

The Gods 21

Chapter 21 – Sharing the Same Bed

Habit was a frightening thing. It could inconspicuously and quietly tamper with a person's heart.

During the marriage ceremony, Xiao Che wanted to lend an arm to Xia Qingyue and had his arm mercilessly frozen by her. The first time he called her "wife", it almost sent her into a rage. The first time he led her by the hand, Xiao Che could feel the ice cold killing intent coming from her...

However, during these few days, the "Qingyue my wife" call coming from Xiao Che's mouth became more and more smooth. No matter what she thought in her heart, she appeared on the surface to have wholly come to accept this form of address. Even undressing in front of him wasn't that awkward anymore, not to mention him leading her by the palm.

These few days, Xiao Che without a doubt slept in the corner, but it wasn't that uncomfortable with the thick blanket spread on the floor. Whenever three in the morning came about, he would wake up by himself and use the silver needles to give her "treatment". These few days, she also became more and more aware of how much her physique had astonishingly changed.

The lighting was dim, but Xia Qingyue's back was like jade, her skin brighter than snow. Xiao Che held the silver needles in his hand as his fingers fluttered. Before long, he was covered in sweat. Half an hour later, another session of "opening the profound" had finished. Xiao Che removed all of the silver needles, a long sigh of relief escaping from his mouth. Exhausted, his mind suddenly felt dizzy and his body swayed before collapsing on top of Xia Qingyue's bare back. An indescribable feeling of warmth and softness spread across his chest.

Xia Qingyue abruptly opened her eyes, a look of anger passing through them. She was just about to use strength push Xiao Che far away when she felt that his current breathing was unexpectedly, incomparably weak... weaker by several factors than any time before.

Xia Qingyue withdrew her profound strength and used only a small bit of power to push aside Xiao Che. She then dressed in a flash before extending a hand to support Xiao Che's body. Looking at him, she asked, "What's wrong?"

Xiao Che's complexion was so pale that not even a trace of blood could be seen. His eyes were half open as if he had lost the strength to open them completely. He nodded slightly, then weakly said: "It's nothing... I had just overused... my strength and energy a bit... Let me rest a little and I'll be fine."

Xia Qingyue's eyes wavered, a feeling of an ache that she shouldn't have once again appearing in her heart. After the first acupuncture treatment, his entire body had lost strength. Every time it happened, he was able to recover relatively easily. However, these last few days, he had to perform acupuncture on her every day. Every needle required the limit of his profound qi. His body was originally weak. To be continuously weakened like this... how could he afford that? It was possible for this to cause his body irreparable harm.

"... You don't need to put in so much effort for me." Xia Qingyue said with a complex look in her eyes.

Xiao Che grinned as he laughed: "No, you're worth it... because you are my... official wife!"

Xia Qingyue: "..."

Xiao Che closed his eyes and slowly gathered his strength. Using a very quiet voice, he said: "Even though you married me to repay a debt of gratitude, you never considered me your husband. But there's no way for me to act like you're not my wife aside from divorcing you. Treating his woman well is also the most basic responsibility and most important honor for a man..."

After saying this, Xiao Che's chest started to feel warm... I say! Even I was touched by those words, I don't believe that you with your womanly heart, felt nothing!

For a long time, he didn't hear any Xia Qingyue say anything. He opened his eyes, lightly took a few breaths, and then said with a pitiful expression: "Qingyue my wife, I might not be able to walk very well. Can you... help me over there?"

His eyes looked towards that corner... the place where he slept.

Xia Qingyue gave the blanket covering the ground a look, the aching feeling in her heart that she shouldn't have intensifying a sliver. She shook her head, her body turning to the bedside. "You sleep on the bed, I'll sleep there."

Upon hearing this talk, Xiao Che was suddenly alarmed. Borrowing strength from who knows where, he quickly reached out and grabbed Xia Qingyue's arm: "Out of the question! That's definitely out of the question! Even though you are stronger than me in every respect... I'm a man, you're a woman! As a man, how could I sleep on the bed and let a woman sleep on the floor! If you want to sleep there, then I'd rather sleep in the courtyard!"

His voice was urgent, and contained an irrefutable kind of resolution. As he finished speaking, he also struggled to get up, as if he wanted to get off the bed.

A complex expression appeared on Xia Qingyue's face. She lightly bit her lip and, after a brief struggle, finally made a decision. She reached out and gave Xiao Che's weak body a light push back, grabbed the crimson blanket, and covered both his and her own body with it.

"You're not allowed to touch me." Xia Qingyue laid down on the outside half of the bed, her back facing Xiao Che, hiding her current expression from him.

Xiao Che silently smiled. He quickly adopted a snug sleeping posture and happily closed his eyes. "Rest easy. With your profound strength, even if I wanted to, I still won't be able to do anything to you... hu, sharing the same bed... only like this can we be considered husband and wife..."

Xia Qingyue: "..."

"Alright... Qingyue my wife, I'll sleep first... wu, tomorrow I'll have little aunt make me some ginseng and chicken soup to recuperate... wu..."

Xiao Che's voice became more and more quiet. As his voice completely faded, his breathing also became exceptionally steady... he peacefully fell asleep in the midst of his immense exhaustion.

Xia Qingyue quietly turned towards him. Seeing Xiao Che's face close at hand, her gaze trembled with a complex expression...

Ever since she joined Frozen Cloud Asgard, she had decided to suppress her feelings and desires for a lifetime. Never did she think that there would be a day where she would be sleeping in the same bed as a man. Before marrying Xiao Che, she wouldn't allow even his slightest touch...

But now, she was sleeping in the same bed as him. Not only that, there wasn't much unacceptance in her heart...

What's wrong with me? Don't tell me it's because I feel guilty towards him?

Maybe...

Her thoughts agitated, she unwittingly also sank into her dreams. She didn't realize that being able to fall asleep so quickly with a man clearly laying right next to her meant that unconsciously, her heart already did not hold any feelings of wariness or rejection towards Xiao Che.

This nap had Xiao Che sleeping until three hours after sunrise. When he opened his eyes, Xia Qingyue was already gone from his side. Her figure was also nowhere to be found inside the room.

Even though he rested for an entire night, his body was still stressed, and it felt as if he had a grave injury. Xiao Che got up, letting out a heavy sigh and thought out loud: "If this continues, there's a chance my body really will break down. I seem to have excessively showed off a bit too much."

"However, this is the only way to have her willingly look for those three things for me."

Xiao Che got off the bed and changed his clothing. After taking off his outer garments, he held the pendant hanging around his neck, momentarily dazed... On the first day of his rebirth, the overlapping memories gave rise to an immense suspicion concerning this pendant. That's because in his life on Azure Cloud Continent, he also had a pendant around his neck that was exactly the same as this one! The pendant appeared to be made of silver, and could be opened to reveal a bright and clean mirror on each side. However, that was it. There was nothing else special about it.

On Azure Cloud Continent, his master told him that this pendant was around his neck when he picked him up. In addition, the one on his neck now has also been around his neck for as long as he could remember. Grandfather told him that this was something that his father, Xiao Ying, got from who knows where. Ever since he was born, it has been around his neck and has also served as a memory of his father.

Two lives... the exact same pendant... what exactly is going on here?

After changing his clothes, Xiao Che immediately entered the Sky Poison Pearl. Inside the emerald green world, the scarlet haired girl was still peacefully floating in a protective posture, showing no signs of waking up.

These two days, he tried to roundaboutly ask grandfather and Xia Qingyue if there was any place that had red haired people. The response he always got was "this is the first time hearing of it". This caused Xiao Che to have an even greater interest and suspicion towards this girl's identity. However, he didn't tell anyone of this girl's existence.

Having changed into a set of casual clothing, he gave his body a stretch. Suddenly, an alluring and delicious smell passed in front of Xiao Che's nose, causing him to momentarily salivate. He followed the

smell and, upon seeing a pot of soup on the table, rushed over with all speed. As he opened the lid, a gust of steam accompanied by a seductively delicious smell slowly rose up.

“Ginseng and chicken soup... Ah! Little aunt is the best after all!” Xiao Che’s stomach immediately rumbled. He picked up the chopsticks and started gulping down the food. After he ate for a while, the front door was pushed open, and Xiao Lingxi, dressed in all light yellow, charmingly walked in. Upon seeing Xiao Che’s table manners, she opened her mouth to say: “Yi? Chicken soup? It smells delicious! And it seems to have the smell of ginseng. Little Che, who made this chicken soup for you? Hee hee, and you didn’t tell me, sneakily eating here by yourself!”

Xiao Lingxi’s words gave Xiao Che a moment of pause: “Little aunt, don’t tell me that you didn’t bring this over?”

“Of course not!” As Xiao Lingxi finished speaking, the expression in her eyes suddenly became strange: “Who else in this Xiao Clan would make chicken soup for you besides me? Hmm... It can only be your wife, Qingyue! It seems that the relationship between you two as husband and wife is fairly good.”

Xiao Lingxi’s words obviously carried a sense of sourness. Xiao Che set down his chopsticks and muttered: “She... How could she... make chicken soup for me...”

This definitely wasn’t possible!

“Hmph! It doesn’t matter who made it for you. To begin with you liked chicken soup, just drink it all... I came here to tell you that the Xiao Sect people will arrive in the afternoon. Right now, the entire Xiao Clan is preparing for it. When the time comes, you have to be a bit careful. You must not carelessly offend the Xiao Sect people.” Xiao Lingxi solemnly said.

“I know. If worse comes to worst, I just won’t go outside. They couldn’t possible select me anyway.” Xiao Che answered indifferently.

“You can’t stay inside.” Xiao Lingxi shook her jade like finger at him, sternly saying: “From what the clan master said, the young master from the Xiao Sect wants to review everyone in the Xiao Clan... Not one can be missing! At that time, you must not forget your manners.”

“Then there’s even less to worry about. It’s not like little aunt doesn’t know that I always have been the most well behaved.” Xiao Che answered with a smile. He then started to gulp down the food again.

“Alright. Then I’ll go to daddy first to help. It’d be good if you joined us after you finish eating the chicken soup.” Xiao Lingxi turned and left as soon as she finished speaking.

Chapter 22 – Upheaval (1)

Not long after Xiao Lingxi left, Xia Qingyue returned. Today she had traded her red clothes for a water-blue dress embroidered with a phoenix design. In her hair was a sapphire pin, from her ears dangled a pair of pearl earrings, and around her neck hung a sapphire blue pearl necklace. The visible neck skin was lustrously snow white, transparent to the point where it seemed that even the bones underneath could be seen. It radiated light and was an extremely beautiful sight to behold.

Xiao Che stared at her with an overwhelmed expression, his eyes intensely lighting up. This kind of uniquely beautiful scene, wasn’t it just like a picture of a fairy descending to the mortal realm...?

Xia Qingyue walked through the door, every step light and graceful as if she were stepping on clouds. Her snow-white face and pale neck were not only beautiful to the extreme, but also exuded a kind of nobility and cold proudness that would bring people to shame... No one who saw her would believe that she was merely the daughter of a small town merchant, but would rather think that she was an aloof and untouchable empress.

Xiao Che stared at her in a daze as his heart sighed a thousand times... This room was the only place that she could have changed! He must have been sleeping soundly and actually missed the beautiful scene of her changing! Ahhhhhh, it was simply unforgivable!!

“Blue clothing suits you even better than red,” Xiao Che heartfully praised as he watched her, delighted beyond compare.

Xia Qingyue was not moved in the least by his admiration. Seeing the empty soup pot on the table, she walked over and picked it up, preparing to go outside.

“Did you make that chicken soup?” Xiao Che asked out loud.

“Did it taste bad?” Xia Qingyue asked in an ice cold manner, her back facing him. However, within the depth of her eyes was a subtle emotion that even she, herself, did not understand.

“It was really good. That was when I knew that you’re exceptional even when it comes to making soup.” Xiao Che said with a smile. He stood up and stretched, then said earnestly: “In order to repay my wife Qingyue’s chicken soup, tonight on the bed... I’ll put in even more energy.”

“.....” Xia Qingyue had already become accustomed to his occasional flirting. She said expressionlessly: “The Xiao Sect people will arrive this afternoon. The leader is the youngest son of the Xiao Sect’s master, called Xiao Kuangyun. I heard master say that this Xiao Kuangyun’s profound strength cultivation can only be considered average among the younger generation of the Xiao Sect, and his reputation abroad is extremely poor. However, he is excessively spoiled because he’s the youngest son. There’s no one in Floating Cloud City that dares to provoke him. It’s best to try to avoid meeting him face to face.”

“Xiao Kuangyun? Alright, I understand. Thank you for warning me, Qingyue my wife.” Xiao Che said, beaming.

.....

Today was the day of arrival for the people from the Xiao Sect.

News of the Xiao Sect’s arrival not only affected the Xiao Clan, but had also immensely affected all of Floating Cloud City.

Floating Cloud City was situated at the bottom of Blue Wind Empire in every respect. On the other hand, the Xiao Sect was situated at the very summit of the Blue Wind Empire. The number of levels between the two were innumerable. People from the Xiao Sect... and also the youngest son of the Xiao Sect’s master coming here in person was no different than the emperor visiting the lowest rural family. All of Floating Cloud City had been enveloped in a kind of nervous atmosphere. Some people faintly looked forward to it, hoping to use any kind of method to establish even the tiniest bit of connection with the Xiao Sect. Even more people were alarmed in their hearts. Upon finding out that this afternoon is when they would arrive, they all locked themselves inside for fear of accidentally offending the other party... If

the Xiao Sect's people wanted to kill them, it wouldn't be much different from stepping on an ant. For them, laws were just a joke.

The Xiao Clan's main courtyard had been put in neat and tidy order, with not a spec of dust to be found anywhere. As early as two days ago, the Xiao Clan's largest and most luxurious courtyard that Xiao Yunhai had always lived in had again been swept and decorated. Even the bedsheets, blankets and furniture had all been replaced. In addition, Xiao Yunhai had moved himself to the smaller courtyard next door. Even the next few days worth of food had been personally arranged by him... Although he was weary to death, his heart stayed incomparably exuberant! That's because he was one hundred percent confident that his son Xiao Yulong would be the one selected by the Xiao Sect this time! At that time, his son would soar into the sky! And he, himself, would become someone that no one would dare provoke in Floating Cloud City... No! Rather, within a radius of hundred li!

(TL: li = .5 kilometer)

Starting from ten in the morning, Xiao Yunhai had personally led all of the elders to wait at the clan entrance, ready to greet the guests. They waited all the way until noon... then... until the afternoon... it wasn't until five in the afternoon when a Xiao Clan disciple ran back shouting from a distance: "Clan Master! They... they've arrived!! Xiao Sect's people have arrived... That loftiness... it's definitely the Xiao Sect!"

Everyone's body shook. Xiao Yunhai took a quick step out, bellowing in a low voice: "Quick! Immediately notify everyone to make ready. I definitely won't forgive anyone who messes up and offends the noble guests! Fellow elders, follow me out to meet them at once!"

Xiao Yunhai madly rushed out. Only after forging straight ahead for more than a li did he finally see four people unhurriedly walking in their direction.

Of the four of them, in the lead was a young man that looked to be about twenty years old with luxurious clothing, a normal build, and mediocre features. His white face contained a trace of sallowness, his appearance that of an excessive hedonist. As far as looks went, he wouldn't stand out in the midst of a crowd. However, even such an ordinary face was full of wild arrogance and haughtiness. His hands were behind his back as he walked, his eyes looking upwards, not even glancing at the occasional passerby, as if even a look would dirty his eyes.

Following behind him was an elder in black clothing, his features calm like water. Even further back were two similarly black clothed youths. An silver eagle pattern was embroidered onto each of their shoulders.

Xiao Yunhai took a deep breath and then quickly walked up to welcome them. He cupped his fist in greeting, his body leant forward, and carefully and respectfully asked: "Excuse me, are you four the noble guests from the Xiao Sect?"

The young man in front stopped, glanced at them lazily, then said with half closed eyes: "That's right, this noble one is the Xiao Sect's Xiao Kuangyun."

Xiao Yunhai's attitude immediately became even more respectful. He reverently said: "It turned out to be four noble guests, that's great! We have been looking forward to your arrival for a long time. Your humble servant is Floating Cloud City's Xiao Clan's current clan master. The five behind me are the Xiao

Clan's five esteemed elders. For four noble guests to come out all this way for our Xiao Clan, we are extremely grateful and humbled."

"There's no need to continue with the nonsense." Xiao Kuangyun's gaze flickered across all five elders. He then lazily shook his arms out: "Lead the way."

"Yes, yes! Please follow me." Xiao Yunhai promptly nodded and then turned his body to personally lead the way back to Xiao Clan.

"I'm afraid I don't recognize this senior..."

"Xiao Moshan." The black clothed elder replied indifferently. His face was without emotion, much like that of a corpse.

Xiao Yunhai didn't dare to speak any further, his heart full of apprehension. He could make out Xiao Kuangyun's level of profound strength cultivation, but couldn't sense even a sliver of profound strength from this Xiao Moshan's body. This could be because this Xiao Moshan hadn't cultivated, which was clearly not possible. Either that, or his profound strength cultivation surpassed his ability to detect it by far.

By the time they returned to the Xiao Clan, a large group of people were already standing at the entrance. Upon seeing the respectful attitude of Xiao Yunhai in the front, their hearts thumped. Their eyes all fell upon that haughty young man, and then they all tripped over one another to welcome them.

"May I ask if this is the young master from the Xiao Sect?" A heavysset, middle aged man at the very front asked respectfully.

"Who are you?" Xiao Kuangyun slanted his half open eyes to look at him.

"I... I am the governor of Floating Cloud City. My lowly name is Situ Nan. When I heard that the noble guests from the Xiao Sect were arrival, I came... came to greet you." Situ Nan's voice started to tremble and cold sweat ran across his forehead. As Floating Cloud City's governor, he had seen many important figures, but none of the important figures that he had seen amounted to anything in front of this young master of the Xiao Sect. The arrogant young man in front of him was only mediocre in terms of appearance, but just a word from him would spell his death.

"This humble servant is Yuwen Ba. I've been good friends with the Xiao Clan clan master for many years. I came... came to admire the gracefulness of the Xiao Sect young master. I also brought a few meager gifts, I hoping the young master will accept them." The Yuwen family head, equally famous among the Xiao Clan and Floating Cloud City, also rushed forward, his face full of respect. His hands offered a small and delicate jade box.

Xiao Kuangyun passed his gaze over that jade box and then swept his hand towards the two people behind him. "Receive it."

One of the people behind him immediately stepped forward and expressionlessly took the jade box into his hands.

Seeing that the Xiao Sect young master had actually accepted his gift, Yuwen Ba's face filled with happiness. Other people looking to establish some small bit of relationship with the Xiao Sect scrambled

forward to present their own gifts... Xiao Kuangyun didn't refuse anyone and accepted all the gifts without question. Then, with slanted eyes, he carelessly spoke: "All of you withdraw. It's already a bit late today. If there's anything else, we'll talk about it tomorrow."

"Right, right! Young Master Xiao traveled over land and water to come here. He must be exhausted. We'll come back tomorrow once Young Master Xiao has rested." Governor Situ said as he nodded his head.

Only then did the crowd disperse.

Xiao Yunhai and the five elders respectfully introduced Xiao Kuangyun to the Xiao Clan. Xiao Yunhai said to them: "The four noble guests from the Xiao Sect have traveled at this way and must be exhausted. Would you like to have short rest first? An elegant residence has already been prepared."

"There's no need, my body isn't that weak." Xiao Kuangyun swept his gaze across the Xiao Clan as the corners of his mouth stretched, exposing a hard to hide disdain. He then unenthusiastically said: "If it weren't for Elder Xiao Zheng's death, I wouldn't even have known there was this kind of place. I heard that the ancestor of this place was a piece of trash that our Xiao Sect had expelled. However, no matter how trashy, it's still someone from the Xiao Sect. Even if he's a piece of trash that the Xiao Sect didn't want, he was still able to become a lord in this kind of place. To be able to grow like this over these many years, it's still not bad."

"Yes, yes. Thank you for the compliment, Young Master Xiao."

Faced with Xiao Kuangyun's naked contempt and disdain, Xiao Yunhai still nodded his head to express his thanks. How could he dare retort even a bit?

"The dead are important. The reason I personally came here is also to fulfill Elder Xiao Zheng's final wish. We clearly stated our purpose to you in our letter. Tomorrow morning, have everyone in your clan assemble in this courtyard. Not one of them must be missing. I will personally select one to take with us back to the Xiao Sect." After saying this last sentence, Xiao Kuangyun held his head high as if he were announcing heaven's fortunate edict.

Chapter 23 – Upheaval (2)

"Yes! Tomorrow morning, everyone in the Xiao Clan will gather here. I promise not one will be missing." Xiao Yunhai promptly pledged.

"Great! Our time is really precious; we only have tomorrow. I don't want there to be any unexpected issues." Xiao Kuangyun indifferently said, then tilted his head: "You are all the esteemed Elder Xiao Zheng's descendents, it's only right to bring this gift. Xiao Ba, deliver the gift."

The one called Xiao Ba stepped forward and expressionlessly placed a wooden box in front of Xiao Yunhai. Xiao Yunhai's hands trembled as he received it with a terrified expression on his face: "I thank... thank the Xiao Sect for its gift. I'm very grateful."

"The thing inside is called 'Profound Opening Powder'. It can clear a profound vein, letting a person cultivate much faster for a certain period of time. It also has a very good restorative effect on profound veins that have been damaged for any reason. Even among our Xiao Sect, this is considered a very effective medicine."

The implication was that... since it was an effective medicine to the Xiao Sect, then to them, it would be considered a first rate magical elixir.

"It also has a very good restorative effect on profound veins that were damaged for any reason"... This sentence caused the expression of the up-to-now taciturn and silent Xiao Lie to suddenly spasm. His eyes leaked a strange light, but then he immediately sighed inwardly as his expression dimmed.

Xiao Yunhai carefully put the wooden box aside, and then said with a face full of gratitude: "Since it is the Xiao Sect's medicine, then its effects must be beyond my imagination. I don't know how our Xiao Clan will be able to repay Young Master Xiao's great favor... Since Young Master Xiao doesn't need to rest, how about I have a few people take you gentlemen for a tour around our Xiao Clan or Floating Cloud City? Even though this is a small town, we have a few places that may brighten your eyes."

Seeing that Xiao Kuangyun didn't shake his head, Xiao Yunhai immediately reached out and dragged Xiao Yulong over: "This is my son, Xiao Yulong. His age is similar to Young Master Xiao. Why not have him take everyone out for a stroll?"

Xiao Yunhai's intention was very clear. He wanted to, as much as possible, have Xiao Yulong be the first to mingle and get familiar with Xiao Kuangyun. That way, the chances of him being taken back to the Xiao Sect would further increase. If he could make a good impression on Xiao Kuangyun, then it was possible that he may earn Xiao Kuangyun's protection once in the Xiao Sect, thereby rapidly rising in position...

"This lowly servant is Xiao Yulong, to be able to witness the elegance of the noble guests from the Xiao Sect surely is the fortune of a lifetime." Xiao Yulong stepped forward, his face humble and modest.

Xiao Kuangyun gave Xiao Yulong a lookover and indifferently said: "Fine, then take us for a stroll. I've stayed at the popular places for a long time, it's not bad to get a look at the remote areas. The rest of you can disperse. I don't like being followed by too many people. I will find you when I need you."

"Yes, yes!" Xiao Yunhai replied as he promptly nodded: "If you gentlemen need anything, then please immediately tell anyone here. Yulong, please take good care of these honored guests."

"Yes father."

Xiao Yunhai and the five elders left respectfully. The people from the Xiao Sect arrived later than expected so naturally the official business will be delayed to tomorrow.

Xiao Yulong stood to the side of Xiao Kuangyun and bowed, showing a relatively humble attitude. His face revealed a smile: "Young Master Xiao, even though this Floating Cloud City is small, but it has everything you'd expect it to have. I don't know if Young Master Xiao wants to first experience the beautiful scenery, fine delicacies, or... the beautiful women?"

Seeing the vague smile on Xiao Yulong's face, Xiao Kuangyun's eyes brightened, his face also revealing a trace of a lewd smile: "As men, what do you say we should first experience?"

How could Xiao Yulong not know what kind of person he was from his sallow face? He immediately gave a heh heh kind of laugh and said: "You can tell Young Master Xiao is a true man from a glance! As a true man, obviously we should first experience the things that a true man enjoys! Even though our Floating

Cloud City is a small town, our city's Heavenly Fragrant House is known far and wide. More than a few people travel hundreds of li because of its reputation. Let us first take a turn there?"

"You, boy, are pretty sensible." Xiao Kuangyun, his lips curling, looked into Xiao Yulong's eyes for moment: "Let's go."

Xiao Yulong's footsteps were swift as he walked ahead to lead the way. When they were just about to leave, the silhouette of a beautiful girl appeared in Xiao Kuangyun's line of sight.

The girl's figure was wonderfully moving and delicate to the extreme. Looking from afar, her physique was so graceful that it was simply too hard to describe. Under the azure long skirt, one could faintly make out a pair of exquisite and slender legs. Her dress floated in the wake of her slow walk and her jewelry occasionally twinkled on her delicate, womanly figure. The perfect arcs of her waist, breasts, and buttocks were indescribably lovely. She radiated an incomparable, soul shaking charm and had a kind of proud appearance and attitude that transcended this world.

Xiao Kuangyun's mouth gaped widely and his entire body froze on the spot. His eyes unwaveringly stared at that exquisite silhouette in the distance. Inwardly panicking, he almost believed that he was seeing a river nymph from the legends. As if noticing his stare, the girl angled her face towards him, gave him a cold look, then turned her head and walked into the courtyard. Even her complexion, from the glimpse that Xiao Kuangyun got when she turned her head to glance at him, caused his body to shake, as if all the bones in his body had turned soft and melted.

He still hadn't returned to his senses even long after Xia Qingyue had left his sight.

Upon Xia Qingyue's sudden and inopportune appearance, Xiao Yulong's heart gave off a *thump* sound as he prayed that she wouldn't be spotted by Xiao Kuangyun. But unfortunately, Xiao Kuangyun saw her and had also shown the same reaction that the majority of men had the first time they saw Xia Qingyue's true face... No, the reaction was even more exaggerated. Xiao Yulong's heart began to immediately twitch... In this small Floating Cloud City, how could any woman that Xiao Kuangyun had set his eyes on escape? And once Xiao Kuangyun had set his eyes on her, it also meant that he wouldn't be able to obtain Xia Qingyue in this lifetime.

However, he immediately clenched his teeth lightly and, standing next to Xiao Kuangyun, waved his hand in front of his face. He quietly whispered: "Young Master Xiao?"

"That girl... who is that girl? Who is she?" Xiao Kuangyun's expression was in turmoil and even his voice was trembling in excitement: "This world... actually had a woman this beautiful! All of my wives and concubines... all of the women I've played around with... added together wouldn't be a match for her... A fairy... she's simply a fairy..."

Xiao Kuangyun had been moved to such a state of excitement that he had become incoherent. The light in his eyes was hot almost to the point of combustion. Xiao Yulong changed to well-intentioned attitude and said with a face of smiles: "She's called Xia Qingyue and is our Floating Cloud City's most beautiful woman. She truly is a fairy like person."

"Xia... Qingyue. Xia? Then she isn't a member of the Xiao Clan?"

“Right!” Xiao Yulong nodded his head as his eyes narrowed. He clearly stated: “She isn’t a member of our Xiao Clan, but is rather the daughter of the richest merchant in our Floating Cloud City. She only married into our Xiao Clan three days ago, marrying the grandson of the Fifth Elder, Xiao Che.”

“What? She’s married?” Xiao Kuangyun’s expression belied his disappointment. In a flash, it then turned into a burning jealousy and an extremely intense desire: “She’s actually married! And married into your Xiao Clan... That’s absolutely ridiculous!! How could the grandson of a puny Xiao Clan elder be worthy of this kind of fairy?!”

“Right! Young Master Xiao’s words are too true!” Xiao Yulong promptly agreed: “Only a person with a dragon’s amount of talent like Young Master Xiao can be worthy of this kind of fairy. Young Master Xiao doesn’t know that even though the person she married is the grandson of an elder, he is actually our Xiao Clan’s most useless person... His profound veins have been deformed since his childhood. Even now, he’s still only at the first level of the Elementary Profound Realm. He’s an absolute disgrace to our Xiao Clan.”

“Wh... what?” Xiao Kuangyun’s expression turned ashen and his hands began to tremble: “This beauty is unexpectedly married to that kind of trash! This is absolutely unforgivable... unforgivable!”

“That kind of woman should belong to me, Xiao Kuangyun! How could a piece of trash from the Xiao Clan be worthy of her?!” Xiao Kuangyun growled in a low voice, the flames of his jealousy igniting. He immediately walked towards the courtyard that Xia Qingyue had just entered.

He had walked only two steps when a forceful and dignified voice sounded from behind him: “Young master. The sect master appointing you to come out here is also a kind of learning experience. The sect master specifically warned you that you mustn’t do anything that will lower the reputation of the sect! Especially snatching away someone else’s wife.”

Xiao Kuangyun stopped moving, his entire face full of lust and disagreement. However, he still obediently stopped moving.

Xiao Yulong glanced at that elder called Xiao Moshan in bewilderment... It seems that he came here not only to accompany and protect Xiao Kuangyun, but was also his overseer. Just one sentence was enough to scare Xiao Kuangyun into inaction. Furthermore, from his words, it was evident that this Xiao Kuangyun had already snatched other people’s wives quite a few times before.

Xiao Yulong’s gaze wavered. He quickly walked next to Xiao Kuangyun and said in a low voice: “Young Master Xiao... If you have set your eyes on that Xia Qingyue, you may not have to use force to take her. There are many methods to do this.”

“Methods? What methods?” Xiao Kuangyun turned his head and stared at him with his burning gaze.

Xiao Yulong immediately leaned towards his ear and quickly whispered into it. After he finished talking, Xiao Kuangyun’s eyes immediately lit up. The corner of his mouth also revealed the trace of an impatient, lewd smile.

“This is something that I just learned. I haven’t told anyone else. I didn’t think that it would happen to be able to help Young Master Xiao. It truly can’t get any better.” Seeing Xiao Kuangyun’s lewd smile, Xiao Yulong’s heart was filled with loathing, but his face still obediently held a smile.

“Very good. Extremely good.” Xiao Kuangyun slowly nodded his head.

“It seems like Young Master Xiao has a similar taste in beautiful women. Actually, within our Xiao Clan, there are more beauties than just Xia Qingyue,” Xiao Yulong said in a low voice. “Fifth Elder Xiao Lie has a daughter who just turned fifteen this year, but is already an outstanding beauty. She isn’t worse than Xia Qingyue by much... I don’t know if Young Master Xiao has any interest?”

“Fifteen year old... and is almost as beautiful as that fairy from just then?” Xiao Kuangyun’s eyes fiercely widened, revealing a wolf-like glint.

Upon seeing the look in his eyes, Xiao Yulong knew what he should do next. He once again leaned towards Xiao Kuangyun and said in a low voice, “If Young Master Xiao is interested, then this is even easier. The method is really simple, we just have to...”

Xiao Yulong leaned close to Xiao Kuangyun’s ear and again whispered into it.

“HAHAHA! HAHAHA....” Xiao Kuangyun started to laugh wildly as the obscene look in his eyes intensified: “When I return, I should really thank my father for letting me meet two stunning beauties.... I really didn’t come here to this faraway place in vain.”

His gaze turned towards Xiao Yulong. He then slowly nodded his head: “You’re called... Xiao Yulong right?”

“Yes, yes! This lowly one is Xiao Yulong.” Xiao Yulong showed excitement on his face. For Xiao Kuangyun to remember his name was his greatest honor.

“You are pretty good, not bad at all. If these two things are taken care of successfully, then after we return to the Xiao Sect, you should just stick to my side.” Xiao Kuangyun said with narrowed eyes.

“Ah!” Xiao Yulong’s entire body shook. He was moved to where his eyes were opened widely. After he recovered, he knelt in front of Xiao Kuangyun with a *putong* sound and heavily kowtowed. “Yulong thanks Young Master Xiao for his large kindness! If it’s possible to stay by Young Master Xiao’s side, then Yulong will definitely loyally, with all my heart take care of Young Master Xiao!”

This result caused Xiao Yulong’s heart to wildly throb in pleasant surprise... To be able to enter the Xiao Sect is already a delight equivalent to reaching heaven in one step. Yet to be able to follow the son of the sect master is an entirely different thing. It’s something that Xiao Yulong would’ve never dared to imagine before.

Chapter 24 – Upheaval (3)

Xiao Lie originally had great expectations for the people from the Xiao Sect. The son of the Xiao Sect’s master presumably should be like a celestial dragon god.

However, at first sight, he was instead greatly disappointed. He didn’t see the aura, grace, self-restraint, and appropriate loftiness that the direct disciples of a great sect should have. Rather, he only saw condescending arrogance and a tyrannical look in his eyes that left an uneasy feeling. It was just like that of a pampered and spoiled playboy that had grown up among sycophants. But upon thinking carefully, he was also relieved... After all, the Xiao Sect couldn’t possibly care about this small Xiao Clan. How

could they send some “great person” over? The status of “the son of the sect master” was also merely to express a superficial respect to the dead Xiao Zheng.

“Daddy, I just heard them say that you and the clan master headed off to welcome the Xiao Sect’s people. How come you’re back so soon?” Xiao Lingxi had just happened to stop by to deliver food to Xiao Lie. With a face full of curiosity, she asked: “Have the people from the Xiao Sect already arrived? What kind of people are they? Do they have a really frightening aura?”

Xiao Lingxi’s questions reminded him of the elder standing behind Xiao Kuangyun. He nodded: “Of course, the people from the Xiao Sect are unfathomable. However, Xi Er, you should avoid the Xiao Sect’s people as much as possible in the few days that they’re here. The young man leading them isn’t some kind of benevolent person. If you can avoid them, then you should do so.”

“Ah?” Xiao Lingxi blinked her eyes in disbelief and then nodded lightly: “I know daddy. In fact, I was already a little bit afraid of them. After all, they are from the Xiao Sect. They must be super super powerful.”

“Even if you’re curious, you should try to stay away from them.” Xiao Lie once again warned. He lightly breathed in and, with a heavy load on his mind, walked into the courtyard.

“Daddy? Why do you look like you have something on your mind? Did something especially big happen?” Xiao Lingxi asked nervously. As a daughter who knew her father well, with just a glance, Xiao Lingxi could see through Xiao Lie’s facial expression.

Xiao Lie froze for a second, and then shook his head: “It’s nothing...” He paused for a moment as he realized that if he didn’t say it out loud, then this clever daughter of his may not feel at ease for the rest of the day. He could only slowly respond: “The Xiao Sect brought a gift called the “Profound Opening Powder”. From what that Xiao Kuangyun said, this Profound Opening Powder has a great restorative effect on damaged profound veins. So...”

“Ah! It can fix damaged profound veins? Is that true?” Xiao Lie hadn’t even finished talking, but Xiao Lingxi was already crying out in excitement. All of the sudden, her small hands tightly clenched the edges of her clothing. Fixing Xiao Che’s profound veins had always been her greatest wish. These past few years, she had nonstop diligently searched for every possible method with Xiao Lie. Xiao Lie’s words were no different to her than the celestial sound of heaven granting her wish.

“The effects of the Xiao Sect’s medicine can’t be compared to that of ordinary medicine. It may really be able to provide surprising results.” Saying this, Xiao Lie’s expression slowly dimmed: “However, the Profound Opening Powder’s most important use is to accelerate the speed of cultivation for a certain amount of time. Right now, the clan master and the rest of them all consider this ‘Profound Opening Powder’ as a treasure. To convince them to use the ‘Profound Opening Powder’ on the body of Che Er, who’s considered a good for nothing in their eyes... It truly was a slim hope.

Xiao Lingxi’s expression became sluggish. Xiao Lie’s words were like a pail of cold water that extinguished all of her excitement. She bit her lips and resolutely said, “No matter how, we must obtain the Profound Opening Powder. Little Che definitely isn’t a good for nothing! He’s the one that needs the Profound Opening Powder the most!”

“I’ll try with all my power to fight for it.” Seeing her daughter’s expression, Xiao Lie let out a long sigh. However, in his heart, he was perfectly clear how little hope there was of getting the Profound Opening Powder... In other words, it was absolutely impossible.

.....

Nightfall.

“I saw the Xiao Sect’s Xiao Kuangyun today.”

Candle light faintly swayed inside the room. Xia Qingyue sat at the side of the bed and lightly said.

“Oh... what kind of person is he?” Xiao Che yawned before casually asking with an indifferent look.

“He is like his name.” Xia Qingyue’s eyebrows drooped as she remembered the look in Xiao Kuangyun’s eyes as he looked at her. A look of disgust passed through her eyes. Her master had told her that of the Xiao Sect master’s four sons, the other three all could be considered as having dragon-like talent. Only the fourth son was an one hundred percent idiot. However, he nevertheless was doted on the most by the sect master, possibly because he was the youngest and was the legal wife’s only son.

(TL: Kuangyun translates to “wild/violent cloud”)

“That’s pretty normal. If you think about it, it’s pretty obvious what kind of people the Xiao Sect would send to this place. But either way, it still has nothing to do with me. At the most, I just have to go tomorrow as a formality.” Xiao Che shrugged as he spoke. His eyebrows suddenly twitched, and his expression sharpened slightly. He raised his head and asked: “Qingyue my wife, you said you saw him? Then did he also see you?”

“That’s right... why?” Xia Qingyue raised her eyebrows.

Xiao Che raised his hand to rub his chin, then suddenly said: “You said before that he was a piece of trash with an exceedingly bad reputation. This kind of trash... *sigh*, Qingyue my wife, if I haven’t guessed wrong, your master should be near Floating Cloud City, right?”

“... How did you know?” A trace of astonishment flashed across Xia Qingyue’s face.

Xiao Che didn’t explain. He said with a serious expression: “Since it’s like that, think of a way to communicate with your master. It’d be best to have her come to this place tomorrow...” After thinking for a moment, his expression once again relaxed: “Since your master is nearby, then I guess there won’t be any big problems. Let’s sleep.”

Xia Qingyue’s delicate brows raised slightly, and she then quietly pondered for a moment. She once again thought back to the expression in Xiao Kuangyun’s eyes as he looked at her this afternoon and finally understood the meaning behind Xiao Che’s words. Her expression suddenly spasmed, and she unconsciously reached out to pinch the icicle shaped sound transmitting device at her waist.

Seeing Xiao Che preparing to spread the blanket at the corner, her gaze faintly swayed. Her lips continuously moved quite a few times before she finally let out a voice: “Come sleep on the bed.”

“Ah?” Xiao Che turned his body towards her and said with wide eyes: “Qingyue my wife, what did you say?”

Xia Qingyue immediately turned her face away to hide her current expression. She coldly replied: "If you didn't hear it, then forget it!"

"I heard it! How could I not have heard it?!" Xiao Che immediately nodded like a chick pecking rice. He threw the blanket in his hand away and quickly threw himself onto the bed, then looked at Xia Qingyue with a happy smile: "Qingyue my wife, will you sleep on the inside or outside tonight?"

"....." Xia Qingyue didn't reply. With a wave of her snowy hand, she extinguished all of the red candle in the space of a second. The room was immediately pitch black, and her heart also secretly let out a sigh. She reached out and pushed Xiao Che to the inside, pulled the blanket over, and covered both of their bodies with it. Laying down sideways with her back to Xiao Che, she said in a quiet and cold voice: "You don't need to think about it too much. I'm only doing this to make it more convenient for you to treat my body at three in the morning... You're not allowed to do forbidden things! Otherwise I won't ever let you sleep on the bed again!"

"As you wish, my beloved lady wife!" Xiao Che elatedly spoke as he gave the blankets a tug and sniffed the remainder of the young lady's fragrance that was still held in it.

Now, she was being called "wife" by Xiao Che several dozen times a day. From the initial sulking up to now, not only did hearing it feel incomparably natural, but also at the same time gave her a kind of indescribable feeling of "I am his wife". This subtle change caused her to be flustered and more so left her at a loss. She closed her eyes and strove to avoid thinking about these things that set her heart into disorder. Not long after, she peacefully fell asleep.

It had unwittingly become three in the morning. This was the darkest time before dawn, and the entire Xiao Clan was peaceful. The only sounds that could be heard were the occasional buzzing of insects.

In the darkness, from Xiao Lingxi's courtyard came a light *creak* sound and, following that sound, the securely closed house door slowly opened. A petite shadow slowly snuck out and, after peering at the surroundings for a while, quickly ran fled outside.

The shadow hadn't been able to step outside the courtyard gate when a tall, gray figure suddenly dropped from the sky, landing in front of her. The sound of a girl's cry of alarm rose up, then soon after came a solemn voice, lowered with great effort: "Xi Er, where are you going this late at night?"

"Ah! Da... daddy!" The greatly frightened shadow pulled down the shroud covering her face, revealing a lovely and touching girl's face. It really was Xiao Lingxi. Looking at the Xiao Lie that had suddenly appeared in front of her, her soul shook momentarily. "I... I... I..."

"Ah!" Xiao Lie let out a long sigh, then said in a low voice: "Xi Er, you want to go steal the Profound Opening Powder, right?"

"I... I..." Xiao Lingxi lowered her head as she faltered.

"You are my daughter. How could I not know what you're thinking in your heart?" Xiao Lie once again let out a long sigh and then patted his daughter on her shoulder. "After you left me this afternoon, I thought you had a strange look in your eyes. I felt uneasy, so I came here to stand guard... Sure enough, you had the thought to go steal the Profound Opening Powder... Xi Er, you really are too willful. Do you know how dangerous this is? That Profound Opening Powder isn't something ordinary. It is a gift from

the Xiao Sect. If your tracks were discovered, then it would be in the Xiao Sect's jurisdiction. At that time, if the those four from the Xiao Sect decide you're guilty, not to mention me, there's no one in this Floating Cloud City that could save you."

Xiao Lingxi lowered her head and bit her lips. "I... I know all of that. But... but... Little Che is too pitiful. He's clearly a good person, yet is always laughed at by people, looked down by people, and treated as trash by everyone. If he could fix his profound veins, then he won't be ridiculed anymore. He wouldn't fall short of anyone..."

Xiao Lie opened and closed his mouth, a look of remorse flashing across his face.

"I always wondered, why Xiao Che was the one with the deformed profound veins, and not me... This world is really too unfair to him... Daddy, did you know? Whenever I see Little Che being laughed at, and that he still tries to adopt a uncaring look and instead come comfort me, my heart is filled with so much unease... If I could fix his profound veins, even if I have to become a thief... even if I receive the penalty of death, I would still be willing to do it a hundred times..."

As she talked, Xiao Lingxi's eyes were already filled with tears. She covered her face with her hands and finally couldn't help but start sobbing.

A violent spasm passed across Xiao Lie's face. As he looked at his sobbing daughter, his heart was also grieving. He quietly consoled: "Xi Er, I know you are wholeheartedly doing this for Che Er. But, you doing this, leaving aside the consequences, Xiao Yunhai didn't give that box of Profound Opening Powder to anyone after receiving it. He should be carrying it on his body. With your strength, how could you steal anything from Xiao Yunhai? Listen to me, go back and sleep. Concerning the Profound Opening Powder, I will spare no effort to think of something. Even though I haven't argued about anything these few years, among the this Xiao Clan, I, on the whole, still have a voice. Obtaining the Profound Opening Powder isn't necessarily a completely hopeless cause. You aren't allowed to do this kind of silly thing in the future. If something really happened to you... who will take care of and protect Che Er afterwards?"

Xiao Lie's last sentence gently struck Xiao Lingxi's soft heart, leaving her heart with a sudden, lingering fear... That's right! If I didn't succeed, was caught, and received a large punishment, what would happen to little Che...

"I... I understand." Xiao Lingxi removed her black clothing and dropped them to the side. She wiped the tears from her face and said in with a guilty face: "Daddy, I'm sorry. I did a stupid thing and had you worry again. I'll obediently go sleep now and won't do something like this again... Daddy, you should quickly go back and rest... I promise I won't go steal the Profound Opening Powder."

"*Chuckle*, it's good as long as you listen." Xiao Lie nodded his head and smiled warmly. But before leaving, he still worriedly picked up black clothing on the ground and took it with him.

Chapter 25 – Upheaval (4)

Today could be said to be the Xiao Clan's busiest day.

Early in the morning, the Xiao Clan entrance was already densely crowded. All of the influential families of Floating Cloud City could be seen here, and furthermore, they were represented by their heads.

Although there were many present, none dared to be loud. They all whispered to one another in the smallest voices possible for fear that they would disturb the important guests amongst the Xiao Clan.

"I heard a long time ago that the Xiao Clan's founder came from the Xiao Sect. It looks to be unexpectedly true."

"The Xiao Clan will be soaring to new heights. We have to maintain a good relationship with them from now on."

"Good thing I've never offended the Xiao Clan, otherwise I wouldn't be able to eat or sleep in peace."

"Old Mu, why did you come too?"

"Oh, every one was rushing to be the first here, so I couldn't not come. They're here to establish a relationship, but I'm here just in case. What if that brat from the Xiao Sect checked how many influential families were in Floating Cloud City and then saw that no one from my Mu family came here? If they find some fault with that, then my entire family would have to bear the consequences."

Xiao Clan's entrance remained closed, and everyone outside all waited with great care. Not one of them dared to leave.

They waited until nine in the morning.

Before dawn, a platform had been set up in the empty ground in the middle of Xiao Clan, with chairs, tables, and all kinds of equipment set up around it. At eight in the morning, Xiao Clan sounded an urgent order for all of its inhabitants to assemble. At once, the Xiao Clan's inhabitants gathered together as they immediately rushed to the rendezvous spot. In less than a quarter of an hour, everyone in the Xiao Clan, be they young or old, were in their designated positions with not one missing.

Today would be the Xiao Clan's most significant day. They all clearly knew what was going to happen today, and the vast majority had looks of excitement and anticipation. There were even some with mediocre talent who still wished in their hearts for the chance to be chosen by those from the Xiao Sect.

Xiao Che was basically the last to arrive. When he walked in leading Xia Qingyue by the hand at a pace that was neither fast nor slow, he instantly became the focus of everyone present... Of course, if it was just him alone, chances were that no one would even want to look at him twice. What was important was the Xia Qingyue at his side!

She had an exquisitely graceful posture and a complexion that was alluring enough to conquer not only a city, but the world as well. The people there acted as if they were seeing an incomparably beautiful river fairy slowly walking towards them. This was especially true for the young men, who stood there with glazed eyes and wildly beating hearts. Some even had drool unconsciously streaming down the corners of their mouths..

In contrast, Xiao Che at her side... His face was pale, his eyelids drooped, his eyes seemed soulless, and his footsteps lacked strength. He had not even walked a dozen steps and had already yawned three times with the appearance of someone who had had excessive sexual intercourse and now yearned for sleep.

Huh? Excessive sexual intercourse....

As they thought of this and also saw the two of them hand in hand, quite a few people clenched their teeth as they trembled all over. Their eyes radiated a deep dissatisfaction and a flaming jealousy. Upon thinking about this heavenly beauty, a goddess who they yearned for in their dreams being pressed down every day by the piece of waste that they looked down on the most, their stomachs almost split open with anger and jealousy.

Xiao Che's half asleep and extremely fatigued appearance was not an act, but it obviously couldn't be because of any excessive intercourse. It would be strange if he had energy when he woke up at three in the morning for her regular acupuncture treatment, worked himself half to death, and then was again woken this early in the morning. As for their clasped hands, it definitely couldn't have been Xia Qingyue's doing. Rather, when they were walking over, Xiao Che suddenly grabbed her under the watchful eyes of the crowd. Since Xia Qingyue couldn't impolitely free herself, in addition to the fact that she had gotten used to him holding her by the hand these past few days, she could only let it be.

"Everything within the Xiao Clan is excellent, except the fact that we have an unnecessary and unsightly piece of trash!"

As Xiao Che walked past a youth, a mocking voice that was loud enough for him to hear came from his side. Xiao Che raised his eyebrows slightly and saw Third Elder Xiao Ze's grandson, Xiao Chengzhi, intently squinting ahead. An undisguisable sneer hung from the corners of his mouth, and on his face was a look of envy that he vigorously tried to hide.

He said those words to the person in front of him, but even an idiot knew that he was mocking Xiao Che. At once, the sound of laughter rose from the surroundings. Each and every young disciple looked at Xiao Che with a ridiculing expression in their eyes.

"Brother Chengzhi, were you talking to me just now?" Xiao Che's footsteps paused as he asked Xiao Chengzhi with a harmless smile on his face.

"Oh, Brother Xiao Che, you misunderstood. I was clearly talking to a piece of trash just now. For Brother Xiao Che to ask this, does that mean you consider yourself to be a piece of trash?" Xiao Chengzhi turned around and said with a smile. As his gaze touched Xia Qingyue's beautiful snowy face, a difficult to disguise look of zeal flashed through his eyes.

"Oh! So that's how it was!" Xiao Che nodded with sudden understanding. He then pulled Xia Qingyue's hand along with him: "Looks like he wasn't talking about me. Qingyue my wife, let's hurry up and return to our position.... Tut tut, as I look at a pathetic toad dreaming about eating swan meat, I'd rather be a piece of trash that sleeps holding the swan every night. Qingyue my wife, what do you think?"

"What... did you say!!" Xiao Chengzhi suddenly turned around, a dark expression on his face.

"Huh?" Xiao Che paused and looked at him in surprise: "Brother Chengzhi, what's wrong? I was just talking about a toad so why do you have such a strange reaction? Don't tell me that Chengzhi has some special relationship with the toad I was talking about?"

"You !!" Xiao Chengzhi's trembling lips revealed his immense fury, yet he couldn't think of anything else to say.

“Qingyue my wife, we had better go quickly. A toad will bite when it gets anxious. If we were bitten by this thing, wouldn’t we be disgusted to death?” As Xiao Che talked, he pulled Xia Qingyue far away.

Xiao Chengzhi’s face muscles spasmed as he almost puked out blood.

“Che Er, Qingyue, come over here.”

In the midst of the crowd, Xiao Che quickly saw Xiao Lie beckoning to him with Xiao Lingxi by his side. He and Xia Qingyue swiftly walked over.

After Xia Qingyue underwent Xiao Che’s acupuncture treatment, not to mention her physique, even her face showed a great change. Ignoring her physique, her complexion had become more delicate, rosy and luminous. However, this change of complexion held a different meaning under Xiao Lie’s eyes. Seeing Xiao Che clearly exude an spiritless attitude, Xiao Lie lowered his voice and said with a chuckle: “Che Er, you’re still too young. You’re only half grown, and your body is still developing. Concerning these matters between men and women, you should control yourself as much as possible or else it may harm your body.”

“Ah?” Xiao Che stared at him. After recovering, he could only nod his head in embarrassment: “This... I understand. In the future, I’ll definitely control... control.... AH!”

He uttered a sound of pain. The small hand held in his suddenly pricked him mercilessly with its nail. Xia Qingyue turned her face away, but one could faintly see a patch of pink slowly spread across her cheeks.

Eh eh eh? She actually blushed...

Xiao Che was about to quietly explain himself when he once again grimaced in pain... It was Xiao Lingxi’s small hand that had fiercely pinched his left arm.

“Little aunt, why did you pinch me?” Xiao Che said as he looked at Xiao Lingxi, a wronged expression on his face.

“Hmph!” Xiao Lingxi pouted and also faced the other way, ignoring him in a fit of anger.

“Young Master Xiao has arrived ! !”

At this time, a loud and clear shout erupted from the front of the crowd. The crowd immediately quieted as everyone’s eyes turned towards the source of the sound, wanting to catch a glimpse of the elegance of the Xiao Sect’s members. Not long after, a luxuriously dressed young man with a proud demeanor walked over through the crowd. Xiao Moshan was not more than half a step behind him, and Xiao Yunhai was in front personally leading the way. Both his expression and posture were differential, with not even a hint of disrespect.

Under Xiao Yunhai’s guidance, Xiao Kuangyun walked up the erected platform and sat on the seat of honor in the middle. He swept his gaze over the Xiao Clan members beneath him with a haughty look, like an emperor overlooking his subjects. A moment later, he nodded to Xiao Yunhai to indicate that they may begin.

“Is this the big shot from Xiao Sect? If we don’t talk about anything else, his appearance is still a bit too unsightly. Aren’t the genes of the great Xiao Sect suppose to be formidable... Eh? He shouldn’t be adopted, right?” Xiao Che muttered quietly.

“One hundred of him can’t compare with little Che!” Xiao Lingxi echoed in reply. As soon as she said that, she remembered that she was suppose to be mad at him. She once again quickly let out a *hmph* sound, and turned her face to ignore him.

“Che’er, Xi’er, don’t spout nonsense.” Xiao Lie said in a low voice.

“Oh.” Xiao Che answered, as he stopped talking.

“Is everyone from Xiao Clan here?” Xiao Kuangyun slowly said with half open eyes and a bored tone of voice. However, both his eyes were rapidly spinning about searching the crowd for the figure of the fairy he saw yesterday as well as the girl whom Xiao Yulong claimed to on par with that fairy.

“It has already been confirmed. Everyone is present, there won’t even be one missing.” Xiao Yunhai said with a serious look in his face.

“Very good!” Xiao Kuangyun nodded. His gaze then slanted towards the main entrance: “Who are those people standing outside the door?”

“Reporting to Young Master Xiao, they are all powerful families within Floating Cloud City. They’ve been gathered here since early this morning, hoping catch a glance of Young Master Xiao’s elegance.” Xiao Yunhai replied as he half rose out of his chair.

“Ah, it’s like that.” Xiao Kuangyun nodded and then said with a wave of his hand: “Since they are guests, we can’t let them wait outside like that. Let them come in. Having the people outside of Xiao Clan witness today’s matter is also a good thing, otherwise others may later say that I was being biased.”

Xiao Yunhai promptly sucked up to him: “Young Master Xiao is truly worthy of being the son of the sect master of the Xiao Sect. You’re this young and are already this open-minded. It’s enough to make me blush with shame... Xiao De, quickly, invite our guests in.”

The main entrance opened and all the powerful inhabitants of Floating Cloud City orderly walked in, each and every one with a reserved demeanor. All of them brought a heavy gift. Amongst the crowd, Xiao Che also saw Xia Qingyue’s father, Xia Hongyi.

“Very good, now we can start.” Xiao Kuangyun straightened in his chair and finally assumed what could be considered a normal sitting posture as he looked down and lightly spoke: “My name is Xiao Kuangyun and I am from the Xiao Sect. Regarding the great name of the Xiao Sect, you all should be very clear. In the Blue Wind Empire, there’s nothing that my Xiao Sect can’t resolve. All of you ought to feel honored and proud because even though you are a bit weak, you can still be said to be related to the Xiao Sect. The founder of the Xiao Clan was the son of one of our Xiao Sect’s Elders. However, although your founder was the son of an elder, he was actually born from a female servant. His status was so low it wasn’t worth mentioning, and his profound strength was really too lacking. As a piece of trash, he wasn’t fit to remain in the Xiao Sect. Your founder was thus banished by that Elder to this place, and that’s how your Xiao Clan came into existence.”

Xiao Kuangyun’s extremely harsh words did not hide his disdain for both the entire Xiao Clan and their founder. A few Xiao Clan members scowled upon hearing this, but no one dared to make a fuss.

Chapter 26 – Upheaval (5)

Xiao Kuangyun was really wild, but within the Xiao Clan, he truly had the right to be wild. Not to mention his ear-piercing speech, even if he had called the entire Xiao Clan dogs, everyone in the Xiao Clan would have to obediently listen. There definitely wouldn't be anyone who would dare to retort. It may even be possible that some would wag their tails accordingly.

"Before Elder Xiao Zheng died, he remembered his affection for his son, and left behind a dying wish. He hoped we would find the one with the best aptitude amongst the younger generation here to bring back to the Xiao Sect."

Xiao Kuangyun picked up the roster that Xiao Yunhai had prepared overnight, looked all around him, and then arrogantly said: "Today, I will personally check that. In a while, anyone whose name I call will come in front of me and show your profound strength. However, aptitude isn't decided by the level of your profound strength, but by your foundation and potential!"

"Before I came here, my honorable father had me bring a batch of Profound Opening Powder. The person selected not only will be brought back to the Xiao Sect, but will also receive this Profound Opening Powder as a reward! Good medicine can only be enjoyed by those with enough aptitude. It would only be wasted if used on the body of trash!" Saying this, Xiao Kuangyun's gaze slanted towards Xiao Yunhai. "Clan master, bring out the Profound Opening Powder. Even though this is a gift to the Xiao Clan, you shouldn't have any complaints about giving this to the one with the best aptitude as a reward, right?"

No matter how ridiculous Xiao Kuangyun's words were, Xiao Yunhai still wouldn't dare to have any reservations. However, upon hearing his words, Xiao Yunhai's expression all of a sudden became pale, and a cold sweat broke out on his forehead. He didn't move to retrieve the Profound Opening Powder, but rather stood there in a fluster.

"What's the matter?" Xiao Kuangyun's expression darkened: "Clan Master Xiao, you wouldn't be unwilling to part with the Profound Opening Powder, right?"

"No, no, of course not." Xiao Yunhai promptly shook his head with a terrified expression: "It's only... only..."

"Only what?"

With a *putong* sound, Xiao Yunhai immediately knelt on one knee with both hands trembling. He said with a face full of terror: "I... I deserve to die... The Profound Opening Powder that Young Master Xiao gifted us yesterday, I left it in our Xiao Clan's infirmary and made it clear to the person there that they must guard it well. But... but this morning, the person from the infirmary suddenly ran over to tell me that the Profound Opening Powder in the infirmary had unexpectedly... unexpectedly disappeared!"

Hua—The crowd below immediately broke into chaos.

To steal the treasure brought by the Xiao Sect... who could have the nerve?!

"Huh?" Xiao Che frowned slightly as a burst of suspicion appeared in his heart... Based on his ten some years' understanding of Xiao Yunhai, he would consider him a cautious person. Knowing his character, for him to put the treasure that the Xiao Sect brought in the infirmary after receiving it from them instead of keeping it on himself was a bit unreasonable... Knowing that the infirmary only had Xiao Gu,

who had wholly devoted himself to medicine and had practically no profound strength, the infirmary could be considered the most weakly defended area within the Xiao Clan.

Not only that, the Profound Opening Powder was brought by the Xiao Sect. Even if someone craved it, at the very least they should have waited until the people from the Xiao Sect left to act. Why would they unexpectedly pick such a dangerous time... Even if they stole it, would they even have a life to use it afterwards?

Xiao Lie's entire body shook. He immediately glanced towards Xiao Lingxi, only to find that Xiao Lingxi also had a face full of astonishment. Noticing Xiao Lie's pointed look, Xiao Lingxi promptly shook her head forcefully to indicate that she had nothing to do with this. Xiao Lie withdrew his gaze and inwardly took a deep sigh of relief.

"Wh... what!!"

Xiao Kuangyun violently stood up from his seat as his expression turned incomparably dark, his body radiating a baleful aura. He looked at Xiao Yunhai and said fiercely: "You're saying that... there's actually someone who would steal the Profound Opening Powder?"

"Your humble servant couldn't protect it. I request Young Master Xiao administer punishment." Xiao Yunhai lowered his head, a look of shame and fear across his entire face.

"This is ridiculous!" Xiao Kuangyun violently took a breath as his chest heaved. His complexion became more and more dark; he had evidently been extremely angered: "Someone actually dared to steal our gift to the Xiao Clan. Good! Very good! I've really underestimated this Floating Cloud City! You all are actually... quite bold!"

Xiao Kuangyun's anger and killing intent had extended to almost the entire Xiao Clan. This caused everyone's spines to shiver and their hearts to convulse. They didn't even dare to breathe loudly and, unable to cope with their panic, hung their heads low for fear that Xiao Kuangyun would look at them.

Xiao Che half closed his eyes, his gaze directly on Xiao Kuangyun's eyes. A short while later, he poked Xiao Lie and asked in a small voice: "Grandfather, the clan master didn't offend this Xiao Kuangyun yesterday, right?"

Xiao Lie was startled, then shook his head: "Xiao Yunhai was always prudent. He shouldn't have gone that far."

"Then that's strange." Xiao Che rubbed his chin and then said quietly: "This Xiao Kuangyun's anger is clearly fake. If the clan master had offended him, and he had planned to steal it himself and then blame the clan master, then that would make sense. If that's not the case... don't tell me this Xiao Kuangyun is acting out a monkey's show by himself?"

"... Watch your mouth." Xiao Lie didn't understand the meaning of his words and so quietly warned him.

Xiao Kuangyun's eyes became sinister and his expression darkened to the color of a storm cloud: "Yesterday, when I took out the Profound Opening Powder, there were only members of the Xiao Clan around. I don't think that you Xiao Clan people would be stupid enough to let the fact that you've obtained a high-grade medicine spread to the ears of outsiders. In addition, your Xiao Clan's defensive

abilities can't be considered weak in Floating Cloud City. If someone wanted to break it, it wouldn't be easy... Then, the thief should be from your Xiao Clan!"

Xiao Kuangyun's words caused the expression of all of the Xiao Clan members to change. The sound of whispers grew even louder. Xiao Yunhai also quickly nodded: "Right! Young Master Xiao sees clearly. After I knew the Profound Opening Powder had been stolen, I also thought that it was stolen by someone from our Xiao Clan. The infirmary's Xiao Gu is almost sixty years old and is unconcerned with worldly affairs. He simply wouldn't have any kind of desire for the Profound Opening Powder, so it shouldn't be him that stole it. Everyone else should probably be viewed with suspicion."

"Hmph! The insignificant Xiao Clan simply isn't worth mentioning in the eyes of our Xiao Sect! Any lowly person from our Xiao Sect could single handedly wipe out your entire clan! This time, we graced you with our presence and trekked thousands of li to your Xiao Clan. That gave you an immense amount of prestige and was a great show of kindness... yet you instead gave me such a large surprise! This is practically a slap to the face of our Xiao Sect!"

A slap to the face of the Xiao Sect... this incomparably strange and large accusation caused Xiao Yunhai's face to immediately turn ashen.

Xiao Kuangyun's eyes were like that of a viper, sweeping from one face to another. Everyone touched by his gaze lowered their head as if trying to avoid being struck by lightning. No one dared to look him in the face... However, this absolutely didn't mean that Xiao Kuangyun's eyes had been incredibly penetrating, or that his aura was that fierce. It was only because he was backed by the enormous Xiao Sect.

Xiao Che's gaze turned to Xiao Yunhai's face and his expression became even more downcast. He said in a low voice that only he could hear: "This Xiao Yunhai's demeanor is also unexpectedly fake... What exactly do they want to do?"

In Xiao Che's two lifetimes worth of memories, particularly those from the life on Azure Cloud Continent, he had experienced countless designs of good and evil and skirted past the boundary between life and death multiple times. The amount of people he had encountered was even more innumerable, from the most ordinary of people to the overlords of the world. Not even a profound practitioner that was hundreds of years old would necessarily be able to compare to the viciousness seen by his eyes.

Xiao Kuangyun once again swept his gaze around. His tone suddenly became mild: "Forget it, even though it's truly regrettable, I can't be bothered to get upset with you people from this small place. The person who stole the Profound Opening Powder, I'll give you fifteen seconds to obediently come out and hand over the Profound Opening Powder. I may show you mercy for the first offense! If you continue to be obstinate, then don't blame me for being impolite."

"Xiao Ba, start counting!"

After Xiao Kuangyun finished speaking, he let out a cold snort and sat back down on his seat. The black dressed young man on his left stepped forward and started the countdown in a low voice.

Xiao Yunhai immediately turned around and said in a loud voice: "The vermin that stole the Profound Opening Powder, did you hear that?! Young Master Xiao is magnanimously tolerant to give you a way

out. Quickly mend your ways and come apologize! If not, not to mention Young Master Xiao, the entire Xiao Clan will never forgive you!!”

“... Twelve... eleven... ten... nine...” The black clothed man called Xiao Ba continued to count down.

Everyone in the Xiao Clan turned to look at their neighbors, one after another guessing at who was reckless enough to dare steal something the Xiao Sect had brought. Although Xiao Kuangyun’s mouth had uttered “mercy”, from his expression, no one believed that they would earn his “mercy” after voluntarily admitting guilt.

“... Four... three... two... one... time’s up!”

Xiao Ba’s voice dropped off, and he then stepped back. Xiao Kuangyun once again stood up, his gaze dark and cruel as he sneered: “I already gave you a chance. Since you don’t know a good thing when you see it, don’t blame me for being ruthless after I catch you! Xiao Jiu!”

“Yes!”

In the wake of Xiao Kuangyun’s shout, another black clothed young man stepped forward and then immediately raised his palm. A whirlpool of profound strength began to condense in his palm.

“Xiao Clan Master, the Profound Opening Powder was stolen with the black box, right?”

“Yes, they were stolen together.” Xiao Yunhai nodded. His face revealed a suspicious look, as if he didn’t understand why he was asking this question.

“Very good... On the black box containing the Profound Opening Powder is a mark of our Xiao Sect’s unique profound strength—The eagle mark! As long as we use our Xiao Sect’s unique profound strength, we can very quickly determine the whereabouts of every eagle mark in the vicinity.”

As soon as Xiao Kungyun finished speaking, Xiao Jiu’s hand suddenly lowered as a growl of “it’s there” escaped from his lips. His body then turned into a gale as he rushed towards his right like lightning. His speed was exceedingly fast; in a blink of an eye he had disappeared from everyone’s sight.

“*Chuckle*, it seems we’ve already found it.” Xiao Kuangyun sneered, a deep sense of self-satisfaction flashing through the depth of his eyes... as if he was very pleased with his own performance.

“Wonderful. As expected of the Xiao Sect, not one drop of water can leak out.” Xiao Yunhai’s face also revealed a happy expression, which then darkened once again. He solemnly said: “Young Master Xiao, the nature of this matter is too vile. Not only did it provoke Young Master Xiao’s wrath, but also caused our Xiao Clan to lose quite a bit of face. So no matter who the thief is, even if it’s my son, Young Master Xiao need not have any apprehension. You must severely punish them!!”

“Hmph! Of course. No one who has offended my Xiao Sect has met a good end!”

At this time, a gust of strong wind blew over. Xiao Jiu had already hurried back, his hands holding a wooden box. The eagle mark on the wooden box was still faintly radiating light. This wooden box really was the box holding the Profound Opening Powder that Xiao Kuangyun had given Xiao Yunhai yesterday.

“Young master, I found it.” Xiao Jiu delivered the wooden box into Xiao Kuangyun’s grasp and then stepped back without a sound.

All the whispers stopped. The surroundings became so quiet that even the drop of a needle could be heard. The atmosphere turned completely cold. Everyone widened their eyes and held their breath, waiting to see who was the one that had enough courage to dare steal the Profound Opening Powder... They could all guess how tragic the fate of that person would be.

“Xiao Jiu, where did you find this box?” Xiao Kuangyun asked with a sneer.

“The 66th courtyard, under the owner’s pillow.” Xiao Jiu clearly replied with an expressionless face.

The 66th courtyard...

Everyone’s gaze all at once converged in one direction, unbelievably staring at the girl who looked as if she had been petrified.

Upon hearing the words “the 66th courtyard”, Xiao Lingxi was stunned on the spot. Seeing pair after pair of eyes turn towards her, she stepped back and hysterically shook her head, crying out involuntarily: “It’s not me... it’s not me!”

Chapter 27 – Upheaval (6)

The 66th courtyard was the courtyard that Xiao Lingxi lived in. Everyone in the Xiao Clan was well acquainted with it due to how easy it was to remember. Upon hearing Xiao Jiu say “66th courtyard”, the first thing they thought of was the courtyard’s owner.

The crowd separated and isolated Xiao Lingxi’s location, giving her no place to hide from everyone’s eyes. Xiao Lie’s expression changed greatly while Xiao Che’s brows furrowed. His expression all of the sudden became incomparably overcast as he stepped forward and stood in front of Xiao Lingxi. A wave of anger expanded with a rumble in his chest, threatening to explode.

Only when Xiao Jiu called out the words “66th courtyard”, did Xiao Che completely understand what the discordant feeling he had been experiencing up until then meant!

Before, there were too many people in the way, and they were also standing relatively close together. As a result, Xiao Kuangyun couldn’t clearly pinpoint where Xiao Lingxi was. However, now, he could naturally get a good look. At once, his eyes lit up and emitted a glow similar to that of an vicious wolf. This girl wasn’t as good looking as Xia Qingyue, but was still a genuine young lady in every way. She had natural-born bright eyes and white teeth, a compelling elegance, and a gentle, beautiful, and charming face. Especially her eyes, which, though currently full of panic and fear, were still like pools of sparkling spring water, clear, transparent, and thoroughly moving.

Xiao Kuangyun forcefully swallowed a mouthful of saliva as his heart flipped and shook... that Xiao Yulong didn’t lie to me after all! Even though this Xiao Lingxi is slightly worse than Xia Qingyue as far as looks go, she’s only slightly worse. However, her flavor will definitely be just as good. Also, when she matures, she won’t necessarily be worse than Xia Qingyue... After coming to this kind of backwater place, I unexpectedly met what could be considered two world class beauties. This is simply heaven’s reward for my long and difficult journey!

Xiao Kuangyun began to feel that his initial refusal to come to this Xiao Clan was simply an extremely stupid decision... Fortunately, he was unable to defy his father’s order in the end and obediently came here.

“Xiao Lingxi... how could it be you?!”

Upon seeing Xiao Lingxi, Xiao Yunhai’s expression was first that of surprise, then shock, then finally disbelief.

“It wasn’t me! Clan Master... it really wasn’t me!” Xiao Lingxi forcefully shook her head, a terrified look on her entire face. She really did have the thought to steal the Profound Opening Powder last night, but after being caught by Xiao Lie, she obediently went back to her room and slept... She knew absolutely nothing about the theft of the Profound Opening Powder.

“Oh my, I didn’t expect that the reckless thief would be a little girl.” Xiao Kuangyun said in a mystifying fashion: “But I did just say that no matter who it was, I wouldn’t let them off lightly!”

“Ah! Xiao Lingxi, how could you... act so willfully and do this kind of reckless thing?! This box of Profound Opening Powder is the treasure that the Xiao Sect travelled thousands of li to gift us! With this, what could I... possibly do?” Xiao Yunhai sighed heavily with an appearance of extreme grief.

“Clan Master! It wasn’t me. It really wasn’t me who stole it! There must be... there must be a mistake somewhere! It really wasn’t me!” Xiao Lingxi shook her head over and over, her entire face already pale.

Xiao Kuangyun said with an angry and stern voice: “This box of Profound Opening Powder was found under your pillow. If you didn’t steal it, then are you telling me it grew wings and flew there? Young lady, I gave you a chance to admit your guilt before. It was you who didn’t take it. Now that we have conclusive proof and also countless people from outside the Xiao Clan as witnesses, you still want to deny it? It seems like you won’t confess if I don’t give you a heavy punishment!”

“Give you a heavy punishment”, those five words caused Xiao Lingxi’s entire body to waver. If it wasn’t for Xiao Che promptly supporting her, she may have already collapsed on the ground. Xiao Che’s hands clenched as a *pop* sound continuously rang out from his knuckles. He carefully watched Xiao Kuangyun, his entire body emitting, for the first time since his rebirth, true... killing intent!

“Young Master Xiao, please calm down!” Xiao Yunhai immediately stepped forward and knelt on one knee. He said beseechingly: “Xiao Lingxi stealing from the Xiao Sect is truly unforgivable, but... but she isn’t a bad person. In my Xiao Clan she is very well liked. The fact that she would steal the Profound Opening Powder also involves some complications...”

“Complications? What complications?” Xiao Kuangyun asked with a dark expression.

Xiao Yunhai used his eyes to indicate Xiao Lingxi and Xiao Che, who were standing together. He said with a remorseful expression: “Xiao Lingxi is the only daughter of our fifth elder, and she has a nephew called Xiao Che who is older than her by a year. This nephew of hers had the misfortune of being born with deformed profound veins...With deformed profound veins, no matter how Xiao Che grows in other areas, it’s still the same as having his life mostly ruined. Xiao Lingxi extremely cherishes Xiao Che and has always been searching for a way to restore his profound veins... This is something that everyone in the Xiao Clan and Floating Cloud City knows. All those present here can attest to that. The reason Xiao Lingxi would have the audacity to steal the Profound Opening Powder is obviously because she heard that the Profound Opening Powder has the power to restore destroyed profound veins. Thus, with the intention of saving her nephew, she committed this reckless crime.”

“Although the crime has been committed, and the evidence is conclusive beyond a doubt, I beg Young Master Xiao to be lenient with his punishment on account of the fact that our Xiao Lingxi is still young and has a sincere heart. Our entire Xiao Clan would be grateful for Young Master Xiao’s great kindness.”

Even though Xiao Yunhai’s posture was low, every one of his spoken words were sincere. They struck straight at the heart, causing everyone to feel touched. His words also allowed those who didn’t understand how Xiao Lingxi would have the audacity to steal the Profound Opening Powder to suddenly realize... It turns out that the Profound Opening Powder also had the ability to restore damaged profound veins. No wonder...

Everyone in Floating Cloud City knew that Xiao Che’s profound veins had been damaged since birth. The fact that Xiao Lingxi had always cherished him and unceasingly worried about the state of his profound veins was also something that everyone in the Xiao Clan knew. With this, the fact that Xiao Lingxi would steal the Profound Opening Powder was no longer reckless, but rather reasonable.

More than a few people secretly looked down on the way Xiao Yunhai always fawned over Xiao Kuangyun. However, now, a kind of heartfelt admiration towards him started to grow in everyone’s hearts... In order to protect a Xiao Clan disciple, this Xiao Clan Master still begged for forgiveness with all his strength even though he faced a raging member of the Xiao Sect. His words were also passionate, and he even knelt on one knee.

Only Xiao Che was sneering in anger... What a flawless performance! On the surface, it was someone begging for forgiveness for the sake of Xiao Lingxi, but in truth, it was completely legitimizing the accusation against her! If he was an outsider, it’s possible that even he would think that everything was Xiao Lingxi’s doing.

“It turns out there was this kind of situation.” After listening to Xiao Yunhai’s words, Xiao Kuangyun’s expression clearly mellowed quite a bit. He said lightly: “Hmph. My noble self isn’t some vicious and merciless person. Since she committed this blunder for the sake of her nephew, in light of these feelings, as long as she obediently admits her mistake and apologizes, I can still consider it gently...”

“It wasn’t me! It really wasn’t me who stole it!” Xiao Lingxi forcefully shook her head. She gritted her teeth and shouted in a slightly hoarse voice: “If I did it, I would definitely confess... But I really didn’t steal the Profound Opening Powder! I especially don’t know why it would appear in my room... It must be some kind of mistake! Clan Master, please believe me. It really wasn’t me!”

Xiao Lingxi shouting in this way not only didn’t move anyone, but instead had the opposite reaction due to Xiao Yunhai’s previous obfuscation... She is the one with the most reason to steal the Profound Opening Powder, and it was also found in her room. These facts could already thoroughly determine her guilt. That Xiao Yunhai would plead for leniency on her behalf without regard to danger or dignity was already extremely benevolent and moving, yet she still won’t confess.

Xiao Kuangyun’s expression that had just mellowed once again darkened. He said with a sneer: “Where was there a mistake? Our Xiao Sect personally found this Profound Opening Powder in your room. Are you saying that our Xiao Sect member purposefully framed you, a young lady from this small Xiao Clan? Eh?”

Xiao Kuangyun said this sentence with full of anger and confidence... That the grand Xiao Sect would purposefully frame someone from the Xiao Clan, which didn't even amount to anything in their eyes? It would be a joke to anyone who heard it.

At this time, the Xiao Clan's First Elder Xiao Li stood up. He pointed at Xiao Lingxi and said with a stern voice: "Xiao Lingxi! You made such a large mistake, and thus humiliated the entire Xiao Clan. The clan master still personally pleaded for leniency on your behalf, and even Young Master Xiao was thinking of dealing with you mercifully. Yet you unexpectedly still don't know a good thing when you see it! You have really... disappointed us too much!"

"Ah, more than disappointing, it's simply extremely heartbreaking." Second Elder Xiao Bo shook his head and said with a sad expression: "She would go as far as to waste the clan master's persistent pleas for leniency... Ah! Xiao Lingxi, what kind of existence is the Xiao Sect that they would deliberately and wrongfully accuse you? If you could change your ways after making a mistake, that would be best. But you acting like this in front of our various friends from Floating Cloud City shames us greatly."

"I... you... you..." Upon seeing pitiless and cold gazes one after another, Xiao Lingxi's lovely body trembled, and teardrops leaked from her eyes. Her mind was completely blank. She wasn't able to utter a complete sentence.

At this moment, Xiao Che lightly squeezed her small hand with his. Standing at her side, he said with a warm voice that only she could hear: "Little aunt, don't be afraid... For the moment, don't say anything, because it doesn't matter what you say right now. It doesn't matter if they believe you or not. I will always believe in little aunt... Leave the rest to me."

Leave the rest... to me...

His profound strength was miniscule, and his body was frail. He had grown up under her constant protection. Yet it was precisely this weak body that stood in front of her. When he said these few simple words, her frantic, helpless, and ice cold thoughts quickly and unexpectedly became peaceful and warm... It was as if they had returned to their childhood, where, whenever she was bullied, he would always fly in from afar to stand in front of her and, using his hands, feet, and teeth as the most vicious weapons, prevent her from receiving even the tiniest scratch...

Xiao Che... She quietly murmured in her heart.

"*Cough* *cough*..." Xiao Che stepped forward a few steps and faked a few coughs, attracting everyone's attention. He bowed slightly and said with a smile: "Young Master Xiao and the other three friends that travelled here from the distant Xiao Sect. Allow me to introduce myself... I am Xiao Lingxi's nephew, the Xiao Che that is considered by everyone to be without redeeming features. I have a few questions I want to ask the clan master concerning the stolen and subsequently recovered Profound Opening Powder. There shouldn't be any problems with that, right?"

"Oh... You are Floating Cloud City's infamous piece of trash?" Xiao Kuangyun indifferently glanced at him and sneered with a sound of disdain: "You shouldn't be thinking of making excuses for your little aunt, right? *Chuckle*, that's fine, I actually do want to see what you can find out with your questions."

"Che Er..." Xiao Lie, whose face had long ago turned ashen, lightly uttered. The response he got was from Xiao Che's right hand behind his back, which indicated for him to be silent.

“That’s good!” Xiao Che nodded as his gaze turned towards Xiao Yunhai: “Clan master, I have a few questions I want to ask you about the Profound Opening Powder...”

Not waiting for Xiao Yunhai’s reply, Xiao Che had already started to ask: “The first question... Clan Master, you, be it your cultivation of profound strength or mental fortitude, are preeminent amongst our Xiao Clan. Even more so, your temperament is steady and prudent. If not, you wouldn’t be able to become our Xiao Clan’s clan master. This matter, everyone in the Xiao Clan, and even everyone in Floating Cloud City, all know without exception. Then the question is, this excavator... Oh, that’s not right. With Clan Master’s prudent disposition, after receiving the gift from the Xiao Sect, the best course of action would be to keep it by your side, because only when it’s by your side is it the safest... But Clan Master instead left it in the infirmary, which could be said to be the least secure location. Can Clan Master explain this?”

Chapter 28 – Upheaval (7)

“Xiao Che! What do you mean by that?” The First Elder Xiao Li suddenly bellowed: “Don’t tell me you’re implying that Clan Master had stolen the Profound Opening Powder from himself, and then shifted the blame to Xiao Lingxi! You’re the reason why Xiao Lingxi had stolen the Profound Opening Powder. If you keep blabbering such nonsense, be careful or else even you will get punished together if you don’t step down!”

“Don’t be agitated, First Elder.” Xiao Che shook his head as he laughed, appearing harmless: “Where would I get the courage to even dare question Clan Master, I’m just voicing out the suspicions in my heart, and I believe, that most of us here have the same question too. Many of us here understand Clan Master’s nature and must be puzzled as to why Clan Master had handled the situation that way. Of course Clan Master is innocent. He couldn’t have done this kind of low and dirty thing that even the world would despise. I’m sure Clan Master will give a perfect explanation. Am I right, Clan Master.”

(TL: “low and dirty” was interpreted from Chinese idiom that literally meant “worse than pigs and dogs”)

The people of Xiao Clan and the nobles of Floating Cloud City all stared at him surreptitiously... The Xiao Che they knew was a weak and timid person, someone who was terrified of even coming into contact with outsiders. However, not only was he able to be speak frankly under the watchful eyes of the crowd in this tense atmosphere and situation, his expression did not even change when the First Elder had shouted at him... This Xiao Che and the Xiao Che they knew seemed to be two fundamentally different people.

“Low and dirty that even the world would despise” These few words caused Xiao Yunhai’s face to cramp momentarily. He raised his head to look at Xiao Che, faintly smiled and said: “There’s no need to get agitated First Elder, it’s normal for Xiao Che to question this way and just like he said, many of our friends here should have the same question as well. Actually, when I received the Profound Opening Powder from Young Master Xiao yesterday, I indeed had prepared to keep it by my side. However, the Profound Opening Powder is a high-grade medicine from the Xiao Sect that’s also extremely precious. The higher the grade of the medicine, the easier it is for the effects to dissipate. In the case of this treasure elixir, even if the effect was to dissipate by a bit, it would still be a great loss. If I were to carry it with me, it will often come into contact with impure vital energy so even though it is protected by the Black Profound Ebony box, its effects will still dissipate easily. That’s the reason why I placed it inside the

infirmary. After all, in the infirmary, a numerous variety of herbs have been gathered over the years, resulting in plenty of 'medicinal energy'. In places with ample 'medicinal energy', the elixir's energy will not dissipate that easily... That is the reason."

"Another reason is that we of the Xiao Clan have always been serious about abiding to the law. I never would have expected a 'domestic thief' to appear, or even think that she would have the audacity to steal the important gift the Xiao Sect had brought... But no matter the reason, it is nonetheless my fault that the Profound Opening Powder was stolen. In regards to this, I can't escape that responsibility. I won't complain if Young Master Xiao also demands my punishment."

Xiao Yunhai sighed heavily after he finished speaking.

Xiao Yunhai explanation was completely perfect. The First Elder suddenly yelled once more: "Xiao Che! Did you hear that clearly? Clan Master had left the Profound Opening Powder in the infirmary was because of this meticulous reason and wanted to protect the Profound Opening Powder's potency! Who would have thought a house thief would appear! What else do you have to say?"

"Oh, oh! So that's it!" Xiao Che nodded his head, as if he was pleased with Xiao Yunhai explanation: "To even know the existence of 'medicinal energy', Clan Master sure is knowledgeable. Then, the second question that I wanted to ask is coincidentally related with this 'medicinal energy'."

Xiao Che narrowed his eyes and faintly laughed as he continued: "Regarding 'medicinal energy', our Xiao Clan's infirmary has accumulated a variety of herbs over the years and they are indeed ample. Furthermore, the highest quantity herb we have in our infirmary is the "Thin Net Grass", so the medicinal energy's odor should be a sweet fishy one belonging to that of the 'Thin Net Grass'."

"Clan Master also knows that the box containing the Profound Opening Powder is made from the Black Profound Ebony and Black Profound Ebony is very good at protecting the effects of elixirs from dissipating to the surrounding, then does Clan Master know the reason why Black Profound Ebony can protect the effects of elixirs... Well, in fact, the reason is pretty simple. Black Profound Ebony has a very strong particle absorption ability, so when the medicinal force in its surroundings come into contact with the Black Profound Ebony, they will get firmly absorbed and will be difficult to diffuse. After the surface has absorbed enough until full capacity, the medicinal force still would be unable to scatter even if it wanted to. I believe that anyone here with a bit of medical knowledge should understand this theory."

Quite a number of people present nodded their heads silently.

"Then, if the Black Profound Ebony Box that contained the Profound Opening Powder had been placed in the infirmary for a certain period of time, its surface surely would have absorbed a large quantity of 'medicinal energy' when inside the infirmary. According to the nature of Black Profound Ebony, it absorbs fast but diffuses slowly, so even if it was removed from the infirmary, you should still be able to smell the 'medicinal energy' even after two to three days... the sweet fishy smell of the Thin Net Grass..."

Once these words were said, Xiao Yunhai complexion immediately changed slightly.

Xiao Che had calculated accurately that Xiao Yunhai would not really have placed the Profound Opening Powder in the infirmary because if the Profound Opening Powder had really been stolen, he would have cried his eyes out... And Xiao Yunhai indeed did not place the Profound Opening Powder in the

infirmary. As for the infirmary doctor, Xiao Gu, he had already been informed about this beforehand, and under the Xiao Sect's deterrence, Xiao Gu did not dare to refuse.

"I wonder if Clan Master dares to bring the box over, and let us smell to check whether or not the odor that should be there, is actually on the box?" Xiao Che said as he chuckled.

"Xiao Che! As expected, you're still suspecting Clan Master, simply preposterous!" Before Xiao Yunhai said anything, Xiao Li once again erupted agitatedly: "In order to protect your little aunt, you are actually going to forcefully question Clan Master, simply ridiculous! Unreasonable! Our Xiao Clan had totally raised you in vain all these years, why haven't you withdrawn!!"

"Hehe, there's no need to be agitated, First Elder. Their aunt and nephew relationship has always been close, his attempt to exculpate at all cost is understandable. Furthermore, what he said is also reasonable and fair. Since he wants to know if there are any problems with this box, we shall just prove it to him. But, both the Profound Opening Powder and Black Profound Wood are precious treasures, how could we let anyone touch it as they please." Xiao Yunhai turned to face Xiao Kuangyun after he had finished speaking and respectfully continued: "Then, can we please trouble Young Master Xiao to be a witness. I believe that if it's Young Master Xiao, his word will convince the masses more than anyone else present today."

Xiao Che secretly sneered but his expression did not change, and nodding slightly: "Of course, if it's Young Master Xiao, he will be the most trustworthy. Can Young Master Xiao please do us the honor of smelling the odor on the box, to clear the doubts in my heart."

Xiao Kuangyun and Xiao Yunhai's gaze met. At the same time, they both thought that it was impossible for the dumb Xiao Che to realize that they had been cooperating from the very start. Xiao Kuangyun held up the box in his hand, smiled disdainfully, and casually replied: "This suspicion is quite interesting. That being the case, I shall smell it on your behalf."

After he said that, Xiao Kuangyun lifted up the box that contained the Profound Opening Powder, brought it to his nose, and started to earnestly smell it. He then knitted his eyebrows and spoke: "Even though the smell is not strong, there indeed is a sweet yet fishy smell."

He narrowed his eyes and indifferently said: "Come over and smell it as well First Elder, to avoid other people suspecting that I am collaborating with the Xiao Clan Master."

"How could it be possible that someone of Young Master Xiao's status would bother to lie to us." First Elder Xiao Li immediately flattered as he walked over obediently and strongly sniffed. He then nodded his head: "That's right, it does indeed have a sweet but fishy smell." He glared across the room and raised his voice: "What else do you have to say, Xiao Che? Young Master Xiao and Clan Master have already given you a heaven's amount of face, if you continue to pester endlessly, I will personally chase you down."

"Whoa! Calm down First Elder." Xiao Che waved his hands up and down as his expression became strange: "Both Young Master Xiao and First Elder unexpectedly smelled a sweet fishy smell, this this this... *Cough cough* Actually, I was not careful just now and had misspoken... Young Master Xiao being of the noble status, surely only come into contact with the highest grade of elixirs. As for the common herbs like that of the Thin Net Grass, you surely would not bother to take a second look. Clan Master

and First Elder wholeheartedly dedicate themselves to training and does not dabble in medical knowledge, and therefore naturally has no time to visit the infirmary, so you might not know that the odor of the Thin Net Grass is actually not a sweet fishy smell, but a sweet bitter smell. Any one of you know that if you go in the infirmary and take a sniff... eh? Yet both Young Master Xiao and First Elder had smelled a sweet fishy smell, this makes me unable to understand. I wonder if anyone here can do me a favor to explain this for me?"

Once those words were said, everyone's expressions had changed, becoming incomparably brilliant, while on the other hand, Xiao Kuangyun, Xiao Yunhai, and First Elder Xiao Li's expressions instantly became rigid... Although it was only for a moment, many people clearly saw that change. Meanwhile, the Xiao Clan disciples who often frequent the infirmary, were familiar with the smell of the Thin Net Grass and burst into stares...

Numerous people's hearts began to pump violently...

They began to scent an atmosphere, different from before...

"Xiao Che! You still don't want to shut your mouth, brat... Not only did you try to shield Xiao Lingxi in vain, you still went as far to question Clan Master, to question Young Master Xiao! I see you are deliberately playing with us, and continuing to babble nonsense!" Xiao Li face ashened and revealed an ominous glint in his eyes: "Young Master Xiao, Clan Master, don't listen to his nonsense anymore! Since the truth of the stolen Profound Opening Powder matter is already out, we need not waste any more time. Xiao Che, this brat, not only caused all this mess, he still tried to shield the culprit and offended Clan Master and Young Master Xiao. He ought to be penalized!!"

As long as one was not deaf, one could clearly hear that Xiao Li's words contained a hint of humiliation in his rage. As for the topic of "smelling wrong", he had completely avoided the issue and didn't even give out a word of explanation.

"Since Elder Xiao does not want to hear my nonsense, then I shall cut to the chase. As for my last question, I want to ask this friend call Xiao Jiu from the Xiao Sect. This should be an extremely simple question and I expect you to answer it. If you are able to answer it, then I will admit that my little aunt had indeed stolen the Profound Opening Powder and I won't utter a single word of complaint. Even if you want to punish my little aunt, or even punish me together as well!"

Without waiting for Xiao Yunhai and the rest to respond, Xiao Che's gaze had landed on the corpse-like face of Xiao Jiu. His expression remained bland but his eyes had become incomparably sharp, each word sounded like a small gong: "Xiao Jiu, you say that the Profound Opening Powder was found under the pillow of my little aunt's room. Then, can you tell me whether the bed in my little aunt room is facing east or west? What is the color of the pillow? And if the pillow was placed on the southern end or the northern end of the bed?"

Xiao Jiu's expression instantly stiffened while Xiao Kuangyun and Xiao Yunhai's expressions all of a sudden became incomparably unsightly.

"If you did go into my little aunt's room and found the Profound Opening Powder under her pillow, then those questions should be extremely simple to you... Come, tell me your answer, you just need to say out, my little aunt and I will immediately plead guilty without a second word. Yes, I guess you, Young

Master Xiao, Clan Master and all the elders here want to settle this case quickly and start the main business for today, am I right? Then you should quickly tell us. It would be bad to delay your master and everyone's time here... Say it? Say it... what? Why aren't you answering me? Didn't you clearly go into my little aunt's room? Why can't you even answer such a simple question?"

"Don't tell me... you never even went into my little aunt's room in the first place? But you claimed that the Profound Opening Powder is found under my little aunt's pillow... How did that come about? Could it be that you know the legendary Thousand Mile Chicken Snatching skill?"

Chapter 29 – Upheaval (8)

No matter how big or small the courtyards were, the Xiao Clan had a total of around two hundred thirty three courtyards. The courtyards were all arranged irregularly and most of them looked almost exactly the same. If we don't even mention the Xiao Sect members who came yesterday and only talk about people who have already been living here for ten or even twenty days, even they would not necessarily remember all the courtyard's positions, nor would they accurately connect them with their owner. This was why Xiao Che was certain that Xiao Jiu had not even gone to Xiao Lingxi's courtyard.... Even if he deliberately went there to check it out yesterday, he could not possibly find it again in such a short time. He should have been faking his search and instead just randomly walked around in a circle for a while until he came back with the box containing the Profound Opening Powder.

Xiao Jiu's silence and the dramatically worsening complexions of Xiao Kuangyun and Xiao Yunhai would even let fools begin to understand what was going on.

Xiao Yunhai flawlessly answered Xiao Che's first question... yet he did not know that it was only just a decoy. The second question that came immediately after made them sink into a deep hole. As for the third question.... it was virtually a resounding slap to their face.

"Little Che...." Xiao Lingxi buried her face in her hands as her vision became hazy. In her most helpless situation, everyone had kept away from her, questioned her, and wronged her for a period of time. Only he stayed the same as before. He fearlessly put his body in front of hers in attempt to shield her.... and confronted the people that not even those of the Xiao Clan would readily dare to provoke.

This silhouette left a deep impression at the bottom of her heart, and this memory may last a lifetime, without any chance of ever disappearing or fading away.

Xia Qingyue's expression became bright once again. The questions were flawlessly answered and everyone was fully convinced of their act, but unexpectedly, he completely turned the entire situation around with only a few simple questions, while also exposing their lies. She yet again discovered that she actually did not truly understand him. No, it should be said that he had hidden his true self from everyone else.... for no one even knew of his frightening medical skills that could shock the entire world. At the moment, he had only revealed a scheme that left others incapable of movement.

The look on everyone's face secretly changed....

However, there were no traces of any change on Xiao Lie's face. Instead, he became even more ashen as both his hands quietly trembled together.

He knew from the start that it was an act to shift the blame onto someone else. Except that Xiao Lingxi ended up with the position of the scapegoat.... As he noticed the way Xiao Kuangyun's gaze changed when his eyes turned in Xiao Lingxi's direction, he went in a fit of rage. However, he could not open his mouth to speak, and could not possibly try to speak. This time, Xiao Che's few sentences exposed their ugly and vicious intentions in front of all the people that were currently present.

But after that?

Could they even be ashamed? Would shame cover their faces? Would they apologize? Or perhaps shout loudly to say that it was all a misunderstanding?

Haha.... That's absolutely impossible!

This would only anger them even further, and make things get more out of hand which in turn would make the consequences even more severe. The people who were present were well aware of this farce, but they did not dare to openly declare that it was happening. Instead, waves of anger came from the opposite party, like blades of grass swaying in the wind....

This was because the other party was the son of the Sect Master of the Xiao Sect! He could crush the entire Xiao Clan with a lift of his finger! Without sufficient power, what was the use of having a brilliant tongue and an observant mind? In the face of absolute power, this so-called truth could not even be considered as just a joke.

"Xiao Che!! You unfilial bastard, you still haven't shut up!!" The First Elder pointed at Xiao Che and desperately bellowed in rage: "You again and again search for a ridiculous reason to discredit Clan Master and our noble guests from the Xiao Sect! What exactly is your motive! Why would the Xiao Sect try to frame Xiao Lingxi? Everyone in the world knows of the Xiao Sect and their word holds enormous weight. If they say that the Profound Opening Powder was found in Xiao Lingxi's room, then it was found in Xiao Lingxi's room! No one in Floating Cloud City has the right to question their authority!"

"This is truly outrageous, to question even the honorable guests from the Xiao Sect. Clan Master and Young Master Xiao had repeatedly exhibited their accommodating patience but unexpectedly, if you give him an inch, he'd want a mile; this is simply intolerable.... Young Master Xiao, Clan Master, this old one pleads for the rapid arrest of the thief Xiao Lingxi and the nonsense babbler, Xiao Che!" Second Elder Xiao Bo shouted in anger.

In fact, everyone present was well aware of the situation at hand, yet did not dare to say it out loud. First Elder and Second Elder shamelessly roared, and there was not one person who would speak in their favor, but there was a look of pity in everyone's eyes.... The opposing party was the Xiao Sect. Even if you saw through their trickery. Even if you completely unraveled their scheme and the truth, what was the use?

Xiao Kuangyun's expression had already darkened to the color of charcoal. He did not think that his "perfect" plan would backfire in his face in front of so many people.... Although these people looked at him with a fearful expression, and didn't dare to make a single sound, he would bet his little toe that in their minds, they had inevitably sneered at him and saw him as a dog!

And all of this was because of Xiao Che!

Xiao Kuangyun became more and more enraged as he directed his killing intent at the nobody that paid no heed to his importance. He spoke in a deep voice: "I, from the dignified Xiao Sect, have no obligation to answer the question of a useless piece of trash from the Xiao Clan. Furthermore, I have no obligation to explain a matter belonging to my Xiao Sect! Which Elder in Xiao Clan is in charge of law enforcement? Immediately arrest this thief and the piece of trash that tried to vainly shield her!

"We solemnly obey Young Master Xiao's order!!" Roared Fourth Elder Xiao Cheng, the chief of law enforcement within the Xiao Clan who saw his opportunity to make an appearance. He suddenly turned his head, his eyes revealing an ominous glint as they laid upon the victim Xiao Lingxi, and shouted in a loud voice yet again: "Xiao Lingxi, Xiao Che! You two have already committed a serious crime, come with me at once to the law enforcement hall to await your punishment!!"

The situation had made a sudden change. It was obvious that they had been exposed, yet the opposite party acted without a care for their pride and immediately made a direct approach. Xiao Che actually became alarmed as he retreated backwards, and whispered to Xia Qingyue: "Hey! Qingyue my wife, where's your master!!"

"Don't know" Xia Qingyue flatly replied.

"I~! @# ¥ %....." The reason why Xiao Che dared to mercilessly slap Xiao Sect's face was not because his blood rushed to his head, but because he knew that Xia Qingyue's master was in the vicinity.... Last night, he had even specifically reminded Xia Qingyue to notify her master.

In the end, Xia Qingyue only offered him "don't know". This motherf*cker...

Xiao Cheng's profound strength was one the top five within the Xiao Clan, so it was fundamentally impossible that Xiao Che and Xia Lingxi had the ability to resist him. But now, a tall shadow appeared all of a sudden, in a flash, and stood in front of Xiao Che and Xiao Lingxi. With an entire body surging with profound strength, Xiao Lie had abruptly come forward....

A vibration sounded as a sandstorm brew as far as anyone could see. The Xiao Cheng that had been rapidly dashing towards his target was directly hit as he flew backwards. After landing, he staggered backwards seven or eight steps until he regained his balance.

Within the Xiao Clan.... It should be said that within the entire Floating Cloud City, the only person who could make him yield in just one strike was the one in the tenth level of the Spirit Profound Realm, Xiao Lie!

"Xiao Lie! What's the meaning of this! Are you going to brazenly shield them?" If it was the past, Xiao Cheng would undoubtedly shrink in the presence of Xiao Lie, but at this moment, he nevertheless shouted with complete confidence.

Although he knew what was happening, and knew that there was no use in struggling to defend them, how could Xiao Lie silently watch Xiao Che and Xiao Lingxi be brought away to suffer such injustice? Ignoring Xiao Cheng, he faced the platform and spoke: "Clan Master, regarding today's situation, I always had something I wanted to say! It is absolutely impossible that my daughter, Xiao Lingxi is a person that would steal the Profound Opening Powder!"

“Haha, Xiao Lingxi is your daughter, so of course you would say that!” Xiao Li laughed coldly: “However, the truth is already clear, whatever you have to say is completely useless! If you dare to shield and obstruct this arrest again, don’t blame me for not acknowledging our Xiao Clan’s relationship as I’ll also seize you together with them!

Since he stood next to Xiao Kuangyun, Xiao Li had enough confidence to lie in broad daylight and spoke as if they were fact, with an incredible expression on his face.

Xiao Lie was incomparably balanced as he looked at Xiao Yunhai and lightly spoke: “Yes, it’s true that I did tell Xi Er that the Profound Opening Powder had the ability to repair profound veins. I instantly regretted it after I told her that, because knowing her personality, I was afraid that she would be impulsive enough to steal the Profound Opening Powder. As a result, I stood in front of her courtyard’s doorway all night, until dawn! She absolutely did not even take half a step outside her courtyard entrance!”

“Tch!” Xiao Li scornfully sneered: “In order to absolve your daughter’s crime, you could actually think up of such a ridiculous reason! Think about it, would anyone even believe your words? Our friends present today, do anyone of you believe him?”

In the presence of the four Xiao Sect member’s grim faces, no one dared to speak.

Xiao Lie’s expression became coldly resolute as he spoke in a loud voice: “I, Xiao Lie have always lived a straightforward and upright life! Although not a true gentleman, I have never looked down on a person of lower status! I have never harmed anyone, nor have I deceived anyone! If what I said earlier had even half an untruth, may the heavens and earth punish me, and condemn me to a terrible death!”

Xiao Lie’s words were sonorous and struck the hearts of the people. Every individual word was filled to the brim with a profound righteousness and spirit. Xiao Lie was not only the strongest in Floating Cloud City, but his integrity was also well known! It was actually not necessary for him to swear the ‘may the heavens and earth punish me, and condemn me to a terrible death’ oath for others to believe his words.... But, even though it wasn’t necessary for him to say those words, with Xiao Che’s previous statement, everyone present had already thoroughly seen the real truth. However, in the midst of Xiao Sect’s domineering power, it was fundamentally impossible to change the unfavorable accusation placed upon Xiao Lingxi. Even if Xiao Lie brought out more evidence, it was useless, and would merely cause Xiao Kuangyun to be further enraged out of humiliation.

“HAHAHAHA....”

A burst of disdainful laughter suddenly rang out in the midst of the people belonging to the Xiao Clan. A Xiao Yulong who had not bothered to speak, suddenly stood out and appeared. He turned towards Xiao Lie, laughing as he looked at him: “In this matter, this Xiao Yulong has absolutely no right to speak or intervene, but all of a sudden, when I heard Fifth Elder’s grand speech, I truly couldn’t hold back anymore.... A person who has fooled the entire Xiao Clan these ten or so years, unexpectedly professed himself to be a ‘straightforward and upright person that had never deceived another’! This is simply a joke bigger than the heavens itself!”

Has fooled the entire Xiao Clan these ten or so years... Those few words startled everyone.

As he listened to Xiao Yunlong's words and saw his expression, Xiao Che's brow suddenly sank, and a bad premonition surfaced within his heart.

"Xiao Yulong, what do you mean!" Xiao Lie immediately knitted his eyebrows and asked in a low voice.

Xiao Yunhai also spoke with a serious expression on his face: "Yulong! Fifth Elder has always been a person of virtue and prestige. In the presence of our noble guests from the Xiao Sect, in the presence of our Xiao Clan, and in the presence of our friends from Floating Cloud City, you mustn't indiscriminately gossip!"

Xiao Yulong bowed slightly, and said: "I request father to rest assure, your son naturally would not dare to speak so casually in broad daylight." As he looked at Xiao Lie, his eyes narrowed and he laughed faintly: "Fifth Elder, you claim to be a 'straightforward and upright person who had never deceived another', then do you dare to pledge on your son Xiao Ying's lifetime of honor and glory.... that Xiao Che is indeed your blood-related grandson!?"

Chapter 30 – Upheaval (9)

Xiao Yulong's words made Xiao Lie's entire body tremble, his pupils immediately contracted as he dumbfoundedly stood there.

Looking at Xiao Yulong's sinister smile, how could he not realize that the mumbling on that day, in front of his son Xiao Ying's grave... had entirely been heard!

What Xiao Yulong had said caused the crowd to instantly break into an uproar. Everyone's jaws dropped open as they shifted their focus onto Xiao Lie and when they saw Xiao Lie's unusual reaction, the astonishment in their hearts suddenly magnified several times. With this, the sound of the discussion had also started to increase.

Xiao Che was completely stumped; when he took note of Xiao Lie's reaction, he was stupefied in place. Xiao Lingxi also had a dull expression, and looked at Xiao Lie blankly.

"Yulong! What is this about?" Xiao Yunhai frowned as he asked solemnly.

Xiao Yulong turned sideways and replied respectfully: "A few days ago when I went to the cemetery at the rear mountain to pay my respects, I coincidentally met Fifth Elder. At that time, he was standing in front of his son, Xiao Ying's grave and was mumbling something to himself... But I heard it very clearly, he was saying... that Xiao Che was in fact, not Xiao Ying's biological son!"

From Xiao Yulong's words just now and Xiao Lie's reaction, the crowd had already faintly guessed the truth, but now that Xiao Yulong had so plainly announced it, it was like hearing a sudden clap of thunder. Everyone in the Xiao Clan were completely astonished. Those who were familiar and friendly with Xiao Lie widened their eyes even more, with faces full of complete disbelief.

"This..." Xiao Yunhai also had a face full of shock. He gravely said at once: "Yulong! This is a major matter that concerns our very bloodlines, you absolutely cannot speak recklessly!?"

Xiao Yulong firmly replied: "Of course I wouldn't dare to lie about such a big matter. As for the truth, won't you know after you ask the Fifth Elder... Fifth Elder, I guess you already heard what I said clearly, if

you have a clear conscience, and that Xiao Che is really your biological grandson, then do you dare to swear on the honor of your son?"

Everyone's gaze had all focused upon Xiao Lie. As he stood there stiffly, his expression became more bitter and astringent, he did not utter a single word or give an explanation for quite a while... His son, Xiao Ying, was the greatest pride of his life, and even if he had passed on, he would never swear on the honor of the deceased Xiao Ying, if that was the price.

Xiao Che opened his mouth, but he couldn't say a single word. His chest felt empty as a heavy and stifling emotion quickly swept through his entire body.

"Father, how can little Che not be your biological grandson... Father, quickly say something, quickly tell them!" Xiao Lingxi strongly shook Xiao Lie's body as she shouted in a terrified tone of voice.

But Xiao Lie did not utter a single word for a long time, as if he had turned into a statue. His expression quietly turned decrepit, and in a blink of an eye, he suddenly aged by more than ten years.

"Fifth Elder, how did that come about? Were the words that Yulong said the truth?" Xiao Yunhai agitatedly asked Xiao Lie as he frowned.

Xiao Lie slowly raised his head and took a deep breath. Xiao Yulong had forced him to swear on his son Xiao Ying... But that was something he would never do no matter what. Henceforth, this matter which he had concealed for sixteen years, was destined to be unable to remain hidden from now on. He had thought that he could cover up the truth for an entire lifetime, until the day he died, but he never would have thought that it would actually be mercilessly revealed so quickly under this unimaginable situation, and in front of so many people.

Xiao Lie's appearance had already tacitly agreed. If otherwise, he could have already sworn without apprehension and sealed Xiao Yulong's mouth shut. Everyone in Xiao Clan were all flabbergasted. Even Xia Qingyue was also stunned. Xia Hongyi who was standing at the surrounding quietly at this time also had a face full of shock... Xiao Che was not Xiao Ying's son? How could... this be!!

"Grandfather..."

As Xiao Che walked in front of Xiao Lie, every step he took was incomparably dense. When he looked at a face that seemed to have aged considerably in an instant, Xiao Che felt a burst of pain in his heart. He tried his best to remain serene, and asked softly: "Grandfather... is this really... true?"

Xiao Lie drooped down his head and looked at Xiao Che. He gave a bitter smile and in his clouded eyes, was a complicated expression that Xiao Che was unable to see clearly: "Even though you aren't my biological child, but over these years, I have always treated you as my own grandson..."

If the silence before signified his consent, in that case, this sentence was the confirmation that everyone had now clearly heard!

The Xiao Clan instantly went into an uproar. Being in the Xiao Clan for so many years, this was without a doubt, the most shocking news that any had heard before.

Xiao Che stood there expressionlessly without uttering a single sound for quite a while, as if he had lost his soul. Xiao Lingxi was dumbfounded as well; she shook her head furiously, rushed toward Xiao Lie and

agitatedly shouted: "Father! What are you saying... little Che grew up with me from a young age, he's the biological son of my brother Xiao Ying, how could he not be your own grandson... You must be joking... am I right!?"

A hand stretched over and grabbed Xiao Lingxi's hand. At this moment Xiao Che's expression had changed back to normal. He looked at Xiao Lingxi and gently shook his head afterwards, revealing a shallow smile: "It's okay, little aunt. Grandfather will always be my grandfather, and you will always be my little aunt. We will always be the closest of families, so it doesn't matter if we are related by blood or not; our feelings will never change... So is it really that important if I'm not the biological child?"

"Little Che..." Xiao Lingxi eyes instantly became hazy.

Whereas on the other side, a few of the mad dogs who suddenly got ahold of Xiao Che's huge "weakness" started to bark wildly.

"Simply ridiculous! Ridiculous! This youngster that our Xiao Clan had raised for an entire sixteen years, does not belong to our Xiao Clan, and is actually a bastard who carried the blood of an outsider... This is practically the biggest joke in the history of Xiao Clan!" First Elder Xiao Li roared with a face full of rage.

"Xiao Lie! You actually brought a bastard into our Xiao Clan, and let our Xiao Clan raise him for an entire sixteen years! How do you want us... to even scold you! Argh!" Third Elder Xiao Ze sighed heavily.

"You clearly know he is a bastard but you still kept him in Xiao Clan, and let him enjoy the privilege of being an Elder's grandson! Xiao Lie, you actually lied to our entire clan for sixteen years. If Yulong didn't discover this by luck, perhaps we would get duped by you forever. By that time, the descendants of Xiao Clan would have been mixed with the blood of outsiders! Xiao Lie, do you know how big of a sin that is!" Fourth Elder Xiao Cheng pointed at Xiao Lie as his face turned red due to his agitation.

Second Elder Xiao Bo scolded loudly: "No wonder every of our Xiao Clan's descendants had above average talent, but all of a sudden a broken profound vein trash appeared! So it turns out that this trash Xiao Clan had raised for sixteen years was actually a bastard! If this were to spread, won't our Xiao Clan become the laughingstock of Floating Cloud City!"

Not only the four big elders, but even the middle aged, and the attendants who belonged to the four big elders all stood out, mercilessly criticizing Xiao Lie. For a moment, Xiao Lie became the target of a multitude of verbal arrows.

"Fifth Elder, this is... is... Argh!" After Xiao Yunhai facial color went through a series of changes as he sighed for a long period of time.

"Hehe, you guys have truly let me witness such an extremely amusing show. The Xiao Clan which have developed to what it is today with great difficulty, unexpectedly has mingled in a bastard that came from nowhere! Even I am feeling embarrassed for you all!" As Xiao Kuangyun opened his mouth, his voice was the usual sound of sharp unpleasantness. He glanced at Xiao Che and enthusiastically continued: "Today is Xiao Clan's general meeting, other than the people of Xiao Clan and the people that were invited, outsiders have no place here! Xiao Clan Master, what are you still waiting for, quickly throw this bastard out and from this day onwards, he should not be allowed to even take half a step into the Xiao Clan!"

“Ahh... this...” Xiao Yunhai had a expression of “cannot bear to”. However after hesitating for a while, he gritted his teeth, faced Xiao Che and spoke: “Xiao Che, Fifth Elder has already admitted that you are not his grandson; you don’t have our Xiao Clan’s blood in your body either... Although our Xiao Clan had raised you in vain for sixteen years, but in these sixteen years, you were in the dark as well and if we were to go after you for anything, it would instead show our pettiness... Just leave, quickly leave our Xiao Clan. From now on, you have nothing to do with our Xiao Clan and you are not allowed to take even half a step into our Xiao Clan ever again!”

The gazes all focused onto Xiao Che again, and many people silently sighed in their hearts. However, Xiao Che did not even have a trace of a want to beg or sorrowful expression on his face. After listening to Xiao Yunhai words, he just smiled slightly with signs of sarcasm: “Clan Master and the elders need not be troubled, since I don’t belong to your Xiao Clan at all, then I will leave... Furthermore I will leave right now!”

He stood in front of Xiao Lie as his eyes trembled for a while, and then suddenly asked: “Grandfather... If I’m not your grandson, then who exactly are my biological parents?”

Xiao Lie had knew in advance that he would ask this question. He closed his eyes and shook his head: “I don’t know, Xiao Ying had picked you up from outside, even he does not know who your true biological parents were...”

“.....” From Xiao Lie shaking and his complicated eyes, Xiao Che knew this wasn’t Xiao Lie’s heartfelt answer. He must know the truth of his birth, but in front of so many people, he wasn’t able to say it.

With a *plop* sound, Xiao Che knelt down heavily in front of Xiao Lie and sincerely said: “Grandfather, even if I’m not your biological child, but these sixteen years, you have treated me better than your own. You raised me, educated me, protected me, spent countless blood and sweat on me, and I can never return these sixteen years of affection. I have always been extremely glad to have such a kind grandfather like you. Although it was only today that I discovered that I actually do not have the Xiao Clan blood, what of it? You are my grandfather and I am your grandson, even if we are unrelated by blood, I will forever keep this affection in my heart! As long as grandfather does not mind, I will forever be your grandson!”

Those words caused everyone to feel a tremble in their hearts. Xiao Lie eyes started to moisten as he heavily nodded, said “good” with a hoarse voice, and walked forward, raising his hands with the intention of lifting Xiao Che up.

However Xiao Che avoided his hands, bent down, and heavily kowtowed three times towards Xiao Lie.

“Grandfather, little aunt, no matter what happens after I leave, I request that you carefully protect yourselves, and take proper care of your health....”

When Xiao Che stood up, his forehead was already bruised. However the smile on his face remained as gentle and calming as the autumn wind. He turned his body around and walked toward the direction of the gate. He didn’t want to leave... because grandfather and little aunt was here; he still wanted to use his life to protect them... but, he had to leave, or else grandfather and little aunt will get dragged into an unforeseeable mess. Regardless of whether or not he wanted to stay, he would still be forced to leave anyway.

“Little Che!!”

Xiao Lingxi sobbing shouts came from behind, and Xiao Che’s footsteps paused slightly, but he didn’t stop. He didn’t look back, and walked towards the gate without hesitation... Nobody knew that under his calm and quiet facade, masked a multitude of anger, resentment and the intention to murder...

He was exceedingly wise and shrewd, but he didn’t have power... Without power, he couldn’t fight back, he couldn’t protect his grandfather and little aunt, and he did not even have the strength to struggle... He had no other choice than to be expelled in this way...

The day when he was just reborn, he desired to gain power, and power was something that humans had always instinctively pursued from the very beginning. At this moment, compared to his previous days, his thirst for enormous power multiplied by a hundredfold, and could even be said to be a thousand times more intense...

He wanted to gain enormous power to protect his grandfather and little aunt, to wash away all this humiliation, and to make the people who had reveal their ugly faces today, regret. He wanted Xiao Kuangyun to die without a corpse... And even wanted the whole of Xiao Clan to pay an unforgettable price!

“Please keep my grandfather and little aunt safe... I beg you...”

While passing by Xia Qingyue, Xiao Che said in a voice that only she could hear.

This man who was brimming with mystery and arrogance; when he said that, his eyes revealed a desperate plea for help... Perhaps, in his entire life, he had never begged anyone before, for his plea seemed to appear particularly heart wrenching. Xia Qingyue’s heart heavily quivered, and unexpectedly had an instant feeling of suffocation... She could not help but involuntarily and slowly, nod her head.