

The Gods 1881

Chapter 1881 - Empress and Consorts

Yun Che hadn't spoken a word since, "Announce it, Tianli."

However, his imperious might had sunk into everyone's soul like the falling sky, choked them out like a million mountains, and extinguished the last embers of their resistance completely.

When the curtain of light cascaded from Emperor Yun City, one blue and one yellow figure—Shui Yingyue and Lu Zhou—flew toward it and engraved the names "Glazed Light Realm" and "Shrouding Sky Realm" faster than anyone else.

After the other upper star realm kings had woken up from their trance, they also exploded toward the light screen and engraved their realm names on the curtain of light as well. No one wanted to be mistaken as hesitating, especially since Emperor Yun was watching them from above right now.

This was but a simple declaration of loyalty, and yet the upper star realm kings practically fought each other just to get their realm names on the light screen on a conspicuous spot even a second sooner.

Not only that, every second of the scene was projected live across the entire God Realm.

At this point, anyone who claimed that they didn't understand the full weight of the title "Emperor Yun" after witnessing the complete submission of the king realms and the competition between the upper star realm kings could only be lying through their teeth.

There were three upper star realm kings who, unlike everyone else around them, hesitated to put their realm name on the screen of light, however.

"Sect Master Huo, you do it." Yan Wancang let out a heavy sigh. "You are the only one who can."

However, Huo Rulie shook his head and said, "I don't have the right to represent my realm king."

"But it is your, no, our responsibility to protect the Flame God Realm no matter the cost," Yan Juehai said with a complicated expression on his face. "Forget overstepping our authority, we can surrender even our lives if it means safeguarding our realm."

"Plus, you were the realm king's master. He respects you the most out of all of us, and if nothing else... your right to transgress is greater than ours."

Huo Rulie hesitated for a moment. Then, he charged toward the light screen and engraved "Flame God Realm" on it.

He knew Huo Poyun would see this for sure.

"Hmm? Are you Sect Master Huo of the Flame God Realm?"

Huo Rulie was just about to leave when a taunting voice entered his ears. "I haven't heard anything about your ascension to become the Flame God Realm King, Sect Master Huo! Have you forgotten to notify me? How... discourteous of you."

Huo Rulie didn't even need to turn to know that the speaker was the old enemy of the Flame God Realm, the Descendant Fire Realm King. He replied coldly, "Our realm king is sick, so I am replacing him. That is all there is to it."

The Descendant Fire Realm King sneered. "Sick? Emperor Yun is the first great emperor of the entire God Realm! Forget sick, he should crawl his way over even if he is on his last breath!"

"But instead of doing so, he sends a small sect master to represent him?" The Descendant Fire Realm King's voice abruptly turned severe. "This is a clear act of contempt against His Magnificence! What do you have to say, Flame God Realm!?"

Up until now, no one had dared to say anything due to the heavy pressure that was Emperor Yun's presence. That was why the commotion had drawn every pair of eyes.

Huo Rulie feared nothing his whole life, but at this moment, he felt like his soul was about to snap from the tension, and his normally molten hot blood was cooling into ice.

He could feel the gaze of the realm kings, the god emperors, and Emperor Yun himself solidifying on this location.

One of the best ways to establish one's power was to make an example out of someone. He couldn't help but wonder if the Descendant Fire Realm would be rewarded for their contribution, and the Flame God Realm be scapegoated for their act of contempt and be destroyed.

After all, it was a fact that the Flame God Realm King hadn't attended the grand coronation ceremony. He hadn't bent the knee when the eastern realm kings had submitted to the Devil Master, and he had almost been executed by Yun Che in the Snow Song Realm.

"The Flame God Realm has no such intentions!" Yan Wancang stepped forward in a hurry and stood together with Huo Rulie. However, he was nowhere strong enough to withstand the spiritual pressure from all the higher realm kings in front of him, and the god emperors above him. His heart abruptly clenched, and all the protestations he was going to make were stifled in his throat.

Just when everyone's attention was drawn to this brief interlude, a white light suddenly exploded from behind the crowd and straight toward the light screen.

The sudden eruption of profound energy was unusually powerful, cutting through layers of space like they were nothing more but water. All the higher realm kings next to it were pushed away as well.

"Despicable devil person... you, an emperor!? You will be punished by the heavens!!"

A horrifying screech accompanied the sound of shattering space. It was a woman's voice, and yet the sheer brokenness and hatred behind it caused everyone's hair to stand on their end.

Everyone's attention was pulled away from the trio and toward the owner of the voice instantly. What they saw was a famous face that no realm king would ever dare to forget.

She was Luo Guxie!

There was a massive difference between the Luo Guxie they remembered and the one they were currently seeing, however. For starters, she looked like she had aged an impossible amount of time. Her hair was half white, she had black rings around her eyes, and her countenance was horribly distorted.

If it wasn't for her unique aura, no one would be able to match her current appearance to "Fairy Guxie".

Somehow, not a single one of them had noticed her existence until now. She must have used some sort of bizarre method to cover up her aura.

Maybe it was because the god emperors were too high up in the sky, but they hadn't seemed to notice her until she revealed herself either.

Although her countenance was distorted, her strength hadn't diminished in the slightest. As the former strongest profound practitioner beneath the eastern region king realms, her strike had the power to split mountains and sunder the sky itself.

Of course, Yun Che was surrounded by god emperors. He didn't have to lift a finger, and ten Luo Guxies still wouldn't be able to harm a hair on his person.

The light screen though was a completely different story. There was no chance it would survive a full-powered hit from Luo Guxie.

The light screen was a list of all the realms that had sworn their loyalty to Emperor Yun. If it was destroyed before the eyes of every man and woman in the entire Primal Chaos, it would undoubtedly deal a severe blow to his image.

However, it had happened all too suddenly, and was right when everyone was distracted by something else. There was nothing the higher realm kings could do to stop her.

It was at this moment the eyes of the three Yama Ancestors shone with a black light.

Luo Guxie had been waiting for a perfect opportunity like this. Likewise, they had been ready to go from the start.

The moment she acted, all three Yama Ancestors immediately summoned their powers and each unleashed a wisp of black energy from above.

No one doubted Luo Guxie's strength, but she might as well be a child before the three Yama Ancestors.

In fact, if the Devil Queen hadn't ordered them to prevent even a single drop of her filthy blood from staining the ceremony, they would never have lowered themselves to attack her together.

The power of the three Yama Ancestors devoured all of Luo Guxie's space-splitting blast like it was nothing. It looked as easy as scattering a puff of smoke.

The suppression of power came just as quick as its emergence. It happened so quickly that even the Divine Masters couldn't react to what was going on.

Luo Guxie's ugly expression froze when her power disappeared before it could destroy the light screen.

At the same time, three wisps of energy so dark that her breath caught in her throat slipped into her body, suppressed her profound energy, sealed her profound veins and immobilized her down to every

cell. Forget moving or using her profound energy, she couldn't even feel the cold in her little finger anymore.

At Emperor Yun City, Mu Xuanyin raised her finger and made a tapping motion. The image of an ice phoenix flashed above Luo Guxie, and...

Ding!

A deep blue light spread across Luo Guxie's body with incredible speed until she was turned into a frozen statue. Then, she scattered into a cloud of diamond dust before many shrinking pupils.

There wasn't even a single trace of blood.

Mu Xuanyin then looked behind her and spoke in a chilling voice, "Take out the corpse dust. It will not taint this land."

Whoosh!!

Several black storms immediately appeared out of nowhere, seized the diamond dust before it had a chance to scatter, and took it to a far distant place where no one's senses could reach.

As promised, not even a single speck of Luo Guxie was left behind.

Dead silence enveloped the space beneath Emperor Yun City.

Luo Guxie, a peak level nine Divine Master, was the former strongest profound practitioner beneath the eastern region king realms and the better of all higher realm kings. Practically no one had not heard her name.

Her ruthless and terrifying attempt at revenge had certainly lived up to her reputation as well.

However...

Such a person had been crushed so quickly and easily that they could've mistaken her for a grasshopper by the roadside.

Moreover, the murder had happened right before the eyes of the higher realm kings present for the ceremony, and all the profound practitioners watching the projection right now. It struck a sense of terror in their hearts like nothing they had ever felt before.

Luo Guxie was already much stronger than all of them, and yet the subordinates of the Devil Master—no, Emperor Yun were even stronger than that. It was a kind of strength that surpassed even their wildest imagination.

If the powerful Luo Guxie could be annihilated in an instant, what could the rest of them possibly hope to do? Emperor Yun had just proven without lifting a finger that the resistance and wishful thinking of countless profound practitioners were fuel for the funniest, stupidest jokes in the entire universe.

The Shrouding Sky Realm King, Lu Zhou abruptly dropped to his knees, filled his throat with profound energy, and roared on top of his lungs, "His Magnificence's divine might is omnipotent and all-encompassing, and that crazy woman, Luo Guxie was but an ant before him! There is no greater sin

beneath this heaven than to defy Emperor Yun, and all those who attempt it shall be met with the severest death!”

“All who have partaken in Emperor Yun’s protection will strive to eliminate these evils after they’ve returned to our realms! These lowly ants will not disturb Emperor Yun’s mood!”

Lu Zhou’s full-throated shout successfully broke the higher realm kings from their stupor and caused them to drop to their knees. Even as they screamed out their oaths of loyalty though, they couldn’t dispel the fear in their souls for a very long time.

Luo Guxie had obviously plotted her revenge for a long time now, but not only had she failed to land a single speck of dust on Yun Che, Chi Wuyao had used her to cement Yun Che’s authority in the most direct and intimidating manner.

Meanwhile, Huo Rulie, Yan Juehai, and Yan Wancang all let out deep sighs of relief.

After that short but heart-throbbing interlude, no one was paying attention to the Flame God Realm anymore.

Their relief only lasted for a few breaths before overwhelming anxiety pressed down on their hearts.

In the eyes of countless people, the upper star realms were insurmountable existences, but to Yun Che, they were humble places at best.

As the Flame God Realm King, Huo Poyun must understand the consequences of his obstinance... maybe even stupidity.

But he...

Contrary to the people beneath the Emperor Yun City who were panicking, those standing above it looked completely unperturbed.

After shooting Yun Che a careful glance, and meeting the Devil Queen’s eyes for a brief pause, Qi Tianli rose to his feet again and continued his announcement:

“... Chi Wuyao shall be crowned the Great Empress. She is bestowed the power to command all four divine regions, utilize their resources, and control the lives of any being as she sees fit! Those who defy the Empress shall be dealt with as if they had defied the Emperor himself!”

Since ancient times, no consort of any plane had ever shared equal power with their ruler. It didn’t matter what they were called—queen, empress, queen mother or harem manager—they weren’t allowed to interfere with the matters of ruling, and that was that.

However, Emperor Yun’s empress had been bestowed almost equal power to him!

“... Witch Jie Xin, Witch Jie Ling, Witch Ye Li, Witch Yao Die, Witch Qing Ying, Witch Lan Ting, Witch Hua Jing, Witch Yu Wu, and Witch Chanyi shall be made the imperial concubines of Emperor Yun and the exclusive servants of Empress Chi. They shall assist the Emperor and the Empress with their needs.”

“Heavenly Wolf Star God, Xingwu is bestowed the title ‘Consort Star’. She will reside in Rainbow Star Palace...”

“Brahma Heaven God Emperor, Yun Qianying is bestowed the title ‘Consort Shadow’. She will reside in Silk Shadow Palace...”

“Meiyin Divine Maiden, Shui Meiyin is bestowed the title ‘Consort Sound’. She will reside in Color Sound Palace...”

“Blue Dragon Emperor, Qing Que is bestowed the title ‘Consort Blue’. She will reside in Blue Dragon Palace...”

“Deep Sea God Emperor, Cang Shuhe is bestowed the title ‘Consort Grace’. She will reside in Shuhe Palace...”

Witches, Star Gods, Lady Goddesses, and even the God Emperors... every name was a star a Divine Master dared not even dream of in a lifetime. Yet, they were all going to become the consorts of the great emperor.

“Snow Song Realm King, Mu Xuanyin is bestowed the title ‘Consort Ice’. She will reside in Ice Phoenix Palace...”

More than half of the higher realm kings looked up in shock the second they heard this. Luckily for them, they had the presence of mind—or rather lack thereof—to keep their mouths shut.

In the Snow Song Realm, the already silent crowd froze all of a sudden.

Then, their eyes widened like saucers, and their jaws hit the floor with resounding thunks.

Chapter 1882 - Heart Set on Speeding Home

The entire world knew that Mu Xuanyin was Yun Che’s master.

Several years ago, Mu Xuanyin had literally defended Yun Che to the death outside Blue Pole Star. It had been a choice and action that risked the very existence of Snow Song Realm itself.

It was such a sacrifice that anyone who had witnessed it with their own eyes couldn’t help but wonder whether they were more than just master and student.

There was only shocked silence beneath Emperor Yun City. If anyone had an objection to offer, they didn’t voice it. After all, Yun Che currently stood above every living being in the God Realm, and the rules were his to rewrite as he pleased. Forget romancing his master, he could do far worse than that, and no one would dare to say a word about it.

Of course, the Divine Ice Phoenix Sect had the biggest reaction out of everyone present.

After all, they were there in person when the discipleship ceremony took place.

“I knew it,” Mu Tanzhi muttered with a sigh. Mu Xuanyin’s unnatural actions and decisions back then all made sense now.

Mu Huanzhi was gnashing his teeth. “Yun Che, you anim—mmmm!”

Mu Tanzhi sealed his friend’s mouth with ice right before he committed heresy. “Are you trying to die? That’s Emperor Yun to you!”

Mu Huanzhi slapped Mu Tanzhi's arm away, but the indignation on his face hadn't disappeared. "I thought that the Ice Phoenix God Investiture Canon freezes one's emotions completely at peak cultivation, so why did the sect master..."

"Ceh!" Mu Tanzhi clicked his tongue disdainfully. "Your own Feixue is head over heels over Emperor Yun. Hypocritical much?"

"..." That shut up Mu Huanzhi completely.

Back in Emperor Yun City, Mu Bingyun snuck a curious peek at her sister and noticed that she was completely unperturbed by the visible shock coming from the realm kings. Not even the diamond dust circulating around her was disturbed in the slightest.

It made sense though. She had literally died and come back to life. There was nothing left in this world that could sever the bond between her and Yun Che anymore, much less something as trivial as the judgment of the people.

Meanwhile, Qi Tianli was still continuing his announcement:

"... an 'Enforcement Bureau' will be established in each and every upper star realm, middle star realm, and lower star realm of the four Divine Regions. It will be responsible for maintaining the law and order of all realms."

"Cang Sh*tian shall be made the Chief Enforcer, the head of all enforcers... Furthermore, a deputy chief enforcer shall be appointed to each divine region. The Great Glazed Light Realm King Shui Qianheng will oversee the Eastern Divine Region; the Blue Dragon Divine Attendant Qing Ruo will oversee the Western Divine Region; Chief Enforcer Cang Sh*tian will oversee the Southern Divine Region; and the imperial concubine Yuwu will oversee the Northern Divine Region..."

"The enforcers will answer to Emperor Yun and the Great Empress only. Furthermore, the king realm realm kings and the enforcers will be supervising each other. If an enforcer is discovered to have committed a crime themselves, they will be considered to be doubly guilty!"

Absolute silence dominated the entire God Realm. There wasn't a single person—especially the rulers—who didn't understand what the creation of the "Enforcer Bureaus" and the "Enforcers" meant. It meant that the Chief Enforcer all the way down to the lowest Enforcer of a lower star realm would be clutching every inch of the God Realm in a death grip in the name of Emperor Yun very soon. That the announcement was so brief and to the point almost felt like an understatement of the scale of the matter.

After that bombshell announcement was the announcement of various rules:

"... dark profound energy is but an offshoot of all the profound energies that exist in this universe. Neither are better or more righteous than the other. Therefore, all profound practitioners are forbidden from discriminating, hurting or exiling a dark profound practitioner from now on... all dark profound practitioners are required to set down their resentment and live in harmony with their new neighbors as well. Anyone who does harm to another profound practitioner without good cause or reason shall be punished equally."

It was as if the universe itself had let out a collective sigh of relief.

Since Yun Che had been betrayed by the three divine regions, and had returned with the Northern Divine Region behind him, everyone was afraid to even imagine the vengeance he would bring.

This was especially true for the Northern Divine Region. It was an entire divine region worth of resentment that had been accumulating over a million years. As the victor, Yun Che could've elevated the Northern Divine Region above all other divine regions with just his words. He could've given them the absolute freedom to trample over all the other divine regions just like they had suffered for a million years.

However, not only had the Devil Master granted them equal status to the northern region's profound practitioners, but he had even stopped them from venting their righteous hatred.

There should've been nothing in the world that could absolve the northern region's profound practitioners from their million-year old resentment. The Devil Master who led them out of their cage and reversed their very fate... was the only exception.

They couldn't help but feel grateful toward him despite themselves. Even the establishment of the Enforcers suddenly felt much more tolerable than before.

"... profound practitioners of the three divine regions are encouraged to marry the profound practitioners of the Northern Divine Regions, but only if the persons involved are truly content with one another. Forced marriage is considered a serious crime!"

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"The Wood Spirits are the universe's purest beings, and a gift from the ancient Creation Gods. Therefore, the act of hunting Wood Spirits is considered an unforgivable sin! Anyone who breaks this rule shall be sentenced to death alongside their sects and clans, not even a God Emperor is exempt from this rule. Hunt a Wood Spirit, and you will die!"

"If a Wood Spirit is discovered to have been killed in a domain, everyone from the lord of the domain to the realm king themselves will be punished severely!"

The new ban on the hunting of the Wood Spirits could only be described as horrifying.

Not only were God Emperors NOT exempted from the crime of hunting a Wood Spirit, but everyone ranging from the domain lord all the way to the realm king would be punished severely for it. Harsh didn't even begin to describe the new rule. It was biased to the absolute extreme in favor of the Wood Spirits.

The God Realm had always had a ban on the hunting of Wood Spirits, but Yun Che had witnessed its effectiveness with his own two eyes.

An entire Wood Spirit Royal Family had been slaughtered for poor reasons. The first of its two remaining survivors, He Lin had saved his life. The second, He Ling had left her tears in his heart and willingly bound herself to him as a poison spirit for eternity. She was also the only person to have witnessed his fall from grace and return to it in its entirety.

After everything the Wood Spirit Race had done for him, no amount of bias or repayment was considered too much.

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“... profound practitioners of the God Realm are forbidden from harassing the lower realms. Further more, no sect or profound practitioner is allowed to travel to a lower realm planet without having reported to an Enforcement Bureau first!”

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“Fen Daoqi is appointed the new emperor of the Burning Moon Realm... Yan Wu is appointed the new emperor of the Yama Devil Realm. She will command the Yama Devil Realm and its subordinate realms... Yan Tianxiao is bestowed the title “Ardent Devil Yama Emperor”. His memorial tablet will be placed in the Ardent Devil Hall of Emperor Yun City, and his descendants shall receive the direct protection of Emperor Yun for all generations to come. All descendants of the Ardent Devil Yama Emperor will be exempted from death, even if they commit a crime that is deserving of it.”

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While the Qilin Emperor was announcing the rules to every living being in the four Divine Regions...

At a small country called Eastern Frost in the Northern Divine Region.

Eastern Frost was a small and insignificant country located in the Eastern Ruins Realm. Its nation’s power hadn’t changed much throughout the years either. However, its status had been elevated to an unprecedented height because of one tiny fact: it was rumored that the Devil Master had stayed in Eastern Frost for a brief period when he first arrived in the Northern Divine Region.

It was even rumored that he had once bedded its princess, Dongfang Hanwei.

As a result, there were almost no middle or upper star realms within the Five Nether Ruins who hadn’t heard of Eastern Frost today.

For the past couple months, countless experts, hegemony, and even realm kings had visited their tiny country with great gifts in tow. They were especially humble when they were in the presence of Dongfang Hanwei.

It was a kind of honor their humble country had never even imagined since its foundation, much less received.

Right now, everyone was watching the projection of Yun Che and listening to the Qilin Emperor declaring the new rules. As the sky darkened, the unprecedented grand coronation ceremony that shattered every custom and tradition finally seemed to be approaching its end.

On the ground, Dongfang Hanwei, the princess of Eastern Frost was staring at the projection high up in the sky and clasping her hands before her chest. Her eyes looked misty, and her mind seemed to be anywhere but there.

The Eastern Frost Monarch quietly made his way to her side before saying, “If you ask me, you should go. Go to the Southern Divine Region and show that you have the courage to take that first step, no matter how impossibly far he is. If nothing else, I don’t wish for my daughter to fall into a different cage after the Northern Divine Region has just escaped theirs.”

“ ... ”

There was a long, long silence.

The Devil Queen, the God Emperors, the Lady Goddesses... even the exalted Witches were only worthy of becoming his imperial concubines.

In the end, Dongfang Hanwei closed her eyes and shook her head slightly. She still didn't say a word, but her fingers unconsciously tightened around a pure white jade that was hanging in front of her chest.

She ultimately didn't take that first step.

Yun Che had never returned to the East Ruins Realm or Eastern Frost after he left the Five Nether Ruins, and he never would.

Many years later, after Dongfang Hanwei would inherit the throne from her father and become the new Eastern Frost Monarch, she would become a great ruler who was known to have governed fairly, united her people, and helped her country prosper. She would borrow the lingering presence of Yun Che and transform Eastern Frost from a small country into a true nation that occupied one corner of the realm.

She would never marry, and she would remain single even until the end of her life.

Not only that, but every citizen of Eastern Frost knew that their monarch wore a pure white jade around her neck. It was perfectly normal, and it was completely unworthy of her status, but she was never seen without it...

Many, many years later, when she breathed her last and finally departed this mortal world, the jade would break to reveal a single strand of hair...

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A new era, a new set of rules, and the first true great emperor in the history of God Realm.

When the image of Yun Che's cold, unrelenting gaze had imprinted itself permanently into every God Realm profound practitioner's soul, when the grand coronation ceremony had finally reached its end, and when the projection had finally vanished from the sky, the people abruptly realized that multiple Enforcement Bureaus had already been set up in their star realms.

They might even have stood right next to an Enforcer and never known about it.

No one knew how deep Emperor Yun's influence ran. No one dared to even venture a guess. What they did know was that the rules that were just announced would be their new life's commandments. It was either obey, or die.

In reality, Yun Che himself had no idea how deep his influence ran. After all, he had left everything on that side of things in Chi Wuyao's care. However, he was certain that Chi Wuyao hadn't completed the web that would exercise absolute control over all the star realms of the three divine regions. It was physically impossible to achieve in half a year even if she was an omnipotent god.

However, the "careless" reveal of Enforcement Bureaus had still achieved its intended purpose. It painted yet another heavy coat of darkness upon the already suffocating three divine regions.

It was only a matter of time now. When the Enforcers grew in strength, and the great web was fully formed, Yun Che and Chi Wuyao would finally have complete control over the entire God Realm.

Yun Che wouldn't allow any harm to befall Blue Pole Star ever again.

Just the same, Chi Wuyao wouldn't allow any harm to befall Yun Che, not even if the possibility was miniscule.

What this meant was that starting now, she would keep an eye on all the geniuses who were born among the four divine regions.

It was a bit ironic, but some star realms held huge celebrations after their realm kings returned home when Yun Che himself hadn't done anything of the sort after his own grand coronation ceremony. Whatever the reason for the celebration might be—relief for having escaped a gruesome fate, or joy at the emergence of a new era—the Northern Divine Region was definitely not the only divine region which was welcoming a new lease on life.

Not only that, their actions misled some star realms into thinking that they would be punished if they didn't celebrate after the grand coronation ceremony, so one celebration grew to ten, ten grew to a hundred, and a hundred grew to every realm in the three divine regions. The scale of the celebrations were no joke either. It was as if they were afraid that the world wouldn't hear about them.

Yun Che was eulogized across every star realm, the kings realms he annihilated were lambasted as sinner realms, and the once highly-esteemed Eternal Heaven God Emperor was crucified as the absolute worst sinner of the current God Realm. Even the once almighty Dragon Monarch was described as an evil dragon who was rightfully punished by Emperor Yun.

It was incredible how certain things like rumors could spiral completely out of control in just a short time. When countless years have passed, and the people of the future look back on this part of history, it is impossible to say what the written records, the official history, will look like.

None of this mattered to Yun Che though.

From the moment he appeared in Emperor Yun City and cast his shadow down upon the entire God Realm, his cold, dark eyes... had never strayed from the direction of Blue Pole Star.

This is taking too long, but... at least it's finally over.

The Heretic God's last wish, my duty, the root of all calamities, the calamities themselves and everything else... it's finally all over.

There were only three days left before Yun Wuxin's twentieth birthday.

He couldn't wait to return home.

Chapter 1883 - Blue Pole Snow Heart

Blue Pole Star, Profound Sky Continent, Divine Phoenix Empire.

The unapproachable Divine Phoenix Forbidden Ground, today a vast crimson barrier had been established for a certain purpose.

Rolling inside the barrier was a flame hot enough to burn the entire Divine Phoenix Empire to ash. Even with the barrier, the phoenix flames still dyed the sky crimson.

Rumble!!

A pair of phoenix flames intertwined with one another before turning into a massive explosion. A resonant phoenix cry cut through the air, and a scorching ray split the sea of flames in half. After the ray of flames came to a stop, it extinguished itself to reveal the slender figure of a young woman.

A short distance away from her, the sea of flames also subsided to reveal a woman of dreamlike beauty. As the fabric of her clothes slowly fell to the pull of gravity, and the last of the crimson flames vanished from her hand, a faint smile that could enchant the entire world crossed her lips. "Very good. You've improved tremendously in the World Ode of the Phoenix since your mental state changed half a year ago. Soon, there won't be anything left I can teach you."

However, a scorching wind rose right after she finished her sentence. Yun Wuxin was nearly out of profound energy, but she stubbornly kept her phoenix flames burning and said, "I can... still continue, master."

Feng Xue'er withdrew her smile a bit and asked slowly, "You've been working really hard as of late. Are you planning to search for your father in God Realm again?"

"No!" Yun Wuxin clenched her fists and gritted her teeth. "I just... want to be able to hit him harder... when he finally comes back!"

Feng Xue'er shook her head and walked up to Yun Wuxin with a half-smile on her face. "Wuxin, forget beating him, you won't even know what to say when you finally meet him. Anyway, it's one thing to push yourself and another to go overboard, especially since you're the one who decided to wait until he comes home yourself. Also, the day after tomorrow is your twentieth birthday. You will sadden a lot of people if they see you injured."

"Hmph!" Yun Wuxin looked down and bit her lip. "It's not like he will be there... or be saddened by it."

Feng Xue'er: "..."

"Master," Yun Wuxin suddenly looked up and asked in a small voice, "It's been five years since he went away. Do you really... not resent him?"

"No."

The reply was unhesitant and immediate. It was laced with deep worry, but she truly couldn't sense even a tinge of resentment in them.

"Not even a little?" Yun Wuxin whispered.

"Not even a little."

Feng Xue'er replied in a calm and gentle voice, "There are many things I'm unsure about, but not this one. He can be gone for five years, a hundred years or even a thousand years... but I know, that it is because he has no other choice, not because he has given up on us."

Surprise took Yun Wuxin for a second before she muttered, "You're just the same as mom... you're both so... foolish when it comes to father."

Feng Xue'er shook her head smilingly. "A long time ago, your father stranded himself in the Primordial Profound Ark for my sake. As for your mother, death trailed her and your father's footsteps during the few months they spent together in the Dragon God's Trial. Even so, the notion of abandoning your mother never crossed his mind."

"There is no love or hate in this world that is without reason. You say that we're foolish, but if you had known your father as well as your mom and I, you would know that he, in many cases, is the most foolish man in the entire world... it is why so many of us are willing to devote our hearts to him forever."

"..." Suddenly, Feng Xue'er turned completely silent. Then, her eyes started fogging at an unbelievable rate.

"Master?" Yun Wuxin looked up in surprise when her master's aura suddenly grew a bit out of control. "Are... are you thinking about him again?"

Feng Xue'er unconsciously reached out and grabbed Yun Wuxin's wrist tightly. She looked as if she was trying to confirm that she wasn't dreaming.

"Wuxin, I think... your twentieth birthday gift... will be the best gift in your life."

"I'll treasure your gift no matter what it is, mas—"

She heard something. A loose strand of aura caused Feng Xue'er's crimson belt to brush lightly against her cheeks.

She whipped around. She moved so fast that her mind was almost slower than the body.

A new person had appeared within the phoenix barrier that was supposed to isolate everything.

His white clothes and black hair looked the same as ever. His brows looked like sharpened swords, but his eyes looked warm enough to melt one's heart. Hanging on his lips was the faint smile he always wore when he was facing her.

Everything was exactly the same as she remembered. For a second, it felt as if they had just separated yesterday.

He could feel Blue Pole Star firmly beneath his feet. He could see Feng Xue'er and Yun Wuxin just a couple of meters away from him. He had imagined this moment in his mind over and over, and yet he still nearly lost control of himself when the moment finally arrived.

Slowly, he stretched out his arms and whispered, "Xue'er, Wuxin... I'm home."

"..." Yun Wuxin didn't react to his words. She looked frozen to the point where it looked as if someone had turned her to stone.

Feng Xue'er took a step toward him before stopping. Then, she pressed a hand on Wuxin's trembling shoulders and gave her a gentle push.

A warm breeze blew, and her father's arms were wrapped around her before she realized it.

Yun Che pulled her closer and held her as tightly as he dared... in that moment, it felt as if the world itself was granting him its warmth.

All the pain and suffering he had gone through for the past five years dissolved into powerless smoke that would never, ever pierce his soul again.

A breath passed... another breath passed... suddenly, Yun Wuxin began struggling mightily and thumping his chest with all she had. A strangled sob escaped her throat from time to time.

Yun Che continued to hug her gently but unyieldingly. He refused to let her go no matter how much she struggled.

Her struggles grew weaker and weaker until finally, her arms were wrapped around his waist, and her face was buried in his chest. Then, her strangled sobs turned into full blown cries.

Her last bit of resistance left her completely. She clung to her father and cried to release all the emotions she had smothered until now.

Five years of worry, concern, fear and resentment... everything had transformed into translucent tears that drenched Yun Che's chest in no time.

Yun Wuxin had long since outgrown the young, childish girl she had been a long time ago. She was the only daughter of Yun Che and a divine way cultivator. She was unquestionably one of the most important women on the Blue Pole Star, and she was looked up to and revered by all.

Before her family, she was a sweet-tempered and elegant woman. Before the masses, she was as cool and lofty as her own mother. Even from a great distance, the people were afraid that their gazes would somehow sully her pure image.

And finally, before her father, she cried as if she had transformed back into the child she once was.

Feng Xue'er watched his face with single-minded affection as she walked up to him. Then, she noticed his eyes.

At first glance, it seemed like he hadn't changed at all.

But...

Once upon a time, his eyes were as infinite and mysterious as the stars. It was what had drawn her to him and chained her heart to his forever. But now, his black pupils looked the same as ever, but the stars had faded away into pitch black darkness. It looked like a black hole that would suck in all the souls in the world with a single thought.

Her heart clenched painfully for a second. She couldn't imagine what he had gone through to change him so much in just five years.

Before she knew it, a warm hand had wrapped around her delicate wrist tightly. Their gazes met, and she saw both tenderness and deep regret in his eyes. "Xue'er, I... made you all worry... again."

Feng Xue'er shook her head gently before smiling at him. "You are back, and that is all that matters. Grandpa... dad... mom... everyone... is doing very well."

“Mn...” Yun Che squeezed out the word before he had to silence himself to keep the tremors in his voice from showing. Then, he touched Wuxin’s cheek with one hand and watched her tear-filled face, whispering, “My Wuxin... is all grown up.”

Each year, a girl underwent a wonderful transformation until they grew to full maturity. It was one of the most beautiful miracles nature had granted to this world.

But he... had missed seventeen of those twenty years.

They were years he would never, ever get back.

Yun Wuxin’s face was a complete mess at this point. The crying was such that she felt physically exhausted when she finally got it somewhat under control. She had definitely felt resentful and angry before this, and she had definitely resolved herself to beat him up with the greatest power she could muster when she met him, but when she actually came face to face with her father for real, when her father held her as if he would never let her go again, she felt as if she could do nothing else except cry and rejoice.

“Will... you... leave... again...”

Even the question she barely squeezed out of her lips was far, far more fearful than it was angry.

Yun Che shook his head slowly but determinedly. “No. Never again. I promise...”

“Uu... sob...” Yun Wuxin tried her utmost to hold back her tears. “You... always broke... your promises...”

“...” Yun Che felt a stab in his heart as he looked into his daughter’s eyes. His lips shivered a bit before he whispered, “Please believe me one more time... okay? This time... there is nothing in the world that can separate us anymore.”

Meanwhile, two women were standing high above the sky and watching this scene.

“We probably shouldn’t have followed him,” Chi Wuyao said with a small smile on her face. “Or rather, we should’ve waited until Wuxin’s birthday before visiting Blue Pole Star. I feel like our presence is tainting this reunion somehow.”

She then let out a sigh before continuing, “To think that little girl would’ve grown up so much.”

Unusually, Qianye Ying’er didn’t say anything.

Chi Wuyao side-eyed her before asking, “You’re not actually touched by this reunion, are you?”

“...” Qianye Ying’er’s eyebrows moved in a way that suggested that she had only just come back to herself. She then replied in a cold voice, “Some people view their daughters like treasures, and some toss them aside as thoughtlessly as sandals. Human nature truly is a curious thing.”

“I spent my whole life trying to become someone like Qianye Fantian, and yet all I want to do now is to stick by Yun Che’s side as much as I can.” Qianye Ying’er let out a self-derisive snort. “I bet the world and even you think that I’m one of the weirdest women you’ve ever seen.”

However, Chi Wuyao shook her head and said, “You are wrong. Even if you had never met Yun Che, you would never have become another Qianye Fantian.”

Qianye Ying'er: "..."

Chi Wuyao explained slowly, "Qianye Fantian killed your mother because you loved your mother so much that you were able to rise to become the unparalleled Brahma Monarch Goddess in less than a thousand years. In the same vein, you were willing to accept a slave imprint from Yun Che just to obtain Qianye Fantian's acknowledgement and save his life."

"You are cruel and cold-hearted toward people you don't care about, but you cherish those you do care for as deeply as Yun Che himself."

"Rivers and mountains may change, but not one's essential nature. A person's personality or philosophy may change drastically due to a certain event, but their true nature may not change even with the long passage of time. Even if nothing had happened at all, you would never have become a true villain like Qianye Fantian."

"Take Yun Che for example. His journey is easily the harshest anyone has ever seen, and yet his true nature has never truly changed."

Chi Wuyao's smile suddenly froze for a second.

It was because she recalled a woman whom she couldn't understand or forget even to this day.

Why had she changed so drastically...?

"Save your preaching for yourself!" Qianye Ying'er retorted.

"..." Chi Wuyao would've said something, but the memory of Xia Qingyue had fouled the mood somewhat.

"I have a question," Qianye Ying'er said suddenly.

"Hmm?" Chi Wuyao turned her head a little.

"What... what do you think would've happened between us if my child had..."

She didn't realize it, but her voice had grown distant, and her eyes a tad misty when she said this.

Chi Wuyao smiled a little before replying, "Go make a new baby if you want to know the answer. What happened back then was a tragedy, but at least you have an infinite amount of time to make up for it now. Let the past stay in the past."

Chi Wuyao looked down at the weeping Wuxin again. It was impossible not to think about that "Xi'er" who had never even met their father. She exhaled slowly.

She could only hope that this would stay between Mu Xuanyin and her for eternity.

"Hmph! I'm not that pretentious," snorted Qianye Ying'er when suddenly, she sensed Chi Wuyao leaving for somewhere. She asked with a frown, "Where are you going?"

"This is a small lower realm planet, but not only was it created together by the Heretic God and the Heaven Smiting Devil Emperor, but an unnatural number of True God Ruins are present in this world. They are the reason Yun Che became who he did."

“Now that I’m here, how can I not witness every corner of this planet with my own eyes?”

The voice faded, and Chi Wuyao was gone from her sight.

However, Qianye Ying’er stayed behind and resumed watching Yun Che from afar. She neither showed herself nor left his side.

Chapter 1884 - Father and Son

The rumor was uncertain, and no one saw him with their own eyes. However, news of Yun Che’s return still spread throughout the Profound Sky Continent and Illusory Demon Realm like a storm. In two days, almost no one from the elite force on both continents hadn’t heard the rumor.

The signs were pretty obvious after all. On that day, the entire Divine Phoenix City was in an uproar, the Blue Wind Queen abruptly left in the middle of a talk with the envoys, the weather of the Snow Region of Extreme Ice suddenly turned stormy, the Little Demon Empress cut a black scar of atop the Demon Imperial City as she departed and more...

It could only mean that Yun Che, after five years of absence, had finally returned to the Blue Pole Star.

Naturally, rumors of his demise on the higher planes also vanished like they never were.

Of course, the denizens of the Blue Pole Star could never guess how high Yun Che stood on the totem pole that was the Primal Chaos.

It was because it transcended even their wildest imaginations.

Unlike the previous reunion, this one encompassed life, death, despair, hope, the most painful loss, and the unlikeliest miracle to ever exist in the universe... It was precious beyond what any words could possibly describe.

Xiao Lie, Yun Qinghong, Mu Yurou, Cang Yue, Xiao Lingxi, Su Ling’er, Chu Yuechan, Huan Caiyi, Yun Wuxin... one by one, their images entered his eyes and became engraved on his soul. All the tribulations he had endured, all the blood he had stained his hands with, it was all worth it. Nothing—nothing, would ever steal them away from him again.

Last time, he had told them about the vast world that was the God Realm but had concealed many truths regarding his experiences. He couldn’t be honest because of various worries, unknown dangers, special circumstances and many other factors.

This time though, he told them everything. Every encounter, every tribulation; everything...

The Crimson Calamity, the betrayal right after Jasmine and him saved the world, the blood and dust of the dead when the “Blue Pole Star” was destroyed, the desperate escape to the Northern Divine Region, the realm of the dark after Mu Xuanyin sacrificed herself to save his life...

His ascension to Devil Master, his massacre of the three Divine Regions, his coronation as great emperor of the universe.

That being said, there were tidbits of his story that he obfuscated here and there. For starters, “Xia Qingyue” was never mentioned in his story. There was only the sinful Moon God Emperor, destroyer of the “Blue Pole Star” whom he slew with his own hands...

.....

Profound Sky Continent, Floating Cloud City, Xiao Clan.

The clan was a lot livelier than it was before. The city itself was bustling with cheer and movement.

Countless profound ships could be seen flying toward Floating Cloud City and descending on the outskirts. Their passengers watched the city from afar, but dared not enter it without permission.

One way or another, these people had learned that Yun Che was in Floating Cloud City right now. They also knew that today was his daughter’s twentieth birthday, so they had brought many gifts with them as well.

They were aware that there was almost no chance Yun Che would meet them in person. However, just because he wouldn’t receive them didn’t mean they could skip this visit.

“Daughter-in-law Wuyao of Chi greets her father and mother.”

Empress Chi Wuyao saluted Yun Qinghong and Mu Yurou the way a Blue Wind Nation’s daughter-in-law would salute her elders.

Despite Chi Wuyao’s best efforts to suppress her aura, she couldn’t prevent a wisp of a majestic presence from affecting the surroundings. For the denizens of a lower plane, even a wisp of the presence of the Devil Queen was too much to bear. That was why no one could say a word after she voiced her greeting.

Yun Che shot Chi Wuyao a helpless look before isolating her leaked soul presence with his own power. It was only then the people in the hall regained their minds.

“You are... the empress Che’er spoke of?”

Mu Yurou was on her feet before she knew it. Her gaze was attracted to Chi Wuyao’s person like there was a physical tether between them.

Yun Che’s women were without a doubt the best women ever on the Blue Pole Star. And yet, the black-dressed woman before them made the planet itself seem more insignificant than moss.

“Yes.” Chi Wuyao replied smilingly. She remained respectful and polite even though her age and experience far exceeded both her “parents”. “To be more precise, I married my husband two years ago as the Devil Queen. It has only been since the grand coronation that I have been known as the Empress.

“The first wedding was witnessed by everyone in the Northern Divine Region, but the interference of fate prevented us from having father and mother as our witnesses. It was a matter of great regret to both of us.”

“Please, rise.”

Before Chi Wuyao could say anything else, Mu Yurou strode up to her and pulled her up to her feet. Eyes cloudy with tears even before she began, she said, "Che'er said he might've... might've... a long time ago if it wasn't for you. No matter what happens, you will always be Che'er's empress and our greatest benefactor..."

"You mustn't call me your benefactor, mother," Chi Wuyao said with a smile. "Husband and I have been one in body and soul since a long time ago. It is only natural that we do everything in our power for each other..."

"Tch!" Beside Yun Che, Qianye Ying'er looked away as if she couldn't bear the sight. She felt like her skin would crawl away from her flesh if she watched any longer.

Unlike Chi Wuyao, she loved Yun Che but would never deign to pay her respects to Yun Che's relatives, not even if they were his own father and mother.

She hadn't said or done a thing except walking next to Yun Che since she and Chi Wuyao had arrived in Floating Cloud City. It was as if everyone except Yun Che was invisible to her.

Mu Yurou had always been a sentimental woman, so her reaction could only be described as perfectly natural. Her husband, Yun Qinghong, was a different story though. While Mu Yurou was speaking to Chi Wuyao, he had removed his gaze from the empress to let out a soundless sigh.

Although he had mentally prepared himself when Yun Che spoke of the former Devil Queen, his soul still shook like never before the instant he laid his eyes on her. He immediately knew then that this woman was someone who completely transcended his knowledge, common sense and even imagination.

... that someone like her had willingly bowed her head to the likes of them because of Yun Che felt...

A glimmer of something indescribable flashed across Yun Qinghong's eyes. Then, his cheerful smile returned like it had never disappeared in the first place.

"Wuxin, this is my meeting and birthday gift for you."

Meanwhile, Chi Wuyao was speaking to Yun Wuxin and sending a globe of black light flying into her hands.

"Thank you, Auntie Chi."

Yun Wuxin respectfully accepted the gift. When the black light faded, she saw that it was a small Profound Imagery Stone.

The look of surprise made it clear that this wasn't what she was expecting.

"A Profound Imagery Stone?" Yun Che shot Chi Wuyao a confused look. No matter how he looked at it, it was a perfectly normal Profound Imagery Stone.

Ignoring Yun Che, Chi Wuyao continued with a smile, "Your father is the emperor of all emperors, and knowing how much he loves you, there is nothing too precious in the world that he won't get for you himself. In the end, I could not find a more fitting gift than this recording..."

Big brother! Big brother!!"

Suddenly, an absolutely ecstatic shout came from afar. The next moment, a figure with a disheveled aura descended and ran straight into the hall.

The corners of Yun Che's mouth twitched a bit. By the time he turned his gaze, Xiao Yun was already standing in front of him.

"Big... brother!" Xiao Yun sobbed. When he finally saw Yun Che with his own eyes, he lost control of his emotions and hugged him, weeping.

"Long time no see, Xiao Yun." Yun Che patted Xiao Yun's shoulder once.

"You're okay... you're okay."

It took a long time before Xiao Yun finally managed to grit his teeth and stop his tears. Then, he recalled something, turned away and pulled a young man to his side. "Yongan, quick—"

The young man dropped to his knees before Xiao Yun could even finish his sentence. A full kowtow later, he said, "Yongan greets Uncle Yun."

The young man was over 2 meters tall. His fortitude shone through his facial features, and his eyes looked as bright as stars. His profound energy was almost at the Sky Profound Realm, and his future could only be equal or brighter than his father's.

"You're all grown up, Yongan." Yun Che let out a deep sigh as he pulled the young man to his feet.

Xiao Yongan's eyes turned wet as he said in a sincere voice, "I have never forgotten the favor I owe Uncle Yun. All these years, father and I have prayed long and hard for your safe return... although, we never doubted that you would be blessed by the heavens wherever you went."

"... good boy." Yun Che nodded lightly.

"Big Brother Yun." From behind the father and son, a beaming Number Seven Under Heaven stepped out while holding hands with a cute little girl. She looked to be only four to five years old.

Yun Che's eyes lit up with realization. "Is she..."

"She is Yongning." Number Seven Under Heaven crouched down and said to the young girl. "This man here is none other than the Uncle Yun from daddy and mommy's stories. Come on! Say hello to him."

I thought so. Yun Che's eyes grew warm as he shot Yongning a gentle smile. Number Seven Under Heaven had been pregnant on the day he left the Blue Pole Star, and Xiao Lie had named her Yongning back then. To see her this big already... it felt as if it had only been yesterday.

"Hello... Uncle Yun."

The young girl looked a bit scared because Yun Che was an unfamiliar face. After she greeted him, she immediately hid behind her mother before peeking out around her.

Yun Che greeted back quickly but warmly. While delighting at the fact that the Xiao Family had a pigeon pair already, he began thinking about what he should get for the little princess.

"Hahahahaha!"

Suddenly, a peal of booming laughter shook the entire Floating Cloud City. There was only one guy Yun Che knew whose laughter always reached his destination first.

“Grandfather!” Yun Che stepped toward his maternal grandfather immediately.

However, Mu Feiyan circled around his grandson like he didn’t exist and walked straight toward his great granddaughter. He then said, “Look at what your great grandfather brought you, Wuxin! It’s a once-in-a-thousand-years Purple Dragon Lizard! I caught it fresh from the Lightning Flame Valley, hahahahaha...”

Floating Cloud City shook again, but it didn’t shake up even a speck of dust.

Today was Yun Wuxin’s twentieth birthday. Naturally, it could only represent a clean start and a whole new beginning.

Xuanyuan Wentian... visitors from the God Realm... the fall of the Star Gods... the Crimson Calamity... the demise of the Blue Pole Star... the days of infinite hatred... the western region Dragon Monarch...

Everything... everything was permanently set in the past. All that was left was indestructible peace and harmony.

.....

The racket gradually settled, and the day turned into night.

Yun Qinghong was standing in a courtyard and gazing at the stars into the sky.

A long time ago, this was where Xiao Yun’s deceased father, Xiao Ying, had resided.

He seemed to have been standing here for a very long time, probably reminiscing about the past.

“Father.”

Yun Che walked up beside him and admired the surroundings for a bit. Almost nothing had changed despite the passing of five years. “Are you thinking about the past again?”

Yun Qinghong returned to himself and shot his son a smile. “Yes, and no.”

“Oh?”

“I’m just... thinking about something. If you would believe it, it is even more bizarre than the past five years of experiences you’ve told us about,” Yun Qinghong said slowly.

That piqued Yun Che’s curiosity. “What is it?”

“Are you... really my son?”

“Hahahaha!” Yun Che couldn’t help but laugh. “You don’t joke much, but when you do you definitely can catch someone off guard, father!”

He didn’t hear a responding laugh, however. When he looked, he saw that Yun Qinghong was staring at the sky without a smile at all. In fact, he looked unusually conflicted and melancholic.

Yun Che controlled himself and asked in a somewhat baffled tone, "Father, you can't possibly believe that?"

Yun Qinghong lowered his gaze and chuckled. "You are my and Yurou's son, and both our blood runs in your veins. The world may turn upside down, but that is one fact that will never change. However..."

A pause later, he continued, "I have never known the world named 'God Realm', but knowing that someone from that world can turn the entire Blue Pole Star to dust with a simple wave of their hand, I have no doubt that they are a kind of existence that I fundamentally don't understand. In fact, I may never understand it for as long as I live."

"But you... from the time you departed this world, to the time you became emperor of all things in the universe... it hasn't even been two decades yet." Yun Qinghong closed his eyes for a bit. "I just can't help but wonder... if I, Yun Qinghong, truly am capable of sowing a son like you."

Yun Che replied, "The fact that I am where I am now is proof of your excellence, isn't it?"

"No." Yun Qinghong shook his head. "Your father is not an unduly humble man. Even now, some traces of my youthful arrogance still lingers in my body. For example, I have been infinitely proud and delighted when you saved the Yun Family and the Illusory Demon Imperial Family from destruction, defeated Xuanyuan Wentian, and became the highest cultivator to ever live in both the Profound Sky Continent and Illusory Demon Realm. Time and time again, I have taken pride in my superiority for having sown a son like you."

"A person's destiny, horizon and limits are often determined by their bloodline and birth. That is a cruel but immutable fact. However, you currently stand at a level neither I nor the entire Yun Clan can ever hope to look up to, Che'er. Can you blame me for thinking what I did? If I am being honest, I feel more melancholic than proud after learning of everything you've achieved, son."

Yun Qinghong then chuckled as if he couldn't believe himself. "My god, am I actually feeling at a loss because my son is too outstanding? There can't be many fathers in the world who are in the same position as I am, hahaha."

"Alright, that's enough self-induced melancholy for the day." Yun Qinghong waved his hand before Yun Che could voice a reply. He then looked at his son and said, "Che'er, you must be busy with work now that you've become the great emperor of the God Realm, right? Are you going to leave soon?"

"Oh no," Yun Che said with a smile, "'Emperor Yun' is naught but a title to me. Wuyao is far better at ruling the God Realm than me anyway. With her skills, nothing will go wrong even if I disappear for centuries or even millennia."

"This is my home, not the God Realm."

"Good." Yun Qinghong finally cracked a heartfelt smile and said, "You have much to catch up with your wives and especially Wuxin. You have missed her for too long already."

"... I understand." Yun Che nodded strongly. "I will do my utmost to make up for everything I missed for the past five years."

Yun Che continued speaking with his father for a very long time after that. It wasn't until the moon set and the stars grew sparse that he finally saw his father off.

When Yun Qinghong was gone, Yun Che sat on the roof and fell into a long bout of melancholy just like his father had.

Xuanyuan Wentian had to plot for a thousand years before he was finally able to obtain a broken Divine Way body.

Long Bai had to cultivate nearly a hundred thousand years before he became the once venerated Dragon Monarch of the God Realm, and that was only because he was rescued and aided by Shen Xi herself.

And he...

He was only thirty some years old, and he had destroyed all of them and conquered the entire Primal Chaos.

He was a cripple before he was sixteen.

The turning point had been the day he was poisoned to death on his wedding day with Xia Qingyue. He had been "reborn" on the Azure Cloud Continent, then "reborn" back to the very same day...

Later on, he encountered Jasmine and obtained the inheritance of the Heretic God, gained the power of the Rage God, encountered the Phoenix Spirit and the Dragon God's soul, obtained Hong'er and the Primordial Profound Ark, run into the Golden Crow's Soul at the Illusory Demon Realm, and You'er when he was facing off the seemingly unbeatable divine way Xuanyuan Wentian...

After he had arrived in the God Realm, he had encountered the Ice Phoenix Divine Soul and the other Phoenix Spirit in the Ancient God Burying Inferno Prison, received special treatment by Shen Xi in the Forbidden Land of Samsara, and even been blessed with many gifts by the returned and ancient Heaven Smiting Devil Emperor herself...

He was carrying four of the seven Heavenly Profound Treasures—the Primordial Seal of Life and Death, the Eternal Heaven Pearl, the Sky Poison Pearl and the Mirror of Samsara—on his person right now. The World Piercer was in the hands of a confidant as well.

Any one of these blessings was something countless people, no, countless lifetimes of people could not even dream of obtaining.

He, however, had obtained them all in just twenty some years.

What...

What did I do to deserve so much fortune? And in such a short time no less.

In fact, variations of this question had flashed across his head many, many times in the past.

Tonight, Yun Qinghong had dragged them all out into the open.

Was it really "destiny"? Could it truly be described by "destiny" alone?

"I never believed in so-called fate until I met you. You... are definitely a person of great destiny!"

Jasmine had said this many times back then.

"Jasmine..."

Chapter 1885 - Father and Daughter

Xiao Clan, at a different courtyard.

Yun Wuxin raised the Profound Imagery Stone Chi Wuyao gave her and poured a small amount of profound energy into it. A recording immediately appeared beneath the night sky.

It was dark. Judging from the speed at which the space in the background was moving in one direction, the recording was probably set on a speedy profound ark.

There was a dark figure curled up in a tight corner of the ship. He looked like he was weathering the bitterest cold of the night.

His complexion was ashen-gray, and his half-lidded eyes looked as murky and hopeless as pools of stagnant water. The barest tinge of light in his pupils was the only thing that suggested that he was conscious at all.

Besides that, the man was rubbing the three Glazed Sound Stones she had created by her own hands again and again. The movement was mechanical and unconscious.

His lips were also parting and closing repeatedly as if he was muttering something again and again. His lightless eyes somehow managed to convey a pain that could only be described as soul-wrenching.

Yun Wuxin froze and instinctively covered her mouth with her palm.

"This recording was taken during your eighteenth birthday."

Chi Wuyao was standing beside her before she realized it. The now Empress said while watching the man in the projection, "That day, he had killed the son of the man he hated the most, Zhou Xuzi, and driven him to the brink of collapse. You could never imagine how terrifying and monstrous he looked. He would never want you to see that side of him."

Yun Wuxin: "..."

"Whenever you crossed his mind though, that side of him would vanish... and be replaced by this pitiful man before you."

Chi Wuyao exhaled slowly. "I know that you harbor a lot of resentment toward him. He has missed you all these years and broken his promise to you again and again after all. However..."

"Please believe that there is no one in this world who loves you as much as he does."

"You and everyone else may have been tormented by the most unbearable worry and impatience, but he... was cooked by the worst imaginable pain and despair. After all, he had witnessed the death of what he had believed to be his homeworld from the start until the end... there was no one in the world who could claim that they shared his pain. No one."

“That wasn’t the worst of it either. He wanted to die. He wanted to die so badly that the desire was barely held back by his thirst for vengeance and other... considerations. His mood and actions at the time can only be described... I’m too scared to recall those days.” Chi Wuyao slowly closed her eyes before continuing in a silent voice, “Even the blind could see that he was fully resolved to join you all on the other side once his vengeance was over. If what happened later hadn’t happened, I don’t think I would’ve had the power to dissuade him from it.”

It was why Chi Wuyao had thanked a clearly hostile Qianye Ying’er from the bottom of her heart. “Well, I personally would like to thank you for all you did.”

“...” Yun Wuxin’s fingers tightened bit by bit. She was able to suppress her sobs, but she couldn’t stop her tears from pouring out of her eyes or her slender body from trembling uncontrollably.

Chi Wuyao continued, “Your father is a far greater man than you can imagine. His greatest achievement isn’t his saving of the God Realm or his conquering of the four Divine Regions, but his decision to forgive even after everything he has been through.”

“So please don’t resent him any longer. He has had to overcome the cruelest and hardest obstacles in the world to reunite with you all. Even now, there are still many deep and hidden wounds in his heart that remain unhealed; wounds that only you... can provide balm for.”

The projection ended, and Yun Wuxin abruptly faced a certain direction. A blink later, the girl had disappeared into the night.

“You dote on him like no one I’ve ever seen.”

A cool voice suddenly appeared from behind Chi Wuyao.

“Dote?” Chi Wuyao smiled and spun elegantly to face the newcomer. “That is an apt choice of words.”

Chu Yuechan kept silent.

Chi Wuyao stared at Chu Yuechan for a few seconds before smiling wider. “Be it in terms of appearance, presence or gaze, you really are quite similar to Feixue. No wonder...”

“Feixue?” Chu Yuechan frowned a little. “What do you mean?”

“Let’s just say you may meet her in the future.” Chi Wuyao smirked a bit. “Speaking of which, I have something I dearly need your help with.”

Chu Yuechan replied, “Please don’t say it like that. You are the Devil Queen of the Northern Divine Region and the Empress of the God Realm. I highly doubt that I can offer you any help at all.”

Everyone knows what the title of Empress meant. It wouldn’t be an exaggeration to say that she was the first of all hiswives.

Not even a woman of Chu Yuechan’s temperament could disregard this completely.

“You are exaggerating, sister.” Chi Wuyao smiled. “We are both husband’s wives. Hence, we are as equal as any sisters in the world. Also, if I studied the customs of the Profound Sky Continent correctly, I believe I should be addressing you as ‘older sister’.”

“... that will be unnecessary.” The cool indifference in Chu Yuechan’s eyes melted a little. She couldn’t help but be impressed by Chi Wuyao’s readiness to lower herself to her level despite being Empress of the God Realm. “What is it that you wish to ask me about?”

“I want to know everything you know about her.” Chi Wuyao’s voice abruptly turned darker. “I want to know everything about Xia Qingyue.”

“Qingyue?” Chu Yuechan frowned a little.

“Yes,” Chi Wuyao confirmed. “To my knowledge, she joined Frozen Cloud Immortal Palace as Chu Yueli’s disciple, your younger sister. I know for a fact that you cared deeply for her because you had been looking for a way to help Xia Qingyue achieve her breakthrough. It was how you and Yun Che came to run into each other in the first place.”

“But why would you want to learn about her?”

“It’s because she sits in my heart like an unsolved puzzle.” Chi Wuyao let out a sigh. “You see, I have a habit that one might say is more bad than good. I am unable to let go of a puzzle until it is solved no matter how much time has passed. That is why I wish to learn more about her. If nothing else, I would know how I’ve come to misjudge her so thoroughly.”

Chu Yuechan’s frown deepened as a certain realization dawned upon her. She lowered her voice before asking, “Now that I think about it, he has not mentioned Qingyue even once since his return... what on earth happened to her?”

Chi Wuyao: “...”

“I can tell you everything.” Chu Yuechan looked Chi Wuyao directly in the eye. They looked like a pair of lofty crescents. “But you must tell me what happened to her as well. She was my disciple after all.”

“Very well.” Chi Wuyao nodded without hesitation. “However, I will need you to enlighten me with your knowledge first. Otherwise, your account will surely be twisted by what I have to tell you.”

“... ask away.”

Chi Wuyao had already set up a sound isolation barrier beforehand.

The name “Xia Qingyue” was such a taboo to Yun Che that he wasn’t even willing to hear it, much less say it. Naturally, she wouldn’t allow him to eavesdrop on what would most likely be a lengthy conversation regarding Xia Qingyue.

Chi Wuyao didn’t really believe that the conversation would provide her with much insight, however. Xia Qingyue was just a girl when she first joined Frozen Cloud Immortal Palace. Her mind might very well have not matured yet.

Still, she must try whatever she could. Her doubts had developed into a kind of defiance unlike anything she had ever experienced. An answer may not exist, but she couldn’t rest easy until she had exhausted all possibilities, and perhaps not even then.

.....

On a roof, Yun Che removed his gaze from the night sky and looked in a certain direction. It wasn't long before a dainty, lively woman descended from the sky and landed next to him.

"Wuxin," Yun Che called out softly while taking in his daughter's features. She really had grown up to become as beautiful as her mother was.

Instead of answering, Yun Wuxin shot her father a long look before sitting beside him. She slowly leaned her head on his shoulder, wrapped her arms around his arm, and tightened her grip.

"..." His sorrow and other complicated emotions instantly dissolved into infinite warmth. He tilted his head slightly until strands of his daughter's hair were tickling his nose before saying, "The night sky is definitely different after the Blue Pole Star was teleported from the Eastern Divine Region to the Southern Divine Region, but my feelings haven't changed one bit."

"This is my homeland. No world no matter how lofty can ever replace it."

"Father," Yun Wuxin said quietly, "When the time is right, would you take me to see the world you call the God Realm? I wish to see all the places you've traveled."

"Sure!" A smiling Yun Che declared in a swaggering tone, "You may travel wherever you like! Right now, the entire universe is open to you and I. There is no place we father and daughter cannot travel to!"

"Heehee..." Yun Wuxin giggled and rubbed her head on Yun Che's shoulder a little. For a moment, it was as if she had returned to that spoiled little girl she once was.

A long distance away, Qianye Ying'er was watching this scene from afar. She had been basking in the cold wind for a very long time, but she still didn't approach the duo as she had originally intended to.

For some reason, even she couldn't find it in her to disturb them.

"That damn daughtercon!" She huffed indignantly to herself. "If he likes daughters that much, I'll just give birth to them until he's sick of them! Hmph! These mortal women think they can compete against me!? Just you wait..."

She left after that to spare herself the frustration.

Back to Yun Che and Yun Wuxin, the latter was currently closing her eyes and enjoying a peaceful moment with her father. Her dainty nose trembled almost indiscernibly as she breathed.

Her aunts, her master and even her own mother would often duke it out secretly or openly to spend even a minute longer with her father. However, they never, ever tried to snatch away her quality time with her father. As a result, she became the biggest monopolizer of her father's time, and she had long since memorized his scent.

It would be an understatement to say that Yun Che's world had been turned upside down for the past couple of years or so. However, his scent had barely changed at all.

He had reached heights she couldn't even begin to comprehend, and yet there wasn't a single impurity to be found in his love for his homeland or his love for her.

Chi Wuyao's words had been both stifling and painful. They also converted the last vestiges of her resentment into deep, warming pain.

"Father," Yun Wuxin said in a small voice, "I love your birthday gift. I also have a gift for you."

"Oh? Show me!" Yun Che's eyes lit up like lanterns.

Yun Wuxin giggled before holding up her hands. A small and delicate jadestone was sitting in them.

The jade was icy white and pure in color. It glowed mysteriously under the faint moonlight and above the girl's snow white skin.

"This Eternal Imagery Stone is..."

It was none other than the same Eternal Imagery Stone he had obtained from Mu Feixue and gifted to Yun Wuxin later.

The Eternal Imagery Stone was basically a superior version of the Profound Imagery Stone because it would never deteriorate on its own. Just the same, the recordings it held would never disappear.

Yun Wuxin gave the Eternal Imagery Stone a press, and a clear, distinct projection appeared in front of them both.

The background of the projection was the Yun Clan's courtyard. In this recording, his daughter looked exactly the same as he remembered her.

"Daddy, it's my fifteenth birthday today, and I received a lot of precious gifts from everyone. You didn't come back on time though."

He had dreamed of her face and her voice countless times in the past years. In this moment, an uncontrollable warmth spread across his heart and his eyes.

"It's fine though. I'm sure it's because daddy is bogged down by some very important business or something." The girl's smile had looked as pure and beautiful as an angel's. "You're not allowed to skip my birthday gift though! You better have it with you when you come back!"

"Also, a punishment is in order since you broke your promise. This is the proof, so you can't say it never happened, heehee."

The image changed. The girl in the projection had lost some of her childishness and became more adult, but she looked a lot prettier than before. Her features were dazzling, and her jet black hair cascaded to her waist like a waterfall. It had only been a year, but she looked like she had been reborn as a whole new person.

"I'm sixteen now, daddy. Why aren't you home yet?"

"I'm much taller than I was last year. Grandpa, grandma, master and aunties all say that I have become as pretty as mom. I really want you to show you how big I've grown."

"I'm really worried... but I know you're the greatest man in the world. I'm sure nothing bad will happen to you. I'll patiently wait for you to return home."

The image changed again, and Wuxin became seventeen.

Her child-like features had completely faded by this point. All that was left was a long, slender body and a face too beautiful to look at directly. Her eyes and her facial features were starting to pick up bits and pieces of her mother's aloofness as well.

"Daddy, this is how I look at seventeen years old... I'm recording this with the Eternal Imagery Stone you gave me because mom once said that missing my growth will definitely be the greatest regret of your life."

"But... why aren't you home yet... why have you been gone for so long..."

Yun Che: "..."

This time, the background of the projection turned into that of a snowy region. At eighteen years old, Yun Wuxin was practically the spitting image of her mother. She looked as proud and lonely as a snow lotus amidst the snow.

"My coming of age has passed, but you still aren't home, father. You told me more than once that you couldn't wait to see how I looked as a grown-up. Well, I'm all grown up now, but where are you...?"

"Everyone's worried about you. Rumors of your demise have begun spreading on both the Profound Sky Continent and Illusory Demon Realm. I know the rumors are fake. You must be leading a peaceful life, right? I... I hope that is the case even if there is a chance... that you are too engrossed in the higher realms to return..."

The snowy wind blew through the young woman's hair. It was almost thigh length at this point. It was her birthday that day, and yet she was standing alone on a mountain of unknown height and gazing at a sky of unknown depth—

"I want to travel to the God Realm to find you, but no one will agree to it. I don't want to worry mother and everyone more than they already are either."

"If you don't come back, I swear I'll hate you until you finally return..."

"Ah!"

Yun Wuxin let out a panicked cry as she turned off the recording prematurely. Her gaze was glued to her knees, and her fingers were clutching the hem of her skirt anxiously as she stuttered, "T-this one doesn't count! I... I was just babbling nonsense... I don't hate you."

She thought that Yun Che would say something, but all she heard was dead silence. When she finally couldn't wait any longer and peeked sideways, she noticed that he was biting his lips and tearing up a little.

She faced toward him and purposely asked in a small, teasing voice, "You... you're not crying, are you father?"

Yun Che abruptly looked away and snorted. "I'm sorry? Your dad's the great emperor of the God Realm, no, the master of the Primal Chaos itself! Like I would shed tears so easily!"

He was circulating profound energy to chase away the water in his eyes even if it was only a moment sooner.

Instead of teasing Yun Che further, Yun Wuxin leaned back on Yun Che's shoulder again and whispered, "Auntie Qianye told me you've married a lot of consorts during your grand coronation ceremony. I'm sure you will have many more sons and daughters in the future. Will you still spoil me like this when the day arrives?"

"..." Yun Che turned a little red. "Don't listen to her bullcrap. I... I didn't marry that many consorts."

"Really?" Yun Wuxin pinched Yun Che's arm disapprovingly. "But auntie Chi told me that her 'dowry' alone amounts to nine Witches."

"Ahem hem hem!" Yun Che turned even redder and said guiltily, "She did that all by herself! I had no idea it was going to happen until it did!"

"What about little Auntie Shui then? Auntie Qianye also said that she was engaged to you when she was just fifteen."

"#¥%..." Yun Che nearly spat out some imaginary water. The one hundred and eighty poses he was going to punish Qianye Ying'er with later flashed through his mind!

"Actually, now that I think about it..." Yun Wuxin tilted her head thoughtfully. "Why don't I have a brother or a sister yet? I already had a lot of aunties before you left the God Realm, and now that number has practically doubled and more."

"You... you don't really have a weird problem, do you father?"

"OF COURSE NOT!!" Yun Che roared out like he was struck by lightning. With a mask of perfect calmness but a heartbeat that sounded like thunder, he declared, "I just don't feel like it yet! Who do you think I am? It is as easy as snapping my finger if I really want to!"

"... besides, I already have the greatest daughter in the entire world. I don't think I would regret it even if I never have another son or daughter in my lifetime," he said half-seriously.

"Hmph! You truly are a natural-born ladykiller, father! You make up these lines with naught an effort at all! It's too bad they're no use against your daughter!" Yun Wuxin said playfully.

"..." Yun Che couldn't refute this at all.

"Oh right!" Suddenly, Yun Wuxin exclaimed as if she recalled something. "Was the Blue Pole Star teleported to the Southern Divine Region on the tenth day of your departure, father?"

Yun Che thought for a second before answering, "That is correct... how do you know that?"

He didn't recall being too specific about the time when he told everyone his story.

"I knew it." Yun Wuxin said with a pleased expression, "It's because a strange phenomenon overtook both the Profound Sky Continent and the Illusory Demon Realm when it happened. I even recorded it with the Eternal Imagery Stone. Take a look."

The Eternal Imagery Stone released its special, icy light once more, and a projection appeared before Yun Che.

In the projection, the blue sky and space itself were shaking unnaturally. The clouds were scattering to bits, and a red light had overtaken the entire sky in just the blink of an eye. It was also growing redder and redder by the second.

The red light was dimmer than expected, and it definitely wasn't as piercing as the crimson crack had been. Yun Che still immediately recognized it as the unique light of the World Piercer.

It had been a planetary-scale teleportation from one divine region to another divine region. Maybe it would've been different if the World Piercer was fully charged, but it had still taken five to six breaths before the red light finally faded away into nothing. Of course, that amount of time meant nothing at all even to a mortal.

The spatial shock gradually came to an end.

Yun Che immediately noticed that the sky looked vastly different from how it used to. The denizens of the Blue Pole Star had much weaker spiritual perception and eyesight, however. He highly doubted many people would notice it even at night.

The projection disappeared there, and Yun Wuxin said, "At the time, many people guessed that it was caused by a never-before-seen earthquake that impacted both continents, or a giant meteor with extraordinarily rich fire element crashing against the Blue Pole Star."

"However, the people forgot about it pretty quickly since it only lasted for a short moment, and the aftermath was mostly negligible."

"Of course, no one thought that the entire planet itself had gone through a super long distance trip across space. The world truly is an amazing place where our imagination cannot hope to catch up to reality. This can only be described as a great miracle."

"It is a miracle," Yun Che said with a sigh.

If this miracle hadn't happened, he could scarcely imagine what he or the God Realm would've become.

"Are the Eastern Divine Region and Southern Divine Region very, very far apart from each other?" Yun Wuxin asked.

"Very," Yun Che replied. "They are so far apart that you can multiply the distance between the Profound Sky Continent and the Illusory Demon Realm by billions and still fall short."

Yun Wuxin blinked as she tried to imagine the impossible distance inside her head. Then, she made a surprising comment, "Little Auntie Shui must be a really gentle woman then."

"Hmm? Why do you say that?" Yun Che asked curiously.

Yun Wuxin had never had contact with Shui Meiyin. He hadn't described her temperament when he told his story either.

“Isn’t it obvious?” Yun Wuxin explained smilingly, “The entire Blue Pole Star was teleported into a completely foreign divine region. I wouldn’t have been surprised if the planet had undergone a complete climate change.”

“However, as far as I’m aware, the seasons remained exactly the same after the teleportation occurred. Floating Cloud City was still a city of four springs, and the Snow Region of Extreme Ice remained as cold as ever.”

Yun Che: “...”

“It would’ve been a matter of great regret if Floating Cloud City was beset by winter, or if the ice and ice palaces in the Snow Region of Extreme Ice had melted into a sea. However, nothing has changed despite the super long distance spatial teleportation.”

“It must have been because little auntie Shui chose the best possible destination during the teleportation. Not only did she find a spatial environment that was near identical to the original, she even fine-tuned the location of the planet and the orientation of the continents to absolute perfection. It’s the only possible explanation.”

Yun Wuxin was looking a little starstruck at this point. “Not only did she save us all, her actions clearly showed that she is a gentle, good-hearted and attentive person. I can’t wait to meet her.”

“...” Yun Che blanked out for a moment before replying, “It could just be a coincidence.”

Shui Meiyin had never gone to the Blue Pole Star. There was no way she would know how to “fine-tune” the planet to preserve its wonders when she didn’t even know where Floating Cloud City or the Snow Region of Extreme Ice were.

“I believe in coincidences, but on this level? No way!” Yun Wuxin chuckled.

“...” Yun Che blanked out yet again.

An unknown amount of time later, Yun Wuxin was sound asleep on her father’s shoulder. She looked like she was wearing a robe made of moonlight and starlight beneath the night sky.

Her long eyelashes were curved, and a tiny smile was etched on her lips. Yun Che planted a light kiss on her forehead. He would protect this image for as long as he lived.

Chapter 1886 - Father of Xia (1)

When dawn finally arrived, Yun Che sucked in a deep breath of dew-mixed air and felt his mind clearing up instantly.

He released his spiritual perception and scanned for Qianye Ying’er. To his surprise, he found her at the Azure Cloud Continent probably scouting out the dark abyss below Cloud’s End Cliff.

“I was wondering why she’s been missing for so long. That’s where you were?” Yun Che mumbled to himself before calling out, “Yan Two!”

Swhoosh!

There was a black blur, and Yan Two's scrawny and crooked figure bowed before Yun Che. "What are your instructions, master?"

"Did you detect anything unusual in the nearby star realms?" Yun Che asked.

"I have meticulously scanned all nearby star realms multiple times, but didn't find anything that may be constituted as a threat, master. You have nothing to worry about, master," Yan Two answered carefully.

"Very well." Yun Che nodded, but his voice turned colder. "Remember, no one except those close to me are allowed to enter this star realm. Chase away the first offenders, and crush those who refuse to listen."

"Yes. I will never forget his instructions," Yan Two replied while bowing his head.

"You may leave."

The Yama Ancestor was gone just like that.

"Little Che!"

A sweet cry cut through the air the second Yan Two left. Then, he felt Xiao Lingxi thudding against his chest, hugging him tightly and filling his nose with her fragrant scent.

A smiling Yun Che returned the embrace and felt her slightly rapid breathing through her soft, moldable breasts. "You've been holding me like this for three days, Lingxi. Is it not enough yet?"

"I... I was just scared," She said softly while keeping her face buried in Yun Che's chest. "I accidentally fell asleep just now, and when I woke up... I was afraid that it would all be just a dream."

Five years were as brief as a flash to a denizen of the God Realm, but to those who missed him deeply and were worried for him, it might as well be an infinite period of suffering.

"Lingxi," Yun Che said softly, "I will never, ever worry you all again."

"... Mn," she responded, but still didn't let go of him until another familiar cry reached them from afar.

"I'm here, brother-in-law!"

Xiao Lingxi finally moved away from Yun Che and took a moment to straighten his clothes. She then said, "I'll... I'll go visit dad and Yongning."

Yun Che's expression turned complicated as Xia Yuanba's aura came closer and closer. They had just met the day before yesterday, so it made no sense for Yuanba to be moving this urgently. He knew exactly why that was the case though.

Yun Che blurred and appeared directly in front of Xia Yuanba. "You're here, Yuanba."

Xian Yuanba braked in midair before examining Yun Che with a critical and excited eye. "The entire Profound Sky Continent has heard of your return by now, but I bet they have no idea what your new status means. Even I'm still struggling with the concept of the great emperor of the God Realm for the past couple of days."

"Before I forget, are you leaving anytime soon?"

“No.” There was a hint of self-pride behind Yun Che’s smile as he declared, “There is nothing in this world that can control me anymore.”

“Hehe! As expected of my brother-in-law!” Xia Yuanba let out a chuckle before turning serious. “So... how is my sister? Why hasn’t she come back with you?”

In the end, what goes up must come down.

The only reason Xia Yuanba hadn’t asked the day before yesterday was because he didn’t want to disturb his reunion with his family.

Now though, even he couldn’t find an excuse to delay this any longer.

“Yuanba,” Yun Che’s expression turned serious, “What I’m going to say next is going to hurt, but I hope—”

“Is my sister dead?” Xia Yuanba asked suddenly.

“...” Yun Che stopped talking for a moment. Then, he met Xia Yuanba directly in the eye and nodded slowly. “Yes, she is.”

Yun Che wasn’t too surprised that Xia Yuanba had figured it out on his own. His repeated evasions of the question, his return without her by his side... Xia Yuanba was a slow man, but he wasn’t so slow that the worst possibility hadn’t crossed his mind.

Xia Yuanba’s eyes widened as he shook like a leaf. It took him a while to calm his manic breathing before he could squeeze out the other question, “What... what about my mother?”

“... she is also dead,” Yun Che answered simply and honestly.

Xia Yuanba shook again, and this time it took him five to six deep breaths before he finally calmed himself. “How... how did they pass away?”

Yun Che had prepared his answer long before Xia Yuanba had arrived. Slowly, he put his hands on the latter’s shivering shoulders and said, “Yuanba, you are the bearer of the Tyrannical Emperor’s Divine Veins. Your future will not and shall not be confined to a small world like the Blue Pole Star.”

“In the future, I’m certain that you will carve a place for yourself in the God Realm. In fact, I’m certain that that future is closer than you imagine.”

“That is why I want you to seek out the truth by yourself. As you grow, I want you to use your eyes, your ears, your experience, your mind and your heart to figure out the ins and outs and decide for yourself what the truth really is instead of hearing it from me.”

Yun Che had been watching Xia Yuanba’s eyes all this time. He could see that his friend was listening to every word and calming down little by little.

“When a person has lost control of their emotions, they are often incapable of rational thought or self-control. I don’t want you to go through what I went through, so...”

Yun Che stopped there and exhaled slowly.

If Yun Che was anyone else, Xia Yuanba would've ignored the advice completely and kept pressing.

However, Yun Che was Yun Che, so he sucked in a deep breath and closed his eyes. A short while later, he reopened them and nodded. "Very well. Brother-in-law has never led me astray, so... I understand. I'll do as you suggest."

Xia Yuanba had always been like this. Be it in the past or now, he had always listened to his words. It was also why Yun Che felt more conflicted than before.

"Although I haven't lingered in the God Realm for long, I must admit that the auras there were a great source of attraction to me. If I hadn't made brother-in-law a promise, I might not have been able to resist the urge to revisit the God Realm."

"I am aware that it is the influence of the Tyrannical Emperor's Divine Veins."

It was natural for the bearer of the Tyrannical Emperor's Divine Veins to desire greater power and challenges.

The chaotic emotions behind Xia Yuanba's eyes slowly solidified into strong determination as he tightened his fists. "As you said, I shouldn't limit myself to this world, so I won't. I will enter the God Realm again once I've taken care of my responsibilities in Absolute Monarch Sanctuary."

"Good!" Yun Che said with a strong nod.

"Before that though, can I ask for your help with something?" Xia Yuanba asked suddenly.

"Consider it done," Partially motivated by the complex guilt and regret he was feeling, Yun Che replied without hesitation.

Xia Yuanba began, "I actually visited dad right before he came to see you. I had promised to tell him about mom and sister after I heard everything from you."

Yun Che: "..."

Xia Yuanba continued with a downcast expression, "But well... as you may have noticed, I am just barely enduring the news myself, much less able to speak to dad about it, so..."

"I understand," Yun Che answered. "I will visit Uncle Xia right away."

"Thank you." Xia Yuanba's features relaxed a little. "I'm counting on you, brother-in-law."

As promised, Yun Che sought out Xia Hongyi's aura immediately after Xia Yuanba left. Then, he cut a hole in space itself and tried to make his way to the Black Moon Merchant Guild.

The space of a lower realm was as fragile as paper. Although Yun Che wasn't well-versed in the laws of space, he had no problems traversing the space of Blue Pole Star.

"You're meeting Xia Qingyue's father?"

Right before he could take the step though, Chi Wuyao asked him the question and appeared next to him.

Clearly, she had heard his conversation with Xia Yuanba from beginning until the end.

“He’s Yuanba’s father to be exact,” Yun Che corrected in a somewhat awkward tone. “He was my senior, and he took good care of me since I was young. Even if I hadn’t made Yuanba the promise, I would’ve visited him eventually as his junior.”

“I’m coming with you.”

Chi Wuyao gave Yun Che no chance to turn her down. She grabbed his arm and half-dragged him into the spatial rift leading to the Black Moon Merchant Guild.

The Black Moon Merchant Guild was defended by countless barriers and restrictions, but of course they amounted to exactly nothing before Yun Che and Chi Wuyao. An instant later they appeared outside the courtyard Xia Hongyi had been staying in for the past years.

“Who... who are you people!?”

A Black Moon Attendant was guarding the courtyard entrance, and their sudden appearance had caught him off guard to say the least. In fact, he looked like he might die from shock when he really saw Yun Che’s face. A long time later, he finally returned to himself and stuttered out, “S-s-s-s-s-s-spiritual Master Yun!”

“Tell your master that Yun Che has come to pay him a visit,” Yun Che ordered indifferently.

“Ah... ye... yes.” The Black Moon Attendant took a step and nearly stumbled on his feet. He had half-crawled into the courtyard before he ran back out with a stuttering answer, “G-g-general manager Xia invites you both in.”

Everyone on the Profound Sky Continent knew that Xia Hongyi was Yun Che’s father-in-law. Naturally, his status and treatment in the Black Moon Merchant Guild were much better than what they used to be.

Xia Hongyi didn’t look much different from how Yun Che had remembered him despite the passing years. His attire was humble and casual, and his eyes were keen but peaceful. He smiled just like all those years ago and greeted Yun Che, “It’s been too long, Che’er. I’m happy you came to visit me.”

“Uncle Xia.” He didn’t address him as father-in-law. His already complicated feelings somehow grew even more indescribable.

The killing had been justified, but it didn’t change the fact that he had killed his daughter.

Meanwhile, Chi Wuyao was scanning Xia Hongyi with her spiritual perception.

The result both disappointed and confounded her. Xia Hongyi was a completely average person. In fact, he was below average if she were to judge him by his physique and profound way talent alone.

How on earth had someone like him sown a Moon God Emperor with the Heart of Snow Glazed Glass and Nine Profound Exquisite Body!?

They all took their seats after a short exchange of greetings, but Yun Che clearly didn’t wish to face Xia Hongyi for too long because he said, “Uncle Xia, to tell you the truth, I am here to kill two birds with one stone. I am here to visit you and to tell you about some things.”

"Is it Qingyue?" Xia Hongyi asked smilingly. "Yuanba told me a few years ago that you and her were in a distant space called the 'God Realm'."

"Yes, that is correct." Yun Che nodded before continuing in as even a voice as he could manage, "What I wished to tell Uncle Xia in person, is that she passed away in the God Realm a year ago."

"..." Xia Hongyi's expression froze, and his eyes trembled with inexplicable emotions. A while later, he asked, "Where? Why?"

"She has fallen into a place called the Abyss of Nothingness in the God Realm of Absolute Beginning. She didn't leave behind a body or a possession to remember her with." Yun Che explained in a calm voice that even he found to be a bit unnatural, "As for why she passed away... I believe Yuanba will explain everything to you in time."

Xia Hongyi closed his eyes for several breaths. When he reopened them, he said, "I understand."

Yun Che couldn't think of anything to say except, "I am sorry for your loss."

Xia Hongyi shook his head a little before replying, "After the two of you were wed, and Qingyue officially joined Frozen Cloud Immortal Palace, I already felt like the two of us were living in completely separate worlds."

"It was an utterly inexplicable yet clear feeling. And yet, it was the truth."

"Did she lead a wonderful life?" he asked suddenly.

Caught off guard, Yun Che replied instinctively, "Yes. In fact... no woman has ever had a life as wonderful as hers."

She was a lower realm girl who was born with the Heart of Snow Glazed Glass and Nine Profound Exquisite Body. She joined Frozen Cloud Immortal Palace at sixteen and became a god emperor at thirty. She was literally the youngest god emperor in the history of the God Realm.

Her sins and evils aside, her life was undeniably a wonderful one.

A bitter yet relieved smile crossed Xia Hongyi's lips. "Then all is well. It is the path she chose; the life she picked. It may be a terribly short life, but if it was one that was trod without regrets, if she shone like the brightest moon during this time, then who am I to mourn for her?"

"..." Yun Che fell silent for a moment before replying, "I am both extremely glad and impressed that Uncle Xia is this accepting. I am sure Yuanba will be very glad to know of it."

Chi Wuyao had been observing Xia Hongyi's reaction from the beginning. She didn't notice that her eyebrows had been scrunched into a frown that refused to fade away.

Xia Hongyi wasn't an expert who could disregard everything in the pursuit of his profound way, nor was he a cruel ruler whose concubines and children littered across the country. He was just a perfectly average man with only one daughter to his name, and he had just learned that she was deceased.

Yun Che had been suicidal, depressed and borderline manic for years after his daughter's "death". On the other hand, Xia Qingyue's father hadn't lost control of his emotions, hadn't pressed Yun Che's for an answer, hadn't grieved over her death...

He was so rational about it that it was almost like they were talking about the death of someone else's daughter.

Was this really the reaction of a perfectly normal father?

Chapter 1887 - Father of Xia (2)

"It seems that something regretful has happened between you and Qingyue," Xia Hongyi commented ruefully.

Yun Che had addressed him using a different appellation. He also seemed to be much more distant than before. Finally, he had avoided saying Xia Qingyue's name at all, referring to her as "she" or "her" only.

The odd behavior hadn't escaped Xia Yuanba or Xia Hongyi's notice.

"Five years ago, we ended our marriage and relationship because our 'beliefs' were misaligned. Moreover, I wasn't able to notify Uncle Xia about it sooner due to the circumstances that were in play at the time."

Yun Che explained in the most indifferent and reserved tone he could muster.

"I see." Xia Hongyi shot Yun Che a long look, but didn't press him to explain what exactly he meant by "misaligned beliefs". Instead, he moved onto a different topic.

"Che'er, I would be lying if I said that I'm not curious about what really happened between you and Qingyue, but I'm aware that some things are too private even for an elder to ask about, so I won't. Instead, I will ask you to tell me the whole truth about another matter."

Yun Che knew what he wanted to ask about. "Ask away, Uncle Xia."

"Five years ago after you left for the God Realm, you apparently told Yuanba that Qingyue had found her mother... was it true?"

For the first time, there was a slight tremor in Xia Hongyi's voice.

Yun Che nodded without hesitation. "That is correct. In fact, she found her not long after she was teleported to the God Realm by accident. Since then, she stayed by her side."

Xia Hongyi unconsciously leaned forward as if he was afraid to miss a single word. His larynx started trembling non-stop, and his peaceful gaze suddenly turned chaotic. "Is... is she doing okay?"

Chi Wuyao: "..."

The sudden loss of self-control, the heartbeat that sounded like it might jump out of his chest at any moment... he hadn't even mentioned Yue Wugou's unfortunate passing yet, but Xia Hongyi's reaction was already a million times greater than it was before!

Surprise flashed in Yun Che's eyes, but he continued to tell the truth, "Unfortunately, she passed away as early as eight years ago."

Buzz

For a second, it sounded like someone had brought a sledgehammer to Xia Hongyi's heart. Then, his heart stopped beating as if the organ had experienced a total failure.

Chi Wuyao: "..."

A deep frown crossed Yun Che's features as he asked the stiffened Xia Hongyi, "Uncle Xia?"

Xia Hongyi's lips turned from pale red to deathly white in just a moment. His complexion was whitening at a terrifying rate as well.

"Dead... dead... dead..."

He sounded like he was in complete despair. He crumbled from his seat as if his bones had been plucked from his body.

Yun Che immediately caught him with a gentle gust of profound energy. He also injected some soul energy into the old man's body to soothe his collapsed mind.

"Uncle Xia, she has been in the world of ultimate bliss for eight years. Please don't be too sorrowful," Yun Che consoled. He still didn't know how to address Yue Wugou, so he didn't try.

"Dead... dead..."

Contrary to popular belief, a person was incapable of tears when they were mired in such deep sorrow that they lost feeling in their facial features and even the faculty of their minds. In Xia Hongyi's case, Yun Che's consoling words might as well have gone right through his ears. The man had been reduced to little but glassy eyes and heart-wrenching murmurs.

He had never let go despite thirty some years of separation.

His sorrow and misery had never faded, only hidden behind a calm and elegant bearing.

Chi Wuyao's devilish eyes flashed black, and Xia Hongyi's mind was put back together by force.

Even then, there was nothing she could do about the shocking amount of sorrow that was ravaging his insides.

When Xia Hongyi's eyes had regained their focus, and feelings had returned to his facial features, tears started pouring down uncontrollably. The man hurriedly straightened his posture and looked away to hide his appearance. "I'm fine... I'm fine... I'm sorry you have to see me like this... ss!"

"I'm sure... she has seen your deep love for her from the other side," Yun Che squeezed out some more consoling words that even he found inadequate.

Despite Xia Hongyi's claims, it would take him a lot longer before he finally managed to rein in his tears and quell his sorrow to a manageable degree. A long, deep sigh later, he asked, "Can... can you tell me why she passed away, Che'er?"

His voice continued to shake violently despite his best efforts to control himself. The fingers clenching the arm rests looked bloodless and warped.

Yun Che had intended to tell Xia Hongyi the complete truth, but it had become clear that that was no longer an option. So, he forced himself to lie, "I was told that she had a weak body that was prone to sickness. Despite the best attempts to prolong her life, she ultimately succumbed to illness and passed away in the Moon God Realm."

It would've been senselessly cruel to tell Xia Hongyi that Yue Wugou had committed suicide to join her husband, Yue Wuya, in death.

"She... her daughter was right by her side when she passed away. She buried her with her own two hands."

He had said this in hopes of alleviating some of Xia Hongyi's sorrow, but he still refused to say the name "Xia Qingyue".

"Is that so... is that so..." a weeping Xia Hongyi murmured, "I had thought that she would finally be cured if she returned to that world... I didn't mind enduring eternal loneliness if it meant her good health..."

"But... to think that it was all meaningless in the end..."

He sucked in another deep breath. He had become too pained to speak any more than that.

Some sorrows couldn't be resolved by another's consolation. Yun Che knew this better than most, so he shot Chi Wuyao a glance before rising to his feet and saying, "Please take good care of yourself, Uncle Xia. No matter what happens, please don't forget that Yuanba still needs his father."

"I'm sure that a big-hearted man like Uncle Xia will be able to walk out of his sorrow quickly. We shall be taking our leave now. Yuanba and I will visit you together some time later."

Xia Hongyi had lived his whole life as a businessman, so it wouldn't be an exaggeration to say that the concept of hospitality was in his very marrow. However, his sorrow was so great that he couldn't even go through the usual motions. He simply waved his hand and said powerlessly, "Goodbye... tell Yuanba that he doesn't need to worry about me."

Yun Che nodded and prepared to leave.

Suddenly, Chi Wuyao surprised him by saying,

"If you don't mind, I have a question to ask you, Mr. Xia."

"?" Yun Che stopped in his tracks.

Chi Wuyao hadn't imbued her voice with soul energy, but it was still far beyond the ability of Xia Hongyi to resist. The old man slowly looked up and said, "Please, ask away."

Chi Wuyao began, "When was the last time you met your daughter, Xia Qingyue?"

Xia Hongyi replied without hesitation, "I have not seen her since the day she completed her wedding with Che'er and traveled to Frozen Cloud Immortal Palace."

“Now that I think about it, it has been over two decades since that day, hasn’t it? Sigh. Who would’ve thought that that day would be our final day together?”

Yun Che’s eyebrows twitched, but he didn’t say anything.

“...” Chi Wuyao nodded and said, “Thank you.”

Yun Che and Chi Wuyao stepped out of the Black Moon Merchant Guild together, but they chose to walk aimlessly instead of tearing a spatial rift and returning to Floating Cloud City immediately.

Chi Wuyao’s crescent eyebrows were locked together in a deep frown. It was a strange sight because there were very few things in the world that could puzzle her for long. Yun Che looked like he was carrying a heavy burden in his mind as well.

“Strange, strange, strange, strange...”

Chi Wuyao repeated to herself.

“What is bothering you?” Yun Che asked absent-mindedly.

Chi Wuyao shot him a look before answering, “Xia Hongyi’s reactions toward his daughter’s death and his wife’s death were like night and day. Even as distracted as you were, I refuse to believe you didn’t notice it.”

“I don’t want to talk about her,” Yun Che said.

Chi Wuyao smiled and said in a lazy, silky voice, “You realize that you’re just making it worse, right? If you’ve truly moved on from her, you wouldn’t be bothered by her being mentioned at all. The more you treat her like a taboo, the deeper she will become entrenched in your mind, and the harder it will be to let go of her.”

“... say whatever you want. I just don’t want to talk about her,” Yun Che replied expressionlessly.

Chi Wuyao continued as if she hadn’t heard his reply, “People are creatures of duality. It isn’t contradictory or a mistake to cherish someone for their kindness, and hate them for their cruelty at the same time.”

Yun Che massaged his temples and replied in a helpless voice, “You’re doing it again.”

Although everything had come to an end, Xia Qingyue continued to occupy a space in Chi Wuyao’s mind. Yun Che knew that very well.

She was the bearer of the Nirvana Devil Emperor’s soul, and her ability to judge a person’s true nature was, without exaggeration, the best in the entire universe. And yet, Xia Qingyue had fooled her completely.

Xia Qingyue was the only person she had ever misjudged, and the error had nearly cost her her dearest. In hindsight, it was no wonder she was unable to let go.

Although she might always lower herself before Yun Che, few were as prideful as her.

“He was way too indifferent toward Xia Qingyue’s death.”

Chi Wuyao ignored Yun Che's grimace and continued, "Xia Yuanba is the bearer of the Tyrannical Emperor's Divine Veins and a firm mind, and he can barely control his pain after hearing the news."

"On the other hand, all I felt from Xia Hongyi was a flash of pain. In fact, I felt more shock and pity from him. He reacted how a person would when they heard of their neighbor's daughter's death."

"You are a father with only one daughter to your name. You know better than me how unusual his reaction was."

"..." Yun Che still didn't say anything in response, but he didn't try to cut her off a second time.

Chi Wuyao's smile faded as she continued voicing her thoughts, "He is no profound way fool or cold-blooded ruler, but he could be emotionally detached by nature. That is the only other possibility I can think of anyway. People like that do exist. Like a person who is born without an arm or a leg, some are born without the seven emotions and six desires that drive us all."

"However, his extreme reaction towards Yue Wugou's death contradicted that completely."

"Which brings us back to the question, 'Why is a man this passionate reacting so coolly and rationally toward his daughter's death?' There was barely any sorrow at all."

Chi Wuyao pressed a finger to her glabella. She had come seeking answers today, but her brief interaction with Xia Hongyi only produced more questions and confusion.

Yun Che replied, "She was always cold and indifferent to an extreme. She barely even stepped out of her bedroom. Maybe the lack of frequent interaction with her father is why he reacted like they were strangers."

"Do you really believe that?" Chi Wuyao raised an eyebrow at him.

Yun Che did the same and shrugged uncaringly.

"This isn't even the strangest thing."

Chi Wuyao's charming eyes abruptly narrowed into a pair of abysses. "Last night, I spoke to Chu Yuechan about Xia Qingyue and learned basically everything there is to learn about her life on this planet."

"And?" Yun Che turned to look at Chi Wuyao. He could sense that this was really bothering her for some reason.

"Do you still remember why Xia Qingyue was obsessed with cultivating the profound way?" Chi Wuyao asked.

"Yes," Yun Che replied. "Long story short, she wanted to find her mother and reunite her family."

He had heard it from Chu Yuechan first, but Xia Qingyue had told him the exact same thing later on.

She had thought she could reach her mother if her cultivation was high enough... that she might be able to reunite her family if her cultivation was even higher...

“That is correct,” Chi Wuyao agreed. “This tells us that she was a woman who cherished familial bonds deeply. At the very least, she was someone who gave it her all just to seek out a mother she barely remembered.”

Yun Che: “...”

“Equal in weight to that value was her love for you. Chu Yuechan told me that she nearly lost her life when she saved you from the secret realm of Heavenly Sword Villa... she had even cut her hair when she got word of your apparent death.”

Chi Wuyao whispered, “If he is no longer in this world, then may my hair accompany him to the after life, my emotions be forever severed, and my heart be eternally frozen... that was what she said to Chu Yueli and Chu Yuechan back then.”

Yun Che staggered and lost control of his breathing a little.

All he had left for her was hatred... so why did it still hurt so much?

“So far, everything I heard matched perfectly with the Xia Qingyue I saw through Mu Xuanyin’s eyes back then.”

“So why...” Chi Wuyao paused for a second and frowned deeper than ever before, “Why did a woman who values love and familial bonds so, so much... not visit her father even once after she married you and traveled to Frozen Cloud Immortal Palace?”

Chapter 1888 - A Traceless Moon of The Past

It was one of those things he had either inadvertently overlooked or never minded in the past. Maybe that was why it felt especially shocking after Chi Wuyao had dredged it to the surface.

No matter how carefully he examined his memories, he realized that Xia Qingyue hadn’t visited Xia Hongyi even once after she entered Frozen Cloud Immortal Palace at sixteen years old.

It wasn’t like she had never had the chance to step out of her sect. On the contrary, she was considered a special existence in Frozen Cloud Immortal Palace, and she was granted quite an unusual amount of freedom as a result. In fact, she had participated in the Blue Wind Ranking Tournament and his wedding to Cang Yue.

And yet he couldn’t remember a single moment where she had spoken to her father or kept him company.

The entire reason she started cultivating in the first place was to search for her lost family. So why was she so cold and detached toward her own father?

Did the deception stretch all the way to the beginning? Was her reason to pursue cultivation with all her might itself a lie?

“See? You think that it’s bizarre too, right?” Chi Wuyao said while watching Yun Che’s expression closely.

“It doesn’t matter now. All this means is that she was faking from the very beginning.” Yun Che forcefully nipped the thought in the bud before asking, “Did you read Uncle Xia’s memories just now?”

Chi Wuyao's eyes curled into crescents. "I knew I wouldn't be able to hide it from you."

With Chi Wuyao's devilish soul, it was all too easy for her to read a lower realm mortal's memories while leaving almost no trace behind at all.

The reason she had read Xia Hongyi's memories in secret was to verify her suspicions that Xia Qingyue wasn't Xia Hongyi's real daughter.

There were countless reasons as to how that might come to be, but the simplest explanation would be that Yue Wugou was already pregnant when Xia Hongyi found her. After they fell in love, Xia Hongyi tried to hide it from Xia Qingyue only to be found out later.

That would explain everything. That would absolve her of her doubts once and for all.

Unfortunately, the results were extremely disappointing.

In Xia Hongyi's memories, Yue Wugou—she was Dong Xue to him—was a virgin when they consummated their love.

This meant that Xia Qingyue was definitely Yue Wugou and Xia Hongyi's daughter.

Which brought her back to square one.

There was another strange thing about his memories.

Although Xia Hongyi had been separated from Dong Xue (Yue Wugou) for thirty some years, his memories of her were crystal clear and profound.

However, his memories of his daughter, Xia Qingyue, were strangely simple, sparse and blurry.

His memories of Xia Yuanba showed similar characteristics as well, but it wasn't nearly as bad as his memories of Xia Qingyue.

Finally, she had a distinct sense that something was wrong with Xia Hongyi's memories.

Chi Wuyao was unquestionably the woman with the strongest soul energy in the current universe thanks to her Nirvana Devil Emperor Soul. However, she still wasn't able to identify the source of this wrongness.

"You normally never resort to such methods unless the matter is of critical importance. Is this a matter of critical importance?" Yun Che chided in a helpless tone. Chi Wuyao really was acting a bit too obsessed right now.

"Your Majesty is correct. This queen admits and apologizes for her errors," Chi Wuyao acted like a scolded child, but the mischief in her eyes and the sudden silkiness in her devilish voice were anything but childish. "If Your Majesty must punish this queen... would you like me and Xuanyin to service you together some time in the future?"

Yun Che immediately turned toward her with widened, bloodshot eyes. "You said it! You better keep your promise!!"

“Heehee!” Chi Wuyao giggled cutely and seductively. “Don’t worry, Your Majesty. I know at least a couple hundred ways to make little Xuanyin submit. For starters, she’s weak to—”

Suddenly, the teleportation formation in front of the Black Moon Merchant Guild flashed, and a couple walked out from the center.

Chi Wuyao immediately stopped talking.

“(͡_ ͡)#” Annoyed by the interruption, Yun Che glared at the uninvited guests who happened to be familiar faces.

The man at the left was Zi Ji, lord of Black Moon. The woman to the right was Qu Fengyi, former Sovereign of the Seas of Supreme Ocean Palace.

When Zi Ji saw Yun Che, a look of surprise crossed his features before he slowly dropped to his knees. “Zi Ji greets Spiritual Master Yun. I, Black Moon, am infinitely honored to bask in the Spiritual Master’s presence.”

It had been many years since they saw each other. Zi Ji was still wearing his signature purple robes, but he actually looked younger than he was before. The old darkness and sharpness in his intelligent eyes had also been replaced by unusual peace and tranquility.

As for Qu Fengyi...

Qu Fengyi had knelt at the same time as Zi Ji, but she quickly raised her head slightly to sneak a peek at Yun Che. Her eyes contained awe and curiosity, but no fear whatsoever. The dignity she had carried as a Sovereign of the Seas was also completely missing.

Noticing Yun Che’s surprise, Zi Ji said, “As you may have noticed, my wife is no longer the Sovereign of the Seas she used to be. She has sealed her memories after she recovered, and with it all of the honor and disgrace, sorrow and joy, favors and grievances, rights and wrongs of the past.”

“I see,” Yun Che responded indifferently.

Qu Fengyi bowed deeply before saying, “I may not have my past memories, but my husband has told me of your forgiveness and rescue. I will never forget this favor for as long as I live.”

As she said this, she leaned into Zi Ji as if it was the most natural thing in the world. It was the kind of intimacy and dependence that came from the bottom of one’s heart.

Zi Ji shot his wife a look so loving and gentle that it was almost visible to the naked eye. “I never would’ve thought that these years would be the happiest and most peaceful days of our lives, but they were. I have never seen my wife this carefree and free from worry. I love every facet of her current self be it good or bad. I love them so much that I actually don’t want to return to the past anymore. What Supreme Ocean Palace? What Black Moon Merchant Guild? To think that I only realize now that their futures and belonging to them don’t matter as much as I thought.”

Zi Ji’s smile was light and at ease. “Sometimes, I look back to the past and rue my foolishness. To think that I had toiled for half my life without realizing that what I wanted was really this simple.”

Yun Che nodded. "I am glad you both have found true happiness. It is a bit of a shame that this is where both your legends have ended though."

"Hahahaha." Zi Ji chuckled a little. "All legends ceased to exist since the moment you ascended, Spiritual Master Yun."

There used to be Four Sacred Grounds on the Profound Sky Continent. Sun Moon Divine Hall and Might Heaven Sword Region had been destroyed, Absolute Monarch Sanctuary had come under Xia Yuanba's control, and Supreme Ocean Palace had entered a state of half-seclusion.

It probably wouldn't take long before the Absolute Monarch Sanctuary, Frozen Cloud Immortal Palace and Divine Phoenix Sect became the only Sacred Grounds left on this continent.

"It is a bit of a sad ending, isn't it?"

Chi Wuyao whispered after the Black Moon Merchant Guild was behind them.

"Not really, but it does make you think about some things," Yun Che said. "Some people... actually, a lot of people never know what they really want until they die."

"In that case, what do you think Xia Qingyue really wants?" Chi Wuyao asked.

"..." Half given-up at this point, Yun Che could only roll his eyes at her.

"How long do you plan to stay on the Blue Pole Star?" Chi Wuyao finally stopped teasing him and asked a less abstract question.

Yun Che replied without hesitation, "A very long time. Xuanyin, Meiyin and Caizhi will be coming soon, and... now that I think about it, I should invite the Witches as well. Even if it's just for tradition's sake, they have the right to meet my parents."

He then put a finger on the tip of his nose and revealed his true thoughts, "Sigh. I just don't understand why Wuxin wants to see them so much. You would almost think that this is her birthday gift or something."

A meaningful smile crossed Chi Wuyao's lips. "What about the Blue Dragon Emperor and Cang Shuhe? The entire universe knows them as your official consorts, you know? Shouldn't you bring them to meet your parents too?"

"Is that a joke?" When Yun Che looked at Chi Wuyao and realized she was actually serious, he said, "Forget it."

Chi Wuyao persuaded, "Just because it is a loveless status doesn't mean that it isn't worth maintaining. Moreover, the Blue Dragon Emperor is key to the stability of the Western Divine Region, and Cang Shuhe the Southern Divine Region."

"This is especially true in the case of Cang Shuhe. Mistreating her may turn Cang Sh*tian from a loyal dog into a vile one."

"So what?" Yun Che sneered. "When that day comes, I'll just squash him like the dog he is."

“Sure you can, but it’s not easy to train up another dog who’s as loyal and useful as him,” Chi Wuyao complained with a worried expression. It actually looked like she was planning a contingency for that possibility already.

“Fine, fine.” Yun Che didn’t want to add more burdens to Chi Wuyao, so he surrendered and said, “I’m still not going to bring them to meet my parents, but I promise to visit them from time to time. Wuxin was asking me to take her to the God Realm anyway. I’ll make the trip when we’re exploring the Southern Divine Region and Western Divine Region.”

“My dear Majesty,” Chi Wuyao exhaled a warm breath against his cheek, “I think I want to etch the word ‘half-hearted’ into your face. This way, everyone will know your attitude toward governing from the get-go.”

“... I’m going to visit Caiyi now.” Yun Che attempted to escape.

“Caiyi? You mean that cute and delicate little jade doll called the Little Demon Empress?” Chi Wuyao raised her eyebrows. “I’m surprised. Every one of your wives and lovers only wish that they can melt into your skin and stay with you forever, but you’re going to pamper her only?”

Yun Che explained seriously, “Caiyi may look that way, but she’s really a violent and stubborn girl. She must’ve built up a lot of frustration after missing me for so many years, and she couldn’t exactly beat the crap out of me in front of Wuxin and the elders. If I don’t head over soon, I’m afraid that the stress will actually get to her.”

“Oh? Frustration, is it?” Chi Wuyao shot him a look that was both charming and disapproving at the same time. “You really should get that all out of her. Otherwise, the servants are going to complain about broken beds and whatnot.”

“Ahem, see you later.” Not giving Chi Wuyao another chance to make fun of him, Yun Che cut open a spatial rift and teleported straight to the Little Demon Empress’ side.

A long time after Yun Che left, the Empress finally let out a quiet sigh. “Do you really think I’m immune to jealousy, you sinful man?”

After she recollected herself, Chi Wuyao released her spiritual perception until it stopped at a frozen land.

It was where Xia Qingyue used to cultivate. It was where her former master, Chu Yueli was staying.

Her conversation with Chu Yuechan last night and her meeting with Xia Hongyi today had actually worsened her doubts instead of alleviating them.

And with that... came a sense of unease that she couldn’t describe.

.....

To the north of Blue Wind Nation, the Snow Region of Extreme Ice, Frozen Cloud Immortal Palace.

“Thank you for telling me all this.”

As expected, the information she got from Chu Yueli wasn't that much different from Chu Yuechan's. She did have a different request though.

"I would like to visit Xia Qingyue's old room and cultivation grounds."

However, Chu Yueli shook her head and said, "That won't be possible."

"Why is that?"

Chu Yueli faced toward the ice buildings of Frozen Cloud Immortal Palace and said, "The Frozen Cloud Immortal Palace you're currently seeing isn't the original Frozen Cloud Immortal Palace. The original was completely destroyed by the battle between Xuanyuan Wentian and the Little Demon Empress, leaving little to no trace behind."

"This new Frozen Cloud Immortal Palace was rebuilt after Xuanyuan Wentian was destroyed with the help of Palace Master Yun. Naturally, you won't find Qingyue's room or cultivation grounds here."

"Little to no trace, huh..." Chi Wuyao muttered to herself before asking, "What about a possession then? Did she really leave nothing behind at all?"

Chu Yueli nodded with a lonely expression on her face.

"That is a true shame," Chi Wuyao muttered to herself again.

Some time later, Chi Wuyao returned to Floating Cloud City. But instead of dropping by the Xiao Clan, she traveled to a long-empty courtyard instead.

It was the birthplace of Xia Qingyue and Xia Yuanba, the residence of the Xia Family.

This place was left mostly empty since Xia Hongyi had moved to the Black Moon Merchant Guild. It was only guarded by one or two middle-aged servants who had followed Xia Hongyi since the early days.

An idle servant was given the shock of his life when Chi Wuyao appeared seemingly out of nowhere from the sky. He cried out, "Who are..."

His voice suddenly became caught in his throat. Then, his expression faded into dumb blankness as well.

Chi Wuyao scanned the surroundings while walking toward the servant. She asked, "Tell me, which room was Xia Qingyue's bedroom?"

The servant dumbly raised his hand and pointed at the innermost bedroom.

The Empress' figure blurred, and she appeared inside the room without ever touching the door.

There was a high quality oaken bed with a dark purple see-through curtain hanging above it.

There were tables and chairs that were made of the same wood, a bronze mirror for grooming purposes, and a firmly shut cabinet. It was empty.

That was everything.

There were no clothes, no cleaning tools, no tea sets, no jewelry, no cosmetics, nothing. She couldn't even find a trace of someone having lived here.

She had stolen the servant's soul, so there was no chance he could be lying to her. This was definitely Xia Qingyue's bedroom for sixteen years until she left.

Did... Xia Qingyue really take everything with her after she went away?

Chi Wuyao left the Xia Family courtyard and floated high up in the sky where she couldn't be seen. There, she stayed silent for a very long time.

She hadn't left anything behind at her birthplace.

She hadn't left anything behind at the original Frozen Cloud Immortal Palace either because it was destroyed by the Little Demon Empress and Xuanyuan Wentian's battle.

The Moon God Realm was literally cosmic dust right now.

To think that the deceased Xia Qingyue would leave no traces behind in this world whatsoever.

Assuming that the memories of her were wiped, then she might as well not have existed in the first place.

"I give up."

A long time later, Chi Wuyao finally let out a powerless whisper.

"She's dead. Everything is as good as it can be. There is no need to look into something so meaningless."

The mystery that only seemed to deepen with every attempt to uncover it, the vague unease that seemed to nestle uncomfortably in her heart...

She gave up.

Chapter 1889 - The Joy of Home

Chi Wuyao might be wearing the title of Empress, but she really was bearing the responsibilities of an Emperor. As a result, she had had to return to the God Realm just two months after her stay on Blue Pole Star. She also dragged an unwilling Qianye Ying'er with her.

After all, now was the time the Brahma Monarch Realm needed Qianye Ying'er the most.

Yun Che had stayed behind on Blue Pole Star as a matter of course and spent every day traveling back and forth between the Profound Sky Continent and Illusory Demon Realm. Sometimes, he would travel to the dark space beneath Cloud's End Cliff on the Azure Cloud Continent and reminisce about the Heretic God's painful, hopeless choice with You'er.

If the Heretic God hadn't left behind his inheritances, if the Heaven Smiting Devil Emperor hadn't chosen to sacrifice herself and her devils, the Primal Chaos would've been embroiled in the opposite of the current peace.

If only they could be happy as well...

Now that the universe was at peace, Yun Che had been treating Hong'er and You'er better than ever before. You'er was naturally quiet and obedient, so it didn't take much effort to keep her happy.

Hong'er was weird and energetic, but he indulged her wishes no matter how weird, excessive or unreasonable they might be.

Hong'er's biggest hobby was to eat, and her food choice was bizarre to say the least. Even more bizarre was the fact that she hadn't grown a gram fatter or a day older since the day he got her.

Another two months passed, and still Yun Che almost never left the Blue Pole Star.

Most God Realm profound practitioners disdained staying in the lower realms for long, but Yun Che lived every day to the fullest, as if he was trying to make up for all the time he had lost during those painful years.

From time to time, Chi Wuyao would send him a sound transmission and request his wisdom in various important matters, but Yun Che always replied that she should just use her best judgment.

Of course Chi Wuyao had predicted this would happen, but just because his response was predictable didn't mean that it was right to skip the process. For one, it was the respect Emperor Yun deserved, and two, she didn't want him to forget that he was still the Great Emperor of the God Realm.

.....

Divine Phoenix Empire, Phoenix Perching Valley.

The name "Phoenix Perching Valley" was known throughout the Profound Sky Continent because it was the cultivation ground and meditation space of the Phoenix Goddess herself. In the eyes of the profound practitioners—especially those who hailed from the Divine Phoenix Empire—it was a holy land that could be worshipped from afar, but never approached.

Today, a young woman had descended upon the supposedly unapproachable holy land.

Yun Wuxin was now a fully grown woman. Her countenance was peerless, her skin was like the first snow, and her form looked like it was sculpted from white jade. Her every expression was as picturesque as art itself.

She wore a plain but elegant white dress with long sleeves. A simple belt outlined the thinness of her waist and the fullness of her chest.

The eternal crimson clouds hanging in the sky and the warm breeze brushing against the green grass of the Phoenix Perching Valley gave the young woman the appearance of an otherworldly immortal. It was impossible to tell if it was the picturesque scenery of the land that accentuated her peerless beauty, or the other way around.

Yun Wuxin came here once every month to consult her master, Feng Xue'er regarding the cultivation of the World Ode of the Phoenix. However, she noticed that something was amiss the moment she arrived. Fire was normally a violent and agitable element, but today it was so silent it was almost as if it was afraid of something.

"Is father here?"

Yun Wuxin whispered to herself and tried to pinpoint her father's aura to no avail. It was probably because it was hidden behind a barrier.

She didn't have to walk far when her father and her master's auras suddenly appeared within her spiritual perception. As she guessed, a barrier had concealed her auras.

What she didn't guess was that the barrier also concealed a certain noise that froze her in her tracks instantly.

"Wu... Wuxin is here... Mm!"

"We can deal with her later! Why do you have such difficult knots on your clothes? I'm just going to rip them apart!"

"No! That's Sister Cangyue's—mm... uhn..."

.....

This wasn't the first time she ran into something like this. In fact, she had almost gotten used to it. Almost. Her cheeks turned as rosy as an apple as she escaped in the opposite direction.

"For crying out loud!" Yun Wuxin stomped her foot in annoyance after she had escaped the area. She was annoyed that her father's debaucherous nature hadn't changed in the slightest, and that her master, the so-called Phoenix Goddess, just accepted his advances no matter how unreasonable they might be.

Suddenly, the space in front of her blurred unnaturally. The next moment, she found herself staring at two girls.

The girl to her left wore a black shirt and skirt that matched her black hair and pupils perfectly. Her countenance was so otherworldly that it felt like she didn't belong to this murky mortal coil. When she smiled, her eyes felt like a pair of infinite nights that could drown all the souls in the world for eternity.

The delicate girl to her right looked even younger. Her complexion was as milky as white jade, and she wore rainbow-colored robes that somehow reminded her of the infinite stars in the sky. Unlike the smiling black-dressed girl beside her though, she emanated a proud, lofty aura that didn't fit her appearance at all. She looked so cute that anyone who set their eyes on her would want to hold her tight, and yet her presence sang the complete opposite.

Yun Wuxin didn't know how long she was lost in their appearance. However, she immediately got ahold of herself after she came back down to earth.

"Chi..." She was going to address them as "children" when she scanned with her spiritual perception and found only a pair of infinite abysses. She quickly cut herself off before continuing in a calm and collected manner, "This is the forbidden ground of the Divine Phoenix Sect, and you are not one of our members. I must request that you move elsewhere."

The girl in black dress tilted her head a little, eyebrows curling into a pair of exquisite crescents. "You are Wuxin? No wonder Big Brother Yun Che always praises your looks. I bet that Sister Yuechan is super gorgeous as well."

The girl in the rainbow dress snorted. "Hmph! If there is one thing he is good at, it will be his eye for women."

“...” Yun Wuxin’s lips parted when she suddenly recalled something. “Are you...”

“Meiyin! Caizhi!!”

Yun Che’s excited voice reached all three of them. There was a gust of wind, and the next moment he and a disheveled, red-faced Feng Xue’er were standing next to Wuxin.

“Heehee!” Shui Meiyin said with a smirk on her face, “It looks like we’ve arrived at an inconvenient time.”

“ㄟ(ˊ^ˋ)ㄏ” Caizhi turned her face away a little.

Feng Xue’er grew even redder—and consequently, prettier—than before, but she held in her embarrassment and bowed her head politely at Shui Meiyin and Caizhi. Then, she asked Yun Che softly, “Will you introduce us?”

She already knew who they were from Yun Che’s cry, but formal introductions were still necessary since this was their first meeting.

“My Meiyin, my Caizhi,” Yun Che said smilingly and simply. There was nothing to be added because he had already described in excruciating detail each and every one of his lovers, consorts and concubines in the God Realm before.

“My Xue’er, my Wuxin,” he added after motioning at the duo.

Yun Wuxin took a step forward, saluted Caizhi and Meiyin and greeted them hurriedly, “Wuxin greets Auntie Meiyin and Auntie Caizhi. Please forgive Wuxin for her earlier rudeness.”

She had been curious about her father’s consorts and concubines for a while now, and the woman who saved the fates of her father and everyone else on the Blue Pole Star even more so. She had felt a deep sense of gratitude and admiration toward Meiyin ever since she had heard of her deeds, so she could barely control her excitement now that her idol was standing right in front of her.

“Good girl.” Shui Meiyin beamed at Wuxin before looking at Xue’er next. “Big Brother Yun Che said that you’re the prettiest woman on this planet, and it looks like he wasn’t exaggerating at all, sister Xue’er... although, this isn’t actually the first time I’ve seen you.”

“Eh?” Feng Xue’er looked confused. “You have? When?”

“It was...” Shui Meiyin took a second to remember. “Nine years ago when I was still fifteen years old, heehee.”

She then shot Yun Che a meaningful smile and blinked slowly and deliberately.

“Nine years ago?” Feng Xue’er grew even more confused. Yun Che was still in the God Realm at the time, and she was certain that this was the first time she had met Shui Meiyin. Her appearance and presence were, to put it simply, unforgettable.

“AHEMHEMHEM!” Yun Che let out a series of obviously fake coughs before saying, “It’s not important! Wuxin, you’ve always wanted to speak with your auntie Meiyin, right? Well, this is the perfect time for you to join her and... er, meet your other aunts.”

The fact that Shui Meiyin was here meant that the “eye of the formation” in the God Realm had been fully constructed.

Not done yet, he grabbed Caizhi’s hand and said, “Come, Caizhi. I want to show you something.”

.....

Illusory Demon Realm, Demon Imperial City.

“Where are you taking me?”

Yun Che had flown with Caizhi all the way from Profound Sky Continent to Illusory Demon Realm.

“You’ll know very soon,” Yun Che replied with a bright smile on his face.

The Yun Clan where he was born was right in front of them, but he took her to the mountains at the back of the residence instead.

Caizhi was about to ask again when she suddenly sensed something and froze in her tracks. Yun Che stopped beside her as well. A mix of complicated emotions slowly clouded her trembling, starry eyes...

Below them was a sizable herb garden filled with countless plants. It was a peaceful and tranquil environment filled with the scent of flowers and herbs.

There was an old man inside the garden.

It had only been a decade or so since Yun Gu came to the Illusory Demon Realm, but he was growing more and more famous as a peerless and kind-hearted doctor. He was treated with great respect even by the members of the Illusory Demon Imperial Family and the Twelve Guardian Families.

Despite his growing fame, Yun Gu still gathered his herbs in person. Today though, he was accompanied by an extraordinarily handsome and awe-inspiring middle-aged man instead of the usual Su Ling’er.

If there was a God Realm profound practitioner here right now, they would’ve dropped to their knees in shock already.

It was because he was Xing Juekong, the former Star God Emperor himself!

“... you should only harvest seven-tenths of this leaf. To do so, you wrap it in a small amount of profound energy and deposit it within the cold jade in two breaths...”

“... this herb looks like it’s flourishing, but it’s really been corrupted and should be abandoned...”

“This herb is called Xiang Wanderer, and its shape and presence are nearly identical to the herb called the Bleeding Heart Boat Grass. If either herb is mistaken for the other, they can potentially kill a patient in the worst case scenario. This is why we must commit every form, characteristic and aura of an herb to memory. It is the root of all doctoring...”

.....

Yun Gu was patiently teaching the former Star God Emperor the art of doctoring. Yun Che knew better than anyone that he was the greatest doctor and best master in the entire world.

Xing Juekong's back was half-bent in a posture of humility and respect. He never failed to nod his head seriously and respectfully at the end of Yun Gu's every sentence.

"..." Caizhi watched the scene unfold silently and motionlessly.

"I've wiped away all of his memories." Still holding onto Caizhi's hand, Yun Che said softly, "He no longer has a past, a power, or a name. Not his old name at least."

"He was named 'Yun Kong' after he accepted Master Yun Gu's surname as his own. Master Yun Gu cannot take him in as a disciple, but he allows him to learn and perform the art of doctoring by his side."

"It has only been three months since he started, but he's progressed quickly even though he no longer possesses his past memories. It's probably because of his supernatural intuition as a former peak Divine Master. Sometimes, he has even revealed insights that greatly helped Master Yun Gu's own understanding."

"In the beginning, Master Yun Gu only took him in because I asked him to. Now though, he has grown increasingly willing to teach him. I'm sure it won't be too long before a new famous doctor is born in the Illusory Demon Realm."

Yun Che hated Xing Juekong to the bone.

However, he was Jasmine and Caizhi's natural father.

No matter how much he hated him, he couldn't take his life.

He didn't even dare to hand him off to Caizhi because he knew that her hatred probably exceeded even his. It was entirely possible she might execute him at the mere sight of him.

He couldn't let Caizhi be shackled by the sin of patricide... just like he couldn't let Qianye Ying'er kill Qianye Fantian back then.

In the end, this was the final solution he had arrived at. He had wiped away all of the former Star God Emperor's memories and made it so that he would heal sick patients with his sinful hands. He would be atoning for his sins until the day he naturally died.

This... was the best ending Yun Che could think of for Caizhi.

"..." A long time later, Caizhi's lips finally parted to let out a trembling voice, "Do you think... that he deserves this?"

Yun Che pulled her into his arms and replied, "For me at least, he does. His sin may be immeasurably huge, but..."

He looked down and watched Caizhi's face lovingly. "Without him, I would never have encountered Jasmine. I would not be able to hold you right now. For this at least, I am eternally grateful."

She put up a token struggle before leaning against his chest completely. She sobbed as tears crept into her eyes, "Mother... auntie... big brother... big sister... they are all... all..."

"How does this evil man get an ending like this, while they are... why... just why..."

Yun Che closed his eyes and tightened his arms. He let Caizhi cry to her heart's content.

Despite the growing wetness on his chest, he couldn't stop himself from letting out a long sigh of relief in his mind.

He knew it wasn't enough, but he hoped that this episode would be the start of Caizhi's return to the carefree and happy "Little Jasmine" she used to be. Step by step, little by little.

Chapter 1890 - World Jade

"Where would you like to set the eye of the formation here, Big Brother Yun Che?" Shui Meiyin asked.

Yun Che thought for a moment before answering, "I think it would be best to place it in Xiao Clan. In fact, let's place it right here in this courtyard."

Although the Illusory Demon Yun Family was where he was born, he was ultimately attached to the Xiao Clan of Floating Cloud City in a special, irreplaceable way. After all, it was where he grew up, where his fate was changed forever, and where he met Jasmine for the first time.

"Eye of the formation?" Yun Wuxin shot her father an inquiring glance.

"It's the eye of a dimensional teleportation formation to be exact," Yun Che answered his daughter smilingly. "The other teleportation formation is set in my city in the God Realm, Emperor Yun City. When the construction is complete, you may travel to and from the God Realm whenever you wish."

Yun Wuxin's lips parted a little. It was because she was stunned by the magnitude of the construction.

Yun Che had told her that the spatial laws of the God Realm were much stronger than the ones governing the lower realms. It was incredibly difficult to traverse or destroy the fabric of space of the God Realm.

One of his given examples was the great dimensional formation that connected the Eternal Heaven God Realm and the edge of the Primal Chaos. It had taken the manpower and resources of multiple king realms to complete, and it was literally the biggest space traversing project ever undertaken in the history of the God Realm.

The soon-to-be-completed profound spatial formation that connects Blue Pole Star to the God Realm was on a much smaller scale than that great dimensional formation, but she recognized that it was still on a scale that was beyond her ability to comprehend.

"It connects directly to father's Emperor Yun City..." Yun Wuxin's eyes shimmered. "A profound spatial formation can't be mundane even for the God Realm, right?"

"Of course not," Yun Che replied. "Even if we discount the resources that are involved, your Auntie Meiyin is the only person in the entire cosmos who can complete a profound spatial formation like this in such a short time."

"Auntie Meiyin is amazing," Yun Wuxin praised from the bottom of her heart.

"Heehee!"

Shui Meiyin brushed her fingers against the World Piercer, and ripples of crimson energy trailed after her movement. "I shall begin my work then. The space here is too fragile though, so I will have to strengthen it before laying down the eye of the formation. It will take around ten days to complete everything."

"Oh right!"

Shui Meiyin suddenly recalled something and extended a hand. Sitting on her snow white palm were three bright, crimson jades. "This is for you, Big Brother Yun Che!"

The unique crimson glow was a dead giveaway. They clearly contained the spatial divine power of the World Piercer.

Yun Che accepted the gift and exhaled bits of profound energy to figure out how to use it. Then, he asked in a surprised voice, "Did you create them using the World Piercer?"

"Mn!" Shui Meiyin nodded before continuing in a melodious voice, "The World Piercer will never regain its former glory. Therefore, it cannot create a Void Illusion Stone anymore."

"However, the World Piercer has been able to regenerate some divine energy during the past couple of months of peace, and I decided to create these 'World Jades' with them. All you need to do is to inject it with profound energy, and they'll teleport you to the destination no matter how far away you are from it. It is inferior to the Void Illusion Stone in that it is not perfectly untraceable, but—"

Shui Meiyin's eyebrows curled into crescents. "—the trail it leaves behind is still nearly undetectable, and it only takes a maximum of two breaths to complete the teleportation. Most importantly, it doesn't teleport you to a random, unknown location. I promise you that they are better than all the Void Illusion Stones that remain in the current universe."

"But where do they teleport you to?" Yun Che realized the answer even as he voiced the question.

"Could it be... Emperor Yun City!"

"But of course!" Shui Meiyin giggled again. "Just crush it, and you will be teleported to Emperor Yun City even if you are inside the God Realm of Absolute Beginning."

It should've been impossible to teleport between the God Realm of Absolute Beginning and the God Realm. Before the World Piercer appeared, not even the so-called greatest spatial profound artifact at the time, the Great Void Cauldron could pull off such a feat.

Yun Che clenched his fingers a little. If Yun Wuxin wasn't right here, he would've pushed Shui Meiyin down and kissed her for a very long time.

As the Great Emperor, there was nothing left in the Primal Chaos that could threaten him anymore. However, that didn't mean that he had no use for the World Jades.

It was because the World Jades were meant for his loved ones. He had afforded them the best possible protection in the entire universe, there was no such thing as too much. Even if the worst case scenario—even if the chance of it happening was smaller than a speck of dust—were to occur, his loved ones would still be able to escape the danger.

Shui Meiyin knew exactly where Yun Che's greatest worries lay. That was why she created these spatial divine stones she named "World Jades" for him even though they cost the incredibly precious energy of the World Piercer. The owners of the jades might never have to use them, but their existence would permanently eliminate the last vestiges of worry in Yun Che's heart.

"Three is all I can create though. You will have to decide who gets to have them, Big Brother Yun Che."

Shui Meiyin winked meaningfully at Yun Che before twisting her delicate waist and waving the World Piercer. A thin sheet of crimson light immediately expanded from the Heavenly Profound Treasure and enveloped all the space within 10 kilometers of her.

"Wear this, Wuxin."

Yun Che placed one of the World Jades in Yun Wuxin's hands and advised seriously, "Never store this in your spatial artifact. Instead, keep it on your person at all times. In case the unthinkable happens, you'll be able to teleport to Emperor Yun City immediately."

"I got it." Although she thought that her father's precautions were entirely too excessive, she obediently accepted the World Jade and admired its unique light for a moment. Then, she carefully deposited it inside her sash.

"So, who are you going to give the remaining two jades to, father?" Her tone was serious, but her playful expression was exactly identical to the one on Shui Meiyin's face a moment ago. "Personally, I would like mother and master to have them, but..."

"Auntie Cang Yue and Auntie Ling'er are the gentlest of them all, so they will never contest for it. They will definitely feel disappointed on the inside though."

"Auntie Caiyi would appear the most unconcerned, but the truth would be the complete opposite."

"Auntie Lingxi grew up together with father, and everyone knows just how close you two are. Even I would feel sorry for her if you don't give her one."

"Auntie Caizhi looks very unhappy for some reason. It would be a bad idea to make her even madder."

Auntie Meiyin poured her sweat and blood into creating these three World Jades. Although she gave them all to you, I bet she really wants you to put one around her neck with your own two hands..."

"Auntie—"

"Enough! Enough..." Waves of headache assaulted Yun Che's. The two World Jades in his hand suddenly felt scalding hot for some reason.

Yun Wuxin clasped her hand behind her back and bent forward slightly. Her current appearance was one of an outsider who was used to her cold, lofty mask could never imagine. "If you don't mind, I may have a solution to your problem."

"... are you sure it's a good solution?" Yun Che glanced at his cute daughter suspiciously.

Yun Wuxin said half-jokingly and half-seriously, "It's simple. All you need to do is give me a younger brother and a younger sister, heehee!"

To her surprise, Yun Che actually nodded after a moment of consideration. “Not a bad idea.”

His eyes focused, and his expression suddenly turned serious. “In that case, help me trick your mom into the bedroom tonight! It’s been seven days and eighteen hours since she allowed me to touch a hair on her. I can’t believe she’s still angry about that!”

“Of course she’s angry!” Yun Wuxin rolled her eyes at Yun Che. “How could she not after she saw what you did to auntie!? If she wasn’t as soft-hearted as she is, I... I would be ignoring you just like mom! Hmph!”

“It’s not like that! Yueli and I are—”

“You know it’s no use trying to explain things to an angry spouse, right? Much less me.” Yun Wuxin hid a snicker before continuing with a straight face, “Plus, how is mom at fault when you’re really the one who couldn’t give me a younger brother or a younger sister? I have more aunts than I can count, and let’s not pretend that you haven’t been... been...with them... all this time when my mom was ignoring you!”

“Pfft!”

A girlish snort suddenly came from below. Yun Che’s already awkward expression immediately crumbled into something worse.

It was only now that Yun Wuxin noticed the new arrival. Panicking over the likelihood that she had really hurt her father’s dignity, she said in a hurry, “Auntie Ling’er, I... I was just joking with father.”

“I know,” a smiling Su Ling’er replied while walking up to them. “Can you play with Yongning for a bit, Wuxin? There’s something very~ important that I would like to talk with your father about.”

“Okay!” Yun Wuxin hurriedly agreed before escaping the scene. She didn’t even dare to look at Yun Che’s face before she left.

“This is getting serious. Even your precious daughter is starting to worry over you,” Su Ling’er teased Yun Che after arriving by his side.

“Hmph!” Yun Che exhaled through his nose, crossed his arms and feigned indifference. “This was a common problem for the Dragon Gods, and I have the Dragon God’s bloodline, so it can’t be helped. It’s not all bad though. It would be terrifying if ten thousand years later, the number of my descendants grew to tens of thousands or even hundreds of thousands like some of the realm kings or god emperors in the God Realm.”

His scalp turned numb just thinking about it.

“Yes, yes, whatever you say, husband.” Su Ling’er’s eyes curled a little with cheer. “I’m sure it’s the same for Wuxin. She may ask for a younger brother or sister time and again, but I bet she’s really worried that she would lose some of your love to her future siblings.”

“What an unnecessary worry.” Yun Che let out a chuckle before asking, “So, what is this important thing you wish to talk with me about, Ling’er?”

“Make a guess, husband.” Su Ling’er blinked cutely.

Yun Che tried, but he couldn't think of anything that fit the weight behind Ling'er's words. He replied tentatively, "Did... did Caiyi and Caizhi get into an argument or something?"

"Of course not! In fact, they are doing great right now." Su Ling'er took a step forward and moved her face closer until her lips were almost touching Yun Che's cheek. Then, she whispered in a quiet voice, "What else is very important besides the matter between you and Sister Lingxi?"

Yun Che's surprise gave way to uncontrollable excitement. "D-did you finally figure out why!?"

"Not yet," Su Ling'er replied slowly and seriously. "But I've told your master about your weird impotence whenever you're facing sister Lingxi, and he said—"

"Stop stop stop!" Yun Che interrupted, "You can say go soft or whatever, but NEVER use that word EVER. Also, what!? You told my master about this!?"

Impotence was the greatest pain for any man... and the Great Emperor of the God Realm was no exception.

"Don't worry, husband. When I spoke with our master, I made sure to mention that it was 'someone else's husband'."

"..." Yun Che put a hand to his forehead. "Master isn't stupid, you know."

"That's not important, heehee." Su Ling'er just barely held back a giggle at Yun Che's expression. She continued in a consoling tone, "You really don't need to mind about this. Everyone knows that our husband is the greatest, strongest and manliest man in the entire world... except Sister Lingxi."

"# ¥ %..." Yun Che groaned inside his head. She just had to add that last part!

"What... what did Master say?" Yun Che tried to stay calm, but he only half-succeeded when he realized that he could no longer visit his master without feeling some intense awkwardness.

"Master's judgment was exactly the same as mine," Su Ling'er said. "If the body is perfectly healthy, and the man doesn't react differently before another woman, then it can only be a psychological problem."

"For years, I had believed that your psyche had created some sort of mental block because she was your 'little aunt'. You had believed her to be your blood relative for fifteen years after all."

"However, after you increased all our cultivation to the Divine Origin Realm using the Divine Water of Life, and I spent the past couple of years growing accustomed to the body and profound energy of the divine way, I came to realize that it was a mistake. This mental block may affect a mortal man, but never to a divine way profound practitioner like you."

"..." Yun Che had figured this out himself a long time ago. A body forged in the divine way simply couldn't be touched by the negative effects of the psyche.

"I haven't thought about this until now because of your years-long disappearance, but your 'symptom' remained even after you came back. After searching for a solution or even a reason for the past couple months to no avail, I finally decided that I must consult Master about it."

After going missing for five years straight, Yun Che had returned a renewed man in every sense of the word. He had united the Northern Divine Region, flattened the three Divine Regions, torn the Dragon Monarch apart with his bare hands, and became the emperor of the universe himself. Discounting the Era of the Gods, he was without a doubt the greatest profound practitioner ever in the entire cosmos.

After he returned to the Blue Pole Star, Su Ling'er, Cang Yue, Chu Yuechan, Little Demon Empress, Feng Xue'er and more... everyone had come to know exactly how powerful his draconic blood and divine body really were. He had grinded for seven days and nights straight and remained as energetic as he was on the first day!

And yet... the second he pounced on Xiao Lingxi...

His little brother would immediately wilt like a flower!

It was exactly the same as it was back then!

He himself was a genius doctor. His art of healing had long since surpassed Yun Gu's, especially after he had cultivated the Divine Miracle of Life to completion.

In fact, his cultivation in this area had gone beyond the art of healing and into the boundary that was the true essence of life itself.

He knew better than anyone that it was neither a physical or a mental problem. That was why he was so confused by it.

This was no illness he was contending with. No, this... was an invisible curse.

But what could possibly curse him? In this world where the heavenly way itself feared him, and the Dragon Monarch was crushed by him like an ant?

Even if a transcendental existence like that did exist in the world... why in the Primal Chaos would they curse him with something so nonsensical??

"Master admits that he is confounded, since the issue is neither physical nor mental. That is why he requested me to bring the 'patient' to him for an actual inspection. Do you get why I am here now?"

"You want me to follow you to meet Master?" Yun Che exhaled in a helpless voice.

Su Ling'er stuck out her tongue a bit before grabbing Yun Che's wrist and shaking it back and forth.

"Husband, I know you don't like this, but this is Master Yun Gu we're talking about. You know there's no illness in the world that he cannot treat."

"Both you and Sister Linxi have been hung up on this for a very long time, and this is the only possible way to solve this that I can think of. Please, resolve yourself and come with me, okay? Master will find a way to solve this."

"No." However, Yun Che rejected her without hesitation. "In fact, you don't need to worry about this anymore, Ling'er."

Surprised and slightly aggrieved, Su Ling'er stopped shaking his hands and asked in a timid voice, "You... you really want to keep it a secret that much?"

"It's not that." Yun Che retook her hands to assure her. "I just know that even Master won't be able to solve this. Don't worry though. One day, I will figure out the reason myself."

"Also, when you speak to Lingxi later, please tell her that it's just me still unable to get over myself, okay? I don't want her to start wondering if she's the real problem."

Amusingly enough, Xiao Lingxi being capable of turning him soft instantly wasn't even the strangest thing about her. The fact that she could somehow decipher the World-Defying Heaven Manual written using the Divine Text of Absolute Beginning was a million times stranger than that.

Wait a minute... the World-Defying Heaven Manual!

Now that he thought about it, he hadn't asked Xiao Lingxi to decipher the last World-Defying Heaven Manual the Heaven Smiting Devil Emperor had given to Shui Meiyin before she left, and Shui Meiyin had passed to him later on.

There were a couple of reasons. For one, he was the strongest profound practitioner in the entire universe. Two, he had too much to catch up on after he was finally able to return home. It wasn't like the manual hadn't come across his mind at all, but it was quickly buried by other matters. Now though... he felt like he should figure out its contents for some reason.

Seeing Yun Che's peaceful but firm expression, Su Ling'er understood that there was no point trying to change his mind. "Very well. I just hope Master won't go on another rant about 'hiding a sickness for fear of treatment' again..."

"Oh right," Su Ling'er asked suddenly, "Who is that Yun Kong person you brought home? He has no profound energy or even memories, but you went through the effort to obfuscate his identity anyway. You're only making us more curious, you know that?"

"He is a sinner who deserves a million deaths, but I cannot execute for some reasons," Yun Che replied. "His past is nonconsequential. Just treat him like you would any other person."

Caizhi hadn't objected to Yun Che's treatment of Xing Juekong, but he had no doubt that she didn't want anyone to know that he was her father.

Maybe she would visit him one day. Maybe she would never. It was up to her to decide.

"I see." Su Ling'er looked thoughtful, but she didn't pursue it any further.

"Speaking of which, he hasn't asked Master to restore his lost memories, has he?" Yun Che asked.

"No." Su Ling'er shook her head. "On the contrary, he actually rebuffed master's request when he offered to inspect his head and see if there's a chance to restore his memories."

"Yun Kong claimed that watching our master rescuing the ill and wounded was like having his soul cleansed by pure water. Every time he witnessed a dying patient returning to life, he felt as if their reignited flames of life were glowing in his own hands. It was a kind of satisfaction and joy that was beyond all description."

“He said that ‘the man who brought him here’ had called him an unforgivable sinner, and the longer he worked with Master, the more he grew to fear and reject his own past. That is why he is certain that he doesn’t ever want to regain his memories.”

“I see.” Yun Che raised his eyebrows slightly. He didn’t quite know how to feel about this.

He really wanted to punish Xing Juekong, but... it looked like he had saved him instead.

.....

Although Shui Meiyin was restructuring the surrounding space of the entire Xiao residence, not many people actually noticed her activity.

Yun Che had returned to Xiao Lingxi’s courtyard and saw her sitting with her chin between her hands and watching a rack of grapes she had grown herself. She was wearing a jade green dress that outlined her perfect shoulders and delicate waist. Her peaceful and elegant features looked like they would never be tainted by the filth of the mortal world.

Xiao Lingxi turned around with a beautiful smile on her face when she heard his footsteps behind her. “You came, Little Che. Shouldn’t you be with Wuxin right now?”

“I chased her away. She’s twenty years old, she shouldn’t stick around her father like a baby,” Yun Che walked up to Xiao Lingxi while saying this.

“Pfft.” Xiao Lingxi suppressed a giggle. “Someone’s feeling defiant today. Just wait until the day Wuxin marries. I’ll be there when your act falls apart.”

Yun Che sat down beside Xiao Lingxi and wrapped his arm around her waist like it was the most natural thing in the world. “You’ve been blanking out a lot recently. Is there something on your mind?”

Xiao Lingxi shook her head reflexively, but she nodded slowly after she finished processing his words. “After meeting Meiyin and Caizhi, I came to realize that the goddesses of the God Realm are truly... different. And I haven’t even met my new older sister, the one called ‘Mu Xuanyin’ yet. I heard that she is very... dignified, and that she used to be your master. Meiyin even said that there is no other woman you respect and listen to more than her.”

“Er...” He couldn’t say it wasn’t true.

“So... I’m a little nervous, to be honest. I’m worried I would fumble and leave her a bad impression. For the past two days, I’ve been thinking about how I should speak and act around her.”

Her tension and worry were almost tangible to his eyes.

“Haha, your worry is unnecessary. She is nowhere as scary as you imagine.”

Yun Che held Xiao Lingxi’s hands as he said this. He was smiling, but his heart ached painfully for his childhood friend.

Cang Yue was Empress Cangue, Feng Xue’er was the Phoenix Goddess, Huan Caiyi was the Little Demon Empress of the Illusory Demon Realm, Su Ling’er was the disciple of the world respected medical saint, and Chu Yuechan was the Frozen Cloud Palace Master and mother of Yun Wuxin...

As for Chi Wuyao, Qianye Ying'er, Shui Meiyin, Caizhi and Mu Xuanyin... they stood at a height where she couldn't even begin to imagine.

Of all the women Yun Che had loved, she was the only one who was perfectly average.

Even disregarding family background, influence and status, her looks were inferior even compared to Feng Xue'er or Little Demon Empress, much less the likes of Qianye Ying'er or Chi Wuyao.

It was impossible not to feel some sadness and sense of inferiority every time she looked at the women surrounding Yun Che. She was too average, too humble. She just didn't feel like she belonged with them.

However, she didn't want to reveal her feelings in front of Yun Che either. She didn't want him to worry for her.

"I'll admit that Xuanyin looks very dignified. Scarily so, even. However..." he suddenly lowered his voice and wore a mischievous look on his face. "Ever heard of the phrase 'cold outside, hot inside'?"

His closeness caused Xiao Lingxi's heart to race despite herself. She asked hesitantly, "You are saying that... Sister Xuanyin is... such a person?"

"Oh, yes!" Yun Che declared with absolute confidence, "When she's in the presence of an outsider, she can freeze someone into a popsicle with her two eyes. On the bed though, whew! Not even ten Xue'er's and nine Caiyi's are a match for her."

"..." Xiao Lingxi's eyes and mouth widened at the same time.

"Here's another secret," Yun Che continued, "do you know how Xuanyin and I went from master and student to lovers? Not long after I became her disciple, she, uh... forced herself on me while we were at a place called the Ancient God Burying Inferno Prison."

"What!?" Xiao Lingxi couldn't stop herself from crying out.

"That was her first time, and it took me two days and nights of non-stop activity to finally satisfy her." Yun Che exhaled shortly. "That is why people say you shouldn't judge a book by its cover. Sometimes what you see IS what you get, yes, but other times, well... who knows? Maybe the scariest person you ever meet is also the most... hehehehe. Anyway, what I'm trying to say is that you really don't need to be nervous around her. Heck, who's to say she isn't more nervous than you are?"

"After all, all my women know there's no one closer and more important to me than you, my Lingxi."

"O... okay." She had inadvertently conjured some weird scenes in her mind after listening to Yun Che. Blushing, she bowed her head in an attempt to hide her embarrassment.

She understood that Yun Che was exaggerating things quite a bit for her sake. However, she couldn't deny that it did wonders to dispel her nervousness and tension.

Meanwhile, Mu Xuanyin was watching a cuddling Yun Che and Xiao Lingxi behind a thin cloud in the sky. No one had noticed her due to the effects of Moon Splitting Cascade.

After learning of Shui Meiyin and Caizhi's arrival, she ultimately wasn't able to quell her impatience and decided to give Yun Che a pleasant surprise.

Of course, she couldn't show up right away. If she did, this lovey dovey scene would've turned into a horror story instantly.

"Hmph! There's nothing he cannot say to coax a girl, can he?"

She muttered to herself but didn't show herself or leave the area. She stayed just out of range of Yun Che's perception and watched over him and Lingxi in silence.