand and caught the letter, which he opened and took a glance at. He then curled his fingers and crushed the letter into powder before taking out a white hankie to clean his hand.

A golden flame lit up and then burned the hankie into ashes.

It was only then that he turned around and entered the house.

Chapter 1239: Weapon Soul

As time gradually passed, people slowly started leaving Million Wine Mountain.

Luo Yanming looked up at the sky. "I have to go. Master gave a few Xuan formations today and said that there would be a test coming up in a few days. I don't have much time until then."

Luo Shishi and the others expressed their understanding. Even though Elder Hua Feng was amiable, he was very strict when it came to learning. Besides, Luo Yanming was inevitably under more pressure since he had an outstanding older brother, Luo Yanlin, to be compared with.

"Oh right! Chu Yue, let's exchange pointers with each other when you're free," Luo Yanming said earnestly to Chu Liuyue.

Chu Liuyue raised her eyebrows in surprise, but she later realized that this request had probably come about because Elder Hua Feng had said something about her to him. She laughed and nodded. "Sure."

Actually, there had been all sorts of rumors about how Chu Yue had managed to pass through the academy's barrier. Even though they weren't confirmed, one thing for sure was that Chu Yue was also a Xuan master.

Luo Yanming had heard Elder Hua Feng talk a lot about this matter in the past few days. Although the latter didn't go into details, it wasn't hard to tell that Chu Yue had to be extraordinarily talented in the Xuan master path. It was out of curiosity that he had proposed to exchange pointers with Chu Yue.

A wide grin appeared on Luo Yanming's face when he saw how readily Chu Yue had agreed to it. "That's a promise!"

He soon left after that.

Zhuo Sheng—who couldn't resist looking back and studying Chu Liuyue—laughed in surprise. "Chu Yue, you must be pretty talented for Yanming to be so competitive! You must be quite well-versed in the Xuan master path, right?"

Chu Liuyue stroked her chin. "Not exactly, but... I'm good enough because I have a good master."

Zhuo Sheng and Luo Shishi thought that she was referring to Rong Xiu, so they didn't ask further questions.

After some time, there were fewer people left on the mountain.

"Should we get going now?" Luo Shishi specifically looked at Chu Liuyue when she asked this question. She didn't want history to repeat itself. There was no telling what punishment they—Chu Yue, in particular—would receive this time if the same thing happened again.

Knowing what she was worried about, Chu Liuyue let out a helpless laugh as she raised her hands. "Okay, okay. Let's get going."

Luo Shishi couldn't help chuckling, and she felt her heart thump hard when she saw Chu Yue's black eyes. Her face flushed, and she quickly looked down.

Chu Liuyue didn't notice this, for she was turning back to call out to her fiend. "Let's go, Tuan Zi!"

Tuan Zi wobbly lifted its head from the water. Despite its reluctance, it forced itself to fly back to the group. *?Sigh... When can I enjoy myself again?*

It then closed its eyes and started digesting the power it had absorbed today.

Just as the group was planning to leave, Chu Liuyue suddenly felt a strange and unfamiliar fluctuation within her body. She stopped to feel it carefully.

Sure enough, she felt another fluctuation again.

“The Long Yuan Sword’s sword soul has almost completely fused with this sword. There’s only one last step before it awakens!” Shangguan Jing suddenly rang in her ears.

Chu Liuyue was confused. “What do you mean by that, Ancestor?”

Shangguan Jing explained, “This is a very strong Yuan instrument. Although it has acknowledged you as its owner, it’s not completely yours yet. It’ll only be truly under your control once it’s undergone the lightning tribulation, merged with the sword soul, and forged the sword soul into a weapon soul!”

“So you’re saying that if I want to use this sword, I have to... call out the lightning and refine it?” Chu Liuyue was flabbergasted. *?But I can’t possibly do that at my current level!*

Shangguan Jing, who seemed to know what she was thinking, assured her, “Don’t worry. Just like the last time, I’ll help you to draw the lightning bolts out. You’ll just need to control the sword and refine the weapon soul! As the Long Yuan Sword’s owner, the sword soul only listens to you, so this is something... that only you can do!”

“But...” Chu Liuyue felt a little hesitant. *?Drawing the lightning bolts out will definitely attract the elders’ attention, and this sword used to belong to an ancestor of the school...*

“Once the sword soul becomes a weapon soul, I’ll be able to come out,” said Shangguan Jing heavily.

“What? Are you saying that you can come out of it?” Chu Liuyue was shocked. *?Isn’t this just a remnant of his consciousness? By right, he should’ve dissipated when the Long Yuan Sword acknowledged me as its owner, but he didn’t. After that, he’s been staying inside the Long Yuan Sword, almost becoming one with it. It has never crossed my mind that there’d be a chance for him to come out!*

Shangguan Jing sighed. “I never thought this day would come, but the Long Yuan Sword’s sword soul has been getting stronger by the day ever since it acknowledged you as its owner. Its growth is even more astonishing now that it’s fused with the supreme Yuan instrument. Perhaps the moment it becomes a weapon soul is also the moment I become free!”

A thought suddenly struck Chu Liuyue’s mind just then, making her heart race in excitement. With much disbelief and difficulty, she asked, “Ancestor... Are you... still alive?!”

Chapter 1240: Notes

By ‘alive,’ she was, of course, referring to the real Shangguan Jing, not the remnant of his consciousness. In fact, he couldn’t be deemed as a consciousness if he was able to leave the Yuan instrument and live independently—he was a proper piece of soul!

Chu Liuyue's question made Shangguan Jing fall into silence. It was a while later that he finally let out a long sigh and said, "I... don't know..."

His voice sounded a lot deeper as if he had aged quite a bit at that moment. It contained deep-seated emotions like loneliness, regret, and a hint of helplessness.

It was the first time Chu Liuyue had heard such a melancholic tone from him. *?He really... doesn't seem to know.*

"Having spent a millennium in the Tianling God Realm alone, I've forgotten a lot of things, including... my death."

Chu Liuyue's heart skipped a beat.

The Tianling Dynasty's secret records only stated that Shangguan Jing's failed attempt at breaking through had led to his demise. After his death, the Long Yuan Sword was left in the half God Realm that he had formed with much difficulty, becoming a divine object of support. He, on the other hand, naturally dissipated.

Chu Liuyue had never once questioned this matter because what she had previously seen matched the entries. Even though she previously did find it weird that his consciousness remained intact after the Long Yuan Sword acknowledged her as its master, she didn't think too much about it at the time. It wasn't until now that she realized that Shangguan Jing was capable of leaving the Yuan instrument and that he had actually forgotten how he had died. *?How could an expert like him possibly forget what had happened in the last moments of his life? There's something fishy about this!*

"Chu Yue. Chu Yue?" Luo Shishi and Zhuo Sheng only realized that Chu Liuyue wasn't keeping up with them after walking for some distance. When they looked back, they found her standing at the spot and seemingly in a daze.

Zhuo Sheng, thus, raised his voice a little louder. "Snap out of it, Chu Yue! We have to get going!"

It was only that Chu Liuyue returned to her senses and proceeded to walk toward them. "Coming."

"What's wrong?" Zhuo Sheng looked at her strangely. *?What's gotten into him? He was fine just moments ago.*

"Chu Yue, are you okay?" Luo Shishi furrowed her eyebrows in concern. *?Although he appears somewhat calm, it's rare to see him being so absent-minded.*

Chu Liuyue closed her eyes and calmed herself down. "Don't worry; I'm fine. I was just thinking about something and got lost in thoughts."

"What is it that got you so distracted?" Zhuo Sheng asked curiously.

Chu Liuyue smiled. "It's nothing important. It's not even worth mentioning."

It was clear that she didn't want to tell them.

Zhuo Sheng—who wasn't the nosy type of person in the first place—didn't ask her anymore after seeing that she didn't want to talk about it. "You can always go back and think about it! We should hurry along now! We'll be doomed if we get out of here late!"

Luo Shishi frowned slightly, but she didn't ask any questions either.

The trio then continued making their way down the mountain.

...

This time, they managed to make it out of the mountain in time. They were already at the foot of the mountain and out of the barrier when they heard the vague sound of wind and thunder coming from the top.

Chu Liuyue looked back. Although she couldn't see anything with the barrier in place, she could seemingly sense the colorful lightning bolts falling from the sky. *It's a shame that we couldn't stay...*

She then retracted her gaze and said goodbye to the other two before going back to their own respective lodging.

...

It was already late at night by the time Chu Liuyue returned to Jiuheng Peak, but Rong Xiu's bedroom light was still on. It just so happened that he walked out of his room at that moment. "Oh, you're back."

Chu Liuyue felt comforted to see that, although she didn't know if it was because Rong Xiu was patiently waiting for her. For a second, she could clearly feel a sweet and gentle warmth spreading from her heart to the rest of her body.

She nodded. "Have you been waiting for me?"

Rong Xiu smiled. "Not exactly. I happened to be looking at a rather interesting item."

That got Chu Liuyue's attention, for that item must be something extraordinary for it to be of interest to Rong Xiu. "What is it?"

Rong Xiu walked over to her and grabbed her hand. "Come with me."

As his warm and broad palm enveloped her somewhat cold hand, his familiar scent made her increasingly at ease.

She obediently followed Rong Xiu to his room and was led to the study table, where a book was placed on it. By the looks of its yellowish pages, she could tell that the book was quite old.

"Is this the interesting item you were talking about?" Chu Liuyue looked at Rong Xiu with puzzlement.

Rong Xiu, however, lifted his chin and smiled. "Take a look at it."

It was only then that Chu Liuyue picked the book up. It didn't take long before she realized with a start that this thin and worn-looking book was very heavy. If it weren't because she was physically strong enough, she might not have been able to pick it up.

"What is this..." Her voice trailed off when she saw the book's cover.

On it was an exquisite drawing of a sword—it looked ancient, dignified, and majestic, and the lines appeared powerful. Just one look at the drawing was almost enough to take one’s breath away, but all that wasn’t important because the sword in question was the Yuan instrument she had obtained not long ago.