

The Doctor 251

Chapter 251: Method

Chu Liuyue actually successfully solved the last Xuan formation at the very last minute, becoming the only person who succeeded in the Xuan Master competition!

As they stared at the five dazzling stars, the crowd had different reactions.

Some were shocked, some found it weird, and some were happy. Others were frustrated. However, all of them felt that Chu Liuyue's actions were unbelievable.

One had to know that she only used two hours—from rushing over and joining the competition that was halfway until the end—to solve the five Xuan formations.

Even the people who had doubted her before could not help but admit that Chu Liuyue's Xuan Master talent was very rare.

Chu Liuyue stood up and politely smiled at Su Bai. "Thanks for letting me win."

How did I let her win? Su Bai laughed bitterly. "I admit defeat. I truly lost to you."

Su Bai was very honest as he took a deep breath and cupped his fists toward Chu Liuyue. In actual fact, he had already lost when Chu Liuyue had protected her chessboard completely.

Chu Liuyue was even stronger than he thought.

The crowd dazedly stared at the scene.

Sun Zhongyan was the first to recover his senses, and his heart beat wildly. "I hereby announce the top Xuan Master for this year's Qing Jiao Competition is... Tian Lu Academy's Chu Liuyue!"

The crowd had already heard a similar sentence the day before. However, nobody would've ever expected Chu Liuyue to take first place in the Xuan Master competition after becoming the top warrior yesterday.

"This sick pervert really doesn't allow anyone to live," exclaimed Si Yang. He had a feeling that the distance between Chu Liuyue and him would only grow bigger.

Not only for him but the other people here as well.

This type of person was born to be the envy of others.

Mu Hongyu and the rest heaved a sigh of relief as they cheered excitedly.

Up till now, Tian Lu Academy had claimed first place in two categories of the Qing Jiao Competition.

The key point was that it was Chu Liuyue who took first place both times. She had clearly put on a solo show during this year's Qing Jiao Competition.

On the other hand, the two other academies had a stiff atmosphere.

When Sheng Yiming heard Sun Zhongyan's announcement, he finally could not hold it in any longer. The blood rushed up to his head, his eyes rolled up, and he fainted over.

Xi Wanwan hurriedly helped him up. "Yiming! Yiming, are you okay?!"

Fu Yunshan looked at him in disappointment and frustration. "He just fainted because he couldn't take the impact. Bring him back and let him rest."

It's fine that Sheng Yiming lost in front of everyone today, but it's too humiliating for him to end up in this state. Sheng Yiming really has to change this character of his.

"Oh, oh! Okay! I'll bring him back right away!" Xi Wanwan was very worried about Sheng Yiming, so she did not notice Fu Yunshan's displeasure.

She waved toward the people beside her and got them to help her bring Sheng Yiming away.

But Xi Wanwan heard a familiar voice just as she turned around.

"Please hold on..."

Xi Wanwan's heart skipped a beat as she instinctively stopped and turned around.

Chu Liuyue crossed her arms, smiling at Xi Wanwan.

However, Chu Liuyue's smile made Xi Wanwan uneasy.

She guiltily avoided Chu Liuyue's gaze and asked uncertainly, "Are you calling me?"

Chu Liuyue smiled and nodded. "Of course. There are some things that you need to explain."

Xi Wanwan was instantly anxious. Is Chu Liuyue going to expose me in public?

No! Nobody noticed my actions when I did it quietly, and that thing doesn't even leave behind any traces. Even a fifth-grade Xuan Master like Sun Zhongyan can't find anything wrong with it! Didn't Si Ting also surrender?

Xi Wanwan felt assured as she forced a smile. "Oh? May I know what this is about? If it's unimportant, why don't we talk about it later? Yiming is still unconscious, and we have to send him back quickly—"

"It's not anything major. It'll be over in a jiffy," said Chu Liuyue before she suddenly turned to Si Ting. "Si Ting, why did your chessboard suddenly collapse when you were doing well during the competition earlier?"

Si Ting was dazed. He did not expect Chu Liuyue to do this.

He pressed his lips against each other tightly. If I directly accuse Xi Wanwan without evidence, it won't be of any use. I might even drag Chu Liuyue down.

Upon hearing Chu Liuyue call Si Ting's name, Rong Xiu's thin lips curved up slightly in a seemingly smiling manner. This little fellow still wants to help others...

Yan Qing suddenly felt a chill travel down his spine as his master's aura suddenly became icy cold. He immediately minded himself and tried hard to minimize his existence.

But Chu Liuyue had already picked up the chessboard Si Ting had used. "I think there's something wrong with this thing."

A thought popped up in Si Ting's mind. Can Chu Liuyue produce evidence?

He walked forward and spoke with a low voice. "My chessboard collapsed just now because Xi Wanwan did something to it."

"Si Ting! You can't talk nonsense!" Xi Wanwan screamed an octave higher as if she were a cat whose tail had been stepped on. "So many people here have been watching me. How can I possibly do such a thing?"

"Yeah. There are so many eyes watching you, yet you dared to do such a thing. You're incredibly calm, and even I admire you," praised Chu Liuyue genuinely. It looked like she would even clap for Xi Wanwan if she wasn't holding the chessboard in her hands.

Xi Wanwan's face immediately turned red. When she saw Chu Liuyue's calm composure, her assured heart started to waver. P-perhaps Chu Liuyue really has a way?

"Liuyue, what did you discover?" asked Sun Zhongyan with knitted brows.

He also knew that Si Ting was eliminated in a strange manner, and he did suspect Xi Wanwan. However, he did not discover any clues. Thus, he did not pursue the matter.

He only planned to ask Si Ting in detail after everything ended. He did not expect Chu Liuyue to make the first move.

"Nothing much. I just unintentionally found something extra on the chessboard," said Chu Liuyue as she knocked on the chessboard.

Xi Wanwan stared at it closely. There is nothing on the smooth and clean chessboard. Chu Liuyue is clearly lying to me!

Xi Wanwan sneered and became even more confident. "Chu Liuyue, you said that there's something extra there. May I know what it is? I can't seem to find anything."

The others were also confused since they did not know what Chu Liuyue was referring to.

Chu Liuyue smiled cryptically. "You will find out soon."

Chu Liuyue then waved her fingers, and a silver light suddenly appeared. Her fingers gently swiped across the chessboard, and a faint mark was left on the chessboard.

Her fingers lightly moved as if she was hooking something.

The originally dull chessboard suddenly lit up with a pattern.

The lights intersected in a bright and clear manner.

Sun Zhongyan widened his eyes slightly. That's... That's actually the last Xuan formation on the chessboard! Chu Liuyue actually restored the state of Si Ting's last Xuan formation?!

Chapter 252: Favor

Not only Sun Zhongyan, but all the Xuan Masters present were stunned. All of them knew how complicated the last Xuan formation was. It would be hard for them to draw even a tiny part of it out, let alone reproduce the entire formation.

Also, Chu Liuyue had restored the formation from the initial state to the final state. This was much harder than memorizing a book backward. However, Chu Liuyue seemed to remember it very clearly as she smoothly made every move.

“Even if she solved that Xuan formation, she couldn’t have completely memorized it...”

Even the Tian Lu Academy’s people could not help but discuss softly.

“Did she really see that Xuan formation before?”

It seemed like this was the only explanation of how she could solve the Xuan formation so quickly and even reproduce it entirely.

Dongfang Qing coughed. “Um... Don’t you know that this girl has a photographic memory?”

Even though Chu Liuyue had always been low-key during her meditation class, he had observed Chu Liuyue a few times. He had long realized that none of the Xuan formations seemed to pose a problem for Chu Liuyue. As long as she wanted to, not only could she quickly solve a Xuan formation, but she could also draw the entire Xuan formation’s pattern out.

It was another matter if she could erect advanced Xuan formations as she couldn’t produce such strong and intense energy at her current cultivation stage. However, Chu Liuyue was very clear about how to execute every single force.

Dongfang Qing remembered very clearly that Chu Liuyue seemed to be bored in class on time, so she repeatedly played with the chessboard in her seat.

At that time, he casually glanced at Chu Liuyue and noticed that she was drawing out Xuan formations. Since then, he knew that this girl was not simple. This was also why he wanted Chu Liuyue to participate in this Xuan Master competition no matter what.

“Really?” Even Sun Zhongyan was in disbelief. He usually didn’t interact with Chu Liuyue. Except during the mid-semester assessment, he had not seen Chu Liuyue’s skill with Xuan formations. Now, it seems like she’s really...

“But what does she want to do?”

Very soon, everyone understood the reason for Chu Liuyue’s actions.

After Chu Liuyue reproduced that Xuan formation line by line, she suddenly stopped. “If I didn’t guess wrongly, you stopped here previously, right?”

She showed the chessboard to Si Ting.

Si Ting was very shocked and nodded. “That’s right.”

Chu Liuyue’s lips curved up into a smile as she looked at Xi Wanwan.

When Xi Wanwan saw that Chu Liuyue had reproduced the chessboard, her back broke out into a cold sweat.

With a wave of Chu Liuyue's fingers, a faint line was picked out from the chessboard.

"Xi Wanwan, do you recognize what this is?"

The thing in Chu Liuyue's hand was only an inch long. Even though it was transparent, it reflected light under the sun, so the crowd could still see it.

"That's..." Sun Zhongyan's expression changed. "Silver Soul Hook?"

When they heard the three words 'Silver Soul Hook,' many people looked stunned.

Rumors had it that this item was made from rare snow silk, which was soft and transparent. However, it was very hard and even sharper than swords.

But the major disadvantage of this item was that it could only be used once.

Once one used this Silver Soul Hook, it would become very fragile and would essentially be useless. From another perspective, this was also its advantage.

It was very suitable to be a secret weapon at least. It could cause great damage, but it would not leave any traces behind. After a while, it would completely disappear without a trace.

However, snow silk was very precious. An average person might not even have the chance to see it, let alone use it.

"All these chessboards were properly checked before they were brought to the competition, so they definitely wouldn't be mixed with anything else." Sun Zhongyan immediately realized something and stared at Xi Wanwan. In a stern voice, he said, "Xi Wanwan! How do you explain this?"

Xi Wanwan had long frozen when she saw Chu Liuyue pick up that Silver Soul Hook.

Her entire body was cold, and her mind kept whirring. She almost could not hear what Sun Zhongyan said. Her face was as white as a sheet as she instinctively denied it. "I-I don't know! It's not me!"

Chu Liuyue gently touched the Silver Soul Hook in her hands and lazily said, "It's okay if you don't admit it. People who touched this Silver Soul Hook will have a faint silver mark left on their hands. Do you dare to show us your hands?"

Xi Wanwan's body trembled as she unwittingly hid her hands. How would I know? How was I supposed to know?

"I didn't! I didn't!" Xi Wanwan still denied it, but everyone could tell what was going on from her guilty look.

Fu Yunshan also looked terrible. "If you're clean, you won't be afraid of being checked. Wanwan, you just need to stretch your hands out and prove your innocence."

Xi Wanwan was very anxious as tears welled up in her eyes, but she refused to stretch out her hands. "Director, please believe me. I really didn't do it..."

After seeing her behavior, what else did Fu Yunshan not understand? Xi Wanwan definitely used that Silver Soul Hook in secret!

“When one is solving Xuan formations on the chessboard, every single force must be used adequately. Once one makes the wrong move, the entire chessboard will fall apart. If a Silver Soul Hook lands on the chessboard at this moment... The consequences are unimaginable.”

Chu Liuyue shook her head slightly emotionally. “Such a small thing is pretty valuable. It’s a pity that it’s gone so easily... Xi Wanwan, do you still want to deny this?”

Xi Wanwan could not utter a single word as she collapsed on the floor. She dazedly stared at Chu Liuyue and could not figure out how the Silver Soul Hook was discovered. She also didn’t know how Chu Liuyue picked it up.

She only knew that her future was completely ruined now that the matter had been exposed.

Fu Yunshan was also furious. He hollered, “Why did you do this? You have truly humiliated my Nan Feng Academy!”

To think that I was still putting in a good word for Xi Wanwan earlier. It’s now like a resounding slap that hit my face.

Xi Wanwan’s tears kept dropping down profusely. “It’s all my fault. Director, please punish me! Just don’t implicate others...”

Sun Zhongyan said loudly, “Brother Yunshan, you should give everyone an explanation for this.”

Fu Yunshan had never been this humiliated. At this moment, he really wanted to slap Xi Wanwan to death. He took a deep breath in and said every single word clearly. “Xi Wanwan has ill intentions and despicable methods. From today onwards, she’s expelled from Nan Feng Academy, and she will never be recruited again!”

As if lightning had struck her, Xi Wanwan fainted due to the strong impact.

Fu Yunshan did not even take another look at her as he suppressed his anger and cupped his fists toward Sun Zhongyan and Cheng Han. “It’s all because I didn’t discipline her well enough. I’m sorry.”

Since Fu Yunshan had already stated his stance, others naturally could not say anything more.

Chu Liuyue gently flicked her fingers, and that useless Silver Soul Hook instantly became powder. She then placed the chessboard down and walked out of the competition venue.

Si Ting wanted to step up and thank her, but he heard a low laugh come from beside him.

“Ms. Liuyue, now that you’re done helping others, can you do me a favor?”

Chapter 253: Sour

Si Ting looked over.

Seventh Prince, Rong Xiu. The distinguished Prince Li; also... the person she likes.

Si Ting stopped in his tracks and did not move forward. Even if it were him, he had to admit that Prince Li—who had not been in the Imperial City for long—was very handsome.

Si Yang could not help but nudge Si Ting with his elbow and muttered, “He’s just a bottle of medicine. I really don’t know what the sick pervert likes about him... His face?!”

What’s the point of a man being so good-looking?

When Si Yang first heard that Chu Liuyue liked Prince Li, he was very unconvinced.

Compared to my Big Brother, other than Big Brother’s status being a little low, he surpasses Prince Li in all other aspects. Besides, Big Brother is going to be the Si family’s head in the future. Seriously speaking, there’s not much difference between the two of them. I really don’t know what Chu Liuyue is thinking!

Si Ting’s gaze looked light as he glanced at Si Yang.

Si Yang knew that he had said something wrong, so he hurriedly kept quiet. However, Si Yang did not know that Si Ting was thinking the exact opposite of Si Yang.

Prince Li was known to be weak and did not have actual power. He also did not have much talent in cultivating. However, she still liked him even so.

No matter how good other people were, what’s the point if one did not like them?

Besides... Si Ting always felt that this person was not very similar to the rumors. He could detect a faint suppression coming from Rong Xiu. It definitely was not an aura that a person—who was sick all year long—would have.

...

Chu Liuyue did not detect the interaction between the two as she walked to Rong Xiu.

“Rong—Your Highness, why are you here? What do you need my help with?”

Rong Xiu smiled. “It’s just a small matter, but I have to trouble Ms. Liuyue to follow me.”

Chu Liuyue silently cursed to herself. We’ve just separated for less than two hours. What is so urgent that he had to come over and ask me for help? He clearly did this on purpose.

However, when she saw Rong Xiu’s gentle gaze, her heart softened as she felt a faint sourness.

Her lips curved up slightly. “Since Your Highness asked me, of course, I have to help you.”

Satisfaction flashed across Rong Xiu’s eyes. If it weren’t for the others present, he would have already carried her away.

Cen Hu scratched his head as he looked at the two people who were about to leave. He could not help but ask, “Liuyue, are you leaving just like that? Aren’t you going to celebrate with us?”

They already wanted to celebrate with Chu Liuyue when she took first place in the warrior competition yesterday, but they postponed it as she had her Xuan Master competition today.

Now that she took first place in the Xuan Master competition, they had to hold a celebration for her!

“Didn’t you say that we’ll go to Phoenix Rest—Aiyo!” Cen Hu held the back of his head and looked at Mu Hongyu wrongfully. Why did she hit me?

Mu Hongyu flashed a smile at him. “His Highness needs Liuyue’s help, so how can we hold her back? We still can celebrate for Liuyue after she comes back!”

Cen Hu did not understand why, but his survival instincts kicked in as he sensed Mu Hongyu’s hidden murderous intent.

“Y-yes! Go ahead; we’ll wait for you!”

Mu Hongyu’s almond-shaped eyes sparkled as she looked at Chu Liuyue and Rong Xiu. She seemed to have guessed where Liuyue went the day before.

Chu Liuyue trembled from Mu Hongyu’s gaze. “Then... I’ll come back as soon as I can.”

She then left with Rong Xiu, together with Yan Qing following closely behind.

“I saw something at Zhen Bao Pavilion, and I heard that it is related to Ms. Liuyue...” said Rong Xiu nonchalantly.

The people who heard it revealed looks of understanding.

So it’s related to Zhen Bao Pavilion! No wonder!

Everyone in the Imperial City knew that Chu Liuyue had an extraordinary relationship with Zhen Bao Pavilion.

Even the Crown Prince, Rong Jin, and Fourth Princess Rong Zhen could not get any good deals at Zhen Bao Pavilion. Hence, it seemed wise for Prince Li to be so meticulous and directly ask Chu Liuyue for help.

However, Situ Xingchen almost crushed her silver teeth as she controlled her feelings with much effort.

The others did not feel like it was anything much, but the duo’s every move was absolutely scorching to her.

Help? I’m afraid that’s just an excuse!

Situ Xingchen never knew that the cold Rong Xiu could actually look at a woman with such a gaze—gentle, loving, and doting.

If this doesn’t prove anything between the two of them... Situ Xingchen’s nose felt sour. She thought that even if Rong Xiu did not harbor any romantic thoughts for her, he would still treat her as his junior. After all, they had spent so much time at Mingyue Tianshan together.

However, everything that happened today woke her up from her beautiful dream.

He doesn’t even remember who I am! That gaze was so cold and nonchalant as if he was looking at a stranger!

“Mentor, I’m not feeling very well. I’ll head back first,” said Situ Xingchen softly.

Cheng Han sighed. “Okay. Tomorrow is the heavenly doctor competition. You should get some rest and prepare for it.”

Situ Xingchen acknowledged him and turned around to leave.

...

Chu Liuyue followed Rong Xiu out and saw a familiar horse carriage. Did Rong Xiu come in a horse carriage? That’s true. To everyone in the Imperial City, he’s still the Prince Li that can’t even stand the wind.

Yan Qing went forward and got on the horse.

Rong Xiu walked over and personally lifted the curtain. However, Chu Liuyue did not move as her gaze slowly swept past Rong Xiu and lingered on his sleeves.

Then, she smiled seemingly. “The pattern on Your Highness’s clothes is really special. Is it the only one in this world?”

Rong Xiu squinted its eyes slightly. How sour.

Chapter 254: Half-Unbuttoned Shirt

“I drew this pattern myself and specifically got a master to embroider it on my clothes, so it’s considered unique.”

Looking amused, Chu Liuyue said, “Oh.”

She had heard the conversation between Rong Xiu and Situ Xingchen, so she knew that nothing was going on between the both of them.

Situ Xingchen had a crush on Rong Xiu, so there was a high chance that she secretly embroidered the pattern on her clothes.

But Chu Liuyue still felt uncomfortable when she thought about this.

Rong Xiu’s lips curved up into a delighted smile. “Get on the horse carriage first. We’ll talk on the way.”

Chu Liuyue felt that most people would be coming out soon because the competition had ended. If they saw this scene, she was afraid it would cause unnecessary misunderstandings. Thus, she lightly grunted and got on the horse carriage.

Rong Xiu followed closely behind her and put the curtains down after he entered the horse carriage.

Yan Qing swung his long whip. “Go!”

The horse raised its front hooves and started to run, leaving very quickly.

...

Chu Liuyue and Rong Xiu sat opposite each other inside the horse carriage.

“Your Highness, you’re a distinguished person. What kind of things do you need my help with?” asked Chu Liuyue with raised brows.

Rong Xiu chuckled deeply. “Are you angry at me?”

Chu Liuyue neither admitted nor denied it as her pair of clear eyes stared at him calmly.

“I’ve never liked any other girls other than you, and—”

“I believe you,” interrupted Chu Liuyue.

Rong Xiu was surprised.

But Chu Liuyue still looked calm and determined. “Since we’re already together, I’ll obviously believe you.”

As he stared at the calm girl in front of him, a smile spread across Rong Xiu’s face. He gently held Chu Liuyue’s hand. “It’s great that you believe me, but I’ll explain it to you since this matter made you upset.”

Chu Liuyue was stunned. She looked at Rong Xiu’s serious and warm expression, which warmed up her heart. He’s willing to put his pride down and explain so many things just because... I’m upset?

Of course, Rong Xiu liked to see Chu Liuyue being jealous because of him, but he liked it more when she was happy. Therefore, he wouldn’t let her suffer even the slightest of grievances.

He flipped over his sleeves. “Take a closer look at it.”

Chu Liuyue looked down and realized that the inside of his sleeves also had a strange, intricate pattern. It looks like... tree branches?

The outside was embroidered with peach blossoms that looked like clouds, while the inside was embroidered with lively tree branches. Of course, the tree branches were embroidered with golden threads and looked even more fairy-like.

If one did not flip the sleeves over to take a closer look, it would really be hard for them to notice it...

“I really like this pattern, so most of my clothes have it. Any person that has seen me before can easily replicate the design if they paid close attention. However, they can only mimic a portion of it. The shape is similar, but the feeling is different.”

Rong Xiu spoke lightly and was too lazy to even mention Situ Xingchen’s name. There was no reason to bring up a person that did not deserve his attention.

If Situ Xingchen hadn’t upset Chu Liuyue, he would not have been so calculating toward her. However, it was different now.

When Chu Liuyue saw the tree branches embroidered inside the sleeves, more than half of her anger had dissipated. Her heart calmed down even more after she heard Rong Xiu’s explanation.

This was originally not something for her to get angry about. After all, Situ Xingchen had her own hands and legs; others could not stop her from doing what she wanted.

“Actually, this pattern really doesn’t look similar when I take a closer look...”

The embroidered patterns on Rong Xiu’s clothes were intricately and accurately sewn on, thread by thread. Even the faint peach blossoms’ petals could be vaguely seen. They appeared as though they were blown up by the wind, looking like moving clouds.

As for Situ Xingchen’s embroidered pattern, only her outlines were similar. But after thinking about it in detail, it didn’t look very aesthetic. It didn’t look like a peach blossom or a cloud—neither here nor there.

Chu Liuyue stared at his sleeves as her fingers unintentionally swiped across his palm. After thinking for a while, she suddenly could not help but laugh. “I was too petty.”

Rong Xiu felt ticklish from her touch. He looked up slightly, and his gaze landed on her white and soft neck. Further up was her soft, cherry-red lips.

“I live for this kind of pettiness. Nobody else can have it.”

Upon hearing this, Chu Liuyue angrily glared at Rong Xiu. But it didn’t contain any threats, so she looked even more mesmerizing.

Rong Xiu’s Adam’s apple moved, and he suddenly felt hot. There are some things that I really can’t start. Once I do, I can’t stop it.

He forced himself to turn around and suddenly moved backward.

Chu Liuyue found it weird and saw him putting his cloak at the side. She could not help but tease him. “Why? Don’t you have a weak body? Isn’t your body always cold? How can you feel hot now?”

Rong Xiu raised his brows and did not say anything as his long hands reached for his belt.

Kacha!

The sound of the jade belt being unbuckled reverberated in the carriage.

Chu Liuyue’s smile froze. Rong Xiu is...

However, Rong Xiu seemed not to notice her stiffness at all. He looked up slightly and continued to unbutton his collar after casually throwing the unbuckled belt on the cloak.

Rong Xiu originally had a bulky body and was more than a head taller than Chu Liuyue. Now that both of them were sitting down, Chu Liuyue could clearly see Rong Xiu’s protruding Adam’s apple and jade-like chin when he raised his head.

As Prince Li, his clothes were naturally extravagant.

Chu Liuyue recognized that they were made using superior cotton.

One rough look at it, and one would only think that the white clothes were normal and perhaps extra clean and soft. However, if one took a closer look, they would see the faint glow on it—similar to the moonlight at night.

His collar was tied very tightly, and the embroidery was very intricate. It was tightly held together with a pearl button made from a round and smooth moonstone.

At this point, Rong Xiu's fingers gently touched the button and easily unbuttoned the collar.

His collarbone could vaguely be seen.

"Your Highness, you—" Chu Liuyue's face suddenly burned up.

Rong Xiu lifted his head, but his eyes were looking downward. He saw confusion and panic flash across that young girl's face, and his lips curved up into a smile. He did not say anything, but his fingers progressed downward.

One button.

Two buttons.

He undid his buttons one by one.

Chu Liuyue could even see his snow-white undershirt!

Without any restraint, the top-half of his clothes was loose as if it would drop down at any second.

He raised his arm and actually took off his outerwear.

Chu Liuyue could even see Rong Xiu's faint muscles when he moved.

Chu Liuyue's eyes widened, and her mouth was agape. Even though Rong Xiu regularly slept with her, it was always at night. Their relationship had also been ambiguous, so she did not think so much back then.

But what did he want to do in broad daylight with half his clothes on?

Chapter 255: Burn It

Rong Xiu casually threw his outerwear to the side and lazily said, "Yan Qing, burn all the clothes with such cloud patterns when you go back. Remember, you must do it outside the residence. Don't dirty my place."

Yan Qing—who was on the horse—hurriedly answered, "Okay!"

Chu Liuyue blinked as she guessed something. Rong Xiu's clothes are all in good condition, yet he decisively orders them to be burned...

She lowered his voice and asked, "Rong Xiu, do you really want to burn everything?"

Rong Xiu leaned to the side, and his undershirt drooped down, revealing his hard chest. His posture looked lazy, and he seemingly smiled. "It's just a few pieces of clothes. It's worth it if you feel happier after I throw them away and change to new ones."

Just a few pieces of clothes? I'm afraid more than half of his clothes have this cloud pattern embroidered, right?

Chu Liuyue paused. "Didn't you say that you really like this embroidery pattern?"

Rong Xiu looked at her, and the smiling intent in his eyes grew even deeper. "But I like you even more."

Compared to her, these things were just materialistic items.

Chu Liuyue's heart skipped a beat as she glanced at him. She picked up the cloak and threw it to Rong Xiu. "Your Highness, aren't you afraid of being cold?"

Rong Xiu grabbed the cloak and laughed.

Chu Liuyue originally wanted to act stern, but after listening to Rong Xiu's hearty laughter, she was also influenced and started smiling after a while. "I'm afraid that Your Highness is going to spend a lot of money this time."

"I don't care about that small amount of money, but it's currently the start of autumn, and the weather does seem a little chilly."

The smiling intent never left Rong Xiu's eyes as he suddenly grabbed Chu Liuyue's hands and easily pulled her into his arms. "I won't be cold anymore like this!"

Chu Liuyue wanted to rebut him, but he heard Rong Xiu gently hushing her.

She woke up abruptly and realized that the two of them were still in the horse carriage. If they made any big movements, it would be very hard to clarify when others heard them.

She turned around and glared at Rong Xiu with much warning.

Rong Xiu then straightened up, leaned toward her ears, and said softly, "Don't worry; I'm very obedient."

When the hot air was blown into her ears, it instantly lit up a fire that warmed up her entire body.

Separated by the thin clothes, she could even feel the warmth in Rong Xiu's arms and his strong heartbeat.

Since things had already ended like this, there was no point in struggling. Hence, she relaxed her body and lay in Rong Xiu's arms.

"Your Highness, you said that you wanted me to help. It seems like it has got to do with Zhen Bao Pavilion?"

Rong Xiu laughed softly. "Actually, it's nothing major. I just missed my future wife very much, so I came over to ask you for help."

Chu Liuyue was angered and amused. "Your Highness, you're so handsome. No matter where you stand, countless girls will flock toward you. If you add in your seducing efforts, many women will fall head over heels for you."

This was the truth. Even though Rong Xiu normally looked as gentle as jade, he always had a vague and distant aura around him. This caused many women to have a crush on him, but they did not dare to confess to him.

But if he said such words, all the women in the world would fall for him.

I thought Rong Xiu stayed at Mingyue Tianshan to recuperate all along? That place isn't somewhere that everyone can go. Rong Xiu has been there for so many years. Even if you can't say that he's pure and dainty, he shouldn't be able to pacify people so easily, right?

No, I almost forgot. He has another mysterious identity—Your Grace!

However, Chu Liuyue didn't ask further as Rong Xiu had not mentioned it all along.

Rong Xiu laughed and asked, "Then, is Yue'er amongst those people?"

Seeing that Chu Liuyue kept quiet and did not say anything—looking like she did not plan to admit it—Rong Xiu did not think of it much as well. His fingers on her stomach gently caressed her as he softly said, "Actually, I have a secret move. But I can only let you know about it."

Chu Liuyue turned around in confusion and asked, "What?"

Rong Xiu finally could not hold himself back, and he kissed her lips. "You'll naturally find out after we get married..."

...

Rong Xiu really did not dare to do much. He only kissed and hugged Chu Liuyue for a while before releasing her.

When the horse carriage stopped in front of Zhen Bao Pavilion, Rong Xiu had already changed into a new set of clothes.

This set of clothes looked very similar to the one that was thrown away, but the pattern on the sleeves was different. If one did not take a closer look, they would not be able to tell.

Actually, Rong Xiu did not want to change into this set of clothes. However, many people had seen Chu Liuyue getting into his horse carriage. If people saw that Rong Xiu had changed his clothes, it might tarnish Chu Liuyue's reputation.

Rong Xiu alighted from the carriage first, and Yan Qing was already waiting by the side.

Chu Liuyue followed closely behind and found out that they were indeed at Zhen Bao Pavilion.

She looked at Rong Xiu in confusion. We're actually here?

When the pageboy saw the horse carriage come, he had long recognized that the sign was from Prince Li Mansion. Hence, he enthusiastically came up to welcome them. "Greetings, Prince Li!"

When they saw Chu Liuyue getting off the carriage later on, their smiles became even brighter. "Ms. Liuyue! You're finally here! Lord Chu Ning has just arrived, and Second Boss is accompanying him inside."

Chu Liuyue was a little surprised. "My Father? Why is he here?"

The pageboy was just about to explain, but Chu Ning—who had arrived at the main hall earlier on—immediately came out when he heard her voice.

Once he saw Chu Liuyue, he immediately walked forward. "Yue'er!"

Chu Liuyue then realized that Chu Ning's face had green stubble after not seeing him for a short day.

"Father, it's my fault. Sorry for making you worry," said Chu Liuyue guiltily.

Chu Ning carefully scrutinized her for a while before heaving a sigh of relief. "It's great that you're fine! When I heard that Second Master Yan found you, I immediately rushed back. I didn't expect him to say that you headed to Jia Nan Square and participated in the Qing Jiao Competition. I was just planning to go look for you, but you're already here."

At this point, Yan Ge laughed out loud and came out as well. "Hahaha! Yeah! It seems like the competition went very smoothly?"

As he spoke, he saw Rong Xiu. He bowed down slightly, revealing an even more enthusiastic smile. "It turns out that Prince Li is here too!"

Chu Ning appeased his heart, glanced at Rong Xiu, and solemnly said, "I heard Second Master Yan say that Prince Li has saved Yue'er again this time?"

Rong Xiu lightly smiled. "Second Master Yan was just exaggerating. Actually, I just coincidentally met her on the road."

But Chu Ning felt traumatized. "No matter what, I must thank you for helping her. You've already helped us many times previously. Now that we've troubled you again, I really don't know how else to thank you..."

Chu Liuyue looked at Yan Ge in confusion. Actually, when she and Rong Xiu came back earlier, Rong Xiu seemed to have sent a signal in the woods.

Not long later, Yan Qing came.

After walking for a while, they coincidentally met Yan Ge—who had gone out to look for her.

According to Yan Ge, Chu Ning had asked him to look for me. However, it now seems like he has pushed everything to Rong Xiu?

Chapter 256: Fawn

"Haha! Lord Chu Ning previously came to me and told me that Ms. Liuyue was missing. I was very anxious and immediately sent people out to find her. After not obtaining any news for some time, I wanted to go to the woods outside the Imperial City to try my luck. I didn't expect to meet with Prince Li's assistant—Yan Qing—once I stepped into the woods. I heard that he was going to look for Prince Li, so I followed him because I thought that Prince Li might be able to help us."

"I didn't expect for Ms. Liuyue to be there as well when I followed him! Later on, I asked around and found out that Prince Li had coincidentally met Ms. Liuyue—who had fainted in the woods—and he saved her."

He chuckled. "After I came back, I immediately sent someone to inform Lord Chu Ning. Look! Chu Ning just arrived not long ago, and we were just about to go to Jia Nan Square together! I didn't expect Ms. Liuyue and the rest to come back!"

Yan Ge's words were half-true.

Chu Liuyue indeed came back with Yan Ge and Yan Qing, but Yan Ge had added the part about Rong Xiu saving her. As they were rushing, they did not even have the time to talk in detail.

Yan Ge winked.

Chu Liuyue immediately understood that this was purposely said to assure Chu Ning. She did not expose him on the spot and nodded in agreement.

To Chu Ning, Rong Xiu had already helped Chu Liuyue out quite a few times, so this time was nothing much too.

Chu Ning sighed and said, "It seems like we owe Your Highness a lot more now."

Rong Xiu smiled and said, "Lord Chu Ning, you're being too kind. It was just a convenient matter."

Seeing his humble manner, Chu Ning felt even more grateful and admired Rong Xiu even more. This Prince Li is the kindest person amongst all of His Highness's sons. It's a pity that Prince Li's body is weak, so he has to stay in bed most of the time.

"Your Highness, have you been feeling better lately?"

"Thank you, Lord Chu Ning, for your concern. I'm much better than before."

"That's good..." Chu Ning saw Rong Xiu's appearance and felt that Rong Xiu seemed better than before.

But I heard that none of Country Yao Chen's heavenly doctors could help with Rong Xiu's illness, I wonder...

He suddenly thought of something, and he silently looked at his daughter. Oh yes! Maybe Yue'er has a way! Didn't she cure her Yuan meridian and my old injury previously? If she can help Prince Li recover his health, we can repay a part of his favor!

Thinking of this, he increasingly felt that it was a great idea and planned to talk to Yue'er when he had the chance. They were father and daughter after all, so their hearts were telepathic. With Chu Ning's single gaze, Chu Liuyue could guess what he was thinking, and she was caught between laughter and tears.

I wonder what Father's reaction would be like if he knew that the Rong Xiu in front of him is not sick at all and is very strong instead—almost one of the top few experts in Country Yao Chen...

Chu Ning worriedly glanced at Chu Liuyue again. "Yue'er, what exactly happened yesterday? Why did you leave the school's campus? Who—"

Chu Liuyue coughed. "Father, this situation is a little complicated, and I haven't clearly understood it yet. I'll tell you about it in detail later on. However, there's something else I haven't gotten the chance to tell you yet—I took first place in today's Xuan Master competition."

Chu Ning originally still felt very uneasy, but shock filled his face when he heard the latter half of the sentence. "What did you say? Top Xuan Master?"

He knew that Yue'er had signed up for both the Xuan Master competition and the warrior competition. However, he was already very happy when she took first place in the warrior competition the day before. He did not expect her to even—

“Really?”

“Can I even lie to you about this?” Chu Liuyue smiled happily. “Even though it’s a pity that you didn’t get to watch me compete personally, I didn’t disappoint you with this result, right?”

Upon seeing Chu Liuyue’s delighted smile, Chu Ning was in disbelief for quite some time. Top warrior! Top Xuan Master! The Qing Jiao Competition has three competitions in total, and she took first place in two of them.

Yan Ge—who was at the side—was the first to react. He clapped his hands and excitedly said, “Ms. Liuyue, you’re really amazing!”

Master’s taste is truly very good! Even Madam is a rare talent!

“When you took first place in the warrior competition yesterday, I instructed someone to book the entire Phoenix Restaurant. I wanted to bring you there directly after the competition ended, but I didn’t expect you to participate in another competition again. It seems like booking the restaurant for only one day is far from enough! Hahaha!”

Chu Liuyue immediately shook her head. “How can I let you do this? I’ve already greatly troubled you the previous time, now—”

“Aish... Your status is now different from before! In the past few years, the people who attained good results during the Qing Jiao Competition would be greatly supported, and they would excel in life! Ms. Liuyue, you’ve taken first place in two competitions, so you’ll definitely become a popular character amongst the crowd! If you don’t agree to this, you’re not giving Zhen Bao Pavilion face!”

Chu Liuyue knew that Yan Ge seemed like he wanted to get closer to her and use her. But with Zhen Bao Pavilion’s current status, there didn’t seem to be a need to do so...

However, Chu Liuyue did not express this on her face. She smiled and agreed instead. “Okay! Then, I’ll thank Second Master Yan first! However, why don’t we postpone this and wait until the entire Qing Jiao Competition is over?”

Yan Ge laughed out loud. “No problem!”

...

The few of them talked for a while longer before Chu Ning planned to leave with Chu Liuyue.

Before they left, Chu Ning did not forget to thank Rong Xiu yet again. “Your Highness, you’ve helped us so many times, and I really don’t know how else to thank you. If you have the time, why don’t you come and visit our humble house?”

Chu Ning tried to invite him to their house. If Rong Xiu comes, it’ll be more convenient for Yue'er to take his pulse.

Rong Xiu smiled genuinely. "Lord Chu Ning, you're really kind, and I don't have any reason to reject you. After this matter ends, I'll definitely go and visit you."

Chu Liuyue coughed. The next time he goes, he's probably going to ask for my hand in marriage. Rong Xiu has always been someone who lives up to his words.

She also bowed and bade farewell to Rong Xiu and Yan Ge before leaving with Chu Ning.

When the father-daughter duo's figures disappeared, Rong Xiu turned around.

Yan Ge instinctively wanted to bend down, but he curbed his urge when he remembered that outsiders were around. He chuckled and asked, "Your Highness, do you want to buy anything?"

Rong Xiu slightly nodded. "I should buy something... Do you know what Lord Chu Ning likes?"

He only knew what Chu Liuyue liked, but he did not understand much about Chu Ning.

"Ah?" Yan Ge was taken aback.

Rong Xiu lightly glanced at him.

Yan Ge almost slapped his own forehead. Stupid! Master is clearly starting to target his father-in-law!

"Ah! T-this... Lord Chu Ning used to open a weapon shop, and he seems to be pretty interested in this. He also appreciates things like pottery... They're all inside. Why don't you personally go up to take a look?"

Rong Xiu then lifted his legs and walked in. Without turning his head, Rong Xiu lazily said, "Yan Qing, immediately go and complete the tasks I told you about earlier."

Yan Qing instantly nodded and respectfully said, "Okay!"

...

Chapter 257: Humiliation

After Situ Xingchen and Cheng Han left, Situ Xingchen rejected a few people that wanted to accompany her and proceeded on alone. She aimlessly walked through the streets, not knowing what exactly she felt. She only felt that her mind was blank, and she did not wish to think of anything.

But the earlier scene in the square kept replaying in her mind, causing her to be increasingly upset.

Situ Xingchen kept thinking about it again and again, and she suddenly thought—Why don't I go to Prince Li Mansion?

Ever since she arrived at the Imperial City, she knew that Rong Xiu was given the title of Prince Li and that he lived at Prince Li Mansion—which she always wanted to visit. But she had an extraordinary status, and she felt that it was too much to invite herself over. Hence, she did not go.

However, she did not want to care about so much now. She could not say for certain why she suddenly thought of this idea, but her feet continued to walk in the direction of Prince Li Mansion instinctively.

Even though she had not personally gone to Prince Li Mansion before, she had thought about its location in her heart many times.

Worried that others would recognize her, Situ Xingchen found a deserted corner and put on a cloak to cover her figure completely. She also put up the cloak hood to cover herself up.

Even if someone walked straight toward her, they would not recognize her unless they took a close look.

After tidying herself up, she walked toward Prince Li Mansion.

When Situ Xingchen was a short distance away from Prince Li Mansion, she found many people gathered around here.

Six rows of people were gathered outside Prince Li Mansion as if they were watching a commotion.

Situ Xingchen was very surprised. Prince Li Mansion is where a prince stays. How can a bunch of commoners be outrageous enough to crowd around here? I wonder what Prince Li's subordinates are doing. They can't even handle such a small thing.

She walked a few steps forward and wanted to see what was going on. However, she quickly smelled those people's pungent sweat, which made her extremely uncomfortable and disgusted.

Situ Xingchen stood there with her feet rooted to the ground, unable to proceed on. She refused to push these people away and walk between them.

I think it's just a small commotion. Situ Xingchen turned around when she thought of this, planning to leave.

Just as she turned around, she heard the people around her discussing.

"... I really don't know what Prince Li is thinking! These clothes are in good condition, so why would he just throw them out like this?"

"Yeah! Look at the clothes' material; all of them are extremely valuable! This is akin to burning silver taels!"

"But the clothes are really in good condition; even the cloud embroidery is extremely intricate. It's such a pity..."

Situ Xingchen skipped a beat when she heard a few words; then, she hurriedly turned around and tried to squeeze into the crowd to take a look.

But the people in front were all huddled together, and she did not want to use her force to create a bigger commotion.

Situ Xingchen stood on her toes and forcefully saw a few guards standing in the circle. There was also a bright, red fire dancing in the middle.

She could not see anything else.

Helpless, Situ Xingchen could only lower her voice and say, "Excuse me..."

The few men in front were initially annoyed, but when they turned around, they saw a slim girl standing behind them.

Even though the girl was wearing a cape and a hood, her voice was gentle and melodious. They could tell that Situ Xingchen was a beauty just by hearing her voice.

Judging by the clothes she is wearing, it seems like it's Tai Yan Academy's uniform? It looks like Tai Yan Academy's students came to join in the fun.

The few men looked at each other, and something flashed across their eyes as they made way for her.

Very quickly, a road was paved.

Situ Xingchen was very focused on what was happening within the circle, so she completely did not notice the few people's expressions.

When she finally endured the pungent smell and walked toward the center of the circle, she was shocked by the scene in front of her.

A giant, black metal container was placed on the ground, and a fire was burning intensely within it.

She could clearly see the tips of the fire licking every piece of extravagant clothing. She saw the cloud embroidery on the top piece being quickly hurled into black smoke under the strong fire.

Her heart seemed to be harshly squeezed by something as uneasiness filled her heart.

"Just hear what you're saying! What kind of status does Prince Li have? He just threw a few pieces of clothing, so what's there to be upset about?"

"He can give us these clothes too..."

"What are you thinking? Do you deserve to wear Prince Li's clothes? Besides... He has always been sick. Who knows if these clothes..."

Situ Xingchen heard the discussions around her, but she no longer reacted to them as she dazedly stared at the burning clothes.

A lot more clothes were beside the metal container...

Yan Qing stood beside the metal container and commanded the guards to throw the remaining clothes into it. His cold face still did not have any expression. "His Highness said that all the clothes with this cloud embroidery must be burned! Don't leave any piece behind! If another of such clothing is found in the mansion and dirties His Highness's eyes, you will not be able to bear the consequences!"

"Okay!" The guards did not know the reason behind this order, but they obeyed it anyway.

But when Situ Xingchen heard those words, it was as if lightning had struck her. All the clothes with this cloud embroidery... must be burned? Didn't Rong Xiu always like this kind of cloud embroidery? He even drew the pattern himself. Why would he suddenly...

Her entire body was frozen, and her blood seemed to stop flowing. Cloud embroidery... Yes, I secretly copied the cloud embroidery and sewed it on my own clothes because I like him. Whenever I'm free, I often stare at the cloud embroidery on the clothes, which is akin to seeing him.

I have even embroidered the pattern on my academy uniform. Did Rong Xiu see it? His eyes have always been sharp. Why wouldn't he have seen it? Does he want to burn such similar clothes because I have this cloud embroidery?

What did the person say just now? Dirty his eyes? Does he hate me so much that he doesn't even want to wear such clothes again? Just because of the cloud embroidery, he even wants to get rid of them completely?

Situ Xingchen's limbs were cold, and her heart was completely cold. It was as though it had been harshly trampled and thrown into the snow.

She shivered, but hot tears streamed down her face. I have never been so insulted all these years!

For a moment, she even felt like her clothes were enveloped by that fire, causing her entire body to burn as well.

Situ Xingchen's gaze stiffly turned as she stared at the pile of clothes beside the metal container. There were even people bringing out more clothes from Prince Li Mansion.

He doesn't want any of them! Situ Xingchen could not watch on any longer. She dashed out of the crowd and quickly left.

It was very crowded, and everyone was watching the commotion, so nobody noticed her small movements.

But the few men that had made way for her looked at each other and also left silently, running in the direction that Situ Xingchen left in.

Chapter 258: Deserves to Die

Situ Xingchen was immersed in her great humiliation and sorrow as she floated forward. Her entire person was numb as if she had lost her soul. Her eyes had no focus, and tears kept streaming down her face.

After walking for some time, Situ Xingchen sensed someone walking toward her. She instinctively avoided the person, but it seemed like the person had moved along with her.

It happened again.

She then realized that something was wrong, so she looked up.

Three men were standing in front of her.

The few of them were wearing torn and tattered clothes and looked like they were in their thirties. They had stubble on their faces, and they emitted body odor—which made them even more uncouth.

At this point, their greedy eyes lawlessly swept across her body. Even though the young girl was wearing a hood, her pretty features could still be vaguely seen.

“Little girl, where are you going all alone?”

“How dare you?” Situ Xingchen’s face turned cold when she heard their disgusting voices. As Xing Luo’s eldest princess, nobody has ever spoken to me like that!

When the few men heard her shout, they became even more excited instead of fearful.

“Oh? It seems like this girl is fiery! It’s okay; we love to see you like this! Hehe, it seems like you’re not from the Imperial City. Do you want us to bring you around?” As he spoke, the man at the front stretched out his hand and directly grabbed Situ Xingchen’s arm.

Situ Xingchen immediately drew her sword and slashed that man’s hand. However, the man managed to avoid it quickly.

When Situ Xingchen slashed the air, she realized that the men were also cultivators, even though they looked despicable.

The one who first took action was definitely a stage-three warrior already.

Situ Xingchen normally specialized as a heavenly doctor and wasn’t very talented in her warrior cultivation. Her current skills could only reach that of a stage-three warrior forcefully.

“Little girl, you use your sword in such a flimsy manner. Don’t wave it and become a joke! Hahaha!”

The few men bellowed in laughter.

They had long known that this girl was from Tai Yan Academy. If they did not have any abilities, why would they dare to do anything to her? However, they did not expect her skills to be so-so.

When Situ Xingchen brandished her sword, they could tell that she did not have any combat experience.

This is great! The three men looked at each other before they lunged at Situ Xingchen.

Situ Xingchen was shocked. All of them are stage-one warriors at least! I’m definitely not their match!

When she thought of this, she hurriedly moved backward and took out something from her sleeves.

“You want to call for help?” A sharp-eyed man saw her actions, immediately stepped forward, and kicked away the item in her hands.

Situ Xingchen was in pain and immediately slashed out her sword. But how could she be the three men’s match when they ganged up on her?

After several struggles, she was quickly disadvantaged.

“Hehe, little girl, stop fighting. I promise you that you’ll be very comfortable—”

The few of them rushed forward, and one man even directly removed Situ Xingchen’s hood.

Hua!

A pretty face appeared in front of their eyes.

The three men were stunned as they did not expect her to be so beautiful.

Taking advantage of this, Situ Xingchen immediately waved her hands.

“What’s that?” The few men instinctively blocked and realized it was black powder.

“I even thought it was something powerful. Hah, little girl, you’re—” Just as the man in front was talking, his face suddenly contorted.

This was because he saw his arm—which was stained by the black powder—starting to rot silently and quickly.

He then felt the excruciating pain. “M-my hand!”

“Ah! My face!”

The men’s faces and bodies were all stained with the black powder, causing them to drop on the floor and start groaning in pain.

But the powder was very formidable, and the men rotted into inhumane forms in the blink of an eye. They looked extremely horrifying.

The air suddenly moved, and a black crack appeared.

An elder in black suddenly walked out and respectfully greeted Situ Xingchen. “Greetings, Your Highness. I’m sorry for coming late. Please forgive me.”

His voice was hoarse and deep, and he spoke very slowly—which sounded weird.

Situ Xingchen’s face was icy-cold as she walked over and picked up the item that was kicked away. Actually, she had already injected her force into the item the moment she picked it up, calling Lian Ning over.

“Elder Lian Ning, you should’ve arrived earlier, right?” Situ Xingchen coldly asked as she put on the hood again.

Lian Ning laughed. “Your Highness, you’re so intelligent. Why would you care about these few things? You summoned me over for something else, right?”

Situ Xingchen did not hide anything from him. “That’s right. I need your help with something.”

“Your Highness, you can tell me about whatever you want.”

“Help me check on Chu Liuyue.”

Surprise flashed across Lian Ning’s eyes. “Why would you want to check on her?”

Situ Xingchen knitted her brows. “You know her?”

Lian Ning chuckled. “She was the Crown Prince—Rong Jin’s fiancée after all. Hence, I obviously know a thing or two about her.”

Displeasure filled Situ Xingchen’s eyes.

Lian Ning was so concerned about Rong Jin because her father wanted her to have a marriage alliance with Rong Jin after he dissolved his marriage agreement.

Even though she expressed her reluctance on this matter, her father never seemed to have let go of this idea completely.

This was why Lian Ning knew many things about Rong Jin.

Lian Ning saw that Situ Xingchen did not look good and that she had clearly cried. He knew very clearly that Situ Xingchen liked someone else.

It seems like this definitely has to do with Prince Li now. But... why does she suddenly want to check on Chu Liuyue?

"Don't worry, Your Highness. I'll do it immediately." He agreed without asking any further.

Before he left, his gaze landed on the few rotten corpses on the floor hesitantly. "Your Highness, these people..."

"I'll handle them myself."

"Okay. I'll take my leave first." Lian Ning then stepped into the empty space and silently left.

Situ Xingchen walked forward, stared at the incomplete corpses, suddenly raised the sword in her hands, and harshly pierced forward.

As if she was a psychopath, she first cut off their limbs before gouging out their eyeballs. She finally stopped to breathe heavily when the trio became a pile of rotten meat.

She completely destroyed the trio's corpses until they couldn't be seen. Then, she spat out a few words coldly. "B*tches! They deserve to die!"

Chapter 259: Last Day!

Chu Liuyue followed Chu Ning home.

Even though Chu Ning was very happy about Chu Liuyue participating in the warrior and Xuan Master competitions consecutively, he also felt his heart ache for her. Thus, he did not ask anything else after he went home and saw the faint green color under Chu Liuyue's eyes.

"Yue'er, you've been so tired the past few days. You should rest well today."

Chu Liuyue's heart felt warm as she knew that Chu Ning had a bunch of questions for her, but he still swallowed them down.

"Father, many things have happened in the past few days. When the Qing Jiao Competition ends, I'll tell you what happened in detail. But you don't need to worry. Yesterday's incident will never happen again," said Chu Liuyue as she took out something from her Cosmic Bag and handed it to Chu Ning.

Chu Ning took the object and was shocked upon taking a closer look. "This is... Sky Compass?"

It was a palm-sized black compass that looked like it was not made from stone nor wood. It was cold to touch, and there was a tiny silver needle on it, which glistened under the light.

Chu Liuyue nodded. "Second Master Yan previously sent many gifts over, and one of them was a pair of Sky Compasses. I have kept one for myself, and I planned to give the other to you, but I didn't have the time to. I'll give it to you now."

Chu Ning asked hesitantly, "This item... seems to be pretty expensive, right?"

Chu Liuyue smiled helplessly. How should I tell Chu Ning that this is already considered ordinary amongst the gifts Second Master Yan sent me?

There were even more extravagant gifts that she did not dare tell Chu Ning about. If she did, according to Chu Ning's personality, he would definitely find ways to return the favor.

"Don't worry. Second Master Yan and I are on good terms, so it's not overboard if I accept this Sky Compass. Next time, just remember to bring this along with you. Within a certain range, you can use it to find me. This way, you'll be more relaxed, right?"

Chu Ning repeatedly nodded. Even though he didn't know how Yue'er knew Second Master Yan, it was a good thing after all.

He had interacted with Yan Ge several times in the past, and he could tell that Second Master Yan was genuine toward Yue'er. The most important point was that he really wanted this item.

"That's good." Chu Ning sighed and carefully put away the Sky Compass. "Thank Second Master Yan again when you have the chance in the future."

Chu Liuyue nodded in agreement and talked to Chu Ning for a while longer before going to rest.

These past few days, she had always been tense. She finally relaxed when she lay on her bed, and tiredness crept up to her uncontrollably.

She quickly fell into a deep sleep.

However, Chu Ning kept tossing and turning in bed as countless thoughts popped up in his mind. He could only forcefully sleep after a long time had passed.

...

That night, everyone from Tian Lu Academy was in a good mood.

Chu Liuyue had taken first place twice continuously and could be considered as bringing honor to them.

Tian Lu Academy had not had such results in many years, so they were naturally over the moon. However, the people from the other two academies felt defeated.

Not only did they lose one competition, but they had lost both so far!

However, this was not the most important thing. To Nan Feng Academy's people, Xi Wanwan's actions in the square today had utterly tarnished their reputation.

As for Tai Yan Academy... They had always been the most glorious academy in the past few competitions. Now that their two first places had been snatched away from them, they felt very disappointed.

Chu Liuyue had also won so thoroughly that others could not even doubt her.

When Cheng Han returned to the inn, he planned to talk to Situ Xingchen about the last day's competition, but he shockingly discovered that she had not returned yet.

After asking around, he then found out that Situ Xingchen did not even return to the inn after leaving Jia Nan Square.

She was clearly the one who left first! Cheng Han could not help but be worried and anxious when he did not see her around. During the Qing Jiao Competition, people from all walks of life are in the Imperial City. Who knows what will happen to Situ Xingchen if she's out alone?

Just as he was about to send people out to find Situ Xingchen, he finally saw her come back.

Cheng Han heaved a sigh of relief and hurriedly went up to her. "Xingchen, where did you go alone?"

The tears on Situ Xingchen's face had already been wiped away, so nobody could tell that there was anything wrong with her.

She smiled apologetically in her usual gentle manner. "Mentor, I was just walking around the Imperial City. Don't worry about me."

Seeing that she looked normal, Cheng Han was assured since he really thought that Situ Xingchen just walked around to make herself feel better.

"That's great! That's great! Tomorrow is the last day of the Qing Jiao Competition; it's also the most crowded day. All kinds of people might show up, so you must be careful."

Disgust flashed across Situ Xingchen's eyes when she recalled the three men, but she did not let Cheng Han notice anything as she lightly nodded. "You're right, Mentor."

Cheng Han said calmly, "Tomorrow's heavenly doctor competition is the most important event of this Qing Jiao Competition. No matter what happened before, our trip is worth it as long as you can take first place!"

"Of course, don't put too much pressure on yourself. I've already asked around, and there are less than 100 people participating in this year's heavenly doctor competition. Out of these people, not more than three people can be your match. As long as you perform as per normal, it won't pose any problem."

Situ Xingchen had heard similar words countless times. In the past, she did not pay much attention to such words. However, her mentality was now different from before after experiencing all the setbacks today.

Something seemed to be stuck in her chest, which made her feel very uncomfortable.

As long as she took first place in the heavenly doctor competition, she could truly and completely prove to Rong Xiu that she was much better than Chu Liuyue.

"Don't worry, Mentor. I definitely will come in first place tomorrow."

This sentence stunned Cheng Han. He knew very clearly what kind of person his disciple was.

Even though Situ Xingchen wanted to take first place previously, her desire was not as strong... Besides, it seems like she desperately wants to take first place!

After some thinking, Cheng Han secretly guessed that it had to do with Rong Xiu and Chu Liuyue, but he did not ask about them in detail. It's a good thing that Situ Xingchen desperately wants to take first place!

"Okay! Practice the things I taught you earlier, and we'll wait for tomorrow to come!"

...

The last day of the Qing Jiao Competition.

Before the competition started, Jia Nan Square was already bursting with people.

The past few days were considered crowded, but it was still lacking in comparison to today's turnout.

After all, heavenly doctors had the highest status compared to warriors and Xuan Masters.

In many ordinary people's eyes, it was normally hard for them to see a heavenly doctor as heavenly doctors were thought to be very distinguished.

It was very rare to see so many heavenly doctors competing during the Qing Jiao Competition.

Besides, they had a prize presentation ceremony on the last day, which was also one of the highlights that attracted more people over.

But Chu Liuyue did not sign up for the heavenly doctor competition, so she had lazily slept at home. She arrived at Jia Nan Square late—when the heavenly doctor competition was just about to start.

Chapter 260: Plan

Even though Chu Liuyue came late, nobody caused trouble for her as she had taken first place in the previous two competitions.

She quickly scanned her surroundings and saw Emperor Jiawen finally sitting down on the chair that had always been empty on the east side of the competition venue.

The Empress sat next to him, while the princes and princesses were sitting at the side.

After taking a rough look, Chu Liuyue found most of them pretty familiar. However, Rong Xiu's seat was empty.

Most of the competitors had already sat down in the competition venue, and each of them had a cauldron in front of them.

Sun Zhongyan was currently announcing the competition's rules. "... There's a jade box in front of everyone, which contains three formulas. The three formulas are of different grades. Based on your own abilities, you can choose the one that you're most confident about. As long as you produce the pill, it's considered that you've completed the competition. The elders from the three academies will then determine the winner based on the pills' grades."

His thick and burly voice resonated throughout Jia Nan Square.

Everyone in the crowd was excited and expectant, but the competing heavenly doctors were more nervous.

Chu Liuyue quietly walked to her seat. Most of the crowd was focusing on the competition now, so she did not attract much attention.

After sitting down, she glanced at the competition venue.

Situ Xingchen was indeed standing within.

Everyone around her was guessing who would be the winner in hushed voices. However, Chu Liuyue was more interested in the formulas inside the box.

I wonder what kind of questions will be presented in the Qing Jiao Competition...

Sun Zhongyan gave a few more instructions before announcing the beginning of the competition.

Everyone in the arena opened the boxes in front of them to check the three formulas.

At that moment, some were shocked, some were elated, and others were put in a difficult position. It was obvious that the competitors were of different standards, so they had different reactions to the competition's questions.

After a temporary silence, a young man in the competition venue raised his hand.

"Nan Feng Academy's He Yang chooses the intermediate medical formula!"

The judges at the side hurriedly went forward and made someone deliver the corresponding set of ingredients.

"Everyone only has two sets of ingredients. If you continuously fail twice, you will be eliminated. Are you clear about this?"

He Yang swiftly nodded his head. "Thank you for the reminder, judges. I understand."

He then placed his hand over the cauldron and injected his force.

A blue fire rose up.

Upon seeing this, the other students did not want to be left behind. They respectively chose their formulas and started to refine the medicine.

Chu Liuyue looked down with much interest and discovered that many people had chosen 'intermediate.' Not many of them had chosen 'beginner.'

"I wonder what the difference between the formulas is? Why did people choose 'beginner?' Aren't they bound to lose?" muttered Si Yang curiously.

Chu Liuyue laughed lightly and kindly answered, "That's because all heavenly doctors have a clear understanding of their own abilities. Since they know their standards, they naturally know which formula they should pick. To heavenly doctors, picking 'beginner' would be better than picking 'intermediate' and failing. At the very least, they can have a ranking. If they can't even produce a single item, they will be directly eliminated. Of course, some might want to take the gamble."

Si Yang was enlightened and finally understood the reasoning behind their actions. “According to what you said, does it mean that those who chose ‘beginner’ might not be those with the lowest skills?”

Chu Liuyue corrected him and said, “To be more accurate, their rankings might not be the lowest.”

Si Yang nodded in deep thought. Then, he suddenly widened his eyes. “How do you know this?”

Chu Liuyue glanced at him lazily.

Si Yang immediately reacted—I almost forgot! This sick pervert is also talented as a heavenly doctor. It’s not surprising that she knows this.

“... Oh yeah! Why didn’t you join the heavenly doctor competition?”

Chu Liuyue curled her lips into a half-smile.

Si Yang lightly slapped his mouth. I’m so stupid! Chu Liuyue has won first place in two out of three competitions. Why would there be a need for her to join the last one? Besides, the academy always had a rumor that talked about how Chu Liuyue was not very talented in this area. Hence, she probably found it a waste of time to join the competition.

Chu Liuyue retracted her gaze and looked at the arena.

...

“Cough, cough cough—”

Emperor Jiawen turned around and looked upset when he heard Rong Jin coughing again. “Why don’t you rest in your residence since you’re injured?”

The Empress was elated when she heard this.

His Majesty looked stern, but he was actually still concerned about Rong Jin. If he really did not care about the Crown Prince, he definitely would’ve sent someone to bring Rong Jin back, and he wouldn’t have said such a thing.

Rong Jin also noticed this, and his pale lips curved up into a smile. “Thank you for your concern, Father. My body is fine. Mr. Zuo Rong said that I’d recover after resting for a while. Besides, I haven’t seen you in a long time, so...”

Ever since the Crown Prince was grounded, the palace did not receive any news about his requests to see the Emperor.

Today was a good chance, so he obviously could not miss it.

A moving look flashed across Emperor Jiawen’s eyes.

Even though the Crown Prince was petty, the Emperor had watched him grow up, and he had high expectations for the Crown Prince. How could the Emperor possibly not feel anything for the Crown Prince?

Seeing Rong Jin’s frail appearance, Emperor Jiawen also felt his heart ache. “Go back and rest later. It’s inappropriate for the Crown Prince to look sickly.”

Once the Emperor said this, everyone was shocked. The Emperor seems like he doesn't plan to remove Rong Jin's status as the Crown Prince?

The Empress felt even happier. Originally, she did not approve of Rong Jin coming over.

She knew better than anyone that Rong Jin came over for Chu Liuyue. However, she did not expect Rong Jin to move His Majesty and extract himself from his current difficult situation.

What a lucky hit!

She smiled earnestly. "Your Majesty, the Crown Prince has matured a lot now. I'm sure he won't make you angry over such small matters again."

Emperor Jiawen grunted coldly and did not say anything else.

Rong Jin felt much more at ease, and he could not help but look toward Tian Lu Academy's seating area.

Chu Liuyue was sitting in the crowd.

They were clearly a distance apart, but he still saw her at first glance.

Bright, dazzling, eye-catching!

He had already heard about Chu Liuyue's performance in this Qing Jiao Competition, and it made him fall for her even more.

Only such outstanding women were the most suited for him!

When he came, he had silently asked his mother about her plans. Knowing that she had not taken action yet, Rong Jin felt quite anxious.

At this point, another thought popped up in his head—If Mother still hasn't done anything about this after the Qing Jiao Competition ends, I'll just ask Father myself!